

*Sites and Monuments: National Archaeological Records*, edited by Carsten U. Larsen, The National Museum of Denmark, DKC, 1992

by

Francis P. McManamon

This volume includes most of the presentations made at the first National Records Conference, hosted by the National Museum of Denmark during May, 1991, in Copenhagen. The three day meeting was attended by representatives of 60 countries. This collection brings together revised versions of 19 of the papers presented at the conference. With the exception of two presentations about national records in Poland and one from the United States, all the papers describe systems or initiatives in Western European countries, including six from the United Kingdom.

The articles describe the steps that have been taken or are planned to computerize national archeological information in the countries represented. The kinds of national archeological information range from site inventories, including site locational information and other site characteristics, to standard excavation records, to citations and summaries of archeological reports. In addition to clear descriptions of the computerization of the existing records, most of the articles provide background information on the existing systems of national archeological information. These sections of articles will serve historians of archeology as valuable descriptions of the status of national archeological records as of 1990.

The development of national programs for describing, analyzing, and managing archeological resources and information marks an important point in the history of archeology. For the countries from which these papers are drawn, the political and economic support for the professional management of these resources and data exists. These programs and systems reflect decisions made by governments and the citizens who support them to consider archeological resources as public property to be carried for and accounted for by public institutions. The degree to which archeological resources are considered as public and their care the concern of the state differs in scope and practice among the countries represented in this collection. Some may consider the differences among Denmark, England, and the United States dramatically divergent, yet in each of these states, all or substantial percentages of archeological resources are considered as public resources worthy of some kind of protection from wanton destruction and exploitation. The differences are in the degree of protection afforded and public control maintained.

Several of the articles provide historical information about how the current recording systems have come to exist. These articles are of special interest for the history of archeology. As one would expect from articles that focus on the present situation or future plans, the amount of historical background is not abundant, but when provided, it is interesting. Several of the articles also use copies of historical records of ancient monuments or historic drawings or paintings that record sites as illustrations.

Scandinavian countries present some of the oldest examples of the national governments asserting interest in and concern about archeological sites and monuments. Christoffersen notes a 1623 admonition to Danish bishops and clergymen to provide descriptions of prehistoric monuments in their areas. The aim of this early inventory was decidedly nationalistic. The intent was to legitimize the system of government and long history of the Kingdom. Denmark was nearly always either at war or in keen competition with Sweden, and for both parties, the aim was to

show which of the two countries was the oldest with the most glorious past (Christoffersen, p. 7).

Christoffersen illustrates the continuing interest of national figures in the archeological record of Denmark by reproducing an excavation report for a stone chest prepared in 1862 by King Frederik VII and among the historical reports being inspected and used to update the Danish national archeological records.

Mikkelsen and Larsen briefly describe the historical development of the national archeological recording system in Norway. In 1905 a comprehensive archeological site protection law was enacted in Norway. This was followed by five decades of systematic archeological inventories throughout the country. The remainder of their article describes the current efforts to computerize these records.

Articles describing modern efforts in Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, France, England, Scotland, and the United States provide only the most recent historical developments. In each of these countries, archeological information systems are being supported by government funding or are being undertaken by agencies of the national governments. Arroyo-Bishop and Zarzosa propose a Europe-wide archeological information system that would include "...past and present archival and bibliographic data, survey and site data, finds and museum data, [and] conservation information (p. 134)".

Each article provides documentation that will be useful for historical studies of the development of national systems for the management and use of archeological resources. The objectives and means being used in each country are described clearly and in detail. Readers from the United States will be especially interested in the article by Canouts that clearly summarizes the various national databases containing information about archeological resources and efforts underway to improve the coverage of these databases and access to them. Since the articles date to 1991, concerned readers also will want to consult recent issues of the *Federal Archeology Report* for up-to-date information on archeological databases which are reported on regularly there.

*Culture and Contact: Charles C. Di Peso's Gran Chichimeca*, edited by Anne I. Woosley and John C. Ravesloot. Foreword by Anne I. Woosley and Allan J. McIntyre. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque. 1993. n.p. xxvii+ 299pp., bibliography, index (Cloth).

by  
Jonathan E. Reyman  
Research Associate  
Illinois State Museum

This volume contains 11 papers from the October 1988 seminar, held at the Amerind Foundation, to assess Charles Di Peso's (1920-1962) contributions to American archaeology and particularly to the issues of Mesoamerican-Southwestern interaction and the role of Casas Grandes (Paquime) in that interaction. Two additional papers (Emanuel Breitburg's and Ben Nelson's) were solicited later and are included herein.

The Foreword by Woosley and McIntyre provides a brief history of the Amerind Foundation and the archaeological career of its founder, William Shirley Fulton. It is followed by two more background papers by George Gumerman ("On the Acquisition of Archaeological Knowledge: