

Working Group 3 Summary

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Documentor César Parcero-Oubiña

Working Group metadata

Manager: Gerry Walt

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End time: 13:00

Preliminary Summary

Presentation of ClfA:

- Archaeologists should not act on behalf of their clients, but on behalf of archaeology and society as a whole
- Ethics code is a basic component of any regulation
- A professional association is required for a code to be applied. It can be formed in different ways (bottom-up, government enforced,...), but it must have an actual authority to supervise the application of the codes (as opposed to a membership association).
- Today it is an international association (beyond the UK, 39 countries), with >3300 members. Transposition of codes for adoption in other countries (rather than simply translation).

Discussion and debate

Anything similar in any country? No in Germany, Turkey, Sweden, France

Are there “versions” of the codes of ClfA for other forms of archaeology, beyond field archaeology (excavation)? Yes; around 900 members are mainly field archaeologists, but the rest of them are not; including up to managers.

It is important to highlight that what ClfA represents is not only for field archaeologists, but for archaeologists in general.

But it might be complex to define what a field archaeologist is – anyway, making a difference between field and non-field archaeologists might be a bad idea.

Is archaeology too broad a discipline as to have a single form of professional regulation, or is it better to gather together all the different archaeologies into a single scheme?

In the UK membership of ClfA is not mandatory for doing archaeology – how did it become dominant / majoritarian? If quality control is the strongest point of ClfA, how do they manage to deal with that, with such a large number of members?

It became dominant by showing the benefits of becoming a member to a number of people – peer pressure after that. Besides, clients want to make sure that the work they pay for will be good and won't bring any further problems.

Quality control was actually something that the administration couldn't do and that ClfA began to do. To join you have to present a portfolio of your work. Anyone (clients, public, etc) can ask ClfA to check the performance of a member and make ClfA to take measures, if necessary.

Two factors involved in this issue: traditions and emotions, it is not just an intellectual question. Example of Germany: the role of the state is very important, it won't be that easy that simply archaeologists decide what is good archaeology, that would be a revolution. Similar in France and Turkey and Sweden.

Two issues: (1) assumption that clients are interested in archaeology and (2) regulation of the prices. Yes, prices are a question that is hardly controlled by professional associations, other than through a stronger quality and standards control (if not enough has been done, more money is needed).

At least in some countries, prices are the only factor that counts; without government enforcement there is no possible way to improve things.

If you want to start a "revolution" you need to tell people expected to do it what the advantages are. And, within this context, it is not a good idea that a professional association doesn't think about costs and prices.

Differentiate bad archaeology and bad labour conditions: most of the times problems relate rather with the latter than with the former.

The point is that most archaeologists (at least in some countries) will only be concerned by the latter, that are beyond the capacities of professional associations (at least in some countries, again).

Recognition of archaeology as a profession in Europe might be an important step forward.

Criteria for professional associations: are they equally valid for every country? Basic rules (based on experience in Germany):

- Common rules
- All people agree to them
- Members agree to behold responsibility for their actions (accountability)

A good quality control system is essential to guarantee this last point. In ClfA: quality on members and processes. All organizations are inspected at least once every 3 years by experts in the different fields of archaeology (members of ClfA, not necessarily of

the staff). Allegations are also basic here, to trigger inspections beyond the regular basis.

Non-member organizations cannot be controlled, but the voice of ClfA can be publicly raised if such cases are witnessed.

Should quality control be done during the fieldwork?

Does pressure on commercial archaeology imply that different circumstances exist in comparison with other types of archaeology, and that the risk to reduce quality is higher? Different opinions...

The role of the “public”: will professional accreditation benefit somehow the client (who pays for an archaeological work)? Only if the “public” is considered also as a “client” of the archaeological work and can claim that it is done correctly.

Focus on thinking about what a professional association in Europe should do: Find the common points: what is working well in different countries and what needs to be improved:

- Archaeology should be fully defined as a profession, with no division between public-private, academic-commercial, etc.
- Take other professions as possible models (lawyers, doctors, architects...)
- Its main objective should be a European-level regulation based on the Malta Convention. Lobbying is needed for that, by means of the EAA.
- What is the basic minimum cost of archaeological work.
- Prices must be considered as prices to do things in certain ways, so the matter is prices + quality.
- A system of accreditation to guarantee a quality standard
- “The public” should be explicitly incorporated as beneficiaries of the archaeological work, acting as a guarantee for the quality beyond the mere interest of the developers

Final Summary

The main topics addressed during the session were:

- Discussion of ClfA as a model that could potentially be followed in other countries: how it was formed, how it acquired a prevalent status, practical functioning...
- Effect of different contexts in different countries for the potential success of professional associations and codes. Especially, the leading role of administration in some countries in the setting of quality standards for the archaeological work (e.g. Germany).

- Potential benefits of a European-wide approach (a European-wide association, or a national association endorsed by a European one) to alleviate the issue raised in the former point.
- Direct or indirect effect of other factors in the potential success of professional associations and codes (salaries, working conditions,...). Is it necessary / advisable / possible that professional associations deal with that too?
- Criteria for professional associations: it is essential that members accept accountability for their actions.
- In its turn, a good quality control system is essential, both on-demand and on a periodical basis. Should it be done during the fieldwork too?
- A clear benefit of professional associations is that they act as an authorised voice to support, or criticize, the work of members.
- A professional association in Europe should focus on:
 - Full recognition of archaeology as profession based on common grounds
 - Go for a European-level regulation based on the Malta Convention (lobbying at Brussels)
 - Definition of costs for quality
 - Accreditation for quality standards
 - Seek an explicit incorporation of “the public” as beneficiaries of the archaeological work, acting as a guarantee for the quality beyond the mere interest of the developers