

Scandinavian Archaeology Goes Abroad

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During the past two decades Scandinavian archaeologists have increasingly participated in projects abroad. Only a few of the projects are based on past cultural-historical links, while the majority are based on comparative and collaborative perspectives, often on other continents. The reason for this development is partly the theoretical development within the discipline, and partly also changes in funding policies. This new situation presents Scandinavian researchers with many practical, ethical and political challenges, but if we take them seriously we may often be rewarded.

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INTRODUCTION

Traditionally Scandinavian archaeologists (classical archaeology excluded) have worked primarily within their own country (or even a particular region of their country). This is not surprising, considering that archaeology as a discipline developed alongside the emergence and later the consolidation of the European nation states during the 19th century. The same tendency to base one's research on local or national material is found across the world.

Looking back over the last century, there are a number of examples where Scandinavian archaeologists were involved in inter-Nordic projects (Forntida gårdar i Island (e.g. Stöng), Iceland (Stenberger 1943); Vallhagar, Gotland in Sweden (Stenberger 1955); and to a lesser extent Borg, Norway (Johansen & Munch in prep.)). There are also a few examples of projects that were specifically not inter-Nordic projects but instead motivated partly by national politics, as in the case of research on Greenland in the 1920s and 1930s (Keller 1990:127). And, as the exception to the rule, a few Scandinavian archaeologists were directly involved in projects further afield. One example is the Danish involvement in the Arabian Gulf from the early 1950' onwards, initiated by P.V. Glob (1968) and G.Bibby (1969) (see also Højlund 1999).

During the past two decades, however, the interest in projects and research outside Scandinavia seems to have increased considerably. At the annual meeting of the Norwegian archaeologists (NAM) in 1998 (which included a session entitled

‘Norwegian archaeologists abroad’) a brief survey registered Norwegian participation or interest in projects in Russia, Greenland, Labrador, Sicily, Palestine, Nepal, Egypt, the Maldives, Tanzania, Mozambique and Botswana, in addition to contacts through the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (Riksantikvaren) in South Africa, Zimbabwe, China and Tibet. And this may not even be an exhaustive list!¹ In Sweden the University of Umeå organises field school in Israel, and various researchers are involved in research in Russia and the Baltic, Greenland and Northern Africa. Uppsala has a section for African and Comparative Studies with collaboration with and/or projects on Sri Lanka, Madagascar, the Comores Islands, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya and Egypt, while Gothenburg has projects in Sicily, Hungary and Latin America. Lund has contacts in the Baltic, Portugal and Zimbabwe, while Stockholm limits itself to Ireland and Laos. In Denmark the Internet provides information on ongoing projects on Greenland, in Russia and the Baltic, Shetland and Benin in addition to the continuation of the earlier mentioned research in the Arabian Gulf.

It would appear that in Sweden and Denmark one individual is in several cases responsible for more than one project abroad (e.g. Kristian Kristiansen, Lars Larsson, Klavs Randsborg), while in Norway many more individuals are actively involved in overseas projects². Archaeologists at the University of Bergen have since the 1970s carried out ethnoarchaeological work in Africa, and Randi Håland is, as a result of her long involvement in various countries, certainly the most experienced researcher when it comes to projects abroad. Not surprisingly many ongoing projects are either initiated or supervised by her. However, researchers at other departments and institutions are increasingly looking outside Norway as well.

There are surprisingly few projects on the European continent. By far the majority of projects are located further afield in Africa, Asia, the North American Arctic and South America. While the tendency within anthropology during the past two decades has been to “come home” (Moore 1999:8), it would seem that archaeology is doing the opposite and going abroad! In this paper I will consider first the reasons for this development. Following that I will discuss some of the challenges for and possible consequences of this international involvement.

GENERAL AIMS AND THEIR BACKGROUND

Generally speaking, it would appear that there are three major, though not necessarily mutually exclusive, categories of projects. Firstly there are projects where the main motivation is cultural-historical links, that is, where we assume that there were direct or indirect contacts between Scandinavia and the external

¹ While information about ongoing projects in Sweden and Denmark was available on the Internet, similar information was scarce for Norway. Consequently the list is based on my personal knowledge of projects, and is therefore not directly comparable to the lists for Sweden and Denmark.

² This could be a misrepresentation due to my better knowledge of Norwegian based projects (see above).

research region. This is the case, for instance, for parts of Russia (e.g. Hood 2000), the Baltic, the northern Atlantic region, Norse Greenland, the copper-producing regions in Central and Eastern Europe and other, predominantly European regions. This may be seen as a natural continuation of the cultural-historical archaeology, now with a clear emphasis on not limiting ourselves to sites that happen to be within modern national boundaries. As we all know, the geographical extent of too many archaeological studies has been determined by modern administrative borders of various kinds, thus resulting in a less than complete picture of the settlement structure among other things (for a discussion of one such example see Havas 1999).

Secondly there are comparative projects, whether predominantly on ecological, economical or technological bases or with emphasis on theoretical or methodological issues. Examples of such projects include the research on Arctic hunter-gatherers in northern Scandinavia, Greenland and Canada (Hood 1995, Olsen 1998), the shell middens in Portugal (Larsson 1996), and ethnoarchaeological research in Africa (Barndon 1999). Since the 1960s, archaeology has increasingly become a comparative discipline. While the cultural-historical tradition focused on describing the historical development within specific geographical regions, New Archeology and later theoretical trends triggered an interest in comparative and global issues of various kinds. One of the explicit aims of processual archaeology was to discuss and explain, for instance, the development of agriculture or state societies through comparative or cross-cultural studies. Furthermore the theoretical and methodological debates led to an increasing number of ethnoarchaeological research projects during the 1970s, partly in order to secure information on, for example, hunter-gatherer livelihood and its physical remains (i.e., an extension of the comparative approach), and partly as a more general methodology that employs so-called middle range theories linking the static archaeological data with present dynamic societies (e.g. Binford 1978). This interest in ethnoarchaeology and the patterns in material culture was continued by post-processual archaeologists (e.g. Hodder 1982), although the theoretical perspective differed.

Finally there are projects where historical links or comparative aspects are of less importance and collaboration between institutions or countries is the basis of the programme. In some cases Scandinavian archaeology is here involved more as foreign expertise or consultants, and in several cases the projects are part of programmes linked to the national aid organisations. This is the case for some of the projects in Africa and Asia. Such projects have developed roughly since 1980 (Trotzig 1995), but the aid ideology as a basis for funding archaeology appears to be rapidly expanding. The intentions and goals vary, but the Scandinavian donor country is often expected to finance equipment of various kinds in addition to supporting competence-development either through formal education or by demonstrating new methods and ideas in a joint project (Trotzig 1995; Saugestad 1997; Christophersen 1999; Mogren 1999). The recent emphasis on multivocality

and indigenous views of the past have created yet another reason for interest in such projects.

If we look at ongoing projects, it is noticeable that only a limited number of projects are based on (pre-)historical links. It follows that most projects are based on comparative and/or collaborative research.

FUNDING

In addition to the various research and/or aid-oriented motivations, we can not deny that there may be other reasons for getting involved in research abroad. In my opinion, one such reason is a lack of funds for national research. In Norway the only major source for archaeological research is the Research Council of Norway (NFR). While the OECD-countries in 1991 on average used 2.38 percent of the BNP for research, Norway spent only 1.84 percent (Simonsen 1994). In 1997 the percentage was down to 1.68, while both Sweden and Finland had reached 3 percent (Myking 1999). Recently a governmental report (Stortingsmelding nr. 39, 1998/99) has suggested that also the Norwegian research funding over a five year period should be raised to the international average. It remains to be seen whether such goals will be reached.

In addition to limited resources, many countries give priority to medical and natural sciences. The above-mentioned Norwegian report emphasises the need for research linked to business and industry, while the four main research themes for the near future are maritime research, information technology, medicine and health, and lastly research related to energy and the environment (Myking 1999). Even though the majority of the Scandinavian research is still funded by government departments rather than private business or industry, it is obvious that the funds for research within the social and humanistic disciplines are extremely limited.

Since funds for local or regional archaeological research are difficult to obtain from national research organisations, one strategy is to engage in multidisciplinary research while another is to look to international projects. As national and international policies encourage both of the above, funding is more abundant



Fig. 1. The author in exotic surroundings at field camp in Botswana. Photo: M. Tønseth.

here. The increasing number of international projects in Scandinavian archaeology seems to demonstrate that the official strategy is effective. Although in many ways I consider this to be a positive development, it may nevertheless have negative sides as well. It appears to me that within both multidisciplinary research and international collaboration, we are increasingly seeing research projects based on and constructed around criteria set by politicians and bureaucrats rather than by competent and inspired researchers. These politicians are predominantly middle class, middle aged men (and increasingly women), who are not necessarily updated on the latest research. While I accept the need for politically based guidelines for some of the funding, I am worried that it leaves too little room for younger, radical researchers with views and research aims that differ from the more powerful group mentioned.

And there are additional problems. Below I will discuss some of the practical and ethical difficulties that archaeology abroad may lead to. If the motivation for the project is not first and foremost a genuine research interest but a project constructed around available funding programmes, then I am afraid that one might be both less aware of and less concerned with ethical issues, and that the practical difficulties one encounters are even more likely to deter one from completing the project.

In the long run there may also be consequences for the national research. With limited resources for national projects, there is always the risk that priority is repeatedly given to projects with greater visibility of one kind or another, be it the more monumental structures such as grave mounds rather than below-surface cultural layers such as Stone Age localities (Sjurseike 1999) or sites argued to be of national and even international importance (e.g. Kaupang in Norway³ and Birka in Sweden). Such projects certainly stand better chance of being funded by business or industry as a means of promoting and advertising the firm. Concentrating funds on one or more themes has of course never done any harm to archaeology (rather the contrary as demonstrated e.g. by “The Archaeological Settlement Committee” directed by C.J. Becker, and “Project Medieval Towns” headed by Olaf Olsen⁴), as long as one ensures that themes are rotated once or twice every decade. But my point again is that public opinion or commercial and political interests should not be allowed to dominate basic research.

An objection often heard is that scholars doing fieldwork abroad are in it purely for personal benefits. And, yes, there are some immediate attractions! One does get to visit foreign countries with their potential for new sights, new and exotic experiences, and new colleagues and friends. And I am not denying that there are cases where one suspects this to be the main motivation. However, I think it is greatly exaggerated to believe that such elements are in general the main reason for participation in international projects. They may, however, help

³ For information <http://www.hf.uio.no/iakk/kaupang/>

⁴ “Det arkæologiske bopladsudvalg” og “Projekt Middelalderbyen”.

one to 'stick it out' through less positive experiences such as breakdowns in the middle of nowhere (whether in a landrover or on a ski-doo) or close acquaintance with tropical diseases. Finally an adventurous spirit does not preclude a scientifically and ethically solid outcome. Professor Glob admitted that it was probably the adventurer in him that dragged the scientist along to the Arabian Gulf (Højlund 1999: 55). Nevertheless this adventure have led to so far nearly 50 years of collaboration fully acknowledged and supported by the Gulf states.

THE WEST – AND THE REST?⁵

In the following I am assuming that most international projects co-operate with local archaeologists and institutions in some way. If not, the problems and challenges of working abroad presumably increase dramatically.

In general there are probably fewer ethical (but not necessarily fewer practical) problems involved if the project is based in a Western European country, mainly because there is a greater chance of the collaboration being based on a symmetrical relationship financially and academically. I would argue that there are few cases where collaboration with countries outside Western Europe is genuinely based on a symmetrical relationship. These research projects are often initiated and financed by Scandinavia, and increasingly based on a camouflaged aid model. This puts the receiving countries and colleagues in a dependent position. It often allows us (or perhaps the funding departments or research councils) to have a strong influence on the research topic and the overall organisation and content of the project. To what extent is it possible for the recipient institution to negotiate these matters, while still ensuring the funding necessary to participate in the international academic community? A report to the Swedish aid agency SIDA from 1990 states clearly that both research projects and training opportunities are decided upon by the funding countries (Balsvik 1999a:2).

It can be argued that the formulation of the theme and the central questions is the most important part of a research project as it sets the limits and guidelines for the following analyses (Balsvik 1999a:2; Smith 1999). In particular indigenous groups around the world are now demanding influence over research topics, with a desire to address questions of relevance to local communities (Smith 1999:177), and it is widely argued that one of the greatest contributions provided by indigenous researchers is new questions, perspectives and interpretations (Cruikshank 1991:145; Smith 1999:193).

It is almost exclusively Western, highly industrialised societies that have defined what constitutes knowledge and relevant research in the sense usually employed in academic institutions. This definition, based on a long European tradition, has also become the basis for universities in other parts of the world (Balsvik

⁵ My discussion in the rest of the article was greatly inspired by the NUFU Gender seminar held June 27-29 1999 at the University of Tromsø. The report and papers from the seminar can be accessed from the Centre for Environment and Development Studies at <http://www.uit.no/semut/>. NUFU is the Norwegian Council of Universities' centre for International University Cooperation.

1999b:393). As a result, teaching at a number of Third World universities was and to some extent still is based on the notion of a transfer of knowledge, in many cases quite literally as the staff is educated in the West. In recent years there is an increasing awareness at many of these institutions of the need for independence not only politically but also academically. African students wish to study African history and civilisations rather than Ancient Greece and Rome, and they wish to explore African traditional knowledge in addition to the European tradition of science. Following this, African intellectuals are concerned that the many collaborative research projects funded by the West may delay this process, and some view this research-based aid as an element of neo-colonialism (Balsvik 1999a:2, 1999b:396; Smith 1999).

The hierarchical or asymmetrical relations in collaborative projects may stem from financial or academic differences – or, more often than not, both! In any case it is much too easily assumed or even agreed that Scandinavia constitutes the centre, while *the other* (country, institution, etc.) represents the periphery, the margin. In the following I will look at some of the implications of this asymmetrical situation.

MEETING THE OTHER ARCHAEOLOGIST

While the process of determining the main theme of the project is of great consequence, it is, however, only the beginning. All collaboration must necessarily be based on continuous negotiation of method and theory, strategy and practicalities.

While we all have the best of intentions for mutual collaboration, I am afraid that we don't always follow up as we intended. Unbalanced power relations, whether based on economy, race, gender or academic merits, are a product of historical and political processes. So even though you may behave exactly the same whether in another Western European country or, say, in Africa, you are so differently situated that the meaning of your behaviour will necessarily vary. What was meant to be a practical suggestion or a constructive criticism may be interpreted as



Fig. 2. Planning next day's work. An example of continual dialogue between partners. Photo: C. Damm.

arrogance or patronisation. With the increasingly stronger hermeneutic perspective in archaeology, we should not be surprised that cross-cultural understanding can be difficult or that it is located within various power structures. But it is one thing to know the theory, – and quite another to deal with it in practice!

Consider for a moment the following event: your colleague from outside Scandinavia is visiting your institution to participate in a project in your country. You were somewhat late in getting the permits and equipment organised (we often are, aren't we?), and consequently you both have to scurry between offices, fixing things at the last moment. Getting the research permit before taking off for the excavation is proving a little tricky. At the administrative office you are employing all your diplomatic skills to settle the matter, when your foreign colleague breaks in, usurps negotiations, demanding efficiency and leaving you as a passive bystander. How would you react? And why is it that the image of a (male?) Scandinavian barging in and fixing things for his colleagues in a Third World country comes much more easily to mind than the above scenario? While this example may be interpreted simply as an example of bad manners on the part of the visitor, I would argue that it is also symptomatic of a hierarchy implicit in many international projects.

Many find bureaucracy at home extensive and slow. Most who have worked abroad find it fairly democratic and efficient! One of the main difficulties with foreign administration and organisation is, however, precisely that it is foreign. Initially you are therefore often confused and perhaps frustrated because you don't understand the system, and your efforts towards speeding up the procedure may have the opposite effect. My experience is that more often than not your local colleagues somehow manage to pull things off – even when it looks impossible. The reason is, of course, that they do know the system!

Negotiating the research strategy can be a difficult and time-consuming task. Let us look at a simple example. How is the excavation to be documented? Excavation techniques and procedures for documentation may vary greatly both within and between countries. Scandinavians usually take pride in our long archaeological research history and consider our methods rather advanced. Naturally we would like to demonstrate our skills by employing them also abroad (e.g. Mogren 1999:116). To us this also facilitates analysis of the data at a later stage – but it might have the opposite effect for our foreign colleagues who have more limited access to the most recent technology. Although I would personally agree that Scandinavian archaeological documentation often is accurate, detailed and efficient, in collaboration one should aim for an exchange of knowledge rather than a transfer of knowledge. Offering information as a means of opening up a constructive dialogue on the aims and methods of archaeology should be central to collaborative projects.

Most countries have strict rules about the export of archaeological material, many museums have guidelines for cataloguing the finds, etc. It should go without saying that all international participation require us to abide by local rules and



Fig. 3. Local informant Dice Ikaengeng from Khwai village and lecturer Maitseo Bolaane from University of Botswana. Mutual respect constitutes the basis for a close working relationship. Photo: M. Tønseth.

regulations, including ethical considerations. Unfortunately some scholars still occasionally bypass regulations, or perhaps more commonly violate local ethics and desires, for example by smuggling out finds or disturbing skeletal material. It is deeply disappointing that such conduct is found even among Scandinavians, a region of the world where we usually pride ourselves on being politically correct when it comes to human and ethical issues.

I believe that the majority of Scandinavian archaeologists enter into international projects with goodwill and the best of intentions. But I also believe that too many of us do not realise what we are getting involved in, and do not have the necessary background to cope with the social and ethical dilemmas encountered. The only solution to overcome these problems is time and genuine interest. For that reason collaborative projects are very time-consuming and may well take longer to produce academic results (Djingui *et al.*1999:8). They often require involvement over many years to become successful. More importantly, however, they require your commitment to local communities.

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

Archaeology has come of age, and few would dismiss the fact that research abroad as well as at home has various social and political consequences.

First of all, who do we collaborate with? Since international projects in many cases equal prestige, my guess is that our collaborating colleagues are part of the local academic elite, or protégés thereof. Consequently we often support the dominant segment or the Establishment, thus perhaps contributing to further marginalisation of other groups. Women, for instance, tend to be few and far between in such projects, a point emphasised during the NUFU seminar in Tromsø.

The views and visions of the academic elite are not necessarily in agreement with the rest of the academic staff, not to mention the population in general, and various minority groups in particular. One need only mention the conflict over the temple in Ayodhya (Rao 1994) to illustrate this point. As outsiders we do not always realise what we have become involved in before we are already perceived

as positioned in the conflict.

We must also consider seriously what history we are writing. If we accept that science in general and archaeology in particular is a historical product of the West, we must ask ourselves whether all parts of the world actually need an archaeological version of the past. Although presenting the world with an archaeological record of a small and distant corner of the globe may save your personal career, it may not be what that region needs. History is mostly about power, and it is the story of the powerful: how they became powerful and how they stay powerful. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith, history is not important to suppressed and marginalised groups as history can never be transformed into justice (Smith 1999: 34). Although I would disagree that history can never be important to indigenous and subaltern groups, it is important to consider what kind of history we write and not least how we write it (Damm 2000; Damm not dated b).

As the concrete project may support an academic elite, so the results may be supportive of an official or dominant interpretation of the past. Archaeological narratives and representations of the past are situated within modern power structures, and often serve to reproduce them (Damm not dated a). Again, as outsiders we must be aware that our reports and interpretations may be employed by various local groups. Scandinavians in many cases wish to support minorities and suppressed groups, but as already pointed out, even given our best intentions, our general lack of knowledge of local social and political situations may cause us to make matters worse. Some may argue that most ordinary archaeology is not related to ethnic groups or indigenous affairs. However, it seems to me that the numerous recent, rather extreme examples such as Ayodhya, the Balkan conflicts and many others (see Meskell 1998) demonstrate that archaeology very often does become involved in local politics, and that these, more often than not, are related to ethnic interests.

This brings us back to the issue of who sets the agenda? Who decides what questions are relevant and what kind of history is important or wanted?



Fig. 4. Nadia Lobonova from Petrozavodsk, Russia, Anders Hesjedal from Tromsø, Norway and Andrej Buko from Warszawa, Poland discussing finds at Slettnes, Northern Norway. Mutual exchange and visits should be central to collaboration. Photo: C. Damm.

REMEDIAL ACTION

Many of the problems and difficulties I have touched upon are linked to asymmetrical relations. Does this mean that we should refrain from participating in international projects? Some have argued this (for references see Djingui *et al.* 1999; Smith 1999), but many see advantages and strength in collaboration if conducted with mutual respect.

While many projects may benefit from a more humble Scandinavian attitude, one should not glorify local knowledge and expertise either. Local scholars may idealise their own tradition, replacing Eurocentrism with local ethnocentrism (Djingui *et al.* 1999:5), and thus replacing an open dialogue with an insistence on maintaining status quo. Collaboration can only be successful if all who are involved enter into the project open-mindedly. If we are to move from a transfer of knowledge to an exchange of knowledge, the situation requires that both parties believe that they will learn (not just benefit) from each other's contributions to the project (*op. cit.*:8).

In his discussion of the various positive aspects of collaboration, Mahmoudou Djingui (Djingui *et al.* 1999) has suggested that different backgrounds and the encounter between different types of knowledge may be seen not just as a difficulty in collaboration but indeed as a potential for both Western and local knowledge. For one thing it may contribute to the plurality of voices and knowledge forms. In addition, it may provide the basis for a constructive approach whereby local and foreign scholars may be able to extract different types of information precisely because they are situated differently. Some questions may be too culturally sensitive for a foreigner to ask, while other information is considered culturally too evident for a local scholar to engage in. Foreigners, on the other hand, may be able to obtain answers to such banal or even silly questions. Smith, in contrast, appears to prefer a different type of collaboration, whereby indigenous researchers interview indigenous informants, and non-indigenous researchers concentrate on non-indigenous (Smith 1999: 178), but she is willing to open the door to outsider participation. While both of these scholars are concerned with anthropological and sociological research resembling the ethnoarchaeological perspective, the idea of co-operation producing a combined result that is bigger and better than its parts can easily be transferred to other archaeological projects. I am tempted to speak of the possibility of a hermeneutic fusion of horizons.

I think that it will enrich Scandinavian archaeology if we participate in international projects, even beyond the immediate vicinity of Northern Europe and beyond areas with cultural-historical contact. We may be able to encounter other views of the past, other approaches to archaeological problems, and learn more about the uses of material culture in different societies. The combination of local and foreign eyes can yield a very powerful potion. I further believe that we can make valuable contributions in many contexts, whether regarding methods and theoretical considerations or comparative problems and material. But on our part it will require serious consideration of the extent and form of involvement in

international projects, and perhaps we should more readily decline participation?

Mutual collaboration should also include visits by foreign colleagues to Scandinavia. Too often the travel is from Scandinavia outwards, with limited mobility from the other country. All researchers benefit from international travel, perhaps in particular those from countries that do not often organise major international conferences. And, not least, we should also to a much greater extent encourage researchers from outside Scandinavia to participate in projects here, and in this way open up a dialogue on our traditions and interpretations! If we argue that discussion and exchange of information and ideas are constructive abroad, surely they must be so at home too.

While collaboration in principle may be perceived as positive, there is still the question of asymmetrical relations. How can we avoid a regime of imperialistic research when we do go abroad? Smith (1999:173) lists a number of questions that may help us plan and evaluate collaborative projects. In the following I have edited the questions slightly, but she asks us to consider:

Who defined the research problem?

For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so?

What knowledge will the local research community (or indeed the local community) gain from this study?

What knowledge will the foreign researcher gain from this study?

What are some likely positive outcomes of this study?

What are some possible negative outcomes?

How can the negative outcomes be eliminated?

To whom is the project accountable?

Many funding organisations should be encouraged to restructure their basis, allowing for greater input and initiative in regard to research interests from the recipient countries. As one step in this direction, NUFU is considering letting a greater part of the funds be managed from recipient countries, thus empowering local institutions (Balsvik pers. com.). Research projects funded by Western sources should also strive to a greater extent to consider local forms of knowledge, acknowledging that development may first require rehabilitation of traditional knowledge and know-how (Boutrais 1999: 478).

While most projects presumably are relevant and interesting to the persons directly involved, it is pertinent to ask whether and to whom they are relevant in a wider perspective. Are they primarily rewarding for the academic elite, or are they also of interest to the local communities? This is particularly important with regard to ethnoarchaeological studies, but also to more traditional projects often conducted in towns or nearby villages (e.g. Stanish & Kusimba 1996).

To conclude, we must evaluate our projects more carefully in advance if we desire genuine collaboration that takes into account local, national and international issues. This can only be achieved through an open dialogue where all who are

involved are allowed to participate actively. Based on these premises collaborative, international projects hold great potential for archaeology. They may force our eyes open to new perspectives and new issues beyond a regional and national approach, and ultimately they may be able to shift archaeological knowledge into another gear by integrating ideas, methods, perspectives and interpretations from a variety of locations.

English revised by Laura Wrang.

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