

PAVEL KOUŘIL – RUDOLF PROCHÁZKA ET AL.

MORAVIAN AND SILESIA STRONGHOLDS OF THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CENTRAL EUROPE



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Moravian and Silesian Strongholds of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries in the Context of Central Europe

Pavel Kouřil, Rudolf Procházka et al.

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Foreword

Pavel Kouřil, Rudolf Procházka

Early medieval centres have been currently receiving a relatively significant attention in Central Europe. From time to time, the state of knowledge is summarised in cross-cut proceedings and specialised monographs that deal with different regions, sites or points of view (recently Biermann et al. Hrsg. 2009; 2011; Ettel, Werther Hrsg. 2013; Herdick 2015; Kouřil, Gryc 2014; Christie, Herold Hrsg. 2016; Macháček, Ungerman Hrsg. 2011; Procházka 2017a; Urbańczyk eds. 2004). The monitoring of the topic presented in this volume has a relatively long tradition in Moravia and Czech Silesia, even though its centre of gravity belongs falls within the period of the ninth century, when the Great Moravian Empire was at its height. Although the extent of the evaluation of long-term research is rather diverse, the results obtained so far allow to predict a basic model of the development of the fortified centres on the monitored territory¹. Its core is the theory of the fall of central strongholds in South Moravia and the transition of power to northern and central Moravia.

The outlined situation caused rather substantial differences in the development of post-Great Moravian centres in the period from the tenth to the eleventh centuries. The core texts in this book, amended with the results of recent archaeological activities, deal with these central sites, their foundation, development, function and position in the settlement structure. There is an important complement in the form of summaries of the situation in Bohemia, Slovakia and selectively also in other European countries (Poland, Germany, England) that provide a wider context. This book is based primarily on the results of archaeological research and incorporates all related disciplines (in particular history) and a number of natural sciences and their methods; this interdisciplinarity increases the information value of the processed situations and finds while significantly broadening the possibilities of interpretation. It is divided into four basic chapters that reflect the topics in the context of different territories.

The book opens with two historical contributions that constitute the introductory section. In the first one, entitled *Building and organising central places and fortifications as a manifestation of princely*

power in early medieval Europe, David Kalhous attempts at a theoretical perspective of the reasons behind the construction of fortification in early medieval societies, drawing on particularly the situation in western European societies that have richer spectrum of written sources. Kalhous emphasises the multi-faceted role of the centres in complex societies, while fortification is not necessarily part of the central functions. The fortification of settlements was often necessary because of military pressures (Anglo-Saxon burhs, Henry the Fowler's strongholds, small Tornow-type fortifications of the Sorbs and others). This old theory, this time applying to Central Europe, was revived by Joachim Henning (2004). In accordance with J. Henning, D. Kalhous points to a wave of fortification around or after the year 900. In this context, the reasons of the (late) fortification of Great Moravian centres deserve attention; to a certain extent it corresponds with this paradigm, as indicated by new dendrodata (e.g. Henning, Ruttkay 2011; Macháček et al. 2013). A certain temporariness of the west-European fortification of the ninth and tenth/eleventh centuries, praised by the author, contrasts with the systematic construction of princely administrative strongholds in Central European monarchies of the tenth/eleventh centuries that aimed at the best possible control of internal sources that followed a phase of securing the results of expansion (Moździoch 1990; 2002; Sláma 1988; Žemlička 1997 and others).

The depiction of the geopolitical situation in the Central European space in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the relationship of the dynasties newly ascending to power – Bohemian Přemyslids and Polish Piasts – is dealt with by Polish historian Marzena Matla who based her work on written sources with regard to archaeological findings in the contribution entitled *The expansion of the Přemyslids and the Piasts between the late tenth century and the 1030s, and the possibilities for control over areas and the role of strongholds*. Her paper, based partly on an older monographs (Matla-Kozłowska 2008) brings new insights into key events of the time that included the beginnings, scope, security and the end of the Přemyslid expansion to Silesia and Lesser Poland as well as Polish activities aiming at the control of these territories, eventually also Moravia

and episodically also Bohemia. The author is one of the leading advocates of the expansion of Boleslav I. to Silesia and Lesser Poland. From a Moravian perspective, what is important is the part analysing *Dagome iudex*, a key document dated to the end of the tenth century, which mentions, among others, a territory called Alemure, which the researcher considers to have been a larger territorial unit, identifying it with north Moravia, or more precisely, the Olomouc region; this seems to be supported by new archaeological observations (Opava-Kylešovice, Přerov), which will be mentioned later. Her claim that the Polish occupation of Moravia by Boleslav Chrobry was terminated as late as the end of the 1030's, not about a decade earlier, also seems well argued. It draws on an older theory by a classic of Polish historiography Gerard Labuda (Labuda 1960b).

The core of the publication is the second chapter where the contributions concerning Moravia and Silesia – and partially also Slovakia – are concentrated. Key essay in this section – and of the whole of the monograph – is a study by Pavel Kouřil and Rudolf Procházka entitled *Moravian centres between the Mojmirids and Přemyslids*. The processing of key find situations and a massive amount of archaeological artefacts while using the possibilities of a number of natural science methods enabled the authors to give a new picture of the emergence, development, function and position of relevant tenth/eleventh-century strongholds in the residential patterns in Moravia of that time. The breaking events of early tenth century, characterised by the collapse and loss of function of critical centres and agglomerations of the Mojmirid rule – affected among others by the Ancient Hungarians – caused somewhat different positions of different Moravian parts in subsequent decades, which is a state that prevailed until the final stages of this age. The most affected was the southern part of Moravia, i.e. the core of the domain including wider Brno region (although this one not so significantly) – i.e. the direct contact zone. The centre of the country (Olomouc, Prostějov, Přerov, Kojetín and Kroměříž regions) experienced a somewhat different development; gradual evaluation of a large bulk of research results confirms the previously expected important position of Olomouc. Same as in the previous periods, the regions in the northern forefield of the Moravian Gate – what later became Opava and Těšín Silesia – had a different development. This objective fragmentation, together with the absence of central authority and the obvious weakening of local elites and probably accompanied by insufficiently consolidated economic circumstances re-

sulted in Moravia standing aside at a time when the conditions of an etatisation process started to take shape in the neighbouring regions (Bohemia, Poland); despite of certain attempts (possible own coin minting, partaking in the Polish campaigns at the times of Bolesław I the Brave), Moravia never quite caught up and stayed handicapped. This allowed the authors to conclude that after the collapse of the country at the beginning of the tenth century, various parts of the region had different statuses that became more levelled as late as the end of the centennium. Archaeological sources confirmed quite unequivocally that the epicentre of development shifted to central or more precisely northern Moravia, where an uninterrupted, continuous development was recorded. The Přemyslid conquest, probably connected with the construction of new castles and a revitalisation of older fortifications, was interrupted by Piast expansion, whose reflection in material culture finds is quite unique (Opava-Kylešovice, Přerov). Generally, one of the contributions of this book is the publication of a number of new material culture artefacts, especially top-quality metal artefacts found in the Moravian and Silesian environment, including the unique coin finds and a hack silver hoard (recently Novák et al. 2016). It is obvious that due to different burial rites, the elites of the latter half of the tenth and the first half of the eleventh century are reflected in a different way than those of the Great Moravian period. Their presence is attested e.g. by the striking of imitative coins, hack silver and coin hoards, imported semi-precious stones and fragments of equestrian equipment and personal goods. The second third of the eleventh century saw a definitive taking of control of the country by the Přemyslids, this time much more thorough and systematic than the first attempt one hundred years earlier. The tools used for this included administrative strongholds spaced in particular around the south and east border, and a system of fiscal measures aimed at an effective exploitation of the country's resources, including minting. The structure of the Moravian and Bohemian societies was consolidated rather quickly. This gave rise to the core of the Czech state, which proved surprisingly strong in the following centuries.

The position of Mikulčice, the central site of Great Moravia, after its collapse at the beginning of the tenth century is dealt with by Lumír Poláček in his contribution *The faded glory of Great Moravia: post-Great Moravian finds and the question of settlement continuity in ninth–eleventh century Mikulčice*. It addresses the issues of continuity or discontinuity of the local population, taking into account in particular the archaeological sources

and observations. Poláček states that the stronghold undoubtedly lost its position of a power centre as a result of violent events, however, some settlement activities, albeit in a strongly reduced form, persisted there in the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries. However, the author notes that their unequivocal specification lacks absolute chronological background necessary for the study of material culture of the tenth and the first half of the eleventh centuries and that a sufficiently researched centre hinterland (Hladík 2014), detailed archaeological, anthropological or palaeoecological analyses would contribute significantly to a deeper understanding of this area. He also briefly introduces the topic of so-called new centres that drew on their Great Moravian predecessors.

The issue of continuity of settlement structures is in a way related to the collective essay by Luděk Galuška, Jiří Mitáček and Miriam Nývltová Fišáková entitled *Uherské Hradiště – Sady: from a Great Moravian sacral centre to the largest church necropolis of the ducal period in Moravia*. It is a historical-archaeological assessment of the largest church necropolis of the tenth/eleventh–twelfth-century in Moravia (little short of 900 graves), concentrated around one of the most important sacral centres of the Great Moravian Empire in Uherské Hradiště – Sady; the authors present a basic overview of funerary practices and the construction of a shrine as early as the Great Moravian period that served its purpose throughout the whole history of burial there. This fact is linked with the unusually long use of the obol for the dead – until the second quarter of the twelfth century – which finished at the turn of the eleventh/twelfth centuries at later in non-church burial grounds. The first results concerning the diet of the buried are published here; they prove that meat diet that included sea fish prevailed in both the researched stages (Great Moravian and post-Great Moravian).

Olomouc and Přerov seem to have been the key Moravian strongholds at that time (Bláha 2001c; Procházka 2017a). The position of Olomouc, which seems to have survived the events associated with the fall of the Great Moravian Empire without substantial damage and losses, is the subject of article by Pavel Šlězár *Olomouc between the Great Moravian and Přemyslid duchies*. It gives a concise overview of the development of the site from pre-Great Moravian and Great Moravian periods until after the eleventh century. It was in the tenth and eleventh centuries that the place transformed into a dominant Moravian power centre, which was influenced, inter alia, by its position at the

crossroads of main long-distance routes, especially the trans-European route. Long-distance commercial and cultural contacts, oriented mainly to the northern and eastern environments is attested by a number of imports, including coins. The building and fortification of the stronghold and the outer bailey, the emergence of a craft and trade in the extramural settlement and the presence of sacral buildings, only confirm the exceptional role of this centre.

Also Přerov, especially at a time of the Polish conquest from the end of the tenth to the first third of the eleventh century, was one of the most important Moravian centres of its time, as claimed in the text entitled *Přerov Stronghold and the material culture of its inhabitants in the late phase of the early Middle Ages* by Rudolf Procházka. The complex assessment of the stronghold excavations demonstrated a continuity of the Piast and Přemyslid settlement phases and brought key findings concerning the technology of its construction, material culture, socio-political structures, function, cultural and long-distance trade contacts, subsistence and nutrition, all this involving a number of related disciplines and natural science methods. From a historical perspective, there is an essential hypothesis about the very probable collaboration of the local elites, concentrated mainly in Olomouc, and the Polish fighters, deployed in the town of Přerov where built fortification whose construction concept clearly refers to Greater Polish influence.

The previous contribution also provides an evaluation of osteological material from the largest Přerov excavations written by Miriam Fišáková Nývltová entitled *Evaluation of osteological material from No. 19 and 20 Horní náměstí in Přerov*. Throughout the period domestic species clearly prevailed in the diet of the local people, hunting and fishing were less important. Cattle played an important role, followed by sheep/goat, pig and domestic chicken. However, in comparison with Chotěbuz-Podobora, which was also evaluated, horses are less represented, but both the sites show higher proportion of cattle, sheep and goats bones compared to a higher proportion of pig bones in other localities of that time. In this context, let us remind of the archaeobotanically documented cattle breeding directly on the Přerov stronghold (Kočár et al. 2017). It should be emphasised that this is the largest assessed osteological assemblage from Moravia dated to the end of the tenth and the eleventh centuries.

One of the primary tasks of the project was an archaeological research at the Opava-

-Kylešovice stronghold in Silesia. Its surprising results are presented in the texts by Pavel Kouřil and Jana Gryc *Early medieval stronghold in Opava-Kylešovice and its importance for the understanding of the silesian region in the tenth–eleventh centuries*. The research documented a situation that is unique in the Czech lands – the stronghold was built by means of so-called hook technique (and a system of grates), typical for the northern regions (Greater Poland); based on a sequence of dendrochronological data, this happened no later than in the 960s, which fundamentally changes the view of the historical development of Silesia (and Moravia) in this period (Kouřil, Gryc 2014). The largest collection of belt fittings in Central Europe comes from here, which is typical for Viking (Varangian) environment (in the meantime, the items published here have been amended with more finds), which attest a possible engagement of eastern warriors and merchants in the building of the fortifications and the control of the neighbouring region. Many other finds (coins of western provenance, a dirham, Nordic bimetallic hallmarked weights etc.) illustrate the exceptional situation in the stronghold in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The question of the function of this stronghold remains open; according to the data provided it was hardly the work of somebody else than Měšek I (?) and served as a wedge in the side of a territory still controlled by Bohemian Boleslav I (that included parts of Lower Silesia!). Later it undoubtedly supported the power of Bolesław I the Brave and its survival in the Přemyslid era is not quite clear.

Jan Videman's paper *Finds of coins and the beginnings of minting in Moravia in the tenth and early eleventh centuries* focused on the beginning of Moravian minting. He concluded that Moravia began to develop their own coin production as early as the end of the tenth century (anonymous imitations of Czech and Bavarian models), mainly in the form of coins of obol weight; the situation probably suggests the efforts of Moravian elites to engage in the process of long-distance trade and contacts with early Přemyslid environment. In the first decades of the following century, at the time of the Polish conquest of the country, only western coins and Islamic dirhams are documented along with Moravian coins, with Bohemian coins missing completely.

The final part of this chapter and an important counterpart to the situation in Moravia after the collapse of the Mojmirid rule is the essay dealing with its formerly eastern part, so-called Nitra region by Peter Bednár and Matej Ruttkay *Nitra and the Principality of Nitra after the fall of Great*

Moravia. It is evident that unlike in Moravia itself no total destruction of the country took place; a number of key sites of Great Moravian dating developed continuously for several centuries and they were incorporated into the political-administrative system of the emerging Hungarian monarchy; this is particularly clear in Nitra and its hinterland where even an intensification of settlement activities was documented. This status cannot be generalised as in some parts of Slovakia, especially in its northern regions, the development was probably quite different and other regions are not sufficiently researched. In general, however, with few exceptions, older burial sites were replaced by newly founded necropolises of Bijelo Brdo character.

The third chapter presents contributions concerning the situation in the Czech Basin. The first one, entitled *Early medieval fortified centres in central Bohemia: key issues* was authored by Ivo Štefan and Ivana Boháčová; it assesses fortified centres in the Central Bohemian region, in so-called Přemyslid domain; which is a territory with one of the greatest concentrations of fortified objects in early medieval Europe at all. The study updates the still valid theory of the shaping of Přemyslid domain and was written by Jiří Sláma (1988). At the time from the second half of the eighth to the second half of the eleventh centuries; the study indicates three main horizons of the construction of strongholds and provides a more or less detailed characteristics. They monitor their functions (mainly military, economic and cultic), a common model of construction, population intensity, social structure, organisation of houses, architecture, etc.), in particular in the sites belonging to the latest phase (tenth/eleventh centuries). At the time of its construction the network of strongholds was an obvious expression of an extreme power organisation, even mobilisation of the central Bohemian region, from where the expansion of Bolesław I that led to the control of Bohemia and an expansion further north and east. In the course of the eleventh century most early Přemyslid strongholds were gradually abandoned or degraded to the centres of local importance and common agrarian settlements.

The primary concern of the study by Naďa Profantová and Kateřina Tomková, *Strongholds and the material culture of the Bohemian elite in the early Přemyslid Period*, is to present direct or indirect evidence of the presence of elites in strongholds, whether it is the churches, residential architecture documents of minting, hoards, working precious and coloured metals etc. at the key strongholds in different parts of the Czech country. Items of high-standard and luxury nature; their interpretation

tation and informational value are monitored for selected material culture artefacts, especially jewellery and militaria (swords, spurs). The inspiration by Great Moravian designs can hardly be questioned. The second half of the tenth century saw a transformation in the burial rite that results in a significant decline of elite material culture (Tomková 2011). The main focus of the work therefore lies in the first half of the tenth century. Some of the Bohemian strongholds are already covered as complex fortified centres creating greater agglomerations; in this context, their closer characteristics are presented. It is obvious that the theory on the Přemyslid territory interwoven with a network of strongholds by Jiří Sláma that was mentioned earlier remains one of the cornerstones of the research into tenth-century Bohemia; the task of further studies remain the detection of other models of territorial organisation in Bohemia (e.g. Kouřim region), as well as the inquiry into the structure of fortified seats, their nature and function in the following early medieval centuries (e.g. Lutovský 2006).

The valuable results of long-standing archaeological research in Lesser Side in Prague are summarised and documented in the last contribution in this section, *The Lesser Town of Prague in the tenth and eleventh centuries* by Jarmila Čiháková. It was in this space where a rather massive fortified settlement with a main stronghold was built in this period. The author, who has dedicated her work to this topic (e.g. Čiháková, Havrda 2008) gives general characteristics of this centre with the emphasis on fortification system, urbanism, different types of architecture, craft production, material culture etc.; interesting is the lack of funerary areas. Unlike other strongholds in Prague with a convenient location and the presence of top elites, the extramural settlement develops soon, with distinctive features of an economic, especially trade, centre of the first order.

Finally, the last section with the contributions by foreign researchers, important for comparison, describes the situation in other European regions. For the Czech and Moravian ratios is important primarily Polish perspective that is presented two texts. The first one, by Michał Kara, *Transformations of elite culture in Wielkopolska related to the process of the Piast State formation (with a particular emphasis on strongholds). An archaeological perspective*, presents the results of research concerning cultural changes linked with the process of the forming of Piast patrimony. This elite culture, manifested as early as the first half of the tenth century, is mostly related to the stronghold

sociocultural environment and continues into the next period; it is characterised particularly by strongholds, which fulfil the central functions in the Piast monarchy that was being established at that time. Similarly as in the Bohemia, the Piasts chose a firmly organised territorial domain is strongly fortified strongholds as the starting points for their expansions (Kara 2009). It seems that the construction of 'early-state' regna of the Mojmirids was somewhat different.

The second essay, *The problem of metallurgy development in early medieval strongholds based on finds from Ostrów Tumski in Wrocław*, by the team of Aleksandra Pankiewicz, Sylwia Siemianowska and Krzysztof Sadowski is focused on the problem of specialised metallurgical production at an early medieval Polish fortifications; as an example choose one of the key strongholds – Wrocław. They somewhat relativise the possibility of metallurgy in its various districts, they assume the existence of jeweller and silversmith workshops, as well as the processing of lead. They touch upon the unsatisfactorily addressed question of the supplying of the fortified centres with metals, particularly iron. Both the Polish texts allowed the readers to at least look into the complex and still lively discussed issues of the beginnings, expansion and crisis of the Piast monarchy of the tenth–twelfth centuries (cf. latest Drelicharz et al. eds. 2017).

Early medieval castles and their elites in Polabian Slavs in the tenth and the first half of the eleventh century are addressed in the short but complex article by Felix Biermann, *Early medieval ringforts and the social elite of the Polabian Slavs in the tenth and first half of the eleventh century*. The researcher who based his text on a cross-section studies (e.g. Biermann 2014), states that in this period, over a hundreds of stronghold of different types were constructed there, distinguished by their functions and sizes. Apparent is the development from of smaller objects to larger ones with more complex defence systems and higher functions in the eleventh century and the differences between the north and south of the territory. He notes that a number of artefacts were found in the strongholds (jewellery, parts of garments, weapons), which were the property of the profane but also ecclesiastical elites of the tribes. They development was significantly different from that in the territory of other Central European Slavs; the Baltic coast does not exclude the involvement of the local elites in long-distance trade, inter alia, of the slave trade.

The last contribution *The Strongholds of the Burghal Hidage: some points for comparison* by Stuart

Brookes takes us to England, namely Wessex in late ninth and early tenth centuries, when its kings successfully defended themselves from Viking attacks. Based on the analysis of a written source, *Burghal Hidage*, in which 31 fortresses are mentioned, and archaeological observation, a methodology is presented for the monitoring of the changing function of the different fortified places in this period. From the very beginning, they were strictly defensive, systematically constructed strategic points in regular distances from each other, with specified numbers of defenders that later served to other territorial acquisitions; over time, however, many of them changed into purpose buildings, while others were irretrievably lost. What is interesting about our environment is the fact that also older, prehistoric positions were used for defence purposes. A comparison with the more or less planned construction of Central European 'early

state' strongholds offers itself, although their function seems to have been somewhat more complex, with deeper social roots.

What to say by way of conclusion? In the name of the contributors, we wish that this book, which brings a concentration of new findings concerning the breaking events of the tenth/eleventh centuries after a certain break, interested and inspired its readers. It deals with a period of the formation of Central European states when fortified centres played a key role. This is when the map of Central Europe (as well as other regions) changed and when the foundations of Czech statehood were laid and when Moravia (and later also Bohemian Silesia) became integral parts of what later became the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. Despite different problems and discord, this union has persevered until the present day.

1 The terminology of fortified settlements is not completely unified in Central European historical science. In the book, the term of a castle or stronghold was used for the early medieval centers; we abandoned the traditional term of *burgwall* (the Polish 'gródzisko') originally meaning the abandoned fortified settlement. The term *castle* (Czech 'hrad') is, however, more used in the Czech lands for the fortified, mostly stone seats of 12/13th – 15th centuries. Also, the term *hillfort*, sometimes referred to as *burgwall*, is considered more appropriate for fortified sites located on a hill. The term *Ringfort* refers to lowland fortified sites of approximately circular ground plan.

Building and Organising Central Places and Fortifications as a Manifestation of Princely Power in Early Medieval Europe

David Kalhous

'After their defeat, he forcibly seized their cities and towns, both inland and along the coast, and installed his retainers and comites in the more important and better-fortified places. And since he desired to remove from the perfidious pagans all spirit to revolt, *he ordered his officers to burn down on a certain day at an agreed hour all the fortresses in their land. And so it was done.*' (Gallus Anonymus 2003, 116/117–118/119) These sentences written in Poland during the second decade of the twelfth century confirm contemporary recognition of the importance of the fortifications and central places in the early medieval society. Yet, the set of the problems connected with the relationship between the central power, the central places and the fortification is quite complex and for better understanding, an analytical approach is unavoidable. First, it will be necessary to introduce the concept of the central places and apply it to the early medieval settlement structures. Then I will discuss the relationship between communication and power and whether (and how) both these sociological concepts are related to the central places and fortifications. Following this, I will outline the different aspects of the spatial dimension of medieval kingship. Finally, I will briefly describe the systems of fortification in early medieval Europe.

It is clear that this short overview cannot take the place of the large monograph that this complex phenomenon deserves. Because of this, my paper is instead intended as a guide, where numerous examples from different regions of early medieval Europe should provide some inspiration. It should not serve as a basis for comparison, where a careful historiographical analysis would have also been required to avoid the vicious circle of arguments taken from different national historiographies without any context. (Otherwise, it might end as once described by E. J. Schoenfeld (1994, 58), i.e. that 'rather than helping each other to understand the societies they study, historians of Anglo-Saxon England and tenth-century Germany have managed to make one another even more confused than they were to begin with'.)

Let us begin with a few theoretical remarks. We can distinguish between the competitive 'power over' and cooperative 'power to' (Karlberg 2005). Still, all power is based on communication and if we understand communication as 'a coordinated process of selections/choices' (Luhmann 1991, 193–216, here esp. 213; 2002, 155–168), we have to conclude that 'the production of the discourses is controlled, organized and redistributed by a certain number of producers whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to take its ponderous, formidable materiality' (Foucault 1981). There are different sorts of communication, but any communication requires a system of symbols that will mediate it and also the media of communication, be it language and its discourses (Eco 1979, 9–14), a set of gestures (Althoff 2013a; Schmitt 1992), or architecture, which became the part of political discourse (Foucault 2000, 349–351). Only if we accept the assumption that the signs constitute a system can interpret them systematically. Naturally, this does not exclude misunderstandings or other effects in individual cases, because 'material culture is embedded in systems of symbolic expression but also in systems of practical action on matter. Hence, although material culture participates in processes of signification (objects may provoke emotional and intellectual responses and be invested with significance of various kinds by users and makers), it is not primarily a system of communication like language' (Dietler, Herbich, 1998, 244).). All of these media have their pros and limits, e.g. monuments guaranteed stability and durability over time, but not flexibility and the other way round. Medieval rulers seemed to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these media and skilfully combined them in their governmental practice and protected their exclusivity whenever necessary (e.g. *droit de regale*).

Strongholds and fortifications were part of the communication between the rulers and the ruled while contemporary chroniclers also recognised their importance. Indirect evidence



Fig. 4. Kojetin-Popůvky, silver jewellery from the hoard. 1 – star-like earring; 2, 3 – fragments of basket earrings; 4 – cylinder decorated by granulation; 5 – upper part of an originally biconical earring cylinder; 6 – twisted cone made from filigree wire; 7 – six lobated oval pearls; 8–11, 13, 14 – pearl fragments; 12 – fragment of an unidentified item decorated with filigree wire; 15, 16 – small fragments of unidentified jewels; 17, 18 – small fragments, possibly of hooks. Drawing J. Grieblerová.

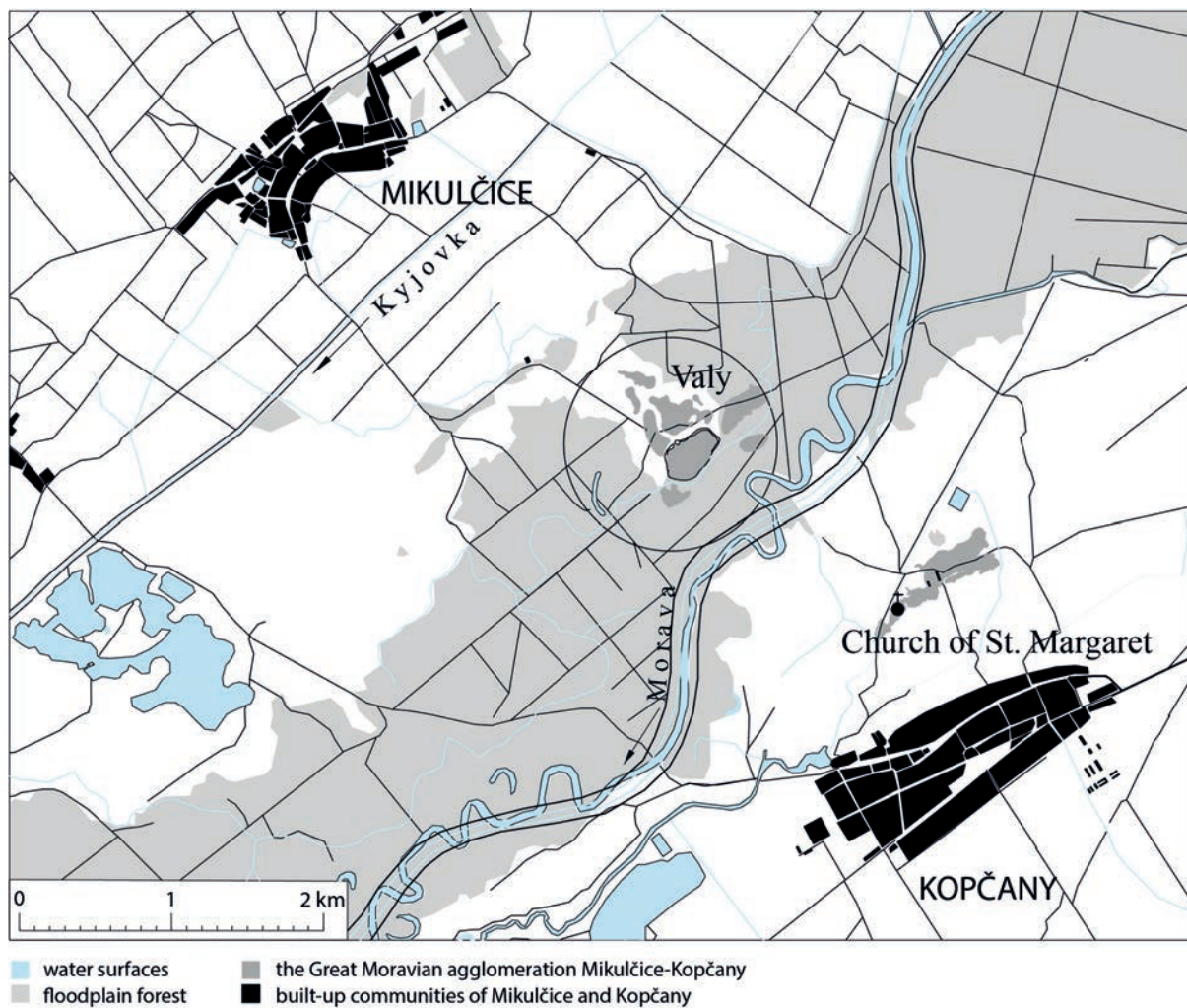


Fig. 1. Topography of early medieval settlement agglomeration in Mikulčice – Kopčany. Highlighted: settled area at the end of the ninth century on both sides of the river – what is today the Czech-Slovak state border. A hypothetical circle around the outer boundary of the extramural settlement of the Valy stronghold near Mikulčice. On the Slovak side: the position of the Church of St. Margaret of Antioch near Kopčany, which is the only preserved Great Moravian church. Based on Poláček 2016.



Fig. 2. Chart showing the development of settlements in the area of the Valy near Mikulčice between the ninth and thirteenth centuries (hypothetical state). A – second half of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century; B – late tenth century and the beginning (the first half) of the eleventh century; C – mid-eleventh century to mid-thirteenth century. Based on Poláček 2014d.

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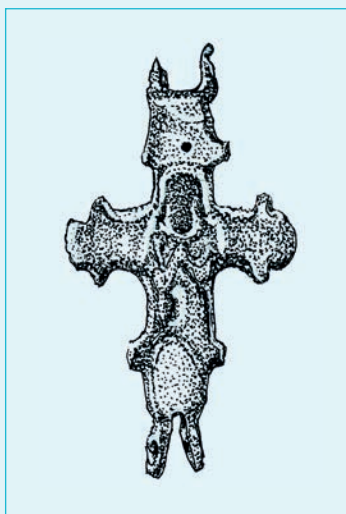
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