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Development-led Archaeology in Europe Meeting the Needs of Archaeologists, Developers and the Public

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Edited by Agnes Stefánsdóttir

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Cover image: Archaeologist gives a guided tour at a development site at Reykjavík's
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Development-led archaeology in Europe

Meeting the needs of archaeologists, developers and the public

General introduction

As a contribution to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the European Archaeological Council organized its annual Symposium on a topic which is closely related to the objectives of this initiative. It was appropriate to gather in Bulgaria, the country which was chairing the European Union in the first half of 2018.

Development-led archaeology (preventive archaeology) has taken over almost all archaeological excavations in Europe. It is estimated, that in many European countries, as much as 80-90% of excavations are now development-led and in some countries close to 100%.

In 2015, the EAC Symposium concentrated on development-led archaeology under the title *When Valletta meets Faro. The reality of European archaeology in the 21st century*. The symposiums three sessions presented the different legal and organisational models across Europe, analysed the practical outcomes of different rescue archaeology solutions and a final session focused on how to assure quality of research and ensure lasting public benefit.

The 2017 symposium of the EAC was also in part linked to development-led archaeology. The title of the symposium was *Dare to Choose: Making Choices in Archaeological Heritage Management* and it concentrated on the decision-making mechanisms and actions from mainly the heritage management viewpoint.

One of the subthemes of the Amersfoort Agenda¹ published after the EAC Symposium in 2015 (Theme 1. The Spirit of the Faro Convention: embedding archaeology in society) was: *Know the public: analyse the wants, interests and expectations of stakeholders in society regarding their involvement in archaeology, preferably through interactions with these stakeholders*.

In the 2018 heritage management symposium, the idea was to look at the topic of development-led archaeology from a different angle and encourage a discussion between the heritage management officials, the developers, the archaeologists working in the field and the public. How can we meet the needs of these very different stakeholders and do we always need to?

This topic was also relevant in view of the decision of the EU and European Parliament's decision to make 2018 the European Year of Cultural Heritage with the aim of raising

¹ <https://www.europae-archaeologiae-consilium.org/strategic-documents>

awareness as well as drawing attention to the opportunities offered by Cultural Heritage. In other words, to reflect on the place that cultural heritage occupies in all our lives.

The Symposium lasted one and a half days (22 and 23 March 2018) and consisted of three presentation sessions followed by discussions – including questions and comments from the floor.

Session 1 – The archaeologists

The first session of the symposium was dedicated to the archaeologists. What has been the impact of development-led archaeology on archaeology as a profession, are we seeing lower wages for archaeologists because of market dumping? Is the science poorer? Has archaeology turned into a mechanical profession, with all the excitement and wonder gone?

Who is really in charge and making decisions on what and how to excavate?

How do we make sure that the quality of work is sufficient? Should there be a centralized (state) agency or is a regional office better? Or can we leave it to the „market“?

Lyudmil Vagalinski (see p. 15) discussed the juridical and practical effects of the implementation of a new Law of Heritage of Culture in Bulgaria which was introduced in 2009.²

Nadezhda Kecheva (see p. 21) introduced some practical examples of development-led projects in Bulgaria and it's impact on the profession and the quality of the work.³

Eva Skyllberg (see p. 25) described how quality assessment and quality control of projects has become important in the management of Swedish archaeology.

Filipa Neto and João Marques discussed the history of archaeological research in Portugal and how the profession has evolved through the years. Archaeology is now a low-income job.

Petri Halinen, Marianna Niukkanen, Sirkka- Liisa Seppälä & Helena Taskinen (see p. 29) described lessons learnt from having free competition in development-led archaeology in Finland.

Rudina Zoto, Mariglen Meshini & Ilira Çela (see p. 33) introduced the Project of the natural gas Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) in Albania. The pipeline starts in Turkey, goes through Greece and Albania, under the Adriatic sea and ends in Italy. Having such

² Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.4>

³ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.2>

a big project has resulted in an increase of using scientific criteria in archaeological processes and has been a school for Albanian archaeology.⁴

Session 2 – The developers

In session two, development-led excavations were discussed concentrating on the developers' viewpoint. The 'polluter pays principle' and other models of funding development-led archaeology were compared as well as the differences on how large-scale and small-scale developers operate under the polluter pays principle.

How can we make archaeological research a natural part of the construction cost – and is it natural?

Jon Seligman (see p. 39) introduced the Israeli experience with archaeology vs. development. Development-led archaeology is increasing and has reached around 70 % of all archaeological research.

Kate Geary discussed how archaeology can add value to development. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists has produced a guide for clients commissioning archaeological work.

Máté Stibrányi & Eszter Kreiter described current approaches to development-led archaeology in Hungary.

Anu Kivirüüt & Ulla Kadakas described how the Estonian heritage protection system is based on the polluter pays principle. In small-scale excavations the National Heritage Board has tried to help the owners by doing the preliminary survey or offering partial funding.

Neil Holbrook (see p. 43) discussed client expectations of commercial archaeology in the UK.

Henny A. Groenendijk (see p. 49) presented some actual best practice examples from the Dutch countryside where it was attempted to create a win-win situation for both farmers and the archaeology.⁵

Session 3 – The public

In the third session the aim was to look at archaeological research from the point of view of the public. How can we justify that public funds are used to pay for archaeological excavations? Is the research for the archaeologists benefit and their scientific endeavours, or should we always be able to demonstrate that they are something that benefits the public as well?

⁴ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.7>

⁵ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.1>

Can we use the media to a greater extent to shape public opinion - since they are responsible for informing society about both archaeology and development.

The role of amateur associations in building bridges between the public and heritage management.

Marjolein Verschuur (see p. 57) presented a survey conducted by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands on the relationship between archaeology, the public and the national government.

Gábor Virágos (see p. 61) introduced the magic triangle and how communicating the archaeological heritage is a complex procedure where different types of communication is needed for different stakeholders.⁶

Kirsty Owen & Rebecca Jones (see p. 65) presented Archaeology for Everyone, how the approach to publicly funded archaeological investigations in Scotland is being changed.⁷

Zdeněk Šámal discussed how archaeology is presented in media from a reporters point of view.⁸

Finally Sigrid Peter (see p. 69) presented a citizens view on public archaeology and heritage in Austria and how best to communicate with the interested public.⁹

Acknowledgements

After each session the floor was open for discussion and questions from the participants of the symposium. I want to thank all who attended the symposium for very lively discussion where important topics were raised and discussed from many angles. I would also like to thank the session chairs, Barney Sloane, Lyudmil Vagalinski and Thor Hjaltalín for excellent time-management and encouragement of the discussions after their sessions.

Special thanks are due to the EAC's assistant Djurra Schaff for all the practical details that need to be organized for such a symposium and of course to our host Lyudmil Vagalinski director of the National Archaeological Institute with Museum and his excellent staff.

Finally I would like to thank the EAC's president Leonard de Wit and the entire EAC board for the opportunity of organising the symposium and for a very fruitful and interesting six years of being a member of the board.

⁶ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.5>

⁷ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.3>

⁸ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.6>

⁹ Internet Archaeology 51. <https://doi.org/11141/ia.51.8>

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The power points of the EAC's 19th symposium can be consulted at
<https://www.europae-archaeologiae-consilium.org/presentations-eac-symposium-2018>

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