



1923–2017

PROFESSOR ANDRZEJ ŻAKI, CREATOR AND THE FIRST EDITOR  
OF THE ACTA ARCHAEOLOGICA CARPATHICA HAS PASSED AWAY

Professor Andrzej Julian Żaki was born in Świrz, a place in the vicinity of Lvov on Sep. 6<sup>th</sup> 1923 as a son of Marian Leopold Żaki and Maria of Politowski. He completed his studies at the Jagiellonian University between 1944 and 1947, having even commenced at undercover faculty due to the occupation time. He prepared his MA thesis on Radial Ceramic Culture under the auspices of Prof. Józef Widajewicz. He received his PhD at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin in 1949. A promoter of his dissertation on ‘The beginnings of the Lusatian Culture in the basin of Upper Vistula’ was prof. Józef Gajek. After designating him as assistant professor he held the office of manager of the Department of Archaeology of the State Art Collections at the Wawel for many years. After leaving Poland in 1971 he was first in the Switzerland and later on in the UK, where he embraced the position of the Head of the Chair at the Polish Foreign Land University in 1977, succeeding Prof. T. Sulimirski and where he was awarded a honorary doctorate. He was there a lecturer in the subject of Archaeology of the Middle Bronze and Early Iron Ages and of the Early Medieval Age. Under the aegis of that institution he was lucky to take part in the expedition to Easter Island and to the Andes.

Between 1975 and 1976 he was formally a lecturer at the University of Lima but he never conducted classes due to long-term student strikes. He received a honorary doctorate. Scientific activity of Prof. Żaki was focused on the issues of

the Lusatian Culture and Early Medieval Period, especially on monumental fortified objects such as castles. As a longtime head of the Department of Archaeology of the State Art Collections at the Wawel, he coordinated excavations performed in various parts of the Wawel hill. He also conducted a long-term excavation in Przemyśl, resulting in the discovery of pre-romanesque palatium and rotunda. Results of these and other field works and studies on many aspects of the Medieval Culture have been included in the monography.

Andrzej Żaki excavated Carpathian fortified hillforts of the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. Of special significance were the works performed at Wietrzno-Bóbrka, Marcinkowice and other fortresses of the Dunajec Valley, such as Kurów, Białowoda, Maszkowice, Naszacowice and Zawada Lanckorońska. Examination of medieval castles of Czorsztyn, Czchów, Melsztyn, Muszyna and Rytyro was also of his interest.

In a separate stream of Prof. Żaki's activity we could find mountain archaeology, which included international Carpathian symposia organized in 1961 and 1964 and primarilyly appoitment of still appearing *Acta Archaeologica* yearbook in 1958 and then its redaction untill 1974. Foundation of Carpathian Archaeological Expedition in 1951 also deserves a special mention. Under his direction acted the later outstanding archaeologists. Pioneering role of Prof. A. Żaki was played in the field of reconstruction of the earliest settlement of Polish Carpathians. Referring to the pollen analysis of the Podhale peatbogs, as the first archaeologist he recognized the importance of palaeobotanical evidence in the discussion about possible settlement of those areas in the Neolithic and later periods. He was also a forerunner of the research of Early Neolithic colonies grouped on the threshold of Carpathians, in the region of Rzeszow and advocated tracking trans-Carpathian contacts in prehistory on the basis of single finds of loose hatchets and axes, including also copper axes.

Prof. Andrzej Żaki was a member of UISPP and PAU. He took part in many international congresses. Here one can mention VI UISPP Congress, Rome 1962; VII UISPP Congress, Prag 1966; IX UISPP Congress, Nice 1976; I International Congress of Slavic Archaeology, Warszawa 1965; Symposium über den Lengyel-Komplex und die benachbarten Kulturen, Nitra — Malé Vozokany 1967; Americanistic Congress, Paris 1975; III Congreso Peruano del Hombre y la Cultura Andina, Lima 1978; Slavic-Germanic Borderland in the Early Medieval Age, Hamburg 1989; St. Wojciech Symposium, St. Maurice, 1997. Estimated number of his publications 567, including 5 books. Apart from our magazine he was also the founder and editor of another journal 'Universitas'.

A tribute to the scientific achievemnts of Prof. Żaki was a volume titled 'Polonia Minor Medii Aevi' dedicated to him on his 80'th birthday (Kraków-Krosno 2003).

*Artificem commendat opus!*

*Paweł Valde-Nowak*