

## EDITORIAL

Over the past quarter-century, archaeological research has undergone significant development, with discoveries at various chronological and thematic levels. This progress is partly the result of new opportunities created by advances in the exact and natural sciences, which have broadened archaeology's methodological framework. Such acceleration is also evident in the study of the vast, millennium-long period during which communities associated with the Urnfield circle flourished in Central and Western Europe. Numerous scholarly works have recently been published on this subject, and various research projects have been carried out. Newly discovered materials originating from fieldwork have also been discussed at academic conferences and in professional journals. Nevertheless, there remains space for further original contributions. The widespread interest in the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age has inspired us to prepare a special thematic issue dedicated to the Urnfield communities.

This volume of *Sprawozdania Archeologiczne* contains fifteen scholarly articles addressing various aspects of this topic. Among other matters, it presents new data on the origins and cultural changes that led to the appearance of 'urnfields' on the map of Bronze Age Europe. Considerable attention is also devoted to questions of settlement and defensive settlements, as well as to spiritual culture, particularly in relation to the organisation of space within cemeteries and the reconstruction of funerary rituals.

A separate group of contributions focuses on the deposition of metal hoards and on archaeometric studies of metallurgy and other forms of production from this period.

We encourage all researchers interested in the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, understood here as the period of the development of Lusatian urnfields and other taxa associated with this cultural phenomenon, to engage with this volume.

With the thematic volume of *Sprawozdania Archeologiczne*, we wish to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of archaeology at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin.

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