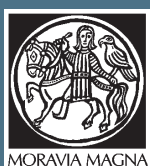
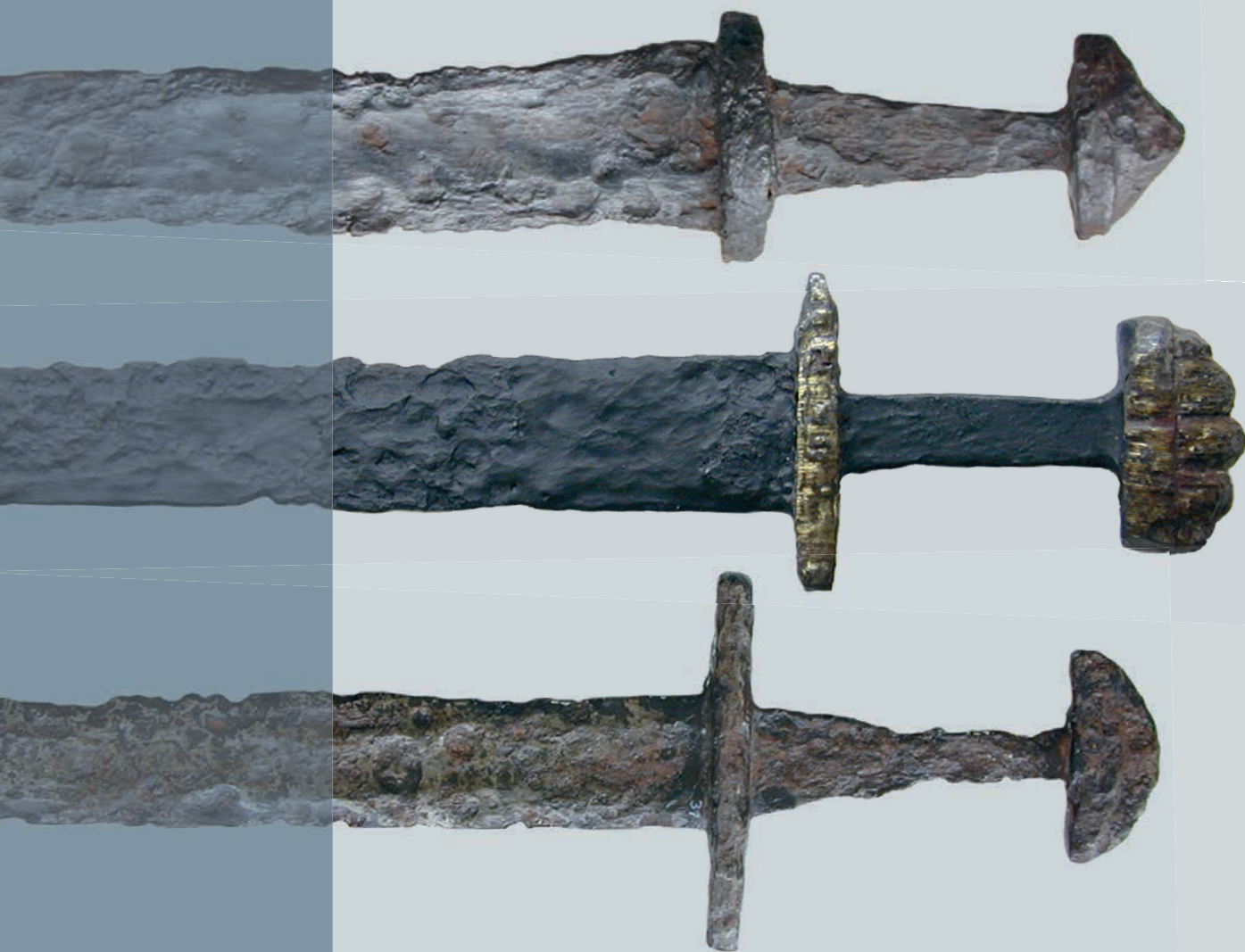


IX

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
Waffenform und Waffenbeigaben bei den mährischen Slawen und in den Nachbarländern

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Lumír Poláček

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BRNO 2019

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Band IX

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Inhalt

VORWORT	7
MILOŠ BERNART: Kettenhemden und andere Kriegerrüstungen des frühen Mittelalters aus Böhmen, Mähren und der Slowakei	9
FELIX BIERMANN: Reitersporen aus Feldberger Burgen im nordwestslawischen Gebiet	23
MILAN HANULIAK: Waffen und Kriegerausrüstung in großmährischen Gräbern auf dem Gebiet der Slowakei.....	37
MIRIAM JAKUBČINOVÁ: Pferdegeschirr und Reitzug des 9. Jahrhunderts aus dem Gebiet der Slowakei anhand des Materials aus Bojná	51
ANTE JURČEVIĆ: Funde frühkarolingischer Waffen und Reiterausrüstung aus der Entstehungszeit des kroatischen Fürstentums	67
BOHUSLAV FRANTIŠEK KLÍMA: Kriegergräber im großmährischen Burgwall Znojmo-Hradiště und seinem Hinterland (mit Exkurs von HELENA BŘEZINOVÁ)	101
JIŘÍ KOŠTA – JIŘÍ HOŠEK: Schwerter und Schwertfragmente aus dem großmährischen Zentrum in Mikulčice	151
PAVEL KOUŘIL: Frühmittelalterliche bronzene Hakensporen mit nach innen umgeschlagenen Enden aus Mähren.....	181
ZDENĚK MĚŘÍNSKÝ: Schwertfunde im ostmitteleuropäischen Raum im zeitlichen und sozialen Kontext	201
ELISABETH NOWOTNY: Waffen und Reitzubehör im Gräberfeld von Thunau, Obere Holzwiese. Neue absolute Daten zu Petersens Typ Y-Schwertern.....	211
MAJA PETRINEC: Sporen und Reitzubehör aus der 2. Hälfte des 9. bis 11. Jahrhunderts im kroatischen Raum.....	233
LUMÍR POLÁČEK – PETR LUŇÁK: Äxte aus dem slawischen Burgwall von Mikulčice und ihr Fundkontext.....	245
NAĎA PROFANTOVÁ: Neue Funde von Waffen und Reitzug aus Mittel- und Ostböhmen.....	263
PHILIPP ROSKOSCHINSKI: Waffenausstattung, Waffengebrauch und Kriegswesen der Nordwestslawen vom 10. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert	283
ŠIMON UNGERMAN: Die Wadenriemengarnituren im frühmittelalterlichen Mähren.....	307
JOZEF ZÁBOJNÍK: Terminologisch-typologische Spezifika der funktionalen Bestandteile des Pferdegeschirrs aus der Zeit des Awarischen Khaganats.....	343
ANDRÁS CSUTHY: Horse Harness Rattles from the Avar Period.....	351

STEFAN EICHERT – MATHIAS MEHOFER: A Carolingian-Period Winged Lance from Lake Längsee in Carinthia/Austria	359
VÁCLAV GŘEŠÁK – MARTINA HŘIBOVÁ – PETR HLAVÁČEK – LUDĚK GALUŠKA – ONDŘEJ BÍLEK: Reconstruction of the Riding Saddle Used in Great Moravia in the 8th–9th Centuries	373
DAVID KALHOUS: Preconditions of the Genesis of the Přemyslid Realm.....	385
PIOTR N. KOTOWICZ – MARCIN GLINIANOWICZ – ARKADIUSZ MICHALAK: Elements of Weaponry from the 9th- and 10th-Century Trepcza Complex near Sanok, South-Eastern Poland.....	403
PAWEŁ KUCYPERA: Pattern-Welding Technique in Early Medieval Sword-Making.....	421
PETR LUŇÁK: Rectangular Embossed Fittings – Possible Armour Parts?	431
KAROL PIETA – ZBIGNIEW ROBAK: The Military Finds from Bojná III and Klátova Nová Ves near Topoľčany, Slovakia	441
ZBIGNIEW ROBAK: The Age of Migrating Ideas. A Short Contribution on Cruciform Decorations on Great Moravian Strap Fittings in the 9th Century.....	453

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 Reiterausstattung 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

The Age of Migrating Ideas

A Short Contribution on Cruciform Decorations on Great Moravian Strap Fittings in the 9th Century

ZBIGNIEW ROBAK

The Age of Migrating Ideas. A Short Contribution on Cruciform Decorations on Great Moravian Strap Fittings in the 9th Century. *The paper presents three groups of strap ends from 9th century sites in Central Europe. Using already-known findings and part of the newest material from the hillfort Bojná I Valy in Slovakia, the author tries to group the fittings into types. Due to the fact that the collection is homogenous and that the area over which the items occur is relatively small, one of these types was given the working label “Bojná”. This paper also outlines considerations concerning the possible origins of this type of fitting and its chronology. Finally, some recent findings from continental Europe as well as from England are also presented here.*

Keywords: Great Moravian Period – Carolingian Empire – strap fittings – decorative motifs

1. Introduction

The period from the end of the 8th century to the first third of the 9th was a period of rapid cultural change for those Slavs living in the area of Moravia and present-day western Slovakia. One of the most characteristic phenomena of this period is the western (Carolingian) influences which affected the social and economic spheres of the culture of the Moravian Slavs. In addition to these social and economic changes, these influences also affected the material culture, especially weaponry, warrior outfits (belts) and architecture.

2. General cultural context

As a result of the war of Charlemagne against the Avars between 791 and 804 AD, the Khaganate was destroyed; this was to wield enormous importance for the further history of the Middle Danube basin and adjacent areas.¹ The war was conducted in several stag-

es and Slavs living in areas inside the Khaganate and in the Czech Basin also participated in the struggles. Unfortunately, there is no specific information about the wartime activities of the Slavs who formed the political structures in the area of today's Moravia and Slovakia. But we must remember that, for contemporaneous European chronicles, distinguishing Slavic tribes was not a priority, unless there was a specific aim. We must reckon with a high probability of participation by the Czech tribes (also called Slavs in general) as allies of the Franks already in 791 AD. Slavs also fought on the Avar side. In 803 AD, the defeated Avar tudun and some Slavs, probably Pannonian, paid homage to Charlemagne in Regensburg. The fact that the Slavs were mentioned by their own name in sources describing the Avar wars, and military actions undertaken by the Slavs on their own as well as within the alliance were described, may indicate a progressive emancipation of the Slavic elites, who sought to exploit the current

¹ About the war and its consequences, recently: TŘEŠTÍK 2001,

53–85; POHL 2002, 315–323; POLEK 2007, 237–301, here the literature along with sources.

political situation. The prospect of sharing spoils looted in the war on either side was probably of considerable significance. This situation lasted long after the struggles between the Franks and Avars, to 811 AD at least, when Charlemagne was forced to intervene in Pannonia to separate Slavs and Avars warring against each other. According to some researchers this may refer to the Slavs inhabiting the basin of the Váh, Nitra and Hron, and making raids on the land that had formerly belonged to the Avars (POLEK 2007, 292–293). In 822 AD a representation of the subjected or allied Moravians appeared at one of the Emperor's meetings, in Frankfurt. In the first two decades of the 9th century the crystallization of the political organism, represented by Mojmir shortly thereafter, probably came to final.

Therefore, after about 820 AD, we must take into consideration the increasing participation of the Slavic aristocracy who lived in Moravia and present-day Slovakia as well as in Bohemia in the ceremonial distribution and exchange of goods between themselves and the Frankish aristocracy. Such circumstances, such as the subordination of Pannonia to the Empire (803/804 AD) and the slightly earlier subordination of Bavaria (788 AD) as well as the imposition of tribute on the Czechs as a result of Charlemagne's expedition in 805–806 AD, were not without significance. From 828 AD the Carolingian state, and after 843 AD East Francia, through its Marches, directly bordered the lands inhabited by the Moravians and the "Slovakian"² Slavs (and later on the Moravian state), regularly displaying its supremacy. The ceremonial of the gift and exchange together with other rituals of public communication became more official in their character after the baptism of the Moravians in 831 AD³ and the turning of the (Great) Moravian aristocracy to a western Christian cultural circle (WAMERS 1994b, 33–37; ALTHOFF 2011, 51–63). The next step of the process was probably a second, internal system of redistribution of goods and the process of spreading ideas among the nobles and their retinues. As far as luxury items are concerned, they were not solely accidentally obtained imports, but the process of acquiring them was also

related to the participation in a high lifestyle together with the Carolingian nobility.

Thus Carolingian culture became the inspiration for new trends in fashion and ceremonies, and also in daily habits, for Slavic princes, and further, for their retinues (PROFANTOVÁ 2001; TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 110–112; 157–158). The idea of warriors wearing a mounted belt fertilised the minds of the Slavic societies that inhabited the area of Bohemia, Moravia and present-day Slovakia, who had been reorganising themselves after the disintegration of the Avar Khaganate (clearly evidenced by the fact that they did not follow a better-known nomadic design of belt). As it seems, the Carolingian model of a noble equestrian warrior, which had been successfully built up from the times of Charles Martel (BACHRACH 1970; BOWLUS 1978) was quickly taken over and accepted among local elites and further among the finer chivalry. Not only were imported Carolingian products worn, but the Slavs started copying them intensively, adapting patterns as well as costs to the requirements of local customers (CAPELLE 1968b, 237; PROFANTOVÁ 1997b, 112–113; SZŐKE 2007, 412). A similar process, although leading to different ends, can be observed in the case of Viking Age Scandinavia, where imported elements of Carolingian sword-belt sets, despite their original intended function, were converted into hangers and brooches and finally initiated the formation of new local types of products, such as trefoil- or U-shaped brooches (MAIXNER 2005, 1–3).

It is worth mentioning that the Carolingian "sword strap fashion", connected with the Christian warrior ethos, widely influenced people throughout Europe in the 9th century.⁴ The popularity of Carolingian patterns strongly influenced not only Moravian or Scandinavian fashion but also the Anglo-Saxon art of the second half of the 9th century. Under the reign of Alfred the Great, direct sources of influence came from the Continent to England, and the Viking conquest and establishment of the Danelaw also effected stylistic changes. From the middle of the 9th century the increasing number of Carolingian parts of strap sets in south and south-east England highlights a direct influence coming from mainland Europe (see below). However, their occasional presence in Viking graves in England suggests that Viking activity might also have played an important role in the adoption of new types of fittings in Britain. Continental influences consequently led to changes in the Trewhiddle style, typical of the whole of 9th-century England, with a tendency to increase in

2 This term should be treated as a geographic appellation only. We do not know of any definite names of Slavic tribes inhabiting present western Slovakian areas (unlike the Moravians in Moravia).

3 However, the establishment of official diplomatic relations, and therefore recognition of the political organisation of the Moravian Slavs, had come earlier, before 822 AD, when the Moravian representation took part in the meeting in Frankfurt. It is not known whether or not the Slavs from present-day Slovakia already belonged to them, and settling that case is not the subject of this study; however, contacts between Pribina and the Bavarian noble environment in the second half of the 820s are well attested (POLEK 2007, 300–305).

4 Recently published metal objects with floral ornamentation from Andalusia (SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 2009a) prove that Carolingian fashion was more widely popularised than hitherto thought.

overall size, which then led to the universal adoption of broad tongue-shaped strap-ends. By the beginning of the 10th century a new, more robust, U-shaped form of strap-end, based upon an established Carolingian prototype, had replaced the zoomorphic variety of the Trewhiddle style. Throughout the 10th century these strap-ends proliferated into a number of decorative types recognised as the Winchester type. (WEBSTER/BACKHOUSE 1992, 229–234; 268–283; Cat. No. 35; THOMAS 2001, 42–43).

The phenomenon of adaptation is reflected in the archaeological material found in areas of Moravia and Western Slovakia. Starting from the late 8th century, we can observe a quantitative increase in the number of elements of Carolingian-type belt-mount sets with a very significant quantitative leap starting from the 2nd decade of the 9th century (ROBAK 2013b, 192–194). There are items imported from the west of Europe, made with complicated techniques and of precious metals, decorated with precious stones, as well as local imitations of them, usually poorer (though this does not mean that there are no unique and exceptional local products).

These elements disappeared from archaeological material at the beginning of the 10th century, as the Great Moravian state collapsed and its elites declined. The youngest items, probably the spoils of war, are found in the context of Early Hungarian material from the Carpathian Basin, dated to the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries (UNGERMAN 2011b, 144). It can be assumed that these products survived in post-Great Moravian culture even until the middle of the 10th century, but only as already-finished products – it is rather doubtful that they continued to be produced.

The design of Great Moravian belt sets was clearly inspired by the products of Carolingian handicraft. According to researchers, items derived from Moravia and Slovakia are generally local products, in contrast to those found in areas of Bohemia, Croatia and Slovenia.⁵ Recently, researchers more frequently express their belief that decorations and belt sets were locally produced in the areas of the Czech Basin, Slovenia and Croatia or imported from certain Slavic areas to others⁶. It is difficult to verify this hypothesis, especially given the possibility that the Slavic aristocracy could have brought specialised craftsmen from Western Europe or Byzantium. In the case of certain items, the Carolingian originals are basically indistinguishable from Slavic copies (WACHOWSKI 1994, 130; LENNARTSSON 1997/98,

538). However, it should be noted that only a few (relative to the total number of findings) fittings found in Moravia are made of silver, gold or bronze. Such examples of expensive imitations of the Carolingian style are known primarily from political and cultural centres such as Mikulčice, Břeclav-Pohansko and Staré Město.

Almost all strap fittings and belt-mount sets found in Slovakia, mainly in the middle Vah and Nitra valley areas, are also local products, but among them there are no “spectacular” specimens, such as the examples found in Moravia. Most of them are only poor imitations of the decorated, luxury parts of belt sets worn by the Great Moravian elites. They were made of iron and usually took on simple forms. Mostly we encounter U-shaped strap ends. The fittings were decorated with geometric ornaments in the form of punched circles, arcs, dashes or engraved lines, or alternatively decorated with simple convex profiling, bosses, quasi-rivets, notches as well as with serrated edges.⁷ Predominant motifs are lozenges with concave sides or a cross, often imagined as a relief. There is a small number of items recognised as “middle class”, that is, objects made of bronze, silver plated, damascened, with more sophisticated ornamentation, and also with motifs typical of Carolingian art. But these are exceptional finds; some of them were probably imported from Western Europe.⁸

Such a situation can be explained by the fact that areas of Western Slovakia were the secondary centre of the Moravian state,⁹ remote from the places of residence of the aristocracy (including high-ranking Church functionaries) who were the natural recipients of luxury goods. Products found in this area should be considered dedicated to low-ranking retinue members, members of a hillfort garrison, or possibly for the middle- and high-ranking commanders of units. It is possible that the end users could also have been people who were not warriors but bore weapons, such as merchants or “Bauernkrieger” – armed free peasants (PROFANTOVÁ 1997a, 88; ŠALKOVSKÝ 2004, 386; ŠTEFAN 2011, 337). The almost complete lack of such types of finds outside political and military centres, connected with the place of residence of the elites, is probably not accidental. A similar layout of finds has been observed in the Bohemian area. (PROFANTOVÁ 1997a, 93; PROFANTOVÁ 2011, 97). The situation is slightly

5 BERANOVÁ/LUTOVSKÝ 2009, 151–157; UNGERMAN 2002, 93; PROFANTOVÁ 1997a; 2001, 327; PROFANTOVÁ 2011, 96–98; BIALEKOVÁ 1977, 150; BIALEKOVÁ 1982, 150–154.

6 MILOŠEVIĆ 2000c, 121–122; PROFANTOVÁ/FRÁNA 2003; UNGERMAN 2005, 717; PROFANTOVÁ 2011, 91–94.

7 BIALEKOVÁ 1977; 1978; 1981; 1982; KOLNÍK 1999, 228; PIETA 2000; ŠALKOVSKÝ 2004; JANOŠÍK/PIETA 2007.

8 Benda 1963; BIALEKOVÁ/PIETA 1964; BIALEKOVÁ 1977, 146; BEDNÁR/SAMUEL 2002, 151; PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007, Obr. 1:4, 1:6, 1:7; JANOŠÍK/PIETA 2007, Obr. 14:4, 14:5; RUTTKAY 2007, 192.

9 TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 109–110; RUTTKAY 2002, 47–49; MĚŘÍNSKÝ 2006, 135; 141–150.

different in southern parts of Moravia, where the presence of a small number of warriors, including equestrians, in a rural milieu is confirmed by burial finds (ŠTEFAN 2011, Fig. 2).

3. Finds from Bojná

Bojná, Topolčany district, is one of the early medieval political and economic centres in the area. The hillfort is situated in the mountain range of Považský Inovec and in the Middle Ages it guarded the route connecting the valley of the River Váh and the valley of the River Nitra. Thanks to excavation research carried out there since 2005 and terrain prospections in the hillfort's environs we have managed to obtain materials that have become invaluable sources for studies of the craft production, including weaponry, of Great Moravia. Parts of strap sets are one of the most commonly found categories of items in Bojná. The collection is composed of more than 200 items now and the number continues to increase (ROBAK 2014, 46–53). Quantitatively, this collection is basically comparable only with the collections that come from the state centres located in Moravia. Therefore no other Slovak site is comparable with Bojná, perhaps except for Pobedim. Most fittings represent type IV strap-ends according to K. WACHOWSKI (1992, 58) or class B4 in the most recent elaboration of Carolingian strap fittings (ROBAK 2013b, 59–61) – the most popular type of strap-end. In addition to elements similar to those obtained from across the entire area of Great Moravia as well as Slovenia and Croatia, some types of fitting from Bojná are completely or almost completely unknown from other locations. A preliminary analysis allows the distinguishing of three new varieties of strap-ends, which can be classified as class B4 (one variety) and class C (two varieties) (ROBAK 2013b, 59–61; 69–76). Class C fittings are extremely rare in archaeological material from the area of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and some of them are unique and impressively decorated. Such items are equally rare in materials from Western Europe and Southern Slavic territories.

4. Types of fittings

Among the rectangular fittings from Bojná we can distinguish two groups:

a) Fittings in the shape of an elongated trapezoid (Cat. Nos. 19–21; Fig. 1:1; 10). They are decorated with a geometric ornament (as are most fittings from this site) made with vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines, arcs and corrugations. The middle parts of these fittings are decorated with profiling or with two bosses in the shape of a lozenge with concave sides. Fittings

with this shape have not been known before. There are 3 exemplars from Bojná. The only analogy that could be recalled is the fitting with a loop and copper underlay under the rivets which was found in Hradec nad Jizerou (KAVÁN 1967, 153–159; Fig. 1:3) and which is probably part of a sword belt set (ROBAK 2013b, 117–119)¹⁰. In the case of the fittings from Bojná, there are no finds of parts of sword belt sets of that type, except for a strap-end, decorated in a similar manner. Of course, it is likely that further research could change this situation: for example a pair of small strap ends in the shape of an elongated trapezoid with horizontal ribs (Fig. 1:6; Cat. No. 37) from grave 594 in Zalaszabar-Borjúállás was recently published together with a couple of buckle-spurs (SZŐKE 2009b, 128; Abb. 45:b).

Spurs with buckled terminals, undoubtedly of Carolingian origin, are a developed version of looped spurs. Buckled spurs commonly occur in the 9th century on the south-eastern peripheries of the Carolingian Empire. The oldest items, from Croatia, can be dated back to the late 8th/early 9th centuries – the youngest (Zalavár, Zalaszabar-Borjúállás) that can be dated were certainly in use around the middle of the 9th century (after 840 AD). There are two main areas of concentration of such items – Dalmatia and the surroundings of Lake Balaton, as well as a smaller concentration covering Moravia and Western Slovakia. Single items are known from Rijeka and Esztergom (KOUŘIL 2001).

Spurs from Zalaszabar-Borjúállás, just like exemplars from Zalavár (Sós 1963, 62–66), reveal more similarities to items from Dalmatia, with a long ornamented spike. A large number of buckled spurs were found together with strap-fitting sets, although it is worth noting that these spurs appear practically exclusively together with the so-called “bird-shaped” or large, profiled shield-shaped strap-ends. Trapezoidal fittings from Zalaszabar-Borjúállás in conjunction with this type of spurs are an exception.

b) Rectangular fittings, slightly narrowed in the middle part (Cat. Nos. 22–24; Fig. 1:2, 1:4). There are 2 exemplars known from Bojná. The surface of the first fitting is decorated with a plastic ornament. Its segments are alternately convex and concave and it is decorated with ornaments in the form of punched circles, arcs, diagonal hachure and lines dividing the segments. The second one is decorated with geometric and plastic ornaments. Its upper part is covered with notches and a herringbone pattern. In the middle, the fitting is undecorated. Its lower part is decorated with

¹⁰ Cat. No. 25. The time of deposit of the fitting in a settlement layer was stratigraphically determined to the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries (KAVÁN 1967, 159). In the source publication the underlay was described as made of gold.

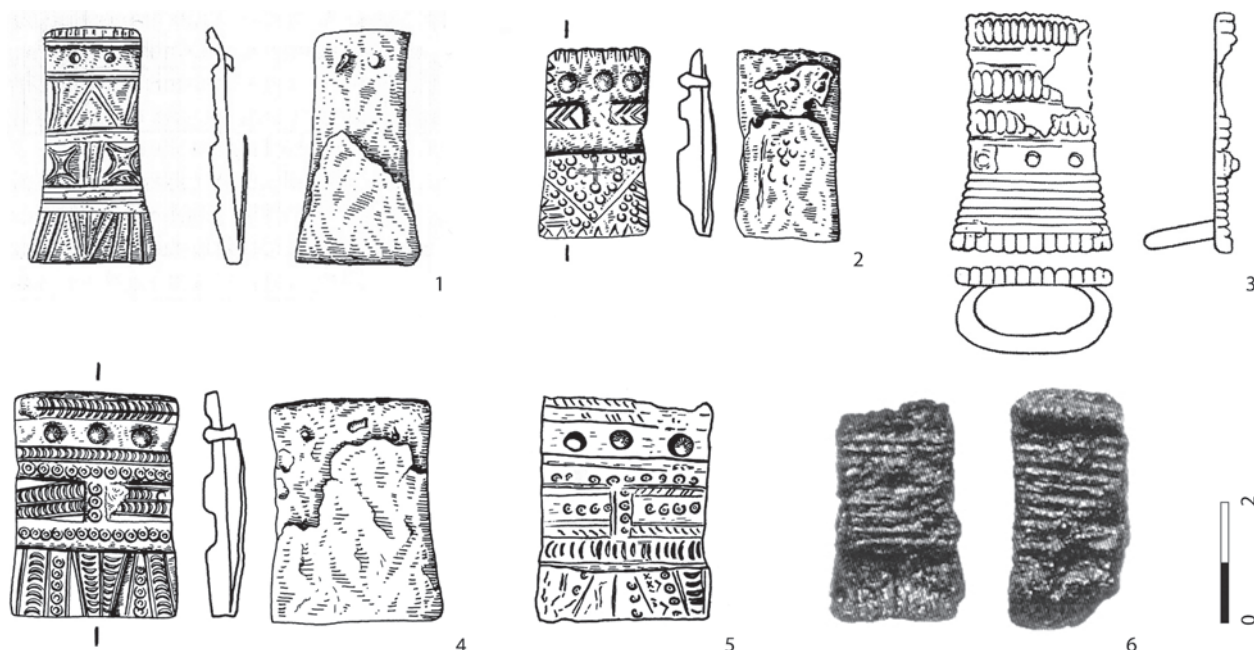


Fig. 1. Rectangular and trapezoid strap ends: 1, 2, 4 – Bojná-Valy (PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007; JANOŠÍK/PIETA 2007); 3 – Hradec nad Jizerou (KAVÁN 1967); 5 – Kraków-Dębniaki (NIEZABITOWSKI et al. 2008); 6 – Zalasabar-Borjúállás (SZÓKE 2009b).

irregular punching. It was cut with two lines arranged in a V-shape, which in effect divided the lower part of the fitting into three triangles. In the middle triangle the symbol of the cross was punched.

The find from Cracow recently published as a Carolingian fitting (NIEZABITOWSKI ET AL. 2008, 412; ROBAK 2013a; KAJFASZ 2014 139–140; Fig. 1:5) provides evidence that we can expect further discoveries of this type of fitting, sometimes even already in museum storehouses. The item has a rectangular form and its middle part is slightly narrowed. The surface is decorated with geometric and plastic ornaments also in the form of punched circles, arcs, diagonal hachure and lines dividing the segments. Aside from minor differences in the ornament sequence, the fittings from Bojná and Cracow are almost identical. Given the fact that this variety of fitting does not occur anywhere else apart from Bojná and that the configuration of the ornament is quite complicated, we may cautiously presume that they were made in the same workshop, if not by the same craftsman.

In 2004 P. ŠALKOVSKÝ (2004) pointed out an unknown variety of the class B4 fitting (Cat. No. 1–14; Fig. 2.). These U-shaped and flat (1–2 mm in thickness) fittings in this paper are further referred to under the working label “Bojná-type”. They are relatively common at this site, which was probably the very place of their production (Fig. 11). They are relatively large in size (5–5.6 cm in length and 2.5–3 cm wide). Their characteristic features include three bosses (probably intended to imitate rivets) placed at the lateral edges

and in the centre of the lower end of the fittings. Based on the currently identified fourteen specimens, we can distinguish two sub-varieties.

The first one includes fittings with convex bosses (Cat. No. 4–14). The bosses are generally ornamented with punched symbols resembling an upside-down inverted omega sign or a triangle with open upper part as well as a symbol of a circle divided into two or three parts. Between the bosses there are carved or punched motifs of a Greek cross in several varieties (Fig. 3.). The upper sections of both varieties are decorated with a herringbone pattern. The main decorative motif applied to the fittings with three bosses from Bojná is the Greek cross. It is possible that the notches on the fittings of the first variety were filled with niello or inlaid with copper wire (BIALEKOVÁ 1981, 63–82), as was surmised in the case of the fitting from Alsórajk-Határi and probably the one from Bojná (Cat. No. 4). The second variety includes fittings with large round flat bosses decorated with punching (Cat. Nos. 1–3)¹¹. Between and above the bosses the ornament is made of horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines of arcs and punched points.

Almost all the fittings were found at the Bojná I hillfort. Beyond that site, in Slovakia, such fittings were found only in Čakajovce near Nitra – though

¹¹ After submitting the article for publication another fitting of the second variety has been identified and preserved. It comes from grave 6/99 in Nitra-Chrenová (Baumax) and was previously published as corroded (BŘEZINOVÁ/BENEDIKOVÁ 2003, 59; ROBAK 2014, Tab. LII:6).



Fig. 2. Strap ends with three bosses: 1 – Bojná-Valy; 2 – Detva-Kaľamárka (reconstruction according to X-ray photo); 3 – Dubnica nad Váhom-Údolie; 4 – Alsórajk-Határi (Szőke 1996); 5, 6 – Bojná I Valy (PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007); 7 – Nitra-Chrenová.

the ornament is obscure (REJHOLCOVÁ 1995, 54; 78; ROBÁK 2014, Tab. LI:3a), Dubnica nad Váhom-Údolie¹² (Fig. 2:3; Cat. No. 14), near the hillfort in Detva-Kaľamárka¹³ (Fig. 2:2; Cat. No. 12; ŠALKOVSKÝ 2004, 384) and at the burial ground at Nitra-Chrenová (Fig. 2:7; BRÉZINOVÁ/BENEDIKOVÁ 2003, 59). Because all those fittings have exact analogies among the fittings from Bojná, it can be assumed that all the fittings of the “Bojná type” were made at the same workshop.

Interesting and only seemingly distant finds were discovered in male grave 25 in Alsórajk-Határi near Zalavár (Fig. 2:4; Cat. No. 13). The graveyard was probably founded around 850 AD or later (SZŐKE 1996, 76–80, 124). The entire site dates back to 840/850–880/890 AD, just as the graveyard in Zalaszabar-Borjúállás does (MÜLLER 1994, 96–97), and both are associated with the presence of people under the rule of Pribina (the man who was exiled from *Nitrava*) in the area of Lake Balaton. According to the sources, Pribina had acted in the vicinity of Nitra until 833 AD, when he was expelled by the Moravian ruler Mojmir¹⁴. About 842 AD Pribina

received land located to the west of Lake Balaton, on the River Zala, as a benefice from Louis II the German. This benefice was officially confirmed by letters of Louis in 846 and 847 AD. The sources inform us that Pribina, on taking charge of the dukedom, “has gathered the people from all around him and greatly expanded in that

2014a, 247). Pribina only became a prince because historians and archaeologists needed a ruler of the Principality of Nitra (which they had created themselves). They needed to fill the gap before the regnum of Svatopluk in the years 869–870 (see CHROPOVSKÝ 1964, 20 with literature; BIALEKOVÁ 1972, 127–128). Today, among the numerous strongholds of western Slovakia previously dated to the first third of the 9th century, allegedly forming the core of this Principality (the 30 strongholds of *Merehanos* mentioned in *Descriptio civitatum et regionum ad septentrionalem plagam Danubii*), only in the case of a few can this chronology be sustained (HENNING/RUTTKAY 2011; RUTTKAY 2012, 122–131); furthermore, the title assigned to Pribina loses its rationale. In the historical sources Pribina is described as „*quidam*” (someone), never as *dux Nitraense*. Furthermore, the subordinating of Pribina by Louis the German to merely a prefect, Ratbod, (which would certainly have been an insult for a nobleman, even a Slavic one) provides an argument against this hypothesis. In addition, neither Pribina nor his son Chezil (Kocel), being Frankish counts and using the title *dux*, made claims to the territory located in the Nitra basin, although they had numerous occasions to do so. Pribina did not participate in the disputes concerning the supremacy in Moravia at the time of Rastislav and contented himself with the county of Lower Pannonia. In this case the title *dux* did not express the exceptional position of Pribina, because it was used to describe all the counts of the Eastern March (TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 153–154).

12 Acknowledgements to Mr. Jaroslav Somr from the Museum of Trenčín for supplying the fitting.

13 Acknowledgements to PhDr. P. Šalkovský, DrSc. for sharing the fittings from Bojná (33/98) and Detva as well as unpublished X-ray photos for further research.

14 We are not certain whether Pribina had indeed been a Nitran prince before his expulsion in 833. I am inclined to believe that he was rather a local regent administering the Nitra region (*Nitrava*) on behalf of Mojmir (cf. TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 135; SZŐKE

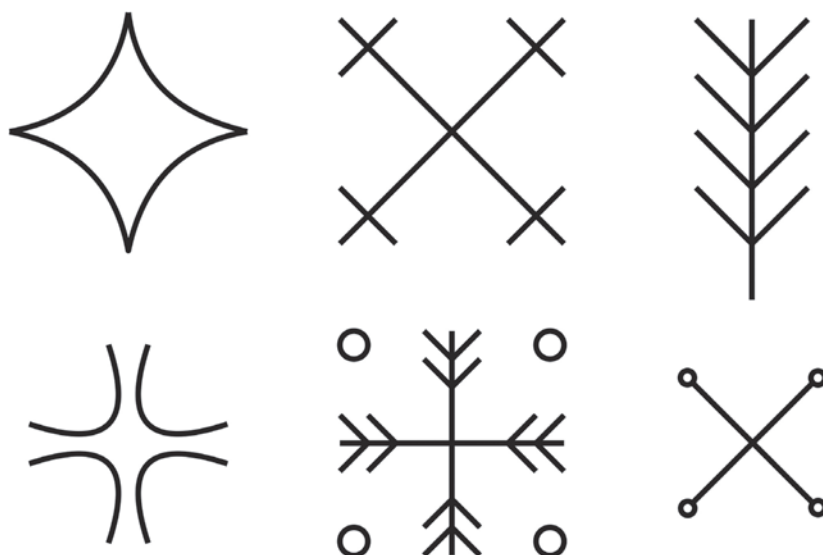


Fig. 3. Decorative cruciform motifs applied at the strap ends with three bosses.

land¹⁵. Its eastern borders also constituted at that time the external eastern borders of the entire Carolingian Empire.

Of the witnesses of the consecration of the church in Mosaburg/Blatnograd by the Archbishop of Salzburg Liupram, half bore Slavic names. As was indicated by B. M. Szóke, based on archaeological and anthropological evidence (SZÓKE 2008, 52), most of Pribina's people came from the nearest areas of Pannonia and can be connected with mixed Avaro-Slavic groups that had been living there since the 7th century. But it is possible that there was a group of his former tributaries who had previously inhabited the area of Nitra (or just members of his party mentioned in *Conversio*), and that could explain, at least to some extent, the appearance of some elements characteristic of the middle Váh and Nitra valley areas there. However, it is worth noting the rich diversity of Pannonian culture of the mid 9th century, which reflects the diversity of the eastern regions of the Carolingian Empire, including Moravian, Southern Slavic territories, East Alpine and Lower Danubian areas, corresponding with the statement about people from "all around". The Carolingian patterns are clearly visible in the culture of Pannonia in the second half of the 9th century, which does not require a comment in the light of the official supremacy of the Carolingian Empire over that area since the end of the Frankish-Avarian wars. In terms of the material culture it refers both to imports as well as the local production of imitations (SZÓKE 2007, 412–413).

15 Translated by the author. (...) *et circumquaque populos congregare ac multum ampliari in terra ilia*. "Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum", c11 (Kos 1936, 136). Although this fragment has other translations: "and was in that land a great lord" or "and gained great importance in that area" (SZÓKE 2009a, 403, Ref. 90).

The fitting from Alsórajk-Határi is a little different from the coherent set of finds from Slovakia. The item is shorter and more "compressed", so it was most probably made in a different workshop from the fittings from Bojná, which seem to be products of a single craftsman. If there is no genetic relationship between the finds from Bojná and Alsórajk-Határi, the fitting could have been made in a local Pannonian workshop (maybe in Zalavár), producing for local customers, using a western pattern¹⁶ not as yet recognised, or the fitting could be an import. At this point it is possible to put forward two hypotheses for further research. First, that the fittings from Bojná are imitations of some peripheral-Carolingian products and are not an original invention, and second, that the pattern on the fitting from Alsórajk-Határi, or the fitting itself, comes from Western Slovakia.

There are no other typical elements of belt sets, decorated with a similar style, at least so far. Although corroded, the only fitting with a neck and loop is known from Mikulčice (Cat. No 15). It shows preserved traces of decoration resembling that present on the fittings with three bosses – it also has three bosses and a notched edge, but the plate of the fitting is smaller and the bottom edge is straight. In the middle of the plate there was a small rivet and there are no traces of decoration. The fitting cannot be associated with any homogeneous stratigraphic unit (KLANICA 1984, Abb. 8:16). In the case of iron items from Mikulčice we should also assume that they were locally manufactured (KLANICA 1973).

16 B. M. SZÓKE (1996, 81) suggests that the pattern for the fitting could have been provided from the Tassilo Chalice Style. However, his suggestion also assumes that the fitting is dated to the first third of the 9th century.

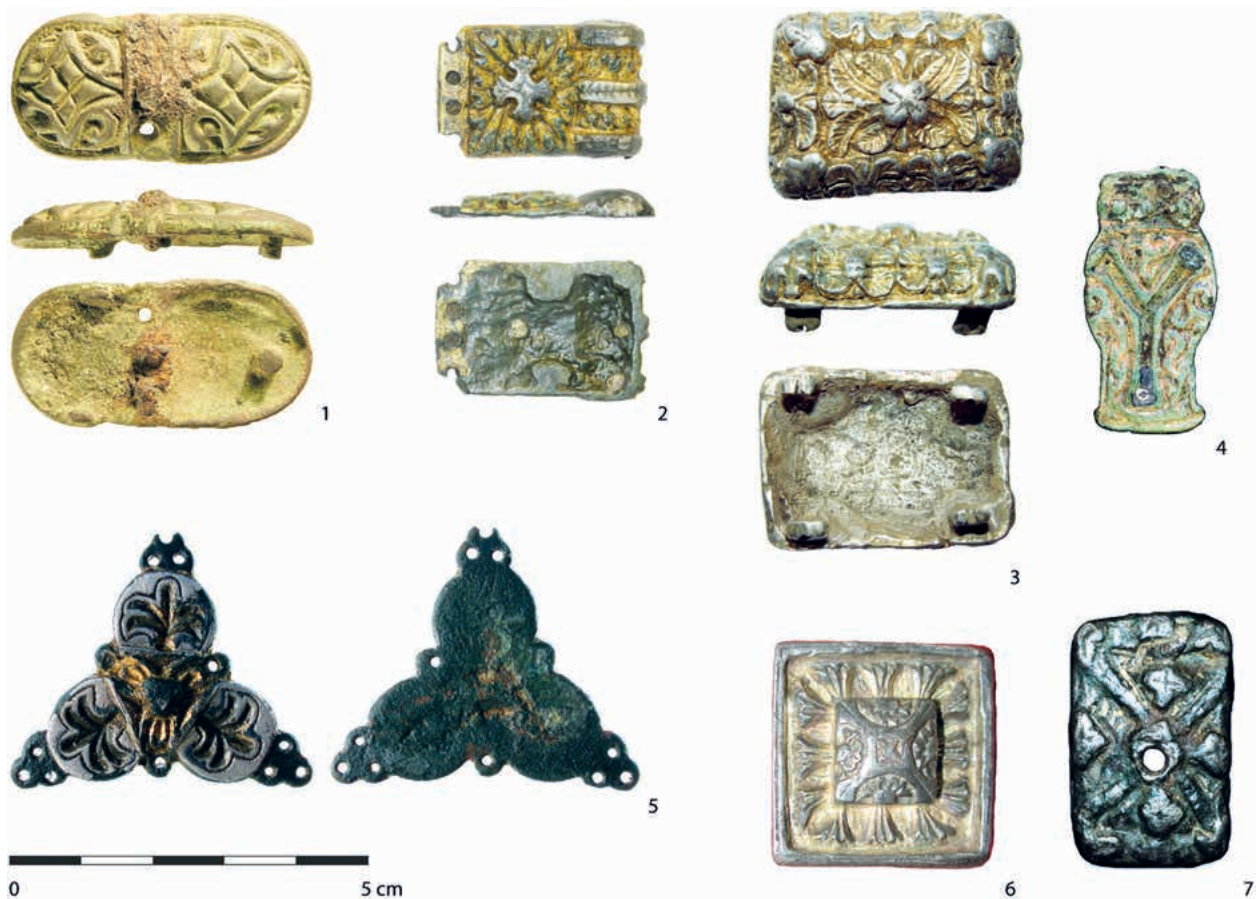


Fig. 4. Ninth century strap-fittings with cruciform decoration from England: 1 – Isle of Wight; 2 – Torksey; 3 – Cambridgeshire; 4 – Great Dunham; 5 – Great Barton; 6 – Wareham; 7 – unknown place. Photos 1–5 by Portable Antiquities Scheme; 6 by British Museum; 6 by TimeLines (ref. see catalogue).

It is possible that said group of fittings was an imitation of mounts with three bosses and a rib in the shape of an inverted Y. Probably the above-mentioned corroded fitting from Mikulčice belongs to that group, rather than to the “Bojná type”. These fittings are known in Great Moravian and South Slavic environments (Fig. 12) and pertained almost exclusively to partial and full sword belt sets. They are also known from Bojná – the cross-fitting, 2 fittings with neck and loop (Ösenbeschlag), the two-part fitting connected with a hinge and rectangular shield (Scharnierbeschlag), 2 twin-like broken plates of probably another such fitting and 3 strap-ends (ROBAK 2013b, 178–182), Olomouc (BLÁHA 1998, Obr. 6:4), Rajhradice (STAŇA 2006, Obr. 67:316.7), Mikulčice (KLANICA 1984, Abb. 8:11; PROFANTOVÁ/KAVÁNOVÁ 2003, 252; ROBAK 2014, Tab. IX:4), Znojmo (KRATOCHVÍL 2007, Obr. 8–9), Svete Gore nad Bisticco (BITENC/KNIFIC 2001, No. 342), Gradišće nad Bašljem (BITENC/KNIFIC 2001, No. 317), Zalavár (SZŐKE 2014b, Fig. 86), Libice n. Cidlinou (PRINCOVÁ-JUSTOVÁ 1997, Obr. 1:5) and Trenčianske Teplice (PIETA 2000, Abb. 4:8). The same ornament is applied on plates of spurs from Vyšný Kubín (ČAPLOVIČ

1987, Obr. 95:1), Rajhradice (STAŇA 2006, Obr. 53:60.1 and maybe 52:53.2b) as well as on a set of spurs and loops from Břeclav-Pohansko (KALOUSEK 1971, 143) and a cross-fitting from Mikulčice (KLANICA 1984, Abb. 7:1). From Slovenské Pravno and Jasenov-Vyšehrad come spurs with a plate decorated in an opposite way – with three hollows, originally encrusted, and a Y-notch (BIALEKOVÁ 1981, Obr. 62; JAKUBČINOVÁ 2014, Obr. 5:1), similar to the fitting with a neck and loop from Brno-Staré Zámky (KOUŘIL 2013, Abb. 10:2).

The bosses on some elements are precisely decorated with geometric (often with quasi-omega or triangle) motifs and, in one case, a quasi-mask motif. Some of them also have lines in a herringbone pattern above the bosses. Perhaps a similar effect was intended to be attained on imitations of the “Bojná-type” fittings. There is no doubt that fittings with the Y-rib were very popular, also in distant regions of the Slavic territories, and that some of them exhibit almost identical decoration, which may suggest the Carolingian origin of that decorative motif and presumably the same origin of some of the fittings. The other argument is a resemblance between the tips of ribs formed in the shape

of animals' heads and the heads of animal creatures imagined on some items made in the Tassilo Chalice Style – the so-called “Duckhead type”¹⁷. Some researchers have put forward a hypothesis that these fittings are of Carolingian origin (PROFANTOVÁ 2011, 79–81), but there are no known Carolingian fittings of this type from Western Europe.¹⁸ Fittings with “Duckhead” rib tips are known only from Slovenia, where different Carolingian artefacts occur quite commonly, including early Carolingian items, and also those decorated with Tassilo Chalice Style ornamentation. All these items are characteristic of the period of Frankish penetration (military, trade and missionary) to the east after the end of the 8th century, and for the period of the establishment of a new political order in the Central Danubian region and areas along the River Sava and the Adriatic coast in the early 9th century (TOMČIĆ 2000, 151–161; TOMČIĆ 2007; KNIFIC 2008, 320–322). Although, as was mentioned, a clear distinction between ostentatious items made in Western Europe and those made locally, according to western patterns (maybe by travelling craftsmen), is in fact impossible. On the other hand it should also be noted that most items from Slovakia are simplified, or even mediocre, which indicates local production in blacksmiths' workshops (Bojná, Trenčianske Teplice, Vyšný Kubín).

A related group of fittings are those with an X-rib and four bosses known from Zemianské Podhradie (KOLNÍK 1999), Pobedim (ROBAK/KNOLL/BIALEKOVÁ 2013), Gradišče nad Bašljem (BITENC/KNIFIC 2001, No. 321) and Obrovo Hradišče near Zinkovy (METLIČKA/PROFANTOVÁ 1997/98, Abb. 2:1). Two similar strap-ends with three bosses and one functional rivet come from Bojná (ROBAK 2014, Tab. L:8–9), but instead of the X-rib there is an X-notch. The only one West European find decorated with an X-rib which can be considered a Carolingian mount, maybe a Rotenkirchen type (UNGERMAN 2011a, 592–595), comes from a private collection and is not confirmed (Cat. No. 32; Fig. 4:7),

17 HASELOFF 1951, 18–19; 36–49; YPEY 1968, 175–176; HASELOFF 1976/77, Abb. 20; Sander 2007, 97–100; WAMERS 1994a, 30–37; WAMERS 2008, 38–47.

18 So far there is only one known, probably Carolingian, fitting with a Y-rib. It comes from Great Dunham in Norfolk, but the way of applying the rib is quite different (Fig. 4:4; Cat. No. 36). According to B. Ager (see catalogue) the fitting is ornamented in a style similar to the Tassilo Chalice Style, but poorly. The Y-rib (not inverted) was filled with niello and silver wire. Instead of the three bosses, triskeles are applied. The unusual shape of the fitting resembles the shape of a fitting from Marquartstein (WAMERS 2008, Abb. 11), and some other fittings decorated in the Tassilo Chalice Style, for example from Mogorjelo in Bosnia (MILOŠEVIĆ 2000b, IV.170a) and the region of Volterra in Tuscany (GIESLER 1974, Abb. 3:37a), which could be accidental, of course.

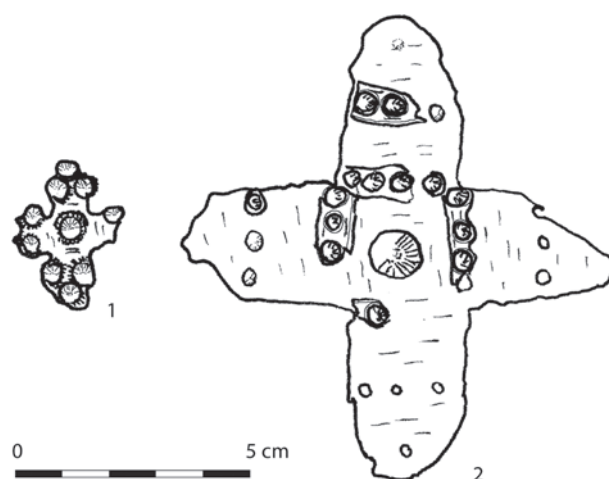


Fig. 5. Karlburg-Villa, cross-fittings (OBST 2008).

but the cross-shaped bosses are similar to the cross motif applied to the Carolingian fitting of a Rotenkirchen type from Cambridgeshire (Cat. No. 34).

Fittings with six bosses, known from Vyšný Kubín (TURČAN 2004, Obr. 2:3), Závada and Gars-Thunau (FRIESINGER/VACHA 1987, 122) could be distinguished as another local style. The latest analysis of the sword belt set details from grave 23 in Závada shows that the bosses of those fittings were not hemispherical, as was depicted in older drawings, but flattened and decorated with convex punching.¹⁹

Unfortunately, we do not know many Carolingian fittings from Western Europe decorated in at least a similar manner, except for finds from Karlburg-Villa (OBST 2008, 93). From that site comes a small iron cross-fitting with three large rivets on each arm, and one central one, whose heads are decorated with pearls made of bronze (Fig. 5:1). From Karlburg-Villa there also comes a massive iron cross-fitting which has two lines of rivets on each leaf – four at the butt of the leaves and three in the middle as well as one on the bottom (Fig. 5:2). Trefoil-shaped fittings fastened with three rivets placed at the bottom of leaves are known from Husby (CAPELLE 1968a Taf. 3:2) and unknown sites in Italy and England (Cat. Nos. 28–29, Fig. 4:5; 9:5–6). This manner of decoration of the bottom parts can also be found on strap-ends ornamented in the Tassilo Chalice Style (WAMERS 1994a, Abb. 17:066).

5. The cross motif

Back to the Greek cross motif (*crux quadrata*): it is one of the most popular decorative motifs in Great Moravian craftwork (BIALEKOVÁ 1999), especially on

19 Analysis provided by Mgr. M. Knoll from AÚ SAV Nitra and author.

strap mounts, and it appears on them regularly, also in the form of cross potent, cross crosslet, cross patée, cross, saltire (St Andrew's cross) or a cross with four points. A lozenge with concave sides can also be considered a variant of the Greek cross motif that can be observed for example in the case of the lozenge-shaped pendant crosses of Velké Bílovice, Mutěnice and Windeeg types (MĚŘÍNSKÝ 1988) or Carolingian lozenge-shaped cross-brooches with a triple bud (WAMERS 1994a, 138–141). This ornament was usually achieved by punching four arcs. Depending on the craftsman's skills, the theme ended up something like a Greek cross (which it was intended to be) or otherwise more like a square. Fittings decorated with a rhombic boss occur in Great Moravian materials frequently. This pattern could also have been taken from Carolingian sword-belt sets, although West European belt set parts of Carolingian type, decorated with a "pure" geometrical ornament, are very rare. Such elements, if any, are rather interlaced into a floral ornamentation²⁰ (Fig. 4:1, 8:6; compare Fig. 6:1 and Fig. 6:2).

In this context it is worth mentioning a recent find of an oval fitting with a loop from the Isle of Wight (Cat. No. 30; Fig. 4:1). The fitting is a typical part of the Carolingian sword belt set with a trefoil-shaped fitting. The surface of the fitting is decorated with a motif in the shape of two touching flagella forming a calyx. The resulting square field was divided into four parts. A similar decorative theme is placed on a gold-plated silver spur-strap fitting, found in grave 4 in Biskupija-Crkvina (JELOVINA 1986, 18–19). Additionally, a loop from that grave is decorated with a plated lily-cross. The motif imagined on the fitting from the Isle of Wight we can also observe on an enamelled square brooch from Rozenburg (CAPELLE 1978, Taf. 27:m). A very similar, though simplified, motif is depicted on the strap-end fitting found in grave 253 in Břeclav-Pohansko (KALOUSEK 1971, 148). However, this fitting is considered a Carolingian import (CAPELLE 1968b, 231) and originally could have been part of a set.

In addition to typical utilitarian and symbolic functions, the belt could also have been used as a bearer of magic contents. We could mention that the magical function of a belt and the images presented on its

fittings was observed as early as in Early Iron Age items (EIBNER 2000) and such a protective function ensuring prosperity was certainly known in the Early Middle Ages both to the Franks as well as Slavs (ČAUSIDIS 2001; UNGERMAN 2001).

The Franks were considered by the Slavs to be not entirely Christian but more worshippers of the cross (TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 202–203). The cult of the Holy Cross and a demonstration of piety in general were significantly enhanced in the Carolingian state as a consequence of the policy of empire building, especially during the reign of Louis the Pious. First of all, the symbol of the cross had served as a sign of victory since the time of Constantine the Great in the Byzantine Empire. It also had a similar meaning for the Visigoths.²¹ Therefore, it could supposedly help in vanquishing enemies, not only pagans but all foes, and support victory. Pre-Christian religions allowed a multiplicity of cults and believers expected supernatural support and protection from the deity who was venerated. The victorious war by the Franks against the Avars, won by the Christians, that is, the people who worshipped the cross, could only strengthen the Slavs in this belief, and this probably facilitated their Christianisation (ŁOWMIAŃSKI 1979, 264, 273). A replacement of old symbols by the symbol of the new faith was a quite natural progression.

However, the symbol of the cross accompanied the Frankish advances not only as a sign borne at the front of the army, but also as a permanent element of their clothing, with the king and nobles in front, embroidered for example on coats and placed on weapons (SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 2009b; MÜLLER-WILLE 2003, 459). This phenomenon had penetrated Frankish culture in the 5th–6th centuries under influence from Byzantium and it had been popularised during the 7th century. Among the Franks, the manifestation of personal Christian belief had been very significant since then (WAMERS 1986, 36; 42–44; 57; 60; BIERBRAUER 2003, 437). Placing symbols of the faith on clothing and parts of equipment probably had more than an aesthetic or declarative function, though it did undoubtedly broadcast the fact which god was patronising the bearer. Thus, it is a typical example of magic thinking – a sign of the new faith (in presupposition better because of victoriousness) which had to protect the owner, augment his success and defeat his enemies. This belief was expressed by the Monk of St Gall in the 9th century almost literally, when he stated that "*first, the sword was dressed in a scabbard, afterwards wrapped in leather and thirdly in a very white linen toughened by a light wax, in order to*

20 A fragment of a strap-end, decorated with a lozenge surrounded by plant spirals, is kept in the British Museum in London (AGER 1995, Abb. 9; Cat. No. 31). A strap-end from Birka also has a lozenge as a central motif (ARBMAN 1937, Taf. 47:1). The recent find with the cross motif is a strap fitting of Rotenkirchen type from Cambridgeshire (Cat. No. 34). From Claydon in Suffolk also comes a strap-end ornamented with stylised acanthus fronds enclosed in the shape of a lozenge around the cross (THOMAS 2001, Fig. 6.4:a; THOMAS 2004, Fig. 6:31; Cat. No. 35).

21 GOLDBERG 1999, 60–72; BACHRACH 2001, 147–150; MCCORMICK 1986, 247–252; TŘEŠTÍK 2001, 202–204.

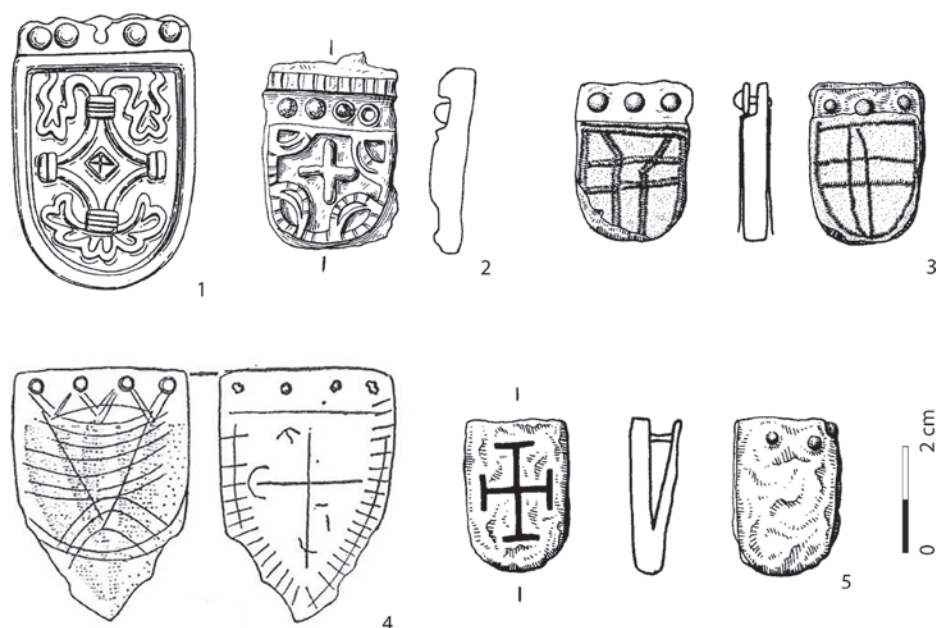


Fig. 6. Strap ends with cross ornament: 1 – Claydon (THOMAS 2004); 2, 3, 5 – Bojná-Valy (PIETA et al. 2011); 4 – Altessing (STEIN 1967).

destroy the pagans, together with a shining little cross in the middle, being always tenacious.²² This description is consistent with a description of Frankish swords set down in the 9th century by al-Kindī. According to him, the swords had crescents or crosses inlaid with brass or gold at the top (POULÍK 1957, 281; KIRPIČNIKOV 1966, 46–47). Two of these swords, along with sets of fittings, were found in graves 265 (POULÍK 1957, 280–284; KOŠTA 2005, 160–162) and 580²³ (KLANICA 2002, Fig. 3; 9, KOŠTA 2005, 172; KOUŘIL 2014, 367) in Mikulčice. Another sword with a golden Greek cross is known from Haithabu (KALMRING 2010, Abb. 301:20). The same decorative motif, made in a similar way as the one on the sword from grave 265 in Mikulčice and the one from Haithabu, is applied on a small strap end from Bojná (Cat. No. 16), which could be part of a sword-belt set.²⁴

The poor equipment of West European burials dated to Carolingian times does not provide us with satisfactory comparative material (SCHUTZ 2001, 95; MÜLLER-WILLE 2003, 459–460), especially with regard to simple forms of fittings. However, the majority of already known Carolingian belt fittings, most of which come from Scandinavia, are decorated with floral motifs, while a single cross motif, and generally geometric motifs, occur only sporadically. A repeatedly cited belt-end fitting from Gornji Vrbljani in Western Bosnia (VINSKI

1977/78, Tab. 1–2), undoubtedly Carolingian, is an excellent example, although the cross motif applied there is just part of an expanded ornamental layout, as is the one on the fitting from Torksey in England (Cat. No. 27; Fig. 4:2). The arms of the cross are stylised in the shape of a palmette or a lily, in an almost identical manner to the way the floral ornament is applied to the set of fittings from Duesminde (WAMERS 2005, 134) and Birka, grave 750 (ARBMAN 1937, Taf. 47:1, 3). Carolingian fittings decorated with a simple Greek cross motif are also known from the graveyard in Altessing in Bavaria (STEIN 1967, Taf. 2:16:a; Cat. No. 17; Fig. 6:4), Büraburg in Northern Hesse (CATALOGUE PADERBORN 1999, V:15; Cat. No. 19; Fig. 9:3) and Domburg in the Netherlands (CAPELLE 1976, Taf. 18:319). A cross with tripled arm ends, with a similar pattern to the cross applied on the fitting from Torksey, was roughly (self-made?) engraved on the reverse of the fitting found in Kinnekule in Sweden (WAMERS 1985, Taf. 43:3; LENNARTSSON 1997/98, No. 117). It is worth noting that this shape of cross appears in Great Moravian and Southern Slavic environments (KLANICA 2002, 31, 33–34; Obr. 3) and also on the cross-guards and pommels of Carolingian swords (LENNARTSSON 1997/98, 461), as well as on some other items and jewellery (SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 2009b, Abb. 21:4). According to Z. KLANICA (2002, 33–34), this shape of cross is typical of the Mediterranean area at the time under discussion, but, as is detailed above, it was also popular in Western Europe.

Fittings with roughly engraved (scratched) crosses constitute a very interesting class. Beside Kinnekule, some specimens are known from Altessing, Schouwen and Bojná (STEIN 1967, 218; CAPELLE 1978, Taf. 14:72; Fig. 9:1; HARUŠTIAK 2010, Taf. I:5), and thus could be

22 After POULÍK 1957, 281; transl. by author.

23 The loop and the belt-end were engraved with the motif of the lily cross.

24 Cross motifs could also be applied on other kinds of weapon, such as spears. One such Frankish winged spearhead is known from Herzegovina (MILOŠEVIĆ 2000b, IV.261b).

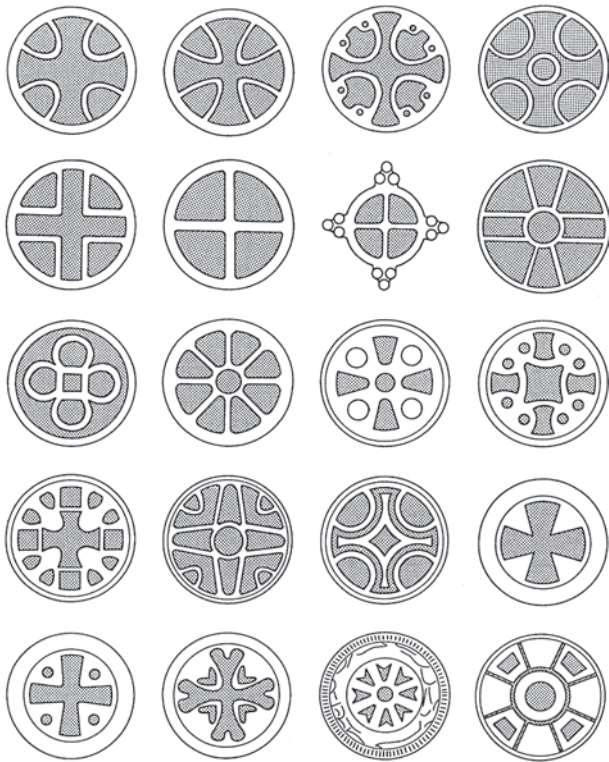


Fig. 7. Decorative motifs applied on Carolingian-Ottonian enamelled disc brooches. Second half of the 9th–10th century (BERGMANN 1999).

considered uncommon. Some owners, presumably, wanted to provide themselves with some additional care from God by engraving/scratching a cross symbol on the reverse of their fitting. The engraving of runic inscriptions on the reverse of Carolingian belt-ends (often re-used as hangers) also occurs in Scandinavia (BLINDHEIM 1982, Fig. 16–17). However, it is very interesting that all the copies mentioned with a cross are made of silver.

According to E. WAMERS (2008, Abb. 14) and M. SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM (2009b, 193–194) such fittings with the cross motif (often applied as a dominating decoration) could have belonged to clerics or abbots. The finds of bells and parts of a reliquary or an altar from Bojná also indicate the place as the seat of high-ranking Church functionaries, not only ordinary priests. In the light, however, of the great popularity of cross motifs such belt fittings cannot be connected unambiguously with the clergy. Still, there could be some truth in the statement. Between 741/742 and 746/747 AD, Büraburg was the site of a bishopric and the missionary centre of St Boniface-Winifrid (STRZELCZYK 2008, 211–212) and one of the strategic points in the Saxon wars of Charlemagne (SONNEMANN 2010, 21–24). According to Z. KLANICA (2002, 30–34, 39), in robbed grave 580 in Mikulčice Bishop Methodius might have been buried (a very disputable hypothesis).

6. Possible inspiration

It is quite possible that the inspiration for decorating Slavic fittings could also have been supplied by other types of western decoration with simplified ornamentation, e.g. rings or especially Carolingian brooches²⁵ (Fig. 7 and 8). Increased production of cross-shaped brooches decorated with the cross motif can be observed from the beginning of the 9th century onwards, and this fact could be connected with the intensification of Christianising actions aiming at conquering areas located to the east of the Rhine by the Carolingians (WAMERS 1994a, 134–142; WAMSER 1999, 230). The centre of production and distribution was localised probably in the eastern part of the Frankish state. So far, the biggest concentrations of such artefacts come from Mainz and Karlburg (WAMERS 1994a, 50–151; WAMSER 1999, 228–230; MÜLLER-WILLE 2003, 454). The distribution map of disc brooches with a cross motif and cross brooches shows a specific concentration between the Main, Rhine and Elbe, which can be supplemented by finds from East England, Danish-Saxon areas, especially Haithabu (WAMERS 1994a, Abb. 83; SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 1997, Abb. 3; MÜLLER-WILLE 2003, Fig. 28.4), female burials of the Pre-Köttlach horizon from Upper Austria and Steier (WAMERS 1994a, 77–80; SZŐKE 1992, 881–883; SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 1997, 342) as well as finds from the territories of Trentino, South Tirol and Northern Switzerland. Although the area of the Czech Basin, Moravia and Slovakia are not included, the ornamentation of brooches resembles images depicted on Slavic fittings. The lack of mass finds of brooches in the Great Moravian environment could be the result of use of a type of dress other than the Frankish, without a coat fastened with a brooch (WAMERS 2005, 81). It has been noted that a sample of applications in the shape of a cross have formal analogies among cross brooches, especially the Worms type (SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 1997, 342–344). Such applications are known from Mikulčice, Budeč, Nin-Ždrijač, Kappele ob. Jadersdorf in Carinthia and Rusanovići (SCHULZE-DÖRRLAMM 1997, 351; PROFANTOVÁ 2011, Obr. 16; MILOŠEVIĆ 2000b, IV.232), as well as an unknown site in Hungary (HAMPEL 1905, Taf. 280:3)²⁶. The use of these applications is only partially clear. In

25 CAPELLE 1976, Taf. 7; WAMERS 1986, 76; WAMERS 1994a, 50–151; BERGMANN 1999, 438–444; MÜLLER-WILLE 2003; SPIONG 2000, 54–63, Taf. 5; BAASTRUP 2009, 518–521.

26 Another cross fitting from Chrudim (Měřínský 2006, 231) that resembles cross brooches is dated to the 10th century, but could be older. The second fitting comes from Libice nad Cidlinou (PROFANTOVÁ 2000, Obr. 3:9). These items are different from “typical” cross-fittings due to their having very thin arms.

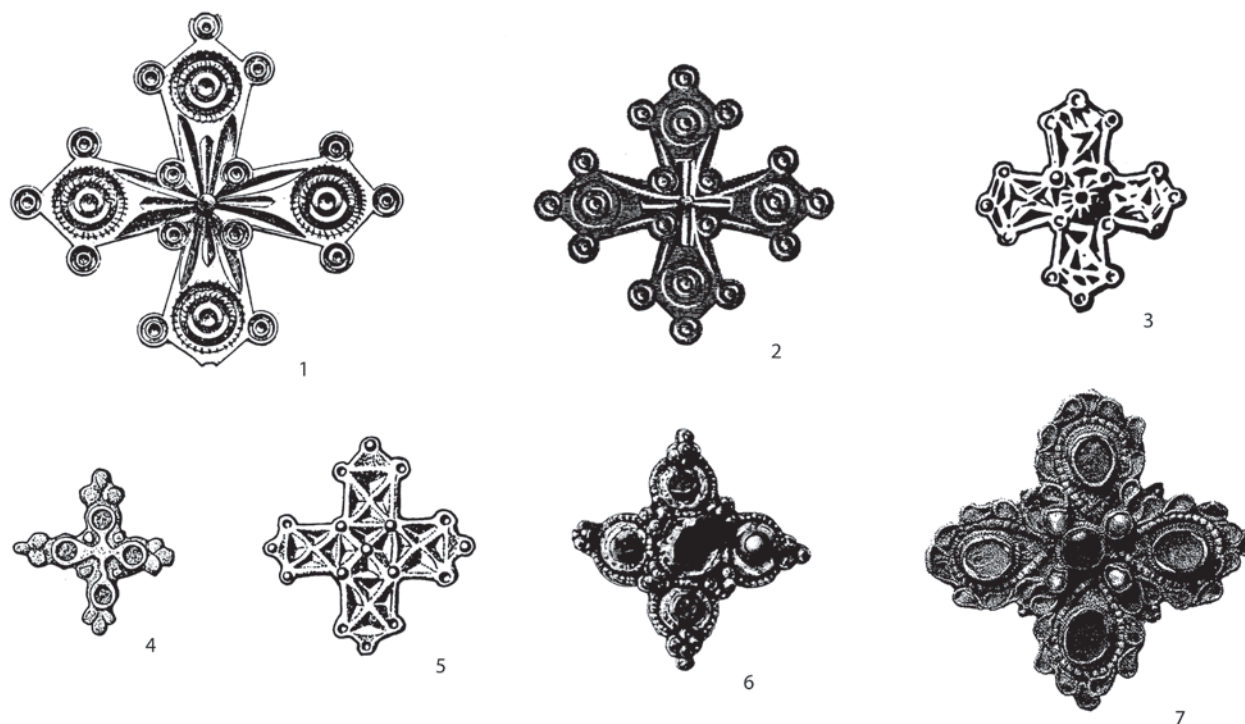


Fig. 8. Cross-shaped brooches of Worms type: 1 – Worms-Abenheim; 2 – Worms; 3 – Woltwiesche; 4 – Karlburg-Villa; 5 – Worms; 6 – Ribe; 7 – Northern France (MÜLLER-WILLE 2003).

the case of the fitting from Nin, it could be a brooch imitating brooches of the Goddelsheim type or an original product; however, its position in the grave suggests that it was worn near the waist (MILOŠEVIĆ 2000b, IV.196). The find from Rusanovići (fitting and buckle with a loop) and the oval fitting from Brno-Líšeň, decorated much like fittings from Mikulčice and Budeč (PROFANTOVÁ 2011, Obr. 16), indicates that at least some of them were used as belt-applications or other components of attire. One of the features distinguishing the Worms type are three bosses or rivets at the convex or triangular terminals of each arm of the cross, in each inner angle and sometimes in a convex centre (Fig. 8). Various parts of these applications from western examples consist of the ornamentation of arms with mask motifs, although this motif has analogies from Western Europe (ibid.). Decoration on the brooch from Karlburg-Villa is very similar to the decoration of the cross-fitting from that site and resembles the ornamentation of Slavic fittings with three bosses (Fig. 8:4).

The scarcity of West European items decorated with geometric motifs could be the result of burial customs prohibiting the equipping of graves. Most known elements come from deposits, i.e. units with a positive selection of items. They are made of precious or coloured metals, valuable for the depositor. Probably further research and especially detector finds will provide items with simpler ornamentation that could have been used

by common soldiers, which for now we can observe for example at Haithabu, Karlburg and Balhorn (WAMERS 2008, 49). However, the cross motif and variations of it, constituting the base or being interlaced into floral ornamentation, typical of Carolingian decorative art, occurs commonly in the 9th century, and must have influenced the aesthetics of the emerging Moravian state.

7. Concluding remarks

As was already mentioned, there are no formal analogies for the above-described fittings from Bojná. It is easier to refer to the entire material of this type that comes from the site. The simple technology of manufacturing and the design of the iron strap-fittings from Bojná suggest local production, probably for the needs of local customers. It can be assumed that these products are the result of assimilation and the processing of foreign stylistic as well as cultural patterns, flowing in from the west and south, from the circle of Carolingian culture. The aristocracy and state elites emerging at that time, who laid down cultural role models imitable for the rest of society, played an important role in that process. Establishing the new religion was also a significant factor. Therefore, the production and application of the fittings had to follow the taking over and dissemination of the original (Carolingian) patterns, and that required time. It took place in the 9th century but not at its beginning. In the case of the use of



Fig. 9. Knight's equipment: 1 – Schouwen (CAPELLE 1978); 2 – London (AGER 1995); 3 – Büraburg (CATALOGUE PADERBORN 1999); 4 – Kinnekule (WAMERS 1985); 5 – Italy (SMITH 1923); 6 – Husby (CAPELLE 1968a). Photos 2 and 5 by British Museum.

Christian symbolism with a magical or declaratory aim, one should not expect that this happened before the official adoption of the new religion around 830 AD. Similar categories of products (belt- and strap-fittings, plate spurs) are nothing special in grave finds and at the hillforts of Great Moravian times;²⁷ however, they can be associated almost exclusively with places where elites resided. It should be mentioned that minor stylistic differences can be observed between items originating from Moravia and those coming from Slovakia (the amount of which is smaller), but it could be the result of research conditions, as well as of a lack of graveyards with a large number of burials containing pieces of warrior equipment over the area of present-day Slovakia.

The lack of well-dated cohesive finds makes it impossible to date the collection precisely. The hillfort in Bojná unfortunately does not have, so far, a precisely established absolute and relative chronology (almost all samples of wood tested come from one section of the eastern section of the ramparts). Nine dates obtained for the wood indicate its construction or reconstruction in the last quarter/end of the 9th century (HENNING/

RUTTKAY 2011, 278–280). However, the archaeological material from Bojná I can be dated generally to the 9th century (ROBAK 2014, Tab. CXIX). Further research will probably allow us to determine a more precise chronology of the site, but for now we must use the closest analogies to provide the dating of the complex.

The site in Závada, located about 6.5 km from the hillfort in Bojná, is the closest known Great Moravian graveyard in the area. In male grave 23 there, a set of sword-belt fittings was found, made in a manner similar to the “Bojná style”, along with a sword of X type. The dating of grave 23 to the first third of the 9th century, based on the presumption that the finds belong to the so-called Blatnica-Mikulčice Horizon,²⁸ cannot be sustained any longer. The only thing that could be claimed about the chronology of grave 23 is that the grave is older than grave 22 and partially destroyed. Elements of such sword belt set fittings (type V, also called Závada type)²⁹ can be dated generally to the second half of the 9th century and the beginning of the 10th century

27 For example: POULÍK 1963; KALOUSEK 1971; DOSTÁL 1975; KLANICA 1984; GALUŠKA 1996; MACHÁČEK 2002; PROFANTOVÁ/KAVÁNOVÁ 2003; STAŇA 2006; KLANICA 2006.

28 Acknowledgments to Mgr. Š. Ungerman, Ph.D. for turning my attention to this case in 2010. About the so-called Blatnica-Mikulčice Horizon, with a history of the rise and decline of that paradigm see: UNGERMAN 2011b; ROBAK 2013b, 22–25.

29 ROBAK 2013b, 149–152; UNGERMAN 2011a, 584–588.

(ROBAK 2013b, 149–152). The whole graveyard can be dated generally to the 9th century (BIALEKOVÁ 1982, 153–154).

The dating of the nearby hillfort in Pobedim, where several samples of strap fittings decorated in a similar style were found, was also generally established as from the first half of the 9th century until the end of the 9th century (VENDTOVÁ 1969, 211; BIALEKOVÁ 1977, 150). It should be noted that the lower end of this chronology was determined based on archaeological material and is uncertain. The results of recently performed research aimed at verifying the chronology of the Slovakian hillforts may confirm that the hillfort at Pobedim existed until the beginning of the 10th century (HENNING/RUTTKAY 2011, 268–270, 284). The recent results of dendrochronological and radiocarbon analyses of samples from the Slovakian hillforts, especially Pobedim and Bojná I, confirmed that the Great Moravian hillforts in Slovakia existed longer than was previously supposed, and maybe also that they emerged later³⁰ (HENNING/RUTTKAY 2011). The hillfort at Detva-Kalamárka was probably also built at the end of the 9th century (ŠALKOVSKÝ 2002, 125; ŠALKOVSKÝ 2011, 30–31).

The only certainly known thing is that “Bojná type” fittings were used in the second half of the 9th century. This fact has been proved by the find of the unique

fitting, known only from the region of the middle Vah and Nitra, in the graveyard in Alsórajk-Határi. This was a burial of a young man (21–25 years). It is a pity that we do not know how long the fitting could have been used for before it was deposited in the grave. The dating of the fitting to the first third of the 9th century, provided by B. M. SZŐKE (1996, 79–81), is based on the above-mentioned analogies, mainly from Závada and Pobedim, so it cannot be considered certain. The author does not connect the fitting with Moravian products, but looks for the genesis of the fitting among West European items, especially those decorated in Tassilo Chalice Style. If the “Bojná-type” fittings are in fact younger, Szőke’s hypothesis about their close interrelation with the products made in Tassilo Chalice Style is not properly substantiated, although the parallels quoted indirectly are valid, as they can be found in the case of some fittings with a Y-rib, whose arms are tipped with an animal’s snout. The origin of the style in which the fittings are made can rather be associated with a general expansion of Carolingian culture and art, which for obvious ideological reasons adopted the cross as its leitmotif. These patterns were then taken over and adapted by the Slavs to their own aesthetic expectations.

The uniqueness of the collection of strap fittings from Bojná lies in the fact that, despite the large quantity of items found at the hillfort and in its surroundings, some of them have no analogies outside the site. The genesis of those products, although under strong Carolingian influence, should thus be sought in the immediate vicinity.

30 We can observe a similar situation in the case of the complex in Břeclav-Pohansko, now dated, based on dendrochronological analyses, to the 880s (DRESLER et al. 2010; MACHÁČEK/DRESLER/RYBNÍČEK 2013).

Catalogue

1. *Bojná I Valy No. 85/2010*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.3 cm; W. 2.6 cm. Corroded surface before preservation. Fitting decorated with a geometric ornament. The lower half is decorated with three large round flat bosses with punched circles (probably four placed in the shape of a cross). There is a geometric ornament placed between the bosses. The lower edge is serrated. Along the edge there is a line of punched circles. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. Above the rivets a line of arcs is placed. The fitting is close to Nos. 219/05 and 229/05 (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLIX:8).

2. *Bojná I Valy No. 229/2005 (Fig. 2:5)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.9 cm; W. 2.8 cm. Fitting decorated with a geometric ornament in the shape of notched, horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines as well as punched concentric circles. The lower part is decorated with three large round flat bosses in the shape of two concentric circles with small circles punched in the shape of a Greek cross. The upper half of the fitting is decorated with two horizontal lines of arcs. Three rivets are placed between them. The lower edge is serrated (PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007, Obr. 1:10).

3. *Bojná I Valy No. 219/2005 (Fig. 2:6)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.3 cm; W. 2.4 cm. Fitting decorated with a geometric ornament in the shape of notched, horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines as well as punched concentric circles. The lower part is decorated with three large round flat bosses ornamented with notches and punching. The middle part of the fitting is decorated with two horizontal lines of arcs. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. The line of arcs is placed above the rivets (PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007, Obr. 1:5).

4. *Bojná I Valy No. 6/2002*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.9 cm; W. 2.9 cm. Heavily corroded. Originally the fitting was decorated with three bosses with a geometric ornament (probably triangles). There are marks of geometrical ornamentation between the bosses. The lower edge is serrated. The upper half of the fitting is decorated with two herringbones. The fitting was fastened with three copper or brass rivets. On the lower part of the fitting, marks of copper are visible. The notches were probably inlaid with copper wire. The fitting is probably close to Nos. 279/2011, 567/2009 and 33/98 (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLVI:6).

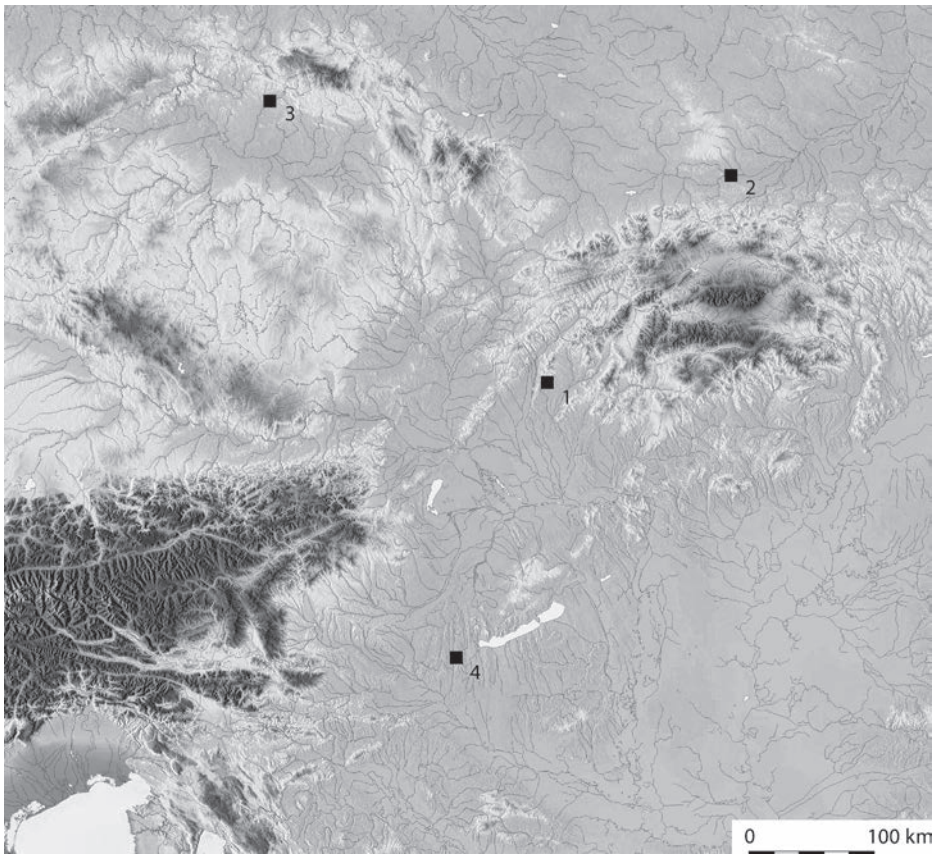


Fig. 10. Distribution of trapezoid fittings: 1 – Bojná-Valy; 2 – Kraków-Dębniaki; 3 – Hradec nad Jizerou; 4 – Zalasza-bar-Borjúállás.

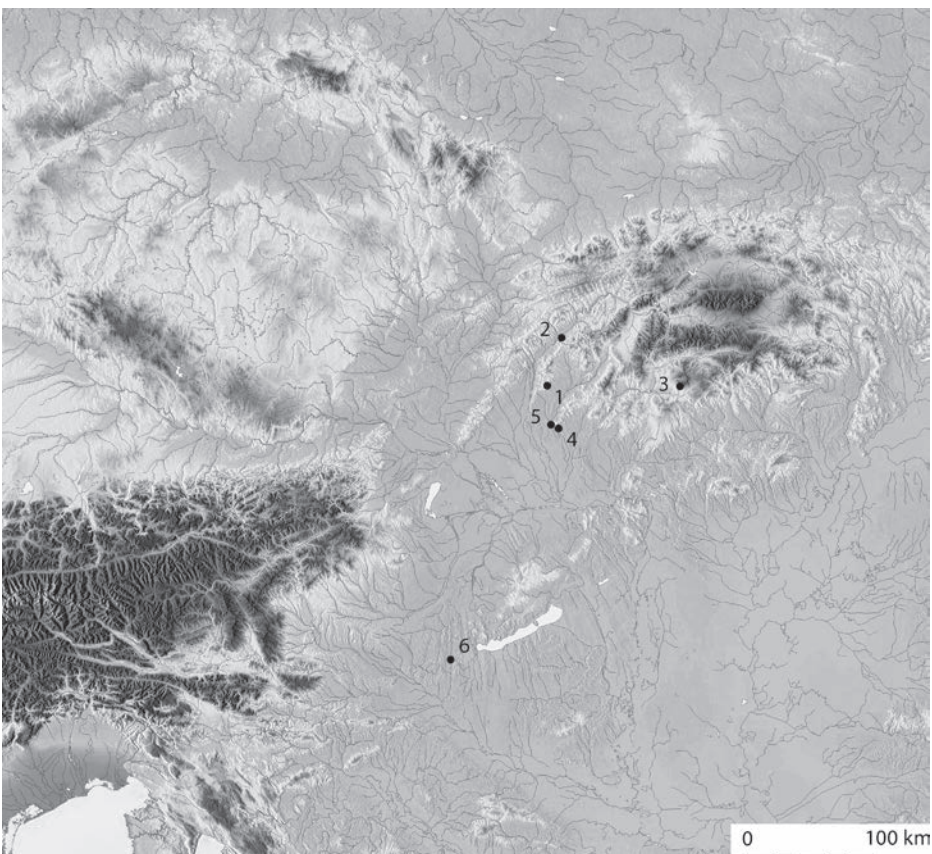


Fig. 11. Distribution of strap-ends with three bosses (Bojná-types): 1 – Bojná; 2 – Dubnica nad Váhom; 3 – Detvá-Kalamárka; 4 – Nitra-Chrenová; 5 – Čakajovce; 6 – Alsórajk-Határi.

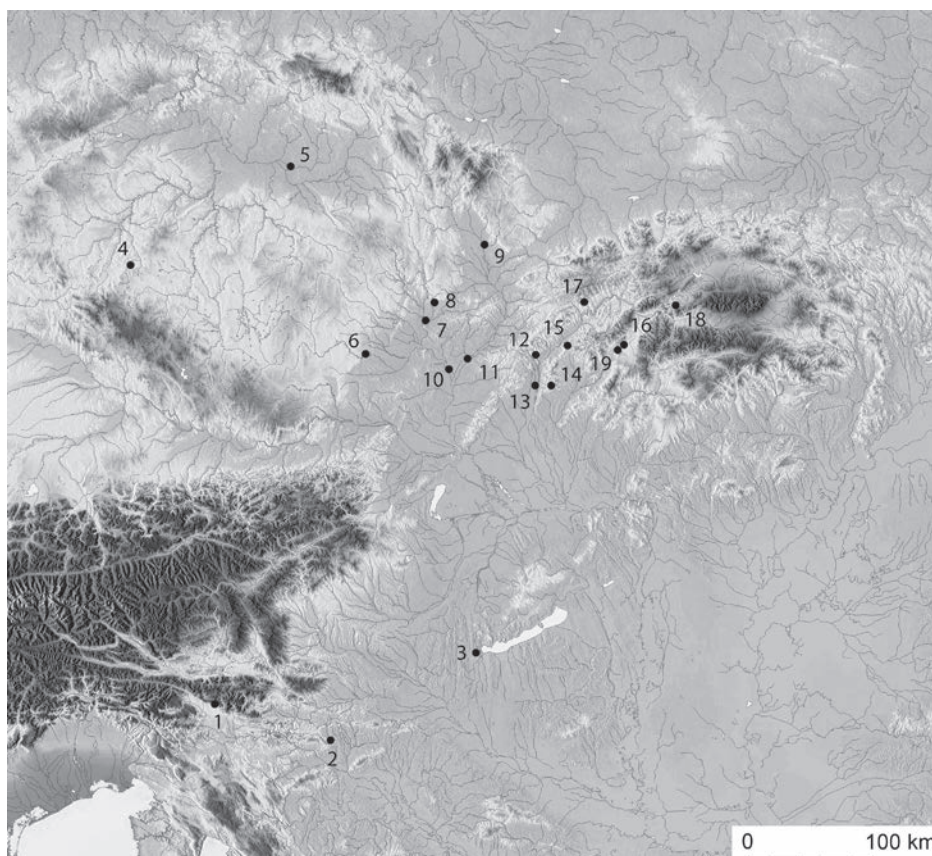


Fig. 12. Distribution of fittings and spurs decorated with Y- and X-rib: 1 – Gradišče nad Bašljem; 2 – Svete Gore nad Bistricou; 3 – Zalavár-Vársziget; 4 – Obrovo Hradiště; 5 – Libice nad Cidlinou; 6 – Znojmo; 7 – Rajhradice; 8 – Brno-Staré Zámky; 9 – Olomouc; 10 – Břeclav-Pohansko; 11 – Mikulčice; 12 – Zemianské Podhradie; 13 – Pobedim; 14 – Bojná; 15 – Trenčianske Teplice; 16 – Slovenské Pravno; 17 – Dolná Maríková; 18 – Vyšší Kubín; 19 – Jasenovo-Vyšehrad.

5. *Bojná I Valy No. 567/2009*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.9 cm; W. 2.6 cm. The lower part is decorated with three bosses with a geometric ornament and arcs placed in the shape of a lozenge with concave sides made with a curved punch. The lower edge is serrated. The upper half of the fitting is decorated with two herringbones. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. There is another herringbone above them (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLIX:4).

6. *Bojná I Valy No. 614/2010*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 5.2 cm; W. 2.8 cm. The fitting is decorated with three bosses with notches on the surface. Two lateral bosses are semi-circular. Between them a motif of a cross crosslet is engraved. Above the lateral bosses double herringbone lines are placed. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. Above the rivets there is a line of herringbone. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLIX:7).

7. *Bojná I Valy No. 268/2011*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.6 cm; W. 2.5 cm. Fitting decorated with three bosses with notches – on the lower in the shape of a triangle. Between the bosses there are traces of a geometric punched ornament – four points. Probably between them, a motif of a Greek cross was placed, as on fitting Bojná No. 49. On the lower boss there is a trace of herringbone or flagellum. The middle part of the fitting is decorated with an engraved chequered pattern. Above it two herringbones with three rivets between them. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLIX:13).

8. *Bojná I Valy No. 277/2011*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 5.4 cm; W. 3.0 cm. Fitting decorated with three bosses with notches. Two lateral bosses are semi-

-circular. Between them a motif of a cross crosslet is engraved, and below them a geometrical ornament is placed (now effaced – only diagonal and horizontal lines are visible). Above the lateral bosses, a double herringbone, three rivets and another herringbone are placed. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLIX:14).

9. *Bojná I Valy No. 278/2011*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 4.8 cm; W. 2.5 cm. Fitting decorated with three bosses with triangular notches. Between them a motif of a Greek cross with four points is engraved and, below, a motif of a flagellum. The middle part of the fitting is decorated with an engraved chequered pattern. Above it there are two herringbones with three rivets between them. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated (ROBAK 2014, Tab. L:1).

10. *Bojná I Valy No. 279/2011*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 5.0 cm; W. 2.8 cm. The fitting is decorated with three bosses with notches. Between them, engraved lines and three motifs of a lozenge with concave sides made with a curved punch (Greek cross) are placed. Above the bosses there is a space with an effaced ornament – probably herringbones. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. Above them there was probably a further herringbone. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated. There are triangles or omega signs on the bosses. The fitting is close to 567/2009 (ROBAK 2014, Tab. L:2).

11. *Bojná I Valy No. 33/98 (Fig. 2:1)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 5.2 cm; W. 3.0 cm. The fitting is decorated with three bosses with notches. Between them a motif of a cross crosslet has been applied. Above the lateral bosses a double herringbone, three rivets and a further herringbone are placed. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated (ŠALKOVSKÝ 2004, 383).

12. *Detvá-Kaľamarĳka, Slovakia (Fig. 2:2)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 5.6 cm; W. 2.6 cm. The lower part is decorated with three bosses with a geometric ornament (a triangle with open upper angle) and arcs placed in the shape of a lozenge with concave sides made with a curved punch. The lower edge is serrated. The upper half of the fitting is decorated with two herringbones. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. There is a further herringbone above them. Similar to 567/2008 (ŠAL-KOVSKÝ 2004, 384).

13. *Alsórajk-Határi, grave 25, Hungary (Fig. 2:4)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.8 cm; W. 2.6 cm. Fitting decorated with three bosses. Originally the bosses were probably decorated. Between them, a motif of a cross with circles at the ends of the arms has been applied. Along the edge, between the bosses, two lines of notching are placed. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated. Above the lateral bosses a herringbone, three rivets and another herringbone are applied. Under the rivets there were probably copper pads. All the notches might originally have been filled with niello. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated. Along with the fitting a buckle was found, but it was too narrow to fit the fitting (SZŐKE 1996, 76–81).

14. *Dubnica nad Váhom-Údolie, Slovakia (Fig. 2:3)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 5.4 cm; W. 3.0 cm. Fitting decorated with three bosses with notches. Two lateral bosses are semi-circular. Between them a motif of a cross crosslet is engraved; below them was placed a geometrical ornament in the shape of a mirror herringbone. Above the lateral bosses a double herringbone, three rivets and another herringbone are placed. The lower edge of the fitting is serrated. The fitting is twin-like to 277/2011 (ROBAK 2014, Tab. LII:2).

15. *Mikulčice, Moravia*

Fitting with neck and loop. Iron. L. 7 cm; W. 2.2 cm. A narrow, distinctive neck and round loop with a diameter of about 1.8 cm. The fitting is heavily corroded. Three bosses and serrated lateral edges are visible. This is the only known specimen of a fitting that does not have a strap-end and does not resemble the fittings from Bojná (KLANICA 1984, Abb. 8:16).

16. *Bojná I Valy No. 133/2007 (Fig. 6:5)*

Strap-end. Iron inlaid probably with brass. L. 2.7 cm; W. 1.9 cm. A small U-shaped fitting consisting of a thick upper plate and a thin bottom plate with two rivets. The surface is ornamented with a motif of a cross potent inlaid with brass. In the source publication the fitting is described as gold inlaid. The most recent analyses carried out by M. Knoll from AÚ SAV verified the former statement (PIETA et al. 2011, Obr. 96:3).

17. *Altessing, grave 9, Bavaria (Fig. 6:4)*

Strap-end. Silver. L. 4.7 cm; W. 3.2 cm. One side of the fitting is ornamented with a self-engraved cross and notches along the lower edge. The other side is ornamented with an indefinite picture made with engraved curved lines. The fitting was fastened with four rivets (STEIN 1967, 218).

18. *Bojná I Valy No. 208/2007 (Fig. 6:3)*

Strap-end. Lead, silver. L. 2.9 cm; W. 2.0 cm. Both sides of the fitting are covered with silver plates. On both plates symbols of a Greek cross are engraved with zigzag lines. There is a thin twisted copper wire around the rivets (HARUŠTIAK 2010, Tab. I:5).

19. *Büraburg, Hesse (Fig. 9:3)*

Strap-end. Iron inlaid with silver. L. 3.6 cm; W. 2.06 cm.

A U-shaped fitting with a motif of a cross potent inlaid with silver. The fitting was fastened with four rivets (CATALOGUE PADERBORN 1999, V.15).

20. *Bojná I Valy No. 17/2008*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.7 cm; W. 2–2.3 cm. Fitting in the shape of an elongated trapezoid with concave lateral sides. The surface is decorated with punched horizontal and diagonal lines of points. The upper edge is serrated. The fitting was fastened with three rivets (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLIX:2).

21. *Bojná I Valy No. 123/2007*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.6 cm; W. 1.8–2.4 cm. Fitting in the shape of an elongated trapezoid with concave lateral sides. The surface is decorated with punched horizontal and diagonal lines of points and with two bosses in the shape of a lozenge with concave sides. Between the bosses a line of arcs is applied. The upper edge of the fitting is serrated. The fitting was fastened with three rivets (ROBAK 2014, Tab. XLVIII:7).

22. *Bojná I Valy (Fig. 1:1)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.6 cm; W. 1.8–2.4 cm. Fitting in the shape of an elongated trapezoid with concave lateral sides. The surface is decorated with punched horizontal and diagonal lines and with two bosses in the shape of a lozenge with concave sides. Between the bosses, two vertical notched lines have been applied. The upper edge of the fitting is notched. The fitting was fastened with two rivets (JANOŠÍK/PIETA 2007, Obr. 14:9).

23. *Bojná I Valy 220/2005 (Fig. 1:4)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.4 cm; W. 2.5–2.7 cm. Fitting in the shape of a rectangle with concave longer sides. The surface is decorated with punched horizontal and diagonal lines of circles and arcs. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. Above them a herringbone pattern was placed (PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007, Obr. 1:9).

24. *Bojná I Valy 218/2005 (Fig. 1:2)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.4 cm; W. 1.8 cm. Fitting in the shape of a rectangle with concave longer sides. The lower half is decorated with irregular punching, two notches in a V-shape and a motif of a Greek cross. The upper half is decorated with a herringbone pattern and has a serrated upper edge (PIETA/RUTTKAY 2007, Obr. 1:1).

25. *Kraków-Dębniĳki, Poland (Fig. 1:5)*

Strap-end. Iron. L. 3.4 cm; W. 2.5–2.7 cm. Fitting in the shape of a rectangle with concave longer sides. The surface is decorated with punched horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines of circles, arcs and dashes. The fitting was fastened with three rivets. Above them a herringbone pattern is placed (NIEZABITOWSKI et al. 2008, 412).

26. *Hradec nad Jizerou, Czech Rep. (Fig. 1:3)*

Strap-fitting with a loop. Iron. L. 4.0 cm; W. 2.1–2.5 cm. Fitting in the shape of an elongated trapezoid. The surface is decorated with lines of punched arcs and notched horizontal grooves. The edges are corrugated. On the bottom side, an oval loop has been applied. The fitting was fastened with three rivets placed in its central part. Under the rivets there were probably copper or brass pads (KAVÁN 1967, 153–159).

27. *Torksey, England (Fig. 8:2)*

Strap-end. Cast copper-alloy, gilded and silvered. L. 2.9 cm; W. 1.9 cm; T. 3.6 cm. Rectangular fitting with a roughly square section with radiating foliate decoration and central applied

lily cross-shaped silver mount with niello inlay. The remaining section of the object is rectangular with three longitudinal rectangular silver mounts with niello inlay, one at either side and one placed centrally, with raised foliate decoration between. The obverse of the object (excluding the silver mounts) is gilded, and there is some gilding at the pierced end of the reverse. The silver mounts are each attached with a silver rivet, visible on the reverse. The reverse is roughly finished and slightly concave, except for two opposing raised, flattened and smoothed rectangular areas at the centre of the long sides. The fitting was fastened with four iron rivets placed in the upper flat part.³¹

28. *Italy (Rome?) (Fig. 9:5)*

Trefoil-shaped fitting. Silver-gilt. L. 6.2 cm. In the centre there is a triangular field which contains an ornament of five small cast granules above five leaf-like features. Each of the arms has a field which contains five cast granules on top of a number of displayed leaves, one of which develops into a mask towards the terminal. The mask is seen from the front and has two raised eyes separated by a nose and curved eyebrows; striations cross the head above the mask. There is no mouth and the chin is produced to form part of the scrolled frame of the panel. The frame has the shape of a formalised animal head. At the terminal of each arm there was a series of three dome-headed rivets each with a collar of beaded wire: on one of the terminals only two rivets and one collar survive. A similar collared rivet pierces the loop at the angle of each arm; one rivet and its collar are now missing. The rivets at the terminals are hammered over underneath onto an irregularly shaped small plate, two of which survive at the terminals; a washer survives in the angle of two of the arms. The back is hollow cast and quite plain, save for ridges which form a triangle at the centre (SMITH 1923, 156; WILSON 1964, 161–162).

29. *Great Barton, England (Fig. 4:5)*

Trefoil-shaped fitting. Copper alloy, gilded and silvered. W. 4.3 cm. The upper surface has a small central projecting triangular boss, which sits in the middle of a larger triangular shape delimited by raised ridges. Radiating out from the central triangular boss into each corner of the larger triangle are three pointed oval shapes with a second smaller pointed oval-shaped groove within each one. Between each of these there is a recessed triangular shape. The central triangular boss has a trace of silver foil on it and the moulded larger triangular shape surrounding it is heavily gilded. Each point of the outer central triangle terminates in a rounded lobe, each of which has a circular rivet hole. Projecting from each long edge of the central triangular shape there is a rounded leaf. Each leaf has a moulded recessed stylised acanthus within it delimited by a border groove; there are traces of black niello within this border groove. Each recessed acanthus has traces of gilding within it and the field of the rounded lobe surrounding the acanthus is covered with silver foil. The sides of the leaves also retain traces of gilding. Projecting from the rounded terminal of each lobe is a trefoil with a circular hole through each lobe; one of these trefoils is incomplete and missing the terminal half of its central lobe due to having been broken in the distant past.³²

30. *Isle of Wight, England (Fig. 4:1)*

Oval fitting with loop. Cast copper alloy. L. 4.1 cm; W. 2.1 cm.

A convex fitting with moulded decoration at the front and largely concave at the rear. At the front it has a circumferential rim within which there are three distinct panels. Just off-centre there is a transverse rectangular panel containing three rivet holes all on the same transverse alignment. Two of the holes, including the central one, contain the remains of a corroded iron rivet. The panels at either side of this off-centre panel are of unequal size and are decorated in a similar fashion. This decoration is in the form of a large raised sub-lozenge motif (the sides are concave) within which there are four raised and evenly spaced irregular lozenge-shaped features. In each field created by the sides of the larger lozenge and the outer rim there is a frond-like feature. At the rear, close to one end and slightly off-centre there is an integral rivet, circular in cross-section with a diameter of 3.0 mm. At the opposite end, at each side there are traces of loop.³³

31. *Unknown find in British Museum, London (Fig. 9:2)*

Strap-end. Copper alloy, gilded. L. 3.3 cm (surviving); W. 2.7 cm. A fragment of a square end of a fitting. Cast relief decoration of 4 scrolls around hollow-sided lozenge enclosing pointed quatrefoil with small central boss; 3 rivet holes in flange across end (AGER 1995, 259–260; Abb. 9).

32. *Unknown location in Europe, private collection (Fig. 4:7)*

Strap-fitting. Silver, probably gilded. L. 3.6 cm; W. 2.6 cm. A thick rectangular belt-mount bearing cast decoration in the form of a central lozenge with radiating segmented saltire. Within each quadrant there is a lozenge with incuse cross decoration. The raised border consists of lozengiform panels with incuse crosses. The mount has a piercing for a mounting pin at one end, in which the pin is still in situ. There is an additional larger piercing through the central lozenge added later. Place of finding is unknown but described as “not from UK”. Probably Rotenkirchen type.³⁴

33. *Wareham, England (Fig. 4:6)*

Strap-fitting. Silver, gilded. L. 3.0 cm; W. 3.0 cm. Deeply recessed within a grooved outer frame, a border of acanthus fronds surrounds a central domed square decorated with an equal-armed cross with lozenge-shaped ends and a square-framed quatrefoil at its centre. Between the arms there are acanthus tufts. Silverish traces around the edge of the mount were identified as probable niello. The otherwise plain back has two complete and two broken attachment lugs. This was probably originally a fitting on a sword or horse harness; its acanthus decoration exemplifies the Carolingian influence which was to shape the future of Anglo-Saxon art in the 10th century. The discovery of this piece at the “burh” of Wareham may reflect Wessex contacts with the Carolingian empire or possibly the Viking army’s sojourn there in 875–876 (WEBSTER/BACKHOUSE 1992, 280).

34. *Cambridgeshire, England (Fig. 4:3)*

Strap-fitting. Silver, gilded. L. 3.7 cm; W. 2.7 cm; T. 1.3 cm. The mount is convex, with tall sides and a hollowed, uneven reverse which bears four integrally cast attachment lugs, one at each corner and set longitudinally. Each is pierced, but the end of each lug is considerably worn, so that two of the piercings are now worn through, on diagonally opposite corners. A central boss in the shape of a four-petalled flower is inlaid with a niello line

31 <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/113187> (accessed July 09, 2019)

32 <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/99647> (accessed July 09, 2019)

33 <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/276027> (accessed July 09, 2019)

34 <http://www.time-lines.co.uk/carolingian-frankish-saltire-belt-mount-015382-26881-0.html> (accessed July 24, 2015)

down each petal, forming a saltire cross. From underneath each petal emerges a gilded oval leaf with grooves forming central and side veins. Between the petals, pointing to the long sides of the mount, are single small drop-shaped leaves. In the opposite spaces, extending towards the short sides of the mount, are pairs of longer arched leaves, again with grooved vein decoration, with smaller lobes (decorated with simpler but similar engraving) emerging from the centre of these pairs. At the corners of the mount are four bosses shaped like fleurs-de-lis, each again embellished with niello lines, now very worn. Between these corner bosses, the long sides are each decorated with a pair of four-petalled flowers or groups of four leaves, each with two horizontal niello lines across their squarish, unglilded centres and engraved vein decoration on each gilded petal/leaf. The short sides (one longer than the other) are each decorated with a single similar four-petalled flower or leaf, made larger on the longer side. A wavy relief line runs around the base of each corner, below the fleurs-de-lis. All the lower areas of the mount are thickly gilded, but there is no evidence of gilding on the higher, niello-decorated areas. This may possibly be due to wear rather than an original incomplete gilding. On the reverse, the edge (the very lowest flat area) bears traces of gilding. These fittings are defined as Rotenkichen type (UNGERMAN 2011a, 592–595).

35. Claydon, England (Fig. 6:1)

Strap-end. Gilt bronze. L. 5.0 cm; W. 3.4 cm. The fitting is decorated with acanthus fronds, whose stem is formed in the shape of a lozenge. Inside the lozenge a small square with a cross is placed (THOMAS 2001, Fig. 6:a).³⁵

35 <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/440582>

36. Great Dunham, England (Fig. 4:4)

Strap-end. Copper alloy. L. 3.7 cm; W. 1.8 cm. A form reminiscent of an animal head. Transverse grooved between two rivets and the attachment edge, most of which is missing. Cast counter-relief decoration consists of a large Y-shaped motif inlaid with niello and silver wire, most of which has been lost, a triskele between the upper arms of the Y, a second triskele on one side, and scroll motifs on both sides. According to the brief account of B. Ager, on the website, the triskeles resemble items made in Tasillo Chalice Style.³⁶

37. Zalasabar-Borjúállás, grave 594, Hungary (Fig. 1:6)

A pair of strap ends. Iron. L. about 4.1 cm; W. 2–2.5 cm. Strap ends in the shape of an elongated trapezoid. The surface of the fittings is horizontally ribbed (SZŐKE 2009b, 129; Abb. 45:b).³⁷

(accessed July 09, 2019)

36 <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/227996> (accessed July 09, 2019)

37 Research carried out within the International Visegrad Fund Scholarship project, a project of the EU Structural Fund OPVaV-2009/2.1/03-SORO and project APVV-0553-10: Early medieval centres of power (central Danubian region). Acknowledgements to PhDr. Karol Pieta, DrSc., head of the Bojná excavation, for sharing unpublished material for research, and to the employees of AÚ SAV in Nitra for their great help. In this paper the outcomes of preliminary metallographic analyses provided by Mgr. Marian Knoll (AÚ SAV Nitra) were used.

Souhrn

Období šíření idejí. Krátký příspěvek k velkomoravským nákončím s křížovým motivem z 9. století.

Mezi různými skupinami kování karolínského typu z raně středověkého hradiště Bojná I jsou kování z jiných lokalit úplně a nebo téměř úplně neznámá, jako například kování obdélníkovo-trapézovitého tvaru nebo nákončí se třemi výčnělky. Trapézovitá nákončí z Bojné můžeme rozdělit do dvou skupin:

a) Kování ve tvaru protáhlého lichoběžníku (Fig. 1:1). Tato kování jsou zdobená geometrickým ornamentem (stejně jako většina kování z této lokality) svislých, vodorovných a šikmých čar, oblouků a zářezů. Ve střední části jsou kování zdobená profilováním anebo dvěma výčnělky ve tvaru kosočtverce s konkávními stranami. Kování v této podobě nebyla do dnes známá. K dispozici jsou tři exempláře z Bojné (dva nezveřejněné). Ojedinelou analogií, kterou můžeme vzpomenout, je kování s průvlečkou a měděnou podložkou pod nýty, které bylo nalezeno v Hradci nad Jizerou (Fig. 1:3) a které je pravděpodobně součástí opaskového souboru. Pár malých nákončí ve tvaru prohnutého lichoběžníku s horizontálními žebry (Fig. 1:6) z hrobu č. 594 v Zalasabar-Burjúállás byl taky nedávno zveřejněn spolu s párem ostruh s přezkami.

b) Obdélníková kování, lehce zúžená ve střední části (Fig. 1:2, 1:4). K dispozici jsou dva exempláře z Bojné.

První kování je na povrchu zdobeno plastickou výzdobou. Tyto segmenty jsou střídavě konvexní a konkávní a kování je zdobeno ornamenty v podobě děrných kruhů, oblouků a čar oddělujících jednotlivé části. Druhé kování zdobí geometrická a plastická výzdoba. Jeho horní část je kryta zářezy ve tvaru větvičky. Ve středu je kování nezdobené. Spodní část kování je zdobená nepravidelným puncováním a zářezy ve tvaru písmena V, který v podstatě rozděluje spodní část nákončí do tří trojúhelníků. Ve střední části trojúhelníka se nachází symbol kříže.

V roce 2004 upozornil P. Šalkovský na neznámý typ kování („typ IV“; Fig. 2), ale v kontextu dalších objevů by měla být jím navržená klasifikace dotčeného kování z Čakajovců odmítnuta a kování zařazeno jako jiný druh. Plošná kování ve tvaru písmene U (1–2 mm hloubky) jsou dále pro práci pojmenovaná jako „typ Bojná“, a to z důvodu jejich relativně vysokého zastoupení na této lokalitě, která byla zřejmě místem jejich produkce. Nákončí jsou relativně velká (5–5,6 cm délky a 2,5–3 cm šířky) a charakterizovaná třemi výčnělky (které mají pravděpodobně napodobovat nýty) umístěnými na bočních okrajích a ve středu nižšího konce kování. Na základě aktuálně známých čtrnácti exemplářů můžeme rozlišit dvě skupiny. První zastupují kování s konvexními výčnělky. Výčnělky jsou

většinou zdobené puncovanými symboly připomínající obrácenou omegu nebo trojúhelník s otevřenou horní stranou, stejně jako symbolem kruhu rozděleného do dvou nebo tří částí. Mezi výčnělky jsou vyřezané nebo puncované motivy kříže opakujících se tvarů (Fig. 3). Druhá skupina je zastoupena kovááním s velkými kulatými plochými výčnělky, zdobenými puncem. Mezi a nad výčnělky se ornament skládá z horizontálních, vertikálních a diagonálních linií oblouků a puncovaných bodů. V horní části obou typů kováání se nachází větvičkový ornament. Hlavním motivem použitým ve výzdobě kováání se třemi výčnělky z Bojně je řecký kříž. Je možné, že zářezy na kováání byly vyplněny niellem,

nebo vyloženy měděným drátem, což se předpokládalo v případě nákončí z Alsórajk-Határi a pravděpodobně také z Bojně. Téměř všechna známá kováání byla nalezena na hradišti Bojná I. Kromě této lokality pocházejí slovenské nálezy jen v Čakajoviec, Dubnice nad Váhom-Údolia (Fig. 2:3), Nitra-Chrenové (Fig. 2:7) a z blízkosti hradiště Detva-Kaľamárka (Fig. 2:2).

Jedinečnost sbírky nákončí z Bojně spočívá ve velkém množství předmětů tohoto typu nalezených na hradišti a v jeho okolí. Část z nich nemá mimo exempláře z Bojně žádné další analogie. Produkci těchto výrobků, vzniklých pod silným karolinským vlivem, je třeba hledat v nejbližším okolí.

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