

Editorial

The publication of this, the fiftieth, volume of *Archaeologia Polona*, with the theme “Looking into the Past”, is the end of a long process that goes back to 2012, when it was due to appear. A number of organizational difficulties and a double change of the editorial team have caused a delay of several years in its production. The current editors of the volume, the third team in a row, determined to make sure the volume appeared, and took over the work on the materials submitted for publication.

The articles originally collected almost ten years ago were again reviewed and in 2018–2019 were supplemented by the original authors. Initially this volume was to be devoted to the activity of several distinguished figures from the history of Polish archaeology. Unfortunately, several texts had been published in other journals in the meantime. This made it necessary to obtain new articles in their place. For this reason, the topic of this volume is broader than initially intended. It presents texts on the history of archaeology from several points of view, ranging from the presentation of the activities of researchers, through the history of institutions and research undertaken as part of contemporary archaeology in Poland and wider afield.

Volume 50 is also dedicated to the outstanding archaeologist Professor Stanisław Tabaczyński on the ninetieth anniversary of his birth. Aspects of his scientific profile are presented to the reader by Dorota Cyngot and Anna Zalewska through the medium of an interview (“A life in archaeology and the specificity of archaeological research: encounters with Stanisław Tabaczyński”). This conversation touches on a number of issues related to archaeological theory and research practice. Most of these issues are also discussed in the texts of other authors of the volume.

Professor Tabaczyński, who has been associated with what is now the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences for almost half a century, also has significant achievements in the preservation of the European cultural heritage in connection with the study of early medieval archaeological sites in France and Italy (and also Algeria), and publications resulting from them.

The rest of the volume consists of seven articles. Their arrangement is roughly in chronological order, based on the time of activity of the archaeological institutions, researchers and their activities they discuss.

Carola Metzner-Nebelsick discusses Karol Hadaczek’s period of stay in Vienna (1897–1900) and its effect on his contribution to Polish archaeology. The author presents the beginnings of the academic career of the scholar, related to his studies at the University of Vienna, as well as the impact of these experiences on his further scientific activity at the University of Lviv. In the biographical text “A portrait of Professor

Zdzisław A. Rajewski (1907–1974), scholar of many talents”, Wojciech Brzeziński and Danuta Piotrowska consider one of the most important Polish archaeologists of the 20th century, the research he directed at the famous site of Biskupin and on the beginnings of the Polish state under the *Millennium Poloniae* program, and also for many years the director of the State Archaeological Museum in Warsaw.

This is followed by a text on the complicated history of an institution. In the article “The Archaeological Museum of the Polish Academy of Learning in Cracow during the Second World War”, one of this volume’s editors, Marzena Woźny presents new information on the history of Polish archaeology in the dramatic times of World War II. In the following insightful text (“Scientific Capital after 1945 in German archaeology – Wilhelm Unverzagt and the archaeology of hillforts”), Susanne Grunwald discusses aspects of the history of German archaeology after 1945. This paper re-examines some current views on this subject, also in the context of the archaeology of defended settlements in the region.

In the next text (“European identity and Polish culture – Tomasz Mikocki’s studies on the tradition of ancient art”), Monika Rekowska considers the academic activity of an outstanding Polish researcher on the legacy of Antiquity in European culture. Mikocki studied collections of Greek and Roman antiquities and monuments and their imitations. She summarizes the extensive legacy in these fields of the researcher who died in 2007.

The development of Italian medieval archaeology is discussed by Michele Nucciotti and Guido Vannini in their article “Light Archaeology and Territorial Analysis: Experiences and Perspectives of the Florentine Medievalist School”. The final article in this section (“Archaeology of graves: a contribution to contemporary archaeology in Poland”) by Jolanta Adamek reviews contemporary exhumations and research at the burial sites of victims of World War II and the early post-War period conducted using modern archaeological methods.

The volume ends with three more texts. The first is a book review (by Paul Barford) of a work discussing the place of historical patterns of thought in the development of a modern Classical archaeology. This is followed by a report from the conference “Biskupin in the past, today and tomorrow”, which took place in 2009, on the 75th anniversary of the beginning of archaeological research in Biskupin, reported by Kamil Adamczak, Anna Grossman and Wojciech Piotrowski. Since its discovery, the site of Biskupin has been of great importance for archaeology not only because of the nature of the remains that it contained, but also the effect its excavation had on the history of the discipline in the 20th century. The obituary for the archaeologist Gerd Weisgerber by Jacek Lech brings to the attention of the reader some aspects of the work of this outstanding researcher of ancient mining.

With the final publication of this volume, the editors hope that the texts that it contains will contribute to the broadening of knowledge about the development of European archaeology at the end of the 19th and the 20th centuries and its place in the contemporary context.