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## **Symposium: Aerial Archaeology: Approaches to the Interpretation of Sites and Landscapes**

Robert Bewley

### ***Aerial archaeology - approaches to interpreting archaeological sites and landscapes***

Robert Bewley

Aerial survey for archaeology is a proven and efficient method of prospecting for sites and interpreting ancient landscapes, in a non-destructive way. As a technique and in its approach it can be adapted to almost any environment, on a world-wide basis.

The purpose of this session will be to explore those areas of the world where there have been successful aerial archaeology programmes and to encourage wider usage in other countries and regions. To be successful the technique needs the co-operation of governments (in terms of permission and resources) and a desire amongst archaeologists to combine this technique with other survey methods. Although primarily a survey technique its impact is being widened with the analysis of interpretation and mapping. It has an important contribution to make in cultural resource management, education, understanding the dynamics of past human land use, as well as providing good material for popularising the past.

### ***Africa's socio-economic experience down the ages: Linking aerial archaeology data to today's 'suffering and smiling' (to be confirmed)***

Patrik Darling

### ***A complex project on the study of prehistoric settlement patterns in Bohemia: The contribution of aerial archaeology***

Martin Gojda

A recent project has studied relations between different categories of human occupation activity in prehistoric Bohemia (western part of the Czech republic) in both synchronic, and diachronical terms. The intention is to identify principal features of the settlement network, its links with the natural environment, demographic characteristics, its internal structure, its continuity over time and the roots of changes affecting it. It is also expected that the project could contribute to the recognition of the practical and non-functional aspects of spatial arrangement of prehistoric sites and to sites prediction. The project team aspires to achieve significant advances in the field of non-destructive prospection and documentation by using aerial archaeology, surface survey (plough walking) and geophysics. Also of importance is the use of GPS for precise topography of data collected during field campaigns.

Aerial reconnaissance is a primary and repeatedly practised procedure in territories of our interest. Crop- and soil mark sites identified from the air have been rectified to plans and hopefully archaeological maps based on the information gathered during the course of the project will be produced in future. The presentation of how aerial archaeology has been operating in the project is the main topic of the proposed paper. Activities of the Prague Institute of Archaeology in helping to practice aerial prospection in other central European countries will also be mentioned.

### ***Aerial archaeology in Jordan, 1918-1998 and beyond***

David Kennedy

The earliest photography of archaeological sites in Jordan from the air was by pilots of the German air force in 1918. A considerable number have been preserved and offer precious records of sites damaged or now lost entirely. Likewise, the air photographs taken for Air Aurel Stein in 1939 have recently been rediscovered. More recently, an ARC-funded project has allowed the author to interpret over 4000 vertical photographs of Jordan of 1953 and identify some 25,000 sites. Now, following a flight in 1997, a season of new flying, explicitly for archaeology, was carried out by Dr R Bewley and the author in May 1998. It is hoped that further flying may be possible on a routine basis in future years.

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***Absence - real or apparent?: Aerial archaeology toward postprocessual thinking***

Wlodek Raçkowski

In my paper I would like to explore the way in which main ideas of postprocessual archaeology refer to aerial photographs and their potential to the study of the past. It seems to me that two aspects are especially important. The first one concerns objectivity vs. subjectivity of aerial photographs. Michael Shanks writes that discovery (from the air as well) asserts our autonomy. It means the past in some sense belongs to us (aerial archaeologists) because we found it. The second one concerns visualisation of the past which might be treated as an important element of archaeological discourse with significant persuasive power. Photographs are used as a special form of narration and they cannot be reduced to words.

Both aspects show that aerial archaeologists have kind of dual power. They possess the past because it was saved by them by taking photographs and they can also select/control the past by utilising different kind of photographs. Does it mean that aerial archaeologists have a power in relation to both professional archaeologists and the public? Can aerial archaeologists utilise their potential power in order to be involved in current theoretical discussion in archaeology?

***Installation of Aerial Archaeology in China***

B Song (in absentia)