

The aim of the project is to verify whether the binding regulations in Poland after 1989 concerning the protection of archaeological heritage meet their basic objectives. We want to establish whether the Polish archaeological heritage protection system serves the research tasks of archaeology, ensures effective protection of archaeological heritage, encourages reporting new archaeological finds to the authorities and prevents crimes against archaeological monuments.

In the second half of the 19th and 20th centuries archaeologists received numerous information about accidental finds of archaeological monuments from the current territory of Poland. Their supply gradually decreases after 1989, despite the development of technology, popularisation of the use of metal detectors and the emergence of new organisations associating antiquity lovers and amateur prospectors. On the other hand, the phenomenon of crime against archaeological artefacts (*nighthawking*) is increasing. For years amateur prospectors have been (and often still are today) perceived as the main threat to archaeological heritage, also due to the legal model adopted in Poland, which makes amateur "detector" archaeology practically illegal. At the same time, the unprecedented increase in construction investments and the lack of uniform standards causes problems in recording and storing archaeological monuments from rescue excavations and in enforcing the keeping of reliable documentation of conducted excavations.

The presented project, through the use of interdisciplinary methods, aims to establish what are the causes of these phenomena and whether they are regionally and socially differentiated. In order to answer the research questions we will make a comprehensive analysis of the current state of protection of the archaeological heritage in Poland. We will check if the archaeological research is properly documented and if archaeological finds (including so-called mass monuments) are properly stored. Within the project there will be created a database of finds reported by amateurs in Poland after 1989, rewards paid to finders and detected crimes against archaeological monuments, taking into account the possible regional differentiation and the social status of people reporting finds and committing crimes against monuments. We will compare the number of finds reported to museums in Poland and in selected European countries after 1989. This will make it possible to assess the effectiveness of solutions adopted in different countries. Thanks to the interdisciplinary analysis of the collected data (using various methods developed by social, legal, historical and geographical sciences), we will identify the main weaknesses of the archaeological heritage protection system in Poland. Using a comparative method, we will analyse the solutions adopted for the protection and registration of archaeological monuments in selected countries (Denmark, England and Wales, Belgium, Italy, Romania). We will verify the validity of the possible introduction of some of these solutions into the Polish system and present the research problem in the European background.

The results of our research will allow us to indicate what solutions can be introduced in Poland, so that new archaeological sources would be made available for scientific research and effectively protected, and the social potential of antiquity lovers and amateur prospectors would be used to the benefit of archaeological heritage. The above issues have not been the subject of in-depth studies so far, and the implementation of this project may affect both the increase in the level of protection of archaeological heritage and the increase in the source base for archaeology, in the form of new finds of archaeological artefacts reported by amateurs.