



Jaroslav Bartík

**Prehistoric**  
exploitation and  
workshop **area** at  
Brno – **Stránská skála**

Czech Academy of Sciences  
Institute of Archaeology, Brno



## **Prehistoric exploitation and workshop area at Brno – Stránská skála**

Prehistoric exploitation and workshop areas in Moravia I

Jaroslav Bartík

### **With contributions from:**

David Cibulka

Šárka Hladilová

Matěj Kmošek

Hana Nohálová

Jan Novák

Antonín Přichystal

Lubomír Šebela

Petr Škrdla

Petr Zítka

Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of Archaeology, Brno

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Author: Mgr. Jaroslav Bartík, Ph.D.

Reviewers:

doc. PhDr. Martin Oliva, Ph.D., DSc.

PhDr. Pavel Burgert, Ph.D.

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# Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	8
(Jaroslav Bartík)	
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	11
(Jaroslav Bartík)	
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>THEORY, TERMINOLOGY AND METHODS</b> .....	15
2.1 Prehistoric exploitation of raw materials .....	15
2.2 Workshops .....	20
2.3 Distribution network .....	22
2.4 Archaeological survey method .....	22
2.5 Excavation methodology .....	24
2.6 Methodology of data analysis and synthesis .....	25
(Jaroslav Bartík)	
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b> .....	31
(Jaroslav Bartík)	
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
<b>STRÁNSKÁ SKÁLA</b> .....	35
4.1 Description of the site and its natural surrounding area .....	35
4.2 Stránská skála-type chert .....	39
4.3 Evidence of human activities at Stránská skála (Jaroslav Bartík, Petr Škrdla) .....	42
(Jaroslav Bartík)	
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES FOR RESEARCHING POST-PALEOLITHIC HUMAN ACTIVITIES AT STRÁNSKÁ SKÁLA</b> .....	45
5.1 Surface assemblages lacking a precise location .....	45
5.2 Stránská skála II .....	51

5.3	Stránská skála III	59
5.3.1	Surface assemblages (Jaroslav Bartík, Petr Škrdla, Antonín Přichystal)	59
5.3.2	Geophysical survey	66
5.3.3	Excavation 1981–1982	67
5.3.4	Test pitting 1983	74
5.3.5	Excavation 1984	74
5.3.6	Excavation 2017	75
5.3.7	Excavation 2018	77
5.3.8	Test pitting 2020	85
5.3.9	Excavations 2021 & 2023	85
5.4	Stránská skála IV	87
5.4.1	Surface assemblages (Jaroslav Bartík, Petr Škrdla)	88
5.4.2	Geophysical survey (Jaroslav Bartík, David Cibulka)	95
5.4.3	Excavation 2011	100
5.4.4	Excavation 2016	101
5.4.5	Test pitting 2016	105
5.4.6	Excavation 2019	106
5.5	Stránská skála V	109
5.6	Stránská skála VI	114

(Jaroslav Bartík, Petr Zítka)

#### Chapter 6

	<b>BLADE TECHNIQUE AT STRÁNSKÁ SKÁLA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT</b>	117
6.1	Direct strike with hard hammerstone	118
6.2	Direct strike with organic billet	118
6.3	Direct strike with soft hammerstone	118
6.4	Indirect percussion with punch	120
6.5	Pressure flaking	120
6.6	Evaluation of experiment	122

(Jaroslav Bartík)

#### Chapter 7

	<b>STRÁNSKÁ SKÁLA AS A PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT AND EXPLOITATION-WORKSHOP AREA – ANALYTICAL PART</b>	125
7.1	Lengyel culture	125
7.1.1	Chipped stone industry	125
7.1.2	Pottery and other finds	131
7.2	Funnel Beaker culture	132
7.2.1	Chipped stone industry	132
7.2.2	Hoard of chipped artefacts in ceramic vessel	161
7.2.3	Macrolithic stone tools (Jaroslav Bartík, Antonín Přichystal)	166
7.2.4	Polished stone industry	170
7.2.5	Pottery	172
7.2.6	Archaeozoological material (Jaroslav Bartík, Hana Nohálová)	182
7.2.7	Bone industry	185
7.2.8	Copper artefacts (Jaroslav Bartík, Matěj Kmošek)	186
7.2.9	Daub	187

7.3	Bell Beaker culture .....	191
7.3.1	Chipped stone industry.....	191
7.3.2	Macrolithic stone tools (Jaroslav Bartík, Antonín Přichystal).....	206
7.3.3	Polished stone industry .....	210
7.3.4	Pottery (Jaroslav Bartík, Lubomír Šebela) .....	211
7.3.5	Archaeozoological material .....	218
7.3.6	Bone industry .....	221
7.3.7	Copper artefact (Jaroslav Bartík, Matěj Kmošek) .....	222
7.3.8	Daub .....	223

(Jaroslav Bartík)

#### **Chapter 8**

### **STRÁNSKÁ SKÁLA AS A PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT AND EXPLOITATION-WORKSHOP AREA –**

	<b>SYNTHETIC PART.....</b>	<b>227</b>
8.1	Prehistoric exploitation of chert at Stránská skála.....	227
8.1.1	Exploitation methods.....	227
8.1.2	Exploitation tools (Jaroslav Bartík, Antonín Přichystal) .....	231
8.2	Chronology (Jaroslav Bartík, Petr Škrdla) .....	237
8.3	Distribution network (Jaroslav Bartík, Petr Škrdla, Antonín Přichystal, Lubomír Šebela).....	241
8.3.1	Late Neolithic .....	241
8.3.2	Proto-Eneolithic.....	246
8.3.3	Early and Middle Eneolithic .....	248
8.3.4	Late Eneolithic .....	256
8.3.5	Final Eneolithic.....	257
8.3.6	Early Bronze Age.....	260
8.3.7	Undated and isolated finds of Stránská skála-type chert.....	262
8.3.8	Summary of distribution evidence.....	265
8.4	An outline of the development of post-Paleolithic chipped industry at Stránská skála.....	266
8.5	Reconstruction of the Paleoenvironment (Jan Novák, Šárka Hladilová, Jaroslav Bartík) .....	273
8.6	Finds of human skeletal remains .....	279

(Jaroslav Bartík)

#### **Chapter 9**

### **STRÁNSKÁ SKÁLA IN THE CONTEXT OF EXPLOITATION AND WORKSHOP AREAS IN MORAVIA AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES.....**

	<b>.....</b>	<b>283</b>
9.1	Late Neolithic to Early Eneolithic .....	283
9.2	Final Eneolithic (Jaroslav Bartík, Lubomír Šebela, Petr Škrdla, Antonín Přichystal).....	287

(Jaroslav Bartík)

#### **Chapter 10**

	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>297</b>
	<b>Czech summary .....</b>	<b>307</b>
	<b>Sources of figures .....</b>	<b>316</b>
	<b>References.....</b>	<b>321</b>
	<b>List of contributors.....</b>	<b>348</b>

## Preface

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Stránská skála (SS) is an important term in many scientific fields and, on a wider scale, can be characterised at the very least as a site of European importance. Despite a number of recent interventions and a growing allotment garden, the site retains a certain *genius loci*. Incidentally, Stránská skála was the first archaeological site I visited upon becoming a university student in the field of archaeology, although I naturally could not have known at the time that within a few years it would become one of the key sites of my scientific interest focused on the research of prehistoric exploitation and workshop areas. Several additional coincidences, including occasional surface surveys and assisting in a rescue excavation in 2011 led over time to long-term systematic research, which continues to this day. Four researchers played a major role in my interest in Stránská skála – L. Šebela, J. Kopacz, A. Přichystal and P. Škrdla, who in 2015 asked me to work on the preparation of the international Polish–Czech grant project *The End of the Stone Age on the Stránská skála Hill in Brno – Lithic Chipped Production or Optimization?* (Grant NCN No. 2015/B/Hs3/00016), which was successfully realized in 2016–2019. By that time, I was already working on my PhD thesis on prehistoric workshop areas in Moravia, and an enormous amount of newly acquired material and data ultimately led me to focus the subject of my work on Stránská skála, albeit in the context of broader spatial and chronological contexts. I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor M. Oliva for his endless inspiration and valuable advice. Defended in 2020, my PhD thesis (Bartík 2020a) essentially became a building block for this book, which

naturally contains many changes and a great deal of new data, as research continues and Stránská skála has become one of the key sites studied as part of my post-doctoral project at the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno, which has supported the site since the beginning of the research. In a sense, it can be said that there was also a certain continuation of the institutional research tradition that began here in the 1980s and 1990s under J. Svoboda, who, however, focused his interest primarily on the Paleolithic settlement of the site.

The aim of this book was to create a comprehensive summary of existing knowledge of post-Paleolithic human activity at Stránská skála, with a particular focus on evidence of the extraction of local chert and its subsequent knapping in workshop, or rather, as it turned out, settlement-workshop areas. An effort was therefore made to gain an understanding of the very motives of extraction and the importance of the processing and distribution of chert for prehistoric societies of that time. This primary summary should lead to the creation of a new archaeological model and the formulation of hypotheses to be verified by further research. Readers themselves will have to judge the extent to which our goal was reached. The book about Stránská skála is also the first of the planned monographs in the series *Prehistoric exploitation and workshop areas in Moravia*.

Given that the book was written in English, I must warn foreign readers of several terminological pitfalls, which must be explained here. The most problematic issue is the different chronological names for individual periods or affiliation of specific

archaeological cultures to them in various parts of Europe. The reader must bear in mind that the book employs periodisation systems valid in the Czech Republic (possibly in neighbouring countries), which naturally do not correspond to Western European terminology, which does not use the term Eneolithic, but rather Late Neolithic. The term Chalcolithic is more commonly used for this period in the south-eastern parts of Europe. Chronological classification can also be problematic, as some cultures that we normally place in the Final Eneolithic can already be classified in other parts of Europe in the Early Bronze Age or, on the contrary, still in the Neolithic. Chapter 8.2, which summarises the development of post-Paleolithic activities at Stránská skála from the perspective of absolute chronology through series of radiocarbon dates, will help foreign readers make sense of the mentioned terminological inconsistencies and possible chronological correlations.

Over the past thirteen years, a great number of people, a complete list of which cannot not even be provided here, have helped me or otherwise participated to varying degrees in the research of Stránská skála. In addition to the closest collaborators named above, I would also like to thank several other researchers who became co-authors of the book's individual chapters. The chapter on the reconstruction of the natural environment and partially also the subsistence strategy of the prehistoric inhabitants of Stránská skála could not have been created without paleobotanical analyses performed by J. Novák and the analysis of malacofauna by Š. Hladilová. Similarly, H. Nohálová (and previously also M. Nývltová

Fišáková) deserve credit for valuable information on the species composition of domestic and hunted animals from newly conducted research. I thank P. Zítka for his tireless assistance with the implementation of archaeological experiments, the results of which appear in Chapter 6. A growing number of employees from the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno have been involved in the research of the site in recent years. My heartfelt thanks go especially to D. Cibulka for conducting a new geophysical measurement of the SS IV location and M. Kmošek and his team for conserving and analysing copper artefacts. Great thanks go to J. Brenner, who is responsible for the majority of the presented drawings. I thank M. Vlach for providing data and advice in the ArcGIS environment. Excavations at Stránská skála could not be conducted without great assistance from a large group of friends and especially archaeology students from the Institute of Archaeology and Museology of Masaryk University and other universities. Special thanks go to D. Hons, A. Bedáňová (Čerevková), T. Rychtaříková, J. Malíšková, M. Kmošková (Zelíková), K. Augustinová, K. Dufka and many other enthusiasts and volunteers from the general public.

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*Jaroslav Bartík*



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