



## Remit and Objectives of “Archaeology” Liaison Group

The main objective of the ARWA International Association is to promote and work for the development of all of the sciences involved in the building of archaeological knowledge, in the geographic and chronological fields covered by the Arwa mandate.

Archaeology forms the core of ARWA. In some countries it is a discipline in its own right, it has no strict borders and it is linked to other branches of knowledge (e.g. Anthropology, Ethnology, History and History of Art, Geology, etc.). Interdisciplinarity is indeed at the base of theoretical and practical archaeological research.

### A. Archaeology and other disciplines

Archaeology is intended as the study of the human past through the recovery and study of anthropogenic remains (material culture or artefacts, architecture, biofacts or ecofacts, cultural landscapes etc.). Artefacts include all types of transformed ecofacts from excavations and surveys. “Invisible remains” (icnoarchaeology, intangible heritage) are also taken in account. As evidence of the cultural and material past lives, the material culture (e.g. biofacts and ecofacts), is studied in order to infer patterns of human behaviour, cultural adaptation to the environment, and cultural practices from a local or regional perspective.

The “Archaeology” Liaison Group (“Archaeology” LG) is concerned with the scientific study of the prehistoric, protohistoric or historic human groups, through the analysis of their remains. For the sake of brevity, at this initial stage of the organization of the “Archaeology” LG, the term “time-period” will be used rather than “civilisation” or “culture”. The definition of branches, fields, types, study methods, interpretative approaches is complex in archaeology. It is not intended as a venue to present and debate the different branches of archaeology and their definitions (e.g. archaeobotany, archaeometry, settlement archaeology, etc.). Rather it acknowledges that many branches act as bridges with other disciplines: environmental archaeology is related to environmental science, ethnoarchaeology with ethnology (or often, ethnography), geoarchaeology to geology, philology to history, etc. Fieldwork and analytical methods are numerous and are steadily expand (anthracology, geochemistry, geophysics, LIDAR, petrography, etc.).

ARWA's first principle is to avoid definitions and the establishment of hierarchies, to enhance a smooth cooperation and to ensure a proper representation of its members in the Association. The links of archaeology to other disciplines depend on the country, the period of time, and the way sciences were constructed and hierarchised in connection with local research policies. The situations are, thus, diverse internationally. Epistemology and historiography are currently not the topic of the construction of ARWA, but may be discussed in the future.

Archaeology has greatly evolved, in the field and beyond, due to the new development of its theoretical background and the integration of many new techniques and methods (such as Artificial Intelligence, Bio- and Geo-archaeological Analyses, Machine Learning, Muon Tomography, Remote Sensing, etc.). Techniques and methods

are not, by themselves, the object of the “Archaeology” Liaison Group, but it is important for method to be reconsidered, in order to better assess the quality of our results, and their integration.

In Archaeology, as elsewhere, the general tendency is “self-reproduction”. The choice of ARWA is to encourage progress in Archaeology (theory, methods, and techniques). Inter-institutional exchanges (in the form of co-masters, co-supervision, internships, etc.) need to grow, so that students may benefit from a more wide-ranging offer, which will also be a suitable vehicle for promoting new research themes and new disciplinary fields.

Finally, Archaeology is interdisciplinary by its essence, but transdisciplinarity needs to be built. Enhancement is required, in order to better shape the young generations.

## **B. Archaeology and the other Liaison Groups**

In the architecture of ARWA, the “Archaeology” LG therefore occupies a central position. It is organically linked to the other Liaison Groups: “Bioarchaeology”, “Art History, Iconography, Iconology”, “Geoarchaeology”, “Heritage”, and “History and Philology”. Since field archaeological research is the prerequisite base for all the other researches and scientific programs, “Archaeology” LG is also strongly linked with the ethical and deontological issues related to the discipline, and the necessity to preserve the heritage discovered in the archaeological process, sees it is also linked to the “Heritage” and “Ethics” Liaison Groups).

Since the improvement of concepts and methods, and the transmission to younger generations (potentially to develop new approaches) are at the base of the development of any discipline, the “Archaeology” LG operates in collaboration with the “Mentoring” LG. The aim is to promote the integration of young colleagues into the programs developed by members of the network. In cooperation with the “Website” Liaison Group, the “Archaeology” LG aims also at spreading the activities of the network not only to the scientific public but also to a wider audience.

As noted above, ARWA’s objective is to encourage and work for the development of all the disciplines involved in the establishment of archaeological knowledge. In order to develop the “margin of progress” of the discipline, the “Archaeology” LG should carry out collective thinking involving researchers from different countries, training, and schools.

Shared topics for Webinars, Workshops, and Inclusive Congress themes will integrate the interests of several Liaison Groups and the propositions of the ARWA members.

## **C. Actions**

According to the definition of ARWA, the role of the “Archaeology” LG is to contribute to the definition of discussion themes and the organization and promotion of opportunities to share information, view, ideas and experiences. “Archaeology” LG is encouraging the creation of workshops either face-to-face or through the utilisation of collaborative online platforms (for multicast communications such as webinars, workshops, e-symposia, seminars, and conferences). Replays will be available through ARWA website and social media platforms.

The “Archaeology” LG aims at taking the actions set out below:

1. Support for and promotion of Archaeology in the geographic and chrono-cultural fields covered by ARWA and diffusion of genuine information in other countries;
2. Sharing of the priorities for Archaeology, as defined internationally and by each country, throughout the membership;
3. Promotion of a fully inclusive approach towards all ARWA’s scholars and students as part of the same scientific community, bypassing any official and hierarchical relationships
4. Improvement of the archaeological scientific approaches and training students accordingly;
5. Expansion of the relationships of the “Archaeology” LG with other social and scientific fields by supporting and defining new interdisciplinary research fields;
6. Support and definition of collaborative programs at macro-regional scale, in order to develop and better relate and integrate the results of studies (chronologies, sourcing, technologies, etc.);
7. Strengthening ties and collaborations with the neighbouring geographic areas: the Aegean, Maghreb, East Asia, etc. for the resolution of major issues such as: mobility, neolithisation, urbanism process, cultural interaction and dissemination of cultures, exchange networks, trade, etc.

8. In cooperation with the “Methodology”, “Heritage” and “Ethics” Liaison Groups, elaboration and promotion of practice guidelines for fieldwork (survey, excavation), documentation and registration of archaeological contexts and related remains, including open access policies (considering laws of copyrights and scientific ethic) and in compliance with: a) governmental and institutional rules that preside over archaeological fieldwork and research data, and b) legal commitment to the funders of the research projects.
9. Propose themes for Archaeology Webinars and Workshops, or Inclusive Congress themes (around 14 workshops for every 4 years mandate). They will be organised by the “Archaeology” Liaison group with one or more than one Liaison Groups. Inclusive Congress themes should be organised with all other Liaison Groups. Funding of the Webinars, Workshops and Congresses will be responsibility of the proponents.