

## Hill forts with collections of Avar Khaganat Period finds in Bohemia. Some interpretation models

In Bohemia, archaeologists only focused their attention on the important subject of Early Medieval studies in the 1960s and later in the 1990s – especially regarding the emergence of the earliest strongholds. Even though written references point to the year 631/632 (Wogastisburg in the Chronicle of Fredegar, around 680),<sup>1</sup> the earliest Bohemian strongholds – attested archaeologically – are dated to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> or to the turn of the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> centuries. As far as the dating of the strongholds' appearance is concerned, we can identify a group comprising 11 to 14 sites that appeared before the first third of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (from a total number of c. 157–159 dated to the Early Middle Ages – Fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> However, their dating is based only on archaeological finds and not on dendrochronological measurements.<sup>3</sup>

The most important are Tismice,<sup>4</sup> Klučov<sup>5</sup> and Doubravčice<sup>6</sup>. Some others differ in size and complexity: some are small (Klučov – about 2.6 ha) and undivided (Kal), others large with multiple parts (Tismice – two parts, 20 ha; Prague–Šárka – three parts, 25 ha).<sup>7</sup>

Cast bronzes from the Avar period have so far been discovered at many of these sites (at least 7 or 8 of them); five sites provided a rather large quantity: **Dolánky–Rubín**<sup>8</sup> (27 pieces including a Byzantine type of belt mount), **Kal** (13/14 pieces and 24 iron three-edged arrows), **Praha–Šárka** (24–26 pieces),<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chronicle of Fredegar (ed. D. Bartoňková/L. Havlík, *Cronicarum que dicuntur Fredegarii Scholastici Libri cum continuationibus*, Magnae Moraviae Fontes Historici I, Brno 2008) 19.

<sup>2</sup> During the winter 2013/14 two new strategic hill sites were identified (both probably with the remains of a low wall/rampart) in the vicinity of Prague, from Mořinka (Distr. Prague–west). A collection of 11 cast late Avar Khaganat period finds, two axes, two spurs with a hook, part of bridle, one arrowhead with wings, a Carolingian iron loop from a buckle, an iron part of a bucket, 8 knives and 4–5 other tools are known. On the other site a collection of 13–14 late Avar cast bronze mounts was found, 3 of them are gilded circle pieces with a motif of Palaimón (earlier Nereida) on a hippocampus with a lion head dated to the first half or mid-8<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Naďa Profantová, *Awarische Funde in der Tschechischen Republik. Forschungsstand und neue Erkenntnisse*, in: *Acta Archaeologica Carpathica* 45 (2010) 203–270, at 218, Fig. 22:9,10. Naďa Profantová, *Nová raně středověká výšinná poloha z Kosoře a |Prahy-Radotína*, in: *V za(u)jetí malostranských stratigrafií. Sborník k životnímu jubileu Jarmily Čihákové*, ed. Jaroslav Podliska et al. (Praha 2015) 48–67.

<sup>3</sup> Tismice is the first case with <sup>14</sup>C date (semi-sunken house 1/013), done in a Prague laboratory (I. Světlík, after calibration 765–888 with 86% probability (weighted average of 3 samples). The oldest dendrochronological dates come from Prague-Malá Strana (first half of 9<sup>th</sup> century), but with some doubts and discussion, because the data comes from fire-tree, which has a less defined local curve. The construction is interpreted as a wooden path, not from a fortification.

<sup>4</sup> Naďa Profantová/Daniel Stolz, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích a pokus o interpretaci významu hradiště – Metal finds from the hill fort of Tismice and attempts to interpret the importance of the hill fort in the Early Middle Ages*, in: *Archeologie ve středních Čechách* 10 (2006) 793–838.

<sup>5</sup> Jaroslav Kudrnáč, *Klučov. Staroslovanské hradiště ve středních Čechách – Ein altslawischer Burgwall in Mittelböhmen* (Praha 1970).

<sup>6</sup> Naďa Profantová, *Doubravčice: zu den Anfängen der frühmittelalterlichen Burgwallanlage aufgrund der Ausgrabungen von J. Kudrnáč*, in: *Památky archeologické* 89 (1998) 303–364.

<sup>7</sup> Naďa Profantová, *Zum gegenwertigen Erkenntnisstand der frühmittelalterlichen Besiedlung des Burgwalls Šárka, Prag 6, Památky archeologické* 90 (1999) 65–106.

<sup>8</sup> Naďa Profantová/Daniel Stolz, *Chronologie a význam hradiště Rubín u Podbořan ve světle nových raně středověkých nálezů – Chronologie und Bedeutung des Burgwall Rubín im Lichte der neuen frühmittelalterlichen Funde*, *Archaeologia Historica* 31 (2006) 149–164; Naďa Profantová, *Nové nálezy zbraní a kování z hradiště Rubín (k.ú. Dolánky a Pšov, okr. Louny) a okolí – New finds of the weapons and fittings from the hill fort of Rubín (Distr. Louny) and its surroundings*, in: *Archeologie ve středních Čechách* 17 (2013) 179–184.

<sup>9</sup> Profantová, *Awarische Funde in der Tschechischen Republik* 203–270; Fig. 14:1–3 and 15. New field prospection in 2015 (J. Hasil- N. Profantová) has yielded 10 more finds from the 2<sup>nd</sup> suburb.

**Tismice** (130 pieces) and **Libice** (approx. 30 pieces)<sup>10</sup> – this site was, however, only fortified in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>11</sup> Recently a settlement in the Kolín district was discovered, where at least 15 cast mounts from the Avar period were found between 2007 and 2010 using metal detectors.<sup>12</sup>

Even though these finds can only be interpreted to a certain extent and mainly on sites where the fortification's or the stronghold's internal area was archaeologically examined, at least two or three interpretation models can be distinguished. In this paper, attention will primarily be paid to two significantly distinct models. It is worth mentioning that previously little was known about the sites included in the presented group.

The first model case comprises the strongholds of Tismice in the eastern part of central Bohemia, the second one deals with Kal, located in eastern Bohemia.

## 1. EXTENSIVE/LARGE STRONGHOLDS WITH MORE DISTINCT PARTS, HOLDING A CENTRAL POSITION IN THE REGION (FIG. 2).

In the models discussed, Tismice represents a possible political and administrative centre supervising the whole group of strongholds, and Kal would be an isolated smaller regional stronghold built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century on the location of a prehistoric fortified site. While the site of Kal ceased to exist as early as the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>13</sup> Tismice was still at least partly (?) inhabited in the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, even though its significance also rapidly decreased.<sup>14</sup> No contemporary cemeteries have so far been found in the vicinity of either site. On both sites, magnetometric surveys have been conducted (4 ditches for Tismice<sup>15</sup>, for Kal only small features are indicated, probably postholes; Kal is unpublished).

From Tismice we have evidence of crafts and sunken features including two houses. It is dated based on imports (116 pieces) including coins (Fig. 1b), belt mounts, sleigh bells of Avar types, and pottery (Figs. 4 and 5).<sup>16</sup> Only two settlement phases are dated to the Early Middle Ages: the first one is older than the fortification (superposition in the acropolis), an outer ditch bounding the suburb has probably had two phases.<sup>17</sup> The Tismice stronghold shows a densely populated hinterland.

The site of Tismice belonged to a group of rather significant strongholds with an area covering approximately 20 ha; the site fulfilled a central function and its importance probably surpassed its immediate vicinity.<sup>18</sup> The stronghold provided a rather large group of metal objects that illustrate long-distance contacts and relations to the Avar Khaganate (over 100 cast bronze objects, most of them from the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century: at least 50 pieces (Tab. 2); and the Frankish Kingdom: a silver coin of Charlemagne († 814) minted in Amiens in the years 771–793/4, the oldest Carolingian denier from Bohemia (Fig. 1b),<sup>19</sup> and a belt fitting with a protrusion, as well).<sup>20</sup> The exceptional importance of

<sup>10</sup> Profantová, *Awarische Funde in der Tschechischen Republik...*, Fig. 13:16–20; Id. Naďa Profantová, *Několik náhodných nálezů z Libice nad Cidlinou a jejich význam pro poznání dálkových kontaktů*, in: *SNM Praha A 66* (2012) 55–62. Others are unpublished, field prospection with metal detector by J. Mařík 2011–2015 (ARÚ CAS Prague).

<sup>11</sup> Jan Mařík, *The Early Medieval fortification of the Libice stronghold (Excavation 1999–2005)*, in: *Archeologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft Ostbayern/West- und Südböhmen. 16. Treffen/Juni 2006/ in Plzeň-Křimice (Rahden-Westf 2007)* 145–154.

<sup>12</sup> It is still unpublished.

<sup>13</sup> Naďa Profantová, *Další kovové nálezy z hradiště Kal, okr. Jičín – Weitere Metalfunde aus dem Burgwall Kal, Bez. Jičín. Archeologie ve středních Čechách 7* (2003) 541–552.

<sup>14</sup> We know of about 3–5 metal finds, which are from the 9<sup>th</sup> century and probably come from the hill fort: 2 gilded strap-ends (Carolingian type), one buckle and 2 undecorated bronze gombiks, which could also be later. The pottery dates to the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>15</sup> Profantová/Stolz 2006, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích*, Fig. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Kateřina Tomková, *Quellen zur Erkenntnis der frühmittelalterlichen Besiedlung im Katastern Tismice und Mrzky*, in: *Památky archeologické 89* (1998) 267–302.

<sup>17</sup> Tomková, *Quellen zur Erkenntnis*.

<sup>18</sup> Josef Bubeník, *K topografii, vývoji a strukturám staršího raně středověkého (6–9. stol.) osídlení v Pošembeří- Zu Topographie, Entwicklung und Strukturen einer älteren frühmittelalterlichen (6.–9. Jh.) Besiedlung von Šembera Gebiet*, in: *Archeologické rozhledy 53* (2001) 256–278; obr. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Jiří Militký/Naďa Profantová /Jan Videman, *Pozdně římské mince a denár Karla Velikého (768–814) z areálu hradiště Tismice*, in: *Numismatický sborník 27* (2014) 35–46.

<sup>20</sup> Profantová/Stolz, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích*; obr./Fig. 3, 4, obr./Fig. 3:7).

this denier is emphasised by its reverse legend, not yet identified in this form in the recent catalogues of the Carolingian coins. The ligature has been deciphered with a high probability – the coin was struck in Amiens. Its name is normally spelled on the Carolingian coins in the Latin form: AMBIANIS. Discoveries of Carolingian coins in Bohemia are very rare.<sup>21</sup> It is possible to connect these Carolingian coins to Charlemagne's campaign against the Avars in 791, as Hahn<sup>22</sup> suggests for the finds from Carnuntum. One part of the Frankish armies crossed Bohemia on its way to Pannonia and returned using the same route.<sup>23</sup> The other historical frame is the plundering of Middle Bohemian territory, especially the Elbe region, during Frankish campaigns in 805–806.<sup>24</sup> Participation by Bohemians in fights against Avars is documented only indirectly by the amount of finds of Avarian origin in Bohemia. These are often considered to be spoils of war. This participation is thinkable only in cooperation with Frankish units. Therefore, there could have been contact among Bohemians and Franks during these campaigns (791, 795/6). The less probable option is that the Carolingian coin could have come to Bohemia in this way. Considering the other finds, I find the direct contact with Franks to be more likely.

The acropolis of the hill fort is bordered by 3 ditches from the suburb (Figs. 2, 3). We can recognise a high density of features from aerial photos<sup>25</sup> in combination with field prospection. However, the stronghold has been only partly surveyed and it is impossible to determine its precise settlement structure. It was probably similar to the nearby site of Klučov, where semi-sunken dwellings and silos were attested.<sup>26</sup> However, it remains unclear whether a more representative above-ground building was constructed on the acropolis of Tismice, as is the case of the stronghold of Doubravčice<sup>27</sup>.

#### **Tismice:**

- a. belongs to the largest strongholds constructed in the 8<sup>th</sup> century;
- b. belongs to the three hill forts with finds of contemporaneous coins (Charlemagne, before 793/4) cf. Figure 1;
- c. has provided the largest collection of bronze objects of Avar provenance found in Bohemia (altogether 110 pieces). The pieces probably originate from 13–14 different belts. The majority of the finds can be dated to the Late Avar period III–second half or last third of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Figs. 4, 5). Two finds can be dated to Early and Middle Avar periods (Figs. 4:21, 5:7), third and fourth pieces are Byzantine buckles produced in the 7<sup>th</sup> century (Figs. 1c, 4:30);<sup>28</sup> however, only the later one was spatially localised and can be regarded as reliable.

The group of jewellery finds also included 3–5 gold-plated objects (e.g. Figs. 4:10, 11, 15; 5:9), silver-plated decorations (Fig. 4:20) and tin-plated items (6 pieces, Figs. 1d; 4: 26, 33; 5:19).<sup>29</sup>

- d. is one of only three Bohemian sites with rare finds of women's jewellery dating to the 8<sup>th</sup> century (2 datable decorations – Fig. 4:13, 22 and 2–3 bronze rings and 1–2 pins whose dating remains questionable). Luxurious decorations are also known from this site – a gold-plated belt-loop with

<sup>21</sup> Of 5 sites in Middle Bohemia, 3 are hill forts (Tismice, Martinice, Prague-Šárka), one is a hoard with more than 64 coins from Jedomělice, west of Prague (Jan Videman/ Nad'a Profantová, An der Ostgrenze des Frankenreiches. Ein Hortfund von Denaren von Ludwig dem Heiligen bei Jedomělice (Bez. Kladno), in: *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Nowae* 19 (2014) 367–389. Since then there were two finds, the first one from Kostelní Hlavno, north-eastern Prague (Charlemagne). The most recent find of a denier of Louis the Pious is from Olšice in south Bohemia (winter 2015/16).

<sup>22</sup> W. R. O. Hahn, *Grundzüge der Altbeierischen Münz- und Geldgeschichte. 2. Teil. Die Karolingerzeit bis zu König Arnulf*, in: *Money Trend* 11 (2000) 58.

<sup>23</sup> Dušan Třeštík, *Vznik Velké Moravy. Moravané, Čechové a střední Evropa v letech 791–871* (Praha 2001) 53–70.

<sup>24</sup> *Annales Mettenses Priores* (ed. Bernhard von Simson, MGH Script. Rer. Germ. 10, Hannover/Leipzig 1905) 1–95, at 93–95. *Chronicon Moissianence* (ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH SS 1, Hannover/Berlin 1826) 280–313, at 307f. *Annales regni Francorum* (ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH SS 1, Hannover/Berlin 1829) 124–218, at 192.

<sup>25</sup> Taken by Martin Gojda and unpublished. There we can also see rectangular linear features.

<sup>26</sup> Kudrnáč, Klučov

<sup>27</sup> Profantová, Doubravčice: zu den Anfängen 313–317, Fig. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Profantová/Stolz, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích*, in this article one Byzantine buckle is mistakenly connected with old Hungarian items. cf. obr./Fig. 7:1, Fototab./Pl. 7:1. In 1918 the excavation has realised in Tismice, the several settlement horizons were recognised there.

<sup>29</sup> cf. Profantová/Stolz, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích*, obr. 4:17. About 89 RFA analyses were made on the chosen metal finds, among them were 4 casts, 1 slug, 10–11 were later or undatable items, the rest were the finds of Avar origin. A maximum of 3 XRF were made for 1 subject (No. 44 and 59; 2 XRF for example No. 25, 40, 61, 142). Most of the XRFs are in the same publication, Tab. 1 (made by J. Frána)

incised decoration that lacks any analogous finds and can only be dated generally to the 8<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>30</sup> The jewellery collection also includes bronze rings that may originate in the Avar period as well as in other times.

- e. has provided finds of metal casts (bronze, lead, zinc – more than 40, the heaviest ones weighing 18, 90 and 179 grams – also small silver items were found in its vicinity, Figs. 5:13, 5:14) as well as a bronze cast mould for beating decorations (Fig. 5:10)<sup>31</sup> and silver and copper wires. The ingots (bronze and lead) were found in the years 2014 and 2015. Moreover, damaged bronze decorations (mount, fibulae) dating to the Roman period and two worn Roman coins (?) were probably brought here for recycling purposes.<sup>32</sup> The old finds and one new find of an iron slug were excavated there.
- f. has provided sources of copper located in its vicinity.<sup>33</sup>
- g. has provided a rather homogenous group of pottery dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> and the first third of the 9<sup>th</sup> century including less common bowls.<sup>34</sup> Occurrence of a non-transferable type of pottery vessel (the so-called *pražnice* – clay roasting pans) was attested by surface collections.
- h. was surrounded by a network of open settlements,<sup>35</sup> on some of them cast mounts from the Avar Khaganat period were found (for example *Roztoklaty*, *Nová Ves II*, *Tuklaty* – all unpublished as yet); however, no cemeteries have been identified so far. An archaeological excavation was undertaken on one of these settlements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- i. Like the site of *Dolánky-Rubín* or *Kováry-Budeč*, *Tismice* has also recently provided 3 pieces of bronze spurs with hooks (y. 2014–2015), as well as an early Carolingian loop to the spur (Fig. 6a). During the last prospection, knives (2), arrowheads, an iron fire steel and rivets were collected.<sup>36</sup>

On one of these belt-strap ends (No. 67) a piece of leather was microscopically attested. Archaeologists have presumed that a craftsman could have resided in *Tismice* at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century who could produce simple undecorated belt fittings that have no exact parallels in the Avar Khaganate region (Fig.4:16, 17). It is probably not surprising that a crucible used for non-ferrous metal processing was also discovered on the bailey of the *Doubravčice* stronghold.<sup>37</sup>

The cause of destruction of the *Tismice* stronghold remains unclear and, thus, the presumption connecting at least part of the bronze finds with the destruction cannot be completely excluded. However, this hypothesis is not very plausible, for no weapons have been found so far.

Without any doubt, the character of the *Tismice* stronghold differed significantly from the better known but smaller stronghold of *Klučov*, where only one moulded belt end of Avar origin and one damaged bronze earring, probably of south-western (Danube) provenance, has been found. The people lived in semi-sunken dwellings and the settlement was characterised by numerous silos, quern-stones and finds of clay roasting pans. The presence of elites on the site of *Klučov* can be documented only with difficulty but it cannot be completely excluded (one incomplete iron spur probably with a hook). It is clear that the strongholds represent a rather diversified group and various sites fulfilled different

<sup>30</sup> Profantová /Stolz, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích*, obr./Fig. 5:4.

<sup>31</sup> N. Profantová 2016, Chudzińska, M. Wojenka, M. Woloszyn, (eds), *Od Bachórza do Światowida ze Zbrucza. Tworzenie się słowiańskiej Europy w ujęciu archeologicznym, historycznym i językoznawczym*. Księga jubileuszowa Profesora Michała Parczewskiego. Kraków-Rzesów, 57–72 *Tepaci formy 7.–8. století z České republiky*, in: *Od Bachórza do Światowida ze Zbrucza. Tworzenie się słowiańskiej Europy w ujęciu archeologicznym, historycznym i językoznawczym*, ed. M. Woloszyn, M. Wojenka (in print).

<sup>32</sup> Profantová/Stolz, *Kovové nálezy z hradiště v Tismicích*, obr./Fig. 3:5,14, 4:8, 5:9. In the case of Roman coins, it is possible that the coins from *Tismice* are really connected with the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century; it could be regarded as exclusive proof of interest of the Slavonic people in the ancient coins.

<sup>33</sup> Copper was mined for a short time in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. K. Bednařík, *Příspěvky k dějinám chrásteckých dolů na měď*. In: *Českobrodský kulturní zpravodaj*, number 21–22 (1963).

<sup>34</sup> Kateřina Tomková, *Quellen zur Erkenntnis der frühmittelalterlichen Besiedlung im Katastern Tismice und Mrzky*, in: *Památky archeologické* 89 (1998) 267–302.

<sup>35</sup> Tomková, *Quellen Fig. 6*

<sup>36</sup> N. Profantová, *Ostruhy jako doklady přítomnosti elity v 8. a 9. století v Čechách*, *Archaeologia historica* 41/2/2016, 7–40.

<sup>37</sup> Profantová, *Doubravčice: zu den Anfängen*, Fig. 23: 6.

functions.<sup>38</sup> However, unlike the central position of Tismice, the other functions can be determined only tentatively.

## 2. SMALL STRONGHOLD WITHOUT EXTENSIVE ECONOMIC HINTERLAND THAT REFORTIFIED A PREHISTORIC SITE

The Kal stronghold (Valy site) in north-eastern Bohemia covers 7.1 ha (290x260 m) and was fortified in the 8<sup>th</sup> century by an earth and wood rampart, which was strengthened on the outside by stones and a ditch in some parts. Only simple settlement features above ground have been found so far and no defined settlement structure could be observed. A concentration of the finds of Avar Khaganate origin – as mentioned above – can most probably be related to the time of its violent destruction, attested by 106 iron arrowheads: 50% of them are socketed and barbed arrowheads (wings), 22/23 pieces (21%) represent the so-called three-ribbed arrowheads that are regarded as being of Avar origin (Figs. 6b; 7:10; 9).<sup>39</sup> Two of them are three-edged socketed (Fig. 9:14–15), a special type, with analogies only in Šebastovce (E Slovakia), gr. 114<sup>40</sup>, Dolní Dunajovice (S Moravia), gr. 2b<sup>41</sup> and Prušánky (Moravia), gr. 663 (3 pieces), dated to the first third of 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>42</sup> This type is a hybrid, and used to be produced on the Avar–Slavic border. Other finds comprise 6 more or less incomplete axes (Figs. 7:5, 8:8,13; only one of them can be classified typologically and dated to the 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries), two bridle side pieces of eastern origin (Fig. 8:9) and 13 pieces of Avar provenance fittings (6/7 of them belonged to a horse harness and one was a sleigh bell, Figs. 7:1–4, 9–11, 8:3–5, 10) and one iron saddle buckle (Fig. 8:1).

Besides these documented finds, the landowner, F. Posselt, who used to plough parts of the stronghold's area before the Second World War, had numerous strap ends in his private collection. Due to the fact that this collection was not available for the author's research, how many of the finds were Early Medieval remains unknown.

The latest known Avar provenance fittings from Kal can be dated to the last third of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 7:3,4—a three-armed mount of a horse harness and a mount with a large rectangular pendant) with analogous finds discovered at the sites of Mikulčice and Komárno-Loděnice.<sup>43</sup> The find of two pieces of iron spear shoes (Fig. 8:14) may also be connected to the presence of warriors. They have similarities in a Western milieu.<sup>44</sup>

The majority of these finds were found sunken only slightly below the ground and some of them also on the hillside outside the stronghold's fortification. The rather large group of metal objects retrieved from the site counting approximately 180–190 pieces does not include spurs with hooks that may indicate the presence of local horse riders.

<sup>38</sup> N. Profantová, *Erichtung und Zerstörung der ersten frühmittelalterlichen Burgwälle IN Böhmen (8/9. Jahrhundert)*, Bierman, F., Kerting, T., Klammt A. (edd.) *Die frühen Slawen – von der Expansion zu gentes und nationes*, BUFM 81, Langenweissbach 2016, 223–239.

<sup>39</sup> Jiří Kalferst/Nad'a Profantová, *Nové poznatky o hradišti Kal, okr. Jičín - Neue Erkenntnisse über den Burgwall Kal, Bez. Jičín*, in: *Archeologie ve středních Čechách 3/2 (1999) 293–335*; Profantová, *Další kovové nálezy z hradiště Kal, obr. 3:7, 9–14, 5:1–6*.

<sup>40</sup> Vojtěch Budínský-Krička/Anton Točík, *Šebastovce. Gräberfeld aus der Zeit des awarischen Reich (Nitra 1991) 31, Fig. 17*

<sup>41</sup> Zdeněk Klanica, *Předvelkomoravské pohřebiště v Dolních Dunajovicích. Příspěvek k otázce vzájemných vztahů Slovanů a Avarů v Podunají - Vorgroßmährisches Gräberfeld in Dolní Dunajovice. Beitrag zur Frage über die gegenseitigen Beziehungen der Slawen und Awaren im Donaugebiet (Studie AÚ ČSAV I/1, Praha 1972) 10, Tab. 4.*

<sup>42</sup> Zdeněk Klanica, *Nechvalín, Prušánky. Čtyři slovanská pohřebiště – Nechvalín, Prušánky. Vier slawische Nekropolen. Spisy Archeologického ústavu (AV ČR Brno 28, Brno 2006) Tab. 92:4–6.*

<sup>43</sup> Profantová, *Další kovové nálezy z hradiště Kal 542–544, obr. 2; Aleksander Trugly, Gräberfeld aus der Zeit des awarischen Reiches bei der Schiffswerft in Komárno II, in: Slovenská archeológia XXXV (1987) 251–342, Taf. XXVIII. Profantová, *Awarische Funde 224f.**

<sup>44</sup> For example: *Baden, Weistmann-West, Ketzendorf, 8<sup>th</sup> cent., Karl Schwarz, Frühmittelalterlicher Landesausbau im ostlichen Franken zwischen Steigerwald, Frankenwald und Oberpfälzer Wald (Mainz 1984) Abb. 59: 2 or Staré Město, 9<sup>th</sup> century, Vilém Hrubý, Staré Město – Velkomoravské pohřebiště „Na Valách“ – Die großmährische Begräbnisstätte „Na Valách“ (Praha 1955) 535f., Tab. 83:6.*

A sudden destruction of the stronghold can be indirectly corroborated by a small hoard of iron tools (a scythe and a tool with a shaft), burnt corn found in the base of a vessel<sup>45</sup> and a partly melted fitting with a griffin decoration that had replacement rivets – the new rivets were made only of iron (Fig. 8:4).<sup>46</sup>

So far, only two strongholds in Bohemia that ceased to exist at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century are available for scientific evaluation: Kal and Doubravčice on the eastern edge of central Bohemia. The so-called central building located on the acropolis at Doubravčice was burned. Layers corroborating fire have also been detected in the rampart (in its second phase, which is also the first Early Medieval phase) separating the acropolis and bailey.<sup>47</sup> However, it is unclear whether the fire was caused by a military campaign or whether it was accidental.

A cast mount showing a griffin and a Moravian type axe (both 8<sup>th</sup> century) were found by amateurs in the acropolis.

### 3. DOLÁNKY-RUBÍN, THE HILL FORT WITH CONTINUITY TO THE 10<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The similar model is represented by the Rubín site near Podbořany. The settlement of the suburb of the hill fort showed two settlement phases, one from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the other from the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> to beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The site shares several common features with the stronghold of Tismice: not only does the second largest collection of bronze objects of the Avar period (28 pieces, one of them is Byzantine mediated by Avars)<sup>48</sup> originate from this site but also finds of western provenance (at least 3–5 pieces, Merovingian and Carolingian strap ends, a bronze strap end from the garniture of a spur with silver rivets, probably fragments of iron rings from mail coats – various ring diameters – Fig. 10:12–14, 19)<sup>49</sup> and quite a large group of spurs with hooks (8 pieces plus what are now lost objects, Fig. 10).<sup>50</sup> Moreover, weapons (spears, axes and an arrow head) and their fragments have been discovered in the immediate vicinity of the stronghold. In the course of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, this stronghold was probably of supra-regional significance as seems to be indicated by archaeological finds, such as a gold earring with grape-shaped pendants or a granulated silver button (gombík) and part of a glass pot found in a settlement context.<sup>51</sup> Its downfall can be dated to around the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century (probably in connection with some old Hungarian finds).<sup>52</sup> Thus, it is hard to estimate which settlement horizon the weapons or crucibles belonged to. Moreover, the site was already quite densely populated in Prehistory and this fact makes the dating of some of the earlier finds of more common types more difficult. It remains clear that this site belonged among elite seats, its settlement structure remains, however, unclear. It is certain that this stronghold lived through the difficult times at the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries; it retained its role and position and maybe even strengthened it.

In the group of the oldest strongholds we distinguished two basic models: central sites (Tismice and Dolánky) and sites of less importance with less-developed hinterland (Kal, Prag-Bohnice). There are also different sites of less importance or short-term function (Kosoř/Prague-Radotín)<sup>53</sup>, but they have not yet been adequately researched.

<sup>45</sup> Kalferst/Profantová, *Nové poznatky with Anhang E. Ulrychová*

<sup>46</sup> Not yet published

<sup>47</sup> Profantová, *Doubravčice: zu den Anfängen*, Figs. 16 and 2.

<sup>48</sup> Profantová, *Awarische Funde in der Tschechischen Republik 203–270*, Figs. 8:1–10, 9. One animal head shaped phalera is unpublished.

<sup>49</sup> Profantová/Stolz, *Chronologie a význam hradiště Rubín*; Naďa Profantová, *Nové nálezy zbraní*

<sup>50</sup> Josef Bubeník, *Slovanské osídlení středního Poohří - Die slawische Besiedlung im Einzugsgebiet der mittleren Ohře II. Praha*, Tab. V. For comparison, from Olomouc–Povel hill fort in Moravia 4 pieces are known from approximately 50 archaeological features – Josef Bláha, *Předběžná zpráva o objevení předvelkomoravského ústředí v Olomouci – Das vor-großmährische Zentrum in Olomouc, Vorbericht*. *Archaeologia historica* 13 (1987) 155–170.

<sup>51</sup> Bubeník, *Slovanské osídlení*, Tab. IV:19–21; Josef Bubeník, *Die Besiedlung des südöstlichen Vorfelds des Berges Rubín in der Burgwallzeit und ihre Chronologie (Ausgrabungen in den Jahren 1984–1991)*, in: *Památky archeologické* 88 (1997) 56–106, Fig. 26: 1.

<sup>52</sup> Profantová/Stolz, *Chronologie a význam*, Fig. 4.

<sup>53</sup> N. Profantová, *New data about the earliest of Early Medieval hill-forts and hill-sites (8<sup>th</sup>–1st half of 9<sup>th</sup> cent) in central Bohemia*, ed. G. Fusek, *Archäologische Studien zum frühen Mittelalter*. Nitra, 99–114.

**Table 1:** *Tismice, tinned mounts analysed in 2012: after RXA made in Museum Roztoky and combined with microscopical studies. After D. Perlik*

Site	mount no	Fe	Cu	Zn	Ag	Sn	Sb	Pb	Au	Hg	As	Ni	
Tismice	mount no 71, fig. 5:6	2,94	38,35		1,82	41,28	0,12	15,49					tinned
	mount no.68, fig. 5:4	1,62	40,82	0,50	1,12	45,37	0,17	10,21				0,20	tinned
	Horse harness no 66,2 mes., fig.5:9	1,85	66,12		1,94	6,18	0,16	0,15	23,60				gilded
	Horse harness no 66, 1 mes.	3,76	66,21		2,25	6,52	0,17	0,17	20,82			0,10	
	mount no 92, revers, fig. 5:19	0,85	59,56	0,37	0,44	37,96	0,14	0,2–0,9			0,68		tinned
	strap end no 67, fig.5:1	1,41	52,42	0,51	2,09	35,80	0,14	7,63					tinned
	mount no 70, fig. 5:2	2,81	65,22	0,18	0,48	9,42	0,05	1,23	18,20	2,42			gilded

**Table 2:** *Tismice, the chronological and function distribution of Avar Khaganat period mounts (up to 2013), MAP: Middle Avar Khaganat Period, LAP: Late Avar Khaganat Period*

	MAP	LAP I-II	LAP III, IV	Together gilded	Ag foil/casts
Strap-end from main belt-band		0	2	1	
Small strap-end		4 – 5	7	2	
Mounts of main belt	1?	6 + 1?	13 + 2 pendants	2	
Mounts of narrow, secondary bands		0	7		
Mounts protecting belt holes	1	0	3	1	
Propeller shape mount/Propeller hinge			3		
Buckle	1	1 + 1	2 – 3		
Horse harness Mounts/phalera		0	6	2	1
Women's jewellery		1	1 + 1?		
Dies/models	1				
Rings			2 + 2?		
Casts					2 + 8
Total	4	14 – 16	45 + 4/5	8	1

**Table 3:** *Sites with evidence of martial destruction from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Austria. Némětice after Michálek – Lutovský 2000, Chotěbuz-Podobora after Kouřil /Gryc 2011, Mikulčice 905/6 after Kouřil 2003, Váno after Kouřil/Tymonová 2013, 157.*

Site	Type of site	Area of hill fort	Number of arrowheads	Special types of arrowheads	Dating of destruction	Spurs, other weapons	Interpretation
Kal	stronghold	7.2–7.3 ha	105 (with points)	22–23 three-edged	790–805	5–6 axes, 2 spear shoe	Conquest partly caused by the Avar army
Chotěbuz-Podobora, Silesia	stronghold	1.75 ha	30 + X	?	900–915	2 axes, 3 spurs, stirrup, branks	Bailey fire connected with siege??

Mikulčice	stronghold	8 ha	more than 130 from both periods with rhombic	X three-pointed Min. 6	about 800	axes, mace head, bow, spurs-more than 70	Fire connected with siege??
	stronghold			70–80 rhombic	<b>905/906</b>	axes, swords, sabre, spear, spurs	Conquest, Early Magyar army
Němětice	stronghold	0.9 -1 ha	99	22 rhombic, 1 forked	<b>905–940</b>	axe, in the vicinity spear point	
Raab - Sand	stronghold		?	Min. 11 rhombic	955–970		Early Magyar army, fire
Smolenice-Molpír Slovakia	hilltop settlement or stronghold				around 800	axe, 5 spurs, bridle, chain armour	?
Vno (Silesia)	stronghold			Arrowheads with wings	9 <sup>th</sup> century	11 or more spurs, bridles,	