Conflicting Values or Common Ground? Some Concluding Thoughts

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Introduction

In this edited volume, we have encountered issues and discussions from across Europe, reflecting the diversity in challenges that archaeological heritage managers and all those who value heritage in some way face, as well as significant commonalities. Examples have come from Spain, Norway, Finland, the United Kingdom, Slovakia, Belgium, Romania and Moldova. This is by no means an exhaustive representation of the whole of Europe, which would be a far larger and heftier volume, but it covers a range of countries with varying kinds of archaeological heritage and landscape, heritage legislation and diverse cultural, economic and societal conditions. The topics that the authors have focused upon, too, have been broad. There is an inevitable discussion in several chapters of metal detecting, itself a continuing area of debate for European archaeological heritage managers (e.g. Deckers et al. 2016b), but also debated are human remains, underwater heritage, frameworks for commercial archaeology, and general archaeological heritage management issues and challenges within specific national settings.

In trying to offer concluding thoughts to this collection, I offer also my own personal reflections on some of these issues, based upon my own experiences as a researcher of different kinds of engagement with archaeological heritage and also upon other researches and initiatives that I have encountered in Europe and beyond.

Communities, Ownership and Competing Values

A challenge for all those concerned with archaeological heritage, whether academic researchers and teachers; local, national or supranational authority representatives; or simply concerned citizens who care about the heritage environment around them, is the inevitable clash of priorities and agendas. These can be influenced by the social values bestowed (or not) upon different forms of heritage, and sometimes they may challenge accepted heritage management wisdom concerning what course of action is best suited to a particular situation. They may even cause us to reflect upon our own privilege and how this impacts our own particular world views. As Siân Jones has recently noted:

> Encompassing the significance of the historic environment to contemporary communities, social values are fluid, culturally specific forms of value embedded in experience and practice. Some may align with official, state-sponsored ways of valuing the historic environment, but many aspects of social value are created through unofficial and informal modes of engagement. (Jones 2017: 22)

Intermingling with the social values, however constructed, we also frequently see the influence of financial land-connected values of developers, the aesthetic and pragmatic values of such as town planners (which may or may not include a place for archaeological heritage in their vision) and the material values of groups and individuals who may seek to profit from cultural material or the desire simply of ownership.

The tension of ownership is often expressed in the literature through the debates between archaeologists and metal detectorists. Recent research has continued to challenge the legitimacy of metal detecting as an acceptable form of artefact retrieval (e.g. Hardy 2017), whilst others strive to demonstrate its usefulness as a form of 'democratic archaeology' (e.g. Dobat 2013). In our volume, through examples from Norway

(primarily Gundersen but also Sayej in more general terms), the Flanders region of Belgium (Deckers), Spain (Rodríguez Temiño, Yáñez Vega and Ortiz Sánchez), Slovakia (Michalik) and Scotland (Campbell), an image emerges of the impact of both legislation and also societal attitudes towards the metal-detecting community. It is not the case, even within one country, that people – especially heritage professionals – exhibit a consensus regarding whether or not metal detecting is a suitable practice in relation to archaeological heritage protection. Conflicting values here include not only the legal parameters within which practitioners work but also the public perception of whether hobbyist activities such as metal detecting are valid ways for individuals to access directly the heritage around them or in fact a selfish practice that deprives the wider society of irreplaceable archaeological knowledge.

Recent developments in several European countries point to finding a means of generating meaningful archaeological data from metal-detected and other non-professional discoveries of artefacts. These schemes also make greater use of digital capabilities, aiming to generate artefact databases which are compatible across countries. Alongside the long-term development of the Portable Antiquities Scheme's finds database in England and Wales (https://finds.org.uk/database), there are also schemes under development or already launched in Flanders (https://www.vondsten.be/, also Deckers et al. 2016a), Denmark (Dobat and Jensen 2016), the Netherlands (https://www.portable-antiquities.nl/pan/#/public), and most recently Finland, with an Academy of Finland 4-year research grant announced in June 2017 – a project with which I am personally involved. Yet more national heritage authorities in Europe report anecdotally that comparable initiatives are under consideration. At the same time, commentators in countries such as France (Lecroere 2017) express misgivings about engaging with metal detectorists at all. This culture of distrust is also on the side of metal detectorists, as is the case in Spain, where, reportedly, even metal detectorists with an amateur interest in history 'are enormously suspicious of professional archaeologists, to a lesser extent if the archaeologist belongs to a university, but to a far greater extent if they are employed by the cultural administrative authorities' (Rodríguez Temiño and Roma Valdés 2015: 114).

The question of ownership – who has the right to 'own' the past – has for many years proven a rich vein for scholarly debates (e.g. Robson et al. 2007), and values around cultural heritage are often at their most visible within this particular context. In her chapter in this volume, Riikka Alvik addresses the predicament of shipwrecks – a form of archaeological heritage sometimes overlooked in general discussions of heritage management. As she notes, there are complex and ongoing demands and challenges connected to the continued management and conservation of in situ historic wrecks. These wrecks are often by their very nature contested, with various nations having the potential to lay claim to a wreck based upon its territorial location, its point of origin and its intended destination among other things.

Alvik discusses the Dutch merchant ship Vrouw Maria, lost in Finnish territorial waters and bound for Russia. Plenty other shipwrecks, perhaps most notoriously HMS Sussex (Rodríguez Temiño 2017), have drawn extensive attention in law courts and also in the media. Other instances of commercialization of salvaged materials from shipwrecks, such as the Hoi An Shipwreck pottery auction in 2000 (Pope 2007) and the state-sanctioned sale of champagne bottles salvaged from a wreck discovered off the Åland Islands (Halonen 2014: 5), have arguably contributed to the increasingly visible concerns over how appropriate it is to seek to exploit financially the material salvaged from shipwrecks.

Perhaps even more distressing, and certainly frequently in the public eye of late, is the plight of the on-land heritage in conflict-hit countries such as Syria and Iraq, with regular news reports of looting and destruction. It is worth noting, as Neil Brodie has, that just because the media moves onto another story, the problems – for example, as in the case of the continued exploitation of Libya's vulnerable cultural heritage – do not disappear (Brodie 2015). This also, for some, brings into focus questions of scholarly ethics, with some questioning why archaeologists, especially in the West, become so preoccupied with

'classical' archaeology under threat, seemingly prioritizing this over the appalling humanitarian crises that are simultaneously playing out (Hamilakis 2003).

Within the context of arguments for and against private ownership of cultural material and what this all means for heritage management in general, there has been heated debate at the time of writing these concluding thoughts, concerning the civil action filed against American commercial company Hobby Lobby and the company owners. This international media interest is based around the enormous collection of ancient material including Iraqi artefacts and Near Eastern Manuscripts (known as the Green Collection), connected to the planned opening of the controversial Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC (Bokova 2017). It is currently unclear how and if the issue will be resolved, but it is encouraging for those concerned with the protection of vulnerable cultural material that the case is affording ample opportunity for raising awareness through major media outlets, stimulating debate and public opinion.

Some forms of heritage have increasingly become characterized as so-called 'dark' heritage, closely connected to the concept of dark tourism (e.g. Light 2017). While this terminology is employed to indicate that certain kinds of heritage can carry painful and difficult connotations for some, it is also clear that even this 'darkness' might be less of an issue for some interested parties than others, with some, for example, being enthusiastic about the heritage connected to such war and conflict due to its status as 'local' heritage (Koskinen-Koivisto and Thomas 2016: 126).

Some informants that I and colleagues have encountered in our research for the project 'Lapland's Dark Heritage' have even asked us why our project has the name 'dark heritage' associated with it at all. It is also clear that the personal perspectives and social, political or religious (to name a few) backgrounds of individuals affect how they view certain kinds of heritage (and which stories are told or displayed). This can be seen, for example, in the case of heritage associated with the so-called Troubles in Northern Ireland (e.g. Crooke 2001). With contested and often painful chapters in history, the state often faces serious, and not always altruistically motivated, challenges in how to decide which aspects to commemorate and which to silence depending on the context.

Conflicting Values of Policy

Even within the heritage sector itself, the domain of archaeologists and other heritage professionals, there are conflicting values. Whether these are concerning debates over which approaches are best employed to regulate potentially damaging activities such as metal detecting, discussed above, or concerning making decisions on preservation and restoration, that which is considered to be 'best practice' is not always universally agreed. Global organizations such as UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) and its advisory organization ICAHM (the International Scientific Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management) issue charters and agreements. At the European level bodies such as the Council of Europe perform similar and connected functions. Yet, as others have noted, the charters issued by ICOMOS and others, such as the Venice Charter (1964) and the Burra Charter (2013), do not come with legal obligations. They are essentially codes of ethics and practice for professionals affiliated to particular bodies: 'To deviate deliberately from the guidelines or professional prescriptions is to defy the code of ethics which may attract sanctions of the body. These can range from suspensions and fines to expulsion in very serious cases of misconduct' (Munjeri 2008: 22).

What charters and codes of ethics actually stipulate and recommend can also change over time. Following lengthy debates, and calls for its formation (Pitblado and Shott 2015), the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) convened the Professional Archaeologists, Avocational Archaeologists and Responsible Artifact

Collectors Relationships Task Force, of which I was an active member. Arguments for the development of this task force circled around the central question of whether it was ethical to ignore, as many archaeologists do, opportunities to work with non-professional members of the public that possess an interest in researching, finding and collecting archaeological material (see also Pitblado 2014). The task force carried out extensive research, consulting a wide range of published literature as well as seeking input from hundreds of individuals from across the globe (including avocational artefact hunters, artefact collectors, students, consultancy archaeologists, museum professionals and academics). While at the time of writing, the Task Force's recommendations to the SAA, including suggestions for updating the SAA Principles of Archaeological Ethics (http://www.saa.org/AbouttheSociety/PrinciplesofArchaeologicalEthics/tabid/203/Default.aspx), are still under consideration and discussion, the exercise itself demonstrates that codes are not necessarily closed to revision, to adaptation or to being questioned entirely, as situations change and develop.

Conventions too are open to interpretation. Once a country ratifies a convention, such as, for example, the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, it is up to the individual nation state to decide how it will implement the convention (Prott 1983: 339–340). Furthermore, even the decision of what counts as cultural heritage within a particular nation is left to each state, according to Article 1 of the convention, although such decisions are likely to be affected by not only nationalist sensibilities but also the international discourse of heritage practitioners and scholars and others who may influence the decisions made about cultural heritage protection and recognition.

Despite the efforts of supranational organizations such as the UNESCO to provide tools for countries to protect their cultural heritage, some observers have noted that the top-down implementation of newly bestowed statuses such as that of the 'World Heritage' has affected, sometimes negatively, traditional practices and attitudes towards cultural heritage, for example, among indigenous communities (e.g. Keitumetse and Nthoi 2009). Quite often, the 'global cultural heritage discourse and practice' of the UNESCO and other transnational bodies has the effect of trickling down and influencing heritage practices and values at the local level, perhaps transforming the way in which local heritage is thus treated and managed (e.g. Zhu 2017).

The Council of Europe's 2005 Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (known as the Faro Convention) 'requires Parties to reflect on the ethics and methods of conservation and presentation and establish processes for conciliation where different values are placed on the same heritage by different communities' (Wolferstan 2016: 43). Due to its holistic approach, it has been hailed as 'the most comprehensive and diverse international agreement on cultural heritage so far' (Finnish Heritage Agency, n.d.). Such an approach does not come without its challenges, however, and it has been noted that the unusually democratic stance of the Faro Convention has made it exceptionally challenging to implement successfully:

> Although the general principles embodied in the Faro Convention are becoming more widely accepted, this is not yet universal and this people-oriented approach is difficult to instrumentalize within the sort of regulatory framework that is the norm for international conventions. (Olivier 2017: 14)

Values of practice then and the normative way in which heritage professionals and decision-makers are accustomed to dealing with policy implementation may also post a barrier at times to any attempts to introduce more democratic ways of handling the multivocality and varied values associated with heritage.

Digitizing Heritage: New Conflicts?

A significant development that continues to have an influence on aspects of heritage management as diverse as research methods, data management and communication is the rise of digital application. So-called digital heritage and digital humanities have had an impact on academic discourse, with many universities now recruiting digital humanists into senior posts and archaeologists among others willingly embracing digital approaches to develop new perspectives and ask new questions both of archaeology and of how society values and uses it. Areas of reflective enquiry have included everything from the coverage of archaeology in online news outlets (Maldonado 2016), the impact of the use of blogging and other open-access social media techniques on archaeologists' abilities to communicate and disseminate (Morgan and Winters 2015) to the depiction of archaeology within video games (Meyers Emery and Reinhard 2016).

Some have taken advantage of digital applications in order to make heritage more accessible, for example, presenting geographically remote heritage sites including those inaccessible to many due to being underwater (e.g. Edwards et al. 2016) or objects kept far from their communities of origin in museums, in a way that communities can access and explore (e.g. Haukaas and Hodgetts 2016). Here too there are questions to ask, however: Is providing a community with a digital rendition of their cultural heritage really a suitable replacement for the real thing? Can the digital replace the 'real' in this sense, or is it a shallow substitute for material cultural heritage? How does the concept of authenticity relate to digital renditions with heritage, through this medium?

The digital turn nonetheless presents many unprecedented opportunities for archaeological research, from the application of new techniques to archaeological analysis and management processes, through to the opportunity to reflect critically on the impact of digital communication for archaeological practice, public engagement and in some cases self-promotion. However, do these possibilities only create opportunities, or can they also cause yet more fracturing of the viewpoints and values connected to archaeological heritage? Does digital communication exclude those with less access to devices and Wi-Fi, although it opens up chances to widen reach at the same time? Do less well-'shared' and less visible voices become silenced or marginalized by those that have taken better advantage of the new media? As the traditional skill sets and knowledge of heritage managers evolve to accommodate digital methods, including big data analysis and new mapping techniques, are some specialists at risk of being left behind? Naturally, the transitional move to the higher valuation of digital skill sets is mirrored across all areas of life and is not a challenge/opportunity for the heritage sector alone.

What Are the Competing Values that Will Shape the Next Chapters of Archaeological Heritage Management?

There are continued threats to the preservation and protection of archaeological heritage, from the seemingly relentless effect of destructive activities – sometimes termed heritage crimes – including illegal developments destroying conservation areas and historic sites, the illicit antiquities trade and forms of vandalism and criminal damage, through to climate change and political upheavals. The latter may rapidly cause physical threat in instances of civil unrest and military action but also shifts in policy as different political priorities and ideologies come to the fore.

At the time of writing, there are concerns for the future political landscape of Europe, with many commentators watching to see what the impact of Brexit – the exit of the UK from the European Union (EU) – will be across many aspects of everyday life, not least heritage policy. Archaeologists in the UK have already voiced concerns over the threat of possibly receding universities to subjects such as archaeology

(The Archaeology Forum 2016). Others have tried to foresee the likely changes in policy and decision-making, and other sectors concerned with archaeological heritage management (Table 11.1).

Pan-European policy towards heritage, such as the European Heritage Label mentioned in Table 11.1, also has an impact at different levels. As Tuuli Lähdesmäki has noted, within EU policy, heritage 'is a cultural and political concept which is easily instrumentalized for the use of diverse identity projects' (Lähdesmäki 2014: 401). Tensions thus emerge between European, national and local heritage identities and uses.

Table 11.1 Predicted effects of a vote to leave the EU in the 2016 UK referendum

Immediate effects	Longer-term potentials	No change
Loss of access to EU funding for research, tourism and development

Changes to existing policy programmes which rely on EU funding (e.g. agri-environment schemes)

Loss of access to EU cultural programmes (e.g. European Capital of Culture, European Heritage Label designations, EU Prize for Cultural Heritage)

Less say over development of EU cultural heritage policy

Uncertainty over policies to tackle illegal antiquities trade | Possibility to redefine Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, in line with recent or future domestic planning reform

Possibility to redefine EU controlled VAT system (e.g. to reduce VAT on building repair)

Divergence from EU in terms of wider policy on cultural heritage

Likely loss of some influence in pan-European institutions (e.g. Europa Nostra) | Theoretical commitment to and influence on Council of Europe Conventions

European Heritage Days (i.e. Heritage Open Days, Doors Open Days)

Theoretical ability to engage in European Cultural Heritage Year 2018. |

From The Archaeology Forum (2016: 1)

The concept of 'future' in heritage studies is gaining its own traction within scholarly debates, with issues such as how the predicted impact of climate change will play out (e.g. Newell et al. 2017), and even the impact for future generations of toxic waste (e.g. Buser 2015) attracting academic attention. In the context also of difficult and 'dark' heritage, the ways in which we try to reconcile with, conserve or make use of dangerous material remain (e.g. unexploded ordnance left over by the Second World War, cf. Thomas et al. 2016).

As academic studies around heritage, including so-called critical heritage studies, continue to develop, there continue to be opportunities to recognize, understand and acknowledge the conflicting values that occur with relation to heritage. Critiquing professional and other approaches to heritage management and valuation is important, but so is finding workable solutions or compromises. Therefore there needs to continue to be a pragmatic angle to debates. This European-focused volume has been almost a situation report, in a sense highlighting many of the debates and concerns existing in this current period of time with relation to archaeological heritage. Yet these debates often have a long history and are far from being resolved.

Legislation is changing, for example, several countries in Europe have recently updated or are considering updating their laws concerning portable heritage. What more is to come? There are lessons and warnings from elsewhere in the world, with many nervously watching in 2017 the political situation in the USA and the peril that the National Park Service finds itself in (e.g. McDavid and Thomas 2017). We cannot assume that heritage protection or valuation will continue to increase or that either the public or heritage professionals will be satisfied with future changes to policy, legislation or even definitions of archaeological heritage.

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