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KAREL VALOCH: EMINENT SCHOLAR, VALUED COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND

Karel Valoch certainly belongs among the emininent European prehistorians of all time. His knowledge of all aspects of the Palaeolithic and his contributions to scholarly understanding of later human evolution in Moravia, Central Europe, and beyond are truly inestimable. He was a skilled excavator, an insightful analyist of archaeological data, a superb synthesizer, and a wonderfully friendly and accommodating colleague. For me, Profesor Valoch will always be remembered for his friendship and patient help, first in 1973 to a young human paleontology student trying to firgure out the complexities of the Palaeolithic and its peoples in Central Europe, and subsequently as a valued and knowledgeable colleague always willing to offer information and gently constructive criticisms (e.g. see Valoch 1982). Although eager to discuss anything dealing with the Paleolithic,it was obvious that Kůlna cave was for Professor Valoch a site especially rich in critical information concerning later human biocultural evolution. That is evident in his earlier monograph on the site (Valoch 1988) and in one of his last publications, another monograph on Kůlna (Valoch a kol. 2011). Thus it is no surprize to learn that Kůlna was for him ..."a matter of the heart" (Nerudová, Neruda 2013: 131). Others more closely associated with his work have ably elaborated Professor Valoch's impressive contributions (Nerudová, Neruda 2013, Oliva 2013, Vencl 2013). The goal of the contribution to this volume by my coauthors and me is to discuss the Neandertal skeletal remains from Kůlna and other later Neandertal remains from Central Europe and how the significance of these late Neandertal fossils have taken on new light following the impact of Neandertal genomes (Green *et al*. 2010, Prüfer *et al*. 2014, Gibbons 2014). Given Professor Valoch's insatiable interest in new approaches to old problems, we believe he would appreciate the perspecitve we offer here to honor his memory.

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