



ÚSTAV
PRO ARCHEOLOGII
Filozofická fakulta
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PRIMUS

Invitation for Workshop

**POWER IN NUMBERS. THE ROLE OF THE RURAL POPULATION IN CHRISTIANISATION AND
STATE FORMATION**

Prague, 11-13. October 2021

Venue: Department of Archaeology, Charles University, Prague

Organiser: Department of Archaeology, Charles University, Prague

Mária Vargha Ph.D.,

doc. PhDr. Tomáš Klír Ph.D.

Mgr. Martin Janovský

Appliaction deadline: August 31st, 2021.

The meeting introduces a Primus project, “*Empowering the Voiceless. The Role of the Rural Population in State Building and Christianisation in East-Central Europe*”, started in early 2021 at the Department of Archaeology at Charles University, Prague, and aspires to invite scholars working on similar issues to join the discussion with their papers in the framework of a workshop. The proposed meeting is a first of a series that aims to bring together researchers from Europe, dealing with different, yet connected, affairs of the state and church networks’ of archaeological and historical heritage.

In the last decade, interest in the research of Christianisation has been growing. Diverse approaches in history were observable; researchers have investigated the process in the light of state formation, church law, hagiography, and continuing the most traditional branch of research, the development of the ecclesiastical network. This latter has been primarily focusing on the higher levels – archbishoprics, bishoprics, and monastic institutions – mostly due to sources’ availability. The largest segment of the population, thus the widest audience of Christianisation, and the smallest yet arguably most influential element of the church network on the process -local churches- were neglected, as their appearance in written sources is almost nonexistent. Archaeological discussion somewhat followed the footsteps of history; researchers also focused on the archaeology of the largest centres and their ecclesiastical institutions. Besides, investigations concentrated mainly on the individual by interpreting religion in burials and interpreting the pagan-Christian shift in different cemetery types. Still, the ambiguity of the definition and the relative scarcity of such data, these investigations did not result in reliable conclusions. Even though archaeology considered the significant impact that Christianisation had on transforming the rural landscape, targeted large-scale investigations are yet to be uncovered. Our Primus project focuses

on researching the archaeological remains of the earliest network of (rural) local churches and their relation to Christianisation in East-Central Europe, contextualising and analysing them at a regional level.

Accordingly, the workshop aims to examine how and why state politics have interfered in diverse religious affairs; such as the process of Christianisation and the development of the local church system in the early Middle Ages, the promotion and support of certain cults, religious orders, or particular places of pilgrimage to the later Middle Ages, and give a Longue-durée perspective on the matter, by bringing these processes together.

The workshop welcomes papers focusing on the early and High Middle Ages, within the range of the following topics:

- early rural churches, churchyards and field cemeteries
- problem of transitional cemeteries and burial practices
- connection between early state power centres and the ecclesiastical network
- monastic networks and Christianisation
- material culture connected to Christianisation

Applicants are asked to send a brief abstract of their 20-minute project contribution (200-300 words) to maria.vargha@ff.cuni.cz by August 31st, 2021. Limited travel bursaries will be available for those without institutional funding opportunities.

Please indicate your application for funding along with your abstract.



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