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Review of doctor's thesis of Lubosz Hobl :
 "SOUVISLOST HRADŮ V ČECHÁCH S ŘÁDOVÝMI HRADY V JIŽNÍM POBALTÍ"

The paper of Lubosz Hobl M.A. refers to one of more interesting issues on defensive architecture of southern Baltic seacoast history. The author of the thesis discusses architectonic patterns transition, basing on Bohemian castles examples, presenting and comparing his point of view with the thesis of prof. Tomasz Durdik, one of the most eminent castle specialists, concerning genesis of the Teutonic castles, and published in 1993. In accordance with that theory, transition of regular castle model towards Prussian territories took place between 1254/1255, in the times of the crusade headed by king Ottokar II of Bohemia. That was the period, when in Königsberg (present Kaliningrad), the first castle was erected, which in researchers' opinion became a pattern for regular castles of the Teutonic Order for a long time.

L. Hobl's thesis consists of ten chapters, conclusions and a summary. The author presents in a logical and careful way the next T. Durdik's thesis, according to which the most important contribution in creating a new type of Teutonic castles is attributed to, the so called disposable type of a Central European castle (chapter 2), in historical part he discusses the most significant facts concerning the Teutonic Order, and in the following chapter he makes analyses of 31 early gothic Bohemian castles. The research included structures with at least two dwelling houses or dwelling wings and the so called Central European castles, but also some other objects not classified as any of these groups. The castles description and characteristics is conducted by the Author following a precisely defined scheme, turning particular attention to the constructions' internal division structures and communication systems used – both horizontal and vertical, assuming correctly that, if the model transition had taken place in fact, presence of these elements of spatial arrangement must have been also reported in case of Bohemian and Teutonic castles (chapters 3-5). The Author characterized Teutonic castles in Prussia in a similar way, focusing on all parallels and differences between them and Bohemian examples.

This paper part is crucial for the conclusions understanding. First and foremost, the research showed insufficient exploration state or complete lack of chronological key statements (date of an object erection), and in many cases, poor objects' condition and later redecorations changed substantially or blurred original spatial arrangements. Correct classification to a defined type turned out to be absolutely impossible in many cases. In the following chapters the Author also analyses present conceptions concerning the problem, including Middle Eastern, French or Italian assumptions created on the base of comparison to

castles erected by Frederic II. In this context, establishments directing our attention to observable connections between southern Italian and Bohemian castles, which in the Author's opinion indicate indirect transition of some architectonic elements from Italy to Prussia, but via territories of Austria and Bohemia seem to be intriguing.

Conducted analysis indicated that some hypotheses were unauthorized and the influences mechanism, sketched by T. Durdik difficult to verify. In case of Königsberg castle, the key argument was too long time gap between that object building in 1255 and starting erecting other regular castles in the Chełmno Land, which as it was revealed by recent archaeological explorations started many years later.

The Author was right to remark, that present state of many Teutonic castles exploration does not justify today detailed studies basing on their erecting chronology, and it concerns not only regular castles. Until now, the erection date of only few of them has been correctly estimated, and because it is a key element in discussions on Teutonic castles genesis, it is the weakest point of all studies of that kind.

Verification of 'disposable' Central European castle type, which was connected with the theory presented above, indicated that the state of preservation of majority of analyzed object is not good enough to estimate positively T. Durdik's statements, who treated most of them as that type of objects. Conducted analyses evidenced, that despite visible similarities existing between these two areas, direct transition of a readymade architectonic model from Bohemia to Prussia is not possible. We must agree with the Author's conclusions, which are also certified by present research, that a model of regular Teutonic castle was created locally as a result of numerous influences, responding first of all to the needs of the knights order, which functioned basing on the monastic and military rules simultaneously.

The Author making careful analyses of present state of research demonstrates the subject knowledge, creativity, and what is important, personal experience gained during archaeological explorations in Poland, examining several crucial castle sites: in Papowo Biskupie, Wąbrzeźno or Kowalewo Pomorskie. One of few mistakes, in my opinion, is the reference to final analyses' result in preliminary issues, what is a methodical error. It must not be suggested in that paper place that a theory which will be the subject of analyses has 'several weak points'. It is advised and suggested as indispensable to present its most significant assumption, which will be verified in the course of analyses. The Author is right, of course, and his knowledge on the subject, to which he has devoted several years of research work, authorizes him to draw such conclusions.

Access analysis, suggested by the Author is an interesting attempt, requiring however, fulfilling certain conditions, without which all the conception becomes only very limited and hypothetic modeling. The key problem here is the state of preservation and building chronology of particular castles. The idea to make analyses of possible transitions between particular territories and searching for genetic relationships of defined structures types on the grounds of comparative analysis of these buildings' elements requires further studies, which purpose is not only to report and complete proper interpretation of original spatial arrangement, but also recognize and name all later changes. The task is difficult in case of structures preserved in the Chełmno Land – i.e. in the oldest territory settled by the knights of the Teutonic Order, because most of them have preserved in a very destroyed condition, or their substance disappeared completely from the surface. As historical and archaeological

research conducted recently proved, these structures were erected in a few stages: the oldest ones – from the half of 13th century as irregular building concentrations, extending around the yards; the younger, from the 70s and 80s of that century – first regular built structures still erected in the places of older wooden-earthen strongholds, and the youngest – the earliest from the beginning of 14th century, which represent classical regular type of a Teutonic castle, erected in ‘cruda radice’. Taking all these facts into account, it seems that proper analysis of supposed transitions requires further interdisciplinary studies, including also archaeological exploration, which will explain, e.g. questions of erecting and reconstructing stages of the oldest spatial arrangements. In many cases it will be unfortunately impossible, due to residual state of their present condition.

Summing up, in my opinion the thesis of Lubosz Hobl is an important voice in the discussion on the Teutonic castles genesis. The Author deals with the problems easily and with creativity. The reviewed work is an interesting case study, where access analysis method shows possibilities of following supposed transmissions. The work values are interesting to be published, provided some necessary abbreviations are made (e.g. historical part). I am absolutely certain that the PhD dissertation defence procedure should be continued.

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