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FACULTY OF ARTS  
Charles University



PRIMUS

Invitation for Conference

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

Prague, 11-13. May 2022

Venue: Department of Archaeology, Charles University, Prague  
Organiser: Department of Archaeology, Charles University, Prague  
Mária Vargha Ph.D.,  
doc. PhDr. Tomáš Klír Ph.D.

**Application deadline: January 31, 2022.**

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 conference. The proposed meeting is the second 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 and their archaeological, historical and digital investigations.

In the last decade, interest in research into Christianisation has been growing. Diverse approaches in history and archaeology were observable; researchers have investigated the process of Christianisation in the light of state formation, church law, hagiography, and continuing the most traditional theme of research; the development of the ecclesiastical network. The largest segment of the population, thus the widest audience of Christianisation, and the smallest, yet arguably the most influential element of the church network -local churches- were less in focus, as their appearance in written sources is almost nonexistent. Even though archaeology considered the significant impact that Christianisation had on transforming the rural landscape, targeted large-scale investigations are yet to be carried out. 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 by a detailed geospatial and geostatistical analysis.

Accordingly, the conference aims to examine the beginnings of the local churches in the broader context of Europe. Particularly, 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, in a Longue-durée perspective.

The proceedings of the conference will be published in a peer-reviewed volume in 2022.

The conference 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
- digital analysis of large scale archaeological heritage

Applicants are asked to send a **brief abstract** (200-300 words) of their 20-minute project contribution to [maria.vargha@ff.cuni.cz](mailto:maria.vargha@ff.cuni.cz) by **January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022**. Limited travel bursaries will be available for those without institutional funding opportunities.

Please indicate the application for funding along with your abstract.

The conference is supported by the European Regional Development Fund-Project “Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World” (No. CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16\_019/0000734) and affiliated with the programme of Charles University Progress Q07 ‘Centre for the Study of the Midd



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