

Archeologie zaniklých středověkých vesnic na Rokycansku II

**Archaeology of Deserted Medieval Villages
in the Rokycany – Region (West Bohemia) II**

**Pavel Vařeka a autorský kolektiv
Miroslava Buračinská, Petr Rožmberský a Renata Veselá**

**Katedra archeologie Fakulty filozofické Západočeské univerzity v Plzni
Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, University of West Bohemia in Plzeň**

Plzeň 2008

Recenzovali:/Revised by:

František Frýda, Západočeské muzeum v Plzni

Jan Kypta, Národní památkový ústav, územní odborné pracoviště středních Čech v Praze

**Prezentované výzkumy jsou výstupem výzkumného projektu "Opomíjená archeologie"
(výzkumný záměr MSM 4977751314)**

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První vydání, 2008 (první digitální vydání)

First published, 2008 (first digital edition)

ISBN 978-80-87170-03-8

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Archaeology of Deserted Medieval Villages in the Rokycany – Region (West Bohemia) II

1. INTRODUCTION

The first volume of the „Archaeology of Deserted Medieval Villages in the Rokycany Region“ is followed by this second volume, which is dedicated to yet more sites in the region. The extensive research of the abandoned Medieval and Post-Medieval settlements in woodland areas undertaken as part of the research project “Neglected archaeology” (MSM 49777513114) has been taking place in the Rokycany region for four consecutive years. As one of the eight originally selected villages, in this volume we present Nevěžeň located in the north part of the region. We have added some deserted villages that broaden the scope of the original research project and allow for an insight into other areas, such as Cháchov and Javor from the south part of the Rokycany region and Kokot in its westernmost part. New findings bring the catalogue of the deserted villages up to date and can be found in the appendix.

2. THE DESERTED VILLAGE OF CHÁCHOV

The remains of the deserted village of Cháchov (cadastral territory Rokycany, district Rokycany) are located on the gentle slopes of the spring basin of a nameless stream 465-485 m above sea level. Seventy-five surface features in total are concentrated around the central area in shape of an irregular triangle with sides of 100 x 100 x 70 m. It was possible to locate the remains of multiple part (three-part?) houses, outbuildings, wells, ponds and trackways. The houses were probably of timber-cornered construction and provided with stone basements; in some cases we can consider that parts of the structures were built primarily of stone and we can also encounter the use of bricks. The village with village green of a triangular groundplan probably comprised of 9 homesteads and hence represents a moderate sized

village. The homesteads were positioned in a regular layout around the village green. In the southeast part of the site a group of features was confined within a stone wall and, as yet, has been interpreted as a farmstead. The supply of fresh water for the village was even in the drier parts of the year provided by wells and four ponds. The trackway in the south part of the village represents the main access route to the settlement. The village was probably established in the second half of the 13th century. The site was probably continuously inhabited until the Hussite wars or the so-called “poděbradské” wars in the 15th century, when it was deserted. Frequent finds of daub underneath a layer of forest soil speak for destruction by fire.

3. THE DESERTED VILLAGE OF JAVOR

The deserted village of Javor is located at an altitude of 450-480 m above sea level in a spring basin of a nameless stream that flows into a Kornatice stream where it reaches the extents of Kornatice village. The features of the site are spread out on a gentle slope on both sides of a meadow enclave. Within the limits of the deserted village of Javor or in their close proximity were documented 93 anthropogenic surface features. The total area of the village was 4.3 ha and there was a village green probably of a rectangular shape (70 x 200 m), which was flanked by homesteads on its northwest and southeast sides. The southeast side has been damaged by surface mining. On the western side were detected ponds positioned on terrain steps, the lowest having a profound dam. The number of homesteads is estimated at a minimum of six. The most pronounced features on site are those interpreted as houses, which were on the expected groundplots positioned irregularly. It is likely that these represent the remains of multiple-part timber-cornered houses

with a stone underpinning, or with stone chambers. Some smaller outbuildings and water basins were also detected on each recorded groundplot. The trackway leading southwards to the village green could represent the original access route. The greater extent of the village is represented by the remains of ridge and furrow to the southeast and northwest from the village core. To the period after the abandonment of the village we can put other activities represented by the remains of charcoal-making and mining. We place the existence of Javor village between the 14th and first half of the 15th century. However, the findings of pottery from the 13th century from the nearby moated site speak for an even older settlement tradition. The abandonment of the villages in the region influenced the division of cadastral units considerably. The excentric positioning of the villages Kornatice and Milínov in their respective cadastral units indicates spatial changes of administrative units after the abandonment of three settlement enclaves.

4. THE DESERTED VILLAGE OF KOKOT

The site which is mentioned by historic documents for the first time in 1358 can be found on the boundary between the regions of Pilsen and Rokycany and is situated on a gentle slope in the spring basin of a small tributary of the river Klabava (440-455 m above sea level). On the basis of the pottery finds it was possible to date the beginning of settlement here to the second half of the 13th century and the abandonment to the middle of the 15th century. The archaeological finds correlate with the historical sources, as in 1458 Kokot is recorded as deserted. The village covers an area of 600 x 140 m (8,5 ha) and represents the largest deserted village in the Pilsen region and undoubtedly one of the largest archaeologically documented villages in Bohemia and Moravia. In three cases it is possible to interpret distinctive convex features such as remains of three-part houses; the interpretation of other relief features is uncertain, for example it is not possible to distinguish between houses and outbuildings. On site there are probably also remains of overground buildings, sunken chambers, small water basins and possibly also wells. On the basis of the visual evaluation of the plan of the settlement the number of homesteads was estimated to 32, their width vary between 24 to 50 m

and their length reach 50 m. In the middle of the village green can be found a moated site, the northern and eastern end of the village green are probably enclosed by larger houses of the more wealthy persons of a higher social importance. The evidence for several kinds of past activities was identified in the outer area of the deserted village. Particularly, the remains of medieval field systems were identified. The probable total extent of the field system was derived using slope gradient analysis in GIS. Furthermore, we identified prehistoric barrows, features related to mining, past ponds and also springs that are still being used. Very problematic appears to be the determination of the chronological relationship between features in the outer village area and also the interpretation of other surface features. Except from the excavation of test pits to verify some of the inferences from the surface survey, other non-destructive methods have great potential for future research, particularly geophysics, the use of metal detectors, palynological sampling of waterlogged features, on-site and off-site fieldwalking etc.

5. DESERTED MANOR NEVĚŽEŇ

Non-destructive survey in the years 2005-2007 detected abandoned structures that were interpreted as a manorial estate. The site is located 1 km to the northeast from Mlečice on a plateau above a deep narrow valley of the stream Mlečický and Vejvanovský 399-404 m above sea level. The not very pronounced remains of the deserted village Nevěžeň itself were localised in 1982, however, to date it was not possible to find them again or they have been destroyed. The remains of two opposing rows of buildings representing the manor are visible on the surface and its total size could have been 40 x 45 m. The northwest side was probably occupied by a three-part house (approx. 3,8-7,4 x 15 m), other features can be interpreted as the remains of outbuildings, some of which were provided with cellars. According to the documentary evidence the manorial estate was held by gentry at the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century and before 1453 it was already abandoned, as was the Nevěžeň village. The aim of the future research will be to obtain more archaeological finds that would allow for a more specific dating.

6. APPENDIX – NOTES TO THE CATALOGUE OF DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGES IN THE ROKYCANY – REGION

In the previous volume was published the list of the deserted villages in the Rokycany region (The Archaeology of Deserted Medieval Villages in the Rokycany Region (West Bohemia) I), which is now possible to fill in with more detail, be it with new findings in the written sources or with those derived from the research in the field. The sites are similarly as in the Volume I listed alphabetically and marked with the same numbers as in the table published in the Catalogue of the first volume.

