



Job role profiles in archaeology Austria

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'Archaeologists'

Usually, the defining criterion for officially being considered an archaeologist is holding a degree in an archaeological subject. While this is not perfectly clearly defined in Austrian law, it is implicitly assumed in § 11 (1) Bundesdenkmalschutzgesetz, which defines holding a degree in an archaeological subject as a necessary precondition for being eligible to be granted a license by the Bundesdenkmalamt (national heritage agency) for any kind of archaeological fieldwork aimed at 'discovering or analysing archaeological remains' (whether by excavation or non-invasive methods). Archaeological subjects currently taught at Austrian universities are mainly Ur- und Frühgeschichte (pre- and protohistoric archaeology, including medieval and modern archaeology) and Klassische Archäologie (Greek and Roman archaeology), with courses in either or both offered by the Universities of Vienna, Innsbruck, Salzburg and Graz. In addition, the University of Vienna offers archaeology as part of several other degree programmes (Egyptology, Near Eastern Studies, Celtic Studies), but whether graduates of these degree courses would be recognised as 'archaeologists' by official bodies has never been clarified.

Austria is currently changing archaeology courses to the Bologna architecture. As of yet, the degree required to be considered an 'archaeologist' is the 4 year Mag.phil degree (MA equivalent), the first degree available in the pre-Bologna system. Whether the 3 year undergraduate BA (Baccalaureus) degree will be accepted by official bodies has not been clarified as of yet. In a statement in 2006, the director of the archaeology department in the Bundesdenkmalamt stated that it would most likely not accept the BA as a sufficient qualification, but this has not yet officially been confirmed.

'co-workers' ('Mitarbeiter')

Everyone else working in archaeology is usually referred to by the generic term 'co-worker'. Included under this term are academics holding degrees in non-archaeological subjects, skilled

technical support staff (e.g. conservators, photographers, computer technicians, artists, craftsmen etc.), unskilled workmen and volunteers. In the case of fieldwork, the term is also used for staff members holding or studying for a degree in an archaeological subject if they are only participating, but are not the site director or head of a survey team.

Other academics working in archaeology

Academics holding degrees in non-archaeological subjects are usually either employed on a permanent basis or on temporary contracts by archaeological institutions, charities or companies, or act as consultants to these. These are usually referred to by terms specific to their academic subject qualification (e.g. biologist, zoologist, physicist etc.), even if fully participating in fieldwork projects.

Palaeontologists and physical anthropologists have in the past occasionally been granted excavation licences for sites containing archaeological remains which fall into their areas of academic expertise (e.g. excavations in cave sites likely to contain mainly zoological remains, excavations in early modern cemeteries). Regardless of this, academics holding degrees in these subjects are not considered to be archaeologists, but as scientists working in subject areas related to and partially overlapping with archaeology.

Skilled workers

Skilled workers are usually employed on permanent or temporary contracts or occasionally brought in as contractors. Permanently employed skilled workers are rare, and usually are either conservators or photographers. Skilled workers, when not referred to by the generic term 'co-worker', are usually referred to by the term for their profession (e.g. photographer, carpenter), or by generic terms for their professional field (e.g. technician, craftsman).

Unskilled workers

Unskilled worker refers to all members of staff who either have no formal qualifications or a high school diploma (Matura, A-level equivalent) only. They form a variable part of the archaeological workforce, and are almost exclusively employed on temporary contracts on excavations. Most unskilled workers participating in archaeological work are either enrolled in re-employment measures for long term unemployed run by the Austrian employment agency (Arbeitsamt) in cooperation with archaeological institutions or charities, or workers supplied by local councils or other interested parties for excavations as 'in kind' support. Occasionally, prisoners have also been used on archaeological excavations as unskilled workers. If not referred to by the generic term 'co-worker', they are usually referred to as 'excavators' ('Ausgräber') or just plain 'workers' ('Arbeiter'). Some unskilled workers have been working on archaeological excavations for lengthy periods. Some are drop-outs who started archaeology degree courses, but failed to complete them. Others came into archaeology with or developed particularly useful abilities, skills or qualities while working on excavations. However, any practical qualifications such long term 'unskilled' archaeological workers may have developed during their careers in field archaeology are not formally recognised. Informal recognition is usually expressed by archaeologists either regularly re-enlisting them for their field projects or in very exceptional cases by being given long-term or even permanent contracts, and by recommending them to other archaeologists for their field projects, usually by word of mouth.

Undergraduate students enrolled in archaeology degree courses

By and large, students enrolled in archaeology degree courses who have completed field school modules or have gained considerable practical fieldwork experience but have not yet completed their degree are considered as 'skilled' archaeological workers. Given that archaeology degree courses in Austria have as of yet lacked a tight structure, this stage in an archaeological career can last several years, in some exceptional cases even several decades.

In practice, such students make up a large part of the actual archaeological workforce in Austria,

and can hold considerable responsibilities on excavations. Depending on practical experience (once again mostly transmitted by word of mouth from project manager to project manager), such students can be employed as simple labourers, site supervisors and even as acting site directors, with the 'official' site director (the person holding the excavation licence and having a degree in archaeology) only visiting on rare occasions to check progress. Exceptionally, particularly experienced students have been granted excavation licences by the Bundesdenkmalamt or have been employed as site directors for excavations under the direct authority of the Bundesdenkmalamt itself.