Slatina, Brno-City District, South Moravian Region

Chert mining area, horse hunting site Stránská skála

(around 600,000 years ago, 50,000–35,000 years ago, 22,000 years ago, 4700–4500 BC, 3900–3300 BC, 2500–2200 BC)

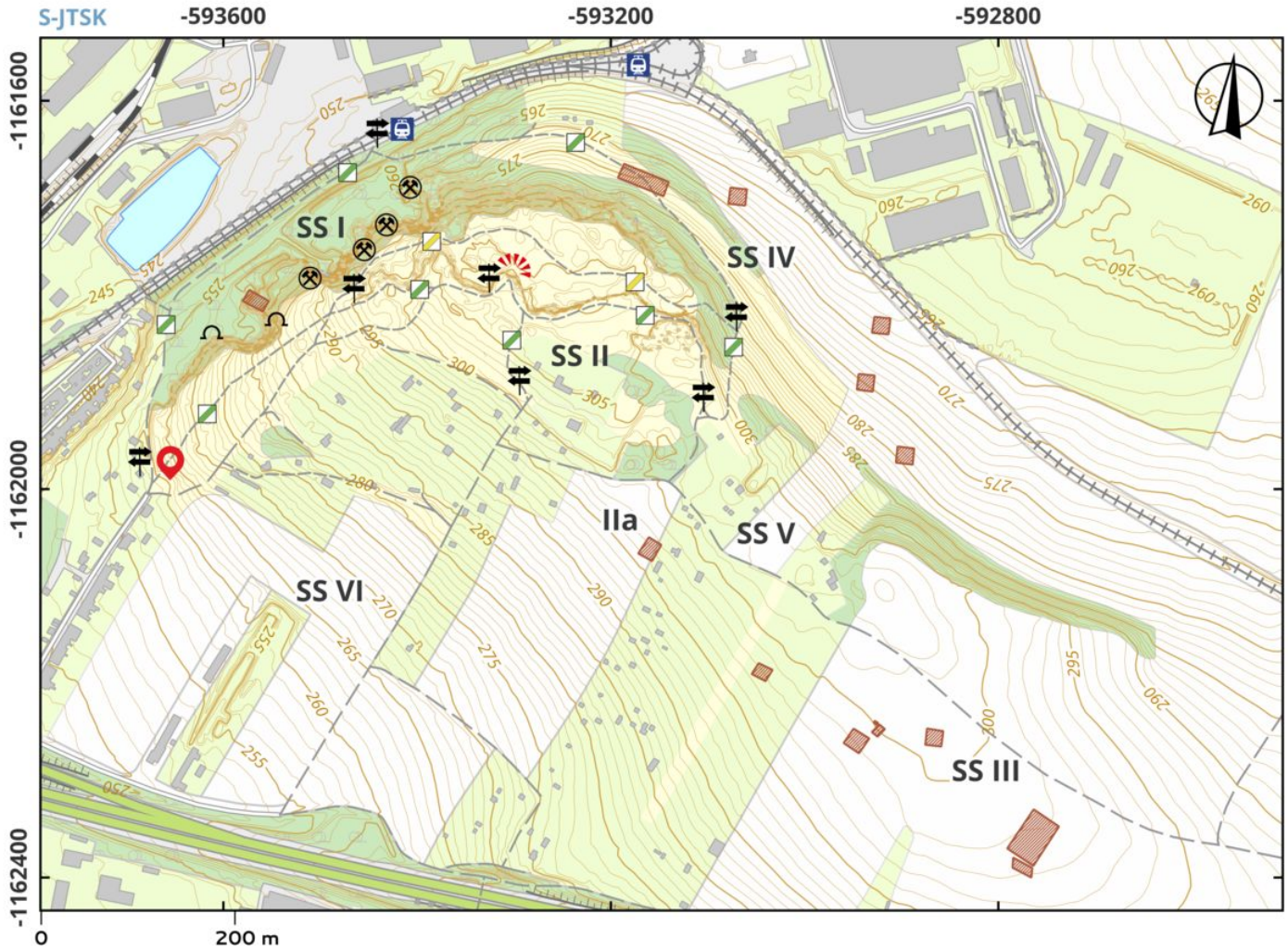
Stránská skála represents one of the most significant natural monuments and archaeological sites in southern Moravia. The valley of the River Svitava, once flowing between Bílá hora and Stránská skála, provided a suitable and attractive natural environment from the beginning of the Middle Pleistocene. The rock formation, composed of Jurassic limestone, was a source of chert used throughout the Stone Age as raw material for making stone tools. Finds from Woldřich's Cave and the debris cone beneath it (Stránská skála I site) suggest the possible presence of humans as early as the Cromerian interglacial stage, over 600,000 years ago. The artefacts provide evidence of some of the earliest uses of fire and intentional cuts on animal bones. A significant intensity of human activity at the summit of Stránská skála has also been proven for the Initial Upper Paleolithic (Bohunician) and the Early Upper Paleolithic (Aurignacian), covering the period of 50,000–35,000 years BP (Stránská skála II and III sites). In the 1980s, the method known as refitting lithic artefacts was applied for the first time in the Czech Republic to material from the Stránská skála site. This method allowed researchers to gain insights into the technologies and core reduction strategies. During the Last Glacial Maximum (approximately 22,000 years ago), Stránská skála served as a hunting site for wild horses (Stránská skála IV site). Archaeological excavations have also provided evidence of Neolithic occupation, specifically associated with the Moravian Painted Ware culture (Stránská skála III). On the summit of the hill (within the Stránská skála III area), an extensive site was uncovered, yielding evidence of the processing of local chert during the Funnel Beaker culture period. One of the interesting finds in this workshop area was a deposit of 44 pieces of chipped blade industry stored in a ceramic jug. The most recent excavations have also confirmed human activity at the site during the Late Eneolithic, in the period of the Bell Beaker culture. The Stránská skála site

continues to be closely studied and will remain a key site in future projects carried out by the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno, focusing on the exploitation of raw materials for the production of stone tools.
The prominent rock massif also features a number of natural caves, some of which were destroyed during the construction of underground tunnels between 1943 and 1945. These tunnels were intended to relocate the production of aircraft engine components from the Nazi factory Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark. A larger part of the tunnels has been publicly accessible since the 1970s.

References: Svoboda 1987a; Svoboda 1987b; Svoboda 1991; Svoboda – Bar-Yosef (eds.) 2003; Svoboda et al. 2020; Valoch 2003; Valoch – Musil 2001.

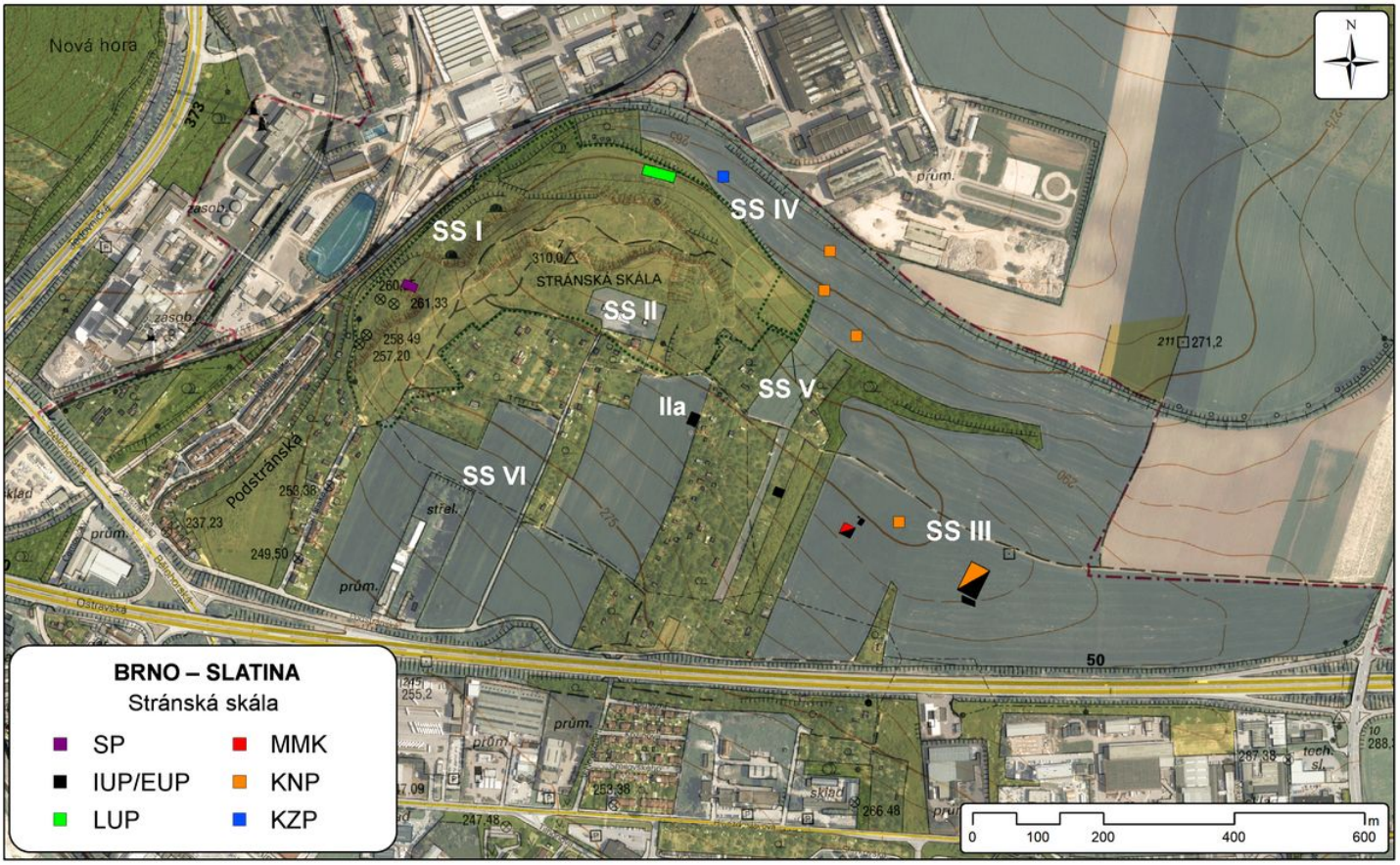
Navigation point: N 49°11'18.18", E 16°40'16.13" (tourist signpost and shelter).

Map notes: Marked trenches (hatched areas). SS I–VI – Stránská skála, sites I–VI.
The coloured areas correspond to the age of the discovered finds. SP – Lower Paleolithic; IUO/EUP – Initial/Early Upper Paleolithic (Bohunician/Aurignacian); LUP – Late Upper Paleolithic (Epigravettian); MMK – Moravian Painted Ware culture (Neolithic); KNP – Funnel Beaker culture (Eneolithic); KZP – Bell Beaker culture (Eneolithic).



Site plan with marked trenches.

D. Spáčil, 2025.



Site plan with excavated trenches.

Graphics by J. Bartík, 2025.

Present entrance to the remaining part of Woldřich's Cave.
Photo P. Škrdla, 2025.

Stránská skála IIIa, refitted Bohunician core.
Photo T. Rychtaříková.

Stránská skála III, excavation of the Eneolithic feature in 1982.

Photo M. Havelka, Archive of the Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno.