

## **THE EUROPEAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE PRIZE 2007**

### **Decision**

The EAA Committee for the European Archaeological Heritage Prize, consisting of Jürgen Kunow, Germany, Romuald Schild, Poland, Anastasia Tourta, Greece, Paula Purhonen, Finland, and Willem Willems, the Netherlands (chairperson), has decided to award the ninth Heritage Prize of the European Association of Archaeologists to professor Siegmar von Schnurbein from Germany, in recognition of his life-time engagement in uniting eastern and western European archaeologies and archaeologists throughout most of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, starting long before anyone could even think of the fall of the iron curtain.

### **Justification for the Prize**

Siegmar Freiherr von Schnurbein has started his career as a specialist on the archaeology of the Roman provinces and in particular on the military organisation during the early Empire. In 1978 he moved to the Roman-Germanic Commission to Frankfurt and started his work in European archaeology as its 2<sup>nd</sup> director. He was elected to become the 1<sup>st</sup> director of the commission in 1990, just after he had been appointed to an honorary professorship at the University of Frankfurt. In 2006 he retired and still continues his scientific projects including some of the European networks he started during his career.

As Director of the Roman-Germanic Commission in the German Archaeological Institute, one of Von Schnurbein's major efforts was to maintain contact with as many archaeologists as possible behind the iron curtain. This was not an easy task in those days, neither for himself, nor for the colleagues from Eastern Europe. A great deal of diplomacy was necessary to balance the engagement without bringing anyone into danger. He organized book exchanges with as many libraries as he could possibly reach, he organized cooperation between his own institution and the academies of science in the eastern countries, managed to get in contact with universities and at the same time with national and regional museums. Whenever possible he arranged for archaeologists to travel to the western world especially to conferences and congresses; he spent a lot of time to knit the networks and to ensure proper invitation through diplomatic channels. For people who fled the east and came to Frankfurt he helped to start new careers far from home and in a new research environment. Many students and professionals have received grants from charitable trusts and governmental services that gave them the possibility to complete their studies abroad and beyond the iron curtain.

After the fall of the iron curtain Von Schnurbein spent an enormous amount of time travelling and visiting the colleagues in the east and inviting them one after the other to Frankfurt; and he spent a lot of effort finding the necessary resources to ensure that whoever wanted to come to the west would be supported as much as possible

Under his directorship joint research missions were started between the RGK and several partners in the east and southeast of Europe in countries such as Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Bosnia, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary and Serbia. But also towards the west contacts were kept and joint projects were developed

with partners in the north of Spain, and in France in Alesia. The latter project in particular also shows how integrative Siegmund von Schnurbein was starting a project that should help to overcome scientific ditches between France and Germany as a result of World War II.

He developed a strategy to coordinate the publication of Roman finds from Central Europe in the CRFB, *Corpus der Römischen Funde im Mitteleuropäischen Barbaricum* that has led to a series of publications in Germany, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Ukraine and Slovakia and is still an ongoing and expanding project.

After the re-unification of Germany Professor Von Schnurbein has played a major role uniting the archaeologists of Eastern and Western Germany. In the German archaeological institute he was deeply engaged into the social questions of integrating the colleagues from the former Central Institute for Archaeology and Ancient History of the German Democratic Republic that vanished during the reunification process.

It was for these achievements and efforts – so closely related to the goals of the European Association of Archaeologists itself – that the Heritage Prize Committee of the EAA came to the unanimous decision to award the 2007 European Archaeological Heritage Prize to Siegmund von Schnurbein.