

ABSTRACT

MIGRATION, CHRONOLOGY AND FUNERAL RITES. CHRONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS AND THE PROBLEM OF THE CULTURAL HETEROGENEITY IN THE EASTERN REGIONS OF THE TISZA IN THE 6TH-7TH CENTURIES AS REFLECTED BY BURIAL SITES

In the last 13 years since my doctoral thesis in history, I have continued my archaeological research of the early medieval period on the territory of Romania, Hungary, and contextually, in the Caucasus area at the “Vasile Pârvan” Institute of Archeology of the Romanian Academy of Science, with various aims and several results.

I presented my doctoral thesis, *Az Erdélyi-medence, a Partium és a Bánság 10–11. századi temetői (10th and 11th century burial sites, stray finds and treasures in the Transylvanian Basin, the Partium and the Banat)*, at the Institute of Archaeology of the “Eötvös Loránd” University in Budapest (Hungary), under the guidance of academician István Bóna at the beginning, followed by Dr. Tivadar Vida.

Along with my doctoral thesis, published in 2013, my personal scientific contribution is also reflected in the publications that have appeared after obtaining my doctoral degree, in prestigious journals abroad, but also in Romanian journals or volumes dedicated to significant scientific events, published in the country, as well as abroad. In the 2009–2022 period, I published 7 books, 33 international articles and 37 national articles as author or co-author.

The main works of my scientific contribution cover various topics that have interested and still interest me, e.g. how is it possible to detect power structures through archaeology, the relationship between centre and periphery in the Middle and Lower Danube Basin, the issue of long distance trade, the (false) problem of unitary chronology in the Carpathian Basin applied during the 6th – 11th centuries, the cemeteries around the church, the mountain archaeology, and the problem of transhumance, the problem of nomadism in the Carpathian Basin.

Since 2010, I have participated actively to 5 research projects, which resulted in the above/mentioned publications from my CV.

The first section (I) of my habilitation thesis presents, in a synthetic approach, the scientific problems related to the dating methodology, respectively the theme of the guidelines of the tombs intercorrelated with the previous issue (Chapter III – IV) on an open, diverse macroregion called Transtisa (Chapter I), considered by many specialists to be culturally unitary (Chapter II) – topics that I have touched upon tangentially in my analyses after 2014, however, never applied and composed them as in this paper. One of the tangible results of the research is the methodological approach (presented in Chapter III.1) that differs compared to previous analyses, which tried to extend and integrate natural sciences (archaeogenetics, ^{14}C , $\delta^{15}\text{N}$, $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ analyses) in the chronological analysis, respectively in studying funeral rituals. One of the main aims was to rethink the methodology of identifying the first generation of “Avar” conquerors, i.e. individuals belonging to communities that travelled in the Middle Danube Basin in the sociohistorical phenomenon called Avar migration, and also, to (re)debate the issue of cultural heterogeneity in terms of the orientation of the graves following the processing of data from 194 funeral sites in the regions east of the Tisza. The small number of graves, respectively the small number of sites that we can link to these early Eastern groups can be explained by the fact that they had a simple, poor archaeological culture, which is very difficult or impossible to identify with exclusively archaeological methods. The ^{14}C investigations, as well as the typochronological analyses based on the numismatic material collected

from the 7th century graves underline the substantial growth of funerary findings datable to the second quarter of the 7th century; this fact can be explained by several causalities. At the same time, starting from the 7th century, social competition had determined the apparition of several funeral practices that offer a certain radiography of the increasingly complex society, since in addition to catacomb-type niche constructions, the parts of several horses began being deposited in certain sites, as a sign of the social distance between the microgroups of the Transtisa region. No such manifestations could be documented in the last third of the sixth century.

At the same time, another issue was also addressed: orientation as an important act, a phase of funeral rituals is closely connected with the issue of chronology. Unlike the orientation of the tombs in the necropolises considered gepidic, from the third third of the 6th century and the first two thirds of the 7th century, the orientations are very varied, however, the earliest orientations are not only E-W, as suggested by the specialized literature. A statistic analysis the orientation practices of each micro-community, it can be observed that north of Cris Rivers, the predominant orientations are N – S, respectively W – E, whereas in the area south of Cris Rivers, the predominant orientations are NE – SW and E – W, but with the presence of orientations such as N – S and W – E, respectively. In contrast to the almost general uniformity of the Gepidic era, the main features of the orientations emphasize diversity, suggesting different visions and practices in the world of micro-communities east of the Tisza. Heterogeneity in funeral practices!

The second section (II) introduces a plan for the evolution and development of my professional, scientific and academic career; I also set out several directions of research that I intend to develop in the future. Within *SCOSAAR*, I propose to coordinate doctoral theses that would discuss topics related to post-Roman archaeology, especially social archaeology of the early medieval era in the context of funeral rites, correlated with a high-complexity publication of archaeological sites that have already been researched, both funerary sites, and settlements, the problem of nomadism in the early medieval period in the Middle Danube Basin, mountain archaeology and the problem of transhumance in the early medieval period, microregional archaeological research.