

Editorial

For the second time in its history, *Archaeologia Polona* dedicates an entire volume to archaeological prospection, understood as a growing range of non-invasive methods for recording archaeological structures. As in volume 41 issued in 2003, there is foremost a large set of articles documenting the application of geophysical methods in the investigation of archaeological sites. There are also articles on the GIS methods, processing and visualization, technical aspects. Recent years have witnessed a rapid development of ground-scanning technology (LiDAR), also represented in the volume. A novel element are articles from the field of the history of archaeological geophysics.

The volume accompanies the 11th International Conference on Archaeological Prospection, organized on 15–19 September 2015 in Warsaw by the journal's publisher, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (together with the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw and the Scientific Association of Polish Archaeologists). For the past decade or so, the organizers of successive conferences have adopted the principle of publishing not the commonly accepted abstracts, limited to a few sentences, but rather brief articles including illustrations and references that give in effect a representative review of what is going on in the field, both in scientific institutes and in commercial companies around the world.

The strong representation of archaeological feedback in the volume is the effect of there being a full-day session devoted to the topic at the conference. Nine invited guest lecturers representing different centers from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Italy and Poland make up this session, the idea of which is to evaluate the effectiveness of prospection methods from the point of view of those commissioning the research, that is, the archaeologists. The objective is to popularize prospection methods among archaeologists in Poland.

The first part of the volume contains articles by Polish authors, discussing relevant research carried out in Poland (articles on research of Neolithic, Early Bronze Age and Medieval sites) and in Egypt where Polish geophysics contributed significantly to research over the past 30 years (article by Zych and Herbich on the Hellenistic/Roman harbour in Berenike). This part is rounded off with an article giving a historical overview of the development of the magnetic methods from its first application in 1958 to the late 1990s. It is only right after half a century since its inception to look up the beginnings of the field and the factors that contributed to its development. Not the least, it is practically the last moment to talk to the founders of the discipline, the authors of those first implementations of the method in the field.

The volume is also a way of paying homage to two extraordinary men, Alain Tabbagh and Helmut Becker, whose contribution to the development of archaeological geophysics has been momentous. Prof. Alain Tabbagh, a student of Albert Hesse (whose founding role in the field was acknowledged in *Archaeologia Polona* vol. 41), has dedicated a lifetime to research on the development and applications of the electromagnetic method. A lecturer at the University of Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris, he has educated a generation of researchers whose work has placed French geophysics at the top of the field. Their articles are found in this volume. As for Dr. Helmut Becker, his varied contribution to the field includes pioneering work on digital recording of measurement data, implementation of cesium magnetometry, the uses of mobile multi-sensor magnetic systems, visualization and interpretation of results and the integration of geophysical research with aerial photography, the latter in association between his laboratory in Munich and Otto Brasch. The achievements of both researchers have been presented in brief articles opening the volume.

Dedicating this volume of a journal with “Polona” in its title to these two scientists is validated also by their links with Poland. Both Alain Tabbagh and Helmut Becker have carried out research in Poland, working in cooperation with researchers from the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw. They have shared their immense experience as well as their equipment, which was not available by any means in Poland in those early years. Alain Tabbagh supported Polish research on early metallurgy of iron, whereas Helmut Becker provided the apparatus necessary to carry out Polish geophysical projects in Egypt in the 1990s. Our gratitude for this and much more is boundless.

Tomasz Herbich