Public Archaeology: archaeology for the public or with the public?

Citizen Science; Amateur Archaeology; Crowd-sourced data; scatter vision; tunnel vision

The following talk is focused on present-day practice of archaeology in Denmark. The talk will focus on the trajectory of incorporative and interdisciplinary archaeology in Denmark, for and with the public. Thus also question best-practice for future archaeological institutions and how to progress archaeological knowledge. Related to this, it will be discussed how to diversify vision from scattered or tunneled vision, towards something that incorporates a multidimensional and interdisciplinary approach in order to create archaeology for and with the public.

Because, what is the overarching existential purpose and intent of archaeology? documentation or mediation?

Dr. Karl Hjalte Maack Raun, Museum Horsens, Denmark
Public Archaeology : archaeology for the public or with the public?

- Archaeology in Denmark
  - Political structure
- Public archaeology in Denmark
  - Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice
- Benefits, deficiencies and weaknesses
  - Scatter or tunnel vision
- Purpose of archaeology
  - Documentation or mediation
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A public matter, a private concern

Municipalities

Museums & Archaeological areas of responsibility

Limited competition
Archaeology a matter of cultural heritage

Outsourced responsibility

Cultural Heritage

The Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces has the regulatory responsibility for sites and monuments and listed buildings. The Agency helps to secure important evidence from all ages and make it relevant to the people of Denmark. The Agency primarily works within the following areas:

Sites and monuments
The Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces holds the overall responsibility for the protection of ancient sites and monuments and for the archaeological excavations undertaken by Danish museums. The Agency does not conduct archaeological investigations itself, but in collaboration with the National Museum of Denmark. It is responsible for the restoration of megalithic tombs and Medieval ruins.

Historic buildings
The Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces is responsible for listing buildings of national significance and may also delist such buildings. The Agency must grant permission for any construction work on listed buildings and offers advice and information on maintenance of buildings. It also contributes to funding the restoration of listed properties. The Agency itself owns a small number of listed buildings. Church buildings belonging to the Danish National Evangelical Lutheran Church are the responsibility of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs.

Municipality and planning
In collaboration with the Danish Ministry of the Environment, the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces lays down overall guidelines for securing valuable cultural environments. The Agency also manages a number of projects aimed at encouraging the municipalities to safeguard heritage assets and regard cultural heritage as a resource that can be used proactively to promote settlement, commercial development and tourism.
Museums in Denmark

There are state-subsidised museums all over Denmark. Together with the state-owned museums they form a network that seeks to secure Denmark's cultural and natural heritage and disseminate knowledge of this heritage.

Most of the museums, 56, focus on cultural history, i.e. various periods and aspects of Denmark's history. There are 27 art museums, while two museums specialise in natural history (geology, zoology and botany). Finally, 13 museums cover several areas, e.g. both cultural, art, and natural history. Some of the museums have several branches or exhibition sites.

All of the museums cover a particular area of responsibility that is geographically, chronologically or thematically defined. Some cultural heritage museums cover the history of their local area in general, while others specialise in e.g. agriculture, fisheries or industry. In the same way, some art museums have comprehensive collections, while others concentrate on certain schools or the works of one particular artist.
There are hundreds of museums in Denmark – from the large national collections to small, private "one-man museums".

The state owns 5 museums, and 97 are approved to receive state subsidies. The Agency for Culture and Palaces does not run any museums itself, but makes grants to and supervises all state-subsidised (approved) museums and most of the state-owned museums. These museums are subject to the Danish Museum Act and must comply with a number of requirements as stated in the Act.

A state-subsidised museum can be owned by one or several local authorities or by an association whose objective is to run the museum, or it can be an independent institution. Museums can apply to the Agency for Culture and Palaces for approval for state subsidies. However, since Denmark already has a well-established network of museums, new museums are seldom approved. A private museum cannot be approved for state subsidies.

Three expert councils with representatives of museums and universities advise the Agency for Culture and Palaces. The council members are experts on cultural history, history of art and natural history, respectively.
Requirements for state-subsidized museums

The Five Pillars

Tasks of the Museums

November 29, 2010

Exhibitions are just one part of the museums' work. Under the Danish Museum Act, all state-owned and state-subsidised museums must help to secure Denmark's cultural and natural heritage in five ways:

Collection
The museums must add relevant new objects and documentation material to their collections.

Registration
The museums must register the objects and material collected. Knowledge of exhibits, etc. must be accessible.

Preservation
The museums must ensure that their collections are preserved for posterity. Objects and archives must be stored in suitable conditions, and objects must be conserved as required.

Research
The museums are research institutions and must seek to gain new insights into their respective areas.

Dissemination
The museums must disseminate their knowledge and collections.

Additional tasks
In addition, the cultural heritage museums are engaged in preserving the cultural heritage of Denmark's countryside and towns and cities. For example, they must advise local authorities in connection with the planning of new construction works, etc. and undertake the necessary archaeological investigations.
Finances of the Museums

The state-subsidised museums are primarily funded by local authorities. Many museums also receive grants from foundations.

Around 1/5 of the state-subsidised museums are owned by one or several local authorities, 3/4 are independent institutions, and less than 1/10 are owned by an association whose objective is to run the museum.

The state grants annual funding to the state-subsidised museums; this is equivalent to approx. 31% of the funding from local authorities and foundations. However, there is a cap on the state subsidies available to each museum.

Extra funding

20 state-subsidised museums receive extra funding from the state because they have special research and/or dissemination activities. Some of these museums also handle tasks at national level.

The Danish Agency for Culture administers various funds to which both state-owned and state-subsidised museums can apply annually for support for research projects, study trips, purchases, publication of books, etc.
Archaeology

In Denmark

Archaeology

Most relics from Denmark’s past are “archaeological heritage” that is buried underground, such as prehistoric settlements, graves and burial places, monuments, chattels, production equipment and structures whose functions we do not know.

All such archaeological heritage is protected under the Danish Museum Act. However, only a small part is protected permanently and must remain unchanged. The rest of the archaeological heritage must be examined by a museum before possible destruction. All citizens have an obligation to notify their local museum or the Danish Agency for Culture if they discover archaeological heritage.

Conservation on Site

The objective of the Museum Act is to preserve as much archaeological heritage as possible underground. This helps to secure valuable material for future archaeologists, enabling them to gain new knowledge about the past. The main principle is that whoever intervenes with archaeological heritage must pay for an archaeological investigation.

What is archaeological heritage

Objective of the museum act

Objective of museums
Archaeological Heritage and Construction Work

Before a building or construction project is commenced, the local museum must be notified.

At the request of the developer, the museum may screen the area for archaeological heritage. If significant finds are made, the developer may either pay for an archaeological investigation, or relocate the construction work so that the site is not touched.

If the museum has not screened the area beforehand and archaeological heritage is discovered, the work must be suspended. The expenses for the required examination of the archaeological heritage are borne by the developer.

In special cases, the Danish Agency for Culture may grant funding if a developer incurs exceptionally high expenses for archaeological investigations.

If archaeological heritage is discovered in connection with ordinary agricultural and forestry activities, the Danish Agency for Culture covers the expenses of any archaeological investigation.

In special cases, the Danish state may opt to purchase a site or monument with a view to permanent protection.
Archaeology in Denmark

Construction work

Commercial and emergency archaeology

National and local investigation strategies
Public Archaeology: archaeology for the public or with the public?

- Archaeology in Denmark
  - Political structure

- Public archaeology in Denmark
  - Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Benefits, deficiencies and weaknesses
  - Scatter or tunnel vision

- Purpose of archaeology
  - Documentation or mediation
Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
- Open

VALUES

Open (culture)
- Trusted
- Transparent
- Global

Social (by all/for all)
- Co-created
- Amateur
- Scattered

Digital (infrastructure)
- Powerful
- Ubiquitous
- Pervasive
- Massive

Research (innovative)
- Unexplored
- Inspiration for innovations
- Transdisciplinary

ATTRIBUTES

- Engaging
- Self-learning
- Accessible
- Reusable
- Participatory
- Collaborative
- Collective
- Democratic active
- Public assessment
- Creative
- Inclusive
- Immediate
- Traceable interactions
- Networks
- Devices
- Empowerment
- Effective
- Innovative
- Educational
- Common
- Responsible
- Sustainable
- Skilled
- Experimental
Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
  Museums, universities and research institutions
- Digital
  - Open platforms

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Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
  - Museums, universities and research institutions
- Digital & Open platforms
  - Collections
  - Public databases
  - Closed databases

SARA/REGIN: SAmlingsRegistrering og Administration
Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
  - Museums, universities and research institutions
- Digital & Open platforms
  - Archaeological reports
    - public
  - Artefacts and monuments
    - www.kulturarv.dk/fundogfortidsminder/

Artefacts and Monuments online
Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
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### Public Archaeology

**Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice**

- **Research**
- **Digital**
- **Social**
- **Open**

#### Values

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| Social (by all/for all) | Co-created | Collective | Creative |
|                        | Amateur | Democratic active | Inclusive |
|                        | Scattered | Public assessment | |

| Digital (infrastructure) | Powerful | Immediate | Devices |
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|                         | Pervasive | interactions | Effective |
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Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
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Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
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Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
  - Citizen Science
- Open

"Kun med befolkningens forståelse og interesse skaber vi bedre vilkår for den skjulte kulturarv"

DIME – Digitale metal detector finds

Adopt a burial mound
Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
  - Citizen Science
- Open

**DIME – Digital metal detector finds**

How many are there? A qualified guess...
- Between 4000 and 6000 ‘hang arounds’
- Between 1500 and 2000 detector users
- Between 200 and 500 ‘super-users’

Unpublished white paper
Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
  - Citizen Science
- Open

DIME – Digital metal detector finds
Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
  - Citizen Science
- Open

• puts action behind ideals of public participation and co-creation
• engenders a sense of shared ownership in the past
• promotes the role of heritage as a source of social cohesion and learning
• realises the potential of archaeology as a social asset and catalyst for learning, civic empowerment and democracy
• realises the potential for citizen science in archaeology

DIME – Digital metal detector finds
Public Archaeology

Present practice, best practice and trajectory of practice

- Research
- Digital
- Social
- Open
  - Transparency
  - Accountability
  - Effectiveness?
  - Coherence

Shared ownership in the past

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EU recommendations
Recommendations are proposed not only at European level, but also and more urgently at the national, regional and local levels. Only close collaboration between different policy stakeholders can guarantee the implementation of successful measures and transformation in the long run.
Public Archaeology

Level of challenges:

Macro

Meso

Micro
Public Archaeology

Level of challenges:

- Macro
- Meso
- Micro
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Public Archaeology : archaeology for the public or with the public?

What do we gain by working with volunteers?

What do we gain by working with researchers?
Public Archaeology: archaeology for the public or with the public?

What do we gain by working with the public?
- Socially driven scatter vision

What do we gain by working with researchers?
- Research driven tunnel vision

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“...leading in turn to a more democratic research, based on evidence and informed decision-making.” (EU_WP, p10)
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Public Archaeology: archaeology for the public or with the public?
Value: What is the point of it all?
The driving force of action, is value.
And value is culturally & contextually defined.