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THE NON-DESTRUCTIVE RESEARCH INTO THE DESERTED VILLAGE OF JOVKA WITH THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS IN NOVÁ VES NAD ŽITAVOU

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Abstract: This article presents new information on the medieval village of Jovka, known from written sources dated to the 13th–18th centuries. By means of a geophysical survey, targeted surface collection, terrain prospecting and a metal detector survey, also using aerial laser scanning, we acquired a clearer picture of the location and dating of this deserted village with the Church of St. Thomas in its built-up area. The rich material culture obtained by the non-destructive archaeological survey facilitates the reconstruction of the everyday life of the local population.

Key words: medieval village – non-destructive archaeological research – pottery – LIDAR – geophysical survey.

Nedeštruktívny výskum zaniknutej dediny Jovka s Kostolom sv. Tomáša v Novej Vsi nad Žitavou

Abstrakt: Príspevok prináša nové poznatky o stredovekej dedine Jovka, známej z písomných prameňov datovaných do 13.–18. storočia. Prostredníctvom geofyzikálneho prieskumu, cieľeného povrchového zberu, terénnej prospekcie a detektorového prieskumu, zároveň s využitím leteckého laserového skenovania získavame jasnejší obraz o lokalizácii a datovaní tejto zaniknutej dediny s Kostolom sv. Tomáša v jej intraviláne. Bohatá materiálna kultúra, získaná prostredníctvom nedeštruktívneho archeologického prieskumu, napomáha k rekonštrukcii obrazu každodenného života tamojšieho obyvateľstva.

Kľúčové slová: stredoveká dedina – nedeštruktívny archeologický výskum – keramika – LIDAR – geofyzikálny prieskum.

The village of Nová Ves nad Žitavou in Nitra district is situated on the interface of the Žitavská and Pohronská pahorkatina hills, on the western and eastern terraces of the Žitava river and in its flood plain. The village, was divided into several independent settlements in the Middle Ages. The oldest settlements in the local area that are referred to in written documents include the medieval settlement of Jovka (*Jovka*) together with the settlement of *Horsan*. Later, other settlements situated in the area of the current village and its surroundings are mentioned – Genden (*Geunden*), Malá Jovka (*Jouka*), Drevenica (*Dervenche*) and Nová Ves itself (*Wyfalu*), which was probably separated or newly established on the property of Jovka (Trubíni, in press).

The article will focus on the medieval settlement of Jovka, which can be – based on historical maps and written reports – situated east of today's village of Nová Ves nad Žitavou (Fig. 1).¹

Written records

The earliest reference to Jovka comes from 1229 in association with the division of Slepčany, whose part was later called Malá Jovka and bordered this property of *comes* Ivanka, an ancestor of the Forgách family. The noblemen from Radava sold 40 morgens of land near the village of Maňa to his brother Thomas in 1237. Another brother Ondrej owned the settlement in 1265, which is mentioned in the written document informing on the conflict concerning Horný Ohaj, from which a road to Jovka was leading (Ivanič 2011, 426). Other reports about Jovka contain brief information on everyday events in the village in the 14th–15th centuries. The last written

¹ Three sites with similar/identical names are mentioned near the current village of Nová Ves nad Žitavou in the Middle Ages. The first site of *Jouka* later became Mikova Ves, the second site of *Jovka* is mentioned in 1342 in relation to the conflict regarding the borders of Pata and Čifáre – here, the property of the Knights of the Cross from Esztergom (referred to as a property bordering Pata and Horný Ďur) is mentioned and, finally, the third site of *Jovka* is identical with the site located above Nová Ves nad Žitavou (Trubíni, in press).

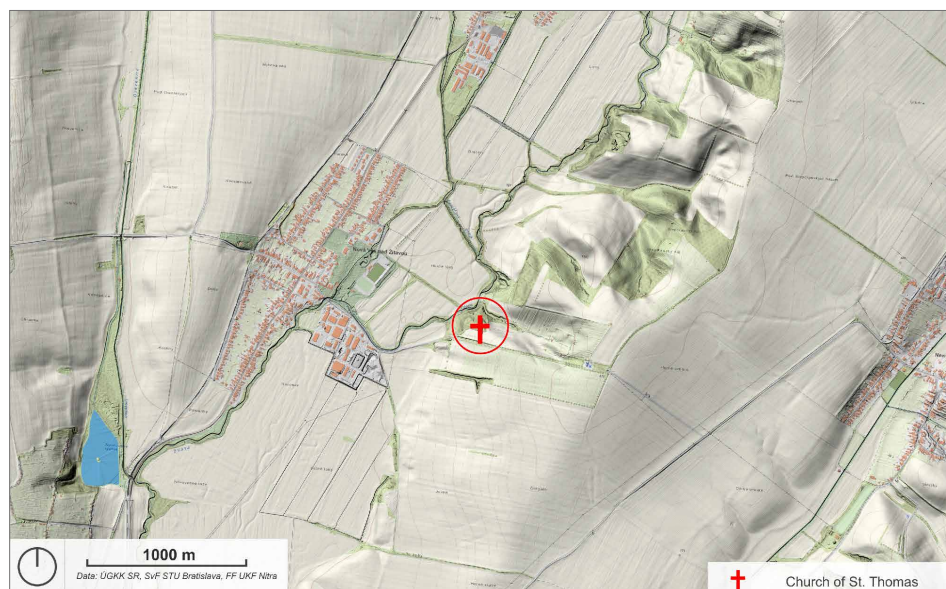


Fig. 1. Nová Ves nad Žitavou and the location of the Church of St. Thomas in the area of the deserted settlement of Jovka.

Obr. 1. Nová Ves nad Žitavou a situovanie Kostola sv. Tomáša v priestore zaniknutej osady Jovka.

report from 1533 mentions three taxed and three abandoned farmsteads in Jovka belonging to the Forgách family. At the beginning of the 18th century, Jovka was referred to as a former and abandoned settlement turned into a farmstead (Trubíni 2022, 85).

The Church of St. Thomas, which is mentioned (together with priest Stefan) on the List of Papal Tithes from 1332–1337, was part of the Jovka settlement (Sedlák 2015, 36). The church is also indicated on the first military survey map of 1782–1784 (Fig. 2); later it disappeared from maps.

History of archaeological research into the microregion

In this territory, popularly called Kostolné or Kostolná,² and in the wider surroundings, several non-destructive archaeological researches were carried out as well as a geophysical survey aimed at localization of the village with the church. So far, remains of a former brick church have been discovered. The church had a rectangular nave and probably a rectangular presbytery, a suggested enclosure and a ditch around the cemetery. There were also signs of other medieval features on the slope north of the church (Fig. 3:1; Habovštiak 1977). Settlement features were also detected approx. 300 m south of the church (Fig. 3:3; Bednár 2001, 35; Tirpák 1995). Probably medieval features were detected by the geophysical survey southeast of the church (Fig. 3:4; Tirpák 1995, 127, 128, Fig. 103). A considerable number of pottery sherds, mostly from the Middle Ages, comes from surface collections in the wide surroundings of the church (Figs. 3:2, 5, 6; Habovštiak 1977; Hanuliak 1989, 224; Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 1988; 1991, 32, 33; 2015, 93, 94).

² Judging by the existence of the local sacral building.

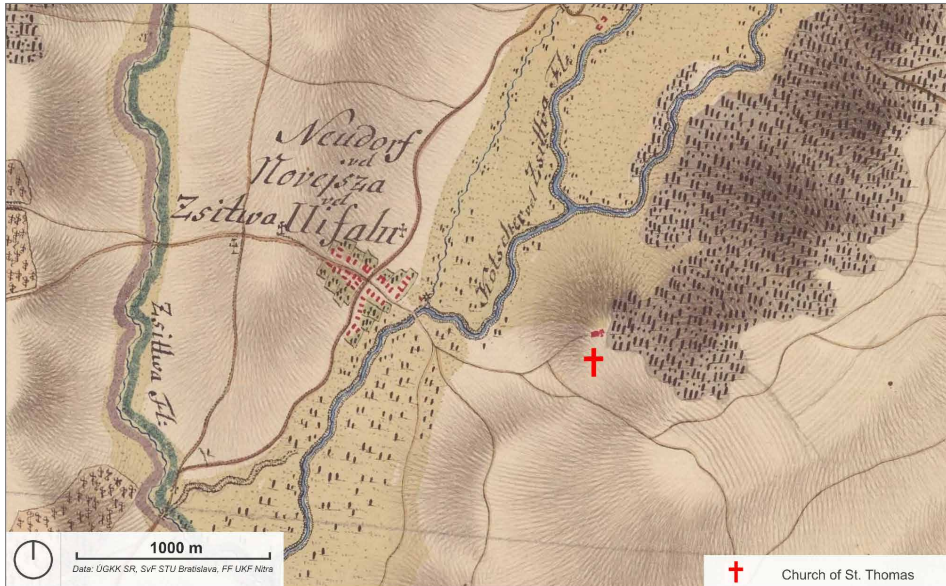


Fig. 2. Church of St. Thomas on the first military survey map.

Obr. 2. Kostol sv. Tomáša na prvom vojenskom mapovaní.

The results of the latest research into the site and its surroundings

Data for this study were obtained from airborne laser scanning conducted by the Geodesy, Cartography, and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic (Leitmannová–Gálová–Michalík 2020). Data acquisition took place on March 2018, with a final reflection point density of 33 points per square metre (pp/m²). The positional and vertical accuracy for the surveyed area is 5 cm (Review of Parameters of the Available Sites, 2024).

From the input data, a high-resolution (25 cm/pixel) Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and a classified point cloud were generated using linear interpolation methods. The DEM was visualized using specialized techniques that emphasize anthropogenic terrain features to identify elements of cultural heritage (Lieskovský, J. et al. 2022). This visualization employed various methods to express curvature at different topographic scales, as well as techniques to illustrate local terrain dynamics.

In the visualizations, depressions are indicated with a dark (blue) colour, while convex shapes such as ramparts or terrain edges are represented with a light (yellow) colour. The intensity of the colours varies depending on the degree of curvature.

High-resolution LIDAR images showed remains of the church appearing in the terrain in form of a depression with a rectangular ground plan. The church area surrounded by the cemetery is encircled by a holloway that no longer exists and the cemetery area is circular (diameter 38 m, area 1,300 m²). The detected situation more or less corresponded with the description by A. Habovštiak; however, no remains of an above-ground brick masonry of the church have been preserved above the terrain. North and northwest of the church area, there are several terraces and remains indicating presence of other settlement activities (Fig. 5). It has been confirmed by the results of the surface collections and a detector survey (Fig. 6). The whole area is located by a meander of the Žitava river, terraces are situated approx. 12–16 m above the river, the church area is approx. 20 m above the river.

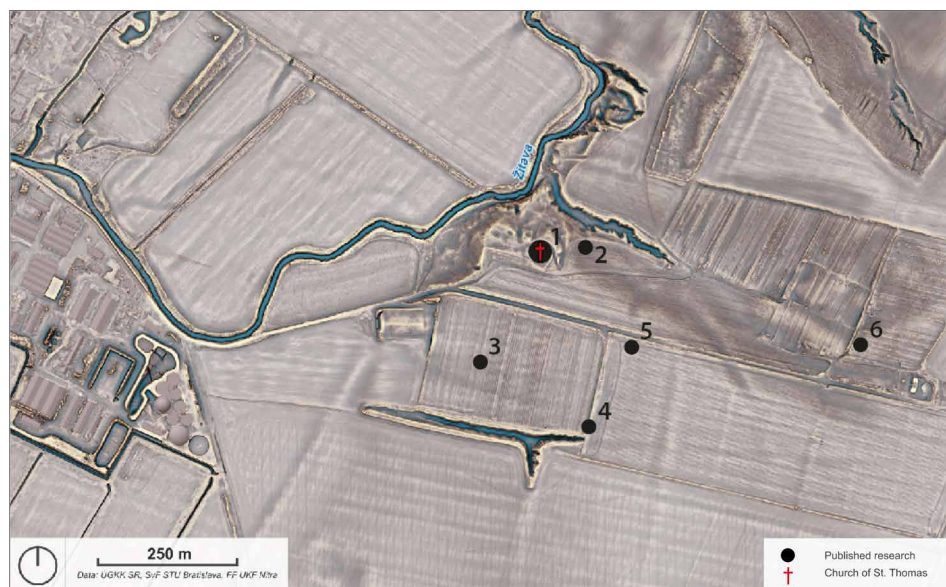


Fig. 3. Approximate location of the previously published medieval finds which can be associated with the medieval village of Jovka. 1 – area of the church with the cemetery and deserted settlement features north of the church, survey (after Habovštiak 1977, 124); 2 – medieval pottery from the 11th–15th centuries, survey (after Habovštiak 1977, 124); 3 – sunken feature from the 12th–13th centuries, rescue excavation (after Bednár 2001, 35); 4 – negative of the sunken feature, Middle Ages (?), geophysical survey (after Tirpák 1995, 127, 128, Fig. 1, 3); 5 – sherds, Middle Ages, survey (after Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 1988, 121); 6 – medieval pottery from the 10th–13th century (after Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 1991, 32).

Obr. 3. Približná lokalizácia doteraz publikovaných stredovekých nálezov, ktoré je možné spojiť so stredovekou dedinou Jovka. 1 – areál kostola s cintorinom a zaniknuté sídliskové objekty severne od kostola, prieskum (podľa Habovštiak 1977, 124); 2 – stredoveká keramika z 11.–15. storočia, prieskum (podľa Habovštiak 1977, 124); 3 – zahlbený objekt z 12.–13. storočia, záchranný výskum (Bednár 2001, 35); 4 – negatív zahlbeného objektu, stredovek (?), geofyzikálny prieskum (podľa Tirpák 1995, 127, 128, obr. 103); 5 – črepy, stredovek, prieskum (podľa Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 1988, 121); 6 – stredoveká keramika z 10.–13. storočia (podľa Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 1991, 32).

After the church area had been cleaned from overgrowth and fallen trees in the spring of 2023, a geo-radar survey was carried out to specify the localization of the building and to detect its ground plan. It was executed by Cobra Locator georadar from Radarteam company over an area of 870 m² in total, with density of scanning of 0.05 m along the profile × 0.5 m between profiles (Tirpák 2023).

Based on the results of the georadar measuring, we can assume that it was a longitudinal single-nave church oriented in the east-west direction (Fig. 4a). The sacral building consisted of a nave with a rectangular ground plan and interior dimensions of 7.5 × 5 m and a semicircular apse with interior dimensions of approx. 2 × 3 m. The foundations were 1.5 m thick (Fig. 4b).

The next stage of the investigation at the site in question consisted of a terrain prospecting of the relief shapes in the forested terrain between fields and the Žitava river together with a surface collection on the slope north of the church, over an area of 1.5 ha. In this space, several – probably artificially modified – plateaus were identified together with remains of at least nine slightly sunken features with areas of 50–120 m² and an holloway leading to the Žitava river. The slightly elevated linear shapes in the southwestern part of the forested area are probably remains of boundaries in the medieval or postmedieval fields (Fig. 5a; 5b).

The terrain prospecting executed in April and August 2023 was primarily focused on verification of terrain relics, as thick vegetation disabled systematic surface collecting of finds. In spite of this, several concentrations of medieval pottery were discovered (Fig. 6).

The pottery was dated to the High and Late Middle Ages. 389 specimens of sherds (an assemblage of 173 was selected on the spot) and 20 pieces of daub were found. Despite the rare and considerably fragmentary finds of pottery discovered during the survey at the site, the assemblage is considerably diverse. All four pottery groups of the high and late medieval pottery defined by J. Hoššo (1983, 220, Fig. 1) are represented in it – coloured, white, white-painted and grey pottery. The most frequently represented group is coloured pottery with terracotta-red, brown, greyish brown, dark grey to greyish black surface. Two fragments of a vessel body can be included among the oldest specimens of this group. The first fragment is decorated by engraved ornaments consisting of encircling horizontal flutings in combination with a simple irregular wavy line (Fig. 8:5); the second one is decorated by horizontally arranged fingernail scratches located on the partly preserved shoulders (Fig. 8:9). The decoration made up by horizontal grooves, flutings, scratches and simple wavy lines is typical of the period of the 11th–13th centuries (Repka–Pažinová 2012, 283); in the 13th century, decoration in form of scratches slowly disappears (Fusek–Spišiak 2005, 303, 304; Hanuliak 2007, 346; Ruttkay 1997, 264). The fragments of mouths from pot-shaped vessels with upturned rims with an encircling cordon and a conically shaped/truncated lips can be dated to the same period (Fig. 7:17). Rims with such shapes occur in the territory of Slovakia as early as the second half of the 11th century (Fusek–Spišiak 2005, 302, 303; König 2014, 53, Fig. 26:2.2; Repka–Pažinová 2012, 282, Fig. 7:C2). Nevertheless, they gradually transform into cornice rims at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries (Loskotová–Procházka 1996, 205, 209), which applies to the find from Nová Ves nad Žitavou. Based on this fact, the specimen in question can be dated to the final period of their occurrence, i. e. the end of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century.

The above-mentioned cornice rims of pot-shaped vessels with conical to funnel-shaped mouths can be dated to the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century (Figs. 7:3; 8:5, 7). Two variants of cornice rims can be distinguished among them – specimens

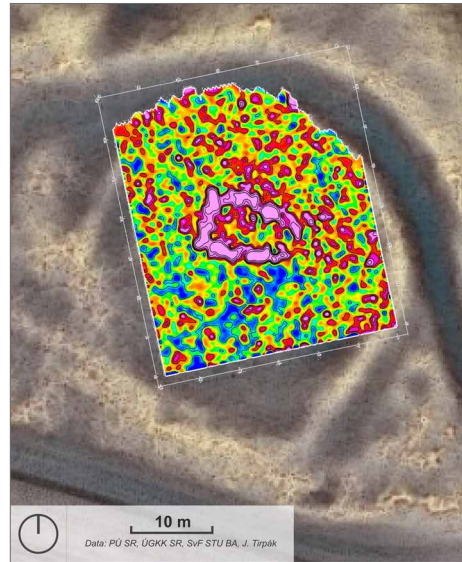


Fig. 4a. Nová Ves nad Žitavou, result of the georadar survey at the Church of St. Thomas on the digital model of the terrain. After Tirpák 2023.

Obr. 4a. Nová Ves nad Žitavou, výstup z georadarového merania kostola sv. Tomáša na digitálnom modeli terénu. Podľa Tirpák 2023.



Fig. 4b. Nová Ves nad Žitavou, digital model of the terrain with the probable ground plan of the former Church of St. Thomas according to the results of the georadar survey. After Tirpák 2023.

Obr. 4b. Nová Ves nad Žitavou, digitálny model terénu s pravdepodobným pôdorysom zaniknutého kostola sv. Tomáša podľa výsledkov georadarového prieskumu. Podľa Tirpák 2023.

evolved from simply everted and truncated rims by extension of the lower edge or its pinching (Fig. 7:3) and rims evolved from upturned shapes with encircling cornices (Figs. 9:5, 7). Pots with funnel-shaped mouths with extended rims with dented upper part also occur in this period (Fig. 9:4). The fragment with a vertically truncated face surface and slightly obliquely truncated upper surface can be included in the group of cornice rims. On the rim, there is an ornament made by



Fig. 5a. Terrain relics in the area of the deserted village.

Obr. 5a. Terénne reliktvy v priestore zaniknutej dediny.



Fig. 5b. Interpretation of terrain relics in the area of the deserted village.

Obr. 5b. Interpretácia terénnych reliktov v priestore zaniknutej dediny.



Fig. 6. Results of the surface collections in 2023, visualisation of the concentration of finds.

Obr. 6. Výsledky povrchových zberov v roku 2023, vizualizácia koncentrácie nálezov.

a tracing wheel; it consists of incisions of circular to oval shapes. Such ornament is typical of the Žitava river region as well as the region of Tekov (Hoššo 1985, 222, Fig. 1:11; Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 2002, Figs. 9:1, 5).

A club rim of a pot-shaped vessel is represented in the assemblage by a single specimen (Fig. 7:2). These also appear in the end of the 12th and in (the first half of) the 13th century, which is documented by finds from Nitra–Párovské Háje (Ruttkay 1997, 272, Fig. 3:13), Podhorany (Repka–Pažinová 2012, 282, Figs. 7:F1, F2), Banská Štiavnica, Dominikánsky kláštor (Dominican monastery) site (Hanuliak–Hoššo–Hunka 1996, 324, Fig. 11:Cb_4) or from the more remote Pustý hrad castle in Zvolen (Beljak et al. 2014, Fig. 120:F).

A relief mark, probably in the shape of a cross in a circle (Fig. 8:10) was identified on one of the partly preserved bottoms. The motif of the mark is frequent and it occurs mainly on high and late medieval pottery from the 13th and 14th centuries, possibly surviving in the 15th century (Beljak Pažinová–Ragač 2018, 192; Hoššo 1985a, 252; Repka–Sater–Šimunková 2017, 187). As for the find from Nová Ves nad Žitavou, we can consider its dating to the older period of the 13th century, based on the character of the sherd (used coiling technique, presence of a medium-grained temper).

The following period of the 14th century is represented in the assemblage by older variants of cuff-shaped rims (Fig. 8:7). Analogical finds are known e. g. from Banská Štiavnica (Hanuliak–Hoššo–Hunka 1996, 324, Fig. 11:Ef_17).

Apart from pot-shaped vessels, the pottery with coloured sherd includes other types of vessels – bowls, storage vessels, kettles with spouts. As for the bowls, they are conical, with horizontally truncated and slightly widened rims (Fig. 9:9). Similarly shaped specimens are known from the environment of Bratislava (Repka 2016, 154, with more bibliography), where they are dated mainly to the second half of the 12th–the beginning of the 13th century. There is also a fragment of a rim from a thick-walled storage vessel with a widened and multiply canted rim (Fig. 7:9). Similar shapes of storage vessel rims are frequently represented among the finds from

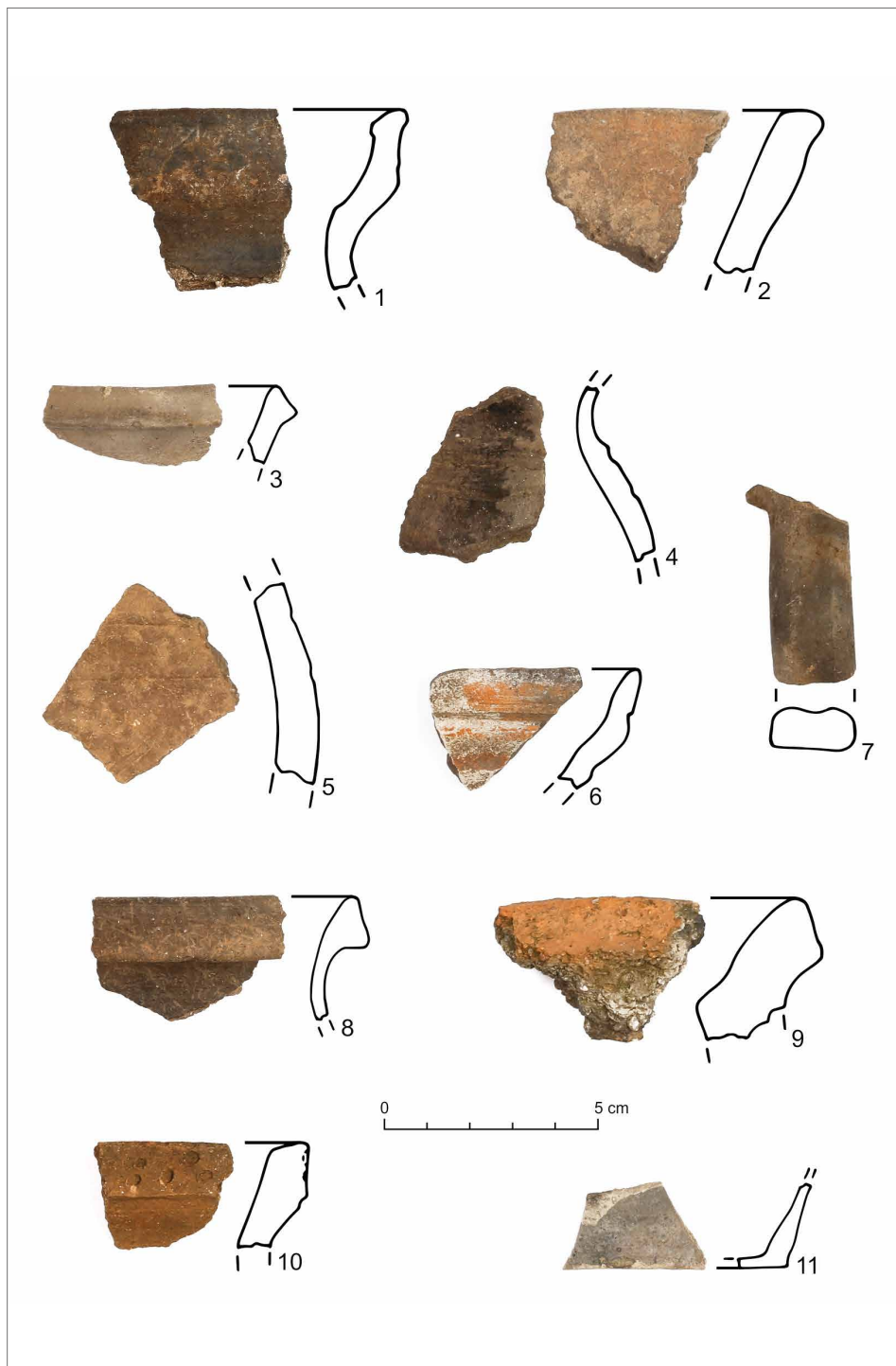


Fig. 7. Pottery sherds discovered on the slope north of the church. Photo by P. Olajoš, drawing by D. Zeleňáková.
Obr. 7. Keramické zlomky nájdené na svahu severne od kostola. Foto P. Olajoš, kresba D. Zeleňáková.

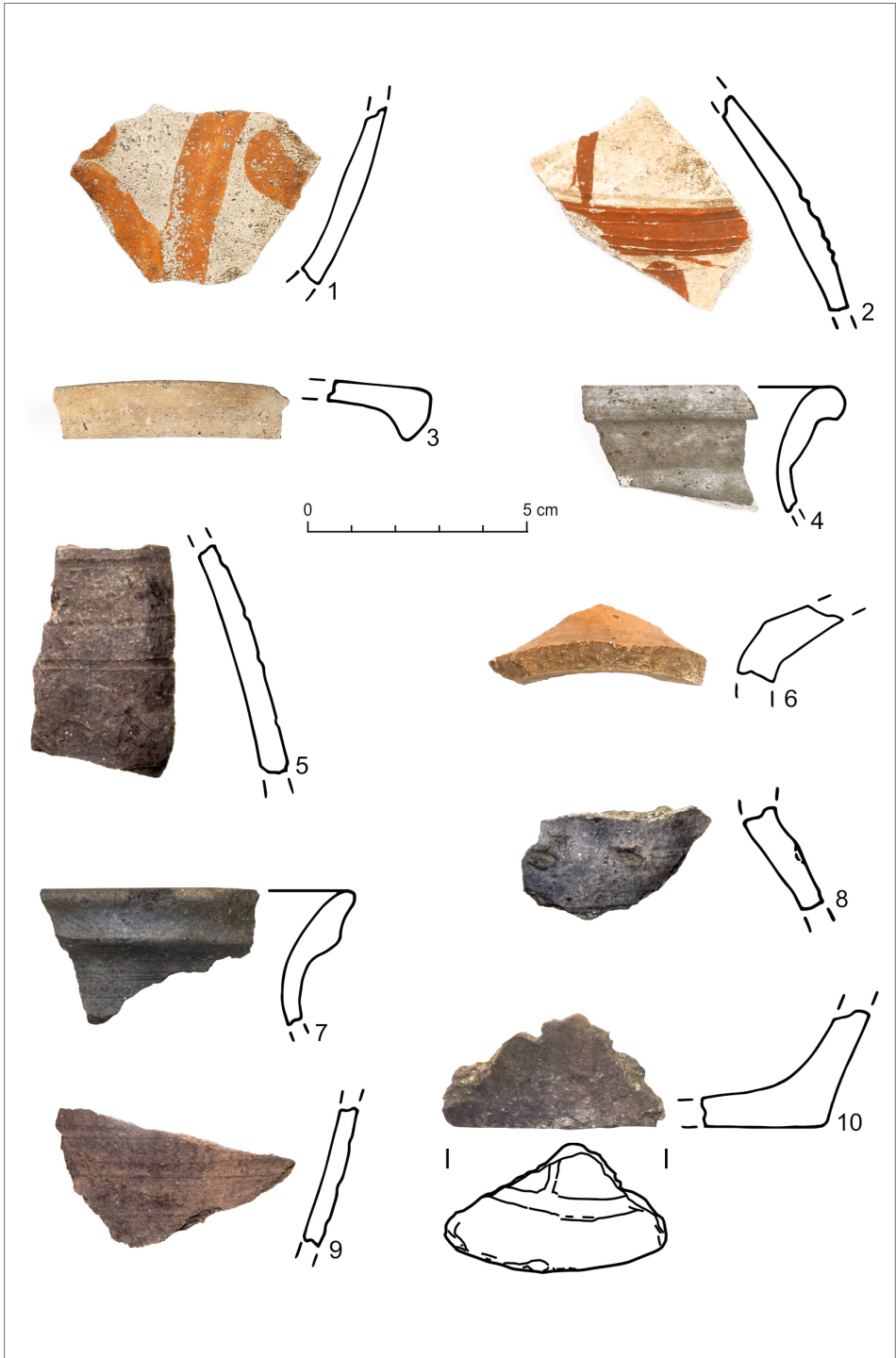


Fig. 8. Pottery sherds discovered on the slope north of the church. Photo by P. Olajoš, drawing by D. Zeleňáková.

Obr. 8. Keramické zlomky nájdené na svahu severne od kostola. Foto P. Olajoš, kresba D. Zeleňáková.

the excavation in Zlaté Moravce, where they are only roughly dated to the 13th–15th centuries (Ruttkayová–Ruttkay 2002, 454, 457, Fig. 11). In terms of shapes, they are considerably similar to storage vessels of Austrian origin – their type 2a in particular (according to Scharrer–Liška 2003, 50, 52, Fig. 4). These storage vessels, which occur mainly in the 11th–12th centuries, contain graphite, unlike the specimens from Nová Ves nad Žitavou and Zlaté Moravce.

The fragment from a vessel body of a reduction-fired pottery with grey/black surface colour and ornament consisting of tracing-wheel decoration (Fig. 9:8), can be classified among the youngest finds in the assemblage. The find can be classified to the so-called Tvrdomestice type, which occurs mainly in the territory of the central Nitra river region in the period from the end of the 15th century to the first half of the 18th century (Bielich–Elgyüt 2015, 605, 606, Fig. 10:3; Bielich–Štrbavý 2006; Repka–Sater–Šimunková 2017, 186, 188, Figs. 5:1, 5, 6).

Vessels made of white clays are represented by 12 fragments in the assemblage. At least three of them belong to the group with white painted pottery (Figs. 7:6, 8:1, 2). This type of pottery, which was produced and primarily widespread in the south of central Slovakia (Novohrad, Gemer-Malohont), arrives in the territories further to the north and west in the 14th century. There, mostly pottery with coloured sherd was widespread (Hanuliak–Hoššo–Hunka 1996, 314). The painted decoration on the discovered sherds is red and brownish red and consists of geometrical shapes, such as horizontal and vertical bands, semi-arcs (Figs. 8:1, 2), which are typical of the white painted pottery. Due to the considerably fragmentary state of finds, the whole decorative motif cannot be interpreted. In terms of shapes, there is a fragment from a funnel-shaped mouth with remains of paint (Fig. 7:6) from a jug (bottle?; compare Hoššo 1985a, 241, Figs. 8:1, 2). It can be dated to the 14th century.

The fragment of a vessel body with applied engraved decoration can be undoubtedly classed with the white pottery (Fig. 9:3). One fragment of a lid can also be included in the white-painted pottery (Fig. 8:3). Based on the preserved rim, which is slightly widened and pinched and is attached to the horizontal part of the body in the right angle, two shapes can be considered. First, it could be a lid. In comparison with conical/bell-shaped lids, they occur less frequently. They are known mainly in Germany and Austria (Felgenhauer-Schmiedt 1977, 222, 227, 228, 224, 289, Tab. 2:11–13; Procházka 2022, 259, Fig. 1: Type 2). In Slovakia, they are known especially from the excavations in the territory of grey pottery, where they are dated to the 14th century (Hoššo–Lesák–Resutík 2002, 615, Figs. 6:16, 18; Nezvalová 2016, 83, 88, Tab. I:III-5-33; II:III-7-90; III:III-8-132, III-8-139, III-8-144, III-8-158; Repka 2016, 160, Figs. 10:1, 4, 5; Vallašek–Plachá 1971, 14, 12, Tab. 1:8). The find of a flat lid with a coloured sherd was published also from Staré Hory near Banská Bystrica (Kvietok 2012, 224, Tab. VII:7), where it was dated to the end of the 15th – beginning of the 16th century on the basis of associated goods. In the territory with white or white-painted pottery, flat lids have not been known before. Therefore, including the analysed fragment from Nová Ves nad Žitavou with conical/bell-shaped lids – the variant with horizontally/obliquely shaped mouths and widened rims occurring mainly in the 14th and 15th centuries – can be considered (compare Beljak Pažinová–Ragač 2018, 195, Fig. 8:8; Hoššo 1985, 224, Fig. 3:5; Kvietok 2012, 224, Tab. VII:6, 13). Based on the character of the fragment (with middle to fine-grained admixture), dating to the 14th century is more probable.

The last pottery group represented in the assemblage is grey pottery (15 specimens). Mostly, there are fragments from vessel bodies. However, a mouth from a pot-shaped vessel with a rolled rim (Fig. 8:4) can be added to the group. In the territory of primary occurrence of this type of pottery, rims of this shape appear in the second half of the 14th century (Hoššo 1970; Ruttkay 1997, 283, Fig. 14).

A fragment of an oval handle with a central flute can be attributed to a jug or a pot (Fig. 7:7). We encounter handles of this shape as late as the 15th and 16th centuries. Similar handles, applied mainly on pot-shaped vessels, are known from e. g. Sľažany (Ruttkay 1988, 129, 130, 133, 134, Figs. 2:1; 3:5, 7; 4:3, 5; 6:4; 7:1). Chronologically, the fragment of the bottom and the lower part of a thin-walled vessel, probably a beaker, can be classified similarly. The fragment evidences production on a potter's wheel. It is made of finely-washed clay without visible additives (Fig. 7:11). Green-yellow glaze is found on the interior surface.

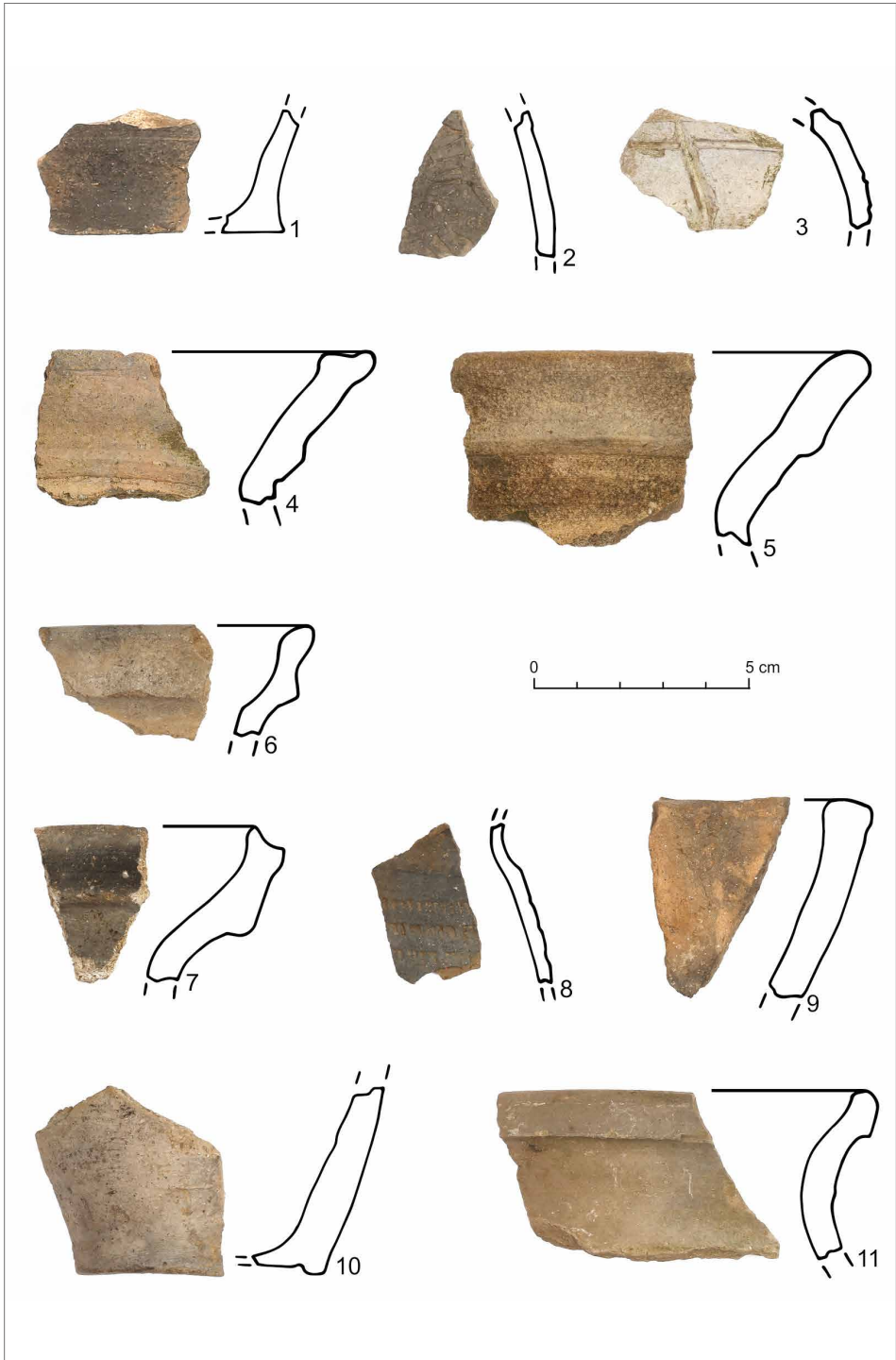


Fig. 9. Pottery sherds discovered on the slope north of the church. Photo by P. Olajoš, drawing by D. Zeleňáková.

Obr. 9. Keramické zlomky nájdené na svahu severne od kostola. Foto P. Olajoš, kresba D. Zeleňáková.

Terrain prospecting repeatedly discovered traces of illegal raiding of the site by metal detectors, which was one of the reasons why a metal detector survey was carried out in March 2024 in the forested area north of the church, on the artificially modified terraces and in the nearby fields. The evaluation survey was carried out by four metal detectors. Conditions for the survey were not optimum despite the early season, as there is a dense growth of shrubs in the bottom part of the slope, combined with ivy, which only allowed survey in several considerably open areas. Several metal finds associated with the local medieval village were discovered. The locations of finds were documented by GNSS measuring done by smartphones (using Locus Map application). The positioning accuracy in the forested terrain was 3–8 m.

Two coins belong to the important finds from the metal detector survey (Fig. 10).

1) Hungary, Andrew III (1290–1301), counterfeit denarius. Lit.: Huszár 1979, č. 413; Lengyel 2019, 133, č. 21/11; Tóth–Kiss 2020, 232, č. 25.17.1.1. 0.307 g; 11.87 mm. (Fig. 10:1)

XRF (X-ray fluorescence) analyses

Obverse (heads): Cu = 93.80 %, Zn = 0.99 %, As = 0.20 %, Ag = 0.95 %, Sn = 3.43 %, Sb = 0.92 %
Reverse (tails): Cu = 92.32 %, Zn = 1.04 %, As = 0.14 %, Ag = 0.93 %, Sn = 4.70 %, Sb = 0.86 % (Štubňa 2024);

2) Austria, Přemysl Otakar II (1251–1276), Vienna, Viennese pfennig. Lit.: Koch 1994, B 163.

0.300 g; 12.89 mm. (Fig. 10:2)

XRF (X-ray fluorescence) analysis

Obverse (heads): Ag = 87.61 %, Cu = 9.60 %, Pb = 1.66 %, Au = 0.52 %, Fe = 1.81 %
Reverse (tails): Ag = 88.52 %, Cu = 9.37 %, Pb = 1.57 %, Au = 0.54 % (Štubňa 2024).

Both medieval coins discovered in the deserted village of Jovka belong to the second half or the last third of the 13th century and are variously valuable. While the denarius Andrew III belongs – despite its domestic origin – to precious mints, Viennese pfennigs Přemysl Otakar II are widely spread and were a common component of currency in the second half of the 13th century and first three decades of the 14th century. Denarii Andrew III are typical with low weight and small diameters, which is common for the coins from that period. During the reign of Andrew III, economic and political crisis was reflected in minting and small coins of lower quality were minted. The average weight of this type of denarius was only 0.295 g (Hóman 1916, 638), which is close to the examined denarius.

Finds of Andrew III coins are rather rare in the territory of Slovakia. The above-mentioned type, which was found in the deserted village of Jovka, had not been previously recorded (Hunka 2013, 110). Currently, we have recorded only eleven denarii Andrew III; they come mostly from deserted villages, castles or religious institutions. Three specimens were found at the Pustý hrad castle near Zvolen (Nálezy V/1, č. 445, 447; Nálezy IV, č. 247; Hunka 2013, 149, č. 145–145a; Hunka 2014, 190–193). Besides castles, denarii Andrew III are known from various religious



Fig. 10. Coins discovered during the metal-detector survey. Photo by P. Olajoš.

Obr. 10. Mince nájdené prieskumom detektorom kovov. Foto P. Olajoš.

institutions. One specimen was discovered in the foundations of the medieval church in Levoča, Spišská Nová Ves district (Nález IV, č. 246; Hunka 2013, 138, č. 41) and another one comes from the Church of the Holy Spirit in Žehra, Spišská Nová Ves district (Nález V/1, č. 477; Soják 2007, 251–252). The previously unpublished denarius from the Dominican monastery in Banská Štiavnica is very interesting as well (Nález V/1, č. 478). The last coin from a church building is the denarius discovered in the former church in Svodín, Nemecký Svodín (Drenko 2003, 154, Fig. 3/1). Other denarii Andrew III come from the medieval villages of Štrba-Šoldov, Poprad district (Nález V/1, č. 479) and Švábovce (Kučerová–Hudáková 2021).

Occurrence of the above-presented coins in hoards is rarer. A single hoard is known from Slovakia – it was discovered in Nitra and contains 2512 coins, including one denarius Andrew III (Nález 2, č. 79). No denarii of this type had been recorded in hoards from the territory of Hungary until 1996 (Saltzer 1996) and they are rare even in museum collections. The largest collection of Árpád coins in the world is in the Hungarian National Museum (Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, MNM) in Budapest; there are only three specimens of the described type and other 23 appeared in numismatic auctions (Tóth–Kiss 2020, 232).

The interesting fact about the denarius from Jovka is that it is a historical counterfeit. They were usually minted on copper discs and later plated with silver or – more often – tin, which made them look original. The counterfeit is indicated not only by the striking brown colour (copper) at first glance, but also by the metal analyses (Štubňa 2024). The denarius was probably tinned, which is evidenced by the measured values of tin – 1.38–5.83 %. The absence of mercury testifies to the fact that its plating was not carried out by the amalgamation technique, but by hot-dipped tinning, i.e. by immersing a copper coin disc in molten tin, or into an alloy containing tin and other elements (Budaj et al. 2015, 36).

Counterfeit coins in medieval Hungary had their rich traditions in the Árpád period. While it was rather sporadic in the 11th century, it became more intense in the following 12th and mainly 13th centuries. This phenomenon is documented not only by written, but also numismatic and archaeological sources. The only document of counterfeit mints in our territory comes from the 13th century, with the date of 10 January 1245, i. e. the reign of Béla IV (1235–1270). In the aforementioned document, a certain Fulcus is mentioned, who was punished by confiscation of Fiľakovo castle; he was also accused of coin counterfeiting – *super fabricatione falsae monetae* (Oslanský 1998, 77). The oldest evidence of counterfeiting in Hungary comes from 1219, from the County of Csanád (Hóman 1916, 472; Kahler 1978, 13). Other documents dealing with this activity are known from 1253 and 1263 (Hóman 1916, 472).

The presence of counterfeiting workshops is specific evidence of coin counterfeiting in Slovakia. The oldest ones are known from the 13th century. One of the best-known workshops was active at the Pustý hrad castle near Zvolen, where coins were counterfeited from the reign of Ladislaus IV (1272–1290) to approx. 1307 (Hanuliak–Hunka 2000). Another interesting counterfeiting workshop was active in the Little Carpathians mountains, on the hill of Železník; it can be dated approx. to the end of the 13th century (Farkaš–Prášek 1997, 45–46). Austrian Viennese pfennigs Přemysl Otakar II were primarily minted there. An interesting discovery of a counterfeiting workshop from the 13th century, which was active during the reign of Andrew III (1205–1240), comes from the territory of Budapest in Hungary, Remete-hegy (Gedai 1999).

The discovered coins themselves are another evidence of counterfeiting. A counterfeit Viennese pfennig was discovered e. g. in the hoard from Štúrovo, which was hidden before 1330; a similar counterfeit coin comes from 1210–1230 from Biňa (Hunka 2013, 118, č. 17; 128, č. 7b). Counterfeit denarii Ladislaus IV are known from Buková, Trnava district, and from Michalov vrch hill near the village of Kolačno, Partizánske district (Hunka 2013, 130, č. 22; 136, č. 60).

The Viennese pfennigs Přemysl Otakar II, which are among the common mints of this period, are shown in a slightly different light. These coins intensely influenced the monetary situation mainly in western Hungary and the adjacent part of today's Slovakia. The inflow of pfennigs is specific, as they arrived here in smaller numbers in the time of their production between

1250 and 1276 (Budaj 2008, 83–89). Until 2008, approx. five such finds were known and only three or four similar finds have been added so far (e. g. Budaj 2017, 49–62). Most of them arrived most probably during the military campaigns of Přemysl Otakar II in 1271–1273. His pfennigs were reflected in finds much later, mainly in 1282–1430 (Hunka–Budaj 2004, 92). Most of them circulated in the first half of the 14th century, which applies also to the mints Albrecht I, Rudolf I and Rudolf III, minted in 1276–1306.

A fragment of an antler plate with a decorative brass appliqué comes from the assemblage of the discovered artefacts as well. The appliqué is a metal ornament with a rosette-shaped pattern consisting of four petals and a central hole in the middle. A tang goes through the hole and the antler part of the artefact, where it is bent and thus attached to the plate (Fig. 11). The ornament has a plastic, concave shape in the place of the petals and convex in the place of the hole in the centre of the ornament. Its dimensions are 14 × 13 mm, the diameter of the hole for the rivet is 3 mm, and the diameter of the rivet is 2 mm. The spectrometric analysis also defined the chemical composition of the ornament's alloy, which shows that the appliqué is made of brass (Štubňa 2024a).

Analogical rose (flower)-shaped ornaments often occur in the wide European territory in the High Middle Ages (Porkisch–Kühtreiber 2004). In the territory of today's Slovakia, they are known e. g. from the Pustý hrad castle (Beljak Pažinová–Ragač–Beljak 2021, Figs. 4:13–23), the Peľuša castle (Blahová 2021, Tab. V:1–3) or the Hrušov castle (Blahová 2021, Tab. V:4) as well as other sites.³ They are interpreted as decorative artefacts – clothes accessories and ornaments which were attached to textile and leather pieces of clothes, belts or head ornaments and head covers (Beljak Pažinová–Ragač–Beljak 2021, 397; Blahová 2021, 26 nn.). They were used as ornaments on horse harnesses, protective equipment, animal collars, book covers and furniture (Blahová 2021, 36, 37) or at the burial rite in the end of the Middle Ages and in the Postmedieval period – to attach a cloth to the coffin (Bielich 2019, 68, Figs. 47:13–17).

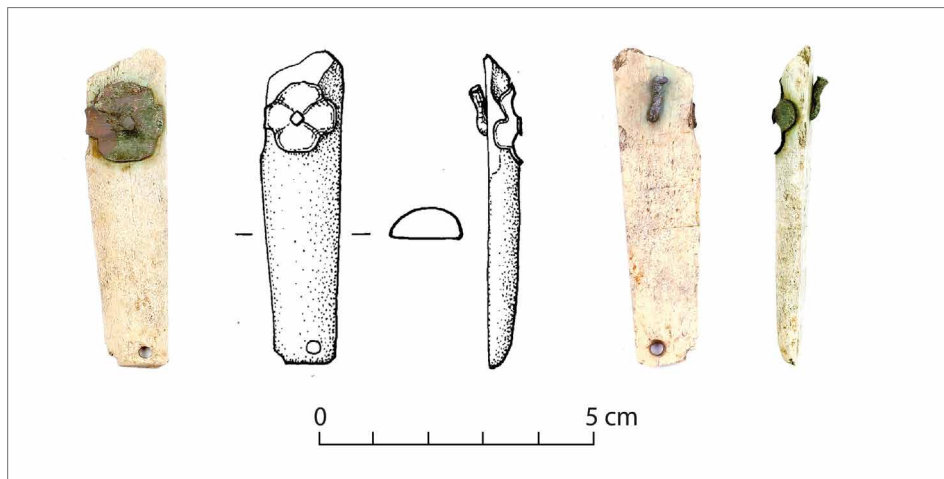


Fig. 11. Antler plate with a decorative brass appliqué. Photo by P. Olajoš, drawing by D. Zeleňáková.

Obr. 11. Parohová platnička s dekoratívnou mosadznou aplikáciou. Foto P. Olajoš, kresba D. Zeleňáková.

³ More analogies presented by S. Blahová (2021, 33).

As for the find from Jovka, the brass ornament was attached to a trapezoidal antler plate with the preserved length of 57 mm, max. width of 14 mm and thickness of 6 mm. In the narrowest part, there was a perforation with diameter of 2 mm, which is not located in the centre of the plate (Fig. 11). The front part of the plate was rounded, polished and shiny – with applied decoration. The reverse of the plate is artificially flattened, without traces of smoothing, which suggests its application to another smooth flat surface. Similar bone plates were attached to a wide range of items – saddles, crossbows (Brych 2012), furniture, clothes accessories – in the High and Late Middle Ages, but also to furniture or small chests found in the urban environment in the Middle Ages and the Postmedieval period. We have no analogical artefact from the rural environment so far.⁴

A part of a sickle is another find. It is an arcuate blade, evenly narrowed in the cross-section towards the cutting edge and ended with a sharp tip (Fig. 12:5). The preserved span has a length of 164 mm, the maximum width of the blade is 21 mm, and the thickness of the preserved part of the blade is 6 mm. Based on the way the blade is bent before the tip, as well as the overall width of the preserved part of the blade, the sickle can be identified as a medieval specimen used for harvesting grain (Borzová 2016, 59; Müller 1982, 477 nn.). Presence of the sickle in the area of the deserted village might be associated with agricultural activities of the local population cultivating the fields near the settlement.

Iron nails with rectangular cross-section and horizontal heads (or without heads) were also discovered by the detector survey. They include two nails with T-shaped heads and without preserved lower parts, i. e. tangs (Figs. 12:1, 3), one complete nail of this type (Fig. 12:4) and a fragment of another nail without a head (Fig. 12:2).⁵ Analogical specimens are known from several medieval sites, e. g. the deserted medieval village of Zalužany (Polla 1962, 209, Tab. XIII:2, 7), from Mstěnice (Nekuda 1985, 149, Fig. 204:f) or from the site of Hozelec (Hudáková et al. 2019, 143, Tab. XXVII: Cat. No. 169). They are also known from the environment of necropolises, where they were used for construction of coffins (e. g. Bielich 2019, 67).

An iron bell (deformed by pressure), 72 mm long and 44 mm wide in the upper part, 63 mm wide in the lower part, with max. thickness of the loop of 4 mm is another find (Fig. 12:6). Such artefacts occur in a large territory of Europe (not only) in the Middle Ages (Henning 1987, 102–105) and are associated with cattle breeding.

Conclusion

The LIDAR survey so far has detected (again) the site of the former medieval Church of St. Thomas with a cemetery and probably also part of the built-up area of the deserted medieval village of Jovka. It is documented by the detected concentrations of pottery sherds and occurrence of daub on artificially modified terraces and near slightly sunken features which might be remains of residential buildings and outbuildings (Fig. 5a).

Two sections of former sunken lanes, which are well visible in the terrain, were interpreted without doubt. One line of the lane copies the contour line along the area of the church with the cemetery and its course disappears in the western direction. However, it leads to the area on the plateau with a slightly descending terrain and three sunken features. From the west and north, the area is defined by a terrain edge; a more distinctly descending slope is situated beyond it. The second line of the sunken lane leads to the NW, down the hill to the Žitava river valley, to the area where relics of six sunken features and a concentration of medieval finds are located (Fig. 5a). Written reports from 1332–1337 document existence of a parish in Jovka. It was most

⁴ A plate similar in shape and size, but without an appliqué, comes from the Pustý hrad castle (Čierny 2024, Fig. 59). M. Čierny interprets it as a part of a composite comb. We would like to thank Mgr. Miloš Čierny from the Institute of Archaeology SAS in Nitra for the information.

⁵ Part of a nail without a head, preserved L 51 mm, W 9 mm, max. T 4 mm (Fig. 12:2); part of a nail with a head, preserved L 34 mm, W 6 mm, T 3 mm; head dimensions 12 × 6 mm (Fig. 12:1); a complete nail, L 94 mm, max. W 7 mm, T 4 mm, head dimensions 12 × 6 mm (Fig. 12:4); part of a nail with a head, preserved L 41 mm, max. T 5 mm, W 4 mm, head dimensions 14 × 7 mm (Fig. 12:3).

probably located near the church with the cemetery. Nevertheless, we cannot comment on the interpretation of the function of these sunken relics more in detail; their depth – in comparison with the surrounding terrain – is approx. 0.5 m.

The targeted terrain prospecting of the area in the period without vegetation, together with the metal-detector survey, uncovered finds bringing testimony of the everyday life at the local medieval settlement. Based on the archaeological finds, pottery in particular, the beginning of existence of Jovka can be dated to the end of the 12th century. The medieval village continually existed there until the approx. mid-16th century, which is documented – besides archaeological

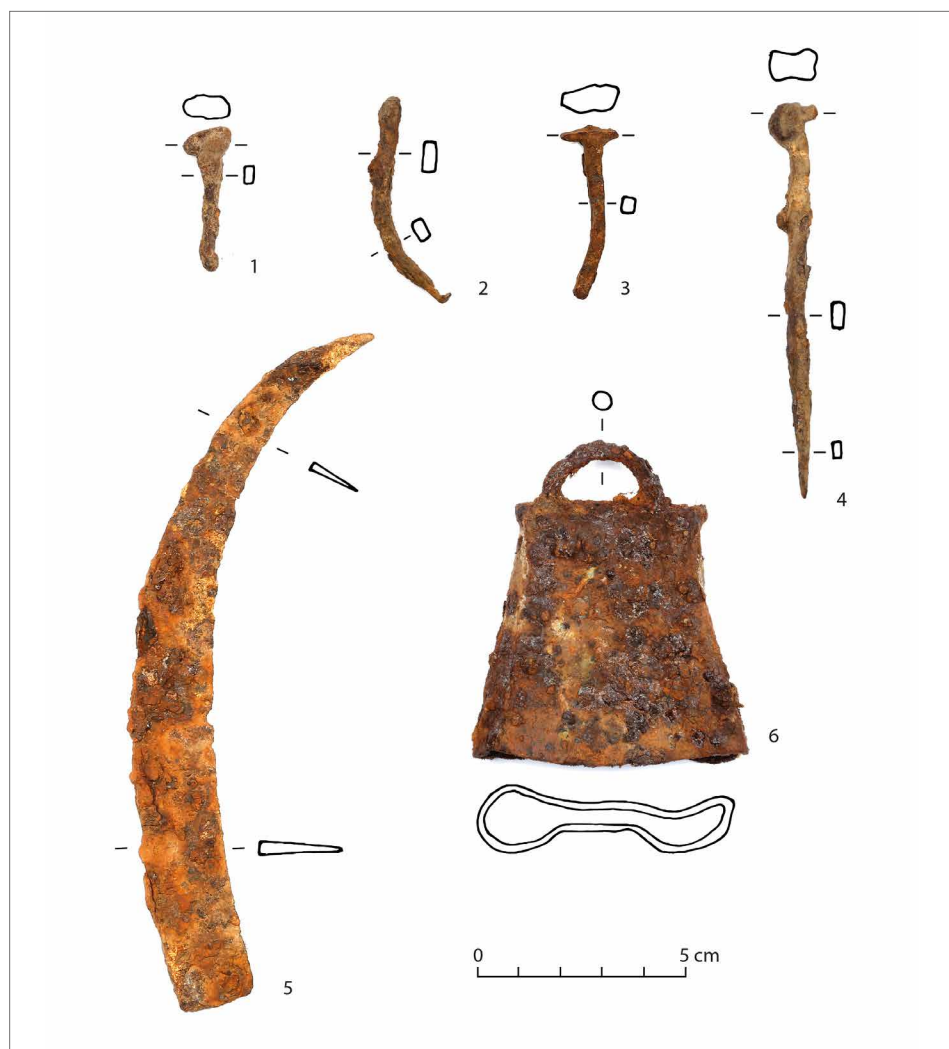


Fig. 12. Metal artifacts discovered during the metal-detector survey of the area north of the church. Photo by P. Olajoš, drawing by D. Zeleňáková.

Obr. 12. Kovové predmety nájdené počas detektorového prieskumu plochy severne od kostola. Foto P. Olajoš, kresba D. Zeleňáková.

sources⁶ – by written references to the village (between 1229 and 1553). When exactly the village was abandoned is not clear from the obtained information; nevertheless, it was definitely deserted in the 18th century.

The obtained results point to the high potential of the LIDAR data processed in very high resolution and visualised by specialized procedures. Data processed in this way allow detailed recording of terrain (topographic?) traces (remains?) of past human activities.

In the potential further excavation of the site in question, a repeated surface collecting and detector survey are planned in the current fields located south and southeast of the Church of St. Thomas. In these (flat) areas, traces of settlement activities can be anticipated. Moreover, the repeated survey in the forested terrain requires clearing, i. e. removing the thick growth of shrubs, which can be done only with the land owner's consent. More information on the total size and character of the deserted village of Jovka could be brought by research by means of magnetometry in these areas, including the following trenching.

We are planning to use the new information on the medieval village of Jovka with the Church of St. Thomas in the presentation of the site to the public and in the process of the proposal to declare it a national cultural monument.

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⁶ Most archaeological material falls to the period of the 13th–14th centuries. Most pottery finds as well as two coins from the second half or the last third of the 13th – first three decades of the 14th century come from this chronological horizon.

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Zhrnutie

Nedeštruktívny výskum zaniknutej dediny Jovka s Kostolom sv. Tomáša v Novej Vsi nad Žitavou

Obec Nová Ves nad Žitavou v okrese Nitra leží na rozhraní Žitavskej a Pohronskej pahorkatiny, v západnej a východnej terase rieky Žitava a v jej nive. Obec, ako ju poznáme dnes, bola v stredoveku rozdelená na viaceré samostatné osady. Medzi najstaršie písomne doložené osady v tamom priestore patrí stredoveká osada Jovka (*Iovka*). Tá sa v písomných zmienkach spomína v rozpätí rokov 1229 až 1533. Súčasťou dediny bol aj Kostol sv. Tomáša, spomínaný v listinách zo 14. storočia. Kostol je vyznačený ešte aj na prvom vojenskom mapovaní z rokov 1769–1785, je situovaný v polohe východne od súčasnej dediny Nová Ves nad Žitavou (obr. 1, 2), neskôr sa na mapách už nenachádza.

V minulosti bolo v predmetnom priestore uskutočnených niekoľko archeologických prospekcií a geofyzikálny prieskum s cieľom lokalizovať dedinu (obr. 3).

Na tieto výsledky nadviazal náš výskum, ktorého prvou fázou bola analýza lidarových snímok. Pomocou nich je možné identifikovať areál kostola s cintorínom, ohraničený zaniknutou úvozovou cestou. Severne a severozápadne od areálu kostola sa nachádza viaceré teras a pozostatkov indikujúcich prítomnosť ďalších sídelných aktivít (obr. 5a), to potvrdzujú aj výsledky povrchových zberov a detektorového prieskumu (obr. 6). Georadarové meranie spresnilo dané informácie o podobe a rozmeroch tamjšieho kostola (obr. 4a; 4b).

Povrchovým zberom sa v apríli a auguste 2023 podarilo v spodnej časti svahu zistiť výrazné koncentrácie stredovekej keramiky (obr. 6). Ide o pomerne rôznorodý súbor, ktorý možno datovať do záveru 12. – prvej polovice 18. storočia, s výraznou prevahou keramiky z 13.–14. storočia (obr. 7–9).

V priestore severne od kostola, v miestach umelo vytvorených terás a na poliach v blízkom okolí, boli pomocou detektorového prieskumu v marci 2023 objavené viaceré kovové nálezy, ktoré vypovedajú o každodennom živote v tunajšej stredovekej osade (obr. 6; 10–12). K nim patrí časť parohovej platničky s dekoratívnou mosadznou aplikáciou (obr. 11), časť stredovekého kosáka (obr. 12:5), železné klince (obr. 12:1–4) a železný zvonček (obr. 12:6). Dôležitými nálezmi

sú aj dve mince: Uhorsko, Ondrej III. (1290–1301), falzum denára (obr. 10:1) a Rakúsko, Přemysl Otakar II. (1251–1276), Viedeň, viedenský fenig (obr. 10:2).

Na základe archeologických nálezov, presnejšie keramiky, možno datovať počiatok existencie osady Jovka do záveru 12. storočia. Stredoveká dedina tu potom kontinuálne existovala približne do polovice 16. storočia, čoho dôkazom okrem archeologických prameňov sú aj písomné zmienky o dedine. Kedy presne dochádza k jej opusteniu, nie je zo získaných informácií známe, avšak už v 18. storočí bola určite opustená.

Získané výsledky poukazujú aj na vysoký potenciál lidarových dát, spracovaných vo veľmi vysokom rozlíšení a vizualizovaných špecializovanými postupmi. Takto spracované dáta umožňujú detailne zachytávať terénne (topografické?) stopy (pozostatky?) minulých ľudských aktivít.

Nové poznatky o stredovekej dedine Jovka spolu s Kostolom sv. Tomáša plánujeme využiť na prezentáciu lokality pre verejnosť a zároveň na spracovanie podnetu na jej vyhlásenie za národnú kultúrnu pamiatku.

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