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WWI AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

My soul looked down from a vague height with Death,

As unremembering how I rose or why,

And saw a sad land, weak with sweats of dearth,

Gray, cratered like the moon with hollow woe,

And fitted with great pocks and scabs of plaques.

Wilfred Owen, «The Show»

A war that destroyed many archaeological remains. The war which has already become part of the archaeological heritage by itself.

Of course, the question of archeology and the First World War (WWI) can be considered in many ways (for example, through personalities and institutions, creation of memorial sites and cemeteries after the end of WWI, increasing of interest in archeology within the borders of the formed nation-states, surveys on battlefields, etc.).

We will focus on the archaeological heritage management generated by the WWI events.

Taking into account firstly – the conjoint of archaeological heritage in the sense of the Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (revised) (Valletta, 1992) «as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study» [1], secondly – on the Western European states experience which put this issue on the agenda especially in 2014–2018 [2].

WWI is unprecedented carnage, destruction and wastefulness. These are large battlefields for millions of one-time victims – soldiers and civilians (this is incomparable with tens or hundreds thousands of participants in previous wars).

This is a modern «industrial” war» [3] that has changed faces of previous wars. WWI began with an outdated paradigm, and three years later its face has dramatically changed. Battles lasted for months, on tens square km, with trenches, tunnels, pits, heavy shelling, artillery firefights and bombardments. More people, more guns, more shells.

This war affected the entire environment: both nature and culture, changing whole ecosystems and landscapes. These are devastated lands, destructed forests, dirty swamps of blood and death, craters in the ground from bombing and artillery shelling. Of course, along with everything, archaeological sites in the soil were also ruthlessly destroyed.

After the WWI end the question of dismantling the rubble, reconstruction, development, and management of the territories got up.

In the first years it was exhumation, identification, reburial. We can read about the organized experience of the British army already in 1919-1921, when they had instructions to look for visible traces, symbols and marks, the order of digging and they did it [4].

Although this wasn't done to collect evidence of crimes or death causes, but for humanitarian reasons. The result was hundreds thousands of buried people. This shows how the foundations of forensic archeology were laid. Over time, the traces began to disappear.

What problems have arisen after?

1. The issue of dealing with the bodies – it is reburial but not the secret removal of the remains.

2. Security issues – are unexploded ordnance, chemical contamination.

3. The issue of looting – illegal metal detector searches at battle sites to find trophies and souvenirs, later – selling valuables.

4. The issue of «uninteresting research» – until very recently the material remains of the WWI period were not considered as a sphere of professional archeology interest

(many representatives of which considered maximum the Middle Ages to be their sphere of interest), except – searchers interest.

5. The issue of stakeholders – tourism, museums, excursions. For comparison – the British or Germans have a strong interest in such issue.

6. The construction issue – because over time the remains acquired the status of «obstacle» for construction, the developers began to get rid of such archaeological context from the plots.

7. Issues of legal regulation – concerning both regarding searches and excavations, and regarding the metal detectors use or memorial places arrangement.

8. Issues of landscape management – it is about militarized landscapes and their parts (trenches, bunkers, hideouts).

9. Issues of experts and myths – the right of heritage property (take into account that people fought far from their homeland); what did they fight for? – for the tsar, sultan, king or for a better world and against oppression. In fact – for empires, profits, exploitation and violence.

10. The issue of methodology and new fields in archeology – is the excavation of unusual objects as trenches, places of artillery battles, dugouts, positions, because it is about trench warfare. Or even more complicated – in the Battle of the Somme (1916), miners used to undermine the enemy's trenches to detonate them. This requires additional knowledge of military matters. Modern radars are needed to detect such moves and routes. As new field Flemish archeology has developed. The study of the Western Front – according to Timothy Saey et al. – is «one of the largest archaeological sites in the world» [5]. Another field was the archeology of conflicts (Nick Saunders was the first to talk about it in his book «Killing Time: archeology and the First World War» (2007) [6]), not only about just archaeological battles, smell of rotten bodies, gas of chemical weapons, or liquid trench dirt but more broadly about archaeological conflicts – the scale of actions, multidimensionality, to understand why the world went mad and condemned millions to a violent death.

As for management it is traditionally considered by levels – state, regional and local. Proposals and measures may relate to investments, increased protection, conservation, damage limitation, improved accessibility, spatial planning, etc.

Decentralization processes are active in Ukraine, more powers and responsibilities are being transferred to communities, so let's outline the regulatory, administrative, financial and communication functions regarding the archaeological heritage management in the context of WWI.

1. Heritage protection – preservation and control of places, accounting, condition monitoring, keeping lists, conclusion of protection contracts, digitization of information.

2. The development strategy and implementation program determination – inclusion the information in strategic plans for the territory development, SWAT analysis of investments, protection, accessibility, limitation of damage during spatial planning, in environmental impact assessment reports in general, and on heritage in particular.

3. Financing – budgeting, but also – attracting grants, sponsors, patrons.

4. Interaction with stakeholders – institutes, commissions, international organizations, with experts – historians, local historians, archaeologists.

5. Public involvement – meetings, open resources on websites, memorial events (memorial services or other commemoration).

For the management functions implementation communal memorial and search enterprises as example «Pamiat” and “Dolia» work in Ukraine for search and exhumation research, arrangement of burial sites.

Archaeologists are also involved. Large-scale archaeological excavations are problematic due to the huge area of battle sites, the large number of unexploded ordnance and human remains. An alternative is geophysical surveying and modern aerial photographs and topographic models.

Thus, the basis for the archaeological heritage management of WWI is using an interdisciplinary approach (archaeology, history, geography, landscape, remote sensing, GIS technologies, SWAT analysis, Earth sciences), awareness, and the most non-invasive methods possible.

It is especially important to remember that the legacy of this war is not only the front line, but also a variety of airports, ammunition storage sites, trenches, earth barriers, military fortifications, dugouts, bunkers, cemeteries, etc.

Let the WWI remain the First only because the Second was, but not the Third will happened ever in the World.

List of used sources

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ТРАГЕДІЯ ПЕРШОЇ СВІТОВОЇ ВІЙНИ, ЇЇ ВІДЛУННЯ НА ТЕРНОПІЛЬщині

Минуло сто десять років від початку Першої світової війни – однієї з найбільших катастроф в історії людства. Віковий ювілей суттєво актуалізує увагу світової й української спільноти до подій Першої світової війни або Великої війни 1914–1918 рр. Слід віддати пошану героїзму предків незалежно від того, на чьому боці вони боролись, та шанувати пам'ять усіх полеглих у цій світовій бойні. Звісно, необхідно переосмислення наслідків і фундаментальних зрушень, до яких спричинило це глобальне мілітарне дійство, яке породило світ сучасного зразка. За своїми універсальними масштабами й демографічними втратами ця війна значно перевершила все, що відбувалося до неї у ході найбільших міжнародних воєнних конфліктів в історії людства.

Війна – це максимальне напруження всіх наявних сил народів-учасників, це величезний виплиск творчої та деструктивної енергій, це колосальний державотворчий ентузіазм. Згадаймо, що тільки у «непроглядному пеклі» Вердена до кінця 1916 р. підірвано 26 млн звичайних снарядів і 100 тис. снарядів, начинених отруйними газами. Перша газова атака у військовій історії на Західному фронті 1915 р. професор Фріц Габер, німецький хімік, стверджував, що ця нова зброя дає змогу під час війни швидше і гуманніше знешкоджувати ворожі війська. Він теж був на місці події під час випробування свого винаходу. Газоподібний хлор став наслідком жажливого спустошення. Люди