

CV Lieven Verdonck

1. Personal information

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2. Education

18/12/2012: PhD (Doctor of Archaeology)

Institution: Department of Archaeology, Ghent University, Belgium

Thesis title: High-resolution ground-penetrating radar (GPR) prospection with a modular configuration

Supervisors: Prof Dr R. Docter and Dr A. Schmidt

17/07/2008: MPhil

Institution: Department of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford, UK

Thesis title: Cross-correlation of electrical resistance and GPR data as a method for depth estimation in archaeology

Supervisor: Dr A. Schmidt

23/09/2002: Licentiate in Archaeology

Institution: Department of Archaeology, Ghent University, Belgium

Thesis title: The Roman villas in the Marche region (Italy)

Supervisor: Prof Dr F. Vermeulen

02/07/1997: Licentiate in Law

Institution: Faculty of Law, Ghent University, Belgium

3. Current Position

From 01/09/2023:

UK Research and Innovation Postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Cambridge (UK), Faculty of Classics; Supervisor: Dr A. Launaro (originally a Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions Postdoctoral Fellowship)

4. Previous positions

From 01/09/2022 until 31/08/2023:

Postdoctoral fellowship (within the 'Paris Region Fellowship Programme') at the Ecole normale supérieure (Paris), Département d'Archéologie et Philologie d'Orient et d'Occident (AOOrOc); Supervisor: Dr M. Dabas

From 15/03/2021 until 31/08/2022:

Postdoctoral researcher at Ghent University, Department of Archaeology

From 01/10/2016 until 25/11/2019:

Postdoctoral fellowship FWO (Research Foundation – Flanders)

Application evaluated by the Interdisciplinary FWO expert panel; Supervisor: Prof Dr F. Vermeulen

From 01/10/2013 until 30/09/2016:

Postdoctoral fellowship FWO (Research Foundation – Flanders)

Application evaluated by the Interdisciplinary FWO expert panel; Supervisor: Prof Dr F. Vermeulen

From 01/01/2012 until 30/09/2013:

Scientific collaborator at Ghent University, Department of Archaeology

From 23/05/2011 until 22/11/2011:

Researcher on exchange at commercial company Eastern Atlas–Geophysical Prospection, Meyer & Ullrich GbR, Berlin, Germany, within FP7 Action 'Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways'

Project: Radiography of the past. Non-destructive approaches to understand and valorize complex archaeological sites.

Supervisors: (beneficiary) Mr. Cornelius Meyer; (home organization: Ghent University): Prof Dr F. Vermeulen

5. Publications (selection)

Peer reviewed articles in international journals (included in Web of Science)

(1) **Verdonck, L.**, A. Launaro, F. Vermeulen, and M. Millett. "Ground-penetrating radar survey at Falerii Novi: a new approach to the study of Roman cities" *ANTIQUITY* 94 (2020): 705–723. Open access: <https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2020.82>. GPR survey at the Roman town Falerii Novi (the first complete survey of a

Roman town): review of the methods and overview of the results, demonstrating how the survey of large urban sites challenges current methods of analysis and publication.

(2) **Verdonck, L.** “Detection of Buried Roman Wall Remains in Ground-penetrating Radar Data Using Template Matching.” *ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROSPECTION* 23.4 (2016): 257–272. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/ya7u6nm6>. This paper shows the advantages of template matching-based extraction of buried linear structures such as wall foundations, over traditional techniques. The technique detected ~75 % of the structures identified through manual interpretation.

(3) **Verdonck, L.**, D. Taelman, F. Vermeulen, and R. Docter. “The Impact of Spatial Sampling and Migration on the Interpretation of Complex Archaeological Ground-penetrating Radar Data.” *ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROSPECTION* 22.2 (2015): 91–103. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/24krdj2r>. This paper presents an objective way of determining the maximum sample interval in GPR surveys, to take full advantage of the capability of the technique. The positive effect of 3-D migration processing is also demonstrated.

(4) Saey, T., S. Delefortrie, **L. Verdonck**, Ph. De Smedt, and M. Van Meirvenne. “Integrating EMI and GPR Data to Enhance the Three-dimensional Reconstruction of a Circular Ditch System.” *JOURNAL OF APPLIED GEOPHYSICS* 101 (2014): 42–50. It is shown for the first time how integration of GPR and electromagnetic induction data allows to calibrate the speed of the GPR waves and the conductivity of the different layers, resulting in a better interpretation of archaeological and geomorphological data.

(5) **Verdonck, L.**, F. Vermeulen, R. Docter, C. Meyer, and R. Kniess. “2D and 3D Ground-penetrating Radar Surveys with a Modular System: Data Processing Strategies and Results from Archaeological Field Tests.” Ed. Jan van der Kruk, Evert Slob, & Lorenzo Crocco. *NEAR SURFACE GEOPHYSICS* 11.2 (2013): 239–252. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/2pvbfywt>. A novel modular GPR system is presented (i.e. the use of several single antennas in parallel), the required positioning accuracy is discussed and solutions for striping in the horizontal slices are proposed.

(6) **Verdonck, L.**, F. Vermeulen, C. Corsi, and R. Docter. “Ground-penetrating Radar Survey at the Roman Town of Mariana (Corsica), Complemented with Fluxgate Gradiometer Data and Old and Recent Excavation Results.” *NEAR SURFACE GEOPHYSICS* 10.1 (2012): 35–45. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/axu3b3u>. The GPR survey at Mariana revealed parts of the early Imperial centre, completely unknown until then, which mainly consists of private houses, often with different occupation phases. The survey allowed locating several old excavations.

(7) **Verdonck, L.**, D. Simpson, W. Cornelis, A. Plyson, J. Bourgeois, R. Docter, and M. Van Meirvenne. “Ground-penetrating Radar Survey over Bronze Age Circular Monuments on a Sandy Soil, Complemented with Electromagnetic Induction and Fluxgate Gradiometer Data.” Ed. M. Ciminale, R. Lasaponara, & S. Piro. *ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROSPECTION* 16.3 (2009): 193–202. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/2mw272fr>. This paper presents a GPR survey over two circular ditches surrounding Bronze Age burial mounds at Koekelare (Belgium). Their depth was estimated with migration velocity analysis and time domain reflectometry, and compared with augering results.

(8) Simpson, D., A. Lehouck, **L. Verdonck**, H. Vermeersch, M. Van Meirvenne, Jean Bourgeois, Erik Thoen, and R. Docter. “Comparison Between Electromagnetic Induction and Fluxgate Gradiometer Measurements on the Buried Remains of a 17th Century Castle.” *JOURNAL OF APPLIED GEOPHYSICS* 68.2 (2009): 294–300. Different configurations of an electromagnetic induction (EMI) sensor were evaluated and compared with fluxgate gradiometer measurements. The gradiometer anomalies were sharper, but also showed a more complicated response.

Peer reviewed articles in international journals (not included in Web of Science)

(9) Verhoeven, G., F. Vermeulen, D. Taelman, and **L. Verdonck**. “Taking vegetation marks into the next dimension. Mapping the hilltop settlement of Montarice (central Adriatic Italy) by a multi-dimensional analysis of aerial imagery.” *ARCHEOLOGIA AEREA* 11 (2017): 165–170. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/yayzr42r>. The potential of state-of-the-art image-based modelling (IBM) techniques is explored to create high-resolution orthophotographs from analogue images acquired at Montarice Hill, Marche, Italy.

(10) Vella, N., A. Bonanno, M. Anastasi, B. Bechtold, R. Farrugia, K. Fenech, D. Mizzi, **L. Verdonck**, and A. Zammit. “A View from the Countryside. The Nature of the Late Punic and Early Roman Activity at the Zejtun Villa Site, Malta.” *RIVISTA DI STUDI FENICI* 45 (2017): 109–143. Print. The excavations and the GPR prospection at the Roman villa in Żejtun throw new light on rural Malta and on the transition between the Punic and Roman periods.

Book chapters

(11) **Verdonck, L.**, A. Launaro and M. Millett. “The urban survey: methodology.” *Interamna Lirenas. A Roman town in Central Italy revealed*. Ed. A. Launaro & M. Millett. Cambridge: McDonald Institute Monographs, 2023. 19–37. Open access: <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.99667>. Overview of the methodology of the geophysical surveys carried out at the Roman town Interamna Lirenas (Italy), with the emphasis on the GPR survey.

(12) Launaro, A., M. Millett, **L. Verdonck**, and F. Vermeulen, “Ground-penetrating radar survey as the linchpin of a multidisciplinary approach to the study of two Roman cities in Lazio.” *Non-intrusive methodologies for large area urban research*. Ed. I.P. Haynes et al. Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing Ltd., 2023, 74–80. Open access: <https://www.archaeopress.com/Archaeopress/download/9781803274461>. Review of the GPR method as it was deployed at the Roman towns Interamna Lirenas and Falerii Novi, and overview of the results (with detailed descriptions of the outcomes in some particular areas in both towns).

(13) **Verdonck, L.**, M. Praet, R. Docter, R. Laffineur, A. De Wulf, and C. Stal. “Geophysical, topographical, and remote sensing investigations on the Velatouri Hill at Thorikos (2006-2014).” *Thorikos: Reports and Studies XII*. Ed. R. Docter & M. Webster. Vol. 12. Leuven: Peeters, 2021. 81–98. Overview of the prospection activities carried out at Thorikos (Greece), including the GPR survey which detected part of the 5th century BC defense system.

(14) **Verdonck, L.**, Ph. De Smedt, and J. Verhegge. “Making Sense of Anomalies : Practices and Challenges in the Archaeological Interpretation of Geophysical Data.” *Innovation in Near-surface Geophysics: Instrumentation, Application, and Data Processing Methods*. Ed. R. Persico, S. Piro, & N. Linford. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Elsevier, 2019. 151–194. Different directions are proposed to facilitate the interpretation of geophysical data in archaeology, e.g. careful data acquisition and processing, data combination, and computer-aided interpretation.

(15) Van Limbergen, D., F. Vermeulen, G. Verhoeven, and **L. Verdonck**. “Methodological Approach.” *The Potenza Valley Survey (Marche, Italy) : Settlement Dynamics and Changing Material Culture in an Adriatic Valley Between Iron Age and Late Antiquity*. Ed. F. Vermeulen et al. Vol. 1. Rome: E.S.S. Editorial Service System Srl, 2017. 10–41. This chapter discusses the methodology the Potenza Valley Survey has adopted since 2000, which includes different kinds of geophysical survey (magnetometry, electrical resistivity imaging, GPR).

(16) **Verdonck, L.** “Fluxgate Gradiometer and GPR Survey to Locate and Characterize the Perimeter, Early Imperial Centre and Street Network of the Roman Town Mariana (Corsica).” *Archaeological Survey and the City*. Ed. P. Johnson & M. Millett. Vol. 2. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, 2013. 241–260. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/3hwunnc9>. Combined interpretation of the magnetometer and GPR prospections at Mariana; results of a test excavation which revealed different phases of a public building.

(17) **Verdonck, L.**, and D. Taelman. “Ground Penetrating Radar Survey at Ammaia.” *Ammaia I : the Survey : a Roman-Lusitanian Townscape Revealed*. Ed. C. Corsi & F. Vermeulen. Vol. 8. Ghent, Belgium: Academia Press, 2012. 69–81. Open access: <https://tinyurl.com/vzd2rrj6>. This chapter describes the GPR surveys conducted between 2008 and 2011 at the Roman town Ammaia (Portugal). Data acquisition and processing, results and archaeological interpretation are discussed.

Peer reviewed papers in international conference proceedings

(18) **Verdonck, L.**, and Adeline Hoffelinck, “Ground-penetrating radar survey of the area to the south of the Schola del Traiano (IV, V, 15-16) at Ostia.” *Ad Ostium Tiberis. Proceedings of the Conference ‘Ricerca Archeologica alle Foce del Tevere’ (Rome–Ostia, December 2018)*. Ed. G. Mainet and M.S. Graziano. Leuven: Peeters, 2022. 79–90. This GPR survey at Ostia detected structures near the *Schola del Traiano*, but it is difficult to draw conclusions on their function. The existence of *tabernae* and a street was confirmed.

(19) **Verdonck, L.**, F. Vermeulen, M. Millett, and A. Launaro. “The Impact of High Resolution Ground-Penetrating Radar Survey on Understanding Roman Towns: Case Studies from Falerii Novi and Interamna Lirenas (Lazio, Italy).” *Proceedings of the 2018 IEEE International Conference on Metrology for Archaeology and Cultural Heritage*. Cassino, 2018. 249–254. Open access: <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.36280>. It is described how a dense sampling strategy, advanced data processing, centimeter-precise positioning, and the combination of magnetometer and GPR data contributed to the understanding of these two Roman towns, and Roman urbanism in Italy.

(20) Mac Thi, Thoa, Cosmin Copot, **L. Verdonck**, and Robin De Keyser. “Speed Control Strategy of Geophysical Measurement Platform for Archaeological Prospection: Conceptual Study.” *2016 IEEE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS (SMC)*. 2016. 3748–3753. This paper presents a conceptual study for speed control of an autonomous geophysical measurement platform (robot towing a cart with geophysical sensors) for archaeological prospection on challenging terrain.

(21) **Verdonck, L.**, Ernie Haerinck, and Bruno Overlaet. “GPR Survey to Explore Social Stratification in a pre-Islamic Burial Area at Mleiha, Sharjah (United Arab Emirates).” *PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2014 15TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GROUND PENETRATING RADAR (GPR 2014)*. Ed. S Lambot et al., 2014. 2–7. This paper presents a GPR survey to explore a necropolis near the eastern border of the site of Mleiha (United Arab Emirates). Several square tomb-towers were detected. All have marks that they have been plundered.

(22) **Verdonck, L.**, and F. Vermeulen. “3-D GPR Survey with a Modular System: Reducing Positioning Inaccuracies and Linear Noise.” *Archaeological Prospections*. Ed. Mahmut G Drahor & Meriç Berge. Istanbul: Archaeology and

Art Publications, 2011. 204–212. Positioning accuracy and solutions for striping in the horizontal slices when using a modular GPR system, are discussed.

6. Creation of archaeological database

I have taken care of the archiving of the GPR data (60 ha) which I collected at two Roman town sites investigated in the ‘Beneath the surface of Roman Republican Cities’ project (see below, ‘Major collaborations’). The data were deposited at the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), in accordance with the ‘Guide to Good Practice: Geophysical Data in Archaeology’. This has created the largest existing archaeological GPR database that is freely available, for analysis and reinterpretation by other researchers. Website: <https://doi.org/10.5284/1052663>. The data from Interamna Lirenas were also deposited at the Apollo repository of the University of Cambridge (available in open access from <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.85701>).

7. Invited lecture

I gave an invited lecture at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Laboratoire d’Archéologie et Philologie d’Orient et d’Occident), Paris, on 12 February 2021, with D. Taelman. This took place within the course ‘Historic geography and geoarchaeology’ (Dr. A. Dan). The title of the lecture was ‘Ammaia – a Roman town in Lusitania and its countryside revealed. An overview of the geoarchaeological and geophysical investigations’. I discussed the geophysical prospection activities by Ghent University at Ammaia (Portugal) since 2001.

8. Organization of international scientific meetings

On 13/06/2018, a workshop on the role of geophysical prospection in archaeology was organized in Brussels, by the Flemish organization for Immovable Heritage (E. Meylemans) and Ghent University (Ph. De Smedt, J. Verhegge and D). During the workshop, specialists from Flanders and the neighbouring countries exchanged ideas on this topic. My role was to give an introductory presentation to the techniques in order to clarify and delimit the subject, and to draw conclusions at the end of the workshop (with Ph. De Smedt and J. Verhegge).

On 26/09/2017, a workshop on GPR and heritage management was held at the British School at Rome, which I co-organized with Prof M. Millett and Dr A. Launaro (University of Cambridge), and with Prof F. Vermeulen (Ghent University). The aim of this workshop was (1) to present GPR projects in Italy, and (2) to bundle recommendations for heritage management proposed by the various projects. My role was to give an introduction on GPR, its potential and limitations, and on the ‘Beneath the surface of Roman Republican Cities’ project (see below ‘Major collaborations’).

9. Research expeditions

I have undertaken a large number of geophysical field expeditions abroad, sometimes as part of a larger campaign organized by the Department of Archaeology of Ghent University, and often in collaboration with other institutions. Research activities included GPR investigations, topographic measurements with GPS or total station, and data processing. Mostly these campaigns involved training of small groups of students. A selection of recent expeditions: Eauze (France), June–July 2023 (campaign of the Ecole normale supérieure, Paris); Lazio (Italy), May–August 2015, May–September 2016, June–July 2017, July 2020, June–July 2021, June–July 2022, in collaboration with the University of Cambridge; York (UK), August 2022 and August 2023, in collaboration with the University of Cambridge; Marche (Italy), July 2018 (part of a campaign organized by Ghent University, in collaboration with the University of Verona); Malta, July 2014, in collaboration with the University of Malta; Boeotia (Greece), June 2013, in collaboration with the University of Leiden.

10. Prizes and awards

Prize for best poster presentation at the NSGG Day Meeting on Recent Work in Archaeological Geophysics, Geological Society, London, 06/12/2016. Title of poster: ‘Beneath the surface of Roman Republican cities: large-scale GPR survey of Falerii Novi and Interamna Lirenas (Lazio, Italy)’ (with G. Bellini, A. Launaro, M. Millett and F. Vermeulen).

11. Funding, grants and fellowships received

For the grants, see also above, ‘Previous positions’ (postdoctoral fellowships).

- 1) Two grants by the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO): 2016–2019 and 2013–2016.
- 2) One grant by the Paris Region (Paris Region Fellowship Programme, a Marie Skłodowska Curie actions COFUND postdoctoral programme). (2022–2024)
- 3) One grant by UK Research and Innovation (2023–2025). Originally a Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowship, this grant was converted into a UKRI postdoctoral fellowship as the UK was not a member of the EU and was not associated to Horizon Europe at the time of the signature of the MSCA grant agreement).
- 4) (with F. Vermeulen) One contract in implementation of the AHRC-funded project ‘Beneath the surface of Roman Republican cities’ awarded to the University of Cambridge (2015–2018). See also ‘Major collaborations’ below.
- 5) One contract in implementation of the AHRC-funded project ‘Roman York beneath the streets’ awarded to the Universities of Cambridge and Reading (2021–2024). See also ‘Major collaborations’ below.

12. Supervision and mentoring

1 PhD student: I am in the PhD committee of Sanaz Esmaeili (University of South Florida, supervisor: Prof S. Kruse). I was one of the examiners in her PhD qualifying exam, I participated (via Skype) in one meeting per semester to monitor progress, and will be an examiner in her final thesis defence (04/11/2021).

2 Master students:

Feria Verschraegen, Ghent University; co-supervisor of thesis ‘Urban roots: mapping and monitoring of tree roots in urban context’ (2021);

Maarten Praet, Ghent University: supervisor of thesis ‘Magnetic prospection in archaeological research: case studies Thorikos (Greece) and Monnikerede (Belgium)’ (2015).

1 Bachelor student: Lies Crabeels, Ghent University; providing help with the interpretation of geophysical data during thesis preparation ‘The Malta Survey Project, Field B55: an analysis of the material from the intra-site survey in relation to the architecture’ (2019; supervisor: Prof Dr R. Docter).

13. Teaching

1 Module (3rd year BA in Archaeology, Ghent University): Non-invasive prospection techniques in Archaeology (6 lectures of 3 hours; approximately 20 students), since academic year 2016–17.

14. Editing and reviewing

I am guest editor of a Special Issue on ‘Advances in ground-penetrating radar for archaeology’ in the journal *Remote Sensing* (with N. Linford and I. Trinks).

I am a member of the Topical Advisory Panel of the journal *Remote Sensing*.

Journals I have reviewed for: *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences*, *Archaeological Prospection*, *Drones*, *Geoarchaeology*, *Heritage*, *ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information*, *Journal of Computer Applications in Archaeology*, *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, *Near Surface Geophysics*, *Remote Sensing*, *Sensors*.

15. Membership of societies

Computer Applications & Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA International)

International Society for Archaeological Prospection (ISAP)

Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG)

16. Major collaborations

Within the research project ‘Roman York beneath the streets’ (2021–2024), funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK), I am undertaking a GPR survey of a number of open areas and streets, to map the remains of the Roman city Eboracum (York), as well as medieval and later phases. This project is a collaboration between the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Classics (PI: Prof M. Millett), the University of Reading (Co-I: Dr. J. Chreighton), and the Department of Archaeology at Ghent University.

I am a promoter of ‘PROSPECT’, an International Thematic Network (Ghent University) for research, education and service in archaeological prospection (2021–2026). The network has 16 partners outside Ghent University, in Europe, Australia, the UK, and the USA. The network will focus on four themes (survey strategies, data fusion, juxtaposition of heritage perception and archaeological reality, and heritage under threat). Research activities include joint projects, joint PhDs and grant applications. The education component comprises e.g. field schools, workshops, and doctoral training programs. Service includes consultancy, public outreach and guideline development.

Within the research project ‘Beneath the surface of Roman Republican Cities’ (2015–2017), funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK), I undertook a complete GPR survey of two Roman towns in Lazio, Italy (60 ha). This project was a collaboration between the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Classics (the PI was Prof M. Millett, and the Co-I was Dr A. Launaro), and the Department of Archaeology at Ghent University (my postdoctoral supervisor Prof F. Vermeulen, and I).

17. Presentations at international conferences

The most recent ones are:

(1) ‘Automated high-resolution ground-penetrating radar prospection with an uncrewed ground vehicle at an archaeological site’, Oral presentation given at the 50th Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology Conference (CAA), Amsterdam, 06/04/2023.

(2) ‘Test with ImpulseRadar Raptor GPR array at Gisacum (Vieil-Évreux, France), and comparison with MALÀ MIRA’, Poster presentation at the 15th International Conference on Archaeological Prospection, Kiel, 29/03/2023.

(3) ‘The high resolution GPR survey of two roman republican cities: fieldwork and analytical techniques’, oral presentation at the Roman Archaeology Conference, Split, 07/04/2022.

18. Public outreach

As part of the worldwide press coverage following the publication of the prospection results at Falerii Novi (Italy) in the journal *Antiquity* (in newspapers from most European countries, CNN, the New York Times), I give about 20 interviews to radio stations, newspapers and websites, some aimed at a wide audience, others for an audience interested in science.

I published articles in popular scientific magazines, e.g. on my research in Bruges (*Magazine of the Museums in Bruges*, 2020), and in Lazio, Italy (in *Current World Archaeology*, 2018, and in *Archeo*, 2018).

I co-organized the exhibition 'Revealing a Roman landscape. Potentia and the Potenza valley between the Apennines and the Adriatic sea' (Rome, May–June 2017; Porto Recanati, July–October 2017, Ghent, March–April 2018), which gave an overview of the research conducted by Ghent University in the Potenza Valley (Marche, Italy) since 2000. My contribution consisted in providing content for the panels and monitors, giving a talk at the inauguration in Rome on 24/05/2017, and helping in setting up the exhibition.

In September 2018, I assisted in the search for the stolen panel of the Ghent Altarpiece, 'the Just Judges'. I carried out a GPR survey at a square near the cathedral of Ghent. Although nothing was found at the presumed location, public interest was large, creating an opportunity to raise awareness about the possibilities and limitations of archaeological prospection techniques.