

## Preface

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The texts collected in the monograph are refined versions of the papers presented at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists in Vilnius, 31<sup>st</sup> of August – 4<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016, in three sessions focused on various aspects of preventive archaeology: (TH2-07) *25 years later: Changes and conjunctures in preventive (development-led) archaeology in former 'Eastern' Europe*; (TH2-10) *After 1990: a turning point in the guiding principles of rescue excavations and its impact on scientific research*; (TH2-19) *Preventive Archaeology, Scientific Research and Economic Development*. The very fact that the EAA's Scientific Committee accepted three sessions focused on preventive archaeology and that 44 papers and 3 posters were presented by authors from 22 countries, clearly speaks for the paramount importance of the preventive archaeology not only in heritage protection sector, but for the archaeological discipline in general.

In the last two decades, after the adoption of the La Valletta Convention, the structure of the archaeological practice changed substantially all over Europe. Regardless of the fact that the implementation of the Convention varies considerably from one country to another, common to all countries is a great increase in a number of preventive research and archaeologists involved. Compared to the period of some three decades ago, this increase is of several orders of magnitude. Hardly anyone could predict such progress in archaeology in the 1980s.

The development of actual preventive archaeology – the term itself has not been always translated in national legislations in its original meaning in referential language of the Council of Europe (i.e. French) – is a process which started in 1992, but it was actually after the year 2000 when most of the European countries were able to accommodate their legislation and practice. The archaeological professional

community is very sensitive about this development, and discussions on various aspects of preventive archaeology, ranging from conceptual issues to practical results and achievements are constant. At almost equal intervals, since 2007, three monographs were published with the aim to document the state of art of preventive archaeology in different countries and reflect some urgent issues at the European level (Bozóki-Ernyey 2007; Schlanger and Aitchison 2010; Guermandi and Rossenbach 2013), and our monograph follows this path.

Though all European countries protect cultural heritage by law, the interpretations of statutory protection and the necessity for preventive archaeology is interpreted very widely and differently. Here, one should not ignore the fact, that in almost half of Europe, the introduction of La Valletta-based preventive archaeology went parallel with the process of democratization, denationalization, and privatisation, and establishment of the free market economy, while the other half was increasingly adopting political and economic doctrines which constantly challenge the 'conservation' doctrine of the La Valletta Convention and some of its major achievements, as the inclusion of archaeology into spatial planning process and the polluter pays principle in the first place. The transformation of archaeology from almost purely academic discipline to a discipline with increasing and statutory participation in everyday spatial planning and development inevitably requires new financial and other resources than ever before. Thus, it should come as no surprise that the other parties (developers or investors) question the value of heritage and relevance of preventive archaeology, and will continue questioning this. Moreover, a major increase and change of financial flow directed towards preventive works in many countries has created distress for traditional institutions and organizations working in archaeology, new conditions have led to the creation of new forms of organization, redistribution of responsibilities and tasks, and practice. Consequently, preventive archaeology is not only about heritage, but also the people who work in its protection and management, and about the discipline of archaeology and knowledge of the past. For accomplishing its role, preventive archaeology can not let the progress of one of its aspects take place at the expense of the others.

This monograph illustrates well heterogeneous situation in Europe. However, such heterogeneity points to one important aspect of preventive archaeology: it is a field of conflict of interests, negotiations and debate between various stakeholders, archaeological and other. The papers presented here are to be considered primarily as aimed at the further discussion. Some present individual national systems and frameworks for preventive archaeology, whilst others give more personal views and experiences that may shed a different light to the achievements of preventive archaeology and its everyday practice. Some papers reflect the progress of preventive archaeology and its practices. All of them are equally valuable for the discussion

since preventive archaeology is an 'open' field, which requires our constant reflexion and attention. Without this, it is all too easy to slide back to the conditions of some three decades ago.

## References

- Bozóki-Ernyey, K. (ed.). 2007. *European Preventive Archaeology. Papers of the EPAC Meeting (Vilnius, 2004)*. Budapest: National Office of Cultural Heritage, Hungary & Council of Europe, Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage.
- Schlanger, N. and Aitchison K. eds. 2010. *Archaeology and the global economic crisis: multiple impacts, possible solutions*. Culture Lab Editions, Tervuren.
- Guermendi, M. P. and Rossenbach, K.S. eds. 2013. *Twenty years after Malta: preventive archaeology in Europe and in Italy*. IBC Bologna 2013.