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"Marxism in Contemporary Western Archaeology", by Bruce G. Trigger in *Archaeological Method and Theory*, Volume 5, edited by Michael B. Schiffer, pp. 159-200. Tucson, University of Arizona Press. 1993, \$40.00 list price.

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Professor Trigger's contribution to Schiffer's volume is a well-reasoned and significant consideration of the influence of Marxist thought on the work of number of contemporary archaeologists. He is more critical of recent developments within Marxist archaeology than is McGuire; the article stands as a challenge to those who utilize Marxist ideas to reconsider the direction they have lately taken. In this article Trigger demonstrates his thorough knowledge of both Marxist theory and the social history of archaeology (here I am following Trigger's convention by capitalizing "Marxist"). Although his consideration of the contributions of Marxists to Western archaeology is generally sympathetic, he is unafraid to criticize where he feels it is appropriate. Like McGuire, Trigger offers critical insight on the relationship between Marxist philosophy and archaeology; unlike McGuire, Trigger explicitly limits his discussion to Western Europe and North America.

Trigger begins his paper with a very succinct discussion of Marxism as he contends it was understood by Marx, Engels, and their early followers. Defined as "classical Marxism," he appropriately recognizes that the early Marxists conceived the philosophy as a system of thought defined through polemics arising from "political activities and associated researches" (p. 160). Trigger makes a point of reminding us that Marxism as it was created by Marx and Engels was a materialist philosophy based explicitly upon empirical observation. The bulk of this opening discussion is dedicated to what Trigger believes to be a requisite demystification of the basic tenets of Marxism, e.g., base/superstructure, forces/social relations of production, true/false consciousness.

Trigger distinguishes classical Marxism from the more contemporary manifestations of Marxist thought which he terms "neo-Marxism." He suggests that neo-Marxist archaeology developed in the late 1970's as a group of young archaeologists in Britain and the United States adopted explicitly Marxist approaches to archaeology. These archaeologists, according to Trigger, turned to Marxism for "a unifying perspective on which they could focus their rejection of the extreme explanatory claims that were being made...by the neoevolutionism, ecological determinism, systems theory, and positivist epistemology that characterized new or Processual Archaeology" (p. 173). According to Trigger, this generation of neo-Marxist archaeologists derived their positions not from classical Marxism itself, but rather from French anthropological Marxism and Frankfurt school critical theory. This indirect adoption of Marxist thought combined with a great variability in commitment to Marxism, both political and intellectual, has created a loose fellowship of archaeologists, including many so-called postprocessualists, who use Marxist ideas in various measure and with various success. Trigger admits that despite confusion on what are and what are not Marxist ideas, the neo-Marxists have made positive contributions to archaeological thought, including a major role in breaking the hegemony over methodology that was once held by processual archaeology.

However, not all that the neo-Marxists have introduced to archaeology is constructive, argues Trigger. For example, in their attempt to make archaeologists aware of the limits to their own objectivity, some neo-Marxists, (here he primarily means Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley) developed an extreme relativism which Trigger interprets as "intellectual nihilism." This involves, says Trigger, the abandonment of materialism in favor of an idealist orientation. This is an irony, he suggests, as Marx and Engels argued that such an idealist perspective would eliminate the possibility of an effective theory of change, making a challenge to power of the ruling class unthinkable. Trigger believes that this perspective reduces "all knowledge to the level of self-serving fantasies" (p. 181), which ultimately support the conservative arguments that seek to "discredit Marxism, the social sciences, and ultimately science itself...as an arbiter of truth" (Ibid).

Perhaps Trigger's most essential critique of the fractious schools of thought he defines as neo-Marxism is his insight that "classical Marxism's theory of knowledge is closer to the positivist epistemology of processual archaeology than it is the nihilism of the more extreme neo-Marxist idealists" (p. 186). Although he does not say it in as many words, Trigger is revealing the contradictions between classical Marxism's intimate role in the construction of modernist hegemony, which gave birth to processualism, and neo-Marxism's role in the postmodern critique, which has resulted in the partial dismantling of that hegemony. Trigger implies that this contradiction is insurmountable when he suggests that idealist explanations should forfeit the right to bear the name neo-Marxist.

Although Trigger is quite critical of those archaeologists he identifies as "hyperrelativists," his prognosis for Marxism in Western archaeology is cautiously optimistic. Accepting the neo-Marxist argument that a system of thought will be influenced if not determined by a dominant political system, Trigger suggests that the decline of the corrupt socialist regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union could result in a wider acceptance of Marxist philosophy in the West. In a slightly veiled censure of political conservatives like Frances Puyama who predicted that the so-called "fall of communism" signaled the final victory of capitalism and the end of history, Trigger pronounces that the growing economic, social and political crises of Western societies leave the future of capitalism somewhat in doubt. Trigger's final and somewhat optimistic thought seems to be this: Classical Marxism has been widely discredited as a result of its manipulation by corrupt and tyrannical political regimes; with the dismantling of those regimes, it may yet experience a process of renewal as a materialist philosophical system, provided that it can survive the challenge of the neo-Marxists.

Trigger's article is a timely and important consideration of the sometimes tenuous relationship between Marxism and the postprocessual critique of mainstream archaeology. He is rightly concerned that the hyperrelativism and exclusively idealist perspectives that have developed within postprocessual neo-Marxism can be self-defeating. While it is important to recognize that archaeologists are and always will be influenced by their particular socio-political milieu, the argument that there is no subjectively knowable past can both paralyze and discredit archaeological pursuits. In order to overcome potentially disabling nihilism, Trigger challenges neo-Marxist archaeologists to integrate classical Marxist thought more directly into their work. As Trigger argues, Marxism is at its core an empirical and materialist system of understanding the operation of the world. I find that I must agree with Professor Trigger; if it is to remain a viable system of archaeology, Marxist archaeology must return to Marx.

"Archaeology at the University of Kansas: Williston, Eiseley, Spaulding, Smith", edited by Marlin F. Hawley. *The Kansas Anthropologist*, 13(1 and 2):1-72, 1992. \$5.00 (Paper)

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Histories of archaeology on a national or continental scale can include only the briefest details of individual contributions. By contrast, a history focused on a region or state, in this case Kansas, can provide substantial information on the careers and achievements of its people and thus make a valuable contribution to archaeological history. Somewhat comparable publications are *Essays in the History of Plains Archeology* by Waldo R. Wedel and *Conceptions of Kentucky Prehistory* by Douglas W. Schwartz. There are essays here on Samuel Wendell Williston by John D. Reynolds, on Loren C. Eiseley by Marlin F. Hawley, on Albert C Spaulding also by Hawley, and on Carlyle C. Smith by Carlyle C. Smith. Williston was at the University of Kansas from 1890 to 1902, teaching geology and anatomy. He did extensive geological research and limited archaeological field work, which included El Cuartejejo pueblo ruin. Most importantly, he reported the association of a stone projectile point with the bones of *Bison occidentalis*. Not until 1937 was there an anthropologist-archaeologist at Kansas, Loren Eiseley, who taught in the sociology department. He carried out the first excavation of an Archaic site in the state and laid the foundation for archaeology's and biological anthropology's permanent places in the curriculum, though excavation plans were frustrated by World War II. (His first budget request was for \$3200, for a full summer of fieldwork.) In 1944 he accepted an invitation from Oberlin College to chair its sociology department. His successor, Spaulding, was at Kansas only 18 months, but accomplished a great deal: extensive archaeological site surveying, establishing good relations with local collectors, and initiating productive cooperation with the new River Basin Surveys. He also taught and served as the anthropology curator in the Natural History Museum. In 1947 James Griffin invited him to the University of Michigan. Carlyle Smith was at the University of Kansas from 1947 until retirement in 1980. His accomplishments are far too numerous to summarize briefly. He immediately began field work, first at the Kanopolis Reservoir, and later developed a major interest in tracing the historic Arikara back to their Pawnee affiliation. Probably best known is his extensive work at the Talking Crow site in South Dakota. He also spent a season with Thor Heyerdahl's archaeological expedition to Easter Island, as well as becoming an expert on gun flints and