

# Modrá u Velehradu, Uherské Hradiště District, Zlín Region

## Early medieval church and cemetery

(8th/9th–9th century)



The remains of the first-ever discovered church from the Great Moravian period are located in the cadastral area of Modrá near Velehrad. The church was discovered by Jan Nevěřil in 1911, but it was not officially recognised by the scholarly community until the 1950s, following a revision excavation conducted by Vilém Hrubý. The church, which was likely dedicated to St John the Baptist, was built by Western clergy. The early dating of the structure to the late 8th or early 9th century is supported by the grave goods found in several surrounding burials and the architecture of the church itself. The building features a single-nave layout with an elongated rectangular chancel. More than 30 graves were found around the church, some of which contained items of Carolingian and Late Avar origin. Approximately 50 m southeast of the church (outside the site plan), a group of graves was discovered, including one burial of a higher-ranking individual, who was buried with ceramic vessels, which can be seen as surviving evidence of paganism. These vessels may have contained (or symbolised) actual food, intended for the deceased to consume in the afterlife, a practice that contradicts Christian doctrine. The Modrá site thus offers insight into the early stages of Christianisation, when both the ideas of the new faith and the customs of waning paganism coexisted. Paganism persisted in Moravia for nearly 300 years, from the arrival of the Slavs in the 6th century until the late 8th century.

In addition to the original church's foundations, a hypothetical reconstruction of the church was built in close  
[https://archatlas-32445064-production.k8s.sinfin.io/en/lokace/modra\\_velehrad\\_uh\\_kostel\\_pohrebiste](https://archatlas-32445064-production.k8s.sinfin.io/en/lokace/modra_velehrad_uh_kostel_pohrebiste)

proximity. Nearby, at the site of a former early medieval settlement, an archaeological open-air museum, “The Great Moravian Fortified Settlement of Central Pomoraví,” was later established.

Another notable feature is the proximity of a stone known as Králův stůl (“King’s Table”), located 3.5 km north of Modrá, near the road to Zdounky (see navigation point). The stone is linked to various local legends, and was mentioned in a 1228 charter by Přemysl Otakar I, marking the boundary of the Velehrad monastery’s estates. In 1996–1997, geomagnetic surveys and subsequent excavations were carried out around the stone. These investigations confirmed that the stone originally stood at the centre of a circle of smaller stones, and the entire structure predates the La Tène period. The only ceramic sherd found during the excavation dates to the Late Bronze Age.

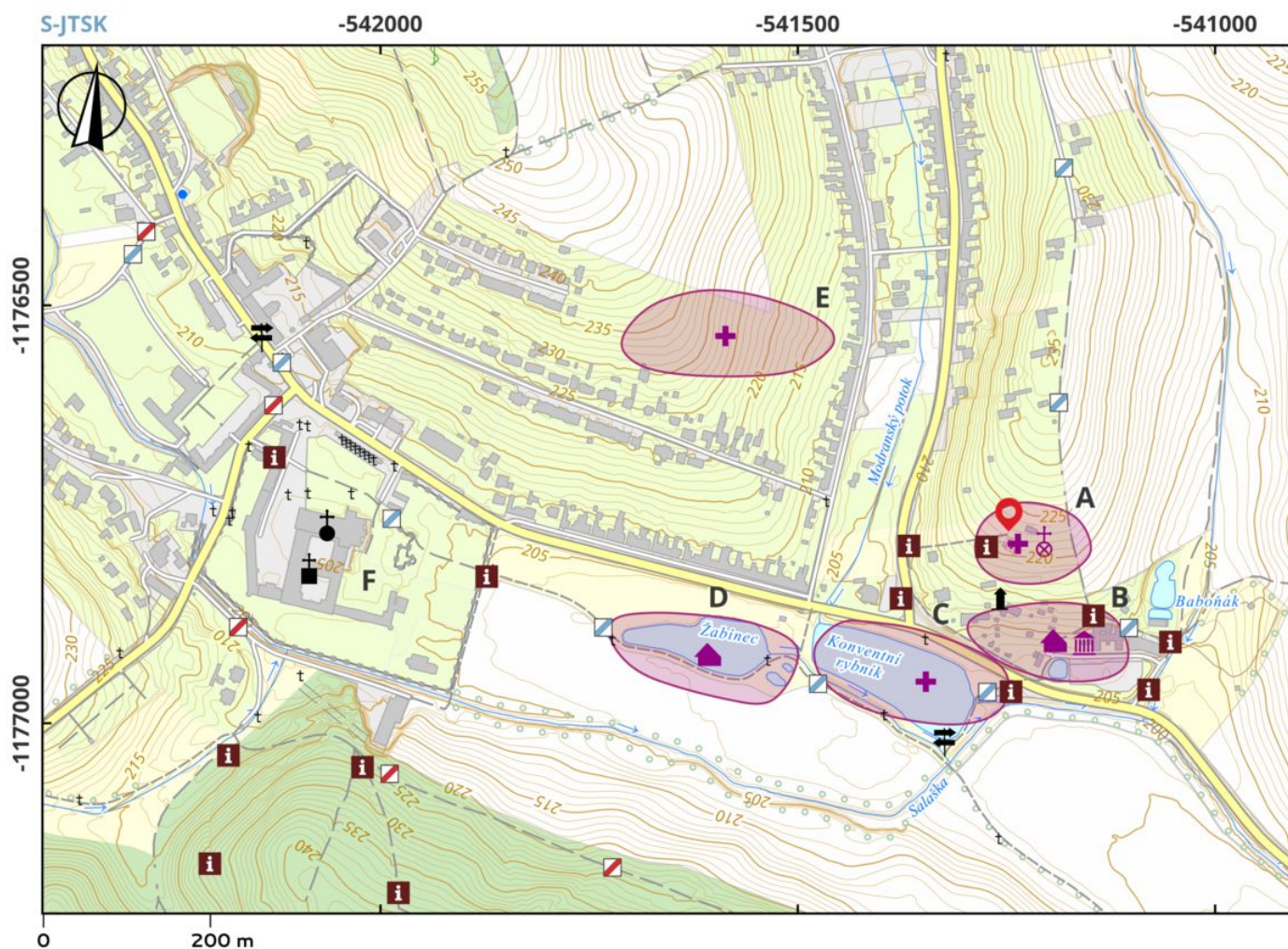
**References:** Cibulka 1958; Galuška 2005a; Galuška 2005b; Galuška 2012; Galuška et al. 2023; Galuška – Šmerda 2010; Galuška – Vaškových 2006; Hrubý et al. 1955; Pavelčík 1996; Pavelčík 1997.

**Web:** <https://www.slovackemuzeum.cz/modra-na-dile>

**Navigation points:** N 49°6′14.52″, E 17°24′24.01″ (church foundation); N 49°8′30.56″, E 17°23′25.20″ (Králův stůl).

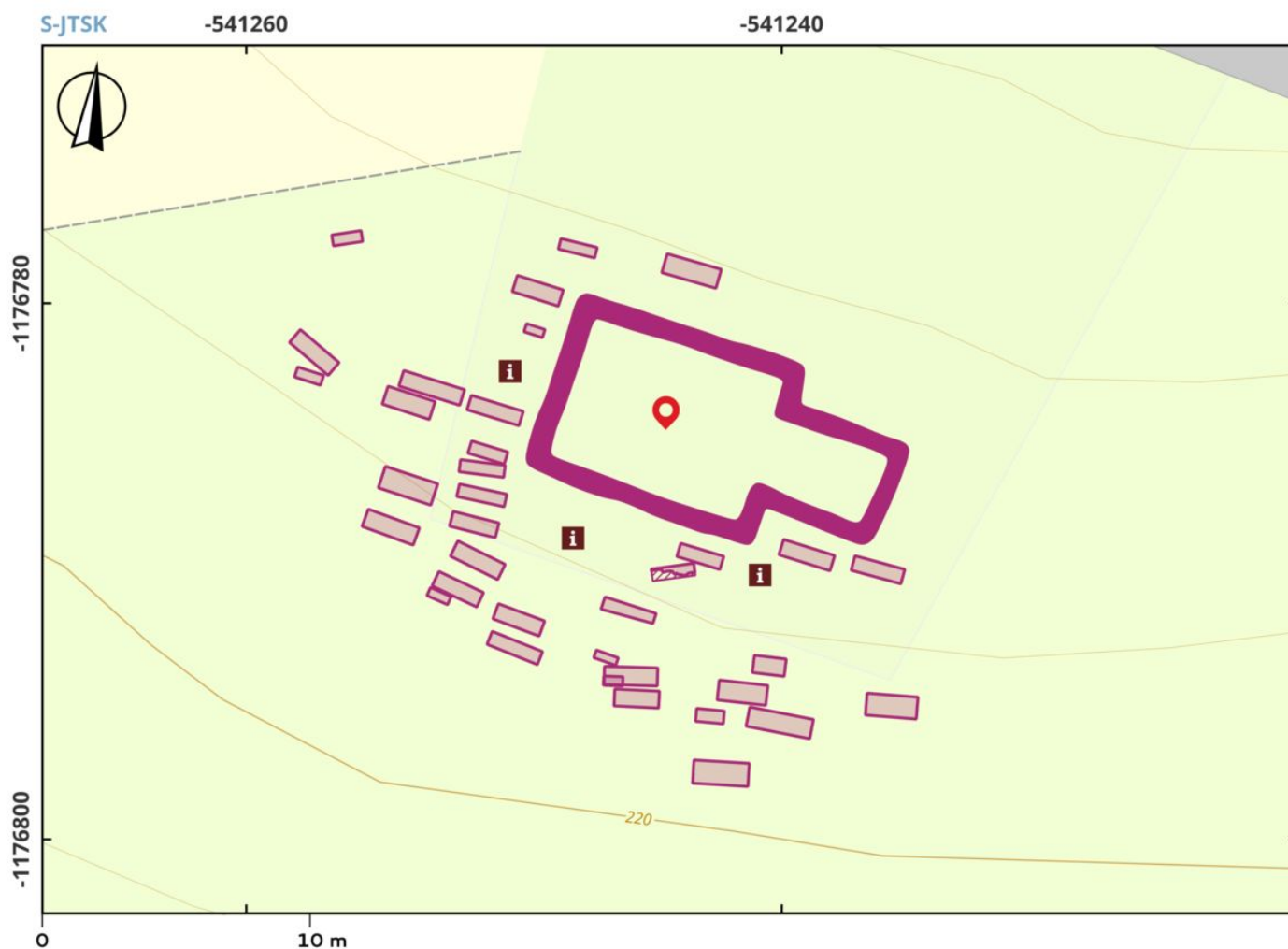
**Map notes:** A – Great Moravian church with cemetery; B – Great Moravian (9th century) and Late Hillfort (particularly 10th–11th century) settlement; C – Great Moravian cemetery; D – Great Moravian and Late Hillfort settlement; E – Late Hillfort cemetery; F – basilica and pilgrimage site of Velehrad.





Access map.

D. Spáčil, 2025.



Site plan. Foundations of the earliest church with adjacent cemetery.

D. Spáčil, 2025.





Hypothetical reconstruction of the church near the original foundations.

Photo Z. Filipová, 2025.



Reconstruction of an early medieval settlement in the archaeological open-air museum.

Photo Z. Filipová, 2025.



Father Jan Nevěřil in 1911 at the site of the discovery of the Great Moravian church in Modrá.

Archive of the Slovácko Museum, neg. no. 3195.



Burial of a rider (22/54) with grave goods, including a knife, belt fittings, two strap ends (Avar and Carolingian style), and spurs with buckles used to attach them to footwear with straps. Fragments of fabric were preserved on several iron items.

Archive of the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno.



**Modrá u Velehradu nákončí**



Gold-plated bronze fittings in the Carolingian style from Grave 22/54 in Modrá.

Photo J. Foltýn, Archive of the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno.