

The Mikulčice-Valy
Stronghold and Great Moravia

MV GM

Mikulčice-guide
Volume III

Lumír Poláček
The Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of Archaeology, Brno

Foreword

The major Great Moravian centre of Valy near Mikulčice was discovered relatively late - in 1954. Until then, this monument was hidden in a riparian forest and protected from unprofessional excavation due to regular flooding by the River Morava. Until the construction of a structure to regulate the river in 1971, periodical floods significantly limited both archaeological excavations and the management of the site. This has resulted in the construction of all modern-day buildings of the archaeological institute and the museum on higher ground for natural protection against floods, as with the most precious parts of the monument. Today, these buildings limit the scope of historic preservation and the presentation of the whole area.

The site has been pronounced a national cultural monument under the name *Slavonic stronghold at Mikulčice* and is managed by the Masaryk Museum in Hodonín established by the South Moravian Region. The research into the stronghold and its hinterland is conducted by the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno, which has had a branch in Mikulčice since 1954. Archaeology lies behind all the knowledge of the early medieval agglomeration, which used to stand on islands in the River Morava and constitutes a border between the Czech and Slovak Republics. Unsuccessful nominations were made in 2007 and 2014 to UNESCO list the *Great Moravian monuments, the Slavonic stronghold in Mikulčice and the Church of St. Margaret of Antioch at Kopčany*. Today, the site administration follows the rules defined in the management plan for the two nominations and is preparing a final nomination. A long-term revitalisation of the entire complex is also currently under way. This includes the reconstruction of the external workplaces of the two currently active institutions: The Masaryk Museum in Hodonín and the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno. In 2019, the Czech and Slovak sides of the monument will be connected by a new footbridge.

The early medieval agglomeration has preserved its unique cultural, historical and scientific value, which is independent of current affairs. Despite the absence of historical reports, the results of the archaeological research clearly prove that Valy near Mikulčice was an early medieval central place associated with the ruling dynasty. Its historic importance, the picturesque landscape and the preservation of archaeological sources together with the knowledge they provide make Valy near Mikulčice an exceptional site - both locally and in the context of European cultural heritage and research.

This guide presents the results of the archaeological research that has been conducted in the site for over sixty years by the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno.

This book is the third volume in the edition of the Mikulčice guides. It is the English version of Volume 2, the publication entitled *Hradiště Mikulčice-Valy a Velká Morava* (Brno 2016), and is intended to be a more representative counterpart of the English version of the first volume of the Mikulčice guides entitled *The archaeology of Mikulčice* (Brno 2008). This new English guide is published with the support of the Czech Academy of Sciences within the framework of the research programme Strategy AV21 *Europe and State: Between Barbarism and Civilisation*.

Text: Lumír Poláček
Editors: Šárka Krupičková, Klára Matulová,
Hedvika Břínková
Photo: Archive of the Czech Academy of Sciences,
Institute of Archaeology, Brno
Jiří Foltýn, Martin Baják, Peter Baxa, Lumír Poláček,
Filip Šlapal, Jaroslav Škojec
Plans, maps: Zdeňka Pavková, Petr Čáp, Otto Marek,
Eva Stuchlíková Talarovičová, Geo-cz
Drawing reconstruction: Rostislav Skopal
Translation and proofreading: Tereza Bartošková,
Paul Simpson, Michael FitzGerald
Layout: Zdeněk Tuka / Atelier Zidlicky
Graphic design and prepress: Milena Havlíčková,
Zdeněk Tuka / Atelier Zidlicky
Press: Tiskárna Helbich, a.s.
Copies: 750 pieces
Published by: The Czech Academy of Sciences,
Institute of Archaeology, Brno

1st edition
Brno 2018

ISBN: 978-80-7524-017-0