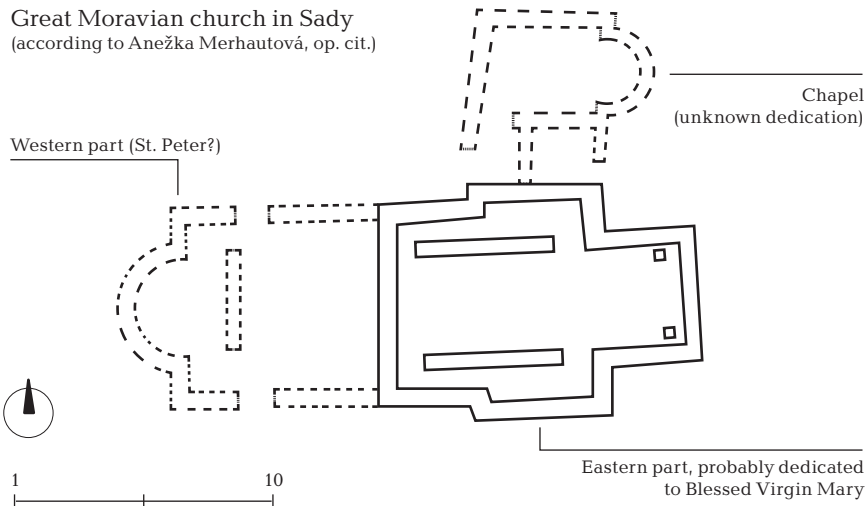


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Patron Saints in the times of Christianization. Some reflections about Great Moravian dedications

In that part of Europe which we can – according to the title of the conference – call as 'barbarian', Moravia belongs to the territories that were christianised as the first ones. The first phase of that process had to do mainly with the activities of South German missionaries who came from the Diocese of Passau and alternatively from elsewhere as well. Situation changed fundamentally after the arrival of Cyril and Methodius and their Byzantine mission. However, only 20 years later next big change came when the Moravian duke Svatopluk, after Methodius's death, expelled the disciples of Cyril and Methodius from Moravia and so ended the period of Slavonic liturgy in Moravia. But not even such a significant change was the last one in this relatively short time; by the end of the 9th century, Hungarians appeared in the Central Europe and put an end to the Great Moravian state. It is supposed that the church organization in Moravia did not break down, at least not completely.¹ However, Hungarian invasion evidently did a lot of damage; a good example is a number of churches which ceased to exist at those times. There are quite few sources available showing how the situation looked like in the 10th century but probably only the incorporation of Moravia into an early Czech state in the 11th century started a relatively continuous development of Moravian medieval church organization.

1. L. Jan, *Počátky křesťanství a církevní správa do doby husitské*, XXVII. mikulovské sympoziium 2002, Brno 2003, pp. 7–20 (especially pp. 11–13).



This “story of the first two centuries of Moravian Christianity in a nutshell” is presented here in order to show difficulties that one encounters while researching the origins of Moravian church, especially the specific aspect of it – dedications. On the one hand, the researchers of patron saints often take for granted the continuity of church dedications – in case of Great Moravian sacral objects, it would not be advisable to do so because plenty of those objects (however not all) ceased to exist. On the other hand, the Great Moravian dedications themselves appear to be quite a tempting research subject; there is a significant deficiency in sources concerning Great Moravia as such, and particularly its spiritual life, thus the dedications of Great Moravian churches could help us to cast light on how the dawn of Central European Christianity looked like. No wonder that the subject of Great Moravian patron saints attracts, from time to time, attention of historians.² Nevertheless, there is no systematic study about this phenomenon available yet. Thus, the aim of this paper is to summarise previous research and to consider the possibilities of researching the Great Moravian dedications.

2. A. Birnbaumová, *Kostely sv. Klimenta*. Zvláštní otisk z Apoštolátu sv. Cyrila a Metoděje, Olomouc 1948; R. Hurt, *Nově zjištěné velkomoravské patrocinium*, „Časopis Moravského musea/Acta Musei Moraviae“ 51 1966, pp. 99–104; L. E. Havlík, *K identifikaci patrocinii středověkých znojemských kostelů*, „Ročenka Státního okresního archivu ve Znojmě“ 1997, Znojmo 1998, pp. 10–21; L. Hosák, *Patrocinium sv. Petra jako doklad pro vývoj moravských sídel*, „Časopis Matice moravské“ 91 1972, pp. 324–328.

As already remarked, researching Great Moravian dedications is rather challenging – mainly because a lot of then churches existed only for a short period of time. Many of Great Moravian churches were built during the 9th century (mostly in its second half) and perished around 900 AD which means that they were in existence only for several decades and only few of them 'managed' to leave some traces in historical sources during such short time.

The following table presents those Moravian churches which have – surely or very likely – Great Moravian origin:

Locality	Dedication
Hradiště sv. Hypolita	St. Hippolytus of Rome
Modrá	St. John (the Baptist?)
Uh. Hradiště, St. George	St. George
Staré Město 'Na Dědině'	St. Michael the Archangel
Olomouc	St. Peter
Staré Město 'Špitálky'	St. John the Baptist (?)
Staré Město 'Na Valách'	St. John the Baptist (?)
Staré Město 'Rybárny'	St. Clement (?)
Uh. Hradiště, 'Sady'	Virgin Mary (?)
Mikulčice III	Virgin Mary (?)
Mikulčice II	Unknown
Mikulčice IV	Unknown
Mikulčice V	Unknown
Mikulčice VI	Unknown
Mikulčice VII	Unknown
Mikulčice VIII	Unknown
Mikulčice IX	Unknown
Mikulčice X	Unknown
Mikulčice XII	Unknown
Pohansko I	Unknown
Pohansko II	Unknown
Uh. Hradiště 'Sady', chapel	Unknown

The table shows according to the current knowledge there were 22 such sacral objects.³ However, only one church has been functioning continually from its origin up to the present – it is St. Hippolytus' church in Hradiště sv. Hypolita near Znojmo. This church is – despite some problems – regarded as Great Moravian, as well as its dedication which for the first time was mentioned in sources in 1221.⁴

From a historian's point of view, the case of Hradiště sv. Hypolita is ideal: there is both a Great Moravian church and its (relatively well-documented) dedication available. Unfortunately, in all other cases some of these elements are missing, or there is a serious problem of its interpretation. There is quite a big group of sacral objects which were, beyond all doubt, Great Moravian by origin, however there is no information about its dedication(s) available. Those obviously seem to be the churches that were destroyed. Ten Great Moravian churches, named II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and XII⁵, ceased to exist in the former big hillfort near Mikulčice⁶, foundations of the other two were discovered in a former fortified settlement in Pohansko.⁷ In Mikulčice, it seems feasible to reveal the former

3. Total number of Great Moravian churches is unknown, because many problems remain still unsolved. Thus, some churches cannot be involved in this study. Those are mainly some localities where churches were hypothetically situated but of which there is no definite evidence available, such as Petrova Louka (Z. Měřínský, *České země od příchodu Slovanů po Velkou Moravu II*, Praha 2006, p. 600), Staré Zámky u Líšně (cf. P. Jokeš, *Soupis patrocinií na jižní Moravě*, „Časopis Matice moravské“ 132 2013, p. 148) or Hora svatého Klimenta (Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, pp. 599–600).
4. *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris regni Bohemiae* (CDB) II, ed. G. Friedrich, Praha 1904–2007, no. 217, p. 205; Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 600.
5. Numbers I and XI are missing because some objects were initially considered as churches which changed with time.
6. After Hungarian invasion, Mikulčice rapidly dwindled in importance and most of the churches perished, although some settlement remained in existence, as well as church IX, which perished only in 15th century (nevertheless, it is not clear whether it was used as a place of worship also in later times); Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., pp. 584–598, 962; cf. L. Poláček, *Die Kirchen von Mikulčice aus siedlungsarchäologischer Sicht in: Frühmittelalterliche Kirchen als archäologische und historische Quelle. Internationale Tagungen in Mikulčice VIII*, Hrsg. L. Poláček, J. Maříková-Kubková, Brno 2010, p. 46.
7. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., pp. 582–584; P. Čáp, P. Dresler, J. Macháček, R. Přichystalová, *Großmährische Kirchen in Pohansko bei Břeclav in: Frühmittelalterliche Kirchen als archäologische und historische Quelle. Internationale Tagungen in Mikulčice VIII*, Hrsg. L. Poláček, J. Maříková-Kubková, Brno 2010, pp. 187–204.

dedication only by churches III (see below) and IX.⁸ In Pohansko, there seems to be hardly any such chance.

Thus, the situation of 13 sacral objects presented here is relatively simple: a dedication is either known or unknown. With remaining 9 churches, the situation gets more complicated. However, by analysing dedications of these churches, we might obtain some valuable information as well.

One example of a church whose dedication we can reconstruct with a high degree of probability is the church in *M o d r á* near Velehrad. It does not exist any more but the likelihood is that this church was mentioned in the document of Czech king Ottokar I from 1228 as "a church of Saint John opposite to Velehrad".⁹ Similar but not the same is the situation of three other, nowadays non-existing, objects: the church of *S t . G e o r g e* in *U h e r s k é H r a d i š t ě*, a church dedicated to Michael the Archangel in the part of *Staré Město* which is called '*Na Dědině*' and *S t . P e t e r* in *O l o m o u c*. The *S t . G e o r g e*'s church was situated on the present-day Masaryk place (*Masarykovo náměstí*) in the centre of *Uherské Hradiště*. Both the church and its dedication to *S t . G e o r g e* were for the first time mentioned in sources in 1257.¹⁰ The dedication of the *Michael's* church in *Staré Město* was first documented in 1464.¹¹ Finally, *S t . P e t e r*'s church in *Olomouc* was the original cathedral of *Olomouc* diocese; it was situated in the present-day *Křížkovský* street (*Křížkovského ulice*), and the oldest mention about it comes from 1141 when the bishop's seat was transferred from this church to that of *S t . Wenceslaus*.¹² In all these cases quite a lot of information about dedication is available but there is no definite evidence of Great Moravian

8. Specificity of church IX lies in the fact that, in contrast to other churches of *Mikulčice*, it did not perish during Hungarian invasion and remained in existence till 15th century — although it is not known whether the building was used also in later period (13–15th century) for religious purposes; Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, p. 598. Thus, theoretically, its dedication, currently unknown, could be found in later sources.

9. *Ecclesia sancti Johannis iuxta Welegrad*, CDB II, no. 321, p. 322. About the church see: Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., pp. 442–451.

10. CDB V/1, no. 136, p. 219.

11. Okresní archiv *Uherské Hradiště*, AM *Uherské Hradiště*, č. i. 45.

12. CDB I, no. 115, p. 117. Cf. J. Bistřický, *Pisemnosti olomouckého biskupa J. Zdíka*, *Sborník archivních prací* 33, 1983, pp. 32–74.

origin of those churches (the archaeological evidence would be most welcome), although according to experts such origin is very probable.¹³

In the area of present-day towns Staré Město and Uherské Hradiště, one can find a specific group of sacral objects of the former Great Moravian fortified settlement. It used to be an important hillfort, by some considered a 'capital' of Great Moravia. It suffered damage during the Hungarian invasion, still the settlement survived up to these days. Thus, some Great Moravian churches existed also in the later times in the place of this settlement, and although they disappeared later on, their dedications have left a trace in later written sources. Already I have mentioned St. Michael's church 'Na dědině' but we know about four other churches as well which were situated in localities named 'Špitálky', 'Na Valách', 'Rybárny' oraz 'Sady'. 'Špitálky' and 'Na Valách' are two Great Moravian churches discovered by archaeologists already in 1949.¹⁴ A fragmentary account of the church visitation dated back to 14th century provides some insight into reconstruction of their dedications. According to this document, in the 14th century the church of Uherské Hradiště had two branch churches — the former dedicated to St. Vitus, the latter to St. John the Baptist.¹⁵ Saint Vitus' church stood in the quarter named 'Na Kostelíku' and historians sometimes speculate on its Great Moravian origin as well; strong evidence in favour of this claim, however, is not available.¹⁶ It is unclear what church the second dedication, St. John the Baptist, can be ascribed to but there is certain possibility that it could be either the church 'Špitálky' or the church 'Na Valách'. It cannot be excluded that the identity of this dedication could be clarified with some assistance of modern history's sources (from 16—18th centuries). Thus, the problem still remains to be solved.

The situation of locality/church 'Rybárny' seems unclear, too. In 1370, a hospital of St. Procopius, Ulrich, Cyril, Methodius, Nicolaus, Anthony, Catharine and Clement was established in the suburbs of Uherské

13. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 579 (St. George in Uherské Hradiště), pp. 574—575 (St. Michael in Staré Město 'Na dědině', cf. A. Merhautová, *Velkomoravská architektura, Dějiny českého výtvarného umění I/1*, p. 34) and p. 601 (St. Peter, Olomouc).

14. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., pp. 570—574.

15. Z. Hledíková, *Vizitace jihomoravských farností v polovině 14. století*, „Jižní Morava“ 6, 1970, p. 23.

16. A. Merhautová, *Velkomoravská architektura*, op. cit., p. 38; Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 579.

Hradiště.¹⁷ According to the studies of Magdalena Čoupková and Robert Snášil, the hospital is actually likely to be the same object as the former St. Clement's hospital between Uherské Hradiště and Staré Město the latter mentioned in 1652.¹⁸ In 1986, Snášil at locality 'Rybárny' discovered a fragment of the stone wall and also of Great Moravian necropolis, hence the place of discovery might well indicate that the hospital was located between Uherské Hradiště and Staré Město. Unfortunately, because of the local situation (the locality is situated in an overbuilt area), there was no chance to explore all of the place.¹⁹ Nevertheless, it is likely that exactly in this place once there used to be a hospital, which – according to the mentioned document – came into existence only in 1370 but probably by the church of Great Moravian origin; this is what Snášil's excavations suggest. Dedication to St. Clement is debatable but not unlikely. Indeed, in a source from 1370, 8 patron saints are mentioned but for the Great Moravian period we can only take into consideration those saints who were already worshiped at that time. It applies to Nicolaus, Catharina and Clement, but in 1652 there only Clement was mentioned. Thus, it may be the case, that Clement was the most important of the church patron saints. The cult of St. Clement was probably important in Great Moravia which is closely linked with the fact that Saint Cyril and Methodius during their mission to the Slavs brought the relics of St. Clement to Great Moravia.²⁰ It is then quite possible that in Rybárny there did exist the Great Moravian church dedicated to St. Clement, though it cannot be said with absolute certainty.

The most important church discovered in the area of Staré Město and Uherské Hradiště until now was situated on the hill in a village (nowadays a quarter of Uherské Hradiště) named 'S a d y'. This big sacral object of relatively complex architecture is sometimes considered a cathedral, a seat of archbishop Methodius. This place is regarded as one of a few possible places of Methodius' burial as well. It is relevant also for the question of dedication as Methodius was buried, according to Short lives of Sts. Cyril

17. M. Čoupková, *Nejstarší uherskohradištská městská kniha. Liber negotiorum civitatis Hradisch*, Uherské Hradiště 2001, no. 20, pp. 61–62.
18. M. Čoupková, *Špitální kaple sv. Alžběty a tzv. 'Kaple Kusnova' v Uherském Hradišti*, *Slovácko* 42 2000, pp. 195–204, especially p. 199; R. Snášil, *'Capella Moraorum' a 'templum sub titulo s. Clementis'*, *Slovácko* 42 2000, pp. 180–182.
19. R. Snášil, *'Capella Moraorum'...*, op. cit., pp. 183–184.
20. P. Jokeš, *Patrocinium św. Klemensa na Morawach – dziedzictwo misji św. Cyryla i Metodego?* „Kraakowsko-Wileńskie Studia Slawistyczne” 8 2013, pp. 311–318.

and Methodius, "in the great Moravian temple, on the left-hand side, in the wall behind the altar of Blessed Virgin Mary".²¹ Although the legend speaks about an altar, not a church, it cannot be excluded, that the dedication of altar and church was the same.²² Indicative of dedication to Blessed Virgin Mary can be also the same dedication of the present-day church in a contemporary village of Sady, not only because of geographical vicinity but also due to the fact that the Great Moravian church in Sady did not cease to exist during Hungarian invasion but survived into later centuries as well, up to the beginning of High Middle Ages.²³ Thus, the transmission of dedication to the present-day village church in Sady, the oldest part of which dates back to the 13th century,²⁴ seems to be quite probable.²⁵ Also, it is sometimes speculated that the western part of the church had a separate dedication, supposedly of St. Peter,²⁶ but, in my opinion, this claim would be difficult to prove. The church was loosely connected with a chapel (possibly a burial one) of unknown dedication.

As for the grave of Methodius and its location in Sady, historians consider that it is possible, but there are other options as well. First and foremost, the great apostle could be buried in another, so far undiscovered church. As for the churches presently known, the description 'great Moravian temple'²⁷ also matches church III in Mikulčice, until now the greatest known Great Moravian sacral object, a basilica of 36,5 m in length and 11,8 m in width.²⁸ An important factor which testifies to the significance of that church, is also a number of churches in its neighbourhood: in the hillfort of Mikulčice, 10 sacral objects have been discovered so far²⁹ — it is the biggest known concentration of Great Moravian churches. Naturally, it

21. *Лежить же въ велицаи црькви моравьстѣи в лѣвѣмъ странѣ въ стѣнѣ за влтаремъ сватыѣхъ богородицѣхъ*, *Magna Moraviae Fontes Historici II*, ed. D. Bartoňková, R. Večerka, Praha 2010, p. 143.

22. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 578.

23. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 578; A. Merhautová, op. cit., pp. 37–38.

24. D. Líbal, *Katalog gotické architektury v České republice do husitských válek*, Praha 2001, pp. 438–439.

25. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 783.

26. A. Merhautová, *Velkomoravská architektura*, op. cit., pp. 37–38.

27. The formulation 'great Moravian temple' means actually 'cathedral'. However, it is obvious that searched object was certainly large as well; Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 776.

28. *České země...*, op. cit., pp. 589–590.

29. Including mentioned basilica.

is not an aim of this paper to discuss where the grave of St. Methodius was located or whether the altar dedication to Blessed Virgin Mary means that the church had the same dedication. But undoubtedly it can be stated that the altar dedication (regardless of where the altar was located – in Sady, Mikulčice or somewhere else) might have borne witness to the cult of Blessed Virgin Mary in Great Moravia, and that the church in Sady (or at least its eastern part) was probably dedicated to the same saint.

The presented data proves that to a certain extent, reconstruction of Great Moravian dedications is possible. Obviously, this is a difficult task. Without a doubt, dedications of some sacral objects will never be found out. In particular, one should be regretful about 10 churches of Mikulčice – it can be supposed that their dedications comprised an interesting and varied assemblage, demonstrating influence of various missions on Great Moravian Christianity. Some serious problem lies in ambiguity of many sources, thus largely we have to work with hypotheses only. This is why a careful, realistic attitude to available facts is of utmost importance which approach unfortunately is not so common.³⁰ A promising method might lie in using mainly sources from either Late Middle Ages or Modern History and connecting that information with available existing data about Great Moravian sacral objects.

Those Great Moravian dedications that we currently know or we assume that existed prove that in Great Moravia there existed cults of most common Christian saints (Mary, John the Baptist, perhaps also Peter, George and Michael) but also cults connected with some specific missions – that from Diocese of Passau (Hippolytus, probably connected with missionaries from Austrian Benedictine abbey in Sankt Pölten³¹) and that of Cyril and Methodius (Clement).³² Dedications to Hippolytus and Clement are particularly interesting, also because in Moravia there are some later medieval churches dedicated to those saints. The possible connection between Great Moravian and post-Great-Moravian cults of those saints is one of the most interesting tasks for future research in this respect.

30. For example, A. Birnbaumová, *Kostely sv. Klimenta*, believed that all churches dedicated to St. Clement are of Great Moravian origin which is rather unrealistic; R. Hurt, *Nově zjištěné velkomoravské patrocinium*, op. cit., speculated about Great Moravian dedication of a (never discovered) church in hillfort 'Petrova louka' on the basis of the place name only.

31. Z. Měřínský, *České země...*, op. cit., p. 600.

32. P. Jokeš, *Patrocinium św. Klemensa na Morawach*, op. cit., pp. 311–318.

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Abstract

Petr Jokeš

Patron Saints in the times of Christianization.

Some reflections about Great Moravian dedications

Keywords:

Middle Ages,
Moravia,
Great Moravia,
church history,
cult of saints,
patron saints,
dedications.

The study sums up previous research of Great Moravian dedications. The research of this issue is rather challenging – mainly because a lot of them churches existed only for a short period of time. Many of Great Moravian churches were built during the 9th century and perished around 900 AD which means that they were in existence only for several decades and only few of them “managed” to leave some traces in historical sources during such short time. Nevertheless, the presented data proves that to a certain extent, reconstruction of Great Moravian dedications is possible. Obviously, this is a difficult task. Without a doubt, dedications of some sacral objects will never be found out. The text focuses mainly on 22 sacral objects, which have – surely or very likely – Great Moravian origin. Dedications of 12 objects are unknown (it concerns mainly the churches of destroyed hillforts in Mikulčice and Pohansko). Dedications of remaining 10 sacral objects are either known or we can reconstruct them with some degree of probability. Thus, in Great Moravia existed cults of most common Christian saints there – Mary, John (probably the Baptist), perhaps also Peter, George and Michael, but also cults connected with some specific missions – that from Diocese of Passau (Hippolytus, probably connected with missionaries from Austrian Benedictine abbey in Sankt Pölten) and that of Cyril and Methodius (Clement). Dedications to Hippolytus and Clement are particularly interesting, also because in Moravia there are some later medieval churches dedicated to those saints. The possible connection between Great Moravian and post-Great-Moravian cults of those saints is one of the most interesting tasks for future research in this respect.

Abstrakt

Petr Jokeš

*Wezwania w czasach chrystianizacji. Kilka uwag
o patrociniach wielkomorawskich*

Autor podsumowuje dotychczasowe badania nad wezwaniami kościołów wielkomorawskich. Badanie wezwań z tego okresu jest trudnym zadaniem, ponieważ wiele wielkomorawskich obiektów sakralnych istniało tylko przez krótki okres. Obiekty te powstawały w ciągu IX wieku, a już na początku X wieku, w wyniku najazdu węgierskiego wiele z nich przestało istnieć, nie pozostawiając śladów w źródłach pisanych. Mimo to w części przypadków można poznać patrocinia, z reguły tropiąc ich ślady w źródłach późniejszych. Przedmiotem zainteresowania autora są 22 obiekty sakralne, które z dużą dozą prawdopodobieństwa powstały w czasach wielkomorawskich. Patrocinium 12 obiektów nie udało się określić (chodzi głównie o kościoły z grodów w Mikulčicach i Pohansku), natomiast w przypadku pozostałych 10 albo wezwanie jest znane, albo można z pewnym prawdopodobieństwem je określić. Z badań wynika, że w państwie wielkomorawskim nadawano patrocinia Najświętszej Marii Panny oraz św. Jana (najprawdopodobniej Chrzcziciela), stosunkowo prawdopodobne są również wezwania św. Jerzego, św. Michała Archanioła oraz św. Piotra. Na Wielkich Morawach istniało również patrocinium św. Hipolita, związane najpewniej z działalnością misyjną austriackich benedyktynów z klasztoru Sankt Pölten, oraz dość prawdopodobnie św. Klemensa, związane z misją świętych Cyryla i Metodego, którzy przynieśli na Morawy relikwie tego świętego.

Słowa kluczowe:
Średniowiecze,
Morawy, Wielkie
Morawy, historia
Kościoła, kult
świętych, święci
patronowie,
patrocinia.

