

A FINAL WORD

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The present volume is a worthwhile step in the study of the medieval European village, and I believe it will receive the attention it deserves as a valuable archaeological source. This optimistic view is based not only on the highly informative nature of the contributions but also on the role that this publication is expected to serve as the introductory volume to a long series. The credit for launching it goes in the first place to the Archaeological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in Prague, which also deserves tribute for the 30 year long research into the medieval Bohemian village. It is almost symbolic that the publication of this volume also marks an important anniversary of the birth of Z. Smetánka, the founder of archaeology of the Bohemian village.

As the director of the Archaeological Institute, I highly appreciate the fact that the papers from the conference "Ruralia" reflect the close links of the Institute (and medieval Bohemian archaeology in general) with the European Archaeological Society. The intention to publish the conference contributions in the Supplement to "Památky archeologické" has provided a good opportunity to commence this new series.