

HALF A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARCHAEOLOGIST

June 29, 2012 Axel G. Posluschny Archaeological Prospection, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2012, Digital Archaeology, Education, Environmental Archaeology, Survey Anthropology, Archaeological sub-disciplines, archaeologist, Archaeology, Australia, Dublin, Europe, European Union, Frankfurt, Geographic information system, Geographical Information Systems, geophysics, German Archaeological Institute, Germany, handle grant applications, http, landscape, Landscape archaeology, LiDAR, Prehistory, remote sensing, Roman-Germanic Commission, target

Ok, my first ever participation at the Day of Archaeology, so maybe I should introduce what I am doing as an archaeologist first.

Maybe I am an example of a not-so-very-typical archaeologist – at least in my current project. I am a Prehistorian, specialized in landscape archaeology and the Early Iron Age in Middle Europe but at the moment I am leading a large European project. *ArchaeoLandscapes Europe* (<http://www.archaeolandscapes.eu>) is dealing with existing inequalities in the use and expertise of various remote sensing methods and techniques in Europe, including Aerial Archaeology, Satellite Imagery, LiDAR/Airborne Laserscanning and Geophysics (though some might argue that Geophysics is not that much ‘remote’).

We organise conferences, meetings, field schools, aerial archaeology training schools, workshops and exchange visits/internships, we publish books, articles, guides and manuals and we are planning an travelling exhibition (starting in Dublin next year). Being funded by the EU Culture 2007-2013 programme we not only aim for archaeologists as a target group but also for the laymen, to raise the awareness of new technologies in and for archaeology, embedded in dealing with the overall European Cultural Heritage.

My responsibility is the management of the project, the communication with the ‘outside world’ and amongst our 57 partners (at present) from all over Europe and Australia. So coming from the field of landscape archaeology and having been involved with a lot of work with Geographical Information Systems (GIS) I am used to this kind of computer based work, but the difference now is the lack of archaeological research. Instead of this I deal with communication mainly,

organising meetings, deal with EU financial rules (least-cost path analyses are easy compared to this!), handle grant applications and try to herd cats (i.e. 57 very different partner institutions).

My home institution is the [Roman-Germanic Commission](#) of the [German Archaeological Institute](#), based in Frankfurt, Germany. The support of such a large institution is essential for a work like this, so it's a burden that is loaded on many shoulders!

The downside of my job clearly is the lack of research work, the advantage definitely is the communication with so many different people with different cultural, educational, scientific and personal background. It is exciting to meet them and to make new experiences and to learn a lot on the many travels that I have to make.

So, no shovel, no trowel, no fancy GIS algorithms, but lots of emails, meetings and great evenings, spent with interesting people – archaeology is so diverse, that is what hopefully Day of Archaeology will show!

Oh, in case anyone wonders about the “half day” in the title: It's Friday and many people leave for the weekend after lunch – and I will leave my office for holidays then

But I hope to find the time to post some more today ...

Feel free to blame any typos on the automatic spell-checker – or on the fact that I am German