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HIGH MEDIEVAL FORTIFICATIONS IN VILLAGES NEAR HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ. MANORIAL RESIDENCES OF LOWER NOBILITY IN EAST BOHEMIA

Abstract: This study discusses high medieval fortifications located in villages in the central part of East Bohemia. A typical feature of this area was its division into small aristocratic demesnes and, consequently, the existence of many fortified manor houses, the residences of lower nobility. This paper summarises the results of a non-destructive survey, detailing the appearance, connection to the existing settlement network, and relationship to the surrounding landscape of individual fortified manor houses.

Keywords: High Middle Ages, fortification, fortified manor house, lower nobility, East Bohemia

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Introduction

Fortified manorial residences were a typical feature of the high medieval rural landscape of East Bohemia. Over time, however, most of these fortified residences fell into disuse or were redeveloped into later settlement forms. Until recently, studies of these residences in the region around Hradec Králové focused mainly on the analysis of written sources from the Middle Ages and the Modern period.¹ The aim of this study is to describe and summarise the formal properties of individual fortified manor houses based on their descriptions and archaeological-architectonic research records, in particular the results of archaeological investigations of the relics of individual manorial residences preserved in situ – their appearance, connection to the existing settlement network, and relationship to the surrounding landscape.

Characteristics of the discussed territory

The area selected for our discussion on the characteristics of high medieval fortifications is situated northwest of the royal town of Hradec Králové and includes several smaller towns in its vicinity – Jaroměř, Hořice v Podkrkonoší, Chlumeč nad Cidlinou, Lázně Bělohrad, and Nový Bydžov (Fig. 1). In terms of present-day administrative division, the selected territory comprises parts of three districts of the Hradec Králové region: Hradec Králové, Jičín, and Náchod. This area was defined on the basis of natural conditions and the historical development of the settlement network at the beginning of the medieval period and over the course of the High Middle Ages.

The natural border of the discussed region is delineated from the east by the river Elbe in its section between Hradec Králové and Jaroměř, while the southern border is defined by the shape of the Dobřenice Plateau, which delimits the Chlumeč Plain in the north. The western border is formed by the river Cidlina, which flows from north to south, and from the north the area is defined by the elevated Zvičina ridge and the Zvičina-Kocleřov ridge in the foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains. The north-western part of the area does not have any distinct landmarks that

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¹ Sedláček 1883; Sedláček 1887; Křížek and Řezník 1992; Šimek et al. 1989.

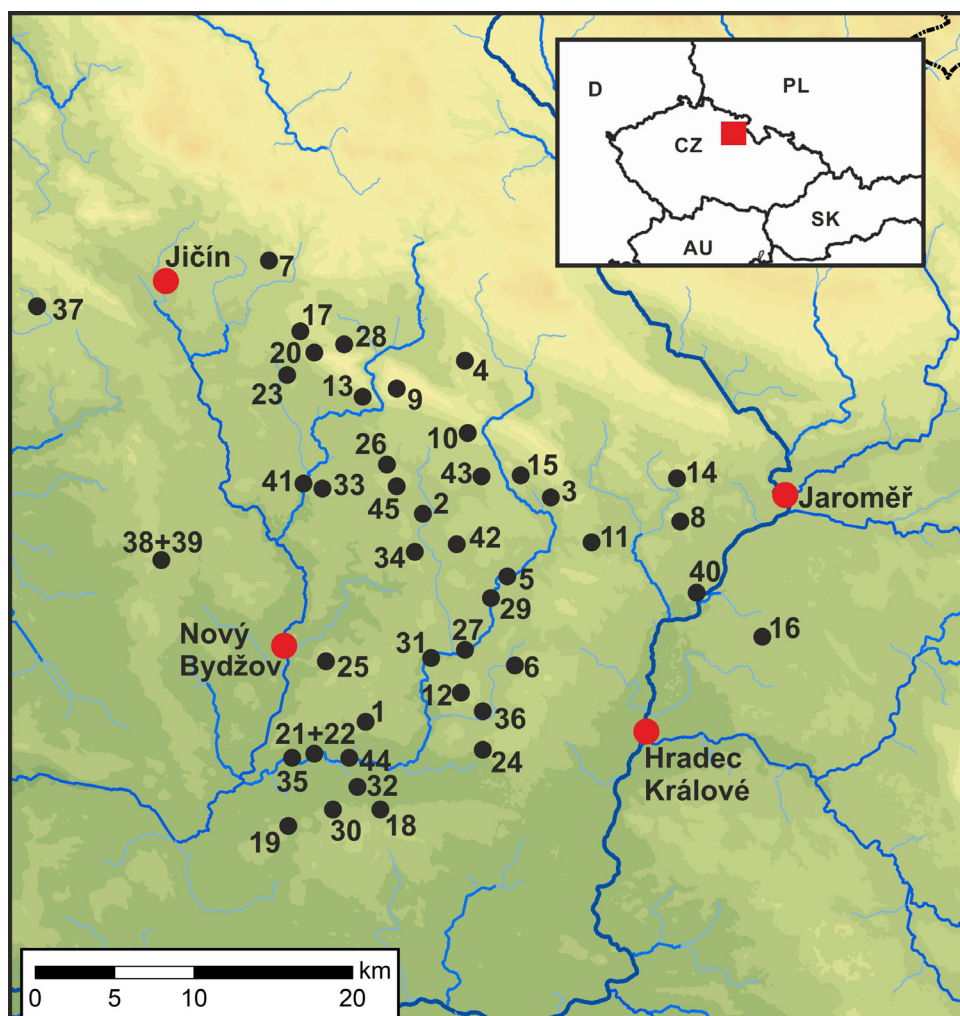


Fig. 1. The territory of East Bohemia and the location of sites mentioned in the text: (1) Babice, (2) Bříšťany, (3) Cerekvice, (4) Dobeš, (5) Dohalice, (6) Dolní Příim, (7) Dřevenice, (8) Habřina, (9) Holovousy-Chloumky, (10) Hořice, (11) Hoříněves, (12) Hrádek, (13) Hradištko u Ostroměře, (14) Hustiřany, (15) Jeřice, (16) Kalthaus, (17) Kamenice, (18) Kasaličky, (19) Klamoš, (20) Konecchlumí, (21) Kosice 1, (22) Kosice 2, (23) Kovač, (24) Libčany, (25) Libeň, (26) Lískovice, (27) Lubno, (28) Mlázovice, (29) Mokrovousy, (30) Nedabylice, (31) Nechanice, (32) Obědovice, (33) Ohništany, (34) Petrovičky, (35) Přestavlky, (36) Radíkovice, (37) Rakov, (38) Sekeřice 1, (39) Sekeřice 2, (40) Smiřice, (41) Staré Smrkovice, (42) Stračov, (43) Třebnouševs, (44) Třesice, (45) Vysoká. Graphic design: P. Drnovský.

can be regarded as a natural border, so it is simply defined by the southern edge of the Jičín Basin. Using the main axes to intersect our area of interest, the north-south axis is c. 35 km and the east-west axis is 30 km.

Despite its relatively small area, the studied territory has many distinct geomorphological features. Located between the Elbe region in the south and the foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains in the north, it is crossed by several major watercourses flowing in north-south (named from west to east): Cidlina, Javorka, Bystřice, Trotina, and the Elbe. The southern part of the region at the lower reaches of the Cidlina and Bystřice rivers is characterised as flatland. The remaining major part of the territory is situated in a slightly undulating terrain. Its most distinct geomorphological feature, the Hořice ridge, is located in the northern part of the studied area. The Miletín valley behind the ridge is part of the moderately rising foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains.

The studied region was also defined with respect to the historical development of the settlement network, with abundant evidence of early medieval sites, particularly in the final phase.² This differentiates it from the adjacent foothills of the Krkonoše and Orlické Mountains, where early medieval settlement was much less intensive. With the onset of the High Middle Ages in the 13th century, the early medieval settlement centres at Hradec Králové and Jaroměř developed into towns. At the end of that century, Nový Bydžov was also founded as a royal town though it soon passed into the hands of aristocrats. In the remaining part of the studied territory, five liege towns were founded by the beginning of the 16th century. Another important feature of the region in question are its many small aristocratic manors, in contrast to the large manorial

² Sigl 1972; Ježek 2007; Drnovský 2013.



Fig. 2. Examples of 19th century cadastral maps depicting the extent of fortified manor houses: (1) Ohništany, (2) Libeň, (3) Obědovice, (4) Nechanice, (5) Radikovice, (6) Libčany. © Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre.

demesnes typical of the neighbouring regions in the foothills of the Krkonoše and Orlické Mountains, which were occupied since the 13th century.³

The scattered character of land ownership in the studied region necessitated the construction of small manorial residences connected to existing rural settlements. Based on mentions in written records alone, in the 14th and 15th centuries there at least 139 such residences existed. Most of them disappeared without a trace, however, so we know nothing about the appearance of their buildings or their locations within the present-day landscape.

Sites, state of preservation, and research methods used

We focused on sites which could be reliably located in the terrain and whose appearance is evidenced by sources. While some of these locations are already known from previous historical and archaeological research,

others were identified recently. Residences known solely from written sources (139 locations) were excluded from the inquiry. The studied group of residences thus comprised 45 sites in total (Table 1). According to the state of preservation, we can distinguish: a) sites with preserved terrain relics and archaeologically documentable contexts (35 residences), and b) sites where the original buildings were rebuilt into later residences or buildings of other purpose (11 residences).

At the beginning of our research, we investigated the basic compendia of written sources related to the existence and localisation of manorial residences in the given region. Special attention was paid to the study of archival maps from the 18th and 19th centuries, with which we can follow the distribution of settlements in the past. Showing plot allotment in villages and in their fieldscapes, 19th century land register maps provided much valuable information. These maps often depict plots of land corresponding to the extent of original settlements, which were still visible in terrain at the time of mapping or their land allotment was at least partly detectable (Fig. 2).

³ Musil 2009, 311-377.

Table 1. An overview of the studied sites and their basic characteristics.

Site	TERRAIN RELICS	DITCH	RAMPART	EXTENT OF THE CORE (M)	TOTAL DIAMETER (M)	PRESERVED ABOVEGROUND MASONRY	PROXIMITY OF A RIVER	IN A POND	NEARBY A POND	ON A NATURAL ELEVATION	IN A VILLAGE
Babice	yes	2	1	40	120	no	-	-	yes	-	-
Bříšťany	no	-	-	38	38	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Cerekvice	no	-	-	9×9	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Dobeš	yes	1	1	22	50	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Dohalice	no	-	-	32×12	-	yes	yes	-	-	-	-
Dolní Přím	yes	1	1	10×7	-	yes	-	-	yes	-	-
Dřevenice	no	-	-	24×13	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Habřina	yes	1	1	38	55	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Holovousy-Chloumky	yes	1	1	20	50	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Hořice	no	-	-	23×14	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Hoříněves	no	-	-	26×12	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Hrádek	yes	1	-	42	85	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Hradištko u Ostroměře	no	-	-	14×10	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Hustířany	yes	1	-	45	83	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Jeřice	no	-	-	16×10	-	yes	yes	-	-	-	-
Kalthaus	yes	1	1	25	80	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Kamenice	no	-	-	14×10	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Kasaličky	yes	1	1	28	70	no	-	-	yes	-	-
Klamoš	yes	1	1	85	95	no	-	yes	-	-	-
Konechlumí	no	-	-	22×13	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes
Kosice 1	yes	1	1	33	80	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Kosice 2	yes	1	1	25	70	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Kovač	yes	1	-	30	71	no	-	yes	-	-	-
Libčany	yes	1	1	27	100	no	-	yes	-	-	-
Libeň	yes	1	1	22	100	no	-	yes	-	-	-
Lískovice	yes	1	1	30	75	no	-	-	-	yes	-
Lubno	yes	1	1	34	87	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Mlázovice	yes	1	1	20	65	no	-	-	-	yes	-
Mokrovousy	yes	1	-	54	82	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Nedabylice	no	1	-	35	45	no	-	-	yes	-	-
Nechanice	yes	3	3	35	154	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Obědovice	yes	1	-	24	70	no	-	yes	-	-	-
Ohništany	yes	1	1	27	58	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Petrovičky	yes	1	1	38	105	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Přestavlky	yes	1	-	26	61	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Radíkovice	yes	2	2	30	140	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Rakov	yes	1	1	40	115	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Sekeřice 1	yes	1	1	27	90	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Sekeřice 2	yes	1	1	21	80	no	-	-	yes	-	-
Smřice	no	-	-	37×32	-	yes	yes	-	-	-	-
Staré Smrkovice	yes	1	1	50	158	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Stračov	yes	1	-	40	103	no	-	-	-	-	yes

Site	TERRAIN RELICS	DITCH	RAMPART	EXTENT OF THE CORE (M)	TOTAL DIAMETER (M)	PRESERVED ABOVEGROUND MASONRY	PROXIMITY OF A RIVER	IN A POND	NEARBY A POND	ON A NATURAL ELEVATION	IN A VILLAGE
Třebnouševy	yes	1	-	30	82	no	-	-	-	-	yes
Třesice	yes	2	2	35	118	no	yes	-	-	-	-
Vysoká	yes	1	1	22	50	no	-	-	yes	-	-

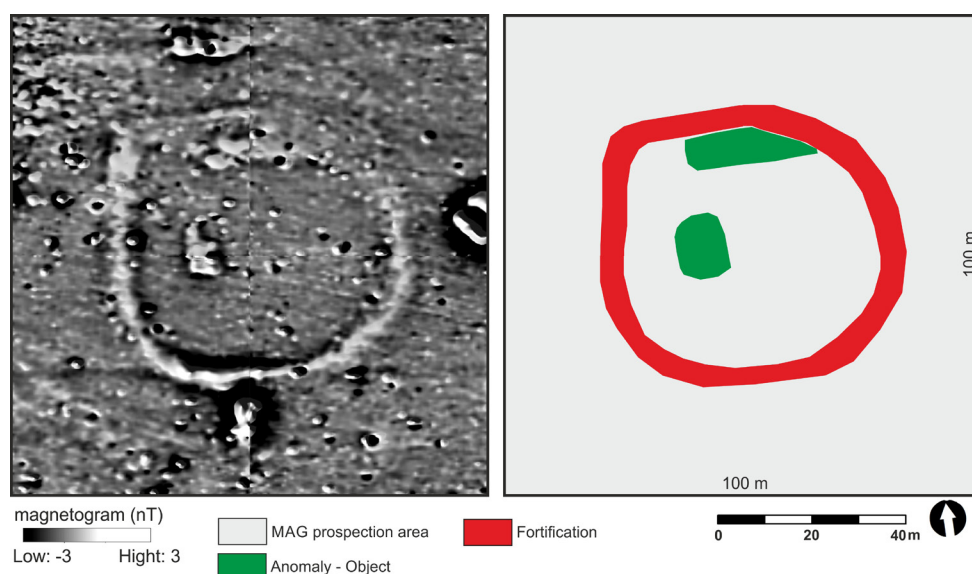


Fig. 3. Rakov, fortified manor house. On the left is a magnetogram, on the right is the interpretation. Graphic design: Pavel Drnovský.

The above-mentioned sites have not yet been explored by archaeological excavations. A voluminous collection of finds was acquired from the fortified manor house at Semonice only at the end of the 19th century. A small part of a fortified manor house at Třebouševy, which also yielded an extensive collection of finds, was explored at the beginning of the 1920s.⁴ An archaeological surface survey conducted after 1950 at the site of the fortified manor house at Tebovice yielded a collection of finds comprising small sets of several dozen pottery shards each.

Our archaeological research was carried out using non-destructive methods. Archival and present-day aerial photographs were used to identify terrain relics and traces of vegetation. Older aerial images are mainly suitable for identifying changes which the studied sites underwent during the 20th century. For example, we can follow the gradual dismantling and partial destruction of several residences. High resolution aerial photographs from recent decades help to identify vegetation marks at individual sites. Even if the terrain relics are poorly preserved, proper light conditions may clearly indicate their shape. Moreover, these images can also reveal underground

archaeological structures (e.g., ditches, masonry) indicated by surface vegetation marks. This method of observation enabled us to identify some previously unknown sites.

Another method used was the analysis of data acquired by laser scanning of the ground surface (LiDAR). Our data processing has shown that all sites, even those that cannot be recognised on the surface, have some detectable terrain features. Subsequent agricultural activity, therefore, did not wipe out the relics of fortification systems at these sites.

The above-mentioned study of archival maps and aerial photographs and the analysis of elevation data were primarily used for localisation and external description of the state of preservation of individual sites. Another non-destructive method used was geophysical survey. Magnetometric measurement was carried out on eleven sites. This measurement enabled us to verify the location of several residences which were only known from written sources. At some of the studied sites we could identify basic settlement components within the fortified area: internal building development, defensive wall, ramparts, and ditch enclosures.⁵

⁴ Huml 1967; Drnovský 2012.

⁵ Drnovský 2022, 57-60.

One example of the use of magnetometric survey is the fortified manor house at Rakov (10 kilometres west of Jičín). This defunct residence, whose existence is documented by written sources from the 14th to 16th centuries, was surveyed during the autumn of 2021 (Fig. 3). On the resulting magnetogram we can recognise a structure which corresponds to the fortification of a manor house. Two anomalies detected inside the inner area can be interpreted as building relics of the residence – one standing alone in the centre of the residence, the other adjacent to the perimeter fortification.

Description of sites

Our set of 45 locations was primarily divided, according to the state of preservation, into sites with detected terrain relics but without any aboveground building constructions, and sites with preserved relics of masonry buildings.

In the first group (35 sites), we are mostly able to identify the character of external fortification elements (ramparts, ditches) and to determine the total extent of the residence, but we know nothing about the building development in the inner ward of the fortified residence. In the case of the second group (10 sites) we can describe the appearance of the central building, but due to later building activities in the neighbourhood of the residence we are not able to identify how the surroundings of these buildings may have looked in the Middle Ages.

Sites with preserved terrain relics and archaeologically documentable contexts

The majority of the studied fortified manor houses used the potential of nearby watercourses to fill their moats and enhance their overall defensive capacity. Several residences were situated directly in the floodplain of a watercourse. Within the studied area, we can thus distinguish 7 fortified manor houses founded in the inundation area of the river Bystřice. The relics of a fortified manor house at Nechanice (Figs. 4:2 and 6) count among the best preserved medieval residences. The operational period of this residence is dated by written sources approximately to between the 14th and 16th centuries.⁶ The fortified manor house was protected by three ditches and ramparts with a circular ground plan, interrupted on the southern side by the riverbed of the Bystřice. The total diameter of the fortified manor is about 154 metres, including the external ditch. The circular mound in the centre of the fortified area has a diameter of 35 metres. Another example of a fortified

manor house which used a river to fill its ditches is the relics at Radíkovice (Fig. 4:3). According to written sources, the fortification was in operation from the 14th to the beginning of the 16th century.⁷ The core of the fortified residence was an artificial mound with a diameter of about 30 metres. Analysis of the elevation data reveals that the mound was enclosed by two ditches and two ramparts (previous research identified only one ditch and one rampart). The total diameter of the site was approximately 140 metres. When the central mound was partly destroyed at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, it was discovered that the mound contained a grate construction made of wooden beams.⁸ In addition to those discussed above, many other fortified manor houses took advantage of nearby watercourses, including those at Bříšany, Kalthaus, Kosice (two fortified manor houses) (Fig. 4:7), Lubno (Fig. 4:4), Mokrovousy (Fig. 4:5), Přestavlky (Fig. 4:6), Staré Smrkovice (Fig. 4:1), and Třesice (Fig. 4:8).

Within the territory in question, five fortified manor houses were situated in the neighbourhood of an artificial lake, including the fortified manor house at Babice, which dates from the 14th to 15th century (Figs. 4:9 and 7). The core of the fortified residence is an artificial mound with a diameter of 40 metres. The inner ditch directly opened into a pond in the eastern neighbourhood of the fortified manor house. In the southern part of the site the rampart adjacent to the inner ditch gradually transformed into the dam of the pond. This rampart was fronted by a second, external ditch. The total diameter of the fortified area was 120 metres. Other fortified manor houses which were directly adjacent to a pond include those at Nedabylice, Kasaličky (Fig. 4:12), Sekeřice (northern fortified manor) (Fig. 5:3), and Vysoká (Fig. 4:11).

There are five residences where the artificial mound was situated directly in a pond, including the residence at Obědovice, in use from the 14th to the 17th century (Fig. 4:15).⁹ A pond is located in the middle of the village and the mound in its centre overtops the water level by approximately 2 metres. The foundation of the fortified residence on this mound measures 21×24 metres. At the fortified manor house in Libčany, we detected a rampart that encircled the whole perimeter of the pond (Fig. 4:14). This residence appears in written sources from the 14th and 15th centuries.¹⁰ Other fortified manor houses situated in the middle of a pond include those at Klamoš (Fig. 4:16), Kovač (Fig. 4:13), and Libeň (Fig. 5:1).

⁷ Sedláček 1887, 341.

⁸ Musil 2019, 153-154.

⁹ Sedláček 1887, 304.

¹⁰ Sedláček 1887, 338.

⁶ Sedláček 1887, 329.

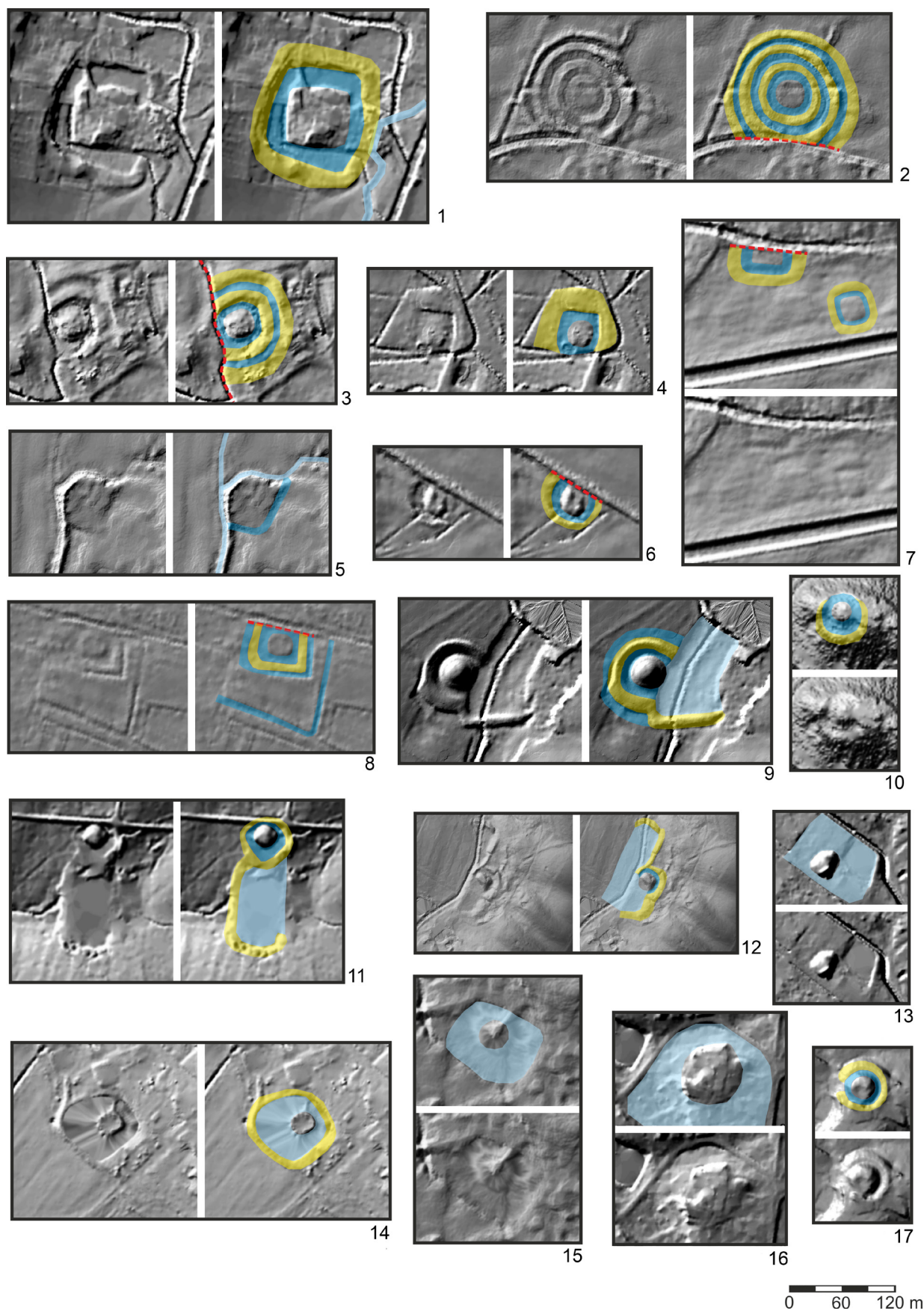


Fig. 4. Plans of fortified manor houses and their surroundings on a digital elevation model. On the left is a hillshade model, on the right is the interpretation of relics: dark blue – ditch, light blue – bodies of water (river, pond), yellow – rampart, central mounds without marking: (1) Staré Smrkovice, (2) Nechanice, (3) Radíkovice, (4) Lubno, (5) Mokrovousy, (6) Přestavlky, (7) Kosice 1 (western fortified manor house) and 2 (eastern fortified manor house), (8) Třesice, (9) Babice, (10) Lískovice, (11) Vysoká, (12) Kasaličky, (13) Kovač, (14) Libčany, (15) Obědovice, (16) Klamoš, (17) Mlázovice. Graphic design: P. Drnovský.

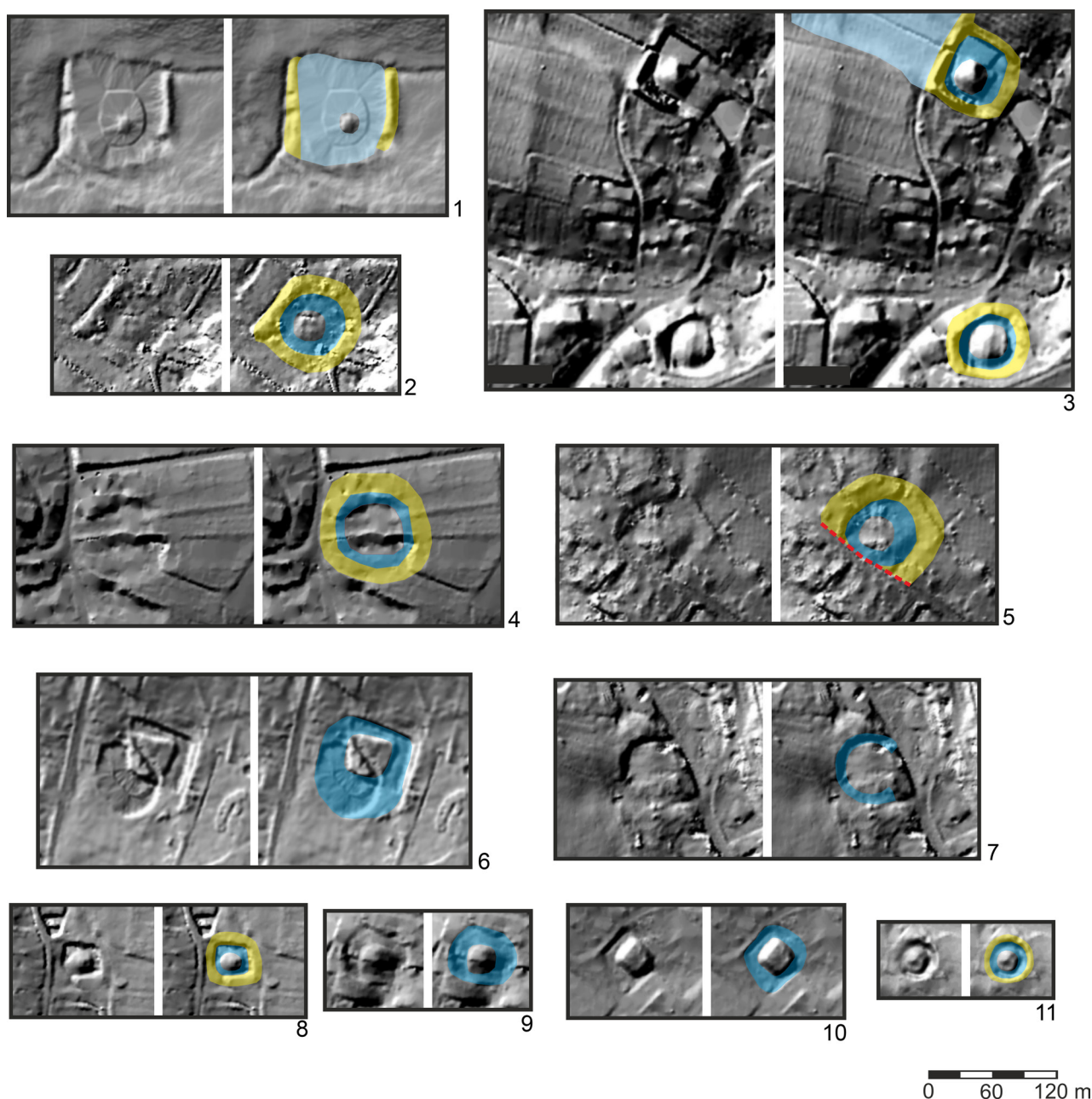


Fig. 5. Plans of fortified manor houses and their surroundings on a digital elevation model. On the left is a hillshade model, on the right is the interpretation of relics: dark blue – ditch, light blue – bodies of water (river, pond), yellow – rampart, central mounds without marking. (1) Libeň, (2) Ohnišťany, (3) Sekeřice 1 (northern fortified manor house) and 2 (southern fortified manor house), (4) Hustiřany, (5) Petrovičky, (6) Stračov, (7) Hrádek, (8) Chloumky, (9) Třebnouševs, (10) Habřina, (11) Dobeš. Graphic design: Pavel Drnovský.

Only two residences were founded on a naturally elevated place inside a village. The fortified manor house at Lískovice was situated on the highest point of a moderate hill at the northern border of the inner built-up area of the village (Fig. 4:10). The fortified manor house at Mlázovice, on the other hand, was built at the edge of an elevation at the village border (Fig. 4:17). The fact that we also know the date of decline of this fortification is quite rare in the context of East Bohemia; the residence was conquered and burnt down by Jan Žižka in 1424. The owner of the

residence, Czernin, was killed during the attack.¹¹ Both the Lískovice and Mlázovice residences were enclosed by a ditch and partly also by a rampart which did not border the whole perimeter of the fortified area but ended at the edge of a natural steep slope.

The majority of fortified manor houses were situated directly within the area of a village. Eleven such locations were identified. Most are poorly preserved because their relics are usually overlaid by present-day

¹¹ Čornej 2019, 547.



Fig. 6. Nechanice, example of relics of a fortified manor house by a river and town. Source: Gojda 2012.



Fig. 7. Babice, example of relics of a fortified manor house by a pond and near a town. Photo: Š. Kravcic.

rural development. The fortified manor house in the village of Dobeš is one of the better-preserved sites (Fig. 5:11). It is a residence of small dimensions with a preserved artificial mound, ditch, and rampart. The central mound is 22 metres in diameter, while the total diameter of the fortified area is 50 metres. Other fortified manor houses which were situated within the area of a village include those at Habřina (Fig. 5:10), Chloumky (Fig. 5:8), Hrádek (Fig. 5:7), Hustířany (Fig. 5:4), Ohništany (Fig. 5:2), Petrovičky (Fig. 5:5), Rakov, Sekeřice (southern fortified manor house) (Fig. 5:3), Stračov (Fig. 5:6), and Třebnouševy (Fig. 5:9).

Fortified manor houses that were rebuilt into residences and buildings of other purpose

Important information about the possible appearance of medieval manorial residences is provided by the historical survey of still standing buildings. The sites mentioned in the previous chapter exhibit no above-ground relics of masonry constructions, so we are not able (except by drawing on the results of geophysical measurement) to identify the character of the building development of the residences. On the other hand, there are eleven fortified manor houses with preserved building relics. Several problematic cellar rooms in the area of later mansions were excluded, however, as they cannot be clearly identified as relics of a medieval phase of these residences.

A total of five fortified manor houses are preserved as free-standing buildings, which were mostly used for agricultural purposes (granaries) in the Modern era. Among the best preserved relics is the perimeter masonry of a fortified manor house at Dohalice (Fig. 8:5). It is a rectangular building, whose sides are 32 and 12 metres long. Up to the level of the second floor, it is the original masonry of a medieval palatial manor house with probably a three-part layout, L. Svoboda says.¹² The fortified manor house at Dřevěnice is also preserved as a free-standing residence (Fig. 8:7). It is a two-storied masonry building with a trapezoidal ground plan with the dimensions of 24×13 metres. The ground floor is partitioned into five rooms. When rebuilt into a granary, the first floor was divided into two vertical levels. Some of the lower rooms are vaulted with a barrel vault. The preserved architectural details of the original fortified manor house are represented by one part of a lintel with decoration referring to the residence owner Jindřich Berka of Dubá. The corners of the building are reinforced with sandstone ashlars. A pair of semi-circular portals and a chamfered jamb of an embrasure window in the eastern facade of the building

are also made of sandstone. J. Slavík and L. Svoboda date this building to the pre-Hussite period.¹³ Two other fortified manor houses at Hořice and Konecchlumí resemble the residence in Dřevěnice. The fortified manor house at Hořice, built of quarried sandstone, is preserved in the form of the ground floor of a rectangular layout with the dimensions of 23×14 metres (Fig. 8:8). The ground floor of the fortified manor house consists of five rooms. There are chamfered saddle portals and chamfered slit windows. The origin of the residence is dated to the 2nd half of the 15th century.¹⁴ J. Slavík and L. Svoboda suppose that the building had one or two wooden floors resting upon the masonry ground floor.¹⁵ Also built from quarried sandstone, the fortified manor house at Konecchlumí has a rectangular ground plan with the dimensions of 22×13 metres (Fig. 8:6). The main building was extended on the south-western side by a small square annex equipped with a pointed Gothic portal with a chamfered jamb. The corners of the building are reinforced with ashlars. Several walled-up older window apertures are preserved at some places between the windows of the present-day first and second floors. One of them has a sandstone lintel, which indicates that these older windows were divided by a stone cross. P. Chotěbor dates the construction of the fortified manor house to the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries.¹⁶ J. Slavík and L. Svoboda date it generally to the pre-Hussite period. The latter authors also suppose that the interior of this building was divided into five rooms.¹⁷ The slightly later fortified manor house at Hradištko (16th century) is also preserved as a still standing building (Fig. 8:9). This residence has a rectangular layout with the dimensions of 14×9.5 metres. The building was originally two-storied, with a non-vaulted ground floor with an ordinary flat ceiling made of wooden beams.¹⁸

Relics of older medieval building phases were discovered in a total of six mansion buildings from later periods. The mansion at Cerekvice contained relics of a medieval fortified manor house represented by a vaulted cellar with 5.2 metre long sides. A wall 1.7 metres thick adjoining the cellar masonry was preserved up to the level of the ground floor and first floor. M. Ebel and L. Svoboda suppose that in the 14th century the fortified manor house had the form of a multi-storied tower building with sides of about 8.6 metres in

¹² Svoboda 2000, 97.

¹³ Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 109.

¹⁴ Slavík 1998, 199.

¹⁵ Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 106.

¹⁶ Chotěbor 1986, 89.

¹⁷ Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 109.

¹⁸ Svoboda 1998d, 213.

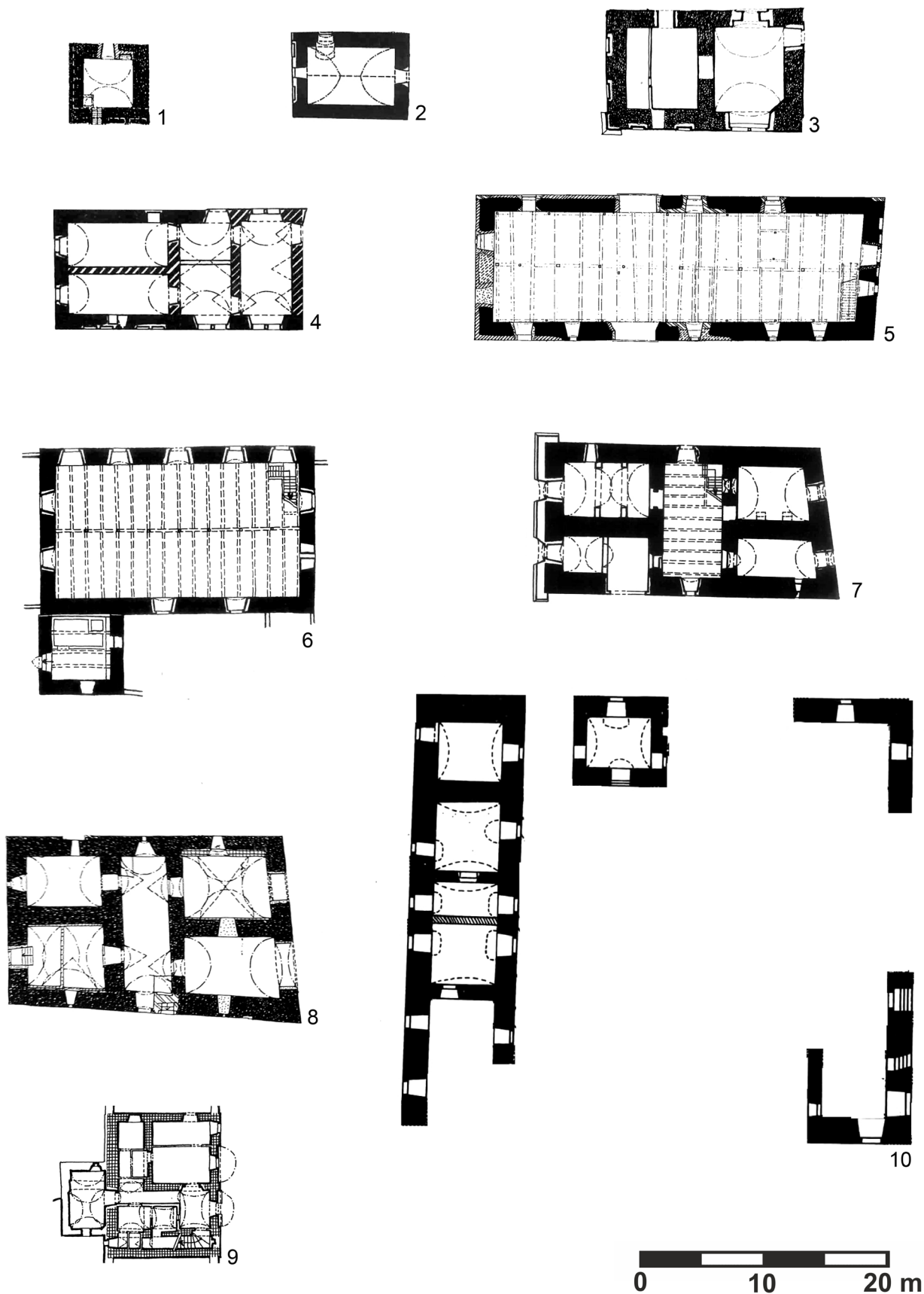


Fig. 8. Comparison of masonry layouts in preserved medieval fortified manor houses.

- (1) Cerekvice, after Ebel and Svoboda 1997, 83, fig. 3, (2) Dolní Přím, after Svoboda 1998b, 137, (3) Jeřice, after Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 103, fig. 5a, (4) Kamenice, after Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 103, fig. 5b, (5) Dohalice, after Svoboda 2000, 92, fig. 3, (6) Konecchlumí, after Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 108, fig. 10c, (7) Dřevěnice, after Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 108, fig. 10a, (8) Hořice, after Slavík 1998, 199, (9) Hradištko, after Svoboda 1998d, 213, (10) Smiřice, after Fišera 2005, 720. Modified by Pavel Drnovský.

length (Fig. 8:1).¹⁹ A single-room, free-standing building was also included in the oldest building phase of the residence at Dolní Příím. The south-western corner of the mansion contains preserved masonry of a three-storied single-room fortified manor house, which is dated by L. Svoboda to the 14th century (approximate dimensions 10×7 metres).²⁰ The survey of this tower-like building conducted by J. Svobodová in 1993 identified a walled-up window without a stone jamb and a walled-up entrance which probably led to a bay (Fig. 8:2).²¹ The masonry of a medieval fortified manor house was also incorporated into the later mansion area at Jeřice. The two rooms on the ground floor, delimited by stone masonry of 1.5–1.6 metres in thickness, formed a rectangular ground plan with the external dimensions of 10×16 metres (Fig. 8:3). J. Slavík and L. Svoboda date the build-up of this two-room fortified manor house to the 2nd half of the 14th century.²² Building relics of a fortified manor house were also identified within the southern part of the main wing of the three-winged mansion building at Kamenice. The medieval building phase is represented by a rectangular building with the approximate dimensions of 14×10 metres (Fig. 8:4). The preserved building details included two corners with sandstone ashlars and a chamfered jamb of an embrasure window. J. Slavík and L. Svoboda suppose that this building had a three-room interior layout and that it was probably built before the Hussite Wars.²³ Three cellar rooms in the southern part of the mansion at Hořiněves are identified by L. Svoboda as relics of the oldest masonry phase of the residence. The palatial three-room building with dimensions of 26×12 metres is supposed to originate from the pre-Hussite period.²⁴ The oldest masonry structures within the present-day four-winged mansion at Smiřice are generally dated to the 15th century.²⁵ These structures include the whole western wing, whose ground floor consists of four rooms with barrel vaults. A free-standing structure in the northern wing (tower?) and the masonry of the north-eastern and south-eastern corners are dated by Z. Fišera to this Gothic phase as well. In contrast, the southern and northern wings were built during subsequent building phases in the 16th century. The area of the medieval residence thus had a rectangular ground plan with dimensions of about 37×32 metres, which also defined the later building development. L. Svoboda

assumes that the Gothic phase included the perimeter defensive wall, tower gate, and palace (Fig. 8:10).²⁶

Summary

This paper discussed both earthworks and remnants of aboveground masonry constructions (free-standing buildings or structures within later altered buildings) of high medieval fortified manor residences of lesser nobility in the central part of East Bohemia. The characteristic feature of the manorial residences for which we have only relics in the form of earthworks is the presence of a central mound (*motte*), which was artificially raised above the surrounding terrain (Fig. 9). The tallest preserved motte in the area of our study is almost 3 meters in height (Habřina). In total, 30 sites with such artificial mounds were identified. In the case of the fortified manor houses at Mlázovice and Lískovice, the builders simply enclosed the central part of the residence at the edge of a terrain elevation above the village with a circular perimeter ditch. An artificial mound was probably also absent at the fortified manor house at Mokrovousy.

The fortified areas can be primarily divided according to the ground plan of the central mound, which can be circular/oval and right-angled/rectangular. The first group encompasses a total of 28 sites and the second includes 7 sites. Artificial mounds were in most cases surrounded by ditches, identified at 28 sites. The presence of a ditch cannot be proved in the case of the fortified manor house at Bříšťany, which was completely levelled to the ground. The fortifications at Babice, Radíkovice, and Třesice had two perimeter ditches and the fortification at Nechanice comprised three ditches. The presence of a rampart adjacent to the external edge of the first inner ditch is rare. Nevertheless, the absence of such ramparts in a total of twelve cases might be caused by the transformations and terrain alterations which most residences underwent after their decline. Nineteen residences were equipped with at least one rampart which, however, was not always preserved along the whole perimeter of the site. The fortified manor houses at Radíkovice and Třesice were encircled by two ramparts and the fortified manor house at Nechanice was protected by three ramparts.

The number of ditches and ramparts defines the total extent of individual residences. All fortified sites with two or more ditches exceed the width of one hundred metres (measured on the longer axis): Nechanice c. 154 metres, Radíkovice c. 140 metres, Babice c. 120 metres, and Třesice c. 118 metres. The largest fortified site was Staré Smrkovice, where the area enclosed

¹⁹ Ebel and Svoboda 1997, 89.

²⁰ Svoboda 1998b, 137.

²¹ Svobodová 1995.

²² Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 104.

²³ Slavík and Svoboda 1993, 104.

²⁴ Svoboda 1998c, 200.

²⁵ Fišera 2005, 721.

²⁶ Svoboda 1998a, XIX.

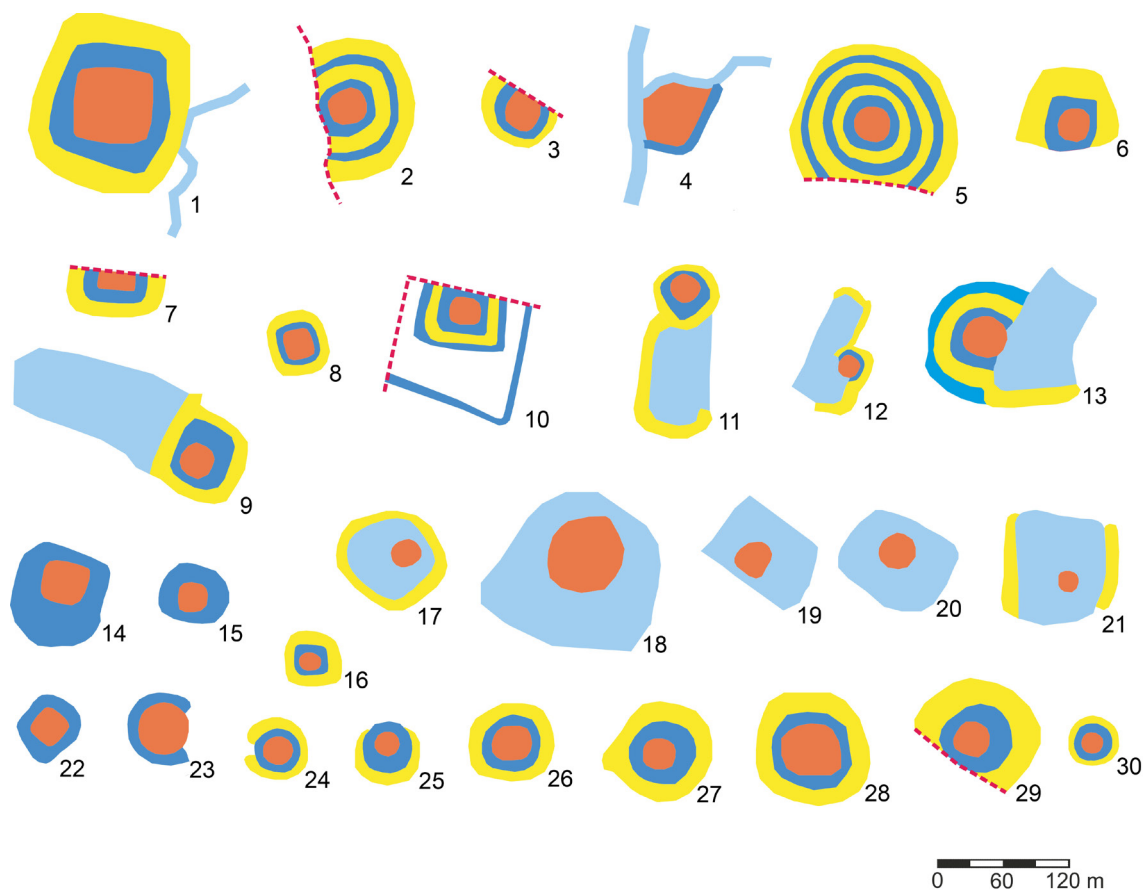


Fig. 9. Comparison of ground plans and forms of individual fortified manor houses. Orange – core, dark blue – ditch, light blue – bodies of water (river, pond), yellow – rampart, dashed line – recent intrusion. (1) Staré Smrkovice, (2) Radíkovice, (3) Přestavlky, (4) Mokrovousy, (5) Nechanice, (6) Lubno, (7) Kosice 1, western fortified manor house, (8) Kosice 2, eastern fortified manor house, (9) Sekeřice, northern fortified manor house, (10) Třesice, (11) Vysoká, (12) Kasaličky, (13) Babice, (14) Stračov, (15) Třebnouševy, (16) Chloumky, (17) Libčany, (18) Klamoš, (19) Kovač, (20) Obědovice, (21) Libeň, (22) Habřina, (23) Hrádek, (24) Mlázovice, (25) Lískovice, (26) Sekeřice, southern fortified manor house, (27) Ohnišřany, (28) Hustířany, (29) Petrovičky, (30) Dobeš. Graphic design: P. Drnovský.

by a single ditch and one rampart was almost 160 metres in length. 6 other residences were 110–90 metres in length. 12 fortified sites were between 90–70 metres. Sites with a length of 70–50 metres were less common (7 residences), and only 3 fortifications with a length of 50–30 metres were detected. The dimensions of central mounds also vary. The extensive mound of the fortified manor house at Klamoš is the largest, with a diameter of 85 metres (measured on the longer axis). The central mounds of the fortifications at Mokrovousy and Staré Smrkovice are over 50 metres in diameter. At the Babice, Hustířany, Hrádek and Stračov residences, the central mounds have a diameter of between 40–50 metres. The most frequent diameter of artificial mounds is between 39–30 metres (found at 12 sites). The central mounds at 9 sites measure between 29–20 metres and the mounds at the remaining 5 fortifications vary around the value of 20 metres.

An important element increasing the overall defensive capacity of fortified residences was a watercourse used to fill the moats, and being located nearby or even in the middle of an artificial lake/pond. 11 residences

were located in direct relation to a watercourse and 5 fortified manor houses were situated near or in ponds.

All the surveyed residences were built in relation to the inner built-up area of their respective villages. 15 fortified manor houses were situated directly in a village and 13 fortifications were located at the edge or in the neighbourhood of a village. This distance was mainly detected with sites which were located in the floodplain of a river or in the neighbourhood of an artificial lake. The waterlogged terrain may have satisfied the demands for a good defensive capacity, but it prevented a direct connection to the inner built-up area of a village. We were not able to draw any conclusions about the relationship between the fortified manor house and village in places where both settlement units have perished (Babice, Kalthaus, Nedabylice, Přestavlky, and Vysoká); in these cases, the location of a manorial residence there is known, but the location of the deserted village is not.

Although in all studied locations we detected an absence of visible relics of internal building development or other building structures, a geophysical

survey of 11 selected sites yielded important information in the form of anomalies connected with human activity: evidence of redevelopment of buildings within the main perimeter fortification, ditches, and rampart enclosures at the outer side of the ditch.

The above-mentioned scarcity of information about the possible building appearance of the studied fortified manor houses contrasts with the relics of several manorial residences preserved within later mansions or buildings of other purpose. Single-room tower buildings were detected at Cerekvice and Dolní Přím. The former had walls approximately 8.6 metres in length, while the latter was 10×7 metres. The construction of these tower forts is dated to the 14th century. Both buildings underwent later alterations. The building in Cerekvice was extended by a three-part palace of 26 metres side length in the first half of the 16th century, and the building in Přím was also extended by a Renaissance palace during the 16th century. The mansion at Jeřice includes perimeter masonry from a fortified manor house with a two-part layout, which may have been built in the 2nd half of the 14th century. Residences composed of a main rectangular building with three-room interior layout are located in Dohalice (32×12 metres), Hořiněves (26×12 metres) and Kamenice (14×10 metres). More complicated internal arrangement was detected in the palatial rectangular fortified houses at Dřevěnice (24×13 metres), Hořice (23×14 metres), and Konecchlumí (22×13 metres). The sites of Dřevěnice, Hořiněves, Kamenice, and Konecchlumí are dated to the period before the Hussite Wars, whereas the fortified manor houses at Dohalice and Hořice are generally dated to the 15th century. In the fortified manor house at Smiřice, which was built during the 15th century, we identified a palatial rectangular building and within the later mansion complex also a tower gate and traces of a perimeter defensive wall, which delimited a courtyard of 37×32 metres in size. The youngest example of preserved buildings is the fortified manor house at Hradištko u Ostroměře, which was built during the 16th century.

Even though we partly know the building appearance of the above-mentioned residences with preserved building relics, in the vast majority of cases we can say nothing about the character of other fortification elements. We can observe the tower-like or palace-like buildings but we do not know how their closest surroundings may have looked in medieval times. The only exception may be the residence at Dolní Přím, where the relics of the moat of an older fortified manor house are preserved near the later mansion building. The ditches and ramparts on the remaining sites were probably levelled during later phases of their development.

In none of the preserved buildings could we find evidence for the presence of an artificial mound, as is found on the vast majority of other preserved fortified sites. This discrepancy might be explained by the fact that when the owner decided to build masonry buildings within the fortified residence, the mound was not piled up because it had no relevant function. Another possibility is that though the residence consisted of an artificially raised mound in the older phase, the mound was levelled during construction of the masonry building. On the other hand, we do not know what type of architecture was common at sites where only terrain features in the form of artificially raised mounds, ditches, and ramparts are preserved. Here we reach the limit of the present state of knowledge about these residences. On the basis of geophysical survey, it seems that this type of site would be primarily connected with wooden constructions, as observed during the dismantling of several sites at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries,²⁷ as there are few reliable reports on the existence of masonry buildings in the case of these fortified residences with central mounds.

Conclusion

During the Middle Ages, small aristocratic demesnes were common in the central part of East Bohemia. These demesnes were connected with the occurrence of fortified manor houses, a characteristic settlement form of the time. On the basis of written reports, there were approximately 139 such residences, most of which have completely disappeared. For 45 sites we can identify the original location. A combination of various approaches enables us to study and partly explore these sites. A typical component in most of these fortified sites was an artificially raised mound situated in the centre of the residence. The majority of the sites declined during the 15th and 16th centuries. In 11 cases the medieval masonry building was incorporated into the complex of a later aristocratic residence. Further research on these sites should mainly employ non-destructive archaeological methods, in particular geophysical methods and the creation of accurate topographic plans, in order to create a more detailed study of fortified manor houses and their surroundings.

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²⁷ Drnovský 2022, 59-60.

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