

"WHITHER ARCHAEOLOGY?" REVISITED

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In 1971, over twenty years ago, *Evžen Neustupný's* award-winning essay on the future of archaeology - "Whither Archaeology?" - appeared in the journal *Antiquity*. Its thought-provoking commentary was a welcome signal from the heart of Continental Europe that a major revolution was occurring in the fundamental theory of our discipline, not just in "New Archaeology" in United States and in a few British archaeology departments, but in avant-garde pockets of innovative archaeologists in the wider world.

The central theme of *Evžen Neustupný's* article was the polarisation within traditional Archaeology between those scholars grounding their research in positivism, empiricism and materialism, and the contrasted school of "Romantic", historically-grounded scholarship. Whilst the former all-too-often remained overcautiously in the confines of refining typology, chronology and with the scientific analysis of material culture, the latter overambitiously created pseudo-historic narratives of past peoples and tried to reconstruct all aspects of their society through uncritical appeal to ethnographic and historic analogues and modern experience of the world.

During the decade of the 1970s and into the early 1980s the challenge set by *Evžen Neustupný* was met within the formal agenda of the New or Processual Archaeology movement. The groundwork for reconciling the polarised communities had already been laid in a series of provocative papers by *Binford* and his associates during the 1960s and in *David Clarke's* extraordinary programmatic textbook *Analytical Archaeology* of 1968. The mature application of a unified Arts-Science or more specifically Anthropological-Scientific Archaeology impacted on a worldwide scale through paradigmatic case-studies and syntheses by scholars such as *Colin Renfrew* in European prehistory, the Scandinavian regional prehistorians such as *Kristian Kristiansen* and *Klavs Randsborg*, and American scholars producing syntheses and regional case-studies in Mesoamerica.

The central building-block of Processual Archaeology was the indissoluble bond between Models and Scientific Verification. Archaeologists would achieve ever-closer approximations to the nature and developmental trajectories of past societies through the dynamic interplay between increasingly sophisticated specific applications of general models and the explicit testing of these operational models against new and better databases. In contrast to the caution of the traditional empiricists, New Archaeologists argued that an anthropological approach to material culture would allow archaeologists to model social and ideological systems as well as the more easily-accessible economic and technological aspects of past communities. But equally, in deliberate contrast to traditional "Romantic" Culture - Historical Archaeologists, Processual Archaeologists insisted that interpretations relying on ethnohistoric analogy or contemporary experience were worthless unless verifiable through scientific validation against statistically-meaningful, archaeological databases.

I cannot think of a finer example of the New Archaeology in its maturity than *Kent Flannery's* edited volume of 1976, "The Early Mesoamerican Village". Formative era

farming communities are analysed from all conceivable dimensions imagined at that time: social scales from the family to the expansionist state, ecological and economic perspectives broaden from site catchment to interregional geography and networks of exchange, modes of investigation range across the entire spectrum from the physical analysis of artefact composition to the religious symbols and mental universes of the peoples concerned. Particularly welcome and generally novel were two features recurring throughout the book: a delicious sense of humour, and a self-questioning and personalized series of discourses between semi-fictional representatives of the dominant contemporary approaches to the archaeological record.

From such a highpoint, how could the discipline of Archaeology go anywhere but into ever-better fusion and interpenetration of social and physical science? One confidently expected to see case-study applications such as Flannery's appearing for every region of the globe, each one finer-tuned and more insightful than the last.

Looking back from the vantage-point of the early 1990s, it is undeniable that the vision of 1976 has remained unfulfilled, whilst few would dispute that the interdisciplinary, scientific approach to the past, represented by Flannery's team, has been rejected by the leading sector of recent archaeological theory - the Post-Processual movement.

Since the early 1980s Post-Processualists, led by *Ian Hodder*, have turned away from Clarke and Binford's aim to convert Archaeology into a "scientific anthropology of the past", diverting our attention towards theoretical agendas derived from self-consciously "Humanistic" movements in Philosophy, Literary Theory and Sociology. A vast and seemingly-unbridgeable gulf has reemerged between empirical, validation-committed archaeologists whose insights now tend to be "middle-range" in scope and those who ground their wide-ranging interpretations on ethnohistoric or personal ideological models rather than "bottom-up" induction from the archaeological data. Some characteristic examples will illustrate today's situation.

In Britain most of the funding for postgraduate research in Archaeology comes from the government, and is largely earmarked for Archaeological Science projects: for the most part the topics for PhD research are smallscale problems of archaeozoology, artefact characterisation and suchlike that make no pretence to be offering direct insights into central questions regarding ancient societies. In direct contrast, and clearly poles apart in approach, was *John Barrett's* contribution to the 1993 TAG (Theoretical Archaeology Group) Conference (undeniably the key theory meeting in Europe each year): in keeping with several other leading Post-Processualists, he proposed the writing of Prehistory from one's personal ideology without regard to the constraints or possibilities of the archaeological record.

It is my opinion, therefore, that the message of "Whither Archaeology?" is once again of critical relevance to the future of our discipline, since we are assuredly back to the polarised situation *Evžen Neustupný* portrayed a generation ago.

There are two important questions to resolve: firstly, how have we come to regress from disciplinary unity during these past twenty years? And secondly, if we were to desire a renewed integration of Arts and Science within Archaeology (in itself a point of major disagreement) how could this be achieved in a more lasting fashion?

Let me start with explaining the disintegration of the grand project of disciplinary synthesis.

Disciplinary renewal and "the generation game"

I belong to a generation of archaeologists that commenced university study of the subject in the 1960s. By virtue of being both an undergraduate and postgraduate at Cambridge, I was

fortunate enough to experience the mystical pull of several gurus (a phenomenon for which Cambridge is renowned/notorious): parallel oracles such as *David Clarke* and *Richard Chorley* (representing positivistic New Archaeology and New Geography respectively), and alternative oracles such as *Eric Higgs* with his subversive Ecological Determinism. After I left Cambridge and up to the present day, *Jan Hodder* has adopted the resident guru status in place of those sadly departed intellectual leaders.

One has to be honest: messianic figures exercise their appeal through the emotions first and foremost; they claim special insight into the world and its workings, which they intimate you just can't get from other teachers; indeed one is positively discouraged from taking seriously and even reading non-approved works of clearly redundant approaches. As a disciple of such a guru one feels "select" and very different from other students, who are wasting their time pursuing traditional or merely alternative kinds of research. A primary aim in conference papers or periodical publications for an aspirant core member of a guru's circle is to demonstrate one's intellectual credentials and right-thinking: this requires regular citation of the hallowed authorities whose "gospels" contain the central tenets of the approach. These techniques of "locking in" younger researchers to a narrow intellectual perspective, with its corollary the "locking out" of research publications lacking the "movement's" approval, I have termed "bibliographic exclusion" (*Bintliff 1991*). Although I could give many examples from my own experience of such practises in the Clarkian and Higgsian schools, it is more important to draw to your awareness the ongoing process in connexion with the "Post-Processual" movement.

The coining "Post-" immediately serves to write off as redundant all those working in a New Archaeological framework who refuse to adopt the Hodder (Shanks-Tilley) agenda, submission to which is shown through citation obeisance to the pantheon of newly-appointed church fathers (Foucault, Derrida, Bourdieu, Habermas, Heidegger, etc.). A small anecdote illustrates the day-to-day activity of mind-closure that ensures doctrinal purity for the true disciple: I recently organized a symposium on evolutionary theory, and had the good fortune to persuade a thinker of world renown, Professor *Stephen Jay Gould* of Harvard University, to cross the Atlantic and give the keynote address. On hearing this, a leading Post-Processualist announced that no self-respecting follower of that movement would wish to be seen at such an address. Knowing Gould's works very thoroughly, I cannot recall anything he wrote which could cause offence to Post-Processualists. But that assuredly isn't the point: a dedicated follower of Post-Processualism wouldn't want to hear Gould because of what he hasn't written. He isn't following the sacred texts and has different stories to tell, so therefore he is beyond potential interest.

This conscious mind-closure extends through published literature back through the centuries, so that a lineage of "correct" thinkers is established and everyone else ignored. *Hodder (1989)*, for example, exhorts us to reject scientific forms of field research report which strive for objectivity, and return to the subjective chat and speculation of the 18th century Antiquarians. Whilst this need not be taken too seriously, unless you are a complete relativist, Hodder would appear to me making a more useful contribution when he asks for archaeologists to offer personal insights into their procedures alongside the technical results normally published in the third person, "impersonally". Well, how about these extracts from the personal testimony of an American archaeologist, frustrated at the conservative methodology of his academic supervisor and trying desperately to try novel approaches to excavation:

"Two days later we started the excavations at the Andrews site. We cleaned back the areas around the features and worked meticulously to uncover each little detail of association. Griffin had told us if we hit anything to call him immediately. Instead we waited until we had the features fully exposed, each artifact in situ, clearly identifiable with respect to the things around it.

We made a mistake - we had not plotted everything on our record sheets before calling Griffin. We... called Griffin from a nearby service station... and before long Griffin came screeching to a halt in front of the site... Griffin jumped down onto our clean trowelled sand floor getting on his knees beside the extended burial. 'Give me a trowel,' he yelled. Mark tossed him a trowel; I held my head...

That afternoon, Griffin returned to Ann Arbor leaving us with a series of holes in our excavations... The artifacts were carried back to Ann Arbor...

Quite clearly, our long-range programme for Michigan archaeology had to change... We had to ensure that good records were kept for each exposed floor and for each feature... Mark and I worked on developing a field manual and a series of data-recording forms...

We began the dangerous game of playing hide and seek with Griffin himself. We didn't really tell him what we were up to as we took students off and made decisions without consulting him...

Griffin surprised us many times: Mark and I had assumed that he wouldn't go along with spending the money for having record forms printed. We contacted the helpful amateurs in hopes of finding a way to get the printing done at no cost. Griffin found out and was hurt. 'Take them out and get them printed,' he said...

We got many different kinds of data which were not generally collected. In fact, the hall outside Griffin's office was filled with fire-cracked rock; the newly-opened lab was filled with fire-cracked rock. When Griffin saw all this rock the expression on his face... was one of total disbelief: 'What in God's name are you going to do with all that fire-cracked rock?' I answered knowingly, 'Why, count and weigh it, of course.' What I could possibly do with such data, I didn't know, but it was part of the archaeological record, and there must be something you could learn.

Griffin was sometimes unbelievably tolerant: He supplied the assistants to count and weigh the rock. I don't think anyone ever did anything with that data. My justification for its collection was simple: If you are using statistics in analysis, the larger the sample the better. The most common item on the sites we were digging was fire-cracked rock. It follows therefore that it was the most important item, statistically speaking, that is. My logic was perfect.

I do recall being upset when Griffin refused to spend the time cataloguing the coke bottle tops and the nails recovered from the excavated plough zone. Looking back, if Griffin was impossible, then Mark and I must have been nothing short of intolerable."

This passage was written by none other than *Lewis Binford*, the acknowledged founder and leading thinker of the New Archaeology movement. It describes events in 1957-8, and was published by Binford in 1972 as an autobiographical commentary to a reprinting of his classic paper on archaeological sampling strategies ("A consideration of archaeological research design", *American Antiquity* 1964; *Binford* 1972, 126-128). It does all, and more, than Hodder was to ask for 17 years later in the name of Post-Processual innovation, and actually is only part of a series of volumes in which at regular intervals Binford has provided a subjective account of the biographical context to his "scientific" papers. Hodder, by discounting any thought of cumulative scholarship, and striving to write-off the preceding generation(s), remains unaware of Binford's progressive achievements in the writing of archaeological reports.

On a broader front, since Post-Processualism is grounded in a revival of philosophical Idealism, where the world is for all intents and purposes what conscious humans make it, it becomes necessary to discard all the accumulated insights into human beings and human

society given to us by earlier gurus such as Freud or Darwin and their followers. I confess to being rather amazed at a grander step of knowledge deletion, also witnessed at the 1993 TAG Conference: a friend whose work in Environmental Archaeology I have always deeply admired, but whose department is known to have been overrun by Post-Processualists, made a public auto-da-fé by anchoring his paper on human awareness of landscape to a Medieval illustration of the Cosmos with the Earth and Man at its centre (whoops - there went Galileo and Copernicus!)

Contextualizing intellectual movements

But where do new mini-paradigms come from? Do they emerge, like Athena from Zeus' thigh, fully-fledged from the mighty brain and soul of the founding guru? From our favourable vantage-point of the 1990s, we can look back over recent theoretical movements and pronounce a very definite No to that proposition. New Archaeology, the Higgsian Palaeoeconomy movement, and Post-Processual archaeology, are not isolated phenomena owing their existence to unique, insightful individuals.

New Archaeology was a belated, local manifestation of "new format" approaches that became dominant in a wide swathe of disciplines from the late 1950s into the 1970s, typified by "Physics-envy", quantitative methodologies, generalized model-using, and attempts at Arts-Science integration (cf. the development of post-War theory in Sociology, Social Anthropology, History, Geography, Biology). In turn, recent research into the history of these other disciplines has "contextualized" this wide movement into the central intellectual trend of the first half of this century and the last quarter of the 19th century - one typified by grand modelling, central planning, scientism and positivism (Bintliff 1986, 1993).

If we turn now to the Higgsian Palaeoeconomic movement, this may seem a slighter affair from the limited publications of Higgs himself, yet becomes immensely influential when you consider the many notable presentday researchers whose work remains heavily influenced by Higgsian theory (Graeme Barker, Geoff Bailey, Clive Gamble, Robin Dennell, Paul Halstead, Iain Davidson, Derek Sturdey, Jim Lewthwaite, merely to name a few). The Palaeoeconomic approach arose to brief but extreme popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s, just at the time when Ecology emerged from its esoteric academic chrysalis as a major intellectual world force.

What can we say about Post-Processualism? Once again, its sacred authors and basic tenets show no divergence from identical revisionary movements in related disciplines (especially Geography, Sociology and Social Anthropology), all of which can be subsumed under the broader umbrella of the Post-Modern movement. In penetrating critiques, against which no serious defence has been offered, Frederick Jameson and David Harvey have "contextualized" Post-Modernism as an intellectual by-product of the major economic and political changes that have occurred in the Western advanced economy nations since the mid-1970s (post-Fordism, flexible economics, anti-welfarism, neo-conservatism; Bintliff 1991, 1993).

If the preceding comments on the "sociology" of archaeological theory are accurate, then there are some advantages but a far greater list of disadvantages to the way in which our discipline is evolving.

On the plus side, "gurus" provide a generational focus to inspire young researchers to open up new pathways to the past or explore new areas of data. Secondly, by "jumping on

the bandwagon" of the latest intellectual fad, archaeologists feel their work is part of a much wider - and hence surely more significant and less parochial - intellectual project.

The negative effects include the following:

1. "Mind-closure" and "bibliographic exclusion". Young scholars are taught to be narrow-minded and adopt a priori positions, talking at rather than with past and present practitioners of other research approaches.

2. Archaeological theory renews itself by elimination rather than modification of previous ideas and approaches - in other words it is not cumulative. Earlier and immediately preceding theorists are declared to have been "in error" rather than laying relevant bits of road for the onward march of the discipline.

3. Given that archaeology is not a very numerous academic community in any one country, that the number of active theorists is a small minority of even that number, we find that "discourse" in archaeological theory tends towards the monologue or hegemony by the generational avant-garde. Diversity of approaches and concepts, encouraging self-critical debate and discouraging strategies of intellectual domination, are severely inhibited.

4. Researchers do not wish to appear fossilized when confronted by the next package of "isms", so tend to adopt them uncritically. They also find it difficult to pursue their accompanying (usually esoteric) bibliography. This latter situation is especially disturbing since close reading of the reception of the same novelties in other disciplines will reveal weaknesses and counter-arguments. Ironically archaeology catches up with all its borrowings five or often ten years after their arrival in related academic subjects, usually when the relevant movement has spent its force and been replaced by the next fad; we should actually be in an ideal position to evaluate the new approach with the benefit of its accumulated critical reception elsewhere. In fact, this never seems to happen, and the new "virus" is imported in pure, virulent form without consideration of its recognized inadequacies (the antidote).

The arrival on the theoretical horizon of new ideas with potential application to archaeological problems is nonetheless not only to be welcomed, but active engagement with their content is the only basis for progress in the discipline's interpretative abilities. However, limiting our awareness to a very narrow range of novelties adopted by a dominant elite of theorists to the exclusion of other influences cannot be healthy for the discipline, especially if even this package requires intellectual conformity rather than critical engagement, and an active disengagement from earlier theoretical discourses.

Perhaps I could illustrate the obvious shortcomings of our current situation with examples of contemporary applications of the Post-Processual mini-paradigm. "Appropriate topics" for young researchers at present (politically-correct topics?) are the Holy Trinity of Gender, Ethnicity and Power. Basically these seem wide-ranging, intriguing research themes, where archaeology could add its vast time dimension to illuminate discussions in other disciplines. The problem seems to be, when one runs through published work or listens to conference papers addressing these topics, that adoption of these slogans seems to require suspension of most of our critical faculties. As has frequently been observed in other disciplines, in situations of hegemonic discourse the researcher who wishes to stay - or become - "a player" in the eyes of the theoretical community, is primarily concerned to establish his/her credentials by appropriate citation of the dominant doctrine and texts, rather than through taking an autonomous, critical stance to both the latest and older concepts and approaches.

Let us begin with Gender. Feminism is the main stimulus in contemporary society that has encouraged a major interest in the Archaeology of Gender. There are many fascinating aspects of past human activity where a focus on gender could be illuminating for an understanding of the entire society. In practice, almost all archaeological applications so far are more concerned to demonstrate how women archaeologists have been unjustly subordinated in the past and even recently, and how men have dominated socio-economic life in virtually every historic or prehistoric context reconstructable. These claims appear to me incontestable, and worth stating. They are also blindingly obvious. My criticism of current research is that it generally goes no further than stating these truisms and decorating them with relevant confirmatory data; there seems to be no impetus to analyse the reasons for these situations, rather the main role of the archaeological theorist is to adopt a public politically-correct stance.

Now I want to know how and why men have continually assumed physical, social, economic and intellectual dominance in human societies. Since current Post-Processual thought rests on the a priori assumption of human culture as the unique focus of past human behaviour, dismissing biological factors, and at the same time rejects traditional anthropological Functionalism for explaining recurrent structural regularities in human culture, our analytical apparatus for getting deeper into the origins and persistence of Gender Inequality is remarkably limited. It should not therefore surprise us that the Archaeology of Gender remains mostly posturing and has taught us little new that is relevant to deeper understanding of these fundamental aspects of human social life. The limitations of the "Culturalist" view are clearest when we are told that "Gender is a purely cultural phenomenon": the entire point of privileging the topic at the present time is thereby removed, since it is surely the fact that Women as a biological category at the phenotype level have throughout history and prehistory suffered inequality from Men that makes the subject of major importance. The only way forward is to try and relate all the possible components in Gender to one another - and this requires giving serious attention to language, symbolism, social functionalism and biological influences. The culturalist position has to be seen as a useful addition to the analysis, not the only viable approach.

Concerning Ethnicity there appears to be an equivalent narrowing of the mind towards adopting a single, uncritical position "approved" by a theoretical elite. Multiculturalism and ethnic rights are in the driving seat, threatening to box the archaeologist in from both practical and theoretical directions. Let us consider, for example, fieldwork on sites, especially burial sites, which modern ethnic communities treasure for political, religious or emotional reasons. We will surely want to support a proper sensitivity to the rights and wishes of the group concerned. But there does exist a real danger that further collaboration could result in the archaeologist becoming entirely compromised by pressure or encouragement to adhere to an appropriate "story" for the ethnic community. These issues can be seen clearly in *Olsen's* (1986) paper on the Saami of Norway. Here it seems that all that potentially divides the politically-correct archaeologist from the Nazi racist archaeologist is being on the "right side" rather than having a more objective and less biased methodology.

Once again what I want to know about ethnicity has to do with the comparison of "official" coherence and actual cultural variety, how "tight" and closed supposed ethnic communities are over time and space, the relationships between biological variance and cultural variance, and the relationships between language, culture and biology. All of these factors are essential to analyze the phenomena of "ethnicity", but such a range of approaches will be absent from current Post-Processual theory.

Finally Power. A preoccupation with dominance structures typifies much current theorizing in archaeology. Revealing the power structure on an excavation (Tilley 1989), in the publication of research, or uncovering power machinations in the history of archaeology, these form one arena of recent commentary. The other is made up of underlining inequality in the development of past societies. Jameson (1984) and Harvey (1989) have argued, to my mind highly convincingly, that the many disciplinary versions of Post-Modernism's obsession with deconstructing all human relationships to forms of domination is an Expressionist form of anguish for academics who feel powerless against reactionary, anti-intellectual governments, see themselves (perhaps rightly) as totally uninfluential in the public sphere, and have lost confidence in any affirmative ideologies or belief systems. In a sense it is a form of paranoia, and is never far from the desire to "take power" back from any institution in sight (Shanks - Tilley 1989); yet with no remote chance of archaeology promoting a social or political revolution, the only avenue is a playful deconstruction of the Past, past archaeologists and current archaeological practice as power games. Archaeological theory, on the other hand, seen as a power game, does not receive such attention, since each generation's theoretical elite aspires to dominate the discourse of theory.

Breaking the mould: how to make archaeological theory really free

I am very doubtful that archaeological interpretations can really progress unless we "smash the system" of generational theory replacement, guru-worship and intellectual dominance structures that have so bedevilled the discipline since the last War (for before the New

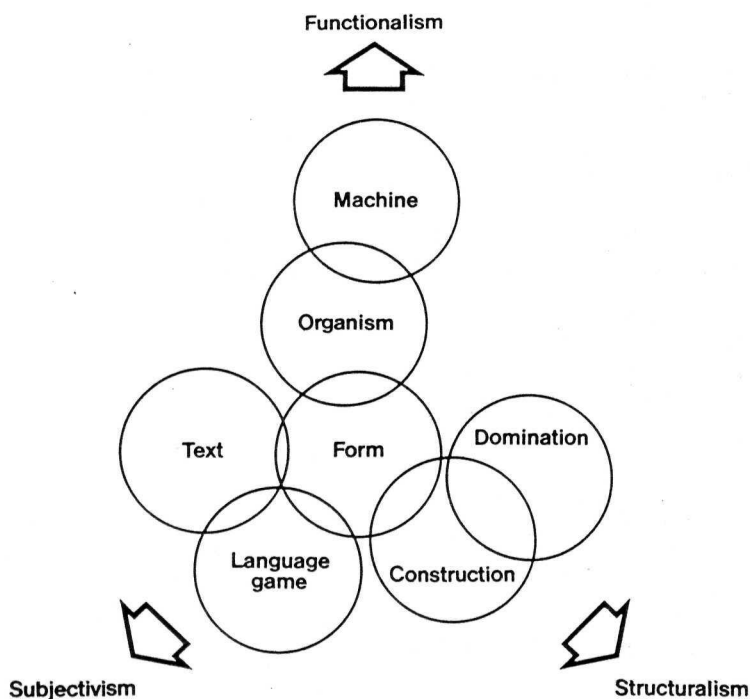


Figure 1. Metaphors of archaeology.

Archaeology the "Great Men" also left little sunlight beneath their shadows). And actually it won't be difficult to achieve. A thoughtful perusal of *Figure 1* is a good place to start. Before I discuss its intrinsic value it is worth mentioning two points that its appearance in this essay provokes. Firstly, the lesson in pluralism it offers was published for geographers in 1982 (*Harrison - Livingstone 1982*, Fig. 1.4), and marked a mature reaction to the potential warfare between what was by then the very old New Geography and the already fallible Postmodern Geography. Secondly, I reproduced the diagram in its original form ("Metaphors of Geography") in a review of archaeological theory in 1986, which has remained largely unread (despite appearing in the well-known BAR series) for the simple reason that it took an independent stance from Post-Processualism and was therefore not worth reading (*Bintliff 1986*).

But let us return to the Figure itself, which delightfully flattens time and tradition into a topological surface where the choice and preference is Your's. In studying past human societies we must have the freedom to see how far a purely Functional, purely Subjective or purely Structuralist (i.e. Levi-Straussian "Structuralism" or Marxism) approach can take us in understanding our data. We can also choose to take intermediate positions on the triangular diagram. And these operational decisions need never be permanent ideological stances - for certainly with a particular culture or period a shift of emphasis will prove enlightening. Moreover, let us give researchers maximum freedom: we should encourage scholarly occupation of all the extremes, to see how far those approaches take us, at the same time as we teach and learn ourselves from balancing from a midpoint the insights gained from every sector of the triangular surface. It is difficult to deny that the history of research in archaeology and history has made it clear that every area of this diagram has a necessary part to play in accounting for the nature of the human past; we merely need to admit this publicly and encourage a new research pluralism - *Vive la différence!*

My second diagram, *Figure 2*, also aims to flatten time, by emphasizing how the contemporary antagonism between Processualism and Post-Processualism is nothing more than the endless dualism in Western thought between the Empirical-Positivist and Romantic-Idealist philosophies. In the recent paper from which this illustration derives (*Bintliff 1993*) I have argued that the great C20th thinker Wittgenstein broke the force of this polarity with his concept of complementary discourses, each employing separate verbal and technical "toolkits". These mutually-complementary discourses represent contrasting ways of looking at the world, ask distinct types of questions about it, and expect distinct types of answers (*Monk 1990*).

Wittgenstein's early work, summarized in the "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus", was focussed on simplifying the role of Philosophy and clarifying the way our words reflect the world around us. A potent image for him was seeing in a court case how model cars were used to reconstruct the scene of an accident. Fundamentally he argued that statements we make are either expressions of belief or ideology (in which case they cannot be further analysed, as equivalent to metaphysical sense perceptions), or reducible to "pictures" of the real world (objects in relation to one another or "states of affairs"). In both forms of expression we can clear up the confusion of language and philosophy, the "meanings of things" by rapidly stripping down people's statements to either (a) a person making a metaphysical credo, or (b) a person trying with varying degrees of success to describe the sense scenario of objects in relation to each other (clearly the "thing-language" of science

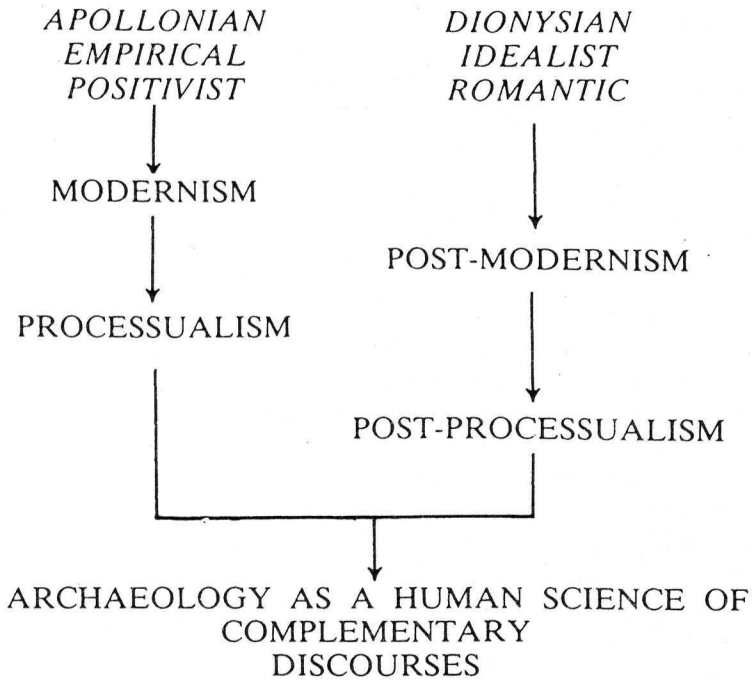


Figure 2. The future of archaeological theory.

was the best approximation to reality). For both uses of language Wittgenstein had the simple advice: "Don't think, look!"

In his later work, summarized in the "Philosophical Investigations", Wittgenstein produced a much more complex model of language. Although apparently rejecting his earlier work, we can see him building on its insights to produce a more flexible approach. We might usefully remind ourselves of the "cars" that represented a past scenario in court: now, when the models are being moved about to represent the world, Wittgenstein argues that (just as actually might occur in a trial), different people will offer variant interpretations of what is happening. He sees these different discourses as a range of games (language-games) or individual items in a toolkit (as if in a carpenter's bag, for example). The separate language-games have different social roles to fulfil in society, and use the "objects in space/states of affairs" flexibly for complementary purposes. Each discourse has its own vocabulary and rules of valid expression or performance for participants.

It is essential to realize that Wittgenstein is far from proposing a relativistic view of reality, in fact he always grounds these discourses in the world of public, perceived action. If someone performs within ideological/metaphysical discourse, they are expressing a transcendental sense perception to other listeners in a specific real time and place. As remarked earlier, it is entirely inappropriate to mix such a discourse with the "thing-language game" of science, whose task it is to parameterize "objects in space" in technical ways. Wittgenstein claims, I think rightly, that "hidden mental states" are inaccessible to discussion or analysis, so that the world works and is interpretable only through social action - either language, symbolism or other non-verbal behaviour.

If we accept these penetrating ideas from someone widely considered to be the greatest C20th philosopher, what are the direct implications for Archaeology? Let us collapse the generational antagonisms and the millennial Idealist-Rationalist polarity into a series of complementary discourses, language-games, or a toolkit. The history of Archaeology clearly reveals a series of ways of looking at the past which have fluctuated in favour and popularity, and which now deserve a place in a constellation of major discourses appropriate to a pluralistic discipline. These discourses can further be justified through comparison with related disciplines and their constellations (cf. *Figure 1*):

A Science discourse - characteristic for most archaeological activity is the revealing, measuring and describing of past human "states of affairs" in "thing" language;

A Biological discourse - from the beginning of Archaeology as a serious discipline in the mid-C19th, there has existed a discourse viewing human activity from a human biological, adaptive, and more recently a human ecological perspective;

A Functionalist discourse - past human behaviour can be comprehended through a perspective derived from traditional Social Anthropology, in which human actions are moulded by adaptive selection favouring the maintenance of communal social structures;

A Culturalist discourse - never absent from archaeological interpretation but variable in popularity is the approach in which human behaviour is primarily controlled through a distinctly human cultural repertoire (verbal, symbolic pictures of the world);

A Political discourse - human behaviour, past and present, can be discussed within the language game of formal political positions and stated ideologies (eg. Marxism, Feminism);

A Religious discourse - our approach to past societies can be analysed as evidence of forms of engagement with supernatural beings or forces.

We are led from the wisdom of Wittgenstein to demand the freedom of plurality: we need the extremes of Idealist thinkers remote from fieldwork, or laboratory archaeological scientists with neither knowledge nor interest in *Critical Theory*, just as much as we expect those who generalize from such studies or write period and subject syntheses to occupy the middle ground and weave creatively from all the separate strands of insight each kind of archaeological discourse comes up with.

Alliance to the dominant mini-paradigm, or the appeal to the "authority" of leading figures in our discipline or outside it, are poor ways to justify the new things we want to say about the past. We need:

- competing ideas and data;

- yet these are worthless (contra *Hodder 1993*) unless we have shared concepts on how we should evaluate the agreement between the data and alternative or complementary interpretative models;

- most of all we need intellectual breadth through not excluding the many, equally valid ways to contribute to the diverse discourses that are archaeological interpretation.

When in 1971 *Evžen Neustupný* accurately chastized archaeologists for forming two antagonistic and non-communicating blocs, neither of which commanded an adequate approach, he hoped for a future total integration - a project the New Archaeology made significant but not decisive advances towards. My own appeal would be to stimulate even greater diversity of views and approaches, whilst at the same time hammering home to every archaeological practitioner that no one discourse is more privileged than the other, and that the complexity of human societies can only be comprehended through pluralistic researches complementing each other in the distinct insights they contribute.

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