

The evidence of medieval settlement areas has recently increased as a result of redevelopment activities within present - day villages. Trenches dug for different kinds of pipe-lines and cables provide limited but valuable evidence for medieval and postmedieval village research. The systematic recording and analysis of such excavations creates a background for the reconstruction of early medieval settlement pattern and the study of the formation processes of the nucleated villages. It also assists in the identification of the different types of villages, the relationship between present day and later medieval village cores and in the reconstruction of village core settings and structuring of medieval and postmedieval villages.

Recently the archaeological investigation of pipeline trenches in the Prague suburb of VINOŘ, Živanická street (former village, mentioned in the documentary evidence for the first time in the 12th century as "villa Vinori", *CDB I*, No. 111, 113, *CDB I*, No. 387, 390) provided 8 medieval settlement features. Medieval features sunk into the natural sand bedrock were recorded within the trench section and spanned about 40 m.

Three different types of features were discovered. Features 1-4/95 were plain pits of circular shape with flat or bowl-shaped bottoms, 110/150 cm deep (under the present day road surface), their function is not clear, but they might be storage or refuse pits. Features 5 and 8/95 were large pits but the lack of finds in both features, makes their function unclear. The last two features 6 and 7/95 were small pits that seem to be post or stake holes.

One prehistoric stone polished axe was found in between feature 1 and 4/95; this axe was not found in any context but in a secondary position under the section. The prehistoric stone axe in the medieval context may be explained as an accidental intrusion, possibly from a prehistoric site in the vicinity or it could suggest re-using of prehistoric stone artefacts in the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup>

The most interesting feature 1/95 included a rich layer of burnt organic material that may prove to be very informative, once it has been analysed, and may contribute to our knowledge of the medieval village environment. Several small fragments of slag found in the feature 1/95 provide evidence of iron making or working on the site.

As a result of a few small diagnostic finds it was possible to determine the date of the excavated features to the late 12th-early 13th century.

Medieval settlement features were discovered about 100 m in a north-westerly direction from the church. The private gallery church was founded in the middle of the 12th century and is situated at the easternmost rim of the VINOŘ village green (*Merhautová 1971*, 252). There is no evidence for medieval settlement features in the trench crossing the present day village green. It is possible to presume that the village green was founded on a previously unsettled area. There are two possible interpretations of the discovered settlement features. They may represent part of an early medieval settlement pattern prior to the establishment of the nucleated village. It might also be possible that this is evidence of the earliest core of the late medieval green - village. The afore mentioned features were situated in front of the present day houses. The boundary line between the house plots and the communal area was probably established in the late medieval period.

In VINOŘ parish, about 600 m in an easterly direction from the village green, is situated an early medieval hill fort the final phase of which was dated to the 13th century (dating is based on field-walking, *Kudrnáč 1966*; *Richterová 1984*). The function of the hill fort within the early medieval settlement pattern is not yet clear, however, its desertion may have been connected with the 13th century transformation.

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1 There is evidence of such secondary "symbolic" use of prehistoric artefacts in medieval villages and also other sites as "thunder stones" that were supposed to protect a house against lightning (*Vařeka 1991*). The stone axe of Eneolithic origin has a flattened back and a cutting edge, as a result of secondary use as a hammer stone.

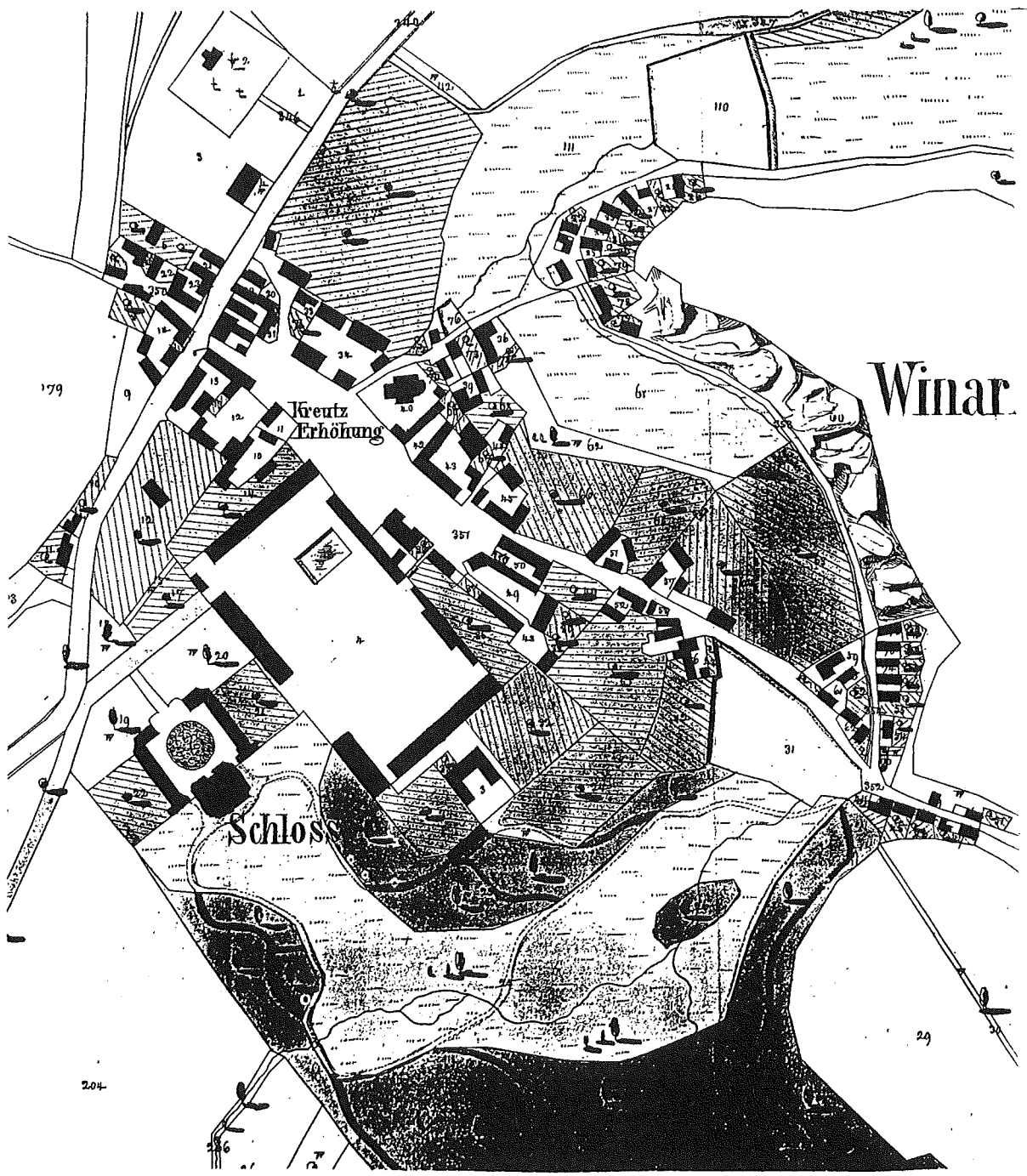


Fig. 1. Plan of the Vinof village core (1841).

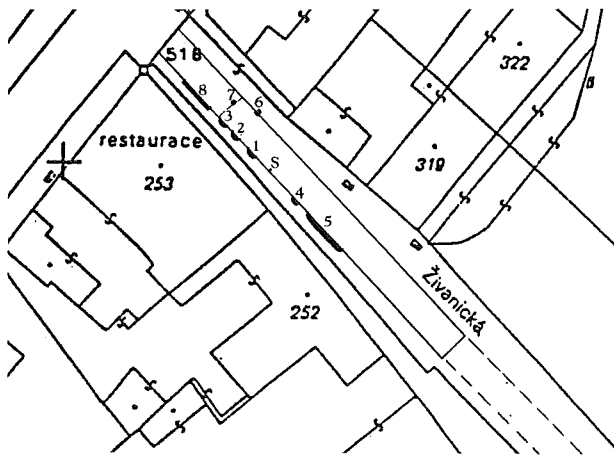


Fig. 2. Map of present day Vnoř with the location of the excavations. S - location of the prehistoric axe.

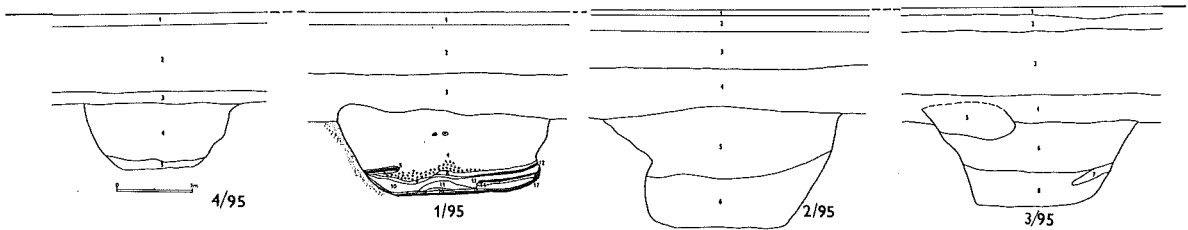


Fig. 3. The west section with features 1-4/95.

## References

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