

Session title: **FROM THE CRADLE TO THE HORIZON: THE VALLETTA CONVENTION AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN ARCHAEOLOGY**

Organizers: Kenneth Aitchison, Institute of Field Archaeologists, UK
Elin Dalen, Riksantikvaren, Norway
Terje Hovland, Riksantikvaren, Norway
Mark Spanjer, Arcadis, The Netherlands

Time: Saturday morning

Room:

Session abstract:

The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) was signed in Valletta in January 1992 and began to come into force in different signatory states from May 1995. The convention has been ratified by 37 countries to date and is without doubt the most important international agreement affecting European archaeology.

Not far from the city where the convention was signed, this full day session will return to the creation of the Valletta Convention, review its achievements and look forward to what the future of European archaeology may be.

How did it all start and what has happened since? What impacts has the convention had on the legislation and organisation of heritage management throughout Europe? What have we accomplished and how do we deal with challenges and issues that have arisen – such as backlogs, archiving, exchange of information, putting research into development-led archaeology, grey literature and publication – all of which are important issues related to the Valletta Convention?

As well as reviewing our achievements, we have also reached an appropriate place and time for archaeologists to look to the future, to think about what the structures of European archaeology will be, what challenges we will face and how we will engage with these in five, ten or twenty-five years time.

European archaeologists need to think about big issues that are already affecting our work and will do even more so in the future – such as globalisation, climate change, the expansion of the European Union, the commercialisation of archaeology, the political manipulation of the past – and think what our plans to deal with these should be.

This session will explore different ideas about the past, present and future of European archaeology, on continental, regional, national and local levels, thinking about issues that may be political or may transcend politics but addressing them all in practical ways. As European archaeologists, what should we change, what should we maintain both within our profession and within ourselves if we want to have an active role in forming this, our shared future?

Part I – History of the Valletta Convention and Case Studies of its Implementation

THE VALLETTA CONVENTION

Elin Dalen, Riksantikvarenm Norway

A brief review of the history and function of the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised), signed in Valletta in 1992.

THE EARLY IMPACTS OF THE CONVENTION IN FORMING HERITAGE LEGISLATION IN THE “NEW EUROPEAN STATES”

Katalin Wollak, National Office of Cultural Heritage, Hungary

(abstract not received)

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S CHALLENGE: MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VALLETTA CONVENTION

Sarah Wolferstan, Paul Drury Partnership, UK

This paper gives the background to the pilot phase of the Council of Europe's Heritage convention monitoring project as well as some preliminary observations on the project's methodology. Upon ratifying a convention, Member States undertake to monitor implementation. In the past, this had only been done through the free text national reports on heritage policy (some of which are published on-line on www.european-heritage.net). Something more robust was needed.

As the archaeological community was considered to be more coherent and united at a European level than other heritage sectors, the archaeological (or Valletta) convention was chosen as the first pilot. The remit was to test a limited number of precisely targeted questions on the practical application of the convention. A team of public servants with experience of the IT tools, archaeology and the Council of Europe designed a questionnaire which they personally launched in five pilot countries – Romania, Ireland, Norway, Greece and Belgium – which had volunteered to take part.

Some 19 months, five country visits and 21 questionnaires later, the questions and their responses have been closely scrutinised for their ability to identify key indicators from as wide a selection of Member States as possible. This paper highlights some overarching concerns of archaeological management to emerge from this pilot and concludes with some initial observations on the challenges faced in using a European-wide approach to convention monitoring.

REGIONAL TOWN-PLANNING DOCUMENTATIONS FOR A COUNTY WITH A HIGH DENSITY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Adriana Ardeu, Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilisation, Romania
Corina Borș, National History Museum of Romania, Romania

Veniamin Gomboşiu, ASAR Group – Architecture Design Bureau, Romania

The Valletta Convention led to a significant change in Romanian legislation regarding the protection of the archaeological heritage. Yet, in comparison with other European countries, the number of large-scale town-planning projects designed from the very beginning to incorporate dedicated strategies and policies regarding the archaeological sites was limited.

In Hunedoara County there are a great many archaeological sites, including World Heritage Sites. Following a recent initiative intended to build up a strategic document for the future territorial development of the area, this paper aims to present the applicable legislative framework, the current aspects of the dialogue with relevant authorities and, last but not least, the work plan envisaged to ensure the cooperation of archaeologists and architects in designing an adequate approach.

This will be considered to be a proposal for an action plan regarding the management of the archaeological sites affected by the forthcoming development needs, all of which have potential impact on areas of archaeological heritage. Our approach is intended to outline the mandatory cooperation that has to be considered by the relevant stakeholders and specialists in terms of the future better protection of the archaeological heritage, with solutions being drafted from specific European regulations and good practices already applied in western Europe as a direct result of the implementation of the Valletta Convention.

BENCHMARKING COMPETENCY IN MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGY

Sarah Ward, Nautical Archaeology Society, UK

This paper will disseminate the results of research currently being undertaken by the Nautical Archaeology Society that is intended to relate education and training to standards in maritime archaeology. 'Benchmarking' outcomes will be considered within the context of the Valletta Convention, and the impact that it will have on the future of European archaeology, its structure, and how European archaeologists will go beyond boundaries to face the challenges of the future.

IMPACTS OF THE VALLETTA CONVENTION. IN SITU PRESERVATION OF URBAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

Vibeke Martens, NIKU – Norwegian Institute of Cultural Heritage Research, Norway

The Malta or Valletta Convention of 1992 emphasises the importance of in situ preservation of the archaeological cultural heritage sites for future research and heritage management. Management of urban archaeological deposits preserved in situ is a complex task requiring cross-disciplinary knowledge as a basis which is set in the contradictory context of preservation and urbanisation.

Cultural heritage is a wide concept. The Norwegian medieval towns are the country's largest statutory protected cultural heritage sites. They constitute important sources of knowledge about life and activities of prehistoric and medieval Norway, and they are important

physical archives for the present and future experiences of that part of the country's history. This paper focuses on the archaeological deposits beneath the surface in these towns.

The medieval towns contain ruins, standing buildings and archaeological deposits beneath the present surface. These deposits originate from accumulation of physical remains from human actions and activities over time; building remains, fires, excavations, and the addition and removal of masses. They are also specific seminatural ecosystems affected by both past and present environmental processes.

SCOTLAND'S HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE IN A RE-EMERGENT NATION

Malcolm Cooper, Historic Scotland, UK

For many, the work of cultural resource managers is straightforward. The key issues are about discovering and evaluating the importance of archaeological sites, ensuring that legislation and policy is applied appropriately, and promoting the value of the heritage resource more broadly. Surely cultural resource managers are therefore technicians undertaking what is a relatively simple and above-all practical process?

Well no. The reality is far from this - different sites hold different values to different groups, legislation and policy is open to interpretation and discretion in its application, and the value of archaeology can vary across time and place and its survival and use is subject to competing and often heated discourse.

Databases of information, legislation and policy, ownership and public value are simply more visible elements in the complex social and political landscape within which we work. Many other factors which influence our work remain less-visible and less well studied despite their importance to our work. This difference can be characterised as thinking from the high ground but working in the swampy lowlands.

Hans Kellner has encouraged historians to 'get the story crooked' rather than getting the story straight. That is to say, we need to get under the text and see the workings, before we can understand the writing of history and the validity of any particular narrative. The same applies with heritage management - to understand the system and how effective it is, we need to get the story crooked.

In this paper, I intend to put on my overalls and get 'under the bonnet' of cultural resource management to see what works and why, and what has stopped working. The paper draws on the current experience in Scotland and has three areas of focus: First the changing role of regulation in the 21st century and its broad impact on heritage management, secondly the role of heritage within Scotland and its relationship to the debate on Scottish identity and independence, and thirdly how restorations of ruined Scottish castles and tower houses have been used in these debates.

Part 2 – The Future of European Archaeology

FORMING A PROTECTION POLICY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND PART OF THE SESSION

Terje Hovland, Riksantikvaren, Norway

DISCOVERING THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS OF EUROPE: MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE OF EUROPEAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EMPLOYMENT

Kenneth Aitchison, Institute of Field Archaeologists, UK

Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe is an ambitious Europe-wide programme that is gathering data about the employment of archaeologists across twelve countries of the European Union.

As well as identifying the working roles that archaeologists have in each of these countries (UK, Ireland, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Greece and Cyprus), this project has also gathered data about the rewards and opportunities that are open to archaeologists across these twelve states.

Funded with support from the European Commission's Leonardo da Vinci fund (part of the Lifelong Learning Programme), this project has looked in particular at issues of transnational mobility – how easy it is for archaeologists to move from one country to another and what obstacles stand in their way (such as recognition of qualifications gained in other countries).

The European Association of Archaeologists has also played a key role in promoting this project and its results, and the EAA meeting in Malta will represent the final presentation of results and recommendations from the twelve partner countries and on a transnational scale. This crucial data will help us as individual archaeologists, representatives of employing organisations and governmental policy makers to look both at the current state of archaeological employment across the continent and also to the future of working in European archaeology.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: RELATIONS BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Willem Willems, Leiden University, The Netherlands

(abstract not received)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT ALONE – A CONCEPT THAT IS INCREASINGLY OUT OF STEP WITH CURRENT AND NEW APPROACHES?

Adrian Olivier, English Heritage, UK

Is heritage management that focuses solely on archaeological aspects of a site, monument or landscape an outdated approach? This paper will consider the advantages and disadvantages of multidisciplinary approaches to heritage management.

BASED ON THE VALLETTA CONVENTION – DIFFERENT APPROACHES IN ORGANISING HERITAGE MANAGEMENT NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

Margaret Gowen, Margaret Gowen & Co Ltd (IE)

The Valletta Convention does not stipulate one single way that archaeological heritage management must be done, but it does provide benchmarks that systems must achieve. This paper will explore some of the different approaches that have been tried in different European states, and considers what future developments might look like.

REINVENTING OURSELVES: DOES THE WORLD HAVE TO CHANGE OR DO WE AS WELL?

Mark Spanjer, Arcadis / NVvA, The Netherlands

The process of devising and implementing the Malta Treaty was achieved through a top-down approach. An 'influential, powerful' few made a deal in isolation that influences the many. The many that perceive themselves as 'true archaeologists' and which don't want to become involved in 'politics' tend to mainly see the cracks in the new building called (European) archaeology.

Our customers in their many forms can be considered to be: The Europeans. Their wishes are not specific and their political representatives are therefore unclear on the subject. What is clear is that there is a huge, amorphous feeling for archaeology which could almost be described as a Need. It is not difficult to predict that, if the process stays on course as it is, some of our 'customers' will be disappointed, with negative consequences.

This paper will look into the role of the many in this process. It will be more about questions than answers. How as a group will we cope with the long-term effects of Malta or even 'Malta II'? Can the few manage alone or do the many have to reinvent themselves?