

EDITORIAL

Accompanying this new issue of *Archeologické rozhledy* is a change in the position of editor-in-chief. It is my pleasure, but also a great responsibility, to take up this task for the coming years and provide the best service I can for the journal, its readers, and prospective authors. Before I introduce my vision for *Archeologické rozhledy*, I would like to thank my predecessor Martin Ježek for an outstanding 23 years of service. During Martin's editorship, the journal underwent significant changes in formal attributes and, most importantly, published content. Thanks to him, I am taking over a renowned journal indexed in the Web of Science, Scopus, ERIH PLUS and other important platforms.

I am starting my service with the 75th volume of *Archeologické rozhledy*, meaning that the journal has been published for a period roughly equivalent to a human life. Naturally, the aims and scope of such a journal are not and cannot be the same as at the beginning. Archaeology has undergone an enormous transformation since 1949. When Jaroslav Böhm and Jan Filip addressed readers on the very first pages, they committed *Archeologické rozhledy* to being a platform on which the results of new excavations from Czechoslovakia could be presented to the '*broad social classes of the nation*'. Regardless of the post-war vocabulary that was employed, this is obviously no longer the role of *Archeologické rozhledy* today, when the journal requires papers that go beyond a simple report on newly excavated sites; although we welcome non-professional readers and authors, there are currently many more suitable avenues for archaeology to engage with the public.

What then is the purpose and future path for *Archeologické rozhledy*? My appointment was an opportunity for a thorough debate on this crucial issue and I am grateful to all involved who shared their views. I quickly recognised two main factions in this debate. First, there were those adhering to the Czech (or Czechoslovakian) tradition of the journal and arguing that *Archeologické rozhledy* should be preserved as a national forum publishing research from the Czech Republic primarily in Czech.

One cannot deny that archaeological research is much more tied to a specific territory and spatially based than STEM fields. However, this should not be an excuse or justification for isolation. Whether it is Linear Pottery longhouses, the Corded Ware burial rite, La Tène oppida, craftsman production of late medieval towns or any other topics of pre-historic and historic archaeology in Central Europe, they cannot be studied sufficiently on a national basis simply because the past world was not limited by strict borders, nor is, in fact, our current world. International cooperation and the exchange of ideas have been some of the cornerstones of the scholarly community since the times of medieval universities. At this point, you most probably sense that I side with the second faction of the debate whose members are calling for an intensification of the international scope of *Archeologické rozhledy*.

I think that Czechoslovak archaeology was heavily affected during the four decades the Iron Curtain cast its long shadow and prevented the free exchange of new thoughts and approaches. Even 30 years after its fall, the Czech research community, including my generation of millennials, does not seem to be fully recovered. The malice of archaeological research locked inside the Iron Curtain can be illustrated by a remark from the late Slavomil Vencel, an editor of *Archeologické rozhledy* in 1974–1985. In one of his papers,

he recalled an incident from the 1970s when his article submitted to a prestigious international journal (published in the West, of course) was not met with appreciation at his home institution but, quite the opposite, with strong reproach accompanied by instructions to never again sell out the fruits of Czechoslovak science to the wrong side of the Iron Curtain.

Although the suppression of the totalitarian regime undoubtedly left considerable scars on Czech archaeology, the problem may in fact be rooted deeper in the past, as a strange antipathy towards foreign influences has apparently pervaded Czech society since the early nationalism of the 19th century. It might be surprising to us nowadays that Karel Hynek Mácha, the famous poet of early Czech romanticism, faced harsh criticism from patriotic circles. In 1836 he published his poem 'Máj', which represents the first Czech romanticist opus and bears comparison with the work of great poets of that time like Lord Byron, Walter Percy, and Walter Scott. Despite the fact that every Czech schoolchild is familiar with its verses today, critics at the time reproached it as a strange new fad from abroad that was inappropriate for national poetry. In their eyes, poets should serve national interests by writing poetry that supports, praises, and educates the newly resurrected Slavic nation in Bohemia and Moravia. 'What do we care about Byron?' was their reaction upon reading 'Máj'.

Many other historic examples could be given to illustrate the perception of *international* and *ours* as opposite concepts in Czech society. Succumbing to environmental determinism in its purest form, I feel like it is probably the geographic location of the Bohemian Basin bordered by mountain ranges that makes us close ourselves in and enjoy splendid isolation. But no scholarly community can exist like that, at least not without being doomed to self-replication, fossilisation, and a bitter feeling of being overlooked by the outer world. For me, and I believe also for the generation of scholars to come, there will be little sense in discriminating between *international* and *ours*, and not only in the field of archaeology. The political barriers mentioned above disappeared more than 30 years ago, and now only the barriers in our minds remain. To paraphrase the famous quote by Philip Phillips, Czech archaeology must be international archaeology or it is nothing; *Archeologické rozhledy* must be an international journal or it is nothing.

Of course, local research published in regional journals in Czech plays an immensely important role and should keep doing so. However, I see the pivotal role of *Archeologické rozhledy* in sharing knowledge across the wider area. After all, it was officially proclaimed an international journal in 2001 and many papers from non-Czech authors have been published in its pages over the last two decades. Nothing new then. Nevertheless, I feel like the merit of an international journal has not been fully accomplished so far. I will therefore devote my editorship to developing *Archeologické rozhledy* as an international journal focused on the archaeology of Central Europe. We aim to present a wide range of original archaeological research from this area regardless of the chronological period or methodological approach. We will seek in particular reports on significant archaeological discoveries discussed within a general context, interdisciplinary and science-based research as well as discussions and topical reviews that examine key issues of Central European archaeology.

I am aware that such a transformation will take considerable time and effort. Also, it cannot be achieved without English as the preferred language of published papers because it is undoubtedly a *lingua franca* of the current academic world. Czech still remains an option for authors and it should be stated clearly that the language choice does not affect

the results of the peer-review process. However, I hope that Czech authors will recognise the advantages of publishing English papers in *Archeologické rozhledy*. It is not about boosting citation scores; bibliometric figures generally offer a good guide on a journal's quality, but should not be blindly worshipped. The true benefits are sharing ideas with a much broader audience and engaging with scholars outside one's 'box', even if the research may be spatially limited to the Czech Republic. The Czech archaeological community is rather small to find a truly independent researcher to review a submitted article. Let's be honest, all scholars working on a particular topic usually know each other very well – either they are friends or, worse, they are not. However, I do not understand the transformation of *Archeologické rozhledy* toward an English-written journal as a revolution but rather a long process that will probably be completed by my successor. In this regard, I believe that the best way of leading is by example. This is why I am addressing you in English and will continue to do so in my future editorials.

If you are a regular reader of *Archeologické rozhledy*, you might notice other changes. The new editorial board has been appointed featuring international members. I am very happy that during my editorship I will collaborate with scholars who are respected experts in their fields of archaeological research. We launched a new website with many functionalities and an online editorial system in which prospective authors can submit their papers. Detailed author guidelines are now available on the website and we kindly ask prospective authors to follow them.

Probably the most controversial novelty is the word count limit regulating the length of submitted papers. Such a policy is not common in Central European archaeological journals, which adhere to the continental style of academic writing. However, I believe that it will help to distinguish our journal and *Památky archeologické* – the other journal published by the Institute of Archaeology of the CAS, Prague. So far, the common sense was that the latter one publishes rather longer synthesising studies, but no explicit differences have been defined thus far. Most importantly, the word limit will help authors write in a more concise and objective-directed way. I have experienced the struggle with word limits during my own writing, but, looking back and with settled emotions, the text always benefited. Furthermore, I want to emphasise that the limits adopted for *Archeologické rozhledy* were not set *ad hoc*, but the benchmark stems from a detailed analysis. The limit of 12 000 words adopted for research articles represents the upper quartile for the word count of papers published in the last three years. For authors who wish to present datasets, lists of finds, or other extensive texts, it is now possible to attach online supplementary material to their paper. I am sure that all these changes and new policies will improve the journal and bring it closer to current standards of academic publishing.

I am delighted that the very first issue I am editing on my own publishes a collection of very interesting papers. The research article by Dagmara Łaciak examines the hypothesis that 'graphite-coated' pottery of the Late Bronze and Early Iron ages could be produced without mineral graphite. Her crafted experiments proved so when she achieved the black colour and lustrous effect by methods not involving the application of mineral graphite. I am sure that Łaciak's paper will prompt other scholars to reconsider their views on pottery production as well as the distribution networks in the Late Bronze and Early Iron ages.

Also, the paper by Daniel Pilař and Petr Květina puts under scrutiny an important and long-standing issue related in this case to Early Neolithic archaeology. Traditionally, the

life of people who inhabited Linear Pottery longhouses has been reconstructed from artefacts and ecofacts excavated from the flanking pits. But is this relationship actually correct? The authors doubt the concept of a *house unit* and point to serious inconsistencies in the material from particular pits. Notably, they base their conclusion on the case study of the Bylany site. Even five decades after the main excavation campaign ended, this well-known site can still contribute to the development of Neolithic archaeology.

I would also like to draw the readers' attention to the new Topical Reviews section that aims to bring papers summarising a specific topic of Central European archaeology or in connection with this area. The first review in this issue, authored by Jarmila Bříšková and colleagues, presents new advances in the radiocarbon dating of previously unsampled materials. Although the progress in radiocarbon dating remains rather overshadowed by aDNA and other biomolecular approaches, it is undoubtedly part of what Kristian Kristiansen called the 'third scientific revolution' in current archaeology. Radiocarbon dating contributes by answering the elementary archaeological question '*when?*' with increasing precision and for new types of samples. The review by Bříšková and colleagues will give readers good insight and will guide them during their own dating research.

The second review, authored by Ladislav Čapek, focuses on current archaeological theory. Our discipline does in fact examine past people and societies, but it is doing so by analysing the artefacts they produced. Thus, we need a solid theoretical framework to understand these human-object relations. Čapek summarises the advance of new theories generally labelled as the ontological turn. They have shaped social disciplines since the early 2000s introducing a more balanced view on relations between humans and non-humans. Besides the thorough summary, the paper also presents examples of applications in archaeological research. Therefore, I am sure it will encourage readers to explore new ways of interpretation and thinking about the past world.

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