

CULTURAL HERITAGE, SOCIAL VALUES AND PREVENTIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN TIMIȘOARA

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Cuvinte cheie: arheologie preventivă, patrimoniu arheologic, valoare, comunitate, impact

The 1992 Valletta Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, ratified by Romania in 1997, provides in Article 9 the need to increase public interest in archaeological heritage, to draw attention to the need to know and protect it, to attract the public to sites and exhibitions where archaeological artefacts are valued¹. More than 100 legislative documents were adopted in Romania following the Valletta convention on archaeological research and heritage². Despite their provisions, as shown by the study carried out by D. Aparaschivei and R. Colțean³, there are still many shortcomings, uncertainties and difficulties in the organization of preventive archaeological research in our country, with consequences both on the archaeological heritage, but, we could say, also on society, since, through the impact it has at community level, on space, archeology can significantly contribute to shaping social identity⁴.

In the period 2014–2015, a study was conducted in nine countries (France, Spain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Poland and Great Britain), on the perception of Europeans on archeology and archaeological heritage, on a sample of over 4500 inhabitants. If in terms of the general level of information of the population this is a high one (with 90% of Europeans considering archeology useful, 70% who have visited an archaeological site and 64% who

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¹ Valletta 1992.

² Musteață 2019, 48.

³ Aparaschivei, Colțeanu 2018.

⁴ Ion 2014, 52.

have visited an archeology exhibition), in terms of preventive archeology we are talking about a low interest (64% of Europeans do not know what it means)⁵. Romania falls, at least at the level of 2016, in this European trend, with a moderate to low interest in archeology in general, in preventive archeology, but also in archaeological heritage⁶.

In this context, in the period 2018–2020 we carried out a sociological survey aimed at analyzing the population's perception in relation to preventive archaeological research, with the impact it has on the city and its inhabitants, with the archaeological heritage and its exploitation.

In the last 20 years, in Timisoara, because of the infrastructure development works in the central area of the city, numerous preventive archaeological research has been carried out, which focused especially on the Cetate area, with numerous and important archaeological sites from the city's medieval period and not only⁷. By number and scale, by locating this archaeological research in the public space (both in pedestrian areas and on the roadway), it was expected that the resident population would have a high level of knowledge and information about this research.

The main objective of this research effort was to investigate the perception of the resident population of Timisoara regarding the preventive archaeological research that was carried out in the city. As specific objectives, we sought to analyze the level of information of the population in relation to preventive archeology (what it is, what it entails), the impact that preventive archaeological research had on the city and the community, but also the perception of the city's inhabitants regarding the heritage archaeological.

Starting from these research objectives, we formulated the following hypotheses:

Hyp.1 The inhabitants of the city of Timisoara have a high level of information regarding preventive archaeology.

Hyp.2 The inhabitants of the city of Timisoara have a high level of information regarding the preventive archaeological research that took place in the city of Timisoara.

Hyp.3 The perceptions of the inhabitants of the city of Timisoara regarding archaeological research, their impact and the valorization of the archaeological heritage are influenced by the level of education.

Hyp.4 There is a link between the presence of the inhabitants in the public space and their level of knowledge in relation to preventive archaeological research.

⁵ Marx, Nurra, Rossenbach 2017; Kajda *et alii*, 2017.

⁶ Palincaș 2016.

⁷ Onițiu, Balaci 2020.

Hyp.5 There is an association between the age of respondents and their perception on preventive archaeological research and archaeological heritage.

The sociological survey took place over three years, namely 2018 (July-September), 2019 (November-December) and 2020 (May-June). The research instrument was the questionnaire, which included a number of 15 closed questions with a 5-point Likert scale response, to which the factual questions were added. The questionnaire was applied in a hybrid form, both face-to-face and online, with online distribution being done via both email and social media pages. To select the respondents, we opted for a non-probabilistic sampling, on a convenience lot, built with the help of the snowball method. The only selection criteria were those of residence (to be residents of the city) and to be 18 years old. To the extent that this kind of research will prove to be of interest, there is the possibility of carrying out a representative survey on the scale of the entire population of the city of Timisoara.

The initial batch of respondents totaled 598 people. After checking the answers given by them regarding residence in Timisoara and age, a number of 450 answers were validated, which were taken into account for analysis in the present approach.

As a socio-demographic profile, the group of respondents included a number of 258 female and 192 male persons. Since it is a non-probabilistic sampling, we did not propose an equal distribution of the two sexes. Also, we did not consider the gender variable to be significant for the objectives of our study. Regarding the level of education, 8 people attended general school, 143 of the respondents declared that they had high school education, 249 had university education, and 50 had postgraduate education. Although we did not propose this fact either, it can be noted that most subjects (66%) attended higher education. As for age, to facilitate the statistical analysis of the data, we grouped the subjects by age ranges, dividing them into young people (18–29 years old), middle-aged people (30–49 years old) and seniors (over 50 years old). Thus, 326 people fall into the first age range, 102 fall into the 30–49 age range, and 22 are seniors. One can see most are young respondents, aged up to 30 years. An explanation of this situation (both in terms of the level of education, but also the age of the subjects) could be justified using the snowball method in identifying potential respondents, the application of the questionnaires being carried out including with the help of the students of the Department of Sociology within the University West from Timisoara.

In order to investigate the level of information of the inhabitants of the city of Timisoara in relation to preventive archaeological research in general, and in particular those that were carried out in the city, we started the research approach with two hypotheses, according to which the level of information and

the knowledge of the people of Timisoara are at a high level. To verify these two hypotheses, we included several questions in the questionnaire, namely: Q1. „Do you know that in Timisoara in recent years there have been archaeological researches that targeted objectives from the area of historical Timisoara?; Q2. According to Ordinance no. 43/2000, any infrastructure work carried out in an area with archaeological objectives requires the discharge of archaeological burden. Do you know this fact?; Q3. Do you know that the obligation to carry out preventive archaeological research rests with the person who contracted the infrastructure work?; Q4. Where have archaeological researches taken place in Timisoara in recent years”?

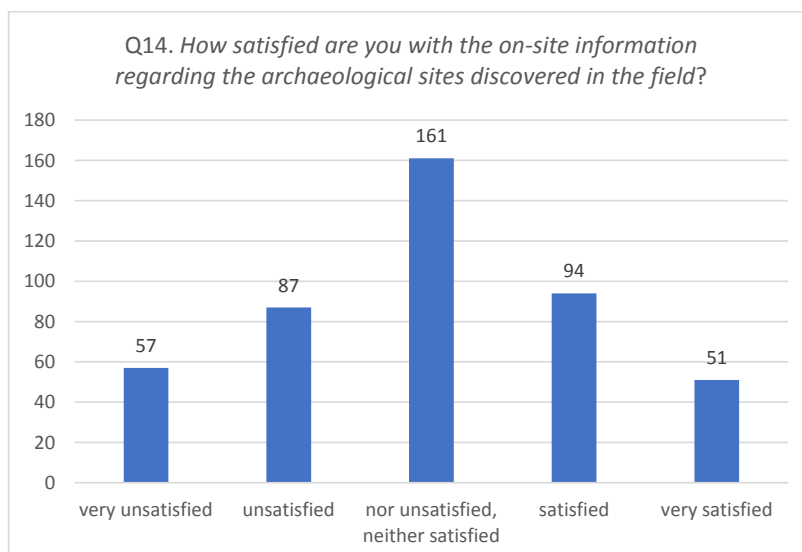
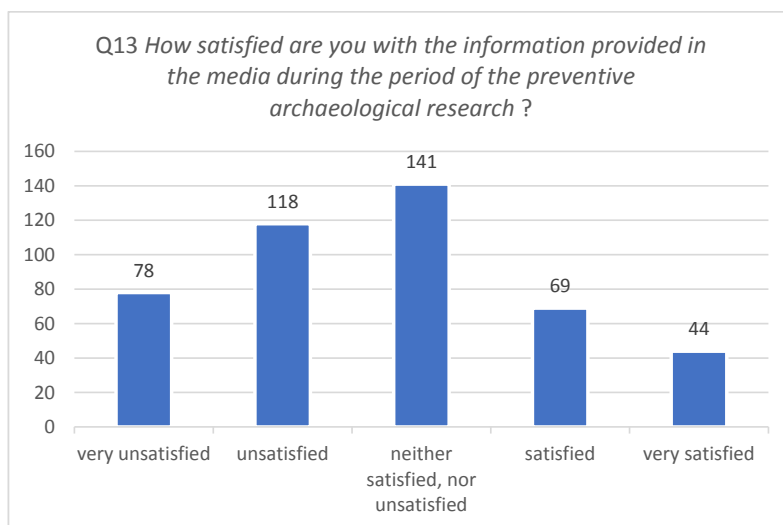
To the first question asked, Q1. „Do you know that in Timisoara in recent years there have been archeological researches that targeted objectives from the area of historical Timisoara”?, the majority of subjects (306 people) answered affirmatively. It should not be overlooked that 114 people, i.e., 25.33% of all respondents, gave a negative answer, adding to them 30 who answered “I don’t know”. We are talking about people with both high school and higher education, from all age groups. To deepen the level of information of the people of Timisoara, we asked question Q4. „Where have archaeological researches taken place in Timisoara in recent years”? 150 of the respondents (33.3%) stated to this open question that they do not know, while another 71 people gave vague answers, without referring to a specific area in the city. We are talking about 50% of respondents who do not really know where archaeological research has taken place in the city, despite the majority of affirmative answers to the previous question.

To the question, Q2. „According to Ordinance no. 43/2000, any infrastructure work carried out in an area with archaeological objectives requires the discharge of archaeological burden. Do you know this fact”?, which aims at the level of theoretical knowledge of the people of Timisoara, 202 of the respondents gave an affirmative answer, which means 44.88%. 185 people answered „yes” to question Q3. „Do you know that the obligation to carry out preventive archaeological research rests with the one who contracted the infrastructure work”? We are talking about a percentage of 41.1% of respondents.

From the simple descriptive statistics we can state that the two research hypotheses that we stated at the beginning of our study, namely Hyp.1 The inhabitants of the city of Timisoara have a high level of information about preventive archeology and Hyp.2 The inhabitants of the city of Timisoara have a high level of information regarding the preventive archaeological research that took place in the city of Timisoara is not validated. The level of knowledge and information of the inhabitants is at most moderate.

What are the factors that could influence and determine this situation? In this

sense, I asked questions Q13 in the questionnaire. „How satisfied are you with the information provided in the media during the period of the preventive archaeological research and Q14. How satisfied are you with the on-site information regarding the archaeological sites discovered in the field”? to which was added the factual question „How many times have you visited the city of Timisoara”? These questions started from the assumption that beyond direct contact with preventive archaeological research, by transiting or visiting the city, knowledge can be facilitated by appropriate information, either through the media or on site.



Looking at the answers given by those surveyed, we can see that the tendency is of slight dissatisfaction with the information provided by the mass media (with a statistical average of 2.74), and a moderate satisfaction with the information available on the spot (the statistical average being 3,09).

Most of the respondents stated that they have visited the city several times (393 responses, representing 87.33% of the group of respondents), so it would have been expected that visiting the city several times would ensure a high level of knowledge of archaeological research, with which, inevitably, given their location, a Timisoara resident should have crossed paths. To see if there is an association between visiting the city and residents' knowledge of archaeological research in the city, an association test was performed, but it did not reveal any relationship between the two.

To see what the perception of the people of Timisoara regarding the impact of preventive archaeological research is, we asked the following questions in the questionnaire with predefined answer options: Q5. „In your opinion, the archaeological research had implications...”, Q6. „Do you think that archaeological research can have positive consequences on...” and Q8. „Do you consider that archaeological research is...”. The opinions of the people of Timisoara were as follows:

In your opinion, the archaeological research had implications	Number of subjects	Percent
- On cleanliness in the area	71	15,77%
- On public silence	31	6,88%
- On public safety	32	7,11%
- On public transportation	85	18,88%
- On pedestrian transportation	83	18,44%
- Do not know / do not answer	148	32,88%

Do you think that archaeological research can have positive consequences on...	Number of subjects	Percent
- Urban development	64	14,22%
- Public education	52	11,55%
- Local history	187	41,55%
- Tourism	125	27,77%
- Do not know / do not answer	22	4,88%

Do you consider that archaeological research is	Number of subjects	Percent
- Useful	239	53,11%
- Necessary	114	25,33%
- Compulsory	63	14%
- A waste of time and money	12	2,66%
- Do not know / do not answer	22	4,88%

On question Q5, regarding the immediate impact of archaeological research, we find that approximately one third of the subjects prefer not to express a point of view. Those who do it appreciate that preventive archaeological research has impacted transport (if we add up the two categories of transport – pedestrian and public – we will see that more than a third of the respondents from Timisoara are of this opinion), followed by cleanliness. As long-term consequences, the surveyed Timisoara residents appreciate that preventive archaeological research is useful and that it has an impact especially on history and tourism. A smaller percentage see in this research a factor that could exert a beneficial influence on the development of the city (an indirect effect of the development of urban tourism) or on the education of the public. We appreciate the fact that most respondents expressed their opinion on questions Q6 and Q8.

The third hypothesis of our research was that the perception of the people of Timisoara regarding the impact of archaeological research can be influenced by the level of education. To see if there is an association between the two, we performed a series of statistical tests of association (Crosstabs), which showed us that the subjects' level of education does not influence the opinions of the inhabitants.

The perception of the people of Timisoara regarding the archaeological heritage was analyzed through questions Q9. „What do you think should happen to the important archaeological sites for the culture and history of Timisoara?” and Q12. „Do you think that the restoration and/or exploitation of archaeological sites could contribute to increasing the number of tourists?” Thus, 8 people answered that they should be covered; 60 respondents expressed that they should be covered in place, but their presence should be signaled by a sign/information board. However, the majority (362 respondents, 80.44%) support the need for the archaeological sites to be restored and enhanced. Most people surveyed (404 people, 90.22%) also believe that the restoration of archaeological sites could contribute to increasing the number of tourists (although we saw above that only 27.77% of the people who took part in the study believed that archaeological research could have positive consequences for tourism. It is thus possible that those surveyed did not implicitly link archaeological research with

the archaeological sites that might be uncovered, which supports our finding of a modest level of information about preventive archaeology).

After carrying out some statistical tests of association (Crosstabs), we found that there is an association between the level of education of the respondents and their opinions regarding the valorization of the archaeological heritage, therefore we can say that our research hypothesis (Hyp.3 Perceptions of the inhabitants of the city of Timisoara regarding archaeological research, their impact and the valorization of archaeological heritage are influenced by the level of education) is partially confirmed (the level of education not being related to the perception of the implications of preventive archaeological research in the long term or on the public space). The fourth research hypothesis Hyp.4 There is a link between the presence of residents in the public space and their level of knowledge in relation to preventive archaeological research is disproved. Most of the respondents stated, as we could see, that they visited the city several times (393 answers, representing 87.33% of the group of respondents). However, the statistical association test did not reveal a link between visiting the city and the fact that approximately 50% of respondents do not know where archaeological research has taken place in the city.

Our last assumption was that there is a relationship between the age of the respondents and their perception of preventive archaeological research and archaeological heritage. For this, we performed an association test between the age variable (the subjects' ages being, as stated at the beginning, grouped by age ranges: between 18–29 years, 30–49 years and over 50 years) and audience satisfaction compared to the way the archaeological research took place in the city, and we observed statistically that there is a connection between the two (according to $p = .004$, $p < 0.05$).

Crosstab					
Count					
1		Age			Total
		2	3		
How satisfied are you with the archaeological research in Timisoara?	1.0	14	9	2	25
	2.0	30	11	1	42
	3.0	159	33	4	196
	4.0	72	22	11	105
	5.0	51	24	7	82
Total		326	99	25	450

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.619 ^a	8	.004
Likelihood Ratio	22.774	8	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.977	1	.084
N of Valid Cases	450		
a. 3 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.39.			

However, our conclusions do not have a degree of generality, as they are not based on probabilistic research, on a representative sample of the scale of the population of the city of Timisoara. Regarding the last association test, as can also be seen from the frequency analysis, most of the respondents fall into the first age range (18–29 years old), therefore involuntarily, the research reflects the opinions of young people.

The 2019 Cultural Consumption Barometer⁸ highlighted the fact that the public's interest at the national level in historical objectives is modest, and that the level of education of the population has a certain influence on it.

According to the same Barometer, 55% of Romanians have never visited a historical monument or archaeological site, and 38% once or more times a year⁹.

In 2020, the situation improved, as shown by the Cultural Consumption Barometer, in the sense that the percentage of people who declared that they did not intend to visit an archaeological site or historical monument registered a slight decrease compared to the previous year (43% compared to 55%). 39% of respondents said that if the pandemic situation improves or does not worsen, they will visit sites and monuments, while 18% said they will visit sites and museums regardless of the pandemic situation¹⁰. A factor that probably influenced this change in attitude was the pandemic situation, which led people to reorient themselves towards activities that can be carried out outdoors, and not necessarily the significance of these goals to the public.

The conclusions highlighted following the analysis undertaken by us on a convenience lot among the resident population in the city of Timisoara fit into this national context of modest interest in archaeological research and objectives. Age or level of education are variables that have a connection with the opinions of the people of Timisoara, as we could see, but we admit that the lack of

⁸ Sandu, Oană 2019, 18, tabelul 2.

⁹ Sandu, Oană 2019, 47, graficul A1.

¹⁰ Oană 2020, 24, fig. 1.

Practici de timp liber grupate în funcție de similitudinea profilor sociodemografice și spatiale ale celor care le adoptă	Educație			Vârstă				Gen		Tip de localitate de rezidență					Total
	gimnaziu	liceu	facultate	18-29 ani	30-44 ani	45-59 ani	60+ ani	femele	bărbat	comună mică	comună medie/mare	oraș sub 100mii loc	oraș mare	București	
mers în excursii	9	29	44	43	34	22	11	20	31	18	18	26	35	37	25
mers la spectacole de divertisment	2	9	17	15	13	6	2	6	11	4	4	9	14	15	8
plimbare în parcuri	44	75	80	82	79	60	53	66	67	44	61	66	82	82	67
mers în mall	16	58	69	66	63	42	28	46	48	41	36	42	72	63	47
mers la spectacole de muzică	2	11	14	16	11	8	4	7	11	7	6	7	13	20	9
mers la cinematograful	2	11	16	21	14	5	1	6	12	6	5	7	13	23	9
practicare activități sportive	9	34	45	57	38	23	9	20	37	13	22	32	40	39	28
mers la restaurant	11	41	59	68	51	32	11	28	46	29	30	40	44	49	37
mers la spectacole sportive	4	14	17	20	18	10	5	5	20	7	10	12	17	16	12
întâlniri cu rude/prieteni	85	90	94	92	93	89	85	89	89	88	90	87	91	91	89
vizitat monumente istorice	2	7	14	13	6	7	4	5	9	4	5	8	13	6	7
vizitat muzee	1	4	10	8	5	3	3	3	6	3	2	5	8	5	5
mers la teatru	0	3	11	8	5	3	4	3	6	1	2	5	9	6	5

representativeness can influence the results (given that most of our respondents were young people with higher education). Future research on a representative sample of the city's population could provide more in-depth information on the perception of the people of Timisoara towards archaeological research and the factors that influence and determine it.

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MOȘTENIRE CULTURALĂ, VALORI SOCIALE ȘI CERCETARE ARHEOLOGICĂ PREVENTIVĂ ÎN TIMIȘOARA

Rezumat

La nivel internațional, dar și național, legislația privind cercetările arheologice (în general) și cele preventive (în special) este extrem de bogată și generoasă, totuși, în practică, există încă numeroase neajunsuri. Unul dintre acestea privește interesul și preocuparea publicului, atât față de acest gen de cercetări, cât și față de patrimoniul arheologic, în ciuda prevederilor convenției de la Valletta, care încă din anul 1992 accentua necesitatea atragerii și educării publicului. O serie de cercetări desfășurate atât la nivel european, dar și în România, au evidențiat un interes modest al populației pentru cercetările arheologice și pentru patrimoniul arheologic. În acest context, dar și pe fondul intensificării lucrărilor de dezvoltare a infrastructurii urbane din Timișoara în ultimele decenii, care a presupus implicit desfășurarea unui număr considerabil de cercetări arheologice preventive, localizate în special în zona centrală, istorică a orașului, am presupus că interesul, preocuparea, cunoștințele și informațiile timișorenilor față de aceste cercetări să fie consistente și semnificative, motiv pentru care am desfășurat o anchetă sociologică în rândul populației rezidente. Concluziile noastre au evidențiat un nivel moderat de informare a populației privind cercetările arheologice preventive care au avut loc în oraș.