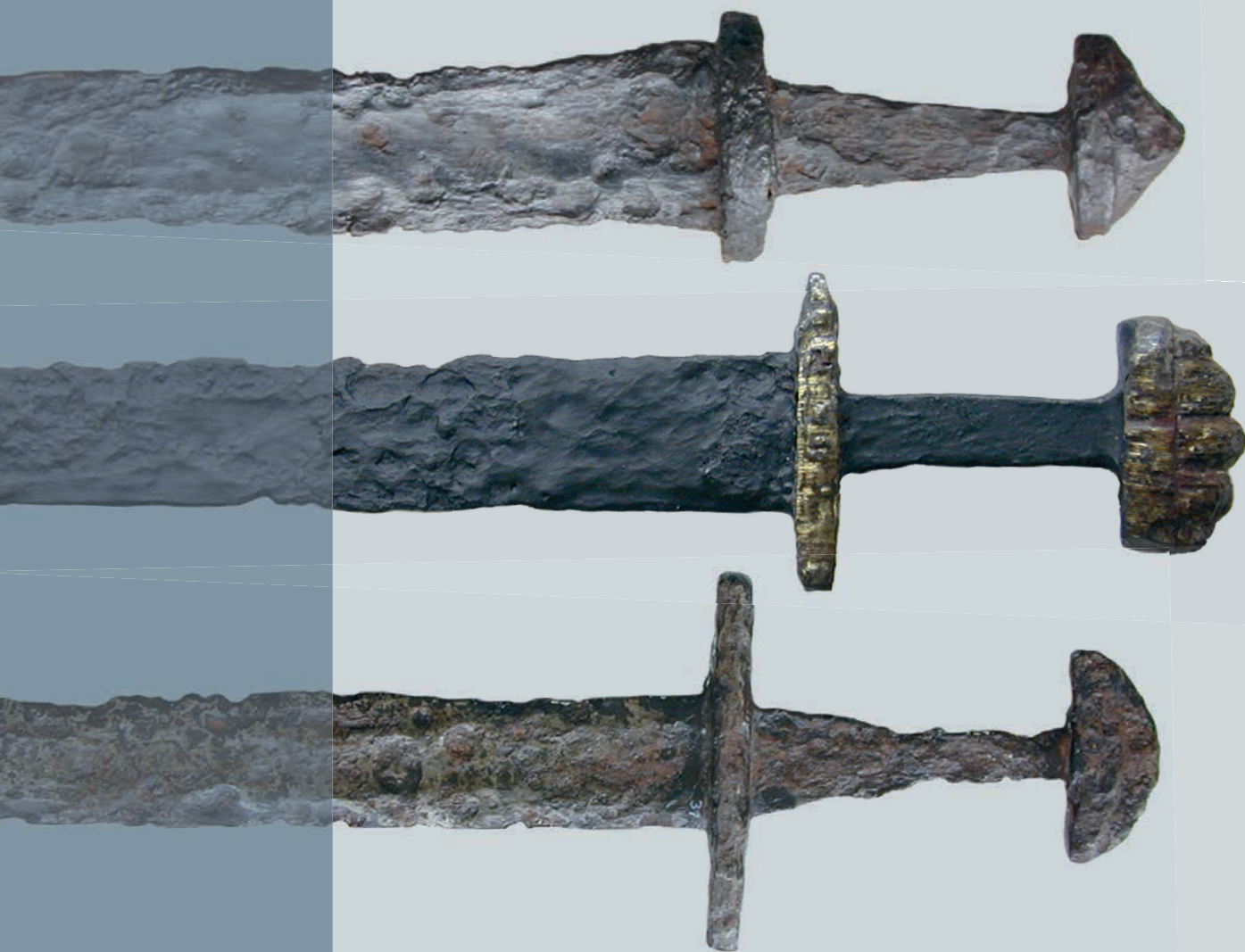


IX

INTERNATIONALE TAGUNGEN IN MIKULČICE



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BEWAFFNUNG UND REITERAUSRÜSTUNG
DES 8. BIS 10. JAHRHUNDERTS
IN MITTELEUROPA

Waffenform und Waffenbeigaben bei den
mährischen Slawen und in den Nachbarländern

Lumír Poláček – Pavel Kouřil (Hrsg.)

Bewaffnung und Reiterausrüstung des 8. bis 10. Jahrhunderts in Mitteleuropa
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Lumír Poláček

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VORWORT

Der vorliegende Band enthält Beiträge, die während der gleichnamigen Internationalen Tagung in Mikulčice im Mai 2011 vorgetragen wurden. Wie schon die vorausgegangenen ITM-Kolloquien so war auch diese Tagung einem ausgewählten aktuellen Aspekt der mitteleuropäischen Frühgeschichtsforschung gewidmet, und zwar dem Thema der Bewaffnung und Reiterausrüstung. Damit wurde ein breites Spektrum von Fragen behandelt, beginnend mit Typologie, Chronologie und Technologie einzelner Sorten von Artefakten über allgemeine Probleme der frühmittelalterlichen Bewaffnung und Reiterausrüstung bis hin zum archäologischen Experiment. Der gegebene Themenkreis wird im Buch nicht nur aus Sicht der Archäologie, sondern auch der historischen Wissenschaft erörtert, und zwar mit einer beträchtlichen Gelehrsamkeit und dem Streben nach einer komplexen oder analytischen Darstellung. Die vorliegenden 25 auf ganz unterschiedlichen Quellenbeständen fußenden, oft innovativen Beiträge von Forschern aus Polen, der Slowakei, Tschechien, Ungarn, Kroatien, Österreich und Deutschland bieten ein kompaktes Bild der Bewaffnung und Reiterausrüstung der Westslawen und Teilen der Südslawen, aber auch der Awaren und Ungarn vor dem Hintergrund der gesellschaftlichen, kulturellen und politischen Entwicklung Ostmitteleuropas in den letzten drei Jahrhunderten des ersten Jahrtausends.

Leider erscheint die Sammelchrift mit beträchtlicher Verspätung, wofür wir die Autoren und Leser gleichermaßen um Entschuldigung bitten. Hauptursache der Verzögerung waren die nach dem tragischen Brand der Arbeitsstätte in Mikulčice 2007 zu bewältigenden Aufgaben: die Errichtung und Inbetriebnahme der neuen archäologischen Basis Mikulčice-Trapíkovo und die parallel hierzu gebotenen Sicherungsarbeiten

an dem umfangreichen, durch den Brand beschädigten Fundmaterial von der Fundstelle Mikulčice-Valy, das nach und nach konservatorisch behandelt und identifiziert werden musste.

Trotz der Verspätung erlauben wir uns, der wissenschaftlichen Fachwelt diesen Konferenzband zu unterbreiten, in der Überzeugung, dass alle Beiträge ihre Relevanz und Aktualität behalten haben. Mögen sie als nützliches Hilfsmittel und Studienmaterial für weitere Forschungen auf dem betreffenden Fachgebiet dienen! Ergänzt sei, dass die letzten Autorenkorrekturen der meisten Beiträge im Jahre 2016 erfolgten und der Inhalt seither nicht mehr aktualisiert wurde.

Es ist uns eine angenehme Pflicht, uns bei allen Autoren der in der Sammelchrift präsentierten Beiträge sowie bei dem Kollektiv der Mitarbeiter, die sich an der Vorbereitung dieses Bandes beteiligten, recht herzlich zu bedanken. Für Übersetzungen und sprachliche Korrekturen sind wir Frau Pavla Seitlová und Frau Tereza Bartošková und sowie den Herren Torsten Kempke und Paul Maddocks verbunden. Für Redaktionsarbeiten gebührt unser Dank Herrn Petr Luňák und Frau Zdeňka Pavková, die auch den Satz des Buches übernahm.

Das Buch erscheint in einem Jahr, in dem das Archäologische Institut der Akademie der Wissenschaften der Tschechischen Republik des 100. Gründungstags seines Vorgängers, des Staatlichen Archäologischen Instituts, gedenkt, der ersten professionellen archäologisch-wissenschaftlichen Arbeitsstätte in der damals eben erst gegründeten Tschechoslowakei.

Erscheinen konnte die Publikation dank der finanziellen Förderung seitens des Editionsrats der Akademie der Wissenschaften der Tschechischen Republik, dem dafür unser Dank gilt.

Lumír Poláček – Pavel Kouřil

Preconditions of the Genesis of the Přemyslid Realm

DAVID KALHOUS

Preconditions of the Genesis of the Přemyslid Realm. *In the following study we analyse the validity of the now generally-accepted view of the beginnings of the Přemyslid realm. Those who established this viewpoint emphasise the income from selling slaves (and distance trade in general) as the main source the dynasties in Central Europe used to strengthen their economic power, which, in the next stage, enabled them to build powerful cavalry armies as their “iron fist”. With these armies they were supposed to have built their “states”. In this article, not only is the automatism of this mechanism brought into question (the prevalence of the cavalry), but also the idea that a state can be built with an army. The author, on the one hand, points out the predatory character of such a system, and on the other hand draws attention to the building of hillforts as a mechanism that not only enhanced the protection of a given area, but also, due to the need for construction and repairs, brought large groups of people together, and thus formed a common identity for them.*

Keywords: early states – Central Europe – Early Middle Ages – history of power – history of violence

The struggles for the boundaries of the realm of the Přemyslids in the 10th century and the chronology of its genesis and fall have received considerable attention in the historiographies of Central Europe (recently MATLA-KOZŁOWSKA 2008), although the sources that might enable a reconstruction of power relationships in the regions of present-day Central and Eastern Europe are scanty. Still, numerous hypotheses have been proposed concerning the development of the early Přemyslid Duchy. The ideas formulated by František GRAUS (1965a) and taken further by his followers from the next generations – Dušan Třeštík, Jiří Sláma and Josef Žemlička – have had the most significant influence and interpretative ambitions. On the following pages we will examine this concept from the perspective of source criticism and logistical and social limits as well.

František GRAUS (1965b) puts forward the idea of four stages in the development of the retinue from a small private troop to a feudalised “extended state retinue”, numbering thousands of warriors. He connects the third stage of the retinue’s “development” with the genesis of the state and describes it as an “extended state retinue”, entirely dependent on the ruler and utterly

loyal to him (GRAUS 1965b, 4–5). According to GRAUS (1966a, 145), rulers destroyed the old social structures with the aid of this “retinue army”, from which a new elite was recruited. At the same time, allegedly, the smaller retinues of the old type disappeared. Their sporadic existence GRAUS (1965b, 11) did not exclude, but they did not play any significant role in his view. The retinue first gained its livelihood from loot, then from the ruler’s treasury and finally from allocated land. In this last stage of development, because of the need for establishing a territorial system, the retinue settled on the land, becoming feudalised. Thus, relationships between the members of the retinue and the ruler weakened, until the retinue dissolved (ibid., 5, 15–17). GRAUS (1966a, 139–145; differently ŁOWMIAŃSKI 1970, 113–115), owing to a shift in terminology and the alleged discontinuity of hillforts, also acknowledges the existence of a deep divide between 9th- and 11th century society, even accepting a prince’s theoretical right to ownership of the whole country as well as the right to assign offices. However, he simultaneously acknowledges the existence of allodial estates of the aristocracy (ibid., 138–139) and ascribes considerable power to

the magnate class as early as in the 11th century (*ibid.*, 139–143, 145–152).

Graus's idea is elaborated on by Dušan Třeštík, who is convinced that he has discovered the source from which the Slavic dukes paid these troops: the slave trade (recently TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 125–128). TŘEŠTÍK (2001, 126) even attempts to calculate the costs and, considering the amount of slaves sold in Cordoba, he thought it probable the army's weapons and armour were paid for out of the profit from the slave trade and from loot. According to him (TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 125–127), these mounted warriors, in contrast to Western Europe, were not enfeoffed with land, but were supported directly by the duke.¹ TŘEŠTÍK (1997, 389–392, 435–440), inspired by Karl LEYSER (1982; criticised by BACHRACH/BACHRACH 2007), also looks for analogies in Saxony, where, allegedly, a reform of Henry I the Fowler (919–936) also led to the formation of a large equestrian army. However, the Přemyslids (and later the Piasts and Arpads), as TŘEŠTÍK (1987, 38–41) puts it, directly followed the model of Great Moravia, whose rulers had supposedly managed to create large cavalry units as well. TŘEŠTÍK (*ibid.*, 38–41) alleges that – while the Bohemian princes as a whole succumbed to the Přemyslids – the Great Moravian elites managed to maintain their autonomy. Therefore, the medieval Bohemian aristocracy was not a direct successor of 9th-century elites, but instead originated from the courtiers and servants of the Přemyslid dynasty, who, as early as at the turn of the 12th century, had begun to build their own base: the external manifestation of this phenomenon may be seen in an alleged “internal colonisation of the country” (TŘEŠTÍK 1971, 555–561).

Fortified settlements also played a significant role in the abovementioned theory. Approximately twenty years ago, on the basis of an analysis of archaeological sources in combination with some written accounts, brilliant archaeologist Jiří SLÁMA (1987; 1988) identified the initial power base of the Přemyslids as the area demarcated by the Libušín, Budeč, Mělník, Stará Boleslav, Levý Hradec, Tetín and Lštění boundary forts, built swiftly one after another at regular intervals, to protect the access roads to Prague. Furthermore, Sláma also proposes consideration of the possibility of a shift of ducal policy with the reign of Boleslav I (935–972). As Sláma puts it, Boleslav, in contrast to his older brother Wenceslas, did not mean to content himself with a formal upper hand over the other Bohemian dukes

and decided directly to subjugate the whole of Bohemia. So he conquered, as SLÁMA (1986, 59–60; 1988, 80–84) writes, the castles of his opponents, destroyed those castles and built new ones in their vicinity for his people.

In order to be able to discuss the concepts that are now relevant for interpretation of the early medieval history of Bohemia we will first focus on the importance of castles to early medieval realms and also on their connection with princes. Secondly, we need to clarify the definition of the retinue, which plays a significant role in many discourses of the early medieval realm. Thirdly, we need to view the evidence for these retinues in early medieval realms and their logistical limitations as well. Fourthly, it is necessary to consider the objection against the evidence for large Přemyslid (or Piast) retinues in early medieval sources.

Naturally, no one can doubt the importance of monuments at the beginning of more complex societies. A few years ago anthropologists and archaeologists put forward the useful concept of “materialisation of ideology”, which would have partially solved the question of the role of fortified settlements in the formation of power structures (DEMARRAIS/CASTILLO/EARLE 1996). These researchers reckon with the existence of elites who, at a given point of social development, are forced to demonstrate their power by means of a certain type of material culture. Certainly, such efforts might be manifested in the building of fortified settlements, landscape monuments. The constant need for repairs documented in many early medieval charters meant a periodical amount of work being undertaken by neighbouring communities; for the so-called *trimo-da necessitas*, first appearing in Anglo-Saxon immunity charters at the end of the 8th century, which included not only the obligation of military service, but also the duty to participate in the construction of fortifications and, potentially, in the repair of bridges, see HOLLISTER 1962; DEMPSEY 1982, and for the Czech lands see e.g. CDB I, No. 79, 83. Through these duties, power was regularly demonstrated on the periphery, symbols of the ability to control the surrounding area and to make the local inhabitants participate in construction. This, indeed, implies the existence of structures of power in a given area before the emergence of the state and does not rule out the possibility of the self-organisation of the communities which built those settlements, so that a strong central power might have been unnecessary in terms of the organisation of their construction.²

1 Třeštík was inspired e.g. by Timothy Reuter. But REUTER (1985, 82–84) also mentions that Carolingian and Ottonian vassals did not hold any fiefs and were sustained by their lords. The thesis of the Carolingian fiefs is problematic: more recent literature doubts their common existence, see REYNOLDS (1994; WOLFRAM 1994; KASTEN 2009).

2 The earthworks of these hillforts consisted of wooden constructions filled in with earth and covered on the external side with a stonewall (PROCHÁZKA 2009). There is one Great Moravian hillfort, Pohansko, where excavations have been being carried out since the 1960s and also continually published.

Castles were also acknowledged as a centre of power by the 12th-century historian, Cosmas of Prague. This is the reason he connected with them not only the contemporaneous Přemyslid princes, but also the mythical dukes from ancient times.³ Furthermore, Cosmas (BRETHOLZ 1923, 2.19, 111) puts an interesting speech into the mouth of the magnate Mstiš, the keeper of a ducal castle, who mentions in the speech that the castle belongs to the duke, who can manage it at will. This would suggest that at least some castles had close relationships to the duke. Therefore, castles would not only have been residences of the “representatives” of the ruler’s power, but also symbols of this power in the landscape. However, the evidence we have does not

extend beyond the 12th century; also, the relationship between ducal castles, estates and villages is the subject of discussion (see at least JAN 2006; TŘEŠTÍK/ŽEMLIČKA 2007; for Poland MODZELEWSKI 1973). Thus, assessment of the functions of fortified settlements and their links to particular social and political circumstances requires a considerable wealth of data, such as we have from the Anglo-Saxon milieu for Mercia in the 8th century, or for the realm of Alfred the Great in Wessex in the second third of the 9th century (BASSETT 2007; HASLAM 2005; about the Burghal Hidage see at least HILL 1969), or from Poland (e.g. KARA 2000), but not from 10th-century Bohemia. With revision of the older excavations, the concept of the early Přemyslid domain starts to seem flawed.

The question of what kind of group can be regarded as a retinue is also essential for the “Central European model”. The concept of the retinue already played a relatively significant role in the interpretation of Germanic society in the works of Germanists of the 19th century. Within the framework of this concept, the retinue was characterised as a group of freemen who were connected to their leader by means of specific “Germanic fidelity” (cf. SCHLESINGER 1953; earlier ROTH 1850, 18–22). In a number of regards, the assumption of “fidelity”- *Treue* – is shattered by Graus, who points out a compulsory element within the retinue and rejects the existence of a specific type of “Germanic fidelity” (GRAUS 1959 and 1966b; KUHN 1956). He himself, however, does not propose any constructive definition of the notion of “retinue” (GRAUS 1965b). On the contrary, his concept of “retinue army” indicates that he employs this term for any relatively stable group of warriors, without thinking about the relationships due to which the group was able to exist, or how the characteristics of these ties changed in connection with the increasing number of members of these “retinues”. Indeed, such a broadly and, what is more, inexplicitly defined notion is not very useful. Moreover, Graus’s polemic is rather close to the idea of the specific “Germanic fidelity”. When it deals with the general notion of fidelity, it loses its force (cf. LUHMANN 1979). For instance, Graus draws attention to numerous cases of treason in various early medieval texts, but he does not pose the question as to why these texts condemned it. The only explanation might be that, in their understanding, “fidelity” played a key role in the co-existence of a certain community as, indeed, a sought-after ideal rather than as the real state of affairs. Henryk ŁOWMIAŃSKI’s attempt (1970, 150–192, 165–166 ff) seems to be more useful, but still remains too vague, because modern armies also fit into his definition.

Although a compulsory element certainly played a significant role within the retinues, the ruler’s retinue

Because of that, we can use the results of these complex analyses without danger as a useful case study (DRESLER 2011). According to petrographical analysis, the stones were transported to Pohansko from a distance of 12 km (ibid., 82–83). The construction of Pohansko also required c. 7,400 m³ of wood that was cut mostly near waterways (ibid., 83, 85–86). The volume of earth is estimated at 69,000 tons (ibid., 84). These materials could have been transported by cart (500–750 kg), or on primitive boats (200–1,000 kg) (ibid., 84; cf. BACHRACH 2010, 51–53). To move the stone using 10 boats with a cargo capacity of 1,000 kg – which would have needed one day for a single journey – would have taken between 5 and 8 years (DRESLER 2011, 92–93; BACHRACH 2010, 59). We do not know exactly how many boats were used; however, our data does not exclude the possibility that in Pohansko the builders could have transported the materials with twice as many boats (DRESLER 2011, 92–93). The daily norm for mining stone is estimated at 1 m³, for processing earth 2.5 m³ and for cutting wood 0.19 m³ and for its shaping 2.5 m³ (cf. DRESLER 2011, 125; PROCHÁZKA 2009, 272–273; HASLAM 2005, 121–154, 132; ABELS 1998, 206), but the employment of skilled bricklayers could have sped up the construction substantially – the bricklayer Vratislav Kunte built a stone wall, width 1 m, average height 1.55 m and length 100 m, in Maková Hora in 50 working days, although by the application of our norms, the construction would have taken 155 days (DRESLER 2011, 126; DRESLEROVÁ 2006, 341–348). We also know that one worker was able to dig a hole for 6 columns in one day, and for the whole hillfort in 35 days (DRESLER 2011, 126). This implies that 150 workers would have managed to build the fortification within 4 or 5 months; the same result is valid for Mikulčice, another important Great Moravian hillfort (PROCHÁZKA 2009, 273). In large hillforts such as Mikulčice or Pohansko, hundreds of people lived at the same time and, in the hinterland, people grew wheat to supply the centre (DRESLER/MACHÁČEK 2008). To mobilise 150 workers for one season would not have placed extreme demands on Great Moravian princes. The same result is valid for Wessex in the 9th century (HASLAM 2005, 132–133) and for Přemyslid Bohemia as well.

3 Cf. Cosmas; BRETHOLZ 1923, 1.19, 38–40; chap KALHOUS 2011. See also PFERSCHY 1989, 289–293; and also SQUATRITI 2002; on the example of the Bulgarians SQUATRITI 2005, esp. 81–90. About hillfort building see the useful monograph by JÄSCHKE 1975. On the relationship between the castle and its suburbium in Carolingian Europe, in the narrower as well as broader sense, see KALHOUS 2008.

was also the milieu where young members of the elites established important contacts and, at the same time, represented the environment they came from (VANÍČEK 1988, 67–69; ADAMUS 1958, 48–58). Certainly, by means of anthropological and sociological enquiries, it would be necessary to answer the question of whether it is likely that new members were fundamentally transformed from representatives of their families into blindly obedient instruments of the duke, which would enable him to murder their relatives and completely alter the social order, and, in particular, were kept as the ruler's "weapons" for a longer period of time (ADAMUS 1958, 48–58). The ties established because of the concentration of elites in a particular place as well as the advantages for the organiser of their meetings were, beyond any doubt, more important (see also ŁOWMIAŃSKI 1970, 115–121, 175–176). The same holds true for the idea of close relationships between the Duke and members of the retinue who were sent to individual castles (England provides an example of the downside of this, see HOLLISTER 1977).

Although the existence of steady cores of the army formed by the ruler's retinue and retinues of individual headmen cannot be rejected, it follows from the aforementioned restrictions – as necessitated by the definition of the term, logistics and other elements – that those armies of many thousands could not have been retinues or even blindly obedient instruments of the Duke's regime. This is closely related to the issue of the characteristics of leaders of retinues, institutionalised armies or, more generally, various types of authority (WEBER 1958, Vol. 1, 122–176; *ibid.*, Vol. 2, 603–612, 679–778). Particularly in an age of limited possibilities of communication and, by extension, supervision, it was simply impracticable.

Apart from quite essential theoretical questions connected with the definition of the entire research field, a number of unexpressed assumptions have formed the basis of the whole concept. Graus and his successors, without much reasoning, base their theories on the idea of the total predominance of a professional mounted army over an army of free infantrymen (CHOC 1967). Also indirectly, he accepts the hypothesis of a similar revolutionary change that allegedly took place in the Frankish Empire at the beginning of the 8th century and led to a similar transformation of Frankish social structure and characteristics of warfare. Nevertheless, these premises, silently accepted, are worth discussing as well.

In the first place, the size of early medieval armies is a matter of fierce discussion. A seemingly brilliant source of information appears to be the so-called *Indiculus loricatorum* (WEILAND 1893, 633; cf. AUER 1971) of 981, where the alleged sizes of equestrian troops sent

to Italy in support of King Otto II are mentioned. However, interpretation of this text is problematic as well. Individual troops amount to dozens of men, but the total sum of horsemen is approximately 2,100. When regarding these troops as mere reinforcements, the total number of horsemen who might have been assembled from the Empire would have been much higher.

That is why Karl F. WERNER (1968, 813–832; cf. BACHRACH 2000) uses another criterion for his estimation of the size of early medieval armies, namely the number of administration units of the Carolingian Empire. Because around 700 counties were known in his time and because he assumed the average county could mount at least 50 equestrians, WERNER (1968, 813–832) calculates a total of 30,000 equestrians. In his opinion, the real number never exceeded approximately 10,000 men.

Making use of Anglo-Saxon evidence Bernhard BACHRACH (1989, 78–82; cf. also WORMALD 1982, 152–153) draws attention to the statute which claimed that one metre of ramparts must be defended by one man. He also proceeds from the length of the ramparts of individual north French civitates as given by Carlrichard BRÜHL (1975; cf. PORSCHE 2001). On the basis of this data, he proposes the minimum size of their garrisons and the number of warriors needed for an effective siege (BACHRACH 1989, 78–80; BACHRACH 1985b, 4–9). In estimating the total size of Angevin forces, he bases his calculations on the number of castles in their domain and on the premise that each of these strongholds had a garrison of 30–40 men (BACHRACH 1989, 82–84). He reaches the conclusion that, altogether, the Angevin forces amounted to 2–3,000 professional soldiers (BACHRACH 1989, 81–82).

The account by Widukind of Corvey can serve as a guideline for solving the question of the size of early medieval armies in a different way. As mentioned above, Widukind (HIRSCH/LOHMANN 1935, I.36, 53) refers to 50 equestrians who decided a battle with their attack. In his chronicle, he also describes the death of 50 warriors at the hands of the Slavs (*ibid.*, 3.45, 126). The fact itself that Widukind deals with this defeat reflects the importance of the loss of such a number of soldiers in the milieu from which he came. Also, when describing the conflict between Otto I and the Frankish rebel Eberhard, he draws attention to 100 equestrians in the King's army (*ibid.*, 2.17, 82). Back in the Carolingian period, the image is similar (DÜMMLER 1895, No. 20, 528; cf. POHL 1988, 12–16). Besides the aforementioned accounts regarding only the loss of a few warriors, the *Lex Inne* (ECKHARDT 1985, §13.1, 143) and some other barbarian legal codes also regard groups of dozens of warriors as armies. These conclusions are also confirmed by archaeological and anthropological evidence.

Statistics of the various types of injuries to over 30,000 buried individuals from early medieval Central Europe show that, in the majority of these, no connection with combat can be proven. Therefore, one must conclude that, despite the statements of epics, chronicles, annals and also some modern historians, the Early Middle Ages was a period of restrained violence and the size of contemporaneous armies did not exceed dozens or hundreds of men (KREJSOVÁ/VACHŮT/HEJHAL 2008).

As far as the size of non-stationary early medieval armies is concerned, moderate estimates seem more likely – not just owing to logistical problems with supplies for the allegedly large armies. Werner and Bachrach's observations – if one accepts them – and also the fact that, in the Middle Ages, the regions of contemporary France, Germany and the United Kingdom were populated as densely as 10th-century Bohemia – would make it possible to think of a relatively great size for the Přemyslid armies – already CHOC (1967, 66–67), on the grounds of his analysis of the *Indiculus*, estimated the Přemyslid forces at 4,000–5,000 armoured horsemen, 3,000–4,000 members of light cavalry and approximately 8,000–13,000 infantry freemen. It would, however, mean that their opponents in the East might have had armies of a comparable size, too. Even if assuming the existence of such large field armies in the Early Middle Ages, this arguable size of Boleslav's army does not account for the success of his expansion, in other words, the establishment of the “realm”.

When considering the hypothesis of a large mounted army on the grounds of the given premises, one is confronted with the problem of the extent of the inhabited area in 10th-century Bohemia. Besides partial yet relatively detailed probes,⁴ only the 40-year-old work by Jiří SLÁMA (1967) is available today. The area of Bohemia equals 52,000 km². In the Early Middle Ages, however, the majority of this surface was covered with forests, while roughly one third was inhabited. Only a part of this third was actually intensively used (BOHÁČ 1987, 59–87). At the same time, it has been surmised that only the core area around present-day Prague, surrounded by several strategically situated settlements, was the power base of the Přemyslids (SLÁMA 1987, 1988). It occupied a fifth of the whole area of Bohemia. Even if as much as a half of it was used for agriculture, the size of the potential pastures did not exceed 5,000 km², i.e. 500,000 hectares. Based on the methods of LINDNER (1981, 14–16), this area was able to feed approximately 50,000 horses, provided, however, that only horses grazed there. If only half of that

was destined for horses, the number of horses amounts to 25,000, which corresponds to c.2,500 mounted warriors (ibid., 14–16; cf. also POHL 1988, KHAZANOV 1994, 30).

A challenging task is estimating the size of the population. Zdeněk BOHÁČ (1987; 1983, 56–61) and Josef Žemlička, two Czech specialists in the history of settlement, propose two more or less extreme solutions. To be precise, in Žemlička's opinion, 20,000 people lived in the region of Prague and no more than 7,500 persons in the fertile surroundings of Litoměřice, while numerous other significant settlement areas were inhabited to a limited extent only (ŽEMLIČKA 1980, 174–176). It follows that, with such limitations on the total number of inhabitants of the Bohemian area in the 10th century, one could speak of 100,000 persons at most, which would mean that, in the course of one century, the population of Bohemia increased four times. Zdeněk BOHÁČ (1987) estimates the number of inhabitants in Bohemia around the year 1050, i.e. one hundred years later, at 400,000 and presumes that the majority lived in the inner settlement area. Thus all solutions indirectly show to what extent the premises which one applies can determine the results of an analysis. This impression is confirmed by the historiography of the High and Late Middle Ages.⁵ The same is true of attempts to estimate the number of farming households needed for supporting one member of the elite. On one hand, Zdeněk SMETÁNKA (2004, 38–39) discovered, on the basis of a charter to the Canons of Únětice of 1130 – who can hardly be regarded as representatives of the highest social stratum – that roughly 2–3 peasant families were able to support one family which did not take part in agriculture. Also ŠMELHAUS (1980, 46) estimates

4 The most important works are BUBENÍK 1988; KLÁPŠTĚ 1994, 2005; VELÍMSKÝ 1998. See also ZÁPOTOCKÝ 1965, 1977; BOHÁČ 1978; ŽEMLIČKA 1974, 1980.

5 Cf. Jaroslav MEZNÍK's (1998, 57) estimates for Moravia, occupying half of the area of Bohemia, of 2,500 to 3,000 villages not before the middle of the 14th century. Also František ŠMAHEL (1993, 191–192), when considering the potential density and size of the population in the Czech lands (Bohemia, Moravia and in the past also Silesia), is pronouncedly sceptical as to the high estimates and supposes that approximately 2,000,000 inhabitants lived in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia at the beginning of the 15th century, with a density of 18 persons per km². In this case, Bohemia would have been inhabited by approximately 1,000,000 people at that time. In his scepticism, Šmahel proceeded particularly from the evidence from rich Italy, where the land register of Florence of 1,427 makes it possible to estimate the average population density at only 24 inhabitants per km². This Italian analogy, however, has its weak points – it is not clear to what extent the settlement structure of the region might have been influenced by the existence of an enticing urban centre. Duby's findings, who on the grounds of Carolingian polyptychs assumes the population density in settlement areas at 25 to 40 inhabitants per km², urges caution; see DUBY (1973, 92–93), who also points out that rather small settlement regions were separated by quite uninhabited areas.

the possessions of the Vyšehrad Chapter (17 canons) at 100–110 landed estates. On the other hand, Krzemińska and Třeštlík (1979, 206, n. 4) estimate, on the basis of a study by Raoul van CAENEGEM (1963, 425), that one monk was supported by at least 30 peasants. Indeed, several thousand horsemen might have been recruited from them under conditions of Přemyslid rule over the whole of Bohemia. However, it is a vicious circle, and the fact that the sizeable pastures necessary for thousands of horses have been neglected in the model presented here does not make the situation any easier.

The existence of a system where garrisons of towns and castles consisted of a small stable troop, as well as of units from the surroundings allocated to a certain section of the ramparts which interconnected a castle and its surroundings, is implied in the chronicle of Gallus Anonymus (MALECZYŃSKI 1952, I.8, 25–26⁶; *ibid.* I.20, 46 about *greagarii milites*; cf. BARAŃSKI 1994, 91–99) as well, which mentions large troops allocated to Poznań, Gniezno, Giecz and other castles. Also Thietmar of Merseburg (HOLTZMANN 1935, 5.9, 231–232; cf. SCHLESINGER 1961, 165–176) highlights warriors settled in the suburbs of Meissen. Otto I's charter of 23rd April 961 (SICKEL 1879/84, No. 222, 306⁷; cf. KALHOUS 2008) mentions Slavs who are allowed to take shelter behind the ramparts of Magdeburg and other castles in return for paying the tithe. In this case, too, it seems likely that those Slavs served as reinforcements for the castle defenders, although there is no clear evidence in this regard. Also the reform, as Widukind (HIRSCH/

LOHMANN 1935, 1.35, 48–49⁸) puts it, introduced by Henry I the Fowler, took the same direction – every eighth man was obliged to serve at a castle. Similarly, in Anglo-Saxon England, besides mercenaries (HOLLISTER 1962, 16–24), there were, on the one hand, warriors for whom war was a way of life and who participated in all military campaigns as the so-called select fyrd, and, on the other hand, the general fyrd called to arms only in order to defend given areas, for instance, castles (HOLLISTER 1962, 27–31). The select fyrd consisted of warriors who were called up depending on the size of the cultivated land – one man per five hides (land tax units) (HOLLISTER 1962, 24–27, 38–58; HOLLISTER 1961, 61–74; about the hide MCGOVERN 1972). Thus, the size and composition of armies differed essentially according to a given situation. Nevertheless, experts on Anglo-Saxon England claim that an essential role, maybe even the main role of the “army's backbone”, was played by the retinues of lords and the ruler (ABELS 1988, 161–171, 173–175, 179–185; HOOPER 1992). This system did not differ much from the Carolingian one. Capitularies also required a certain number of warriors per *mansus* to be called up, depending on the extent to which a given area was being menaced (BORETIUS 1883, No. 48, 134–135). Alongside these warriors, the Carolingians (and rulers of individual duchies established after the fall of the Carolingian Empire) had retinues of bishops, abbots and secular magnates at their disposal (BORETIUS 1883, No. 75, 168; WAITZ 1841, 89; cf. PRINZ 1971). The Ottonian army, too, consisted of retinues of the king and magnates, or freemen. According to LEYSER (1982, 25–33), to whom Třeštlík refers, the significance of Henry I's reforms lay rather in a more intense training than in the formation of a large ruler's retinue. We can also conclude that early medieval armies were hardly uniform organisations and can only partially be seen as tool of social control in the hands of a central power. There is, however, no serious doubt that armoured equestrians and infantry

6 *De Poznan namque mille CCCo loricati milites cum IIIor milibus clipeatorum militum; de Gneznen mille quingenti loricati et quinque milia clipeatorum; de Wladislau castro octigenti loricati et duo milia clipeatorum; de Gdech CCCo loricati et duo milia clipeatorum. Hii omnes fortissimi et ad bella doctissimi magni Bolezlai tempore procedebant. De aliis vero civitatibus et castellis et nobis longus et infinitus labor est enarrare et vobis forsitan fastidiosum fuerit audire ...Plures namque habebat rex Bolezlaus milites loricanos, quam habet nostro tempore tota Polonia clipeatos; tempore Bolezlai totidem in Polonia fere milites habebantur, quot homines cuiusque generis nostro tempore continentur.*

7 *...ad sanctum Mauricium in Magadaburg donavimus atque tradidimus decimam quam Sclavani ad eandem urbem Magadaburg pertinentes, nec non et etiam omnium Sclavatorum decimam ad civitatem Frasa pertinentium, insuper etiam et illam decimam quam Sclavani persolvere debent ad Barborgi civitatem pertinentes, similiter etiam et omnem decimam Sclavatorum ad civitatem quę dicitur Cauo pertinentium ex integro donamus atque tradidimus ad sanctum Mauricium in Magadaburg. Hoc instantissime iubemus ut omnes Sclavani ad predictas civitates confugium facere debent, annis singulis omnem addecimacionem eorum plenissime ad sanctum Mauricium persolvant.*

8 *Igitur Heinricus rex, accepta pace ab Ungariis ad novem annos, quanta prudentia vigilaverit in munienda patria et in expugnando barbaras nationes supra nostram est virtutem edicere, licet omnimodis non oporteat taceri. Et primum quidem ex agrariis militibus nonum quemque eligens in urbibus habitare fecit, ut ceteris confamiliaribus suis octo habitacula extrueret, frugum omnium tertiam partem exciperet servaretque. Ceteri vero seminarent et meterent fugesque colligerent non et suis eas locis reconderent. Concilia et omnes conventus in urbibus voluit celebrari; in quibus extruendis die noctuque operam dabant, quatinus in pace discerent, quid contra hostes necessitate facere debuissent.* SPRINGER (1994, 138–145), who points out that, in this context, the *agrarii* must be regarded as opposites of the *urbani*, that is, not simply as warriors-peasants, cf. LEYSER 1982; BACHRACH/BACHRACH 2007.

freemen also differed socially (LEYSER 1982, 16–25, 39–42).

It is the distinction between the armies called up to defend their country and attack-oriented troops that might account for contradictory pieces of information concerning the size of medieval armies. While economic conditions made it possible to call to arms numerous men in the event of an emergency for a short period of time, it was difficult to provide them with provisions in a particular place: for this reason, Anglo-Saxon measures required, for instance, participation in defence only if the warriors could return home the same evening (HOLLISTER 1962, 27–31). At the same time, it was necessary to occupy major strategic points, i.e. castles, which needed a considerable number of warriors for their defence, who did not always end up taking part in combat. Besides these forces, there was the select army, much more mobile and consisting of men trained in arms. These armies were made up of the King's retinue, significant magnates and, probably, also select warriors from the general militia. It is likely that these well-trained men formed the cores of the garrisons (garrisons mentioned by *Vita Corbiniani*, KRUSCH 1913, Chapter 23, 214). Thus, despite amounting to thousands all over the country, the number which could actually be employed in a particular campaign or battle depended on the given circumstances, mainly of a logistical nature.

There is also the question as to where the Přemyslids gained the means for arming such a large retinue. Concerning the price of a horseman's equipment (cf. BORETIUS 1883, No. 75, 168; *ibid.*, Chapter 9, 171), the information from the Carolingian *Lex Ribvaria* legal code is essential (BEYERLE/BUCHNER 1954, §40 (36).11, 94⁹; cf. BUCHNER 1953; HENNING 1982, 35–68). According to this source, the price of a horseman's equipment would have been around 25 *solidi*.¹⁰ So the equipment of 3,000 equestrians would have cost approximately 75,000 *solidi*. Correspondingly, when proceeding from TŘEŠTÍK's (2001, 125–128) information on the price of a coat of silver armour amounting to 1,950–3,250 *denarii* of 1.3 g, the total sum is 3.5–7.5 t in silver. It is not likely that, as TŘEŠTÍK (2001, 126; about the slave trade in the Carolingian empire cf. MCCORMICK 2002) claims, those funds might have been gained from the slave trade. According to his estimates, the profits equalled the given sum, but

9 *Equem videntem et sanam pro septem solid. tribuat. Equam videntem et sanam pro tres solidos tribuat. Spatam cum scogilo pro septem solid. tribuat. Brunia bona pro duodecum solid. tribuat. Helmo condericto pro sex solid. tribuat. Scuto cum lanicia pro duos solid. tribuat.*

10 For estimating this value compare *ibid.*, §40 (36). 11, 94: *Vaccam cornutam videntem et sanam pro uno solido tribuat.*

only after 50 years. This calculation apparently disagrees with TŘEŠTÍK's idea (2001, 103) of the speed of Boleslav's expansion, its forceful characteristics and, by extension, the immediate need to establish a large and properly armed "state" retinue, in the sense of GRAUS's idea (1965b, 5).

Timothy Reuter, on whose work Třeštík partly bases his reasoning, considers that tributes played the key role in the subsistence of Frankish warriors. However, he thus implicitly proceeds from the quite absurd idea of the ability of barbarian populations in the East to survive plunder by numerous Frankish retinues (and also by their own elites). At the same time, he denies the local Frankish population the same ability. The hypothesis proposed by him would inevitably mean permanent famine to the east of the Elbe.

What is more, another question emerges: how was it possible to rule effectively with such a limited ducal apparatus over such a considerable population? How was it possible, from a purely military perspective, to conquer neighbours with similar capabilities for keeping large armies? And, above all, how was it possible to control them in the long-term? Regarding subsistence, Třeštík's idea of the genesis of a "Central European state" (and Reuters' hypothesis about the Carolingian expansion as well) are probably untenable. The data gathered also undermines the idea of such state organisation in the 11th and 12th centuries. A more probable scenario is that the expeditions of expanding "realms" gave its elites the chance to strengthen their self-confidence and identity through intensified communication and common action. Latterly this common feeling could have been shattered because of fighting between the members of the Carolingian dynasty and because of battles lost against external enemies. However, the much smaller Přemyslid duchy survived its decline.

The question remains about the general significance of the infantry in early medieval warfare. Paradoxically, it is a problem which Czech (and, in many regards, even general) historiography has not analysed in detail (for logistical restrictions cf. BACHRACH 1985a; GILLMOR 1986). It is probably unnecessary to emphasise its extremely limited importance regarding the siege of castles (BACHRACH 1989). For TŘEŠTÍK (1997, 435–438), however, the conquest of strongholds played a crucial role in Boleslav's strategy. In his opinion, St Wenceslas (†935) contented himself with the general acceptance of his overlordship, while Boleslav (935–972) conquered his opponents, destroyed their castles and erected new ones nearby.

The idea of the maximum effectiveness of the armoured cavalry cannot be reckoned with, even when considering the classic battlefield (for the genesis of the

classic type of knightly combat FLORI 1988).¹¹ Pieces of evidence proving its maximum effectiveness are scarce and their interpretation, as shown below, is not devoid of problems (enthusiastic comments in DOSTÁLOVÁ 1996, 396–397). Allegedly, an account by Andrew of Fleury (11th century) belongs here. In his *Miracles of St Benedict* (DE CERTAIN 1858, II.4, 196–197), he describes an encounter of a large army assembled by Archbishop Aimon of Bourges for the purpose of facilitating a truce with God.¹² The defeat of Aimon's army is explained as proof of the superiority of the knights over untrained unmounted freemen (e.g. BARTLET 1994), until Andrew's evidence of the battle was analysed in detail and placed into the context of his whole work (HEAD 1992). A comparison of Aimon's depiction with the account of the author of the *Chronicon Dolense* (DELISLE 1882, 387–388), who describes the battle as a confrontation between two armies of similar strength, shows that Andrew stylised his narration in the sense of a punishment for the violence which the participants in the campaign had committed against their opponents in previous combats.¹³ The description of the battle

scheme refers rather to a perverse world order, returning to a proper state with God's help, than to the real course of the battle (HEAD 1992, 226–235). So the battle cannot be regarded as proof of the superiority of an army of knights.

From our point of view it is important to look again at the battle described by Widukind of Corvey (HIRSCH/LOHMANN 1935, 1.36, 53). According to him, it was the cavalry that commenced the combat. Nonetheless, it was easily forced back by the Slavic infantry; so it returned to the rest of the army with strategic information. Subsequently the infantry took part in the battle, allegedly with great casualties. Finally a group of 50 equestrians attacked again and disrupted the battle formation of the Slavs (ibid., HIRSCH/LOHMANN 1935, 1.36, 53). Thus the cavalry played an essential role in the battle, but rather as a tactical means of an abrupt attack on an exhausted enemy, than as an omnipotent instrument of victory.

Also a century later, at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, which is considered another significant proof of the superiority of armoured cavalry, William's victory was determined, to a large extent, by tactical advantage and trickery, not by the attack of the cavalry. It is also not appropriate to speak of the superiority of equestrian professionals over infantry "recruits", since the core of both armies is likely to have consisted of trained warriors.¹⁴

The aforementioned evidence shows that, even though the mounted armies formed a non-substitutable element of early medieval warfare, the idea of their absolute superiority in combat cannot be accepted. So the employment of an equestrian retinue was not the only instrument for the occupation and pacification of an area.

Even the proposed high level of organisation of Boleslav's domains, as opposed to other countries to the east of Bohemia, cannot serve as an indubitable argument for the success of the potential expansion of the

11 It is again a relatively old hypothesis, the author of whose final version was Heinrich BRUNNER (1887). He thought that during Charles Martel's rule the foot army of Frankish freemen was transformed into a cavalry army of majordomus vasals that enabled the majordomus to defeat the Arabic invasion in 732. However, Heinrich Brunner was sharply criticised by Bernard BACHRACH (1970; cf. HILTON/SAWYER 1963, 90–95). Also Matthew STRICKLAND (1997) points out that, despite the fact that the Anglo-Saxons were familiar with horse-riding and the warriors employed horses for transportation, they managed to fight without horses. The reason for this, however, was not ignorance, but rather a culturally determined lack of interest. This historian also rejects the idea of an absolute distinction between stone castles and forts built out of wood and clay, with reference to the great effectiveness of older strongholds (STRICKLAND 1997, 369–373; similarly KLÁPŠTĚ 2004, 61–67). Strickland's remarks relativise the significance of a certain sort of military organisation for the establishment of those structures, which also concerns the early Přemyslid Duchy. His conclusions are also indicative of the possibility that the growing importance of cavalry in the Frankish Empire in the 8th century was more a result of social processes connected with the redefinition of elites than of any change in military strategy alone.

12 *Porro adversae partis populus multo se inferiorem prospiciens, cum illo numero maris supererarent, arenam, id consilii capiunt ut pedites, ascensis quibuscumque animalibus, medis militum se miscerent cohortibus, ut tam ex figurata specie equitandi quam ex oppositione armorum milites arbitrarentur ab illis. Nec mora, ad duo millia plebeia multitudinis, ascensis asinis, medio equitum ordine partiuntur, equestri. Sed illi expavescentes, fugam per ripas Kari fluminis arripiunt...*

13 *1033 Odo comes Campagniensis ab imperatore interfectus est: et Ebo filius Odonis senioris Dolensis a vicecomite Gaufrido Bituricensium interfectus est. Et ipso anno necdum finito, mense Januario, XVIII die ipsius, hoc est XIV Kalendas Februarii, bel-*

lum cruentissimum fuit actum inter eundem Odonem seniore duces Dolensem, et episcopum Aimonem et Vicecomitem Gaufridum Bituricensem; sed Domino pro eodem Odone seniore mirabiliter pugnante, eos stravit. Nam ubi phalanges ejus eorum exercitus aspexit, nimio terrore correpti, cum suis principibus in fugam conversi, se praecipites in flumine, qui vocatur Carus unus super alium dederunt, exceptis iis gladiis trucidavit: ipse vero Episcopus in ipso proelio vulneratus, nec tamen mortuus, armis relictis, et ipse et alii per fugam elapsi euaserunt.

14 BARLOW 1999, 26; MYNERS/THOMPSON/WINTERBOTTOM 1998, 3.242, 454; VAN HOUTS 1995, 7.15 (36), 168–170: The possibility of the execution of this manoeuvre in battle is accepted by Bernard S. BACHRACH (1971, 344–347). On the battle, see also KÖRNER 1964, 255–266. The author draws attention to Wilhelm's cautious approach. On the most important source, the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio*, see HIRSCH 1982.

Bohemian dukes. At this point, one may draw attention to the ferocity of the struggles of the Saxons, supported by other duchies, against the Polabian Slavs. Despite unrelenting pressure, those areas were subjugated only after more than 150 years of fighting. Paradoxically the Ottonian kings achieved the most remarkable success in the 10th century, when the Slavic lands were ruled by ducal dynasties prone to submit under pressure. Also the subjugation of the Alemanni, or of Saxonia, was a gradual process, consequent to the unquestionable victory of the Carolingians and the alleged destruction of the local elites (BORGOLTE 1984; KELLER 1976; EHLERS 2007). It is also the existence of a certain level of political organisation in the area of present-day Lesser Poland that makes it possible to reckon with a political stratagem which, consequently, might have facilitated negotiations and the relatively fast subjugation of these regions by the Přemyslids and Piasts.

So far the limitations of this concept have been discussed. Now those few sources of evidence which form the basis of Graus's and Třeštík's hypotheses will be analysed. In particular, the question of the gradual and inevitable nature of the development of the retinue and the idea of the "extended state retinue" will be dealt with, especially since Třeštík himself supposes a great shift between the expansive "empire" of Boleslav I (935–972) and the more intensively ruled "Czech state" of his 11th-century successors.

Because in Třeštík's work Great Moravia is characterised as a model for the "realms" of the Přemyslids, Piasts and Arpadians, it is necessary to mention the known sources for the warfare it practised. Allegedly, the earliest witness is Ibn Rustah, a Persian geographer of the turn of the 9th and the 10th centuries. He mentions that the duke of the Moravians Svatopluk I (871–894) had horses and arms at his disposal (PAULINY 1999b, 99; cf. RUTTKAY 1982, 165–198). Nevertheless, he does not refer to a monopoly on horse breeding. On the contrary, he connects it with notable men, in general terms (PAULINY 1999b, 99). Thereby, he disproves the idea of Svatopluk's monopoly on horse breeding, supposed by Třeštík. The Persian geographer does not mention a large mounted army of Svatopluk's either.

In contrast, an account of the Annals of Fulda (KURZE 1891, 75), describing an assault on a wedding procession on its way from Bohemia to Moravia, may provide proof of the existence of mounted warriors. This account, nonetheless, does not specify any relationship of those equestrians to the Duke of Moravia. It is even possible that the attacking horsemen originated from Bohemia. So the abovementioned passage from the Annals of Fulda cannot serve as proof of the formation of a strong "state retinue". On the contrary, if those 600 equestrians had originated from Prague

or another important contemporaneous centre in Bohemia, Kouřim, the Annals would provide evidence against the idea of an inevitable link between the origins of the Přemyslid "realm" and the establishment of a large mounted army, since that allegedly large retinue appears in sources substantially earlier than under the reign of Boleslav I (935–972).

Thus, only warrior graves from the south *suburbium* of the castle in Pohansko (VIGNATIOVÁ 1992; MACHÁČEK 2007, 221–229), together with rather rich graves in other Moravian castles, serve as indubitable evidence of Moravian mounted warriors, settled in those castles. Nevertheless, their relationship to the duke is almost unknown and the stirrups found in the graves signalled the status of the buried person, especially of the children. In assessing them, archaeological research proceeds from the rather questionable results of history. Generally, however, the placing of a sword in a grave can be regarded as a sign of status and does not necessarily refer to the function of a warrior. This holds true especially of the rich graves of children.

Widukind (HIRSCH/LOHMANN 1935, 3.44, 125) mentions a "legion" of select warriors sent by Boleslav I (935–972) to aid Otto I (936–973) at the Battle of Lechfeld in 955 and the *Annales Sangallenses Maiores* (PERTZ 1826, 79) also refer to an army that fought against the Hungarians several days later. This account, too, supports Graus's hypothesis, for it indicates the existence of a large Přemyslid army. However, the sources do not convey whether these were horse or foot and whether or not these troops were a ducal retinue. Beyond any doubt, in contrast, Widukind (HIRSCH/LOHMANN 1935, 3.69, 144) mentions Boleslav's cavalry when referring to "two troops of horsemen" sent by Boleslav I (935–972) to support his son-in-law, Mieszko (968–992), although it is commonly assumed that Mieszko also had strong cavalry at his command.

With this statement, Widukind undermines the testimony of Ibrahim ibn Ja'kúb (PAULINY 1999c, 117; cf. EL-HAJJĪ 1967; TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 111; KOWALSKA 1973, 41–47), a Muslim convert of Jewish origin who came from present-day Tortosa, who – according to al-Bakri – wrote: "Mieszko levies taxes in market coins and pays his soldiers from it. ...Mieszko has three thousand armoured warriors. A hundred of them correspond to a thousand other soldiers. Mieszko gives clothes to his soldiers and provides them with everything they need..." This version, however, must be compared with another reading of Ibrahim's account, extant in a work of al-Qazwini. Here Ibrahim (KOWALSKI 1946, 91) points out the infantry character of Mieszko's army, which was equipped with horses only in the event of emergency. In contrast to the viewpoints of modern researchers, according to neither tradition

did Mieszko have a mounted retinue at his disposal. The value of Ibrahim's evidence is, nevertheless, undermined by a number of factors. First of all, it is unclear whether or not he visited Mieszko's realm. Secondly, Ibrahim's work as such does not exist anymore, but has survived only in excerpts that vary in terms of their content, which, indeed, is demonstrated by the points discussed here. Thirdly, Ibrahim came from a completely different cultural environment and it is difficult to estimate to what extent his work shows him as a skilful observer or as a prisoner of the culture from which he came.¹⁵

15 As Ibrahim was used to naming his sources – if not drawing information from his own experience – it seems that he really did visit Mieszko's realm. Even the suspicious survival of his work does not fully question its authenticity: individual versions usually do not exactly correspond to one another. On the other hand, however, there is no contradiction between them. Evidently, those who used his work chose pieces of information at their discretion but did not modify them substantially. It remains to be ascertained to what measure Ibrahim was able to free himself from the culture in which he grew up (for the concept of "otherness" cf. TODOROV 1999; GOFFMAN 1963; ESCH 1991). Especially in the analysis of these passages, it would be appropriate to examine his work in the wider context of Arab and Greek-Latin geography. One may surmise a certain idea of the extent of Ibrahim's independence of thought only from an analysis of his work, with special regard to those phenomena in which he himself was interested. Passages concerning the Slavic lands convey how broad his interests were: he describes plants grown by the Slavs (HRBEK 1967, 418), diseases they suffer from (ibid., Chapter 13, 417), customs they preserve (ibid., 417); he also mentions goods (ibid., Chapter 6, 413–414) that are produced and traded, the prices of various kinds of goods, distances between individual settlements (ibid., Chapter 3–5, 412–413; ibid., Chapter 7, 414). His ability to distinguish between data from diverse sources is reflected in the fact that, in several parts of his work, he points out that he is appropriating a given piece of information. In his description of Bulgaria, Ibrahim explicitly emphasises that he has not visited that country, but gathered his knowledge from the reports of Bulgarian envoys at Otto I's court in Magdeburg (ibid., Chapter 9, 415). He similarly begins his account of a town of women, gained from Otto I himself. This nonetheless also indicates that he trusted such second-hand information (KOWALSKI 1946, 50). Thus, one cannot exclude the possibility that Ibrahim trimmed Mieszko's retinue on the pattern of the guards of the Umayyad Caliphs. In that case, however, it would rather have been the period when he lived and grew up in contemporaneous Spain than a previous experience that strongly influenced Ibrahim's work. In his time, similar elite troops of mercenaries formed the power base of Umayyad rulers in a flourishing period, that is, especially under Abd ar-Rahman III (912–961), the first Hispanic Caliph, and later under Vizier al-Mansur (981–1002), an unofficial head of the Empire. Owing to the scant evidence of his own work, one cannot decide whether Ibrahim interpreted Mieszko's retinue from the viewpoint of a subject of the Umayyads, or was able to free himself from his previous experience in this case. Still, it is possible to accept Ibrahim's statement and assume that Mieszko really had an armoured army at his disposal. The only

However, the *Gesta of Gallus Anonymus* († c. 1117) seems to support the credibility of Ibrahim's evidence. The first book of the *Gesta* (MALECZYŃSKI 1952, I.8, 25–26) mentions a considerable number of warriors, allegedly supported at Boleslav I the Brave's (992–1025) castles. BARNAT (1997, 223–235) believes that Gallus is referring to a source with characteristics similar to the *Indiculus loricatorum*. Nonetheless, in this case one must realise there are several facts that determine the value of this account. First of all, Gallus, who connects the existence of a large Polish army with the rule of Boleslav the Brave, lived approximately a century after this duke. In addition, the main motive which moved Gallus to write his work must be taken into consideration, namely to praise the great Piast dukes, including Boleslav I the Brave (992–1025) (cf. MICHAŁOWSKI 1985; BISSON 1998). Both aspects necessarily undermine trust in the reliability of the chronicler's data concerning the size of troops allocated to the defence of Polish castles. Moreover, in contrast to Ibrahim, Gallus Anonymus does not claim in his work that Boleslav's army consisted to a large extent, or even purely, of members of the retinue.

Even if not mentioning justifiable doubts concerning the existence of a strong mounted army of the Piast dukes, Widukind's account should make one think why Mieszko, with his strong cavalry units, needed the aid of the Bohemian mounted warriors. Two things are apparent in this respect. Firstly, one cannot confuse the number of troops who could be called up from a given area with an army actually prepared for combat. Secondly, even a strong mounted army – if such it was! – did not provide its commander with the certitude of success and so could not be the only sufficient condition of expansion. The extent of forest coverage in Central Europe at that time, which would have essentially limited the manoeuvrability of such armies, opposes this idea, too.

Yet one cannot neglect a rather vague account by an anonymous author who, in the second half of the 10th century, wrote his remarks into the work *On the Governance of the Empire* by Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (913–959). This anonymous interpolator also mentions a realm of the White Croats (recently on the exaggerated information concerning the size of the Croatian army: ŽIVKOVIĆ 2007). Some Czech and Polish researchers, who also accept the existence of strong mounted armies of the Přemyslids and Piasts, identify this realm with the "empire" of Boleslav I (935–972). Still, the anonymous interpolator of *De administrando imperio* writes that those White Croats have fewer

thing that raises doubts at first glance is the numbers given by Ibrahim.

equestrians and infantry warriors than the Croats of the Balkans (BARTOŇKOVÁ 1969b, Chapter 31, 390). This testimony places a question mark over the idea of the great power of the newly established “empire”, rather than supporting this concept.

The earliest legends of St Wenceslas (†935) and St Ludmila (†921) feature evidence of retinues of individual members of the ruling dynasty (LUDVÍKOVSKÝ 1958, 59; CHALOUPECKÝ 1939b, Chapter 7, 475; LUDVÍKOVSKÝ 1978, Chapter 4, 36). These passages are the topoi of Carolingian hagiography. However, the only place mentioning their size symbolically refers to “thirty men” (LUDVÍKOVSKÝ 1978, Chapter 2, 20; LUDVÍKOVSKÝ 1971). Moreover, the *Legenda Christiani*, containing this information, paradoxically originates only from the end of the 10th century, that is, from the time when the “extended state retinue” is supposed not only to have existed but also to have been the engine of a crisis for the early Přemyslid realm. The *Chronicle of Cosmas* (BRETHOLZ 1923, 1.40, 74–77; *ibid.*, 2.25, 116; *ibid.*, 2.48, 155) also gives plentiful evidence of the existence of personal, sometimes relatively large, retinues of individual Přemyslids in the 11th as well as 12th centuries. So, together with the *Legenda Christiani*, it questions the idea of a gradual and historically inevitable development of the retinue, as Graus and his pupils assert.

It is clear that the existence of the “extended state retinue” cannot be proved and the idea of its inevitable gradual development must be rejected as well (and in contrast to Poland, there is no evidence of the forcible subjugation of Bohemia proper either.) Concerning this issue, research can be based on a direct revision of sources mentioning “mounted armies” of the Přemyslids and Piasts, as well as on an analysis of contemporaneous Anglo-Saxon and Frankish warfare. The relevant sources prove only the potential existence of large early medieval armies of a relatively motley composition that could never be assembled in one place, and not a uniformly organised ducal retinue. The mounted troops of the early Přemyslids were hardly exceptional. Also the explanation of the mechanism of the “extended state retinue’s” genesis must be revised, since it inevitably results in a vicious circle: the theory’s authors themselves, after all, unwittingly question the capacity of the Přemyslid domain to keep a large retinue; they endeavour to find an explanation in expansion, which allegedly guaranteed income from distant trade. However, they neither explain the circumstances regarding initial investments nor reflect the sources of support of such a large army (cf. CHALOUPECKÝ 1939a, 218–222). They also presume that an army of this type would provide the Přemyslids with absolute domination, but a cursory comparison

with the situation on the borders of the Slavic lands and the Empire imply rather the opposite.

So it turns out that, although the authors of the theory of the “early medieval state of Central European type” depict quite a motley image of the organisation of the Přemyslid and Piast domains in the Early Middle Ages, they do not solve the question of how this type of social structure was created. The idea of the specific nature of this model is not convincing either, since one could find numerous pieces of evidence in German, French and English historiography (but also in primary sources in the respective countries) proving the contrary. In future, a broader comparison is necessary, based on primary sources and detailed knowledge of relevant secondary literature, of not only Central European societies, but also of the Roman Empire slowly transforming into the medieval world. The Anglo-Saxon environment could provide material suitable for comparison, for it too was not under strong Roman influence and even the size of the area of individual Anglo-Saxon realms corresponded to that of the Přemyslid domain. Such a comparison would make it possible to extend existing knowledge of mechanisms leading to new structures of power within a given society (JUSSEN 1995, 1998).

However, one might propose another solution to save the idea of looting warriors. A hypothesis of the autonomy of the military and peasant elements of society, among the Saxons as well as in the East, might provide a clue. In such a case, only arbitrarily settled warriors could live on accidentally levied taxes (or rather, spoils) for a longer period of time. Nonetheless, it would also mean rejecting the existence of relatively steady power structures in the given areas and fully revising the prevailing idea of Bohemian (and even early medieval) society of that time. So the Piasts as well as the Přemyslids may have been at the beginning commanders of retinues rather than founders of “realms”, who dominated only the surroundings of the central castle and lived on accidentally levied taxes. Only the building of castles that have to be repaired periodically through the work of many people could have transformed the coexistence of elites and “freemen”. Thus their disputes would commonly have been settled by negotiations, not by legal action based on indisputable legitimate authority. Indeed, in large areas an independent power capable of enforcing those norms within the role of the frame of reference would have been lacking (ELIAS 2002, 197–208).¹⁶

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Souhrn

Předpoklady geneze přemyslovské domény. V předloženém příspěvku se polemizuje nad stávajícím konceptem počátků přemyslovského knížectví. Ten je založen na několika předpokladech. Jednak vychází z toho, že knížata financovala svou družinu z prodeje otroků. Jednak předpokládá, že právě tato početná jízdní armáda byla hlavním mocenským nástrojem, s jehož pomocí Přemyslovci (ale také např. Piastovci na území dnešního Polska) vybudovali svou moc. Za další pilíř pak bádání obvykle považuje i soustavu hradisek vybudovaných Přemyslovci v poměrně krátkém období nejprve jen v blízkém okolí Prahy a následně po celých Čechách. Tato studie pochopitelně nepopírá význam hradů jako centrálních lokalit jak po stránce mocenské, tak po stránce sociální nebo ekonomické, nicméně upozorňuje na to, že se představy o hradech 10. století, zejména pak o jejich chronologii, zatím opírají pouze o velmi malou pramennou základnu, jež začíná být teprve velmi pozvolna přehodnocována. Následně se studie věnuje otázce, jakou sociální skupinu můžeme vůbec nazvat družinou a zda dává smysl termín „družinné vojsko“. Upozorňuje se, že s nárůstem početnosti nějaké skupiny roste význam pravidel a formálních vazeb, zatímco klesá role osobních vazeb mezi družiníky a pánem, jež je obvykle považována za základ celého družinictví. Stejně tak se upozorňuje na obtíže, jež s sebou při omezených možnostech komunikace nesla kontrola periferie, zejména pak na větší vzdálenosti. To se sebou nese pochybnosti, zda takováto „družina“ vůbec mohla být efektivním mocenským in-

strumentem, který by byl plně kontrolován knížetem. Následně se poukazuje na skutečnost, jak extrémně se liší odhady moderního bádání ohledně početnosti raně středověkých armád a upozorňuje se na praktické logistické limity, omezující případné počty přemyslovských bojovníků, i s omezeními danými neméně rozkolísanými představami o počtech obyvatel tehdejších Čech a jejich schopnosti uživit nepracující elitu. Tato studie dospívá ke kompromisnímu závěru, kdy sice připouští teoretickou schopnost českých knížat (a dalších raně středověkých vládců) postavit do pole značné množství bojovníků, avšak zároveň upozorňuje, že jen menší díl mohl být kvůli logistickým omezením součástí „pohyblivé“ armády, zbytek měl zřejmě jenom defenzivní funkci. Ukazuje se také, že pramenné doklady přímo z Čech nebo z blízkého okolí ukazují spíše „kompozitní“ armádu, složenou z více různých složek, zejména pak z družin jednotlivých Přemyslovců. Studie také upozorňuje, že využití nových vojenských technologií (jezdci, brnění, meče a kopí) neznamenal samo o sobě klíč k vítězství v bitvě a uvádí soudobé příklady, kdy sice jízda sehrála důležitou roli v dosažení vítězství, avšak jako taktický prostředek, nikoli jako jediná a hlavní součást dané armády. Následně se v příspěvku probírají doklady, které mají svědčit o existenci tisíců jízdních bojovníků ve službách Přemyslovců, Piastovců, případně velkomoravských knížat a upozorňuje se na slabiny starších interpretací, jež jej vedou k úplnému odmítnutí staršího konceptu, jak jej zformuloval zejména Dušan Třeštík.

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