

In this volume we present a collection of scientific papers from the first workshop in Catalonia specifically devoted to archaeological geophysical surveying. It is a work of undeniable scientific interest with contributions by authors and professionals of great prestige and has allowed a transversal study to be made of one of the most important archaeological sites in Catalonia. However, beyond the scientific aspects of this volume, it falls to us to make some reflections concerning the evolution of archaeological geophysics in recent years.

The use of non-destructive imaging techniques to study the subsoil has gradually made its way into Catalan archaeological research.

This development has been made possible by the interest of a number of archaeologists who saw the possibilities of geophysical surveying as a new *toolbox* at their disposal.

The possibility of obtaining maps of the subsoil using different methods has placed a new form of research on the table. On the one hand, the possibility of exploring large areas that would be inconceivable with traditional excavation methods allows us to expand the context of archaeological sites and delimit them more accurately.

However, as we never tire of saying, no matter how important the results of geophysics surveys are, they are not designed to replace excavations, but rather to make them more effective.

On the other hand, the incorporation of geophysics into increasingly multidisciplinary archaeological research teams allows more effective planning of excavations, thanks to the availability of more and higher quality prior information.

Some of these teams have managed to break fresh ground with these new focuses. The systematic work carried out by the team investigating the archaeological site of Puig Ciutat (Oristà, Barcelona) is a good example of this and it has been followed by those of such important sites as Ullastret, Empúries and El Molí d'Espígol.

These experiences have also allowed the initiation of quite a large scientific production with the aim, distanced from localisms, of including it in the growing corpus of scientific literature, most of which is being built up under the auspices of the International Society for Archaeological Prospection (ISAP).

However, Archaeological Geophysics is still not a well-defined or accepted discipline in Catalan academia and we need to move forward with this scientific recognition if we want to reach the level of the countries around us.

In this precise context the MAC IWAG workshop was proposed as a way of giving recognition to the use of archaeological geophysics as a powerful tool with a promising future and one which should be disseminated among those working in archaeology and heritage.

The initiative arose from the relationship established over the years between MAC researchers such as Gabriel de Prado and Jordi Principal and the team at SOT Archaeological Prospection.

The nucleus of the organisation was developed thanks to the tenacity of our colleague Ekhine Gàrcia who, together with Aurora Martín, Gabriel de Prado, Ferran Codina, Jordi Principal and Alexandre Novo, managed to bring together some of the sector's best researchers and professionals in a programme of conferences and practical sessions focusing on the archaeological complex of Ullastret, as well as making it all logistically possible.

In this respect, the collaboration of Dr Armin Schmidt (International Society for Archaeological Prospection, Geo-dataWiz) allowed us to count on the backing of ISAP for the project, as part of the support for the use of non-destructive surveying methods all over the world.

It only remains, therefore, for me to thank this nucleus of people for their efforts in organising the workshop and also to express my gratitude for the dedication of friends and colleagues beyond the strictly professional and scientific.

I am referring to the speakers Dr Dean Goodman (Archaeometry Research Laboratory, USA), Cornelius Meyer (Eastern Atlas), Dr Phillippe De Smedt (University of Ghent), Gianfranco Morelli (Geostudi Astier, IDS Corporation), Robert Tamba (SOT Archaeological Prospection) and Dr Albert Casas (University of Barcelona).

*Roger Sala*

Director of SOT Archaeological Prospection