

JOSEPH ŽEMLIČKA

## Origins of Noble Landed Property in Přemyslide Bohemia

### ABSTRACT

*This paper explores the transformations of Bohemian (and Moravian) elites from archaic tribal leadership through "retainer aristocracy" of the early Přemyslide rulers to landed nobility of the high Middle Ages. Detailed information on secular landownership is available only from 1100 onward, but it is sufficient to establish that the magnates, who obtained jurisdiction over castle-estates from the dukes only gradually tried to transform these into hereditary landed property. The great landowners kept using their position as officers of the crown and their income from their share of ducal revenues parallel to building up their family estates. This process is investigated on several examples, such as the growth of seigneurial as opposed to ducal castles, and the connection between internal colonisation and growth of landed estates. The author argues that this "roundabout way" of the emergence of secular landownership was inevitable because of the limited resources of the land and the strength of the ducal power based partly on the confiscated estates of rival dukes. Only after the expansion of cultivated land, increase of servile dues, and efficient estate management was the nobility able to shed its official character and become a more or less independent economic, social, and—gradually—also political, force.*

The origin of medieval nobility in Bohemia and Moravia has been studied by many historians. František Palacky assigned a major role to the nobility under the Přemyslide and Luxemburg dynasties. However, he argued that legally differentiated estates and what he called "feudal" society emerged only after 1250 A.D. (Palacky 1876, 15-17). Other historians saw in *nobiles*, *primates*, *comites* or *maiores natu*—whom I shall call magnates, *faute de mieux*—a major force in shaping country's history and, since the thirteenth century, an independent and organized political factor (e.g. Lippert 1896-1898; Bachmann 1899; Bretholz 1912; Novotný 1912-1937.).

In its development to the elite of the high Middle Ages, the nobility went through two fundamental transformations. The first followed the foundation of the Přemyslide monarchy at the turn of the ninth to tenth centuries. This marked the end of the old tribal aristocracy which had been, ever since the early ninth century, challenged by the autocratic attempts of numerous *duces*. Their military retinues were systematically eliminated by the Přemyslide rulers (Žemlička 1989, 697-709). Although complete obliteration of the traditional privileged groups (assumed by Graus 1966, 134-146; Fiala 60-61) seems unlikely, for individual chiefs of clans or subdued *duces* were in some cases integrated into the emerging ducal retinues (Žemlička 1989, 709-710), the overall continuity of the elite was interrupted. During the tenth to twelfth centuries permanent positions within the nascent group of the new "well-born ones" were occupied by those serving in the ducal retinue and by holders of offices at the court of the dukes of Bohemia and in the provinces (Novotný 1912-1913; Zháněl 1930; Vogt 1938, 65-100). Members of the ducal retinue moved to leading political and social positions not by virtue of their individual landed property but through their personal relationship to the dynasty. The *fideles* of the dukes were provided for by offices and benefices connected to the network of ducal castles covering the entire country (see Map 1, on p.11), and exacting dues and services from the non-privileged population (Třeštík-Krzemieńska 1967; Třeštík 1971; Idem 1979; Nový 1972, 94-104; Krzemieńska-Třeštík 1978; Žemlička 1978).

The second transformation took place in the course of the thirteen century. The later years of Venceslas I (1230-1253) and the reign of Otakar II Přemysl (1253-1278) saw the ascent of a number of families of lords whose social and economic position allowed them independence from royal favor. This was a true "landed" nobility, fundamentally different from the preceding "office-holder" (or "beneficiary") nobility. Its significant features included the right to inheritance. This process completed the development from pre-Přemyslide magnates via the "retainer aristocracy" to the nobility of the high Middle Ages, as Dušan Třeštík (Třeštík-Polívka 1984, 99-111) put it. There are many studies on the nobility as a whole (Prochno 1961; Russocki 1971; Idem 1973; Nový 1976; Fritze 1982; Uhlíř 1985; Vaníček 1991) and on selected families (Waldstein-Wartenberg 1966; Vaníček 1981; Žemlička 1990a), but this process of transformation has not been given due attention. My project is to explore one of its central issues: the development of noble landed property.

\*

The needs of early Přemyslide retinues were satisfied from war booty, various taxes (especially the so-called *tributum pacis*), regalia revenues (coinage, market, customs), fines, and services extracted through the network of ducal castles. In addition, the leading retainers received income from offices and benefices. Their property was increased by gifts from members of the dynasty. Duchess Ludmilla (+921), for example, accused her murderers, Tunna and Gomon, of returning her "gifts of gold, silver and sumptuous cloths" in evil (Christian 37). One of the legends lists among the virtues of St. Venceslas (+935)

that "he provided not only arms but also the best of robes to his warriors" (Crescente 184). The "inunense treasure," plundered in 1108 by the conquerors of Libice, held by the Vrsovi family (Cosmas 192), might have been accumulated from booty, gifts and long-term office holding. A magnate named Sezema received "a quantity of sumptuous gifts" from king Vladislav and his queen in 1165 (Vincencius 458). In 1189, Hroznata of Peruc stipulated that if his wife lived longer than he and remarried, she may claim "gold, silver and other domestic appurtenances" (CDB I No. 323 p. 297). Herds of horses or sheep, or a number of serfs were other components of the wealth of the magnates which occasionally turn up in the sources (Třeštík 1971, 560; CDB I No. 124 pp. 129-131, No. 358, p. 326).

Detailed data on the landed property of magnates are available only after 1100 A.D. Features of these holdings, referred to variably as *substantia*, *patrimonium*, *possessiones* or *praedia* may be gleaned from such transactions as the so-called donation of Nemoy, the foundation of a chapter of canons at únetice by a certain Zbynev, the gift of Asinus to the Benedictine abbey of Ostrov, the foundation of the Cistercian abbey at Sedlec by Miroslav, and the provisions for the Premonstratensians at Strahov (Prague) by bishop John I. All of these date from the first half of the twelfth century (CDB I No. 100, pp. 105-106, No. 124, pp. 129-131, pp. 154-155, No. 155, pp. 155-157, No. 156, pp. 157-161). They usually contain grants of 5-10 villages, frequently not entire settlements, usually not in one block. In the forming of these holdings the relation of the *nobiles*, *primates* or their ancestors to duke and dynasty was of primary importance (Nový 1972, 105-110; Čechura 1982, 41-44). Apparently, magnates were free to donate their possessions to the church. Ducal consent seems to have a mere formality. The known holdings were both family possessions and new acquisitions, by purchase or through ducal generosity.

The exact origin of these magnates' possessions is not well known. However, it appears that besides a certain continuity from traditional aristocratic holdings, they came to the magnates in the final phase of the creation of a political elite by the Přemyslide monarchy as ducal gifts. Grants for life tended to become hereditary possessions (Třeštík 1971, pp. 562-563; contrary to Vaněček 1938, pp. 5-7). It seems that Moravia offered the best conditions for such land transactions. When duke Oldrich (Ulrich) conquered it in 1019/1020 from its Polish overlords and gave it to his son Bretislav (Krzemieńska 1980), the Přemyslide ducal administration was entrusted to Bohemians. Replacing the local elite they supplied a significant part of high medieval Moravian nobility: in the course of the twelfth century the Bohemians in Moravia became *Moravi* (Žemlička 1991).

The most important part of archaic magnate holdings were serfs and animals. By calling these estates "holdings" or "possessions," attention should be drawn to the fact they were usually not full-fledged allodial properties. They may very well have consisted of a set of rights to collect revenues and services from diverse farmsteads or other sources. A magnate could own various types of property by different titles. We may assume that they consisted of a combination of tolls and customs, market revenues and various components of the

ducal fisc, to ecclesiastical domains for which we have more ample sources (Vaněček 1933-1939; Třeštík 1979).

\*

After 1150, until which time magnate holdings did not constitute extensive territorial units, a radical change occurred. In addition to the traditional ways of acquisition—ducal favour and purchase—the dynastic succession troubles offered new possibilities. Above all, offices at the ducal court or in ducal castles offered good chances to obtain power and property.

The process of formation of a privileged elite from the core of the ducal retinue (Žháněl 1930, 148-175) was well on its way already in the eleventh century. Influential positions of fathers were transmitted to sons who remained *nobiles* even if they did not rise to prominence. Change of persons intended to prevent permanent occupation of the lucrative benefices tended to slow down. Long-term, even life-time office-holding (Vincencius 414) became usual. This opened the possibilities for alienation of ducal property, nominally "entrusted" to dignitaries. The difference between "ducal" and "private" property vanished more quickly in times of internal strife and decline of central power. This can be observed in the years 1172-1197 when several rival branches of Přemyslide dynasty—sons of Sobeslav I (1125-1140) and Vladislav II (1140-1172), and the Moravian Přemyslides—were fighting with each other.

Powerful magnates connected to ducal castles, began to establish permanent residences in the vicinity. For example, the castellan's office at castle Bilina offered the foundation of the north Bohemian holdings of the noble family of Hrabiscici, high chamberlains since the end of the twelfth century (Vaníček 1982; Žemlička 1990a). The beginnings of the lords of Litice and Pottejn can be traced to Drslav, around 1160 castellan of Plzen (Kalista 1928, 55-60). The chamberlainship at Plzen was probably used by Ratmir of Skvirin, ancestor of the Svamberk family, for gaining property after 1220 (CDB II No. 252, p. 242, No. 332, p. 341). A major factor in the expansion of the holdings of a family whose members were Blah, castellan at Litomerice, Hroznata, known as a founder of a Premonstratensian chapter of canons at Teplá (d. 1217), and the brothers Hroznata and Mesek of Peruc, was the administration of the Litomerice castle which was in the hands of the family for most of the twelfth century. The property of this family was situated mainly around Litomerice and around Teplá (Tomas 1966, 29-33, 41-43; Žemlička 1979). It seems likely that for the better part of the twelfth century the ducal castles Zatec/Saaz (Bubeník-Uhlíková 1977, 194-196) and Kladsko/Kłodzko (CDB I No. 323, p. 197, No. 357, p. 323, No. 411, p. 445) were held by members of single families. The family of the Milhostici, the holdings of which are known from a grant to the proposed Cistercian foundation at Mastov in western Bohemia, may have enlarged their properties when, around 1175, Peter, Milhost's brother, held the castellan's office at Drevic (CDB I No. 278, p. 244). Since the end of the twelfth century, the Markvartici family (in German: Markwartinger) attempted to have their own candidates placed in the office of the Mladá Boleslav/Jung Bunzlau castellany. They had been residing

in the vicinity for some time and they ultimately acquired the Dečín/Tetschen castellany (Waldstein-Wartenberg 1966, 35-57). In the same way, the castellany of Zítava/Zittau and Budysin/Bautzen (today in Germany) helped the rise of Ronovici (Hrone) clan (CDB III. 1 No. 23, pp. 21-22, No. 176, p. 219).

The oldest stratum of seigneurial castles in the north and west of Bohemia (Menclova 1972, 133-167) confirms the close relationship between castle office-holding and noble property. The castellans' office at Mladá Boleslav held by the Markvartici enabled the branches of this family (the later lords of Lemberk, Michalovice, Zviretice, Vartenberk and Valdstejn) in 1230-1250 to found the castles Lemberk and Michalovice. The administration of the castle at Dečín by the Markvartici supplied the resources to the construction of their castle Ostry. The castellany of Zítava held by Ronovici (the later lords of Lichtenburg, Ronov, Dubá and Lipá) led to the foundation of Frydlant and Ronov. The old office holding position of the Hrabasici in the Bilina region was connected to the beginnings of seigneurial castles Reisenburk and Borschenstein, built by the lords of Reisenburk. The noble families who served as castellans at Plzeň founded a line of early seigneurial castles in west Bohemia, such as Litice, Pottejn, Zbiroh and Bor (see Map 1, on p.12).

Castellanies or ducal offices as departure points for social ascent can be observed in Moravia as well. The first documented member of the well-known Pemstěj family, Stepan of Medlov, was an official at Devický in southern Moravia in 1222-1223 (CDB II No. 234, p. 225, No. 245, p. 237). Jířmír/Emmeramus, son of Etley, was burgrave at castle Znojmo in the first decades of the thirteenth century (CDB II No. 28, p. 46, No. 109, p. 104, No. 110, p. 106, No. 205, p. 190, No. 206, p. 191, No. 222, p. 208, No. 232, p. 221, No. 233, p. 222, No. 253, p. 244). Milic I of Svábenice, member of a family which goes back to the second quarter of the thirteenth century, held several offices including a castellany at Hradec nad Moravicí and possibly elsewhere as well (CDB II No. 287, p. 287; CDB III. 1 No. 50, p. 51). A number of other families followed similar trajectories although precise genealogies cannot be established for all of them (Hosák 1936-1938).

Even if the rotation of ducal officials did not come to a complete halt, many castellanies and other important benefices tended to remain in the possessions of a few families. This opened them the way to further increasing their own landed property. Gradually, the different titles by which they held their various estates—from family possessions to temporarily entrusted lands—fell into oblivion. At the end of the twelfth century, the magnate Milhost intended to endow his proposed monastic foundation with a piece of land which his father had received from the duke. Although they might have been only temporarily entrusted to the family, Milhost claimed to hold them *hereditario iure*. It seems that from his much more extensive property, Milhost chose to give up just those which were liable to revindication by the duke. Actually, the foundation was not completed, because Milhost did not reach an agreement with the monks (Čechura 1978).

The composition of the properties of an influential member of an elite family, the Hrabasici, is shown by the testament of Kojata of Most/Brux from 1227. Kojata disposed

## 1. THE RELATION OF DUCAL CASTLES TO THE OLDEST SEIGNEURIAL CASTLES



of almost sixty items concentrated mainly in northwestern and western Bohemia (see Map 2, on p.18). Place-names suggest the various manners by which they fell into the hands of Hrabisi. Some of them were originally appurtenances of ducal castles, others point to assarting around castle Bilina (Hrabisín, present-day Duchcov, Kojetice). Kojata's villages in Moravia are likely to have been originally ducal estates entrusted to the family and later not revindicated. We also know that in addition to the holdings listed in his testament, Kojata held six sites in the district of the Zatec castle. According to another source, these later escheated to the king: their affiliation to the crown was obviously fresh enough in public memory as to prevent Kojata from disposing of them (Kloss s.d. 191-192; Nový 1972, 112-113; Kincl 1978; Žemlička 1990a).

In spite of the growth of landed noble property after 1150, fully fledged landed estates did not emerge for some time. Several magnate holdings, originally held by the duke, retained their administrative affiliations to "their" castles for quite a while. The example of the church played an important role in loosening these ties (Boháček 1975). Ecclesiastical initiatives propagated those immunities by which Church property was exempted from the "care" of ducal officials even if the founders' rights of patronage limited their independence (Novotný 1928, 435-449; Vaněček 1933-1939; Matuszewski 1936; Žemlička 1981).

Beginning in the late twelfth century castellans and other officials, expected to guard the interest of the dukes used their delegated authority to expand and consolidate their private estates. They resented interference with "their" holdings by the authorities once their term of office was over. The character of such interventions is eloquently illustrated by charters issued for ecclesiastical institutions. They referred to "violence and tyranny" or "shameful extortion" by castle officials. These misdeeds may have concerned the middle and lower strata of office-holders who had little chance to create private holdings and had to live on limited revenues from their rather small "offices" and "benefices". The chief culprits may have been chamberlains, forest guards, customs officials, watchmen, lesser administrators, bailiffs, and warriors. From about 1200, their elbow-room narrowed considerably as not only the Church but also the ascending landed nobility managed to acquire immunities for their holdings, exempting them from the castle administration. Even if the "liberty" supposed to have been obtained in 1218 by Stepan of Medlov in Moravia remains somewhat spurious, immunities of later date are authentic (CDB II No. 278, p. 272, No. 373, p. 408; CDB III. 2 No. 195, p. 249, cf. also usta 1917, 151-152). Expansion and consolidation of landed property suggests deep-reaching transformations in the internal structure of the Přemyslide monarchy. During the tenth to twelfth centuries, ducal revenues (claimed in kind or in services) were redistributed among the noble retinue. This caused a merger of the administrative elite with the *nobiles comites*. After 1200 A.D., enterprising noble families left the protecting umbrella of ducal patronage and laid the bases of their own estates. The mediating role of the ruler came to an end. Instead of a recognized share in taxes, contributions and services, the nobility aimed at unlimited rights over land and people. At the same time, the nobility began to emerge as an autonomous political force.

This long-term process was especially enhanced in the times of the political upheaval and even the reform of the monarchy by Otakar I Přemysl (1197-1230) was unable to bring back the "good old ways". The early medieval castle system fell apart and the crown had to look for new support (emlička 1990b).

Parallel to this, the nobility split into two. The traditional officials-beneficiaries saw the guarantee of their future in the conservation of the early medieval situation and the preservation of the rights of castle officers. The second group was the inchoate landed nobility of the high medieval type. They worked to limit the jurisdiction of castle offices in order to become sole owners of their land and the people on it. Their extensive landed estates emerged as a kind of "privatization" of what was originally ducal property. As this new nobility did not need the castle system for its existence, the early medieval set-up lost its historical sense and became parasitical. True, its survival made the transition to the full land holdings of the nobility and the Church ever more complicated.

This process, inconspicuous and difficult to pinpoint in the sources, also implied the development of new kinds of personal dependence. The earlier model, dominated by the mediating role of the castle system, was to be replaced by a more flexible lord-serf relationship. The introductory formula of the Statutes of Conrad II Otto of 1189 may have aimed at the protection of noble landed property (CDB II No. 234, p. 223, cf. Žemlička 1990b, 53-55). Consolidation of rights to land implied consolidation of rights over sedentary peasants. A peasant endowed with land on the one side and a *nobilis* who was subject only to the ruler on the other represented the two opposite poles in the development of high medieval society. Some peasants might have sought the protection of their powerful neighbours or the Church (Graus 1953, 193-195) in the hope of diverting endless extortion by a host of castle officers.

The expansion and consolidation of landed estates was one of the aspects of medieval colonization. Noble families established permanent connections with particular regions in which their holdings were concentrated. This trend of the so-called territorialization of nobility may be traced in its initial stage—in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—by the growth of fortified residences (Klápště 1989, 14-15). During the high of the assarting period in the later thirteenth century, the direction of expansion was indicated by stone-built seigniorial castles. Such castles are important indicators of both domains. Several studies have shed light on this process especially in the case of Moravia, where settlement expanded from the southern plains to the north (Hejna 1979; Bolina 1986; Plaček 1986; Idem 1988).

As early as the second half of twelfth century, noble families holding high castle offices in border regions promoted asserting activities. This was the case for example with the family of Blah, castellan at Litomerice, the brothers Hroznata and Mesek of Peruc and another Hroznata, founder of the Premonstratensian chapter at Teplá. Long-term tenure of the Litomerice castellany and possibly of other benefices in this important provincial may have allowed acquisition of a considerable number of new villages established in the Central Bohemian mountains by different branches of the family. Castellan Blah's lineage



used its exceptional status in the Litomerice region for private goals. In the period of decline of ducal power at the end of twelfth century it gradually appropriated the freshly assarted territories and usurped seigniorial authority over the recently arrived settlers (Tomas 1966, 31-33; Žemlička 1980b, 97-99).

We may assume a similar story with the Hrabisici family, attached to the Bilina castle and subsequently to the important office of high chamberlain. The Hrabisici holdings, developed out of the original core by intense settlement activities in the Krusne Hory region, spilled over the frontier deep into the Saxon side of the mountain range. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Kojata of Most, scion of the Hrabisici family, initiated an asserting project financed by his own funds in the vicinity of Bezdrúzice (German Weseritz), northwest of Plzen (see Map 2, on p.18). Kojata belonged to a senior branch of the Hrabisici family. This branch died out before 1250 but the cadet line continued under the name of the Reisenburk lords to the end of fifteenth century. Hrabisici possessions were the basis of the endowment in 1198 of a family abbey at Osek, one of the wealthiest Cistercian houses in Bohemia (Charvátová 1979; Žemlička 1990a).

A slightly different form of private enrichment was the systematic establishment of new settlements in the forests, the so-called *ujezdy*, or circutions. If their borders were determined with sufficient imprecision, additional ducal land could be seized and assarted. In this manner, the *nobilis* Hroznata settled his *ministeriales* in the woodland region around Teplá, not far from Plzen (CDB I No. 357, p. 324). Assarting activities thrived also on the holdings of Zbraslav, son of Vchyna, cupbearer of the king, in the piedmont area of the Krkonose mountains. His testament, dated 1238, together with some other documents, shows the origin, rise, and decline of a noble domain at the beginning of thirteenth century. In his desire to enlarge his holdings, Zbraslav resorted to transactions of different kinds: he purchased, sold, exchanged, and inherited land, but especially, he founded new villages. A part of his properties was "merited" (*quod hereditarie deservivi a domini rege*) from the king, i.e., received as a hereditary grant (CDB III. I No. 181, pp. 225-227 Žemlička 1983).

Assarting activities were by no means confined to rich and established noble families. Assarting and cultivation proper was carried out by those elements of society which subsequently became—in contrast to the lords (*domini, barones, pani*)—the lower nobility (*clientes, milites, vladkyove*). Ever since the later twelfth century, members of the lower nobility participated in substantial numbers in the occupation of territories along the middle course of the river Vltava, assarted previously by the dukes and monasteries. In comparison with this earlier phase, the later activities were much more intense; the massive woodland complexes surrounding the rivers Vltava and Sazava were broken up by them. In addition to lesser noble families, some lords, such as the Vitkovci or Benesovici, joined in, but their extensive holdings crumbled and melted away before the end of the thirteenth century (Boháč 1978).

Another, even more conspicuous involvement of the lower nobility may be perceived around Litomerice. In the eleventh century, the dukes or their delegates at the Litomerice

castellany settled a group of various servants in the vicinity of the river Ohre/Eger. In a period of demographical pressure and social change, when reserves of the traditional settlement zone along the Ohre river were running thin, people looked at the promising perspectives of the adjacent Central Bohemian mountains. New means of subsistence, new areas of cultivation as well as more secure social and legal positions were to be found there. A series of minor colonization activities began as early as the later twelfth century: occupation of the adjacent valleys and slopes. This movement continued until the fourteenth century. Holdings of the lesser nobility, however dispersed, show clear affiliation to the lower-Ohre region (Žemlička 1980, 93-105, 122-126).

Colonization also stimulated new relationships within medieval society. For a landed nobility the crucial issue was to have serfs who pay rents. In the areas of traditional settlement the nobility and the Church had to transfer the peasants' obligations from the castle-system to themselves. In the freshly assarted areas where landlords owned the land servile conditions emerged more directly. All settlers, whether serfs endowed with land or *hospices* from the ranks of former ducal free peasants, entered into dependence to the landlords. Demands of the castles, if at all claimed, were disregarded. The obstacle placed by the castle system between the emergent landed nobility and "their" serfs, was thus removed (cf. also Nový 1984; Łowmiański 1985, 399-576; Modzelewski 1987).

\*

Considering all these changes, the composition of the nobility around 1250 was rather checkered. The main representatives of the landed nobility had acquired private property through high offices in the ducal administration. The ducal character of these "officials en route to sergneurs" survived for a considerable time. The relationship between them and lesser castle officials and beneficiaries was everything but cordial. The consolidation of the landed nobilities' privileges limited the revenues of middle and lower ranking beneficiaries. The jurisdiction of castle officials was also limited by towns and new royal castles founded in the second quarter of the thirteenth century and later. An additional limitation was imposed on their authority by the strengthening of the central, Prague-based organs as a consequence of the conflict between king Otakar I Přemysl and Bishop Andrew of Prague (Žemlička 1981, 726-729).

The surviving elements of the castle system resented the erosion of their earlier privileges. However, they were of no use to the ruler because the new model of society did not leave space for their existence. These beneficiaries served only their own purposes, having been turned into a strata of parasites. They were an obstacle to the landed nobility and to ecclesiastic overlords and, by their never-ending demands for obsolete contributions and tributes, a nuisance to the serfs. Tensions between groups of old castle officials and the new landed nobility reached a peak in 1248-1249, the so-called rebellion of Crown Prince Přemysl. The division line between the opposing groups was somewhat blurred. Still, the camp of King Venceslas I included powerful "landed" lords who, however, also held offices

at court. His rival, the heir apparent, who later reigned as Přemysl II Otakar headed a rather heterogeneous array of malcontents. A number of these seem to have been motivated by the desire for renewing the traditional privileges of the castle officialdom.

The consequences of capitulation of Přemysl before his father accelerated the transformation process. Great families, such as the Markvartici and Ronovci, consolidated their positions. It is hardly a coincidence that the main phase of seignorial castle building began immediately after the revolt. The continuous obliteration of privileges of the castle office also gained momentum of the second half of the thirteenth century. Some of the lower echelons among castle officials managed to obtain meager holdings of land, others joined powerful lords as clients, again others found their future in royal service as *ministeriales*. Out of these strata emerged the lower nobility (*clientes, milites, vladykove*) in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Žemlička 1985, 583-585).

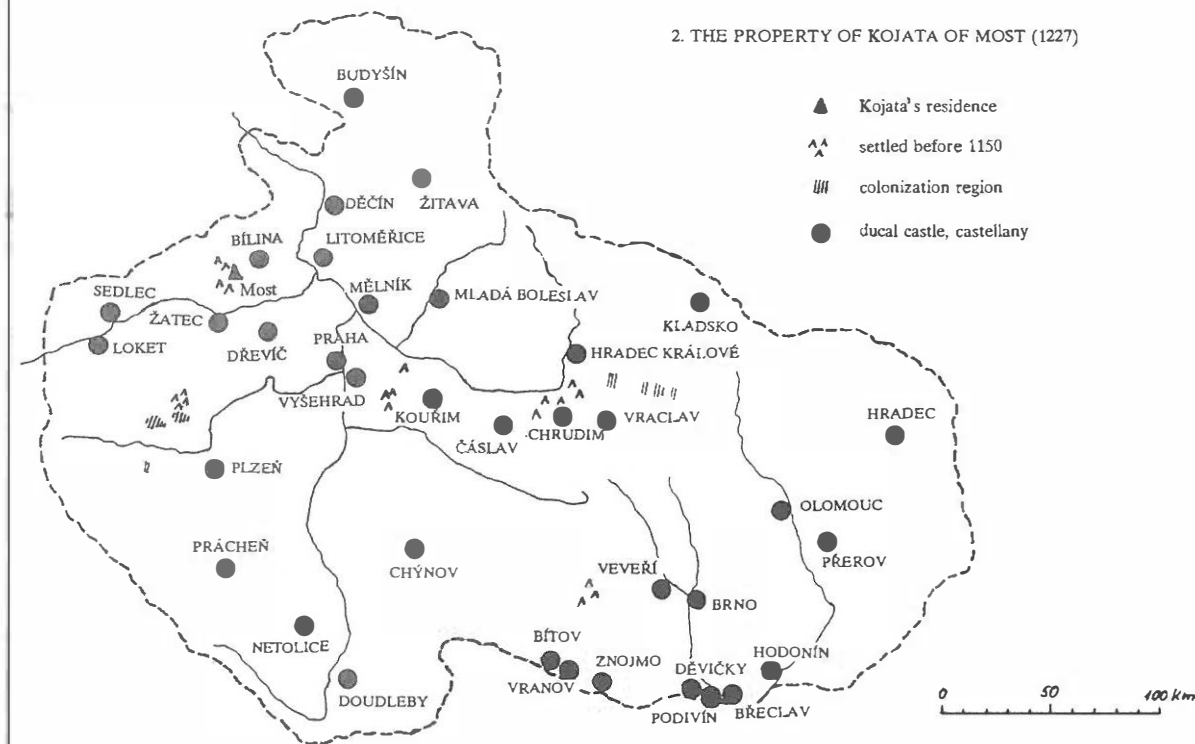
One of the fundamental characteristics of "landed" nobility was the establishment of fortified residences. Beginning with 1160 the predicates of nobility frequently derived from these seignorial castles (Vogt 1938, 114-115). This move was termed an "invasion of the countryside by the nobility" (Třeštík 1971, 560). The new landed nobility left the ducal court, left ducal castles and moved to the midst of its holdings. Noble predicates based on the residences became the norm in the thirteenth century. However, they frequently were combined with titles of major offices, as is indicated in a charter of 1235, issued by Zauis *subcamerarius regis de Nechanic* (CDB III. 1 No. 105, p. 125).

The first seignorial stone castles were erected around 1230 in Bohemia and somewhat later in Moravia. These were usually modelled on the more elaborate royal structures. A solid castle of stone was a convincing display of the standing of its proprietor, while the lesser nobility had to be content with more modest residences or with fortified manorhouse in the centers of villages (Durdík 1984; Plaček-Procházka 1986; Měřínský-Plaček 1988).

These differences in the fortified residences suggest considerable social differentiation within thirteenth-century nobility. Its uppermost echelons are the best known. In the course of the fourteenth century, they became an aristocracy: the lords (*domini, barones, paní*). This group included families which held high courtly and castle offices for longer periods already before the thirteenth century. Modern historiography refers to them by collective names derived from the name of the first known ancestor such as: Hrabšici, Ronovci, Markvartici. The only contemporary reference of this kind seems to have been to the Vitkovci (descendants of Vitek, in German, Witigonen), attested to in the form of Vitkonides in 1276 (Letopisy 302).

The landed property of the Ronovci, Markvartici and other families was considerable at the beginning of thirteenth century. For instance, Kojata of Most held some sixty estates before his death around 1229 (see Map 2, on p. 18). The fact that his brother Vsebor also owned sizable possessions and other evidence suggest that the property of their father Hrabise (d. 1197/1198) might have included more than one hundred items, held by various

## 2. THE PROPERTY OF KOJATA OF MOST (1227)



titles. And this was not even the entire fortune of the family; at least as much belonged to the branch of Slavko, the chamberlain (Žemlička 1990b, 187-188).

However, other members of nobility, even well-to-do ones, had to be content with no more than a few villages. This was the case of the *fidelis baro* Roman of Tynec who bequeathed his three villages to the Cistercian abbey of Plasy in west Bohemia in 1230 (CDB II No. 342, pp. 350-352). Even this baron, however, must have had a feeling of superiority as most of his neighbours were obviously below his level.

The most numerous component of thirteenth century nobility was a rather heterogenous stratum of landowners with modest holdings. In addition to the survivors of the atrophied castle system, many of the formerly free ducal peasants, and various *ministeriales* rose to this rank which also accommodated the poorer branches of powerful lineages. The lower limit of this stratum remained fluid and sometimes it is questionable how far the term nobility is appropriate at all. A number of these gentlemen preserved their relative independence and were subject to the king only, others sought secure positions with powerful lords whose service they entered. They might have performed retainer functions in exchange for modest estates. If such contracts were terminated, they were free to leave but had to give up the holdings, perhaps in return of a compensation. Of course, longer service terms brought permanent advantages. Some *servientes* and *clientes* of Kojata of Most were thus rewarded with land. Zbraslav, son of Vchyna, cupbearer to the king, remembered his ministerials in his testament of 1238. Especially magnates holding influential offices had good opportunities to attract the lower echelons of the disintegrating castle officialdom (cf. CDB I No. 357, p. 324; CDB II No. 303, p. 301; CDB III. 1 No. 181, pp. 225-227).

\*

The transformation of the early medieval *nobiles* and, in general, of higher-standing *Bohemenses* into landed nobility was thus a process neither simple nor short. Why did medieval Bohemian and Moravian society not travel along a straighter trajectory? Was it not possible to avoid a seemingly redundant intervening link, under which the elite siphoned off a proportion of ducal revenues, but was unable to lean on their private landed properties and collect rent from direct subjects? Was the historical process substantially slowed down by these facts?

The answer to these questions is unequivocal: no. It has been demonstrated that this model was not only based on specific features of the preceding developments but also that it was typical for all the monarchies of tenth to twelfth centuries east-central Europe: Přemyslide Bohemia, Árpád Hungary and Piast Poland. It was a consequence of the limited economic potential of the nascent early medieval state which had to provide for the central and local administration as well as for the privileged elite. This elite had to rely on the dominant power of the ruler capable of mobilizing the obligatory contributions and redistributing them based on his role as the owner of almost all land and authority over the population.

Land confiscated to the beginning of tenth century from the subdued non-Přemyslide *duces* were retained by the dukes as their own estates cultivated by servile groups. This was the *raison d'être* of the castle system and of the offices and benefices to which prestations from state revenues were tied.

Once the position of the ruling elites was strong enough and the economic situation made the protective role of the duke superfluous, the conditions for this regulated central model began to change. Increase in the volume of agricultural production and development of both crafts and the trade offered a certain affluence even to holders of modest-sized landholding. The objective conditions for significant private landed property emerged. Growth of these landed properties was enhanced by colonization in the course of which overlord-serf relationship could be established without conflict with the old obligations to castles and their officials. Unity between the central power and the emerging hereditary and landed nobility lived on, constituting the base of state structure, but the development was in favour of partnership. As a social group, the nobility was shedding its one-time official or half-official condition (Třeštík 1979, 139-144; Žemlička 1990b, 35-39).

In addition to economic and political aspects, we should not neglect aspects of social mentality. Magnates of the early Middle Ages, leading a predatory existence and subsisting on their shares of the state revenues, were transformed into overlords of landed property. They had to see to the productivity of their holdings, to their expansion and consolidation, they had to invest in the residences of their lineages and to cultivate good neighbourly relationships. Their own future and the future of their descendants were now in their own hands. This required more responsibility but entailed a greater measure of freedom which was soon to manifest itself in the growth of political consciousness.

Translated by Petr Charvat

## References

(The article was submitted still in 1992, before the new system of notation was adopted. We apologise for the inconsistency.)

Bachmann, Adolf 1899: *Geschichte Böhmens I* (bis 1400), Gotha.

Boháč, Zdeněk 1978: *Dějiny osídlení středního Povltaví v době předhusitské* [Settlement history of the central part of the Vltava-river basin in the pre-Hussite period], Prague.

Boháč, Zdeněk 1982: Otázky terminologie dějin osídlení a kolonizace za feudalismu [On the problems of the terminology of Settlement and Colonization], in: *Historiografie celémk budoucnosti*, Prague.

Boháček, Miroslav 1975: *Einflüsse des römischen Rechts in Böhmen und Mähren* (Ius Romanum medii aevi V.11, 3-162), Milan.

Bolina, Pavel 1986: K problematice kolonizace a počátků hradů na severovýchodní Moravě ve 13. století [On the problems of colonization and the origin of castles in north-eastern in the 13th century], *Československý časopis historický* 34, 565-584.

Bretholz, Bertold 1912: *Geschichte Böhmens und Mährens bis zum Aussterben der Přemysliden* (1306), Prague.

Bubeník, Jozef-Uhlíková, Olga 1977: K počátkům města Žatce [On the origins of the towns of Žatec/Saaz], *Památky archeologické* 68, 193-218.

CDB—*Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris regni Bohemiae* I, ed. Gustavus Friedrich, Prague 1904-1907; II, ed. G. Friedrich, Prague 1912; III.1, ed. G. Friedrich, Prague 1942; III.2, ed. G. Friedrich et Zdeněk Kristen, Prague 1962.

Cosmas—Die Chronik der Böhmen des Cosmas von Prag, hrsg. von Bertold Bretholz, in: *Monumenta Germaniae historica- Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, Nova series II, Berlin 1923.

Crescente—Crescente fide, ed. Josef Emler, in: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum* I, Prague 1873, 183-190.

Čechura, Jaroslav 1978: Počátky osekého kláštera-mnišská kolonie v Maštově [The origins of the Osek monastery—the monks' colony at Maštov], *Památky-příroda-ivot. Vlastivědný čtvrtletník Chomutovska* 10, 53-60.

Čechura, Jaroslav 1982: Hospodářský vývoj sedleckého kláštera do roku 1346 [Economic development of the Sedlec abbey until 1346], *Muzeum a současnost* 5, 39-72.

Charvát, Petr 1985: Poznámky k německé kolonizaci východních Čech [Notes on German colonization of eastern Bohemia], *Archaeologia historica* 10, 75-81.

Charvátová, Katerina 1979: Osecká klášterní država do poloviny 14. století [The Osek monastic domain until the middle of the 14th century], *Historická geografie* 18, 307-350.

Charvátová, Katerina 1985: Význam cisterciáckého řádu pro osídlení Čech [The importance of the Cistercian order for the settlement of Bohemia], *Archaeologia historica* 10, 415-421.

Christian—Legenda Christiani. *Vita et passio sancti Wenceslai et sancte Ludmily*, ed. Jaroslav Ludvíkovský, Prague 1978.

Durdik, Tomas 1984: *České hrady* [The castles of Bohemia], Prague.

Fiala, Zdeněk 1975: *Přemyslovske Čechy. Český stát a společnost v letech 995-1310*, [Przemyslide Bohemia. The Czech state and society 995-1310]] second edition, Prague.

Fritze, Wolfgang H. 1982: Corona regni Bohemiae. Die Entstehung des böhmischen Königtums im 12. Jahrhundert im Widerspiel von Kaiser, Fürst und Adel, in: Fritze W.H., *Frühzeit zwischen Ostsee und Donau. Ausgewählte Beiträge zum geschichtlichen Werden im östlichen Mitteleuropa vom 6. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. von Ludolf Kuchenbuch und Wifried Schich /Germania Slavica III, Berlin, 209-296.

Graus, František 1953: *Dějiny venkovského lidu v Čechách v době předhusitské* I [History of the rural people of Bohemia in the pre-Hussite period I], Prague.

Graus, František 1966: Adel, Land und Herrscher in Böhmen vom 10. bis 13. Jahrhundert, *Nachrichten der Giessener Hochschulgesellschaft* 35, 131-153.

Hejna, Antonin 1979: Hrad Vizmburk a oblast severovýchodních Čech ve 13. století [The castle of Vizmburk northeastern Bohemia in the 13th century], *Folia Historica Bohemica* 1, 193-208.

Hosák, Ladislav 1936-1938: Příspěvky k starému rodopisu moravskému [Contributions to old genealogies of Moravia], *Časopis Společnosti přátel starožitností československých* 44-46.

Kalista, Zdeněk 1928: Královský komoří Černin 1197-1212 [Černin, chamberlain to the king 1197-1212], *Časopis Společnosti přátel starožitností Českých* 36, 49-61.

Kincl, Jaromír 1978: Dva testamenti slechtice Kojaty [Two testaments of the noble Kojata], *Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Iuridica* 3, 301-320.

Klápště, Jan 1988: K některým problémům středověké kolonizace [On some problems of the medieval colonization], *Studia Mediaevalia Pragensia* 1, 93-111.

Klápště, Jan 1989: Česká archeologie a studium problematiky 13.století [Czech archeology and studies of the problems of the 13th century], *Archeologia historica* 14, 9-17.

Klápště, Jan – Žemlička, Josef 1979: Studium dějin osídlení v Čechách a jeho další perspektivy [Studies of settlement history in Bohemia and their perspectives], *Československý časopis historický* 27, 884-906.

Kloss, Ferdinand s.d.: *Das räumliche Bild der Grundherrschaft in Böhmen bis zum Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Gablonz a.N.

Krzemieńska, Barbara 1980: Wann erfolgte der Anschluss Mahrens an den böhmischen Staat? *Historica* 19, 195-243.

Krzemieńska, Barbara – Třeštík, Dušan 1978: Hospodářské základy rané středověkého státu ve střední Evropě. Čechy, Polsko, Uhry v 10. a 11. století [Economic foundations of the early medieval state in Central Europe. Bohemia, Poland, Hungary in the 10th-11th Century], *Hospodářské dějiny* 1, 149-230.

Letopisy – Letopisy české od roku 1196 do roku 1278 [The annals of Bohemia from 1196 to 1278], ed. Josef Emler, in: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum* II, Prague 1874, 282-303.

Lippert, Julius 1896-1898: *Sozial-Geschichte Böhmens in vorhussitischer Zeit I-II*, Prague-Vienna-Leipzig.

Łowmiański, Henryk 1985: *Początki Polski* [The origins of Poland] VI, Warsaw.

Matuszewski, Józef 1936: *Immunitet ekonomiczny w dobrach Kościoła w Polsce do roku 1381* [Economic immunities of ecclesiastical domains of Poland until 1381], Poznań.

Menclová, Dobroslava 1972: *České hrady* [Bohemian castles] I, Prague.

Měřínský, Zdeněk 1982: Studium dějin osídlení na Moravě a ve Slezsku [Studies of settlement history in Moravia and Silesia], *Archaeologia historica* 7, 113-156.

Měřínský, Zdeněk 1985: Církevní instituce na Moravě a jejich úloha ve vývoji hospodářství a osídlení od 10.století do předhusitského období [Ecclesiastical institutions of Moravia and their role in the development of economy and settlement from the 10th century until the pre-Hussite period], *Archaeologia historica* 10, 375-393.

Měřínský, Zdeněk – Plaček, Miroslav 1988: Nástin vývoje hradní architektury vrcholného středověku na Moravě a ve Slezsku do období husitských válek [A sketch of development of castle architecture of the high Middle Ages in Moravia and Silesia until the Hussite wars], *Archaeologia historica* 13, 217-249.

Modzelewski, Karol 1987: *Chłopi w monarchii wczesnopiastowskiej* [Peasants in the early Piast monarchy], Wrocław-Warsaw-Cracow Gdańsk ódž.

Novotný, Václav 1912-1937: *České dějiny I.1-4* [A history of Bohemia I.1-4], Prague.

Nový, Rostislav 1972: *Přemyslovský stát 11. a 12. století* [The Přemyslide state of the 11th and 12th century], Prague.

Nový, Rostislav 1976: K počátkům feudální monarchie v Čechách I. Sigillum commune regni [On the origins of feudal monarchy in Bohemia I. Sigillum commune regni], *Časopis Národního muzea-Historické muzeum* 145, 144-164.



Nový, Rostislav 1984: Vznik poddanského obyvatelstva jako společenské třídy v českých zemích [Emergence of the villein population as a social class in the lands of Bohemia], in: *Struktura feudální společnosti na území Československa a Polska do přelomu 15. a 16. století*, red. Jan Čierny, František Hejl, Antonín Verbík, Prague, 213-240.

Palacký, František 1876: *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě* I.1 [A history of the nation of Bohemia in Bohemia and Moravia I.1], 3rd edition, Prague.

Plaček, Miroslav 1986: Hradý v horním povodí Svatky [Castles in the upper part of the Svatka-river drainage area], *Archaeologia historica* 11, 189-200.

Plaček, Miroslav: K vývoji hradů v povodí Svitavy [Development of castles in the Svitava-river drainage area], *Archaeologia historica* 13, 307-320.

Plaček, Miroslav – Procházka, Rudolf 1986: K problematice opevněných sídel přelomu raného a vrcholného feudalismu na Moravě [On the problems of fortified residences of the transition of early and mature feudalism in Moravia], *Archaeologia historica* 11, 159-170.

Prochno, Joachim 1961: Terra Bohemiae, Regnum Bohemiae, Corona Bohemiae, in: *Corona regni*, hrsg. von Manfred Hellmann, Weimar, 198-224.

Russocki, Stanisław 1971: Z badań nad czeskim systemem beneficjalnym [Some investigations of the Bohemian beneficiary system], *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne* 23, 33-46.

Russocki, Stanisław 1973: *Protoparlamentaryzm Czech do początku XV wieku* [Bohemian proto-parliamentarism until the beginning of 15th century], Warsaw.

Šusta, Josef 1917: *Poslední Přemyslovci a jeich dědictví* [The last Přemysloids and their heritage], Prague.

Tomas, Jindřich 1966: Počátky města Litoměřic [Origins of the town of Litomerice], *Sborník Severočeského muzea, Společenské vědy-Historia* 5, 15-64.

Třeštík, Dušan 1971: K sociální struktuře přemyslovských Čech. Kosmas o kněcím vlastnictví půdy a lidí [On the social structure of Přemysl-dynasty Bohemia. Cosmas the chronicler on ducal possession of land and people], *Československý časopis historický* 19, 537-567.

Třeštík, Dušan 1979: Proměny české společnosti ve 13. století [Transformations of Bohemian society in the 13th century], *Folia Historica Bohemica* 1, 131-154.

Třeštík, Dušan – Krzemieńska, Barbara 1967: Zur Problematik der Dienstleute im fruhmittelalterlichen Böhmen, in: *Siedlung und Verfassung Böhmens in der Frühzeit*, hrsg. von František Graus und Herbert Ludat, Wiesbaden, 70-98.

Třeštík, Dušan – Polívka, Miloslav 1984: Nástin vývoje české lechty do konce 15. století [Sketch of the development of Bohemian nobility until the end of 15th century], in: *Struktura feudální společnosti na území Československa a Polska do přelomu 15. a 16. století*, red. Jan Čierny, František Hejl, Antonín Verbík, Prague, 99-133.

Uhlíř, Zdeněk 1985: Pojem zemské once v tzv. Kronice Dalimilové jako základní prvek její ideologie [The notion of the land community in the so-called Dalimil chronicle as a basic element of its ideology], *Folia Historica Bohemica* 9, 7-32.

Vaněček, Václav 1933-1939: *Základy právního postavení klášterů a klášterního velkostatku ve starém českém státě* [Foundations of the legal situation of the monasteries and monastic estates in the old state of Bohemia] 3 vols., Prague.

Vaněček, Václav 1938: *Dvě studie k otázce právního postavení klášterů a klášterního velkostatku ve starém českém státě* [Two studies on the question of legal situation of the monasteries and monastic estates in the old state of Bohemia], Prague.

Vaníček, Vratislav 1981: Vítkovci a český stát v letech 1169-1278 [The Vítkovci family and the state of Bohemia in 1169-1278], *Československý časopis historický* 29, 89-110.

Vaníček, Vratislav 1982: Příspěvek k problematice studia feudální třídy v přemyslovských Čechách. Rozmach a pokles rodu Hradišiců v 11.-13. století [A contribution to the problem of study of the feudal class in Přemysl-dynasty Bohemiae. Climax and decline of the Hradišici family in the 11th-13th century], in: *Genealogia-Problemy metodyczne w badaniach nad polskim społeczeństwem średniowiecznym na tle porównawczym*, red. Jacek Hertel, Toruń, 161-171.

Vaníček, Vratislav 1991: Předpoklady a formování lechtické "obce Českého království" [Prerequisites for the noble "community of the kingdom of Bohemia" and its emergence], *Mediaevalia Historica Bohemia* 1, 13-55.

Vincencius-Letopis Vincencia [The annals of Vincencius], ed. Josef Emler, in: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum* II, Prague 1874, 407-460.

Vogt, Karl 1938: *Die Burg in Böhmen bis zum Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Reichenberg-Leipzig.

Waldstein-Wartenberg, Berthold 1966: *Die Markwartinger. Geschichte einer böhmischen Familie im Zeitalter der Přemysliden* Gräefelfing bei Munchen.

Žemlička, Josef 1978: Přemyslovská hradská centra a počátky měst v Čechách [Přemyslide castle centres and the origins of towns in Bohemia], *Československý časopis historický* 26, 559-586.

Žemlička, Josef 1979: Litoměřická kastelánie a její postavení v raně středověkých Čechách [The Litoměřice castellany and its situation in early medieval Bohemia], *Litoměřicko* 15, 37-52.

Žemlička, Josef 1980a: Bezděžsko-"královské území" Přemysla Otakara II. [The Bezděz region-"royal territory" of Přemysl Otakar II], *Československý časopis historický* 28, 726-751.

Žemlička, Josef 1980b: Vývoj osídlení dolního Pohří a Českého středohoří do 14. století [Development of settlement of the lower Ohře/Eger-river basin and the České-středohoří mountains in the 14th century], Prague.

Žemlička, Josef 1981: Spor Přemysla Otakara I. s praským biskupem Ondřejem [Conflict between Přemysl Otakar I and Ondřej, bishop of Prague], *Československý časopis historický* 29, 704-730.

Žemlička, Josef 1983: Královský čílník Zbraslav a jeho dědictví [Zbraslav, cupbearer to the king, and his heritage], *Historická geografie* 21, 117-132.

Žemlička, Josef 1985: Odboj královice Přemysla v letech 1248-1249 a jeho sociální zázemí [Rebellion of the prince Přemysl in 1248-1249 and its social background], *Československý časopis historický* 33, 564-586.

Žemlička, Josef 1989: "Duces Boemanorum" a vznik přemyslovské monarchie ["Duces Boemanorum" and the emergence of the Přemyslide monarchy], *Československý časopis historický* 37, 697-721.

Žemlička, Josef 1990a: K počátkům a rozrodu Hradišiců [On the origins and the lineage of the Hradišici family], *Folia Historica Bohemia* 13, 7-41.

Žemlička, Josef 1990b: *Přemysl Otakar I. Panovník, stát a česká společnost na prahu vrcholného feudalismu* [Přemysl Otakar I: Ruler, state and Bohemian society on the threshold of mature feudalism], Prague.

Žemlička, Josef 1991: "Moravané" v časné středověku ["Moravians" in the early Middle Ages], in print.

Zháněl, Stanislav 1930: *Jak vznikla staročeská lechta. Příspěvek k nejstaršímu politickému a sociálnímu dějinám českým* [How the old Bohemian nobility emerged. A contribution to the earliest political and social history of Bohemia], Brno.

**HISTORY & SOCIETY  
IN CENTRAL EUROPE**  
**2**  
**MEDIUM ÆVUM QUOTIDIANUM**  
**29**

**Nobilities in Central and Eastern  
Europe:  
Kinship, Property and Privilege**

edited by

**János M. Bak**

**Hajnal István Alapítvány  
Budapest**

**Medium Ævum Quotidianum  
Gesellschaft  
Krems**

**1994**

PRINTED IN HUNGARY  
Neotipp Bt., Budapest

# HISTORY & SOCIETY IN CENTRAL EUROPE

together with  
**Medium Ævum Quotidianum**

ELTE BTK Gazdaság- és  
Társadalomtörténeti Tanszék  
Budapest 1051, V. ker. Piarista köz 1.  
Hungary  
Tel.: (36)-(1)-11-80-966/325

MEDIUM ÆVUM QUOTIDIANUM  
GESELLSCHAFT  
Körnermarkt 13, A-3500 Krems  
Austria  
Tel.: (34-2732) 84793

---

## Contents

<i>Josef Žemlička</i>	
Origins of Noble Landed Property in Přemyslide Bohemia	7
<i>Elemér Mályusz</i>	
Hungarian Nobles of Medieval Transylvania (1986)	25
<i>Erik Fügedi</i>	
Kinship and Privilege (1990)	55
<i>Kiril Petkov</i>	
Boyars and Royal Officers	77
<i>Jan Pakulski</i>	
The Development of Clan Names in Mediaval Poland	85

Karin J. MacHardy	
Social Mobility and Noble Rebellion in Early Modern Austria	97
István M. Szijártó	
Relatives and Miles	141
István Hajnal	
From Estates to Classes	163

*Authors of the volume:*

Erik Fügedi (1916–1992)

István Hajnal (1892–1956)

Elemér Mályusz (1898–1989)

Karin J. MacHardy (Dept. of History, Univ. of Waterloo, Ont. N2L 3G1, Canada)

Jan Pakulski (Inst. Historii Arhivistyki, Copernicus-Univ., Plac Teatralny 2/a  
PL 87–100 Torun, Poland)

Kiril Petkov (Univ. Veliko Tmovo, Ivailo 11, 4300 Karlovo, Bulgaria)

István M. Szijártó (Gazdaság- és Társadalomtörténeti Tanszék, ELTE,  
1151 Piarista köz 1., Budapest, Hungary)

Josef Žemlička (Inst. of Hist., Academy of Sc. of the Czech Rep., Visehradská 49.,  
12826 Praha 2, Czech Republic)

## LECTORI SALUTEM!

The aim of the editors and publishers of this series of occasional papers is to present recent results of research in social history to the international public. In the spirit of the Hungarian historian of Europe, István Hajnal (1892-1956), we believe that the history of "small nations" may highlight aspects of general development that are less visible in the life of major civilisations.

The volumes in this series will address specific aspects of social development in medieval and modern central Europe. We intend to focus on the region between the German lands and the Byzantine-Russian world, to explore similarities and differences in this area. Instead of arguing the validity of the term, we shall publish studies that may enable our readers to decide to what extent is "central Europe" a historical reality or merely a dream of intellectuals and politicians. That is why we chose a medieval map for our cover: it emphasizes the centuries-old connecting function of the great rivers but contains no ephemeral political boundaries.

It is also our hope to contribute to the understanding of present developments and upheavals in a region about which few critical analyses are available in the English-speaking world. At the same time we should like to foster modern methods and approaches in social history, for so long neglected in our countries.

The present volume appears in close cooperation with the *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* Society and contains studies mainly on medieval and early modern nobilities of the region. The papers of two recently deceased Hungarian medievalists as well as articles of a Czech, a Polish and a Bulgarian historian discuss the social history medieval nobilities. Two articles, on Hungarian and Austrian nobles of the *ancien régime* look at social mobility and estate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The volume closes with an essay by István Hajnal on the end of the noble-corporatist world in nineteenth-century Hungary. With publishing three articles of the generations preceding ours, we wish to bow to those who taught us, without wanting to hide that their questions and answers are not necessarily ours. By printing papers of younger scholars, in turn, we hope to present recent research in the area on topics that are discussed among social historians everywhere.

The volume editor wishes to express his gratitude to those friends and colleagues who assisted in the - often almost unscramountable - task of translating and editing the Czech, Magyar and Polish contributions: Catherine Allen, Simon Carne, Tamás Domahidy, Vera Gáthy, Ryszard Grzesik, and Paul Knoll. Needless to say that he alone feels responsible for the remaining shortcomings, which are, probably, many. Maybe, we shall publish once a volume only on the intricacies and pitfalls of translating medieval and medievalist texts.

# H & S

is a series of occasional papers published by the István Hajnal Society of Historians, in cooperation with the Medium Ævum Quotidianum Society (Krems, Austria), the Společnost hospodářský dejiny [Society For Economic History] in Prague.

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung der Kulturabteilung des Amtes der Niederösterreichischen Landesregierung

## *Editors:*

Vera Bácskai, ELTE Btk, Budapest, Pf. 107, H-1364.

János M. Bak, Dept. of Medieval Studies, Central European University,

Hűvösvölgyi út 54, 1021 Budapest

Gerhard Jaritz (for MÆQ), Körmermarkt 13, A-3500 Krems

## *Editorial consultants:*

John Bodnar (Chicago, IL), Peter Burke (Cambridge), Josef Ehmer (Vienna), Tamás Faragó (Miskolc), Susan Glanz (Brooklyn, NY), Monica Glettler (Munich), Heiko Hausmann (Basle), Tamás Hofer (Budapest), Gerhard Jaritz (Vienna), Charles Kecskeméti (Paris), Béla K. Király (Highland Lakes, NJ), György Kövér (Budapest), Ludolf Kuchenbuch (Bochum), Jaroslav Lánik (Prague), Hans Medick (Göttingen), Walter Pietzsch (Wiesbaden), Martyn C. Rady (London), Herman Rebel (Tucson, AZ), Helga Schulz (Berlin), Júlia Szalai (Budapest), Heide Wunder (Kassel).

Manuscripts and inquiries (including advertising) should be addressed to András Csité, Managing Editor HISTORY & SOCIETY c/o: Hajnal István kör, ELTE BTK, Budapest Pf. 107, H-1364. E-mail: csite@osiris.elte.hu

Sale: Single copies in Hungary Ft300; abroad: \$ 15.00 or DEM 20.00 Sales for North and South America are handled by Dr Susan Glanz (1550 E 9th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11230, USA; for Hungary and all other regions by the Managing Editor.

**ISBN 963-04-2014-7**

Coverpage idea by György Kövér

Computer setting and formatting by Gábor Kelemen

Cover design Csilla Mátrai based on the Ebsdorf Mapamundi.

© Hajnal István Kör, Budapest, 1994.