

## Notes on the Third Meeting of the ARENA Project Partners.

Held at the Aristotal University of Thessaloniki, Greece.

25<sup>th</sup> September 2002

### Action Points for the ARENA Partners

- ❖ **Immediately:** ADS to begin work on density map and map tiles for the two map interface levels. To be ready for August 2003.
- ❖ **15<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** To ensure that Jon Kenny receives a mapping of period terms onto a numeric core, he will circulate a template.
- ❖ **15<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** To ensure that Jon Kenny receives a translation of the TMT top-level class names into your own language, he will circulate a template.
- ❖ **15<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** To supply completed accounts of expenditure, including lists specifying expenditure by 15<sup>th</sup> November. Jon Kenny will circulate a pro forma.
- ❖ **15<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** To supply a list of the benefits for each partner organisation derived from participation in the ARENA project.
- ❖ **30<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** To return to Jon Kenny a list of the key fields contained in each partner's SMR type data base. Jon Kenny will circulate ADS fields as an example.
- ❖ **8<sup>th</sup> February 2003:** To complete the preparation of excavation / project data (or at least a significant proportion of such data) so that these archives can be made available on partners servers. URLs to be supplied to Jon Kenny.
- ❖ **21<sup>st</sup> February 2003:** To meet again in Poznan, Poland. Exact venue to be arranged by Andrzej Prinke and Jon Kenny.
- ❖ **21<sup>st</sup> February 2003:** Be in a position to review the use of the translated TMT top-level class names and any suggested additions. Be able to confirm that each partner's SMR databases be able to map onto these terms or to highlight difficulties.
- ❖ **21<sup>st</sup> February 2003:** To supply ADS with SMR type data including period and coordinates to allow the development of the portal 'front end' density maps.

### Action Points for Jon Kenny

- ❖ **25<sup>th</sup> October 2002:** To create and circulate a pro forma for the submission of partner's accounts and expenditure details.
- ❖ **25<sup>th</sup> October 2002:** To send out a template showing TMT top level thematic class names for translation into partner's language.
- ❖ **25<sup>th</sup> October 2002:** To submit to CAA Vienna proposals for a workshop, poster session and an individual paper.
- ❖ **25<sup>th</sup> October 2002:** Circulate list of ADS field names / types to partners.
- ❖ **15<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** Draw up work programme to achieve project / excavation archives in minimum format available at CAA Vienna 2003.
- ❖ **15<sup>th</sup> November 2002:** To ensure that a mapping of period terms onto a numeric core is received from Poznan Archaeological Museum, cIMeC and Danish Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ **6<sup>th</sup> December 2002:** To complete the ARENA first year accounts and submit to Brussels.
- ❖ **6<sup>th</sup> December 2002:** To write and submit to Brussels an interim report on the activity of the ARENA project.
- ❖ **3<sup>rd</sup> January 2003:** To make arrangements for the meeting in Poznan on 21<sup>st</sup> February with Andrzej Prinke.
- ❖ **31<sup>st</sup> January 2003:** Set up a mock up link to project / excavation archives in minimum format on ARENA WebPages.
- ❖ **21<sup>st</sup> February 2003:** Ensure that the use of translated TMT terms is reviewed at the next meeting and that any problems are confronted.
- ❖ **4<sup>th</sup> April 2003:** To design and have printed an ARENA flier to be ready for CAA Vienna.

Julian Richards (ADS, University of York, UK), Jon Kenny (ARENA Project Officer, ADS, University of York, UK), Andrzej Prinke (Poznan Archaeological Museum, Poland), Oscar Aldred (FSI, Institute of Archaeology, Iceland), Henrik Jarl Hansen (National Agency for Cultural Heritage, Denmark), Claus Dam (National Agency for Cultural Heritage, Denmark), Irina Oberlander-Tarnoveanu (cIMeC, Institute for Cultural Memory, Romania), Corina Bors (cIMeC, Institute for Cultural Memory, Romania), Øyvind Eide (The Museum Project, University of Oslo, Norway), Gitte Hoy-Petersen (The Museum Project, University of Oslo, Norway),.

**Notes on the Meeting:**

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**02/106** Issues arising from the action points were raised.

- Not all partners had sent Jon a set of fields used in their SMR databases. Claus pointed out that Denmark has over 80 tables and that not all their fields would be relevant. It was agreed that Jon should circulate a set of fields used by ADS. Partners can then match their fields to the ADS ones or add new ones. The work should then be returned to Jon.
- Steen Hvaas has agreed that the Danish contribution to the special projects archives for ARENA should be Vorbasse. This is a large Iron Age site including excavation plans and GIS material.
- Norway are not able to make Kaupang available as the project is ongoing. They do, however, have other smaller sites available.

**1. Excavation or Special Project type Archives: Preparation Progress and Problems.**

**02/107 Timetable.** All of the partners are involved with the preparation of excavation type or special project data to be made available through the ARENA portal. This preservation and in some cases digitisation activity will result in a set of archives that can be made available through the Internet as basic, downloadable, files. An example of this kind of presentation can be found on the ADS web site making Cottam excavation archives available:

[http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/projArch/cottam\\_ba/index.cfm](http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/projArch/cottam_ba/index.cfm)

**02/108** It was decided that ARENA would make these archives available at this minimum level; access will be integrated into the ARENA WebPages though hypertext links to a home page for each archive. Jon to set up a mock up example using the Cottam, Terraconensis and Danebury archives by the end of January 2003. This will not be a public link but an example for the ARENA partners.

**02/109** For the next meeting of the ARENA partners (in late February) a mock up Web Page allowing access to all partners' archives will be constructed. This milestone will be followed by the writing of a paragraph of description for each archive that will be used on the Web Page. These should be written in English sent to Jon who will circulate the set for translation into each partner's language. Thus a paragraph describing each archive will be available in six languages. A final version of the Web Page allowing minimum access to the archives (or at least parts of the archives) will be ready to go live at CAA Vienna April 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 2003. Jon will draw up a work programme to achieve this milestone.

**02/110** It was decided that the interface for each project or excavation archive will be left to the individual partner although the metadata will be in a standardised format to allow for interoperable searching (see below in this document for description of layered metadata approach). Each archive will be badged with the ARENA logo and Culture 2000 banner.

**02/111** Progress on individual partners is set out in the table below:

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Archives</b>	<b>Formats</b>	<b>To be ready by</b>
ADS	Danebury Terraconensis Cottam	Variety of database, word processing, CAD and image formats.	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2003

		Currently being migrated into standard format versions. Some scanning to be done.	
Danish Ministry for Culture	Vorbasse Dankirke Hjelm	All in digital format. In recent standard formats. GIS material available. May use a GIS interface	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2003
FSI Iceland	Hofstadir	Is all in digital format apart from images. May be able to provide selected digitised images.	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2003
Museum Project	Can select a group of sites .	Archives have images and documents attached. May eventually provide a GIS interface.	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2003
Poznan Archaeological Museum	Kopolev Got cemetery site. Slavic Forts sites.	Kopolev has a digital archive including images. Slavic forts present a minimum level archive.	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2003
cIMec	Multiple site Historic Archive project for Lower Danube region.	Currently digitising.	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2003

## 2. ARENA Themes: Language.

**02/112** The use of language was discussed for the portal in terms of the front page, the search facility and multi lingual thesauri.

- It was agreed that the front page of the ARENA portal should be multi lingual, provided in the six partner languages. This will be accomplished by having an initial front page that displays clickable icons (flags, parts of a map?) allowing the visitor to select a language. An example of this kind of entry can be found in use by the Pathways to Cultural Landscapes project at: <http://www.pcl-eu.de/>
- As already noted excavation archives will each have a one-paragraph description translated into the six partner languages.
- The search facility will rely on a basic set of multi lingual search parameters, a set of 10 periods and a set of 18 to 22 thematic parameters. The periods need to map onto a numeric core, some partners have already done this and others will be forwarding theirs to Jon in the near future. The thematic parameters have been taken from the top level class names of the English Thesaurus of Monument Types (TMT). Those partners who have attempted to map their monument types into the top level TMT terms have been successful suggesting only one addition so far. Jon Kenny will circulate a template of the TMT terms so that each term can be translated into the partner's languages.

- It was agreed that any attempt to generate multi-lingual thesauri below this top level would not be practical within the time constraints of the project. This was a pragmatic decision taken with specific regard to the central aim of the project, to produce a working portal.
- To reduce the problems for researchers obtaining 'hits' on data in multiple languages a set of help pages will allow people to see the full list of terms in each language that map into the top level. A tool may also be developed allowing for the expansion of these facilities. Although this does not provide a translation service it does allow a researcher to become familiar with terms in the local language.
- The use of the TMT terms in translation and any additional terms required will be reviewed at the February meeting of the ARENA partners.

### **3. ARENA Search Terms: Progress and Problems.**

**02/113** These issues are particularly important for the SMR type data that will be made available by each partner. Some points were covered by the earlier discussion regarding language but certain points were emphasised again. The period and thematic search terms will be presented in the same language as the portal front page, selected on entry to the site.

- Partners from Iceland and Norway have been able to map their monument types onto the thematic top-level class names used by the English TMT. These terms are available on line at:  
[http://www.rchme.gov.uk/thesaurus/mon\\_types/default.htm](http://www.rchme.gov.uk/thesaurus/mon_types/default.htm)
- The 18 thematic terms and the 10 period terms will be used in conjunction to make an initial search. Once an initial search is made on the themes and periods a researcher will then have to work down local indices.
- When mapping onto the 18 thematic terms it is advisable to avoid using Monument <by type> and Unassigned.
- It is still important that we have a record of the field names for each SMR type database. or at least the key fields. Jon Kenny will circulate the ADS fields as an example of what is required. It would also be an advantage if fields can be given an English translation wherever possible.
- A choice of ten period search terms will be used or a date range. Each of the basic ten period terms may contain a number of sub divisions at the local level. These sub divisions may be shown in a help page in the same way as the monument types that map onto the thematic search terms.
- It was felt that we should be open in our portal, setting out why we have chosen to use particular terms and by providing help pages to allow researchers to see the local subdivisions of broad terms such as Iron Age.
- It was also felt that the search results page should contain a warning telling the user which type of period search they have used.

### **4. Presentations**

Both of these presentations were delivered through PowerPoint. The PowerPoint files will be made available for download from the ARENA website resources section.

#### **02/114 Merging Databases at cIMeC**

- Corina Bors reported on current activity at cIMeC creating a digital archive of plans and images by combining three key databases.
- The three databases are: RAN the national repository for archaeological records, a Registry of all archaeologists operating in Romania and the PCNA, an annually updated research plan for each Romanian region. These are dynamic databases so will need to be regularly updated.

#### **02/115 Layered Metadata: Indexing Archaeological Excavation and Project Archives**

- Jon Kenny reported on the use of Dublin Core metadata to index key interpretations or passages from excavation or project archives. This approach uses multiple Dublin Core records that can be visualised as three layers.
- The Top Layer is the usual Dublin Core record that any excavation or project report should have.
- The Middle layer creates individual Dublin Core records that relate to specific interpretive statements made in the excavation or project summary. This summary may be held as part of the digital archive or may be found in a published report in hard copy that is not deposited with the archive. The DC\_Description field actually holds a few sentences drawn from the text (manually if from a hard copy). The DC\_Relation field then allows the middle layer to relate to specific files within the archive.
- The Bottom layer of the Dublin Core layers is made up of Dublin Core records for individual components of an excavation or project archive. This may be structured in a fairly general way, taking the searcher to the front page of the pottery report for example, or taking them to a specific point in the pottery report. The degree of focus will depend on the structure of the archive and the size of the archive.
- It is possible that XML might be used in a limited way tagging specific elements within the archive, images or example.
- A data base structure for layered Dublin Core has been suggested by Jon Kenny and is currently with Tony Austin who is assessing the practicality of design. When Tony has finished with the database Jon will circulate it to the other partners containing some sample data from the Cottam archive.

## 5. Map Interface and Search Systems.

**02/116** This is the key 'top level' of the operation of the ARENA portal. We know have a good idea of how this will appear (see minutes from Copenhagen) and the search terms that will be used (see above).

- The ADS agreed to take on the construction of the 'top level' interface: maps and a search system. This will be completed for the end of August 2003.
- The map interface structure was outlined again. See minutes from Copenhagen meeting.
- The issue of density maps generated considerable discussion. There was some concern that a density map of sites referring to a particular theme and a particular period would not be representative. This is true but the point of the density map, which will have to be emphasised, is not as a research tool but as a helpful guide to areas where data is available. This issue can be raised again when an example is available. ADS agreed to see whether it is feasible to provide a mock up for the next meeting in February.
- The period elements of the map interface will consist of a number of period maps held centrally at the portal administrator (ADS).
- It was agreed that the period interface would be simplified to 10 terms that each partner will map onto a time line. Thus giving a numeric range. As with the lists on monument types it will then be possible for help pages to list further local subdivisions of the basic 10 periods.
- The periods chosen were: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Early Medieval, Late Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern.
- Locating the records on the map. Each record will need to contain a period term that can be mapped onto the ten basic terms above and easting and northing (in lat and long in decimal format rather than degrees & minutes. If a record does not have exact coordinates the centre of the nearest farm, village or municipality will be good enough at the scales involved.
- It was agreed that the partners would supply data from SMR type records to ADS by the next meeting (21<sup>st</sup> February 2003). These will need to include the data discussed above. ADS will then utilise this data to construct the density maps at the 'front end' of the portal.
- If there is a problem with converting coordinates into Cartesian format the cIMeC partners have a conversion algorithm. Contact Corina for further details.
- The ADS has digital maps covering all of the partners. They will begin work on creating the tiles that will combine the themes and periods when the partners return a query.
- The search system will finally produce a table (branded as ARENA) that will lead searchers down into local interfaces that can be designed to suit local requirements.

- The relation of period to the search system was discussed. It was agreed that the search should be made either by period (the list of ten basic periods) or by chronological date. This will generate quite different results. A search by period will generate 'hits' from different periods depending on the national periods (e.g. Iron Age in the UK ends in 43AD but in Norway it ends in 1050 AD). A search by chronological date for 500AD will produce hits from different periods (Roman in UK and Iron Age in Norway).

#### **6. Questionnaire re: technical specifications for Z and OAI.**

**02/117** The questionnaire will be circulated before Christmas and will contain a deadline for return before the next meeting.

#### **7. Financial Reporting and the ARENA Year 1 Interim Report to the EU.**

**02/118** The end of the first year of the project is fast approaching. The following was agreed:

- The first year accounts must be submitted to the EU by 15<sup>th</sup> December 2002. Our financial year ends on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2002. This only allows 2 weeks for the closure of accounts to submitting a final account. To give us more time to prepare accounts it has been agreed to close accounts on 30<sup>th</sup> October and project expenditure for the month of November.
- **Each partner must send a set of accounts to Jon Kenny by Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November.** Jon Kenny will send out a pro forma for each partner to complete containing their expenditure for the year including projections up to the end of November. The pro forma will also require a list break down of items of expenditure and staff time spent on the project. Partners will be asked to sign the pro forma confirming that the figures given can be supported by a paper trail for audit purposes if required.
- Jon Kenny will also have to submit a first year interim report to Brussels. As part of this report a summary of the benefits of participation in ARENA from the partners would be extremely helpful. Jon Kenny will circulate a request. He will also request a list of any presentations that partner's have given on ARENA this year.

#### **8. The next meeting.**

**02/119** Andrzej's kind offer to hold the next ARENA meeting at Poznan was accepted. The meeting was agreed for Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2003. The meeting will also include a visit to the site at Biskupin on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb.

#### **9. The next ARENA workshop in Vienna (CAA).**

**02/120** It was agreed that this should be a whole day session on digital preservation issues.

- Each partner will discuss the particular issues and problems that they have encountered whilst preparing the excavation and project archives for the ARENA portal.
- In addition to papers given by the partners papers will be invited on particular issues, allowing for more theoretical comment on preservation issues.
- At Vienna the ARENA website will launch hypertext links to excavation or special project type archives at each of the partners.
- It was agreed that we should also submit a paper for one of the conference sessions summarising the outcomes of the workshop. William Kilbride from the ADS has agreed to present this summary paper.
- It was also agreed that ARENA should submit a poster session and draw up a pamphlet for distribution.