Adding value: an independent system of accreditation for archaeology and cultural heritage

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Abstract – There are many approaches to archaeology and cultural heritage across the world. These tend to be situated on a spectrum between total state control (the 'national patrimony' model) and the regulation of private actors (the 'social licence' model). Whichever model – or combination of models – is used, the success of any archaeological or cultural heritage programme depends on adequate resources, community and stakeholder engagement, and strong regulation and oversight. It is also essential that the archaeologists or other heritage practitioners have the necessary skills and operate in a professional framework which is independent of political or financial structures. What should such a professional framework look like, and how should it be managed? How can an independent professional framework achieve recognition from government and private-sector archaeology and cultural heritage practitioners at all levels? How can such a framework retain the respect of politicians, developers and other professions whose work impacts on archaeology and cultural heritage? What value does an independent system of accreditation add for the public?

Key words – archaeology; professionalism; heritage management; cultural heritage; practice

Titel – Den Wert steigern: ein unabhängiges System der Akkreditierung für Archäologie und Kulturgüterschutz

Zusammenfassung – Es gibt weltweit eine Vielzahl verschiedener Ansätze, Archäologie und Kulturgüterschutz zu betreiben. Diese reichen von komplett staatlich kontrollierten (das ‚national patrimony'-Modell) bis hin zu vollständig privatisierten Programmen (das ‚social licence'-Modell). Unabhängig vom jeweiligen Ansatz sind für den Erfolg von Archäologie und Kulturgüterschutz – egal wo und unter welchen Umständen durchgeführt – einige fundamentale Parameter ausschlaggebend: Neben den angemessenen Ressourcen müssen die Gesellschaft und die verschiedenen, an Archäologie und Kulturgüterschutz beteiligten Interessensgruppen aktiv mit einbezogen werden. Außerdem sollten für die Umsetzung des jeweiligen Programmes klare Regeln und Kontrollmechanismen existieren. Hierbei ist besonders wichtig, dass Archäologen und andere Kulturschützer, die zur Durchführung ihrer Arbeit notwendigen Fähigkeiten besitzen und in einem professionellen Rahmen agieren, welcher wiederum frei von politischen oder finanziellen Abhängigkeiten ist. Doch wie kann man solch einen professionellen Rahmen schaffen und wie sollte dieser aussehen? Wie kann er Wirkung bei staatlichen Stellen, in der privatwirtschaftlichen Archäologie und beim Kulturgutschützern auf allen Ebenen erzielen? Wie kann ein solches Rahmenwerk von Politikern, Bauträgern und allen anderen Berufszweigen, die Einfluss auf Archäologie und Kulturgüterschutz haben, anerkannt und respektiert werden? Welchen Wert hat ein solches unabhängiges Akkreditierungssystem für die Gesellschaft?

Schlüsselwörter – Archäologie; Professionalität; Kulturgüterschutz; kulturelles Erbe; Akkreditierung

Introduction

The management of archaeology and cultural heritage can be defined most broadly as those practices that identify a community's cultural heritage resources, and the programmes that ensure their transmission to the next generation. There are many ways in which this is achieved in different countries, and it has taken many years for the systems and mechanisms to be developed. It is also the case that systems for archaeology and cultural heritage management closely reflect the prevailing administrative culture of a country, which itself reflects the history of that country and of its constituent peoples.

This paper is written for a European audience, examples are drawn from Europe rather than Africa, Asia or the Americas; nevertheless, many of the underlying points and principles are relevant elsewhere in the world. Therefore, in many places archaeological and cultural heritage systems and practice may implicitly serve to reinforce particular hegemonies, even if that is not the explicit intention of the legislation or regulation. Thus, for example, studies of archaeologists in Europe have found that they tend to be white (overwhelmingly), male (the gender balance is 53-47) and young-middle age (average age was 39 years) (AITCHISON, 2009).

There have been significant developments which have produced a broad international consensus towards the ethics of 'doing' archaeology and cultural heritage – so there is general agreement on what is good practice (for example, ensuring that archaeological remains are protected from development) and what is bad practice (for example, commercial dealing in cultural antiquities). The adoption of the Valletta Convention in 1992 marked a turning point in the practice of archaeology and cultural heritage management across Europe. Like its predecessor, the 1969 European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, signatories had to provide for identification, conservation and protection of archaeological heritage. However the increasing threat to archaeology and cultural heritage from large-scale construction projects during the 1980s was reflected in Article 6 of

the 1992 convention. This introduced the concept of *"l'archéologie preventive"* (preventive archaeology, or rescue archaeology), and parties to the Convention had to specifically *"ensure that provision is made in major public or private development schemes for covering, from public sector or private sector resources, as appropriate, the total costs of any necessary related archaeological operations"* (Article 6).

There is considerable variation between countries in the way in which different jurisdictions deal with these issues. Again, this is a reflection of local/national interpretation of what constitutes (in terms of Article 6 of the 1992 Convention) *"major"* development and to what extent this is *"public or private development"*. Consequently, the translation of the requirements of the Valetta Convention is achieved very differently, even though all European countries give statutory protection to archaeology and cultural heritage. To take one simple example: in Austria metal-detecting is illegal and punishable in a court of law (noting that this is a long-standing application and remains a statement of 'practice' but that recent legal challenges seem to have over-turned this), whereas in the UK there is a government-funded scheme, administered by the British Museum, which allows metal-detectorists to record their finds in a national database (KARL, 2016; BLAND, 2005). Indeed, there can be considerable variation between different parts of the same country where they have a federal or devolved administrative structure, as in Germany, Switzerland and to some extent the UK. It is also the case that in parts of Europe the introduction of *"preventive"* archaeology on the Valetta model took place alongside the processes of democratisation and establishment of the free market economy. Indeed, it has been argued the Valetta Convention played a *"crucial role in developing preventive archaeology"* in these countries, and without it the prospects for archaeology would have been *"rather bleak"* (NOVAKOVIĆ & HORŇÁK, 2016, 26).

The myriad variations in practice have previously been characterised in bipolar terms: as *"socialist"* versus *"capitalist"*, or even *"Anglo-Saxon"* versus *"continental European"* (KRISTIANSEN, 2009; DEMOULE, 2010). However, we feel that it is more helpful to describe a spectrum between two approaches to archaeological and cultural heritage management. At one end is what can be called the *"social licence"* approach, and at the other is the *"national patrimony"* approach (ALTSCHUL & WAIT, 2014; ALTSCHUL, in press). It is important to note that the approaches are not mutually exclusive and most countries adopt elements of both, although one usually predominates.

One heritage – two systems

It is necessary to briefly outline the two approaches at either end of the spectrum, and then consider how a synthesis of the two has been developed, before considering the role of independent professional accreditation in such a process of synthesis – and how such a role could influence future developments. In this discussion, we deliberately adopt a colloquial tone and sometimes over-state the reality. Of course, we recognise that reality is often considerably more nuanced, but we have taken this approach simply to make our points more clearly.

Social licence
Many countries or states place the burden of complying with heritage laws and regulations on the project proponent or 'developer'. This does not come directly from the Valetta Convention, which leaves open the question of the source of funding, saying only that the state should ensure that sufficient resources are available. Instead the notion that *"the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution"* is enshrined in Principle 16 of the United Nations Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, also made in 1992. Although this is often referred to as the 'polluter pays' principle, this term has a pejorative connotation, as it suggests that the project proponents are solely driven by their own personal gain and that economic development has little or no public benefit. Further, by linking pollution with heritage, archaeological and cultural heritage can be, and often is, viewed as an impediment to be overcome rather than a resource that the community values and wants to incorporate in plans for its future.

In contrast, the term 'social licence' has a more positive connotation. It implies that a community's acceptance of a project is conditioned on specific requirements, some of which may refer to protecting and conserving cultural heritage. In practice, a social licence is composed of both 'sticks and carrots'. The 'sticks' of the social licence are the requirements for the project proponent – the 'developer' (or *"polluter"* in Rio Declaration terms) – to comply with the laws, regulations, conventions, charters and other safeguards placed on their actions by government agencies and funding institutions. Additionally, depending on local interpretations of the Valletta requirements, the project proponent may also need to gain the trust and confidence of local communities as well as national and international archaeological and cultural heritage professionals and interested parties. To do so, project proponents need to engage proactively with interested parties and to agree to

conditions protecting cultural heritage that go beyond those protected in law. Most archaeological and cultural heritage compliance tend to be 'one time' actions – for example survey, excavation, building restoration and so-on – which are usually straightforward matters to regulate through permits and spatial planning regulations. In contrast, the broader 'social licence' aspects need to be maintained for the duration of a project which, in the case of infrastructure or resource extraction projects, may be measured in years or even decades. This concept of social licence begins to look a little more like a 'carrot' in that it looks to as-yet unspecified benefits to communities, stakeholders and proponents some years down the line. However, this is a notably weak form of carrot.

The social licence approach has a major flaw: it is paid for by the project proponent. Given that most project proponents are seeking permission to do something else – build and operate a mine, construct a road or build homes or offices – archaeological heritage is viewed as a something to do as quickly and cheaply as possible. Without strong or effective regulation, it is left to the project proponent to decide how much, if any, effort should be placed into the identification, evaluation, and treatment of archaeological and cultural heritage resources. Given that the proponent has a vested interest in not finding things that will stop or impede their project, it should come as no surprise that their conclusion is often "*very little if anything at all*". This is an issue with the 'polluter pays' model which implies that archaeology and cultural heritage is a form of contamination that is impeding progress. Local communities can be excluded from the process, and have little recourse to counter findings of studies funded by the proponent that conclude that significant archaeology or cultural heritage does not exist or is of little significance. It is not surprising, then, that when archaeological heritage emerges as an issue it is often hotly contested.

Therefore, in the 'social licence' approach – particularly where regulation is weak and the private sector is able to influence political decisions – archaeology and cultural heritage practitioners may be viewed by the public and others as being in the pockets of 'developers' or project proponents. Consequently, their value as academic and professional experts is potentially eroded.

National patrimony
Some countries or states view their cultural heritage as national patrimony and opt to have the government take responsibility for all or almost all aspects of archaeological and cultural heritage

management – France for example, and some of the German states, or Bulgaria where a network of local museums hold the monopoly on behalf of the government. Some of the German state heritage agencies may behave as if and pretend publicly that this is the case, but as Krischok (2016) has recently shown, a state monopoly on archaeological and cultural heritage management practice (particularly as regards research) would be strictly unconstitutional under Art. 5 (3) of the German *"Grundgesetz"*. In such legal and policy systems, market forces are seen as a threat to archaeological and cultural heritage resources. In this view the weakness of the 'social licence' approach is that *"preventive archaeology is the only economic activity where the client has no interest in buying the product"* (Depaepe, 2016, 39). Therefore, this system simply provides *"an incitement to excavate for the lowest possible costs"* (Demoule, 2010, 14). This incitement is eliminated (or at least reduced) in a national patrimony system, where heritage is under total government control. The government determines the proper balance between archaeological heritage preservation and economic development, and defines the financial and human resources needed to maintain this balance. This is true of the social licence model as well, but the difference in the national patrimony system is that the government provides and allocates those resources, dictates the terms on which they are deployed, and itself provides the necessary archaeology and cultural heritage services. Crucially it also determines if those archaeology and cultural heritage services were adequately performed. A national patrimony system therefore makes archaeology and cultural heritage management a government monopoly.

Theoretically, archaeology and cultural heritage specialists in the national patrimony model should not be constrained by worries over job security and so are able to focus on purely archaeological considerations, as opposed to consultants who are constrained by budgets and schedules defined by project proponents with little interest in archaeological heritage. In practice however, professionals in state heritage agencies are just as vulnerable as their private-sector colleagues. Political considerations dictate the budgets for particular ministries or organs of state; as has become particularly evident in the ten years or so since the financial crisis (Belford, forthcoming). Moreover, the importance of archaeology and cultural heritage at any particular moment will depend on both the political leanings of the elected government and the economic priorities it chooses to set. This is true at all levels of government – national, regional and local.

Commonly, there is perceived to be little incentive for government workers to meet budgets or schedules and there may be a genuine lack of accountability, or at least a perception of an absence of transparency in budgeting, scheduling, and in accountability to stakeholders outside the government agencies. Corruption occurs in many developing countries and there may be suspicions or accusations even in Europe (perhaps arising from the lack of transparency just described), and cultural heritage projects are not immune. Far from being able to freely pursue their nation's past, archaeological and cultural heritage specialists may be under political influence arising from the way governments finance agencies and set their budgets, and while this is (in Europe) rarely so overt as either to whitewash past sins or to validate and extol the virtues of those in power, the end result may sometime look this way to local communities or stakeholders who are not involved in any decision-making capacity. By vesting the responsibility for archaeological heritage with the government, archaeological and cultural heritage management becomes a top-down activity, which may lead to the promotion of a national or authorised narrative at the expense of local and descendant community heritages and discourses. It is not uncommon for national patrimony systems to stifle consultation with local and descendant communities about heritage issues, which may contribute to perceptions of bias, undue influence, or even corruption.

Therefore, in the 'national patrimony' approach – particularly where the state heritage agencies are strong and closely allied to political or state-hegemonic structures – archaeology and cultural heritage practitioners may be viewed by the public and others as being in the pockets of politicians and state actors. Consequently, their value as academic and professional experts is potentially threatened or even eroded.

Criteria for archaeology and cultural heritage programmes

Regardless of which end of the 'social licence' versus 'national patrimony' spectrum a national or regional system may be inclined to sit, it is possible that the value of archaeology and cultural heritage practitioners as professional experts is being eroded. In general terms the success of any framework for delivering successful archaeology and cultural heritage outcomes will depend on meeting four criteria.

First, that archaeology and cultural heritage is adequately resourced, both financially and with sufficient numbers of adequately trained archaeology and cultural heritage specialists. Both of these aspects are covered by the Valetta Convention, but not all signatories have necessarily ensured that this is the case. The "*Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe*" (DISCO) project documented wide variations in the numbers of archaeologists relative to population size, and equally (if not more so) wide variations in the pay and status that pertain to archaeologists (Aitchison, 2009; Aitchison, 2013). In places where the 'social licence' system is predominant, even where a strong regulatory framework exists, resourcing may be influenced both by political and economic factors. In the Netherlands, for example, efforts by the state to mitigate the decline in the construction industry after the economic crisis in 2008 were accompanied by the devolution of archaeological decision-making from the provinces to local councils. As a result, a "*more selective approach to research designs*" was adopted which "*resulted in less extensive, and therefore shorter and potentially cheaper, projects*" (Dries et al., 2010, 62). Equally, in places where the 'national patrimony' approach has been adopted, political and economic considerations may also result in inadequate resourcing. In Romania, for example, the system for the protection of cultural heritage "*appears to be a logical and complete scheme*" with a Ministry of Culture, a Commission and 41 Regional Directorates for Culture, Religious Affairs and Cultural Heritage; however, in reality "*the ministry does not provide the proper legislation, the Commission does not have any control and the directorates do not have adequate staff*" (Măgureanu & Măgureanu, 2016, 262).

Second, that local communities and stakeholders are empowered to be part of the system and are integrated into the various archaeology and cultural heritage management processes. This is not enshrined in the Valetta Convention, where local communities appear as recipients of educational actions with a view to developing a public awareness of the value of archaeological and cultural heritage for understanding the past and of the threats to this heritage. Valetta does call for the promotion of public access to important elements of archaeological and cultural heritage, especially sites, and encourages the display to the public of suitable selections of archaeological objects (Article 9). It is a key aspect of the Faro Convention (Article 12 especially), which sets out the key role that various 'communities' should have in matters relating to the investigation, conservation

and interpretation of archaeological and cultural heritage. However, at all points on the spectrum, 'public archaeology' (however that may be understood) is at risk of manipulation by political actors, by developers and even by state agencies. So even when developers are reluctant to pay for archaeological research, they *"love public outreach because it's a very efficient way to interest the general public in something other than the development project itself"* (DEPAEPE, 2016, 39). Politicians may seek to use archaeology and cultural heritage as a mechanism for defining identity, or through which to develop other programmes to alleviate social and economic exclusion. Archaeologists themselves may be uneasy with these manipulations; some prefer to be in control of *"transforming our daily work into a socially committed action"* (ALMANSA, 2012, 10).

Third, that there are strong government regulation and oversight of archaeology and cultural heritage management practices. This should be the case both in terms of the bureaucratic processes involved in identifying, evaluating, and treating cultural heritage resources, and also in monitoring actual archaeological and cultural heritage actions, such as surveys, excavations, and consultations. Developing countries rarely have staff in government agencies with appropriate skills or terms of reference to undertake or regulate such work – and since the 2008 financial recession most government departments or agencies in European countries have been cut in numbers, resulting in overworked and under-resourced teams. This is exacerbated by processes that may be overly bureaucratic or simply unworkable. Turning back to Romania by way of example, the process by which developers obtain an archaeological permit *"is long and is a frequent cause of delays and financial problems"*; moreover, the archaeological *"permit-granting procedure becomes redundant due to collision with other permits needed for the development"* (SIMION, 2016, 273). There is clearly a striking disparity between this and the speed at which much private sector work proceeds. In practice this means that *"the costs of archaeology are always underestimated"* and so developers will *"tend to avoid or minimize archaeological works"* (SIMION, 2016, 277).

Fourth, that there is independent verification of the processes, services and outcomes by experts who are adequately insulated from political pressure and authorised to make recommendations. At both ends of the spectrum – and in many places in the middle – this is problematic for two reasons. One is the lack of capability in the form of appropriately skilled and trained archaeological and cultural heritage officers and associated pro-

fessional infrastructures. This might be structural, or it might result from the ongoing effects of the recession on government department and agency staff already outlined. As well as the cases from Romania and Bulgaria noted above, a further example of this comes from Poland, which ratified the Valetta Convention in 1996. The year before Poland had established an Archaeological Heritage Protection Centre, whose role was to control the quality of archaeological works undertaken as part of large infrastructure projects. However, in 2007 the Archaeological Heritage Protection Centre was subsumed by the National Heritage Board of Poland, thus losing its autonomy. More worryingly, the National Heritage Board *"then decided to withdraw from the coordination and control of large-scale preventive works"*, thus leaving *"a vacuum with no independent quality control by any external professional body over the works carried out"* (MARCINIAK & PAWLETA, 2010, 88-89).

In addition to structural and resourcing issues, there is a lack of adequate professionalism among archaeological and cultural heritage practitioners. This point is – or should be – the most important consideration for anyone who considers themselves to be an archaeologist or cultural heritage 'expert'. Given the inevitable biases in public perception at both ends of the spectrum – namely that archaeological and cultural heritage experts are in some way 'in the pockets' of politicians, bureaucrats, developers, bankers, and others – how then can archaeologists and cultural heritage practitioners ensure that their impartiality, expertise and understanding is widely recognised and appreciated? In other words, how is it possible to prevent the erosion of the status of archaeology and cultural heritage practitioners as academic and professional experts?

More directly however, it is in terms of the role and responsibilities of archaeologists and cultural heritage experts that the greatest danger may lie. For example, is an archaeologist's first priority the cultural heritage resource they are investigating, protecting or managing? Or should it be to meet the needs of whomever is paying for their work? Or is an archaeologist's priority compliance with the archaeology and cultural heritage laws of the country or region where they are working, even if these laws are clearly inadequate to protect and preserve heritage resources? It is in a perceived lack of clarity and transparency that an archaeologist's role, and therefore their authority to act, is most directly put under pressure. How should archaeologists respond to this?

One answer may be found in the development of an independent, but authoritative, system for

the accreditation of archaeological and cultural heritage professionals.

Professionalising archaeology and cultural heritage disciplines

The absence of a professional voice representing local, regional, and national publics in terms of archaeological and cultural heritage matters can be problematic. This is a particular risk at either end of the spectrum outlined above. Where the private sector is strong and regulation is weak, there may be perceptions of bias in favour of developers at the expense of high quality archaeological research. Similarly, when the state agency is powerful there may be perceptions that political and social considerations interfere with the objectivity of archaeological endeavour. Even in the middle of the spectrum, where professional archaeological heritage advisors to development agencies are present and behave in accordance with professional codes of conduct, there can be perceptions of bias. In order to ensure the independent authority of archaeology and cultural heritage practitioners it is necessary to recognise the professional nature of such work.

What is a professional archaeologist?
How, then, is a professional defined? Is a professional a person with a university degree in their chosen specialism? Is a professional someone who is paid for the work that they do? The short answer to both of these questions is 'no'. It is worth expanding on the crucial – but often misunderstood – point that a university degree does not make someone a professional, and nor does employment doing something like archaeology – even when that employment is with a university or a governmental agency. A common view of the term 'professional archaeologists' is one of surprise, "*as if academic archaeologists were not 'professionals'*" (Demoule, 2016, 11-12). Academic archaeologists may also be professionals, but they are not professionals simply because they are employed by a university, have educational qualifications in archaeology and undertake archaeological projects. The most basic question that can be asked is: to whom are they accountable for their actions? Their employers and funders are not specifically concerned with the standards and ethics of archaeology; they are only interested in teaching and research outcomes. Peer review of academic papers is one of very few mechanisms by which the quality of their work can be judged (i.e.

the are some evaluation strategies for teaching), but there is no peer review of the data collection stages, nor of the ways in which students or other project participants were treated, nor any guarantee that the data gathered by the project will be made available to other researchers.

Similar considerations exist around archaeologists in state heritage agencies. Again, they are accountable to their employers – that is to say the state, which, in the context of European democracies means (at least in principle) the people. However, as already discussed, national or regional heritage agencies are not directly democratically accountable to the people; rather they are accountable to the government, and therefore to politicians and their political agendas. Also, their ability to require, undertake and monitor archaeological work will vary depending on where the state heritage agency might sit in the broader administrative structure. In the case of the Czech Republic, for example, the two independent state Institutes of Archaeology at Prague and Brno, are responsible in law both for issuing licences and undertaking fieldwork. This is a situation with the potential to create conflicts of interest; but it is also the case that both Institutes have different systems for recording archaeological fieldwork and its results (Mařík, 2016). Put bluntly, many academics and government agency employees are not professionals even though they think they are (and should be!).

In many countries an archaeological degree is considered the basis of a person's ability to be a 'professional' archaeologist. This is true at the 'national patrimony' end of the spectrum, as for example in Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which require a Master's degree in addition to passing examinations at the Ministry of Culture (Horňák & Michalík, 2016; Mařík, 2016). The same is true towards the 'social licence' end of the system. In Spain, which has a mixture of private- and state-sector actors, a 'professional archaeologist' refers to "*graduates in history who specialised in prehistory and archaeology … to count as an archaeologist it is necessary to have completed these studies*" (Parga-Dans, 2010, 47). However just because an archaeologist has a qualification, it does not demonstrate a particular ability to undertake archaeological projects. A PhD in Neolithic pottery, for example, has in no way prepared a person to manage a complex commercial excavation in a densely populated urban centre; nor does it necessarily enable an inspector in a state heritage agency to make an informed judgement about the quality of a particular archaeological project.

Professionalism then primarily depends not upon education, and even less upon employment.

Instead a professional is characterised by:

— *Impartiality*. An archaeologist's first priority is to the public with regard to the heritage resource they are investigating or managing and is capable to distinguish between his own agenda and interests and those of the archaeology and any third parties likely to be affected by his actions and to sufficiently distance himself from his own agenda and interests to fairly consider the interests of the archaeology and any third parties affected.
— *Competency*. Objective accreditation or recognition of a practitioner's competence by one's peers: competency being capable of doing what we do according to accepted professional practices and defined by wide consultation among the body of practitioners, and thereafter reviewed and revised in the same way. Adherence to a code of ethics and to standards of ethical behaviour. Being ethically competent in considering the likely consequences of their actions on the archaeology, and any third parties that may be affected by them within a framework of 'ethical' values and principles, which are universal in their application to a practitioner's actions. Continuing Professional Development (CPD). A commitment to ongoing professional development by continuing training and education.
— *Accountability*. A willingness to be held accountable for one's actions by one's peers: being willing to be judged by one's peers when allegations are made that a practitioner has behaved contrary to the Codes and Standards, and voluntarily subjects themselves to the judgement of their peers (i.e. joins a professional association and accepts its rules and regulations as binding where his professional and possibly even his private conduct is concerned).

Professional associations

A profession is an occupation in which skilled practitioners undertake their duties impartially, according to a code of ethics, and are subject to the oversight of their fellow practitioners by being accredited by an organisation that is independent of both government and private practice. Characteristics of professional organisations include a code of professional conduct, entry conditions for membership, including subscription to the code and a requirement to demonstrate competence, requiring continuing education to qualified members (publications, conferences, courses and self-directed professional development), promoting the development of the discipline and representing the profession, and equal concern for practitioners, practice, and clients. Individuals may act professionally, but they may not really be described as professionals unless there exists, and they belong to, a professional organisation. These definitions, with minor variations, are recognised by most governments.

It is useful to elaborate upon professional associations, as these have an essential role to play in professionalising archaeology and cultural heritage disciplines. Archaeology and cultural heritage are not trivial, and the need for professionals, professional organisations, and for transparently professional action underlies much that we debate in the heritage disciplines. Therefore, because authoritative professional voices even in developed countries may be over-shadowed by accusations of bias, review mechanisms must be shifted outside of government to find a solution. This eases concerns that might be expressed about the technical quality and impartiality of investigations carried out on behalf of project proponents, that are required and monitored by state agencies which may also have conflicts of interest, by providing the necessary peer review of both technical competence and ethical performance.

At present, few of the criteria defining professional associations are present in the international archaeological and cultural heritage arena. This is not to say that professional associations don't exist; what is missing is a more explicit and transparent extension of existing organizations into international applicability. Codes of ethics are by definition universal, governing a professional's work wherever that work takes place. Thus, for example, the European Association of Archaeologist (EAA) has a "*Code of Practice*" (EAA, 1997) that takes as its starting point the Valetta Convention, and states that "*archaeological heritage … is the heritage of all humankind. Archaeology is the study and interpretation of that heritage for the benefit of society as a whole*". Other national societies in Europe have similar "*codes of conduct*" which are signed by their members but without any effective evaluation of their implementation into practice. It also makes reference to ICOMOS and UNESCO charters and conventions; the implication is that the Code is universal, but this is not made explicit. Similarly the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) "*Code of Conduct*", although originating in the UK, talks about how "*archaeology is part of society's common heritage*" and CIfA members are expected to adhere to the Code wherever they are working.

It has been suggested that a code of ethics is a "*noble notion that may be relevant or applicable in some*

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(possibly Protestant) countries of Western Europe" but has limited wider applicability; this argument is based on a view that there is not "*a shared commitment to strong scientific control*" among archaeologists (Demoule, 2010, 15). In fact, there is such a shared commitment; moreover, the key point is that while such ethical codes can, and should, have universal applicability, the detail – which sets out the professional's commitments to "*strong scientific control*" – is in the standards that sit below them. These elaborate on how codes may be best put into action, and may also be nearly as universal; however, guidance about the detailed implementation of standards are likely to be country-specific as they must be more closely tied to legal structures, planning and control systems and social custom. Thus, the ethical conduct and technical work of a professional as a member of a professional association should be relied upon, or quasi-legal redress sought, no matter where their work was undertaken.

Some readers may perceive an apparent contradiction in what has been written above. It is emphasised that Codes are universal, and indeed 'Standards' (such as those defined by CIfA) may also be internationally accepted and adhered to, but the detailed 'guidance' on how any specific 'standard' is to be achieved may be specific to various countries. Professionals within a country may use international standards as a foundation for what is defined, used and done through a professional organisation specific to that country. Given political trends around the world, acceptance of international codes and standards may have awkward local political ramifications, but can (and are) achieved by guidance notes modified to fit local circumstances.

It is important to distinguish between an 'archaeological association' and a 'professional association'. The principal distinction is in the accreditation of members, a form of peer review, which is a feature of the latter but not the former. For example, the EAA is an 'archaeological association': membership is open to anyone who fills in a form and pays the fee. Although members sign up to the "*Code of Practice*" there is no mechanism to ensure that EAA members adhere to this code. Indeed one of the EAA objectives is to achieve a broad membership, extending beyond professionals, and so entry requirements are necessarily widely defined. In theory a member can be expelled for breach of this code, but there is no structure in place to monitor such breaches.

A more closed route to entry is provided by the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA), which is based in the United States of America. The RPA, which is about the same size as the Chartered

Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) currently judges professionalism on the possession of a MA degree. However it does not undertake a detailed review of an applicant's portfolio of expertise by a committee of peers. The RPA does not accredit organisations (CIfA accredits individuals and 'registers' commercial and charitable organisations); neither does it promote detailed Standards and Guidance.

In contrast, CIfA is a 'professional association': membership is subject to a process of "*validation*", in which a member's record of archaeological endeavour is scrutinised by a panel which also considers examples of published and unpublished work. Continued membership requires an ongoing commitment to continued training and professional development, which is recorded. A breach of the "*Code of Conduct*", or of the numerous technical "*Standards and Guidance*" which support the Code, is subject to a series of disciplinary procedures which may impose sanctions on the member (up to and including expulsion from CIfA). Validation, accreditation and disciplinary matters are undertaken by a series of standing committees. These are populated by volunteers drawn from the membership, and sit outside the executive and governance structures, so they provide a strong and independent mechanism for peer review.

CIfA has its origins in the early 1980s, at a time when rescue archaeology was beginning to develop on a more commercial footing. It began as the "*Institute of Field Archaeologists*" (IFA), a name which reflected that early focus on archaeologists undertaking fieldwork and investigation. In 2008 it changed its name to the "*Institute for Archaeologists*" to reflect the much broader range of specialist sub-disciplines that were becoming members – such as buildings archaeologists, illustrators and surveyors, laboratory-based scientists and indeed academics and bureaucrats.

In 2014 IFA became CIfA by becoming a "*Chartered Institute*": that is to say it is constituted under a Royal Charter which means that the UK state (and not just the government of the day) recognises that the Institute requires its members to comply with technical and ethical codes and to work impartially in the interest of "*the public*". This places CIfA – and by extension the profession – on the same basis as other professions, such as architecture (represented internationally by the Royal Institute of British Architects, RIBA). Although based in the UK, CIfA explicitly states that it is not a UK institute and tells its members that they must comply with its code of ethics and professional standards wherever they practice. Membership currently stands at around 3,000, in-

cluding colleagues from the Netherlands, Spain, Germany and the United States.

There is a way to reduce and maybe even eliminate the conflict in roles and responsibilities mentioned above. The standards and code of a professional organisation, like CIfA, which have been widely consulted upon by a large peer-group, serve as a mechanism for an archaeologist to be a true, independent professional. The only other option would for an archaeologist to come up with his or her own standards of conduct and having to decide how to deal with the conflicting priorities noted above. An archaeologist who is accredited by a professional organisation can rely on, and use the independent standards and code of conduct of, that organisation. Moreover, if an archaeologist is questioned or challenged about his or her actions by a developer or a government official or the public, she or he refers to the standards and code that she or he must abide by as a member of that professional organisation.

The 'package' that is professionalism allows other concerns within archaeology to be addressed, albeit sometimes less directly than many archaeologists might wish, but effectively nonetheless. The first is the ongoing sub-standard working conditions that affect a substantial part of the archaeology sector, including short-term and uncertain contracts, low salaries, poor access to pensions and insurance, etc. All these issues are addresses (but perhaps not yet solved) by the increasing professionalism of archaeologists and archaeological companies and organisations. A second issue is a perceived need to diversity and widen the professional horizons of archaeology (as a sector) and of archaeologists. This could be promoted through increasing professionalism to develop new business models and new areas of business activity, with the key being that the arguments here apply across a *"historic environment"* sector and business spectrum and should not be narrowly defined as pointing at *"field archaeology"* (note the breadth of the definition of archaeology adopted by CIfA). A third issue that should be briefly mentioned is the role of volunteers. Usually, any protection of professionalism either disregards volunteer work from archaeology or is perceived to do so. However, all indications are that the role for volunteers to make archaeology public again is of crucial importance. CIfA, unlike many professional associations, continues to place great emphasis upon the role of volunteers and explicitly welcomes individuals not employed as archaeologists as members of the Institute at all membership grades.

Conclusion

The benefits of internationally accepted professional codes and standards, and hence of an international professional association, enable all archaeologists – wherever they might sit on the spectrum of archaeological and cultural heritage practice – to submit themselves to rigorous independent peer review. The application of such an external audit to the individuals and organisations (usually commercial and charitable) involved demonstrates impartiality and a commitment to quality to a variety of non-archaeological partners, stakeholders and funders, and so enhances the processes of impact assessment and conservation management. Professionalism becomes a means of ensuring an ethical approach to technically competent cultural heritage management work — anywhere. We as archaeological and heritage professionals, our project proponent clients, and the wider public, may all reasonably expect development projects to bring not only sustainable economic development but greater knowledge, understanding and appreciation of our archaeological heritage.

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