

# **ABSTRACT BOOK**

**30<sup>TH</sup> EAA ANNUAL MEETING  
ROME, ITALY  
28<sup>TH</sup> - 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2024**

We are asking for short 6 slide 6 minute talks. As discussion of finder-collectors can sometimes be a sensitive topic, we ask that participants, including the audience, engage in debate and discussion in a respectful manner.

## ABSTRACTS

### 1 PORTAL OF AMATEUR COLLABORATORS AND REGISTER OF INDIVIDUAL FINDS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Marik, Jan (Institute of Archaeology of the CAS, Prague) - Antal, Robert (Institute of Archaeology of the CAS, Brno)

The searching of archaeological finds is reserved exclusively for professional archaeologists under the conditions of Czech legislation. In practice, however, many archaeological institutions have been cooperating at various levels with the finder-collectors for several decades. Different approaches to collaborators and the finds themselves, their documentation and storage in collections have been subject to many discussions concerning the ethics and legality as well as the very meaning of such collaboration.

In 2021, the Portal of Amateur Collaborators and Register of Individual Finds was launched. The aim was to identify amateurs who could and were prepared to collaborate with archaeologists within the legal limits and to set up the fundamental ethical and methodological procedures. The portal was created as a platform to support collaboration between professionals and amateurs.

The use of the portal is not obligatory; therefore, its start was relatively slow. The launch of the portal was marked in the first months by a heated debate on legal and ethical aspects. At present, it is only used to a greater extent in only some regions. The main obstacles to its wider use are administrative constraints resulting from outdated legislation and a lack of manpower on the side of professional archaeologists.

Although the portal currently covers only a small part of the finder-collectors community in the Czech Republic, its considerable contribution is to open a discussion on the unification of cooperation procedures and searchers and the possibilities of using their capacities for the protection and research of archaeological heritage.

### 2 A MAJOR TRAIN WRECK: THE 'NEW' FINDS REPORTING APP OF THE AUSTRIAN FEDERAL MONUMENTS AGENCY

Karl, Raimund (Universität Wien)

Modern technology often seems to offer quick fixes for age old-problems. Yet, "we've now got an app for that", in and of itself, doesn't necessarily solve the problem; and especially doesn't relieve those who want to fix it of their duty to consider the foreseeable outcomes of their actions: *quidquid agis, prudenter agas, et respice finem* (Gesta Romanorum; Oesterley 1872, 431). The ongoing train wreck caused by the Austrian Federal Monuments Agency's (BDA) most recent attempt to solve the 'problem' of (the lack of) 'archaeological' finds reporting by members of the public (despite a legal duty to do so) by purchasing "an app for that" serves as an abject lesson for this. Instead of fixing the problem, the thoughtless acquisition of an entirely unsuitable 'quick fix' has created a possibility to commit perfect crimes, both of defamation and of 'laundering' illicitly trafficked portable antiquities; while doing nothing to actually improve 'public' finds reporting. This paper will examine what led to this utter train wreck for heritage management.

Oesterley, H. 1872 (ed.). Gesta Romanorum. Berlin: Weidmann.

### 3 THE FINDS WE NEVER SEE. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARTEFACTS KEPT AS TROPHIES BY LICENSED METAL DETECTORISTS

Falkenberg, Josefine (Archaeological Heritage Office Saxony)

In the German federal state of Saxony, every artefact found in the ground without clear ownership legally belongs to the federal state, not the landowner or finder. While a reward for a finder is mentioned in the legal text, the nature of this reward is not defined. Ever since 2018 metal detecting has become increasingly popular, with many different people wanting to explore their surroundings and their history. Two and a half years ago the Archaeological Heritage Office reacted to growing numbers of people wanting a license for metal detecting in Saxony. A position was created to better deal with administrative work, finds and necessary lectures as part of the licensing process. Practical challenges of this position include the also growing number of illegal detectorists. Aside from openly illegal treasure hunters who post about themselves, their activities and their finds on social media archaeology is faced with people going through the lengthy process of becoming registered only to never hand in their discoveries. If controlled by the police, these collectors have valid licenses to show. When asked for finds by archaeologists, research has supposedly never taken place or nothing was ever discovered. The assumption is, that finds are collected, shelved or sold under the cover of legality. While this generally concerns finds from all ages, a clear favour with the collectors seems to lie

### 4 MANAGEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE, SEARCH AND COLLECTION IN UKRAINE: THE TIME MACHINE WORKS

Videiko, Mykhailo (Kyiv Metropolitan Borys Grinchenko University) - Motorzhyna, Mariia (Kyiv Metropolitan Borys Grinchenko University)

The 19th century in the lands of Ukraine, which was a part of two empires, became a time of intensive searching and collecting. At the same time, part of the land was private, part was state-owned, and ownership of archaeological artifacts was distributed accordingly. At the beginning of the 20th century, many collections became the public domain through a network of museums, and collectors moved to fund archaeological research. The communist regime after 1917 monopolized land, archaeological artifacts and archaeological research.

The 1991 division of land into public and private lands, while preserving the remaining monopolies with weak public institutions and the absence of state control, resulted in the mass destruction of cultural heritage due to unauthorized prospecting. Large number of searchers-collectors were involved in illegal treasure searches. They and their collections are outlawed.

In the conditions of war, the scale of illegal search has decreased. Two trends became active: the transfer of collections to museums and the confiscation of archaeological objects from smugglers and collaborating collectors for the benefit of the state. Some of such gatherings were looted by the Russian occupiers or destroyed along with their owners due to military actions and lost forever.

Attempts to catalog and digitally record the finds obtained during the search are limited by the ethical problems of dealing with the things obtained in this way. Problem is the existence of a state monopoly in the absence of effective control over the processes.

The uncontrolled situation clearly poses a threat to cultural heritage. Attempts to discuss changes in the legislation have failed, although there is an understanding of their need. Looking for a way out, it is worth turning to the experience of the beginning of the 20th century, when cultural heritage was saved by the common efforts of state, public and collectors.

### 5 RESEARCH TO THE RESCUE? A HELPING HAND FOR HERITAGE MANAGERS IN ESTONIA

Kuriso, Tuuli (Tallinn University)

As in many countries that allow metal detecting, there is a considerable administrative burden in Estonia in managing data related to metal detecting. This has led to delays of several years in the processing of public finds, which has weakened local hobbyists' trust in the state (represented by the National Heritage Board). In addition, heritage management resources are often stretched, and major changes to the system or significant digital developments require political will and a longer timeframe for implementation. Alternatively, research and targeted outreach activities have the potential to influence the system from the outside. In this paper I will briefly present three aspects of an ongoing research project that will hopefully lead to positive changes in the current system. These are basic research (a case study of Estonian plough zones), a machine learning experiment (medieval and early modern coins), and a public engagement plan derived from the needs and interests of local hobbyists.

### 6 INTERNAL ENEMY. WHO IS DESTROYING THE UKRAINIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE?

Ivanova, Oleksandra (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy) - Zotsenko, Ivan (Institute of Archeology, National Academy of Sciences, Kyiv, Ukraine)

First of all, it is worth noting some details of Ukrainian legislation in the field of heritage protection. The Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Archaeological Heritage" defines this heritage as: "a set of archaeological heritage objects that are under the protection of the state, and the territories connected with them, as well as movable cultural values (archaeological artefacts) originating from the objects of archaeological heritage". Such a definition artificially narrows the terminology at the expense of tying archaeological objects to objects and territories and requires proving the connection between a specific object and an object or territory. In the case of archaeological objects of unknown or illegal origin, this is usually unprovable. Exactly this provision of the law, in our opinion, creates a large number of problems with the extraction and circulation of archaeological artefacts inside of the country.

Also, the number of finder collectors has increased tenfold over the past 20 years due to restrictions on the purchase of metal detectors and their price.