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(review) A. V. Gudkova, E. Schultze, *Gräberfeld und Siedlung Nagornoe 2. Ein Fundplatz der Sântana Mureş-Černjachov-Kultur an der Unteren Donau (= Archäologie in Eurasien 35)*. Bonn 2017: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Eurasien-Abteilung, Verlag Dr Rudolf Habelt.

The settlement complex known as Nagornoe 2, Odessa oblast, Ukraine comprises a Chernyakhov/Sântana de Mureş culture settlement and burial ground. The site is located in the area known as the Budzhak, which extends between the lower Danube and lower Dniester, on the steep east banks of Lake Kagul. The settlement was discovered in 1964 by N. M. Shmagliev, who was the first to identify artefacts belonging to the Eneolithic Gumelniţa and Chernyakhov cultures amongst the finds excavated at the site. Research of the complex continued until 1987 and was led by specialists in cultures of both the Eneolithic and Late Antique. Finds associated with other periods were also recorded during the course of the excavations. One such discovery were the remnants of a Scythian winter camp (Romanova and Skakun 1991; 1992; 2002). The Late Antique cemetery of the Chernyakhov/Sântana de Mureş culture discovered in 1984 lies approximately 100 m to the East of the settlement. From 1985 to 1993, the research of the burial ground was lead by Alexandra V. Gudkova with occasional involvement of A. A. Rosokhatskiy and M. M. Fokyevev. The excavations revealed 95 Chernyakhov culture graves in total (graves 8a and 8b were considered separate inhumations). It was also noted that the site had been partially destroyed by sand mining.

The Nagornoe 2 settlement and cemetery lie within a larger settlement complex located in the Lake Kagul region. Both sites were associated with the Chernyakhov culture. The research findings from excavations at Nagornoe 2 were only published fragmentarily. What is more, the available publications did not always present finds in a manner allowing for their precise typological identification (Gudkova *et al.* 1997). The recent work by Alexandra V. Gudkova and Erdmute Schultze comes as a most welcome contribution to the existing body of subject literature. It appears as the 35th volume of the *Archäologie in Eurasien* series (ed. S. Hansen), published by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut and the Insti-

tute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Institut Archeologii Nacional'noj Akademii Nauk Ukrainy). Its 334 pages contain 97 tables and 67 illustrations (many of them full colour photographs).

The publication possesses the logical structure of a traditional monograph. Contrary to what the title might suggest, the material excavated from the cemetery is presented before the authors move on to discuss the settlement. In doing so, they build upon the earlier findings of G. A. Romanova and N. N. Skakun (G. A. Romanova, N. N. Skakun 2002). Various categories of finds are methodically presented to the reader. The discussion covers the excavated settlement features, as well as numerous finds. The assemblage includes pottery (kitchen and table ware), glassware (beakers) and imported amphorae. Additionally, objects associated with household activity were also recorded. These included spindle whorls, loom weights, a whetstone fragment and an iron harpoon.

The discussion of the material recovered from the cemetery begins with a presentation of previous research projects and a characterization of local funerary rituals. Similar to other known Chernyakhov culture cemeteries, Nagornoe 2 contained both cremation and inhumation burials. However, only six examples of the latter were recorded. Altogether, they constitute 6.5% of all excavated grave features. Five were cremation urn burials, while a single grave feature contained the remnants of a funeral pyre. It was recorded near the southern edge of the investigated area. In two cases (graves No. 8a and 9), the cremated remains of another individual were recorded alongside inhumed skeletal remains. Overall, the remains discovered at the cemetery have been identified as belonging to a wide spectrum of age groups, including adults of both sexes, as well as adolescents and children.

The forms of inhumation graves were very varied. While most identified burials were simple flat features, graves in the form of niches were also recorded. Finally, traces of shoring timbers (or perhaps of wooden coverings) were discovered in some of the grave pits. The majority of discovered skeletons were positioned with the head oriented North or West. One grave (no. 56) contained the remains of a small child buried in a ceramic vessel. While such forms of burial are not characteristic of the Chernyakhov culture, they have been observed in the Late Scythian context. Some of the graves appeared to have been disturbed in Antiquity and others contained incomplete skeletons. It must be noted that such finds are common at sites associated with the so called 'Gothic Circle' (Kokowski 1995; 1997). At the same time, no overlapping inhumations were recorded at the site. This suggests individual burial plots were clearly marked on the surface and, as a result, the re-opening of graves must have been deliberate.

The next chapters of the book are dedicated to the discussion of individual categories of grave goods excavated at the cemetery. The pottery assemblage comprised both hand-made and wheel-thrown vessels, alongside specimens of imported wares and spindle whorls. The metal artefacts included fibulae and belt buckles (many made of silver), ornaments, coins and both iron and bronze knives which, according to the authors, may have been used not only as tools but also as weapons. Other metal objects included needles and

toilet instruments. An arrowhead was also found, which is uncommon at Chernyakhov culture sites.

The publication discusses all groups of objects made of bone and teeth together in one chapter sub-section. Thus defined, the assemblage comprised combs, pendants (also those made of shell), so called 'needle-cases', as well consumption refuse (analyses by E. P. Sekerskaya – zooarchaeology and A. N. Shklaryuk – malacology). Other publications tend to discuss animal refuse deposits, (evidence of funeral feasts or offerings) in separate chapters or annexes dedicated to specialist analyses. Perhaps it is for this reason that the choice to discuss them together seems unusual. Objects made of stone – beads and tools – are also reviewed in this chapter, as are some of the organic finds such as the occasional wooden artefacts, traces of fabrics and plant remains (i.e. seeds of wild vine grapes and of *Chenopodium album*). Finally, the discussion of the grave goods assemblage ends with a few remarks on the composition of certain garments and the construction of pendants.

The subsequent chapter presents a chronological analysis of the Nagornoe 2 complex (settlement and cemetery). The relative chronology analysis of the burial ground was produced by Alexandr Vasilyev. The imported amphorae recorded at the settlement indicate that the site was already used in the 4th century AD (strong evidence was found for the second half of 4th c.). It was most likely occupied continuously until the beginning of the 5th century. The timeframes established for the settlement are aligned with the dating of the finds recovered from the cemetery. Vasilyev proposes three chronological phases for the burial ground: Phase I (320/330-350/370), which more or less corresponds with phase C3 defined by H. J. Eggers; phase II (350-370/380) and phase III which lasted until the beginning of the 5th century AD. Phase III can be considered synchronous with the Villafontana phase defined by V. Bierbrauer. The above dating, supported by the discovery of finds serving as time-markers (e.g. large double plate-fibulae [*Blechfibeln*]), seems to contradict the chronology known from analyses of primary written sources. According to many records, the invasion of the Huns in 376 led to a depopulation of Germanic settlements located near the limes. It appears that in spite of living in a turbulent period, the population of the Nagornoe 2 settlement had access to precious metals and thrived at the site until the beginning of the 5th century AD. This discovery deepens our understanding of the history of the region traditionally derived from ancient written sources alone.

The following chapter explores the cultural and historical context of the Nagornoe 2 site. While the subject of ethnicity does not feature very prominently in the book, this appears to be a deliberate choice on the part of the authors. They seem to be well aware of the limitations of archaeology, as well as of the imprecise nature of written sources as far as ethnicity is concerned. The Romans were often oblivious to the ethnic diversity of the neighbouring peoples and the low reliability of the ethnonyms they used can certainly be seen as a reflection of their ignorance. Viewed in this context, the authors' decision to focus principally on archaeological analyses must be judged as both justified and understandable.

Alexandra V. Gudkova's and Erdmute Schulze's presentation of the properties of various groups of finds recorded at Nagornoe 2 must be commended for its clarity. Not only do the authors treat the finds as artefacts of material culture but they also attempt to interpret them in the context of contemporary belief systems. Finally, their observations are compared with a broad spectrum of similar phenomena known from other sites associated with Chernyakhov/Sântana de Mureş culture and with others belonging to the Masłomęcz group from the south-east of Poland (Kokowski 1995; 1997). By presenting such a high quality and wide-scope analysis of the cultural context of the Nagornoe 2 settlement complex, the authors arrive at a truly comprehensive compendium of knowledge about the Chernyakhov culture, placing it within the larger system of the 'Gothic Circle'. They also argue that the Nagornoe 2 complex shows many cultural similarities with the sites of the Masłomęcz Group, as well as other sites of Central and Northern Europe. Moreover, the book explains how these connections can be inferred from both the material culture and from the less tangible evidence of contemporary beliefs, especially those concerning magical and funerary rituals. While evidence of Sarmatian influence was also noted, it was primarily observed in the architecture of the graves rather than in the artefacts of material culture. The analysis of the historical context of the site is further enhanced by a review of a variety of written sources. The settlement complex was located approximately 30 km away from the important Lower Danube *castellum* of Dinogetia and just 20 km from the Roman naval base of Noviodunum. The proximity of the limes seems to explain the relatively large amounts of amphorae fragments and other imported artefacts made of glass or non-ferrous metals recorded at the site. These in turn indicate that the settlement had stronger ties with western provinces than with the regions of the Black Sea.

The Chernyakhov culture, not unlike other cultures of the 'Gothic Circle', was characterised by a very rich repertoire of mortuary rites and practices. It has therefore become customary for any relevant publication to include an anthropological analysis of the archaeological material excavated from the cemeteries (if applicable). The annexe by Tatyana A. Rudich presents the Nagornoe 2 bones assemblage and places it within the broader context by drawing frequent analogies with other burial grounds of the Chernyakhov culture (Cherkassy-Zentr, Zhuravka). Rudich also conducts a hierarchical cluster analysis of the similarities between selected Late Antique and Early Medieval cemetery assemblages. The results are presented in the form of a dendrogram. The analysis compares Chernyakhov/Sântana de Mureş sites with Sarmatian and Germanic assemblages (including those associated with 'Gothic Circle' cultures). Some Mediterranean burials are also taken into account. It appears that the Nagornoe 2 cemetery was used by a heterogenous community and that at least some groups within that community showed certain affinities to the populations of Central and Northern Europe.

The archaeological source data used by the authors was presented in the form of an extensive catalogue of burial complexes, informed by the works on cemetery coins assemblages published by (among others) V. A. Anokhin and S. N. Bulatovich. The figures

accompanying this section of the monograph include plan drawings of the graves (vertical and horizontal sections of grave pits), as well as drawings of the finds (with no shading). Additionally, readers are presented with 14 photographs taken during the course of the excavations, also showing vertical plans of selected graves.

The bibliography has been separated into two parts. One contains reference literature written in Latin script while the other lists sources written in Cyrillic. Such a solution seems preferable to transliteration and is indeed more common among authors who reference both Latin and Cyrillic works.

The book can certainly be considered a valuable publication, meeting the high standards of the *Archäologie in Eurasien* series. Nevertheless, it is a shame that the archaeological and anthropological analyses were not accompanied by similar discussions of the metal and glass finds. The subject of local, glass production amongst the barbarians (i.e. non-Romans) and the question of where and how they obtained the raw material constitute very important problems for the research of specialised craftsmanship of the Chernyakhov culture. Such research, however, requires precise analyses of the chemical composition of the glass. Similarly, the publication could benefit from analyses of plant pollen and macrofossils. However, it is important to remember that perhaps in the times of the USSR, when the site of Nagornoe 2 was studied, collecting such samples was not standard procedure.

Despite all the qualities of the publication, it does contain a few minor mistakes. For instance, Figure 2 (Abb. 2, p. 3) shows a linear scale which suggests that the plan of the site was drawn with the scale of 1:10, whereas it is almost certainly 1:100. On page 18, readers may notice a small typographical mistake in the word *Tierknochen* which was rendered as **Tierkmochen*. Page 36 references a publication cited as ‘*Манчинска 1997*’ but no such position features in the Cyrillic bibliography. However, a closer examination of referenced page numbers reveals that the work is most likely the same as the one found in the Latin reference list under ‘*Mączyńska 1997*’.

These are, of course, minor shortcomings which do not diminish the value of the book. The monograph comes as a much-needed contribution to available subject literature concerning Late Antique assemblages excavated in the territories bordering the Black Sea. The book resembles an earlier monograph by M. Mączyńska et al. which explored the Almalyk site in Crimea (2016). Like its predecessor, the book by A. V. Gudkova and E. Schultze advances our knowledge of the cultural landscape of the Black Sea towards the end of the Roman Period and at the beginning of the Migration Period. Moreover, the chronology of the Nagornoe 2 settlement and cemetery, extending well into the first half of the 5th century AD, comes as a revelation since it directly contradicts the available historical sources. According to source literature, the invasion of the Huns would have brought a swift end to the Gothic empire of Ermanaric in the territories of Scythia Minor. If that were the case, the Chernyakhov culture would have likely been extinguished alongside it since, as archaeology tells us, strong ties existed between the two.

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