

## THE EARLY CAROLINGIAN SPUR FROM SMOLENICE, FOUND IN 1934<sup>1</sup>

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The paper presents the analysis of a loop spur found during A. Loubal's research in 1934 on Smolenice-Molpír hillfort. The item is known in the literature for a long time. However, the method of its publication prevented proper scientific evaluation of the artefact. The schematic drawing documentation prompted archaeologists to consider the spur an imitation. A more detailed analysis of the find shows that it is an uncommon item in Western Slovakia, namely an Early Carolingian original dated back to the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century or the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

### INTRODUCTION

A. Loubal organised excavations in the area of the Smolenice-Molpír hillfort in 1934. The Early Carolingian spur he found then is known in the literature for a long time. However, the original publication prevented proper scientific analysis of the artefact. The schematic drawing documentation (Ruttkay 1975, fig. 22: 9) induced researchers to consider it an imitation, while in fact, it is a relatively rare – at least in Western Slovakia – Western European product typical for the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 1).

The earliest information about the early medieval finds from Smolenice come from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Nagy 1896, 359; Sándorfy 1890, pl. II: 2). It was the time when the Molpír hillfort was identified. Although nearly immediately amateur archaeologists started their investigations on the site and its vicinity, we have almost no information about the finds. The same applies to the excavations organised in the 1930s (Romsauer 2011, 39, 40). Later, the Smolenice-Molpír hillfort was regularly studied in the 1960s (Dušek 1965; Dušek/Dušek 1984; 1995). The researchers focused on the Hallstatt phase, clearly underestimating La-Tène and early medieval artefacts. The significance of the site was confirmed by a series of finds obtained by private collectors that – ultimately – were deposited in the Slovak National Museum – Archaeological Museum in Bratislava (Šimčík 2007; Turčan 1994; 1995; 2011). Even today, the hillfort, as well as its area, is constantly devastated and plundered by amateur treasure hunters.

Apart from the spur, we know also another loop spur from Smolenice-Molpír (Fig. 2), a fragment of a buckle spur yoke (Fig. 3: 3), three hooked spurs (one decorated), fragments of Carolingian sword pommels (Fig. 3: 1, 2), a collection of Late Avar bronzes and other pieces of early medieval weaponry (Dušek/Dušek 1984, pl. 100: 2; 1995, pl. 128: 6; 18; Turčan 1994; 1995). Allegedly, on the nearby hill, Záruby, a type H Carolingian sword dated back to the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century was found (Fig. 4; Turčan 2011). On another hill, Dolné Orešany-Rekomberek, one of the largest deposits of early medieval, mainly Late Avar, decorations (Pieta/Ruttkay 2017), including one Carolingian find decorated with the plant ornamentation and dated back to the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Robak 2017b). All these can confirm

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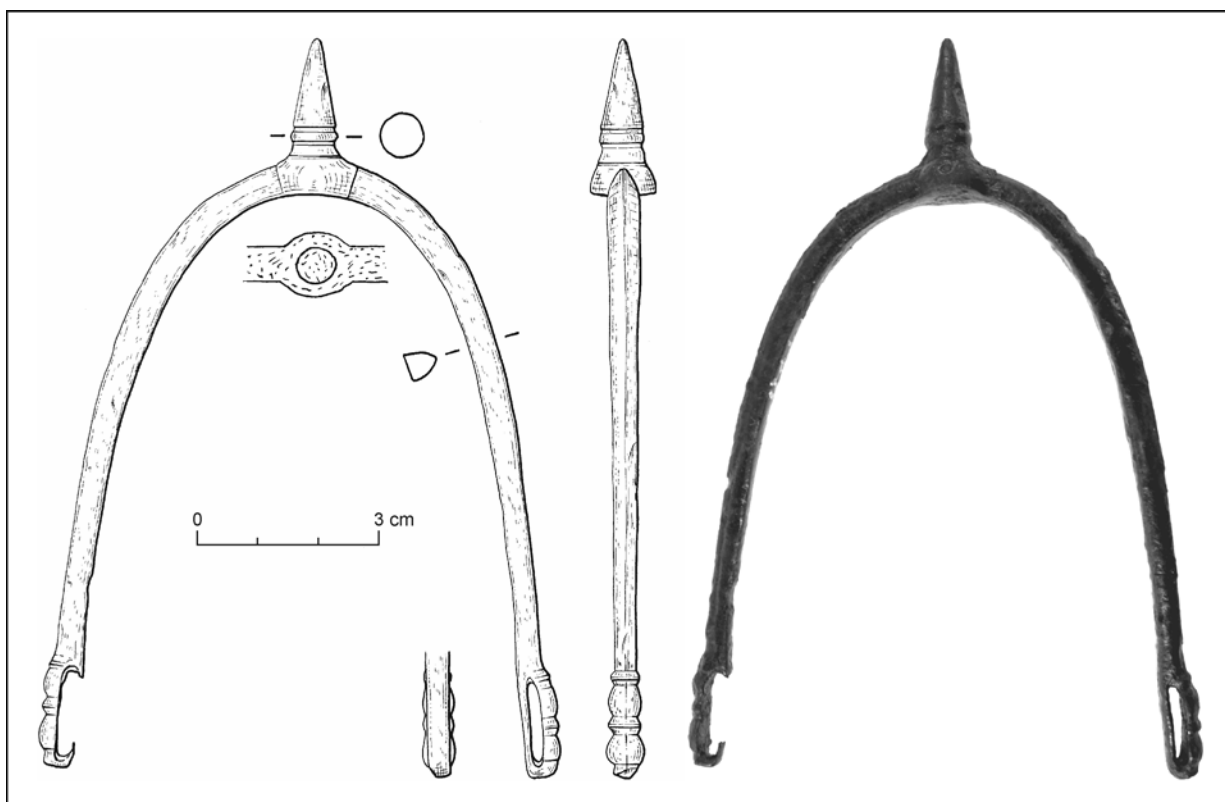


Fig. 1. Smolenice-Molpír. The loop spur. Iron. Drawn N. Vaššová, photo Z. Robak.



Fig. 2. Smolenice-Molpír. The loop spur. Iron (private collection). Photo SNM – Archaeological Museum. No scale.

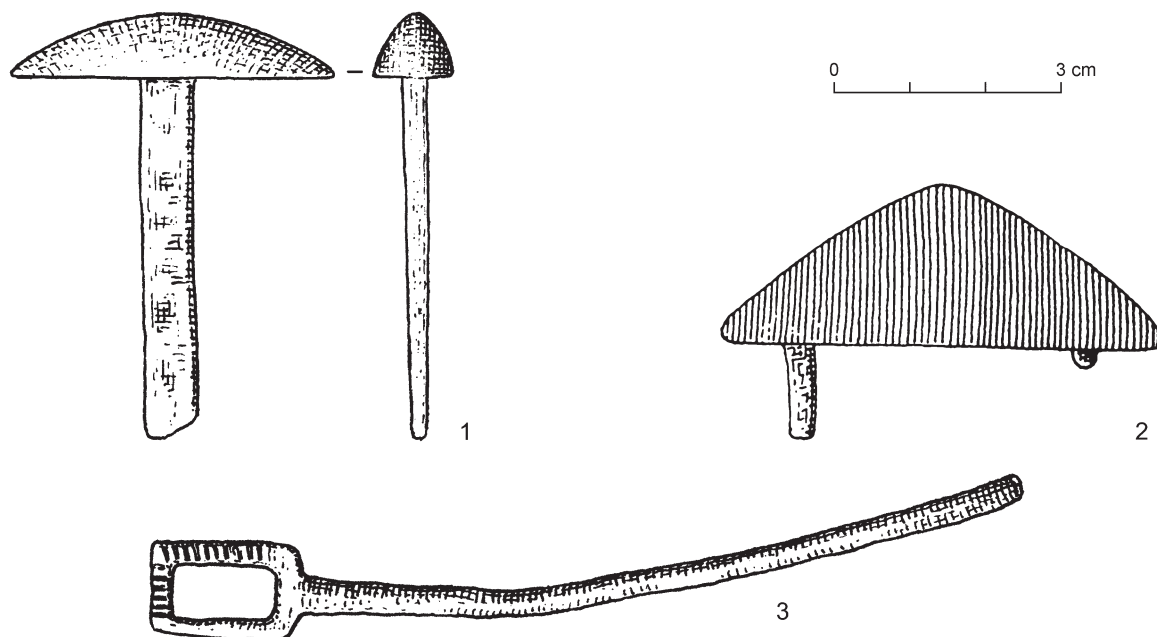


Fig. 3. Smolenice-Molpír. 1, 2 – Carolingian sword's pommels; 3 – fragment of a buckle-spur. Iron (Dušek/Dušek 1984; 1995).

that at the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century, a local power centre emerged in the area of Smolenice. The centre, however, could not compete with those located in the Morava, Wah and Nitra valleys. Despite this, the site in Smolenice retained its function even later, in the Great Moravian times – at least in the 9<sup>th</sup> century – when it became an element in the chain of hillforts protecting routes passing through the Little Carpathians and linking the Morava valley with the Wah valley (Turčan 1994, 80, 81). Some of the troop members stationed there could be later buried on a cemetery located in today village of Smolenice (Dušek 1979; Farkaš 1995). Most likely, the village itself was a settlement background of the hillfort.

### THE SPUR

The spur from the Smolenice-Molpír hillfort is known for nearly 100 years. It was found during excavations organised by A. Loubal in 1934, close to the “second rampart” – according to the measurements of the hillfort made by Š. Janšák in 1930. It was first mentioned by the finder himself in 1935 (Loubal 1935) and then by J. Eisner (1935, 78). Both correctly described it as “Carolingian”. Unfortunately, the documentation of the A. Loubal’s research has not survived and thus it is impossible to draw detailed conclusions about context of the find. The information that the spur was found “between the Hallstatt and Slavic pottery from 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> century” (Fig. 5; Loubal 1935) suggests that it was found rather in a cultural layer than in a feature backfill. The drawing of the spur was published in the museum catalogue in 1975 with a brief comment that the item is missing (Ruttikay 1975, 177, 178, fig. 22: 9). Fortunately, it was found later under another register number. The drawing, however, does not do justice to the item. Based on the publication from 1975, we could consider the spur a simple early medieval loop or quasi-loop spur. This could be a reason why the spur did not attract more interest of the archaeologists satisfied with this schematic publication.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I made this mistake myself when I used a drawing of the spur in the “Bojná 2” and considered it an analogy for the spur from Bojná-Žihlávnik (Robak 2017a, 60, 61). Fortunately, the mistake does not undermine the validity of analysis presented there. Once again, however, it shows that is better to be safe than sorry and to control the sources carefully. Although T. Kind (2007, 587, no. 30) mentions the spur among mit gebuckelten Ösen und/oder Tassilokelchstilornament spurs, he provides no drawing and adds a comment “unpublished” which may suggest that it is another, yet unknown item.

The spur is 12.2 cm long. One of the loops is damaged and the yoke above it is slightly bent. Otherwise, the spur is in good condition. The spur was made of two separate parts – the yoke and the prick placed in an opening 0.6 cm in diameter. The yoke span is 8.7 cm and its internal height is 9.5 cm. It was made from a rod triangle in the intersection. The yoke tips ended with loops. Dimensions of the loops allowed wrapping straps not wider than 1.2 cm and not thicker than 0.2 cm. Loops were formed by bending the rod inwards and the joint can be seen only after meticulous examination. External edges of the loops are decorated with two knee-like thickenings. The prick is 2 cm long and together with the part hidden in the yoke, it is 2.7 cm long. At the base, the prick is profiled.

#### TYOLOGY AND CHRONOLOGY

The spur from Smolenice is a typical example of early medieval loop spurs (Schlaufensporen) that is spurs with yoke tips formed in rectangular, oval or – less frequently – triangle frames. Similar specimens are known mainly from northern parts of Germany (Goßler/Posluschny 1998; Kind 2007, 586, 587) and are known from Dalmatia along with other imports from Western Europe (Milošević 2006). Loop spurs are common in Western European Late Merovingian cemeteries, in assemblages dated back to the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Kleemann 2002, 126; Stein 1967). Usually, such spurs were accompanied by narrow strap-ends with faceted edges (type B1) and later with fittings with an inset (type A1) or the so-called leaf-shaped fittings (type A2, in the older literature sometimes referred to as bird-shaped; Robak 2013, pl. 1). J. Kleemann (2002, 126) dates the horizon of graves containing such spurs and fittings with an inset back to the III and IV phase of the so-called Frisian-Saxon northwestern circle. The youngest assemblages containing such spurs – Schortens, grave 217a and Borne – could be dated based on the presence of Charlemagne denarius back to the period after 771 (around 790/794). This date is consistent with Kleemann's IV phase ranging from about 770 to 800/810 (Kleemann 2002, fig. 87; Rötting 1999, 244; Schulze-Dörrlamm 2010, 346). At the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century, in Western Europe loop spurs were replaced by plate spurs. Typologically, the process is well reflected by spurs from grave 1 from Oldendorf with one yoke arm ended with a loop and another with a plate (Laux 1983, fig. 1).

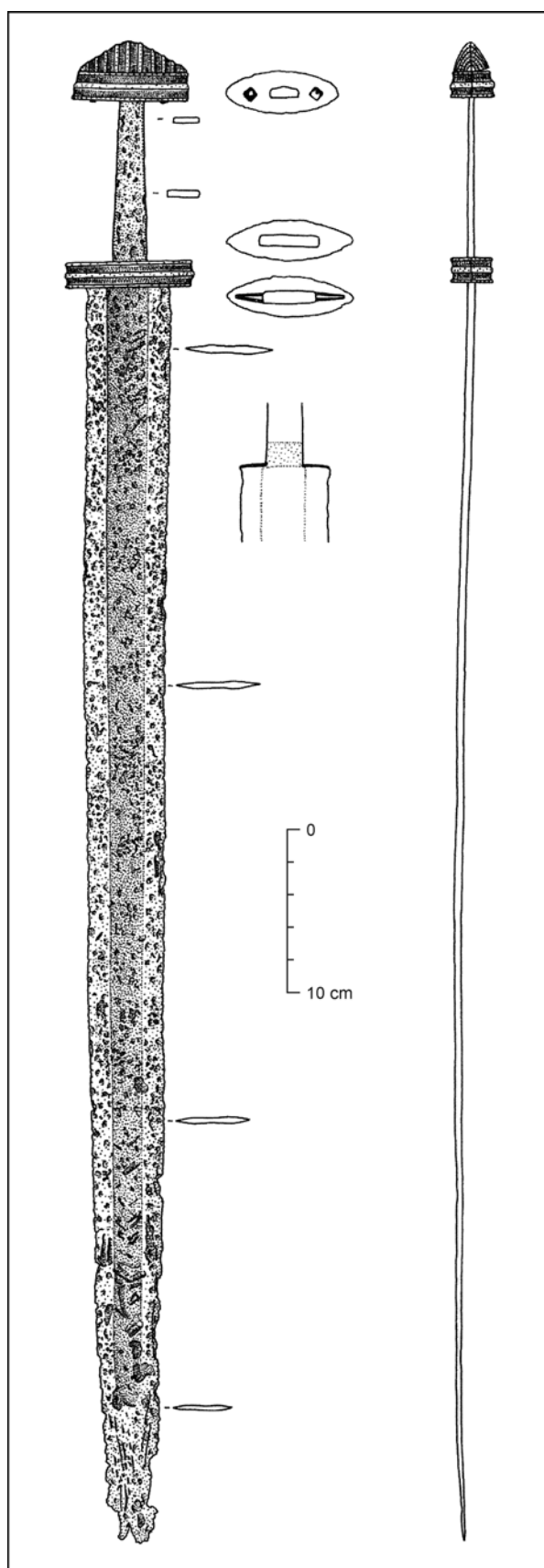


Fig. 4. Smolenice-Záruby. Carolingian sword of the H-type. Iron (Turčan 2011).



<sup>3</sup> To explain this lower intensity of contacts as well as later intensification we should look at the political history of Europe in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century, however the issue is so complex that it cannot be thoroughly discussed in this brief paper. The only exception in terms of the number of Merovingian imports is North-Western Slavic territories where numerous hooked spurs can be actual imports from the West. Probably the differences were related to the geographical location of the lands – on the Baltic Sea coast – at the borderland between many cultures (*Brather 1996; Janowski 2017*). However, when comparing this with the Carolingian period, the general picture remains intact.

spurs with long yokes until the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and hooked spurs even longer (*Profantová* 1994, 71). Nearly all known such spurs, however, are simplified and aesthetically unappealing. Therefore, we can assume that in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, hooked and quasi-loop spurs were acceptable substitutes for those who could not afford, due to financial or technological issues, more luxurious items such as plate spurs.

Only until recently, single examples of Carolingian loop spurs in the Slavic lands were known only from Lower Silesia (*Žak* 1959, fig. 14)<sup>4</sup> and Dalmatia (*Milošević* 2006). In the former case, it was an isolated, single find of a Carolingian type item found outside context and, thus, difficult to interpret (see *Robak* 2018a, 76, 77). In the latter, the presence of loop spurs in today Croatia should be linked with the wave of early Carolingian weaponry to the area. This was the earliest wave of Carolingian imports of the Slavic territories (*Robak* 2017–2018, 331, fig. 2), most distinct in today Croatia and Slovenia, often referred to as the early phase of the Biskupija-Crkvina horizon. The horizon reflects the actual presence of Carolingian troops in this area due to the campaign against the Avars (791–803) and later operations aiming at retaining the control over these lands (*Dzino* 2010, 182–187; *Štih* 2010, 132, 133). Chronological frameworks of the phase could be narrowed to the period between 790 and 820. The items characteristic for the phase include mainly spurs with side rivets and buckle spurs as well as items (strap fittings, buckles, slides) decorated with typical thickenings and Tassilo Chalice Style or related ornaments. Some (possibly even most) of these types of items are local products quite faithfully imitating the Western European stylistics (*Jurčević* 2011). A relatively small number of loop spurs in the mass of artefacts attributed to the first phase is probably related to the decreasing popularity of such spurs at the time. Consequently, we can safely assume that in Western Europe such spurs were already obsolete. Those that reached Dalmatia or Slovenia most likely travelled there “on legs” of their direct users. However, they never gained sufficient popularity to be locally produced, possibly also due to the advent of a new, technologically more advanced type of plate spurs.

The intense archaeological research as well as activities of the so-called amateur explorers – often using metal detectors – led to a significant increase of metal finds in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, including also Early Carolingian finds. Interestingly, Early Carolingian and generally Carolingian finds are found mainly in the Bohemian Basin (*Profantová* 2016b; 2017), while in Moravia and Western Slovakia there are only three new finds in recent ten years (*Robak* 2015, fig. 2: 9, 13; 2018b). The concentration of Early Carolingian finds from the Bohemian Basin is consistent with the observation made by *E. Wamers* (1993, 41; 1999, 436) that there is a correlation between concentrations of Early Carolingian types of finds (particularly decorated in the Tassilo Chalice Style) and the longer physical presence of Carolingian nobility and army confirmed by historic sources. The research on the occurrence of various Carolingian finds on eastern peripheries of the Carolingian state confirms this correlation also for Early Carolingian styles other than the Tassilo Chalice Style (*Robak* 2013; 2015; 2017–2018; 2018b). Some Frankish troops were already, briefly, present in the Bohemian Basin during the campaign against the Avars in 791. In that campaign, the Czechs most likely were the Frankish allies. Then, in 805–806 the Franks organised two campaigns against the Czechs themselves (*Třeštík* 2001, 57–63, 71–85). The Early Carolingian weaponry, so far there are no other kinds of finds, could be traces of these operations. Scarce finds from Moravia and Slovakia reflect the fact that at the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century, these areas did not interest the Franks, there were no Carolingian troops there and any official contacts between the local elites and the Franks, including ceremonial gift exchanges, had not been established yet. The inflow of Early Carolingian products to Moravia and Slovakia was only incidental. Consequently, based on the source material, it is difficult to reconstruct routes and the chronology of the inflow reliably. However, some of these items were probably imported later, for example together with the second wave of Late Carolingian products that is at the end of the first quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (*Robak* 2017–2018).<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, we can notice that nearly all Early Carolingian types of finds are concentrated in areas of defensive structures or cultural layers of multi-phase hillforts roughly dated back to the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Tab. 1). In this period, the Middle Danube and

<sup>4</sup> The chronology of the example from Kraków-Gródek is less certain (*Strzyż* 2006, fig. 27: 11). In my opinion, a chalice-like prick known from spurs from Menzlin and York (see *Kind* 2002) disqualifies the spur as an Early Carolingian product. Most likely, the spur should be attributed to the Ottonian times.

<sup>5</sup> We can draw similar conclusions about some artefacts found in Southern Poland that could be imported from Bohemia or Moravia (*Robak* 2018a, 63–68).

Tab. 1. Localities with finds of Avar bronze decorations, hooked spurs and Early Carolinian items.

Site	Site type	Late Avar bronze decorations	Hooked spurs	Early Carolinian items	References
Bojná-Valy/SK	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Robak 2017a</i>
Brno-Líšeň/CZ	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2010; 2015; 2016b; Robak 2017a</i>
Češov/CZ	hill-fort	–	x	x	<i>Profantová 2012; 2015</i>
Mikulčice-Valy/CZ	lowland stronghold, graveyard	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2010; 2016b; Robak 2017a</i>
Mořinka/CZ	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2015; 2016a; 2016b; 2017a</i>
Olomouc-Povel/CZ	fortified settlement	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2010; 2016b; Robak 2017a</i>
Praha-Kosoř/CZ	hill-fort	x	–	x	<i>Profantová 2015; 2016a; 2017</i>
Rubín-Dolánky/CZ	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2010; 2016a; 2016b</i>
Smolenice/SK	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Dušek 1984; Turčan 1994; 1995</i>
Sv. Jan pod Skalou/CZ	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2015; 2016a; 2016b; 2017</i>
Tismice/CZ	hill-fort	x	x	x	<i>Profantová 2010; 2015; 2016a; 2016b; 2017</i>

in the Upper Elbe region experienced radical political changes caused by the expansion of the Frankish State and the decline of the Avars. The political changes initiated cultural revolution (expansion of Christianity, changes of the burial rite) and social transformations related to the emergences of the elites. The process, most likely, had started earlier, however, the new geopolitical situation accelerated it. The process resulted in establishing numerous hillforts located in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia. Most of these hillforts lost their significance or even perished in the first decades of the 9<sup>th</sup> century<sup>6</sup>. However, some of the hillforts became cornerstones of future political centres of Great Moravia and Přemyslid's Bohemia. The emergence and emancipation of the Slavic elites are reflected in the archaeological sources. The material includes hooked and quasi-loop spurs (including also specimens made of bronze), Late Avar bronze decorations and many other pieces of weaponry – found at the defensive structures – dated back to the turn of the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (*Galuška 2013, 13–97; 2017, 80–92; Profantová 2016a; 2016b; Šalkovský 2015, 102*). The presence – though occasional – of Early Carolingian finds is another manifestation of this phenomenon. The hillfort in Smolenice can be linked with the group (horizon) of hillforts with hooked spurs and Late Avar bronzes used at the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

The distribution of Early Carolingian finds in Central Europe reflects the situation described by historical sources about the Carpathian Basin at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. It seems that the lands located to the north of the Danube, in the Moravia and Vah valleys, did not arouse Frankish interests. Apart from one campaign in the area of the Kamp River, in 791, the Carolingian army was not active on the northern Danube bank. Moravia and lands located further to the north were not a war scene then (*Třeštík 2001, 58–62*). Due to the strategic importance of Pannonia, military operations during the Frankish-Avar war (791–803) concentrated in that region. Consequently, the Franks, who needed a “buffer zone” protecting the eastern border of the state, suddenly became interested in tribal lands surrounding the empire. The crisis and the fall of the Avars opened a gap between the Sorbian (Lusatian) tribes, subordinated in 782, and Pannonia inhabited by the Avars and the Slavs and quite unexpectedly obtained by the Carolingians in 803. The two campaigns in 805 and 806 to the lands inhabited by Czech tribes and the settlement of the Avars “between Carnuntum and Savaria” have brought changes beneficial to the Franks.

Ordinatio Imperii (817) mentions several such buffer lands governed by Louis the German, including lands inhabited by the Carinthians, the Czechs as well as the Avars and the Slavs living to the east of the Bavarians – this comment, most likely, referred to the Slavs inhabiting the future Eastern March (*Třeštík 2001, 103*). Consequently, the tribes living in the Moravia valley, not to mention

<sup>6</sup> These are localities where so-called Great Moravian Phase or (in other periodization system) Middle Hillfort Period (e.g., Převládza-Hradec, Klátova Nová Ves, Olomouc-Povel) were not observed.



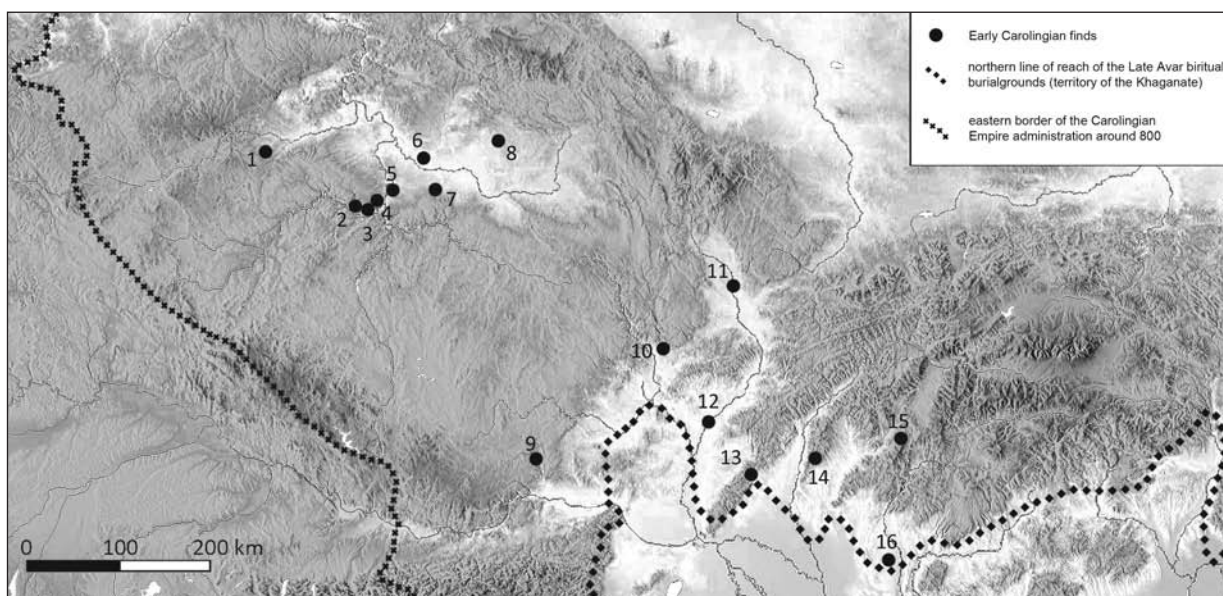


Fig. 6. Early Carolingian finds from the Bohemia, Moravia and Western Slovakia. 1 – Rubin-Dolánky, okr. Louny/CZ (2 small strap ends); 2 – Sv. Jan pod Skalou, okr. Beroun/CZ (small strap end); 3 – Mořinka, okr. Beroun/CZ (strap slide); 4 – Praha-Kosoř, okr. Praha-západ/CZ (small strap end); 5 – Praha-Kunratický les, city of Prague/CZ (belt fitting); 6 – Skorkov, okr. Mladá Boleslav/CZ (spur); 7 – Tismice, okr. Kolín/CZ (strap slide); 8 – Česov, okr. Jičín/CZ (small strap end); 9 – Gars-Thunau, Bez. Horn/AT (buckle in a younger context); 10 – Brno-Líšeň – Staré Zámky, okr. Brno-město/CZ (2 strap ends); 11 – Olomouc-Povel, okr. Olomouc/CZ (small strap end); 12 – Mikulčice-Valy, okr. Hodonín/CZ (3 small strap ends); 13 – Smolenice, okr. Trnava/SK (spur); 14 – Bojná-Valy, okr. Topolčany/SK (small strap end); 15 – Prievidza-Hradec, okr. Prievidza/SK (belt fitting); 16 – Želiezovce-Kostolná, okr. Levice/SK (small strap end).

those inhabiting territories of today Slovakia, were still outside the buffer zone. The document does not mention these lands. For the first time, the Moravians, or rather their representatives on the Frankfurt Council, appear in the written sources in 822. First diplomatic relations were established, thus, before that date. Probably the process was catalysed by the emergence of a strong power centre in Bavaria (starting from 817) and parallel events in Slavonia and Croatia (the revolt of Ljudevit Posavski in 818–822) that inclined the Bavarian nobility to take a closer look at their neighbours (Třeštík 2001, 101–103), they knew that also other tribes could undertake similar attempts to obtain independence.

It was probably then that the Moravians entered the orbit of direct interests and influences of the Carolingian State. Since that time we can expect the presence of the Slavic Moravian elites in the Carolingian public life and consequently also in the ceremonial exchange of goods and gifts. The situation is well reflected in archaeological sources. Around the turn of the first and the second quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, we observe a clear wave of Carolingian imports to Moravia – Late Carolingian products dated back to the beginning and the first quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, the wave is legible also in Bohemia, which remained in the orbit of Carolingian influences at least since the beginning of the century (Robak 2017–2018).

## CONCLUSION

The spur from Smolenice complements the archaeological panorama of Carolingian finds in the Middle Danube Basin. Paradoxically, this find does not invalidate previous observations (Robak 2013, 191, 192; 2015, 325) that in today Moravia and Slovakia there are no archaeological assemblages containing sets of Early Carolingian weaponry. The collection of such finds includes, apart from the spur, few loose finds of strap fittings from settlement layers and one grave find<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 6; Robak 2017a; 2018b).

<sup>7</sup> Mikulčice, grave 108/II. Additionally, grave 129 from Gars-Thunau contained a D-shaped slide decorated with thickenings – most likely Early Carolingian. However, the remaining pieces of burial equipment – a Y-type sword and a plate spur with



Therefore, it would be rather difficult to call the phenomenon a horizon of Early Carolingian finds in this area. Particularly if we compare the situation with the Bohemian Basin where (i) the number of known finds increased significantly in recent years, (ii) variability of types is greater, (iii) finds concentrated in a relatively small area and we can notice a clear cluster around Prague. If we add items made in the Late Carolingian type, but stylistically dated back to the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the concentration would be even greater (see *Robak 2018b*, fig. 8). Not to mention the situation in Slovenia or Croatia where the horizon of Early Carolingian finds is legible – also in archaeological assemblages – and the forms of finds are more varied (*Bilogriović 2019; Jurčević 2011; Karo 2012; Milošević 2012; Petrinc 2009*).

Translated by Magdalena Adamus

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a long prick – date the grave back to the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The radiocarbon analysis confirmed this dating (*Nowotny 2013*, 446, 448, fig. 3). Therefore, we cannot relate this assemblage to the horizon of Early Carolingian finds. However, it confirms that some types of decorations were used for a relatively long time or even stored as valuable pieces of material.

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## Včasnokarolínska ostroha zo Smoleníc, nález z roku 1934

Z b i g n i e w R o b a k

Súhrn

Ostroha z hradiska Molpír v Smoleniciach (obr. 1; 2) je nález, ktorý je v literatúre známy takmer sto rokov. Pochádza z výskumu A. Loubala z roku 1934 v blízkosti „druhého valu“ (podľa zamerania Š. Janšáka z roku 1930). Prvýkrát sa o nej zmienil A. Loubal (1935), pričom ju správne opísal ako „karolínsku“, čo zopakoval J. Eisner (1935, 78). Dokumentácia z prieskumu A. Loubala sa dodnes nezachovala, takže je ťažké povedať niečo bližšie o okolnostiach nálezu. Informácia o tom, že sa ostroha našla „medzi halštatskou a slovanskou keramikou z 9.–10. stor.“ (Loubal 1935) naznačuje, že sa nachádzala skôr v kultúrnej vrstve ako vo výplni objektu. Kresba ostrohy v katalógu múzea bola zverejnená až v roku 1975, a to spolu s informáciami o tom, že predmet bol stratený (Ruttikay 1975, 177, 178, obr.

22: 9). Našiel sa však pod iným číslom. Kresba v katalógu múzea je veľmi odlišná od originálu. Na základe publikácie z roku 1975 (*Ruttikay 1975*, obr. 22: 9) by sa dalo uvažovať o tom, že išlo o pomerne jednoduchý kus včasnostredovekej očkovej alebo tzv. očkovej ostrohy.

Ostroha má dĺžku 12,2 cm. Jedno z očiek je poškodené a oblúk nad ním mierne ohnutý. Predmet je zachovalý a je vo veľmi dobrom stave. Ostroha bola vyhotovená z dvoch častí, a to z oblúka a bodca, ktorý bol následne zapustený do otvoru s priemerom 0,6 cm. Rozpätie ramien je 8,7 cm, vnútorná výška oblúku 9,5 cm. Bol vyrobený z tyčinky trojuholníkového prierezu. Na koncoch ramien sú očka, ktoré umožňujú prevlečenie remeňa maximálnej šírky 1,2 cm a hrúbky 2 mm. Očka boli vyrobené ohnutím splošteného konca tyčinky dovnútra, hoci miesto spojenia je viditeľné iba pri veľmi podrobnom skúmaní. Na vonkajšom okraji očiek sú dve zhrubnutia v tvare kolienok. Výška kónického bodca je 2 cm a jeho celková dĺžka spolu s časťou zapustenou do rámu 2,7 cm. Bodca je profilovaný.

Smolenická ostroha je typickým príkladom včasnokarolínskej očkovej ostrohy (nemecky *Schlaufensporen*), t. j. takej, v ktorej boli konce ramien formované do pravouhlého alebo oválneho, menej často trojuholníkového rámu. Podobné exempláre sú známe najmä z oblastí dnešného severného Nemecka (*Göfller/Posluschny 1998; Kind 2007*, 586, 587) a vyskytujú sa aj v Dalmácii spolu s ďalšími importami zo západu (*Milošević 2006*). Exemplár zo Smoleníc možno datovať na prelom 8. a 9. stor. alebo na začiatok 9. stor. Jeho podobnosť s nálezmi zo Sundremdy (*Deubler 1966*, tab. 39), Osnabrücku (*Schlüter/Zehm 1992*, obr. 31: 4) a Gornji Vrbljani (*Milošević 2006*, obr. 6: 1) potvrdzuje domnienku, že ide o import zo západnej Európy.

Smolenická ostroha dopĺňa archeologickú panorámu karolínskych nálezov v strednom Podunajsku. Paradoxne popiera predchádzajúce názory (*Robak 2013*, 191, 192; *2015*, 325), že v oblasti dnešnej Moravy a Slovenska chýbajú archeologické celky obsahujúce súbory včasnokarolínskych militárií. Zbierka pozostáva z niekoľkých ojedinelých nálezov, okrem ostrohy, aj nákončia, pochádzajúcich zo sídliskových vrstiev a z jedného hrobu (obr. 6; *Robak 2017a; 2018b*). Preto je ťažké hovoriť o horizonte včasnokarolínskych nálezov v týchto oblastiach, najmä keď porovnáme stav archeologických prameňov, napr. s rýchlo sa meniacim stavom zdrojov z oblasti Českej kotliny, kde (i) je ich nárast v posledných rokoch významný, (ii) počet typov väčší, (iii) a vyskytujú sa hlavne na menšom území v okolí Prahy (ak prirátame aj tie, ktoré patria do neskorokarolínskeho typu, s datovaním na začiatok 9. stor., hustota by bola väčšia, pozri *Robak 2018b*, obr. 8). Nehovoríme o porovnaní s usernameami Slovenska alebo Chorvátska, kde je horizont včasnokarolínskych nálezov jasne čitateľný a vyznačuje sa rôznymi formami a ich prítomnosťou v archeologických celkoch (*Bilogrić 2019; Jurčević 2011; Karo 2012; Milošević 2012; Petrinc 2009*).

Obr. 1. Smolenice-Molpír. Očková ostroha. Železo. Kresba N. Vaššová, foto Z. Robak.

Obr. 2. Smolenice-Molpír. Očková ostroha. Železo (súkromná zbierka). Foto SNM – Archeologické múzeum. Bez mierky.

Obr. 3. Smolenice-Molpír. 1, 2 – hlavice karolínskych mečov; 3 – fragment prackovej ostrohy. Železo (*Dušek/Dušek 1984; 1995*).

Obr. 4. Smolenice-Záruby. Karolínsky meč typu H. Železo (*Turčan 2011*).

Obr. 5. Správy zo Slovenského denníka z 5. júla 1935.

Obr. 6. Včasnokarolínske nálezy z Čiech, Moravy a západného Slovenska. 1 – Rubin-Dolánky, okr. Louny/CZ (dve malé nákončia); 2 – Sv. Jan pod Skalou, okr. Beroun/CZ (malé nákončie); 3 – Mořinka, okr. Beroun/CZ (prevliečka); 4 – Praha-Kosoř, okr. Praha-západ/CZ (malé nákončie); 5 – Praha-Kunratický les, city of Prague/CZ (opaskové kovanie); 6 – Skorkov, okr. Mladá Boleslav/CZ (ostroha); 7 – Tismice, okr. Kolín/CZ (prevliečka); 8 – Česov, okr. Jičín/CZ (malé nákončie); 9 – Gars-Thunau, Bez. Horn/AT (pracka v mladšom kontexte); 10 – Brno-Líšeň – Staré Zámky, okr. Brno-město/CZ (dve malé nákončia); 11 – Olomouc-Povel, okr. Olomouc/CZ (malé nákončie); 12 – Mikulčice-Valy, okr. Hodonín/CZ (tri malé nákončia); 13 – Smolenice, okr. Trnava/SK (ostroha); 14 – Bojná-Valy, okr. Topoľčany/SK (malé nákončie); 15 – Prievidza-Hradec, okr. Prievidza/SK (opaskové kovanie); 16 – Želiezovce-Kostolná, okr. Levice/SK (malé nákončie).

Tabela 1. Lokality s nálezmi avarských bronzových ozdôb, háčkových ostrôh a včasnokarolínskych predmetov.

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