THE LEXICAL FRAMEWORK OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHAEOLOGY – SYSTEMATIZING CONCEPTS, TERMS, RESEARCH APPROACHES, AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAST. OBSERVATIONS MADE WHEN READING BOOK ENTITLED *LEKSYKON TERMINÓW ARCHEOLOGICZNYCH*

LEKSYKALNE RAMY WSPÓŁCZESNEJ ARCHEOLOGII – SYSTEMATYZOWANIE POJĘĆ, TERMINÓW, PODEJŚĆ BADAWCZYCH ORAZ WIEDZY O PRZESZŁOŚCI. OBSERWACJE POCZYNIONE PODCZAS LEKTURY KSIĄŻKI ZATYTUŁOWANEJ *LEKSYKON TERMINÓW ARCHEOLOGICZNYCH*

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ABSTRACT: The article explores the significance, guiding principles, and structure of *Leksykon terminów archeologicznych*, offering a critical assessment of the publication in light of the current needs and challenges facing Polish archaeology. The lexicon is examined in relation to other frameworks for structuring disciplinary knowledge within the field. This systematized publication, edited by Arkadiusz Marciniak, Anna I. Zalewska, Dorota Cyngot, Stanisław Iwaniszewski, Hanna Kowalewska-Marszałek, and Franciszek M. Stępniowski, published in 2024, presents a conceptualization of the archaeological research process rooted in the Polish research tradition. The article highlights the lexicon's distinctive contribution as both an extension of prior efforts toward conceptualization of Polish archaeology and a point of departure for further discussion on establishing systematic lexical framework of contemporary Polish archaeology.

KEY WORDS: systematization in archaeology, conceptualization of the research process, Polish research tradition, contemporary Polish archaeology, lexicon

Leksykon terminów archeologicznych is the fourth volume in the series *Horyzonty współczesnej archeologii*, which serves as a platform for presenting innovative and original conceptualizations of issues addressed by contemporary archaeology. The volume was published by Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych UNIVERSITAS, in collaboration with the Committee on Archaeology of the Poznań Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Faculty of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Łódź. The lexicon offers a conceptualization of the archaeological process from the perspective of the Polish archaeological community, presented in the form of entries. Edited by Arkadiusz Marciniak, Anna I. Zalewska, Dorota Cyngot, Stanisław Iwaniszewski, Hanna Kowalewska-Marszałek, and Franciszek M. Stępniowski, the volume compiles terms, concepts, and analytical categories that constitute the conceptual framework of Polish archaeology developed exclusively by Polish archaeologists. It portrays archaeology as a socially embedded and institutionally grounded academic discipline, as well as a vital domain of contemporary culture.

These foundational assumptions and aims of the lexicon prompted a broader reflection on the methods and forms of knowledge organization in archaeology, which emerged during my reading of the volume. In the present article, I attempt to outline the existing approaches to the systematization of knowledge in this field, with particular attention to the format adopted in *Leksykon terminów archeologicznych*.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the significance, conceptual premises, and structure of the lexicon, and to provide a critical assessment of its relevance in addressing the scientific, educational, and public engagement needs and challenges of contemporary Polish archaeology.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC

Efforts to develop forms for the systematization of archaeological knowledge emerged even before archaeology had been formally established as a scientific discipline. The earliest such attempt may be attributed to Johann Joachim Winckelmann's formulation of typological principles as a method of establishing relative chronology (Winckelmann, 1764, cited in Kadrow, 2016, p. 66). A further step in this direction was taken by Christian Jürgensen Thomsen (Petersen, Thomsen, 1836), who introduced the three-age system, later developed by Gustav Oscar Augustin Montelius (1903). The typological approach initiated by these researchers has remained a core element of archaeological discourse to this day, having been continuously developed, revised, and subjected to extensive scientific discussion.

In addition to typology, other methods for organizing knowledge about the past – such as classification and seriation – were developed. These approaches attracted considerable scientific attention and have generated a substantial body of literature

(e.g. Black, Weer, 1936; Gifford, 1960; Krieger, 1960; Rouse, 1960, 1997; Dunnell, 1971; Minta-Tworzowska, 1994, 2011; Read, 2007; Bortolini, 2017). Despite critical voices concerning their limitations, these methods remain widely used – not only due to the absence of broadly accepted alternative approaches to structuring archaeological sources, but also because they continue to prove functional and effective in research practice. Their ongoing use is often justified by their relative transparency, the comparability they enable across research centers, and their deep entrenchment within the disciplinary tradition, all of which contribute to their persistence in scientific circulation.

The volume of information generated through the analysis of archaeological sources, alongside the emergence of new research questions and paradigms, has led to an accumulation of knowledge in archaeology that requires systematic organization. This has been necessary to establish shared points of reference within the academic discourse of the discipline. In addition to numerous scientific articles, chapters, and monographs that address specific areas of the past, more synthetic publications have appeared – systematic overviews offering broader, often cross-sectional accounts of archaeological knowledge or its subfields.

The academic publishing landscape in archaeology includes works presented in a variety of formats, including encyclopedias (e.g. Sherratt, 1980; Ellis, 2000; Crabtree, 2001; Gilbert, Goldberg, Holliday, Mandel, Sternberg, 2017; Cremin, 2018; López Varela, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2018d; Smith, 2020; Kipfer, 2021; Nikita, Rehren, 2023), dictionaries (e.g. Shaw, Jameson, 1999; Darvill, 2008), and lexicons (e.g. Heid, Dennert, 2012a, 2012b; Sievers, Urban, Ramsl, 2012a, 2012b; Mazurowski, 2013; Knüsel, Gerdau-Radonić, Schotsmans, 2022; Marciniak et al., 2024b). These types of publications primarily serve to systematize, structure, and disseminate archaeological knowledge in a concise and accessible format – often through entries or short commentaries on key terms, sites, figures, or thematic issues. Their purpose is not only to provide readers with easy access to essential information but also to serve as a springboard for more in-depth study.

On the Polish academic publishing market, *Leksykon terminów archeologicznych* is the first publication to present a conceptualization of the archaeological process in the form of a lexicon – that is, an alphabetically (less frequently thematically) ordered set of terms, concepts, or entries accompanied by explanations, characterized by conciseness and an informative function. It represents a further stage in the ongoing efforts to conceptualize both archaeology and its subject of study – the past – undertaken over many years within Polish archaeology by the Commission for Anthropology of Prehistory and the Middle Ages of the Polish Academy of Sciences, inspired by the late Professor Stanisław Tabaczyński. Prior to the publication of this reviewed lexicon, the Commission's long-standing work produced such outcomes as the thematic issue of *Archaeologia Polona*, vol. 44, *Special theme: Archaeology – Anthropology – History. Parallel Tracks and Divergences* (see Cyngot, Tabaczyński, Zalewska, 2006) and the publication *Przeszłość społeczna. Próba konceptualizacji* (see Tabaczyński, Marciniak, Cyngot, Zalewska, 2011).

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE LEXICON

Leksykon terminów archeologicznych was conceived as a compendium of knowledge concerning the conceptualization of the archaeological process within the Polish research tradition. The editors deliberately chose to include only contributors from the Polish archaeological community, enabling the entries to reflect that specific perspective. The publication is intended for a broad spectrum of recipients. Among its target groups, the editors identify archaeologists as the primary readership, but also include: Archaeology students; scientific in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences who collaborate with archaeologists; as well as all other individuals interested in archaeology.

As the editors themselves emphasize, lexicon partly draws upon comparable publications available on the publishing market, such as *A Dictionary of Archaeology* (Shaw, Jameson, 1999) and *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon* (Cassin, 2014). The selection and treatment of the issues addressed in the lexicon required adopting an open and flexible format, yet one sufficiently structured to facilitate systematization of knowledge and to capture the complexity and multidimensionality of contemporary archaeology. This publication offers readers not only a set of definitions, but also a tool for reflecting on the current state of the discipline.

Accordingly, the choice of the lexicon format was guided by its flexibility in contrast to other types of knowledge-organizing works, such as dictionaries or encyclopedias, which by nature tend to adopt more rigid and static structures. This decision was closely linked to the character of archaeology itself as a discipline subject to ongoing and dynamic transformation. Moreover, archaeology – whether in terms of the conceptualization of its research subject, its methodological approaches, or the addressed topics – remains tightly interconnected with many other domains of knowledge, which themselves are continuously evolving and being redefined. Additionally, the ways in which research findings are communicated and function within the public sphere are influenced by socio-cultural, legal, and institutional-administrative contexts. The lexicon format thus makes it possible not only to capture this complexity and dynamism, but also to facilitate updates to its content as the discipline continues to develop.

OVERVIEW OF THE LEXICON

Leksykon terminów archeologicznych contains 107 entries, each referring to one of the defined thematic domains – problem areas. These are: I. *Konceptualizacje przeszłości* [Conceptualizations of the Past], II. *Proces badawczy* [Research Process], III. *Metody badawcze* [Research Methods], IV. *Zakresy tematyczne badań* [Thematic Scope of Research], and V. *Archeologia we współczesności. Archeologia wobec społeczeństwa* [Archaeology in Contemporaneity: Archaeology Towards Society]. Each problem area comprises between 17 and 30 entries that address various aspects

of the archaeological process. The preparation of entries within each problem area was coordinated by particular editors: I – Stanisław Iwaszkiewicz, II – Arkadiusz Marciniak, III – Hanna Kowalewska-Marszałek, IV – Dorota Cyngot and Franciszek M. Stępniowski, and V – Anna I. Zalewska.

Lexicon includes two types of entries: 1) long entries – up to 18,000 characters, and 2) short entries – up to 6,000 characters. Long entries explore the nuances of specific issues in depth, taking into account the variability of research approaches and the various contexts of their application in archaeology. They also address topics with a well-established research tradition. Short entries, on the other hand, refer to topics that – although related to others – can be isolated and described as independent elements of archaeological research practice in a descriptive context.

Each entry in lexicon contains two narrative levels: A theoretical level, presenting the definition of the discussed term or concept, its significance for archaeology, and its role in the research process; and a specific (application-focused) level, showing the thematic and problem-based scope, the ways and nature of the use of the term, concept, or category, as well as the changes in its application, meaning, and understanding – both over time and in the context of the conceptualization methods in the Polish research tradition. The entries do not include direct bibliographic references; however, each is supplemented with a list of up to 10 recommended pieces of literature facilitating deeper exploration of the topic. Additionally, lexicon features an internal referencing system: Bolded expressions marked with arrows, which direct the reader to related entries which expand and complement the discussed issues.

The entries are arranged in alphabetical order and listed at the beginning of the publication. In addition, the assignment of entries to their respective problem areas is presented as a list of entries for each area, placed at the end of the *Wprowadzenie* [Introduction].

Problem area I. *Konceptualizacje przeszłości* [Conceptualizations of the Past] is composed of 17 entries showing that archaeology is based on a conceptual framework that serves as the foundation for communication among researchers using a specialized and precise language. Such a conceptual framework highlights issues worth investigating, enables classification and generalization, and supports theory-building. This area includes both terms that have been part of archaeology since its emergence as a scientific discipline in the mid-19th century, and those related to subsequent research trends such as processual archaeology, post-processual archaeology, marxist archaeology, environmental archaeology, landscape archaeology, cognitive archaeology, or bioarchaeology. This problem area includes the following entries: «Adaptacja» [Adaptation], «Antropogeneza» [Anthropogenesis], «Antropopresja a archeologia» [Anthropopression and Archaeology], «Artefakt w archeologii» [Artifact in Archaeology], «Ekologia kulturowa» [Cultural Ecology], «Ekspansja/migracja» [Expansion/Migration], «Eksterioryzacja/symbolizacja» [Exteriorization/Symbolization], «Hierarchie społeczne» [Social Hierarchies], «Kontekst w archeologii» [Context in Archaeology], «Osadnictwo jako przedmiot badań w archeologii» [Settlement as a Subject of Research in Archaeology], «Proweniencja» [Provenance], «Przestrzeń

(percepcja, waloryzacja, symbolizacja, adaptacja, organizacja, stabilizacja, socjalizacja, wizualizacja)» [Space (Perception, Valorization, Symbolization, Adaptation, Organization, Stabilization, Socialization, Visualization)], «Relacje ludzi z otoczeniem» [Relationships of People with Environment], «Relacje pomiędzy ludźmi a roślinami» [Relationships Between People and Plants], «Relacje pomiędzy ludźmi a zwierzętami» [Relationships Between People and Animals], «Rezyliencja» [Resilience], «Udomowienie zwierząt i roślin» [Domestication of Animals and Plants].

Problem area II. *Proces badawczy* [Research Process] consists of 20 entries that pertain to knowledge development in archaeology, research paradigms, and the conceptualization of archaeology's core subject areas. The terms in this problem area demonstrate the dynamic evolution and the process of developing the most cognitively effective ways of investigating the past. Entries in this problem area include: «Archeologia analityczna» [Analytical Archaeology], «Archeologia kulturowo-historyczna» [Cultural-Historical Archaeology], «Archeologia posthumanistyczna i wielogatunkowa» [Posthumanist and Multispecies Archaeology], «Archeologia postprocesualna» [Post-Processual Archaeology], «Archeologia procesualna» [Processual Archaeology], «Archeozoologia» [Archaeozoology], «Bioarcheologia człowieka» [Human Bioarchaeology], «Bioarcheologia: pozostałości roślinne» [Bioarchaeology: Plant Residues], «Biograficzne strategie interpretacyjne» [Biographical Interpretive Strategies], «Ekonomia w archeologii» [Economics in Archaeology], «Etnoarcheologia» [Ethnoarchaeology], «Etyka w archeologii» [Ethics in Archaeology], «Kategoryzacja w archeologii» [Categorization in Archaeology], «Neodarwinizm w archeologii» [Neo-Darwinism in Archeology], «Prawda w archeologii» [Truth in Archeology], «Szkoła Annales» [Annales School], «Teoria średniego zasięgu w archeologii» [Middle-Range Theory in Archaeology], «Wnioskowanie» [Inference], «„Zwroty" badawcze w archeologii» [Research "Turns" in Archaeology], «Źródło / Ślad / Artefakt / Rzecz / Przedmiot» [Source / Trace / Artifact / Thing / Item].

Problem area III. *Metody badawcze* [Research Methods] includes 20 entries related to field research methodology in archaeology (both surface survey and excavation), archaeological documentation, and analytical procedures applied to archaeological materials and source data at different levels of complexity and generalization, as well as across various research stages. The terms in this problem area describe methods currently used in archaeological research – both in the field and in laboratory settings – related to acquiring archaeological sources, transforming them into data resources, and applying analytical tools for their description, analysis, and interpretation. This problem area consists of the following entries: «Analiza danych» [Data Analysis], «Analiza surowcowa: ceramika» [Raw Material Analysis: Ceramics], «Analizy przestrzenne w archeologii i GIS: Systemy Informacji Geograficznej» [Spatial Analysis in Archaeology and GIS: Geographic Information Systems], «Archeologia doświadczalna/eksperymentalna» [Experimental Archaeology], «Archeologiczne bazy danych» [Archaeological Databases], «Archeometria: metale» [Archaeometry: Metals], «Archeometria: miary/wagi czasu, wagi przestrzeni, wagi materii» [Archaeometry: Measures/Weights of Time, Weights of Space, Weights of Matter], «Archeotanatologia (tafonomia szczątków ludz-

kich, „antropologia terenowa")» [Archaeothanatology (Taphonomy of Human Remains, "Field Anthropology")], «Badania biomolekularne» [Biomolecular Research], «Chaîne opératoire» [Chaîne Opératoire], «Datowanie» [Dating], «Dokumentacja archeologiczna» [Archaeological Documentation], «Inwazyjna eksploracja archeologiczna – podstawowe metody badań terenowych» [Invasive Archaeological Exploration – Basic Methods of Field Research], «Klasyfikacja w archeologii» [Classification in Archaeology], «Koncepcje sieciowości w archeologii» [Concepts of Networks in Archaeology], «Metody nieinwazyjne w archeologicznych badaniach przestrzennych» [Non-Invasive Methods in Archaeological Spatial Research], «Seriacja w archeologii» [Seriation in Archaeology], «Stratygrafia archeologiczna» [Archaeological Stratigraphy], «Traseologia / analizy residuów» [Traseology / Residual Analysis], «Typologia w archeologii» [Typology in Archaeology].

Problem area IV. *Zakresy tematyczne badań* [Thematic Scope of Research] comprises 30 entries referring to areas of archaeological observation, primarily structured by the division into prehistoric archaeology, protohistoric archaeology, and historical archaeology, supplemented by archaeology of the contemporary past. It also covers issues of techniques and technologies, references to conceptual frameworks derived from other humanities disciplines and adapted into archaeology, generalizing topics, and traditional subject entries that have a longer history and have recently undergone significant changes, most notably of methodological nature. The terms in this area present concise characteristics of the subject areas of archaeological research – both "traditional" and the newest ones, present in the discipline since the second half of the 20th century. The entries that make up this problem area are: «Agency» [Agency], «Archeologia cyklu życia» [Life Cycle Archaeology], «Archeologia funeralna» [Funeral Archaeology], «Archeologia historyczna» [Historical Archaeology], «Archeologia krajobrazu» [Landscape Archaeology], «Archeologia pradziejowa» [Prehistoric Archaeology], «Archeologia protohistoryczna» [Protohistoric Archaeology], «Archeologia religii» [Archaeology of Religion], «Archeologia sztuki» [Archaeology of Art], «Archeologia środowiskowa» [Environmental Archaeology], «Archeologia tożsamości etnicznej» [Archaeology of Ethnic Identity], «Archeologia tożsamości (gender)» [Archaeology of Identity (Gender)], «Archeologia zmysłów» [Archaeology of the Senses], «Archeologie konfliktów» [Archaeologies of Conflicts], «Archeologie współczesności» [Archaeologies of Contemporary], «Czas w archeologii – archeologia czasu» [Time in Archeology – Archeology of Time], «Język» [Language], «Komunikacja (komunikowanie)» [Communication (Communicate)], «Numizmatyka» [Numismatics], «Pismo» [Writing], «Pożywienie (mięsne i roślinne)» [Food (Meat and Plant)], «Semiotyka» [Semiotics], «Społeczeństwo» [Society], «Technika i technologia: ceramika» [Technique and Technology: Ceramics], «Technika i technologia: drewno» [Technique and Technology: Wood], «Technika i technologia: kamień» [Technique and Technology: Stone], «Technika i technologia: krzemieniarstwo» [Technique and Technology: Flintsmithing], «Technika i technologia: metalurgia» [Technique and Technology: Metallurgy], «Technika i technologia: szkło» [Technique and Technology: Glass], «Technika i technologia: włókiennictwo» [Technique and Technology: Textiles].

Problem area V. *Archeologia we współczesności. Archeologia wobec społeczeństwa* [Archaeology in Contemporaneity: Archaeology Towards Society] consists of 20 entries concerning the relationship between archaeology, the present day, and society in ideational, material, and action-oriented (non-textual) dimensions. The terms in this area reflect the complex and multifaceted nature of the relationships between archaeology and modernity, as well as between archaeology and society, emphasizing the multi-temporal and multi-actor connections between nearly every aspect of archaeological research and the contemporary world. This problem area consists of the following entries: «Archeologia a polityka zrównoważonego rozwoju» [Archaeology and Policy of Sustainable Development], «Archeologia publiczna. Archeologia wspólnotowa» [Public Archaeology: Community Archaeology], «Archeologia sądowa» [Forensic Archaeology], «Archeologia versus polityka» [Archaeology Versus Politics], «Archeologia w strefach konfliktów. Archeologia wobec konfliktów» [Archaeology in Conflict Zones: Archaeology Towards Conflicts], «Dydaktyka archeologiczna. Archeologia jako kierunek kształcenia» [Archaeological Didactics: Archaeology as a Field of Education], «Komodyfikacja dóbr kultury oraz komercjalizacja archeologii» [Commodification of Cultural Property and Commercialization of Archaeology], «Konwersacja ruchomości archeologicznych» [Conversation of Archaeological Movables], «Muzealnictwo archeologiczne w Polsce» [Archaeological Museology in Poland], «Nekrodziedzictwo» [Necroheritage], «Nowe podejścia do dziedzictwa archeologicznego. Krytyczne studia nad dziedzictwem» [New Approaches to Archaeological Heritage: Critical Heritage Studies], «Ochrona prawna zabytków archeologicznych» [Legal Protection of Archaeological Monuments], «Popularyzacja archeologii i upowszechnianie wiedzy archeologicznej w Polsce» [Popularization of Archaeology and Dissemination of Archaeological Knowledge in Poland], «Potencjał, zagrożenia i ochrona najstarszych śladów archeologicznych i paleontologicznych» [Potential, Threats and Protection of the Oldest Archaeological and Paleontological Traces], «Potencjał, zagrożenia i ochrona nowożytnych obszarów przemysłowej eksploracji złóż naturalnych» [Potential, Threats and Protection of Modern Areas of Industrial Exploration of Natural Deposits], «Pseudoarcheologia» [Pseudoarchaeology], «Rekonstrukcje, rewitalizacje zabytków archeologicznych versus dyrektywa ochrony *in situ*» [Reconstructions, Revitalizations of Archaeological Monuments Versus *in situ* Protection Directive], «System ochrony konserwatorskiej zabytków archeologicznych w Polsce» [System of Conservation Protection of Archaeological Monuments in Poland], «Turystyka archeologiczna» [Archaeological Tourism], «Zabytki archeologiczne wobec zagrożeń: nielegalne wykopaliska i nielegalny obrót» [Archaeological Monuments Towards Threats: Illegal Excavations and Illegal Trade].

CRITICAL EVALUATION

A critical evaluation of *Leksykonu terminów archeologicznych* reveals its significant and commendable contribution to the organization and systematization of knowledge in archaeology – both through the adopted form of publication and the careful se-

lection of entries. It serves as a tool that orders and integrates concepts, approaches, and terminologies previously dispersed, which fosters building more coherent and precise communication within the research community as well as in educational contexts. The entries included therein may serve as starting points for further, in-depth theoretical and methodological reflection, as well as provide useful references for analyses of specific research cases. Thus, lexicon not only supports the consolidation of knowledge within the discipline but also creates space for its critical development and reinterpretation in light of changing research contexts and scientific paradigms. Moreover, the 'lexicon' format clearly and accessibly presents to archaeology students the key terms within the discipline, offering a handy list of the most important concepts shaping Polish archaeological discourse. The structure of lexicon allows its use both thematically – through reference to the distinguished problem areas – and intuitively, thanks to the alphabetical arrangement of entries. Such a solution significantly increases the publication's functionality and usefulness, making it a tool not only informative but also educational. For archaeology students, this represents a particular didactic value: On one hand, it facilitates quick location of a specific term; on the other, it encourages deeper reflection on its meaning in theoretical and methodological contexts. Each entry is accompanied by a systematic description that takes into account the current state of knowledge and is supplemented by a recommendation of source literature, enabling independent study of the given issue. Additionally, the bibliographic hints guide the reader toward further studies, supporting the development of academic competencies.

Lexicon is maintained in the rigor of an academic style, which may limit its accessibility for audiences interested in archaeology outside the academic environment. This in turn reduces the role of lexicon as a publication popularizing archaeology, especially in the context of widely sharing humanities research results with the broader public. However, this is not a shortcoming of the publication, since lexicon does not aspire to be a popular science work but primarily serves a scientific and educational function, addressed to researchers, students, and specialists in archaeology. Its deliberate goal is to present terminology precisely and in accordance with the requirements of an academic discipline.

The introduction of a dual index of entries in lexicon was a practical and well--thought-out editorial solution: The first organized according to affiliation with specific thematic domains, i.e., distinguished problem areas; and the second arranged alphabetically. This two-track indexing structure allows the reader to navigate the publication content both according to the logic of substantive issues and intuitively, based on the traditional lexicographic arrangement. This solution significantly enhances the publication's functionality, enabling more effective information retrieval depending on research, educational, or cognitive needs. Additionally, the thematic layout supports a synthetic approach to issues, which aids the contextualization of knowledge and facilitates noticing connections between entries from different archaeological fields.

The structure introduced and consistently maintained by the editors effectively enabled portraying archaeology as a socially grounded and stably established discipline, which was one of the editors' objectives. Of particular importance in this

context is problem area V. *Archeologia we współczesności. Archeologia wobec społeczeństwa* [Archaeology in Contemporaneity: Archaeology Towards Society], which emphasizes archaeology's role as an active participant in public debate, a component of politics of memory, and a tool of education and cultural awareness building. This approach reflects contemporary trends in the humanities, which highlight the social responsibility of science and its engagement in processes shaping collective identity. Simultaneously, it presents archaeology as a dynamically developing discipline, capable of critical self-reflection and adaptation of methods and goals to changing socio-cultural realities. For this reason, lexicon not only systematizes concepts and orders knowledge but also promotes understanding archaeology as a significant area of contemporary culture, engaging in dialogue with various social groups, institutions, and ideological currents. In my view, this aspect of the publication has been fully realized and constitutes one of its significant strengths.

Leksykon terminów archeologicznych, the fruit of many years of reflection, numerous discussions, meetings, and conferences conducted within the framework of the Commission for Anthropology of Prehistory and the Middle Ages of the Polish Academy of Sciences, continues and develops previous initiatives undertaking conceptualization within Polish archaeology. Consequently, it should be regarded as an essential compendium systematizing and ordering terminology related to the archaeological process in the context of the Polish research tradition, both from the perspective of scientific research and academic teaching. This publication not only consolidates a shared conceptual framework enabling precise scientific communication but also supports the development of critical thinking about the methodological and epistemological foundations of archaeology as a scientific discipline. Furthermore, it constitutes a platform for further reflection on the identity of Polish archaeology, its theoretical specificity, and its relation to the international scientific discourse.

CONCLUSIONS

Leksykon terminów archeologicznych is the first publication on the Polish publishing market that systematically and orderly undertakes the conceptualization of the archaeological process from the perspective of the Polish scientific community. The set of terms, concepts, and research categories contained therein creates a coherent conceptual framework reflecting the specificity and achievements of the native archaeological tradition. This publication constitutes not only a valuable compendium of knowledge useful in the context of scientific research and academic teaching but also an important reference point for further reflection on the theoretical-methodological identity of Polish archaeology. Its unique character lies in presenting the contribution of the Polish archaeological community to the systematization and precision of terminology, making it an essential tool not only for students and researchers but also for anyone interested in a deeper understanding of the contemporary conceptual

frameworks of this discipline. *Leksykon terminów archeologicznych* also initiates an important discussion about the lexical foundations of archaeology in Poland and – thanks to its accessible structure and high substantive level – may meet with broad reception in academic and professional environments. It encourages reading not only as a cognitive tool but also as an impulse for further research and reflection on the issues contained therein.

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