Archaeology, Modernism, Modernity

Editors' introduction to "Archaeologies of the Modern," a special issue of Modernism/Modernity

Jeffrey Schnapp, Michael Shanks, Matthew Tiews

MODERNISM / *modernity*
VOLUME ELEVEN, NUMBER ONE, PP 1–16.

Archaeologies of the Modern

"Archaeologies of the Modern" invites a double explanation: first, of a title that associates the modern(ist) scene with the excavation of apparently fragmentary pasts; second, of the issue's unconventional format. The issue is dialogical in structure and provocative in intent. It conjoins essays authored by cultural historians and by archaeologists, and accompanies each contribution by an archaeologist with a brief response from a cultural historian, and vice versa. The aim of this device, as well as of the special issue as a whole, is to inaugurate a dialogue between reflections on archaeology as a modern discipline and inquiries into the archaeological imagination in nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural forms. We believe that this dialogue transgresses the limits of conventional interdisciplinarity because it excavates forms in the cultural imaginary that find a home in no orthodox disciplinary field.

One simple and limited aim of the issue is to contribute to the new history of archaeology. It was only in the 1980s that histories of the publications of supposed great and originary minds in archaeology[1] were augmented by simple sociological and ideological motivation: for example, middle-class Anglo-American experience reflected in archaeological method and theory;[2] nineteenth-century nationalisms fueling archaeological research into local origins.[3] Research into the history of archae-

ology based upon other than published sources had to wait until the mid-1990s (notably associated with the AREA Project: see Nathan Schlanger's contribution to the dossier in this issue).

Anything other than a strictly internalist account of archaeology may well be far off, but there is more to archaeology than the discipline. Here our issue's title points to a much wider aim of furthering what may be called an archaeological history of modernity and its cultural imaginary, modernism, through an exploration of their archaeological components.

To explain what we mean by this we begin with a classic modernist and archaeological gesture (one of Duchamp's readymades) and then sketch three archaeological moments of the last century or so. These lay the ground for a glossary of some key features of archaeological discourse that are the subject of this issue's papers.

An Archaeological Gesture

Consider the snow shovel chosen by Marcel Duchamp as the protagonist of *In Advance of the Broken Arm* (1915). The shovel poses fundamental questions about the nature of objects and their relation to the world. Duchamp's shovel was bought off the shelf of a hardware store, torn from the everyday and set in a museum gallery with a title. It is a fragment of the material culture of the early twentieth century, a piece of machine-age trash—quite unexceptional. But in its association with Duchamp, in its gallery siting, in its titling, it is also a special shovel. It bears an argument about the character of contemporary art (the gallery and its objects; the artist's work and choices). It prefigures a narrative (contemporary newspapers had carried the story of a man who had broken his arm clearing the streets of snow). It is also a relic, an object of worship and even pilgrimage, a fetish—preserved (and, indeed, recreated) for posterity so as to keep alive a distinctly modern practice of *decontextualization* and *recontextualization*.

The readymade piece of art is, of course, duplicitous. In the gallery it betrays its function and elicits new significances only through this betrayal. It is tagged with the story of a *future* denouement. It doesn't dig, but breaks arms. Duchamp's *In Advance of the Broken Arm* positions itself ahead of the work of digging, of uncovering and amassing. The shovel is an avant-*bras:* we might push the gesture further and say that *In Advance of the Broken Arm* moves in advance of a *double* movement that would break the arm of certain longstanding disciplinary conventions: an antiquarian tradition in archaeology with its cult of the past as radical continuity; the anti-antiquarian strain in studies of modernism and modernity with its celebration of history as radical discontinuity. The shovel is a token of digging, but only in a manner of speaking. No longer able to seek out origins in depths, it instead excavates passages (snow removed from city streets) across the labile, unsteady surfaces of an epoch that places constant demands upon the recent and remote past while feverishly seeking innovation; an epoch in which institutions dedicated to the recovery, preservation, reconstruction, and display of ancient "finds" coexist with institutions of countermemory dedicated to the cult of ever renewable, ever new *trouvailles*. That such *trouvailles* may include

trouvères or may choose to privilege ancient textual/architectural remains (as in the cases of Eliot and Pound) merely underscores the point.

Decontextualization and recontextualization—how does this duplicity and irony relate to the practices that long placed archaeology in the service of historical, national, and international myths of origin and (dis)continuity: of group identity formation (nationalisms), race (ethnicity), technological progress, the rise and fall of civilizations, and the like? And how does this distinctly modern(ist) culture of objects intersect the history of archaeology itself, as well as more recent critiques of archaeology, as it were, from the inside? Is the broken arm that the shovel betokens a future in which archaeology excavates in the service of discontinuity? These are among the questions that the present special issue seeks to explore.

Modernist Dreams of An Other Archaeology

To speak of a literal archaeology of the modern era might appear perverse given the negative role assigned to archaeologists and antiquarians in the most advanced expressions of modern culture. From Gustave Flaubert to the avant-gardes and beyond, the archaeologist, whether amateur or professional, has routinely been dismissed as an intransigent and acritical worshipper of the past, and as an adversary of the new, the unexpected, and the unknown. Indeed, when Flaubert sends his two "imbeciles," Bouvard and Pécuchet, into archaeological raptures, it is only to underscore their unthinking pretension, most tellingly when they learn of phallic symbolism among the ancient Celts—"and for Bouvard and Pécuchet everything became a phallus. They collected the swing-bars of carriages, legs of armchairs, cellar bolts, chemists' pestles."[4] In their archaeological excess, the pair recruits even the most functional objects of material culture into a bathetic ancient symbolics; their combination of rapt fetishism and autodidactic ignorance cruelly parodies amateur antiquarianism. The 1909 Founding Manifesto of Futurism, similarly, launches its incendiary appeal for a worship of the future against "the fetid cancer of professors, archaeologists, tourist guides, and antiques dealers."[5] Boccioni and the Futurist painters take aim at a similar list, denouncing restorers, critics, and gouty academics, but singling out for special attention "affected archaeologists with their chronic necrophilia."[6] Professors, tourist guides, antiques dealers, archaeologists: the tumor of passéism was fed by the nineteenth century's seemingly insatiable appetite for experiences of the past as present, whether this meant continuity in the form of relics collected, inserted into bourgeois interiors, or styles from the past revived and resurrected as ornamental surfaces laid over machines or modern constructions. Whether in its houses of secular worship (such as museums and libraries) or in its amusement parks, the century constantly sought to animate the present with expressions of a past that was felt to be ever more remote, thanks to the tumultuous impact of the industrial revolution and the resulting time-space compression and acceleration. But in its very remoteness that past became material for reanimation from the dead into living forms, as well as a realm of pleasurable fantasy and consumption associated with leisure.

So when Tristan Tzara first codified the emancipatory nature of Dada's work of demolition nearly a decade after Marinetti and Boccioni, the archaeologist remained squarely in the line of fire:

> DADA; every object, all objects, feelings and obscurities, every apparition and the precise shock of parallel lines, are means for the battle of: DADA; the abolition of memory: DADA; the abolition of archaeology: DADA the abolition of prophets: DADA; the abolition of the future: DADA; the absolute and indisputable belief in every god that is an immediate product of spontaneity . . . Liberty: DADA DADA DADA;—the roar of contorted pains, the interweaving of contraries and all contradictions, freaks and irrelevancies: LIFE.[7]

The avant-gardes' target is twofold: on the one hand, nineteenth-century amateur archaeology as driven by the culture of connoisseurship and collecting, associated with the country estate, the bourgeois interior, and the museum as reliquary; on the other hand, a newly emerging professional or "scientific" archaeology, driven by field research and supported by academies and universities. The two are collapsed into a single monolithic antiquarianism whose deeper logic is declared insidious because it locates the past at the very core of a conservative, continuity-based vision of the future. The diagnosis is largely correct. Much as in the science fictions of Jules Verne, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, and H. G. Wells, amateur and professional antiquarians were committed to a futurology that either elevated objects outside of time and space into a realm of transcultural and transhistorical beauty (the cult of the masterpiece) and/or subordinated them within grand evolutionary schemes and narratives in the service of a higher law (progress, science, nationhood, humanity, God). Hence Tzara's leap from archaeology- and memory-bashing to the bashing of prophets and futurologists. And hence the importance granted to accidents, freaks, and exceptions to any and every rule.

As is made explicit in Tzara's text, the abolition of archaeology has nested within it a positive counterproposal. It stands as the precondition for an other (and even *othering*) archaeology loosely affiliated both with Freud's tracking of subterranean psychic and somatic intensities, and with an ongoing modern preoccupation, extending from Nietzsche through Artaud and Bataille, with tapping into "prehistoric" instinctualisms, violence, savagery, sacrifice, and sacrality. Instead of feeding necrophilia, this modernist archaeology purports to operate in the service of life. It unburies life forms resistant to or hostile to Culture and Civilization. Irreducible and intractable, its "finds" refuse to be absorbed into grand narratives of nation-building, science, or progress and yield surprises, shocks, thrills, and traumas. They belong either to the realm of prehistory or to the material culture of the everyday.

This other archaeology purports to free objects from the onus of having to signify, to function, to be accessible or available. It cherishes the duplicity of archaeological objects: their moments of decontextualization and recontextualization. In being dug out and ripped from its matrix, the old object holds the potential of producing the effect of the new, by virtue of its very remoteness and alterity, its singularity. The process, the duplicity, is one of estrangement, re-collection, recovery.

Three Modern Archaeological Moments

1. April or May 1896: An Archaeology of the Psyche

In a letter to Stefan Zweig in 1931, Sigmund Freud complains, or brags, "I have sacrificed a great deal for my collection of Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities, [and] have actually read more archaeology than psychology."[8] The obsessive nature of Freud's antiquity collecting is well documented. In Edmund Engelman's famous photographs of the study at Berggasse 19, glowering masks dangle precariously over archaic gods huddled cheek by jowl on every available surface.[9] H. D. describes her first reaction to the doctor's examining room as speechless amazement before the wealth of collectibles: "Sigmund Freud does not speak. He is waiting for me to say something. I cannot speak. I look around the room. . . . Pricelessly lovely objects are displayed here on the shelves to right, to left of me. . . . no one had told me that this room was lined with treasures."[10] Freud's personal physician relates that Freud called his collecting "an addiction second in intensity only to his nicotine addiction."[11] But Freud's interest in archaeological artifacts is not manifest simply in a mania for figurines. Although his confession to Zweig may well be exaggerated, his lifelong fascination with archaeology was systematic enough to call for a library of archaeological treatises running to hundreds of titles and to undergird a close friendship with Emanuel Löwy, recently rediscovered as a "forgotten pioneer" in archaeological research.[12] Underlying this scientific curiosity is a personal enthrallment to the figure of Heinrich Schliemann: as early as 1899, Freud writes Wilhelm Fliess of his envy for the discoverer of Troy, whose archaeological motivations he ascribes to childhood dreams as vivid as his own early love for Rome: "happiness comes only with the fulfillment of a childhood wish. This reminds me that I shall not go to Italy this year."[13]

Even before this avowal of personal idolatry, Freud had introduced archaeology as a methodological correlate to his developing theories of therapeutic psychology. "The Aetiology of Hysteria" (*Zur Ätiologie der Hysterie*), first presented as a lecture to the Viennese "Verein für Psychiatrie und Neurologie" in April or May 1896,[14] opens with a justification for Freud and Breuer's approach based on comparison to excavation—an "advance" in archaeological technique. Freud turns from the patient's autobiographical self-assessment to the analyst's clinical discovery by invoking the switch in authority from history to material culture that Gavin Lucas limns in this issue. An explorer happening upon some ruins may, Freud suggests, simply ask the locals ("perhaps semi-barbaric people") to divulge any indigenous traditions concerning their history. "But he may act differently. . . . he may start upon the ruins, clear away the rubbish, and, beginning from the visible remains, uncover what is buried." If he is successful, the unearthed artifacts will "yield undreamed-of information about the events of the remote past. . . . *Saxa loquuntur!*"[15] For one archaeological tradition, stones speak about their history. For the excavatory analyst, hysterical symptoms are eloquent about their traumatic causes.[16] Both authorities, we might add, will exhibit a similar tendency towards collection and display of the curiosities they expose.

As with so many things Freudian, the systematic role of archaeology in Freud's work has been the subject of controversy in the past twenty years. While Peter Gay is willing to term it "a master metaphor for his life's work,"[17] Donald Spence finds its implied positivism inadequate to the "anecdotal rather than archival" nature of the "so-called data" of psychoanalysis,[18] to which Donald Kuspit responds that, on the contrary, psychoanalysis achieves its hermeneutic goals even more successfully than archaeology.[19] Freud's use of the metaphor is inscribed in a synthetic discussion of the relation of archaeological practice to modernist thought by Julian Thomas in his essay in this issue.

The complexity of critical reaction may simply reflect Freud's own equivocations: the archaeological metaphor appears at odd intervals throughout his writing—in case studies: Dora, the Wolfman, the Rat Man; in the analysis of Wilhelm Jensen's archaeological fable *Gradiva*—subject in each case to varying qualifications and stipulations.[20] In its final evocation, in a late paper on technique, "Constructions in Analysis" (*Konstruktionen in der Analyse* [1937]), the exact equivalence of archaeology and psychoanalysis—"the two processes are in fact identical"—is almost immediately negated by the caveat that "the analyst works under better conditions . . . since what he is dealing with is not something destroyed but something that is still alive."[21] The distinction here echoes the avant-garde critique of archaeological passéism.

The complexity of the comparison between archaeology and psychoanalysis is not lost on Freud. He finds a means of redeploying facets of archaeology for the modern aspirations of a science of the psyche. The analogy recruits not just the depth model of excavation, but other aspects of archaeological practice: its stratigraphic mapping of temporality onto spatial relations; its conscription of fragmentary evidence into a causal narrative. Freud compares the layers of the psyche to those of an archaeological dig, "and if an object makes its appearance in some particular level, it often remains to be decided whether it belongs to that level or whether it was carried down to that level owing to some subsequent disturbance."[22] And the broken objects found in this stratigraphic psyche, like the "priceless though mutilated relics of antiquity" to which he compares them,[23] must be reassembled to produce their meaning. It is this—crucially—that distinguishes the archaeology of the psyche. The biographical event is redescribed as a psychic object whose causes and effects can be reconstructed only ex post facto by the patient analyst, who dusts them off and interprets them in relation to the other shards buried in the ruins of the psychic landscape. Like Freud's figurines, like his speaking stones, the psychic object—defamiliarized but uncannily at home—most strikingly links psychoanalysis and archaeology: disciplines concerned with objects recognizable enough to inspire the reconstruction of their narrative, but remote enough to be accessible only through the ministrations of an expert.

2. July 1926: "Archaeologisms"

Théophile Homelle, the director of the dig at Delphi, announced as early as 1895, "Primitive forms of art now take pride of place in archaeological research," and gushed that archaic sculpture "has the beauty of a half-opened flower, keeping still hidden and intact its glory and its perfume."[24] But it was not a premonitory whiff of the aesthetics

of classical Greece that modern art found most salutary in archaic archaeology. If the primitivism of the early years of the century relies on the trappings of cultures far-flung in space—African masks and Tahitian maidens—it avails itself equally of the remnants of far-off times, furnished by an archaeology moving beyond Winckelmannian classicism and hellenism, a move whose specific implications for Greek modernism are outlined by Gregory Jusdanis in this issue. But Picasso's Iberian heads and Le Corbusier's polychromed Moschophorous are not reference points along a scientifically established timeline, but end-runs around the inevitability of archaeological chronology: before and outside history, so temporally distant as to escape the taint of historicism—and thereby ripe for exploitation by modernism.

So it is when Christian Zervos founds the journal *Cahiers d'art* in 1926. Subtitling the publication "Revue d'actualité artistique" (Review of artistic contemporaneity), Zervos underlines its commitment to the latest and most cutting-edge artistic production. The *Cahiers* showcase the cream of the avant-garde crop: Braque, Gris, Léger, Matisse. Above all, they champion Picasso, Zervos's particular favorite, whose work he would present in a thirty-three-volume catalogue raisonné beginning in 1932.[25] But Zervos's insistence on the modernity of contemporary art goes hand in hand with a presentation of the archaeological object in the power of its alterity. Implicitly reframed by juxtaposition with cubist painting and International architecture, the artifacts unearthed in archaeological excavation shake off their dust and present a brave new face to the world. From the first issues, the *Cahiers* ran articles on Cycladic figurines and Cretan faience, on Etruscan mural painting and Mesopotamian pottery. For some contributors, the importance of this material lay in its crystallization of an untainted originary moment in human existence: Hans Mühlestein devotes a five-part investigation to "The Origins of Art and Culture" in the *Cahiers* for 1930, which is introduced with an explicit call for a "return to the source." "Whoever has a true interest in art cannot be satisfied with the doctrines inspired by classicism, which rest only on a derivative conception of an anterior state where instinct plays the most active role. They are only a consequence: we must go back to the origin."[26] The implicit substitution of a good archaic history for a degenerate classical one may just replicate a shifting archaeological chronology. More radical is the gesture Zervos himself advocates: wrenching objects out of their context so that the journal becomes the forum for encounters between the past and the present, "in order to show the unity of the human spirit under its surface complexity, and the modernity of the great works of the past."[27]

It is in this spirit that Zervos enlists Georges-Henri Rivière, student at the École du Louvre and sometime contributor to the *Cahiers,* to kick off a series presenting archaeological finds—an ongoing set of avant-garde field reports—with a manifesto of sorts in seventh issue of the journal. "Archéologismes," presented in extenso in the dossier hereto, hits the high notes of vanguard-approved archaeology: not classical but archaic; not European but world-wide; not museified but site-specific. "Parricide daughter of humanism," archaeology is its own worst enemy, toppling the museums it seeks to feed and revealing life where it sought to document history. At the same time, Rivière lauds the fruitful archaeological dig and hardnosed archaeological rigor. Ar-

chaeology shows us, not the course of civilization, but the force of the object—modern and ancient are equal; Minos, divested of his legends, reclaims his palaces, their treasures, their frescos. (Arthur Evans, the excavator of Minoan Knossos, certainly colluded in wresting his archaeological finds from a detached and prehistoric past with his modernist reconstructions of the site and its society—they appear distinctively contemporary.) In a warning sadly unheeded by many of his colleagues, Rivière concludes, "those who expect to return to the source will find fog . . ."[28] In Rivière's series, ceramics from Knossos and sculptures from China rub shoulders with etchings by Braque and paintings by Léger. It is not long before his presentations move from print to museum, as his archaeologisms lead him to organize a celebrated exhibit of the American Indian collections at the Trocadéro in 1928 and from there to a career in museological innovation, showcasing archaeological objects for their artistic and cultural creativity.[29] This archaeology is no longer metaphorical but utilitarian, a machine for producing objects whose alterity undergirds revolution.

Interlude. 1937: The End of History

"Be that as it may, history has ended."[30] When Alexandre Kojève explicated Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit* to the Parisian intellectual elite between 1933 and 1939, history became no longer a set of stuffy traditions to be violently abandoned. It was done, finished, reduced to a few posthumous spasms and an internecine debate over whether Napoléon or Stalin was its last avatar. Georges Bataille, whose archaeological interests are discussed by Carrie Noland in these pages, writes Kojève in 1937 in bemused agreement with his analysis: "I grant (as a likely supposition) that from now on history is ended (except for the denouement)."[31] It is during this denouement that an irregular attendee of Bataille's experimental "Collège de sociologie," Walter Benjamin, was hunched over a reading desk in the Bibliothèque nationale, assembling material for his monumental *Arcades Project*. The debris of history surveyed by Benjamin's rearguard angel is exhaustingly exhumed and laid out in this accumulation of historical objects, which consistently seeks to "blast the continuity of history." What Jens Malte Fischer has called an "archaeology of bourgeois interiors"[32] finds its justification in resisting the subsumption of those objects into narration.

> In fact, an object of history cannot be targeted at all within the continuous elapse of history. And so, from time immemorial, historical narration has simply picked out an object from this continuous succession. But it has done so without foundation, as an expedient; and its first thought was then always to reinsert the object into the continuum, which it would create anew through empathy. Materialist historiography does not choose its objects arbitrarily. It does not fasten on them but rather springs them loose from the order of succession.[33]

If the historical continuity implied by some archaeology is rewritten as ontogeny by Freud and repudiated as oppressive by the avant-gardes, its end, or explosion, will require a new relationship to its objects. The unfinished heap of material making up the *Arcades Project* suggests the hazards of such an undertaking.

3. 1961: The Archaeology of That Silence

The award for the most extensive use of the term archaeology to describe humanistic undertaking goes, of course, to Michel Foucault. Yet when Foucault invokes archaeology in the preface to the first edition of *Folie et déraison* (Madness and Civilization), it is easy to gloss over the reference as unremarkable. Bemoaning the silencing of madness by its constitution as a mental illness, Foucault counters with his plans for recovery. "The language of psychiatry, which is a monologue of reason about madness, has been established only on the basis of such a silence. / I have not tried to write the history of that language, but rather the archaeology of that silence."[34] The inspiration here seems still to be a metaphorics of excavation—a silence buried under layers of reason's chatter yearns only to be unearthed so that, like Freud's stones, it too might speak. As a philosophical gesture, it repeats the same distracted wave of the hand with which Jean Cavaillès treats phenomenology as an archaeology—for its depth model of epistemology.[35] The same appears to be the case when Foucault subtitles *Birth of the Clinic* "an archaeology of medical perception [*regard*]," although here perhaps the flavor of rigorous scientific inquiry into the past is added to the mix as well. As it turns out, though, these archaeologies contain seeds of a complexity only hinted at by their initial uses.

What it all adds up to, we learn in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, is the redescription in terms of topology and stratigraphy of what used to belong to chronology. "There was a time when archaeology, as a discipline devoted to silent monuments, inert traces, objects without context, and things left by the past, aspired to the condition of history, and attained meaning only through the restitution of a historical discourse; it might be said, to play on words a little, that in our time history aspires to the condition of archaeology, to the intrinsic description of the monument."[36] Foucault's archaeology provides a description of discourses in their positivity, just as Rivière's provides a description of Minoan palaces without their legends. At the end of history—here, history as the story of the subject *man*—it is ironically archaeology that, stripped of its narrativizing propensities, can once again serve to describe the past. That Foucault precisely rejects the depth model of interpretation that archaeological excavation would seem to invite, and indeed repudiates the very notion of object, serves only to show the many points of contact between a multifaceted archaeology and the complex variegations of modern epistemology.

Modernism/modernity—An Archaeological Glossary

We have outlined what may be called the duplicity of the archaeological object and have tracked aspects of some archaeological modernisms that work upon this duplicity, playing the fragment against context in relation to epistemology, temporality and emancipation. We will amplify our illustration of three archaeological moments with a glossary. Many of the terms here are tropes—in particular, narrative scenarios, character types and metaphors.[37]

surfaces—depths

The archaeological matrix, sometimes called the archaeological record, is considered as an amalgam of layers. The concept of stratigraphy is used to decode this amalgam.

In this decoding, the archaeologist digs down to find meaning. But digging stratigraphically is impossible without the concept of horizontal surface interface—edges, moments of discontinuity when one layer becomes another. The establishment of such surface discontinuity is the focus of much archaeological excavation. And, of course, it involves sideways movement across a surface, planning features such as walls and pits, as one goes.

This is not simply to map the spatial coordinates of a 3-D matrix—the phases perhaps of a ruined building. There is no comprehensible past down there to be discovered in some kind of 3-D form—for archaeology depends upon tying layers to date (there is no innate chronology to sediment), choices of what to distinguish, upon defining the interfaces between and across layers. The concept of interface is thus a *supplement* to the stratigraphy—an immaterial concept external to layering, but essential to it.

the academic

Applies systems of knowledge, and builds synthetic arrangements recounting the past as narrative, as causal chain, system, whatever.

origins—continuity

Much archaeology is a quest for contemporary origins (this is where and when we come from) and is thus premised upon a continuity between past and present.

(dis)continuity—shock

Of course there is a particular and material continuity that lends extraordinary force to notions of geneaological continuity—the materiality of the past has survived, ruined and decayed, but nevertheless present to the archaeologist.

The materiality of loss, however, the experience that so much is gone, that so little remains as inheritance, is simultaneously the ground for radical discontinuity. The implications are threefold. First: The waste and loss that may be the real story of history means that ideas of sociocultural continuity (of community, identity, technology, progress) may be quite literally groundless. Second: The fragments of history attest to massive lacunae, and assembling the pieces as a narrative can only occur locally, if at all. Third: Radical historical discontinuity throws suspicion on accounts and narratives that depend upon notions of sociocultural and biological similarity that transcend history (notions, for example, of universal human values). Radical discontinuity may thus mean a shock of radical difference.

difference—primitivism

Evolutionary schemes play upon a past that is different from the present in being at an earlier, more primitive stage. Here discontinuity is explicitly and intimately tied to grand metanarratives of historical contintuity.

authenticity—aura

Depth and origin are often equated with authenticity.

An authentic artifact may be considered to possess aura. And aura, of course, may involve a sense of distance and difference.

The grounds for authenticity and aura are material—the piece of the past has survived and its materiality is witness to this survival, its metonymical bridging of time and making good of loss.

the amateur (archaeologist/antiquarian)

Hooked on the aura of the past.

the scavenger

Recycling bits of the past otherwise discarded, making them live again, finding value where there was none perceived.

embodiment—document

The material past is encountered unspoken, and is ultimately ineffable (but see mute-ability). Here is a profound question that can only be resolved as fatally flawed translation—how are we to document the past on the basis of its fragmentary material remains? We can only interminably scribble on the ruins which always hold back more than ever could be said or pictured.

Encountering the archaeological past is distinctively sensory—embodied. Just like memory, we feel as much as rationally decode the past. This is associated with its ineffability—it is often *only* felt. Reactions may range from fascination through disgust to veneration of the sacred.

the fieldworker

Engages with archaeological places, and decontextualizes site and artifact, rips them from their setting, for there are only ever fragments, and choices must be made, of what elicits attention, of what to record, of what to conserve.

topography—topology

Ruins in the land—this is one of the sites of archaeology. It may be conceived as "the field."

Sites may be represented as coordinates—spatial grid reference. They may be described topographically. More accurately, and with Michel Serres, their representation requires a *topology* that can deal with the palimpsest that is landscape—the percolating time that folds together the many fragmentary traces of pasts present in any one place.[38]

temporality—actuality

Four archaeological temporalities:

The moment (for example, of origin, or of discovery) arrested/captured.

Date—the application of chronometry.

Ruin and decay—a continuity from past through present.

Actuality—a return of what is no longer the same. The nonarbitrary conjunction of presents: the past's present, the instant of archaeological excavation or discovery, and the time of viewing, reading, recollection.

systematics—loss

The archaeologist faces a mound of debris. One way of making good the loss inherent in the fragment is to define categories and classify. Writing catalogs.

Or, in choosing a systematics that eschews the construction of a coherent historical narrative (inadequately based upon scattered archaeological fragments), archaeologists may instead approximate an artifactual cladistics.

the museologist

Managing the archives. May be a scribe, writing inventories and catalogs.

mute-ability

Archaeologists may think they can read the traces of the past—the mute stones speaking through the work of the archaeologist.

This translation or representation is one of many metamorphic processes that are the subject of archaeological interest. Rot and decay. Restoration. And also everyday discard turned into history.

the manager

Managing the inventories, site access, access to the archives.

ruin—entropy

The loss that is at the heart of the archaeological project—history as ruin—is a precisely modernist experience of the twentieth century. How can we hold on to the mass of information and detail, the lives descending into chaos?

horror—abjection

There is horror not only in the metamorphic processes of decay that apply to our own materiality. But also in the entropy that is history—the tendency to misunderstand (so much is missing), the drift into formlessness. Then there is the sickening loss that is the horror of history—the wasted lives. So much thrown away.

A forensic horror too, as at the scene of a crime—the chance find of a finger bone or tooth (or, so often now, the mass grave of anonymous victims) attesting to . . .

symptomatic logic—forensics

At a scene of crime anything might be relevant. The archaeological site is cognate with the crime scene. The tiny fragment may be significant and provide a clue to some deeper meaning or knowledge. The fragment or trace is here conceived as a kind of clue or symptom.

In a symptomatic logic superficial and isolated finds, events and observations are linked to underlying process. A symptom may lead to medical diagnosis. An archaeological find may track the migration of an ethnic group.

forensics—anthropometrics

The desire is for some kind of control over the incidental details, a system that might lead to identification. Just as Francis Galton and Alphonse Bertillon, and a nineteenth-century will to knowledge, codified and cataloged fingerprints and ears, the shape of eyebrows in a forensic anthropology, a physiognomic science of character, race and conformity, so too did, do, archaeologists collect skulls and flint tools, measuring and comparing in a systematization of ancient race and cultural industry.[39]

the connoisseur

Their esoteric knowledge is based upon tying apparently incidental detail to the authority of the catalog. In such attribution of item to class the connoisseur judges quality and value.

the collector

Recontextualizing fragments. The collection is always more than an account of the past and more than the sum of its parts. It is rooted in heterogeneous association. The collector is fascinated by the life of an artifact—its journey through making, use, discard, recovery, re-collection.

re-collection

It is not only that archaeologists gather fragments and build collections. Like memory, the work of archaeology is re-collection—the reinsertion of pieces of the past into a form that carries significance in the present, carried forward from the past. As in memory, the (archaeological) traces of the past do not constitute a timeline or linear account. They resonate with a present experienced moment; this is what precipitates their reemergence, their recollection. This is actuality.

absence and negativity

It is not that the archaeological past is absent. It is more precisely not present. Or, we might say the trace means the past is absent in its presence. Archaeology is a dynamic of presence and absence.

In this dynamic, all historical culture is residual. There is a negativity represented by the loss of the past, its absence. This negativity is the only condition for knowledge of the past—waste and garbage are the condition of historical insight and knowledge.

agent and artifact

What is the distinction between the history of human agents and the history of material traces? Between people and tools? People and artifacts have, we may say, been intertwined for as long as there have been modern humans. We have always been cyborgs, material agents, embodied agents, materially located agents, people conceivable as things, artifacts playing active roles in society and history.

Material culture, the subject of archaeology and a new interdisciplinary field (material culture studies) that also includes anthropology, sociology, economics, design, and art history, is thus something of a tautology—because human history (of culture) has always been material, in the social fabric, in the materiality of human agents.

Archaeology thus, potentially, merges with natural history, as it did in its antiquarian beginnings, as chorography mingled topography with writing on nature, with speculation on field monuments, with philological focus upon place names, with an interest in old things found, in the animal and plant species of a landscape.

To what extent is the individual agent lost in the tide of history? Is archaeology best understood as the evolution of species of tools? Are overarching structures (social, cultural, biological) the real subject of deep human time?

the legislator

Policing the past—determining what should be kept and protected.

New Archaeological Histories

We have histories of published ideas in archaeology, and histories of class determination in the creation of archaeological knowledges. One of the aims of this collection is to contribute to a new history of archaeological dispositions, of the forms of a cultural imaginary centered upon traces of the past in the present, their metamorphoses in the interests of modernists and antiquarians, the fears and gratifications.

Another goal of this special issue is to show that despite modernist critique of antiquarianism, the connections between modern culture and archaeology are multiple and productive. The twin poles of association evoked by Duchamp's shovel—a metaphorics of embodied excavation and a turn to the accumulated, to the object—resonate powerfully with modernist thought. Between—and beyond—these poles lies a complex of notions: archaism and primitivism, topography, stratigraphy, cladistics, that speaks to the richness of this encounter. What follows is an attempt to begin a discussion between archaeologists and humanists about the vectors of its continuation.

Notes

1. Glyn Daniel, *A Hundred and Fifty Years of Archaeology* (London: Duckworth, 1975).

2. Bruce Trigger, "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist," *Man* 19 (1984): 355–70.

3. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett, eds., *Nationalism, Politics and the Practice of Archaeology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), John A. Atkinson, Iain Banks, and Jerry O'Sullivan, eds., *Nationalism and Archaeology* (Glasgow: Cruithne Press, 1996), Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion, eds., *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe* (London: UCL Press, 1996), Meskell, Lynn, ed., *Archaeology under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London: Routledge, 1998).

4. Gustave Flaubert, *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, trans. T. W. Earp and G. W. Stonier (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1954), 131.

5. F. T. Marinetti, "Manifeste du futurisme," *Le Figaro*, 20 February 1909; trans. Jeffrey T. Schnapp.

6. Umberto Boccioni et al., "Manifesto dei Pittori futuristi," *Poesia,* 11 February 1910; trans. Jeffrey T. Schnapp.

7. Tristan Tzara, "Manifeste Dada," *Dada* 3 (1918); trans. Jeffrey T. Schnapp.

8. Freud to Stefan Zweig, 7 February 1931, *Letters of Sigmund Freud,* ed. Ernst L. Freud, trans. Tania and James Stern (New York: Basic Books, 1960), 403.

9. See Edmund Engleman, *Sigmund Freud. Wien IX. Berggasse 19* (Vienna: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 1993).

10. H. D., *Tribute to Freud,* in *Tribute to Freud, Writing on the Wall, Advent,* ed. Norman Holmes Pearson (1956; Boston: David R. Godine, 1974), 96–7.

11. Max Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying* (New York: International Universities Press, 1972), 247.

12. See Keith Davies, "Die archäologische Bibliothek Freuds," in *"Meine . . . alten und dreckigen Götter": Aus Sigmund Freuds Sammlung; 18.11.1998–17.2.1999, Sigmund Freud-Museum,* ed. Lydia Marinelli (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld, 1998), 156–65; Harald Wolf, "Archäologische Freundschaften Emanuel Löwys und Ludwig Pollaks Bedeutung für den Sammler Freud," in ibid., 60–71. On Löwy, see Friedrich Brein, ed., *Emanuel Löwy: Ein vergessener Pionier* (Vienna: Verlag des Clubs der Universität Wien, 1998).

13. Freud to Fliess, 28 May 1899, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess 1887–1904,* trans. and ed. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), 353. Freud may well have been misled about the provenance of Schliemann's interest in Troy by Schliemann's own self-mythologization. See Inge Scholz-Strasser, "Vorwart" to Marinelli, ed., *Aus Freuds Sammlung,* 13.

14. According to James Strachey's Editor's Note to the Standard Edition, the text was published in May and June of 1896 with a footnote indicating its origin as a lecture delivered May 2 of that year; Freud's correspondence, however, seems to place the lecture on April 21. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* trans. and ed. James Strachey in collaboration with Anna Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1962), 3:189.

15. Freud, "Aetiology of Hysteria," in ibid., 3:192.

16. See also Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method,* trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

17. Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (New York: Norton, 1988), 172.

18. Donald P. Spence, *The Freudian Metaphor: Towards Paradigm Change in Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1987), 79; quoted in Kenneth Reinhard, "The Freudian Things: Construction and the Archaeological Metaphor," in *Excavations and Their Objects: Freud's Collection of Antiquity,* ed. Stephen Barker (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 59. For Reinhard, the metaphor is best understood in Lacanian terms as a topologics in which the Thing serves in the economy of *construction,* rather than excavation, shifting the subject's relation to meaning as such as opposed to uncovering hidden meanings.

19. Donald Kuspit, "A Mighty Metaphor: The Analogy of Archaeology and Psychoanalysis," in *Sigmund Freud and His Art: His Personal Collection of Antiquities,* ed. Lynn Gamwell and Richard Wells (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

20. For a comprehensive discussion of critical attention to the metaphor and of its several iterations in Freud's work, see Karl Stockreiter, "Am Rand der Aufklärungsmetapher: Korrespondenzen zwischen Archäologie und Psychoanalyse," in Marinelli, ed., *Aus Freuds Sammlung,* 80–93.

21. Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," Standard Edition 23:259. See Kuspit's discussion of the importance of this distinction in "A Mighty Metaphor."

22. ibid.

23. Freud, "A Case of Hysteria," Standard Edition 7:12.

24. Théophile Homolle, "Découvertes de Delphes," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts,* ser. 3, 13 (1895): 207, 331; quoted in Robin Barber, "Classical Art: Discovery, Research and Presentation 1890–1930," in *On Classic Ground: Picasso, Léger, de Chirico and the New Classicism 1910–1930,* ed. Elizabeth Cowling and Jennifer Mundy (London: Tate Gallery, 1990), 398–9.

25. Christian Zervos, *Catalogue général illustré de l'oeuvre de Picasso*, 33 vols. (Paris: Editions Cahiers d'art, 1932–1975).

26. La Rédaction, introduction to Hans Mühlestein, "Des origines de l'art et de la culture," *Cahiers d'art* 5 (1930): 57, trans. Matthew Tiews.

27. Christian Zervos, "Fausses libertés," *Cahiers d'art* 2 (1927): 125; Statement at the back of the final issue, *Cahiers d'art* 7 (1932); quoted in Sophie Bowness, "Braque's etchings for Hesiod's 'Theogony' and archaic Greece revived," *The Burlington Magazine* 117, no. 1165 (April 2000): 210.

28. Georges-Henri Rivière, "Archéologismes," *Cahiers d'art* 1, no. 7 (1926): 177. See full text in dossier hereto.

29. See Eveline Schlumberger, "Georges-Henri Rivière: Homme-orchestre des musées du 20e siècle," *Connaissance des arts* 274 (January 1975): 100–7.

30. Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), 152; quoted in Denis Hollier, ed., *The College of Sociology (1937–1939),* trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 88.

31. Bataille to Kojève, 6 December 1937, in Hollier, ed., *College of Sociology,* 90.

32. Jens Malte Fischer, "Imitieren und Sammeln. Bürgerlicher Möblierung und künsterlische Selbstinszenierung," in *Stil: Geschichten und Funktionen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Diskurselements*, ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and K. Ludwig Pfeiffer (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 384.

33. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project,* ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), frag. N10a,1, p. 475.

34. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Random House, 1965), xi.

35. Gary Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Scientific Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 5 n. 8. Gutting's book provides an in-depth discussion of what Foucault means by his archaeological methodology.

36. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language,* trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 7.

37. See also Michael Shanks, "Culture/Archaeology: The Dispersion of a Discipline and Its Objects," in *Archaeological Theory Today: Breaking the Boundaries,* ed. Ian Hodder (Oxford: Blackwell Polity, 2000); Shanks, *Experiencing the Past: On the Character of Archaeology* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Shanks, "L'archéologie et le passé contemporain: Un paradigme," in *Une archéologie du passé récent,* ed. Alain Schnapp (Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1997); Shanks, "The Life of an Artefact," *Fennoscandia Archaeologica* 15 (1998); Shanks, "Photography and the Archaeological Image," in *The Cultural Life of Images: Visual Representation in Archaeology,* ed. Brian Molyneaux (New York: Routledge, 1997); Shanks and Christopher Tilley, *Social Theory and Archaeology* (Cambridge: Polity Blackwell, 1987), chap. 1; Alain Schnapp, *The Discovery of the Past: The Origins of Archaeology,* trans. Ian Kinnes and Gillian Varndell (London: British Museum Press, 1996); Brian Neville and Johanne Villeneuve, eds., *Waste-Site Stories: The Recycling of Memory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

38. See, for example, Michel Serres, *Eclaircissements: Cinq entretiens avec Bruno Latour* (Paris: F. Bourin, 1992).

39. See Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths.*