

Follow the Yellow! Practical and Theoretical Implications of Two Different Excavation Strategies

Author **WOLFRAM SCHIER**

*Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany ,
wschier@zedat.fu-berlin.de*

Abstract:

The article compares the practical, methodological, and theoretical implications of two major excavation strategies: the stratigraphical method, which is interface-oriented, and the planum method, based on artificial levels. Drawing on the experience from the Uivar project in Romania and subsequent research on Neolithic circular enclosures (rondels) in Germany, the author demonstrates how stratigraphic excavation allows for a finer spatial-temporal solution, a more reliable assignment of complexes, and superior control over stratigraphic contamination, but requires greater effort in specialists training and field data recording. In contrast, the planum-section approach favours the acquisition of comparable two-dimensional plans and sections, and facilitates volumetric calculations and analyses of artefact density, but transfers part of the interpretative work to the post-excavation stage and tends to underemphasise the evidence of human intervention. The paper also highlights recent technological advances in 3D model recording, in three-dimensional digital measurements, including dense TST recording, laser scanning of three-dimensional surfaces, and 3D photogrammetry (Structure-from-Motion). All these developments provide cost-effective and accessible solutions for documenting interfaces and propose a nuanced conceptualization of excavation methodologies.

Keywords: *Excavation strategies, planum method vs stratigraphic method, stratigraphical excavation, recording of layers, negative excavated features*