



## Locality and place in the history of archaeology.

**The Institute of Archaeology, UCL, London: March 28, 2007.**

**Tim Murray** and **Ulrike Sommer** provided the following statement about the purpose of the meeting:

Over the past 20 years considerable attention has been paid by historians of archaeology to the deep and complex entanglements of archaeology and the nation that were so much a feature of the disciplinary context of archaeology from the 1850s.

There was (and is) every reason to focus hard on this aspect of the history of archaeology as it allows us to comprehend more fully the reasons why archaeologists (and historians) acquired the authority to explore the histories of nations and ethnic groups and to underwrite claims about priority or essence. Significantly, we are also well aware that although historians and archaeologists now have to share this social and cultural space with others, and their authority consequently diminished, archaeological and historical knowledge claims continue to have significant social consequences.

Acknowledging these points prompts us to question whether this effectively exhausts the research agenda of the history of archaeology.

It is our view that while we accept the importance of focusing on the general and the national, we believe that it is now time to expand our focus by exploring the role of antiquarians and archaeologists in the creation of narratives about local landscapes, monuments, material culture, histories and memories. Although we accept that these narratives need not necessarily be different to or isolated from more general national or continental narratives, there is no warrant to assume that either outcome is inevitable.

Our purpose in this conference is to promote discussion of these issues exemplified through presentations that focus on the local, the particular, and the roles played by antiquarians and archaeologists in making sense of the past in the present.

**Abstracts of papers presented** (a selection of papers will be published in volume 17(2) of the *BHA* in November):

**Stephen Briggs:** *The narrative from Antiquarianism to Archaeology in The Times 1785–1900.*

During the nineteenth century daily and weekly newspapers played a significant role in advancing public understanding. This was certainly true from the way *The Times* chronicled the transformation from antiquarianism to archaeology. With its many different categories of reportage as well as adverts and business information, the paper was truly eclectic, in that it included contemporary adverts and reviews of books on new sciences like prehistory, on the one hand, as well as items of news about important recent discoveries. It also included contemporary discursive articles, business news and adverts of immense value to today's industrial archaeologists.

An initial breakdown of contents significant to archaeology might include:

**The Organisations: The Society of Antiquaries:**

There were occasions accounts of its lectures, but more interestingly after about 1830 derogatory reports on its ineffectuality. Bodies like the new British Association for the Advancement of Science

also came in for some stick. The Antiquaries took little notice, so were replaced in the public eye by the British Archaeological Association (1843–4), then the Archaeological Institute (1845). The unpleasant charade-defining establishment of the former and the split off of the latter was played out to the full in several newspapers.

#### **The Institutions: The British Museum:**

*The Times* was among several papers to wage a campaign to raise the national profile of British Antiquities as part of the displayed collections in the new Bloomsbury building, after about 1830. The trustees seem to have listened a little. Full accounts of the various Ancient Monuments Acts being pioneered by Lubbock were printed, along with chronicles of the debates that accompanied their earlier rejections in Parliament. Good cases were made out for better protection through regular accounts of damages to or losses of monuments, including churches and castles.

#### **Major Scientific Developments and Discoveries:**

Events like the excavation at Hoxne and Paviland are absent, though some of Buckland's work mentioning diluvialism is mentioned. Worsaae's visit to London and the introduction of the Three Ages, such an important development for archaeology, is hardly mentioned (they got Worsaae's name wrong). The Antiquity of Man fares rather better, with a number of useful letters from opposing sides in the question about the age of flint implements 1859–1860s.

Perhaps the most immediately rewarding features illustrative of the contemporary intellectual climate, are reviews dealing with books like *The Antiquity of Man*, *Prehistoric Times* (1865 and 69), Fergusson's *Rude Stone Monuments* (1872), and Evans's *Ancient Stone Implements* (1872). These generally give a flavour of scientific progress that can be more difficult to trace in the contemporary archaeological journal literature.

There are useful obituaries, much on archaeology abroad (particularly Egyptology, Classical and Christian Mediterranean, and the newspaper offer useful indices to the adoption of changing terminologies. Journalists' approaches to contentious personalities were often sharp and even cruel, and some were very revealing in ways that abuse of the libel and defamation laws no longer permit for such public figures.

There is a great deal of value yet to be mined from such contemporary sources even if it may be true to say that perhaps only half of those topics retrospectively considered important were offered even honourable mention by their contemporaries.

#### **Peter Rowley-Conwy, Durham University: *Antiquarians in Denmark: Thomsen and Worsaae.***

This paper discusses the activities of C. J. Thomsen and J. J. A. Worsaae in a different role than they are normally cast. Using regional examples I will focus on the collection and systematic integration of local antiquarian information at the Danish National Museum.

#### **Frauke Kreienbrink, Leipzig University: *Mapping the past: Eduard Paulus the Elder (1803–1878) and the archaeological survey in Württemberg.***

In 1859 Eduard Paulus presented a tricoloured archaeological map of the Kingdom of Württemberg (south-west Germany), recording archaeological monuments, such as burial mounds, hillforts, Roman settlements and roads. Before that, only a few isolated maps of small regions had been produced. Paulus' map was the first archaeological map of a whole German state, and based on an exact geodesic survey to boot. Although the map was mainly the result of a private initiative, it undoubtedly owed much to Paulus' engagement at the Statistical-topographical Bureau in Stuttgart, where he was involved in the first countrywide topographical survey and in the production of the

county inventories (Oberamtsbeschreibungen). In this paper, I will show the special conditions in Württemberg and discuss the role of mapping, surveying and excavating of archaeological monuments in the framework of 'Patriotic studies' (Vaterlandskunde), the systematic survey of all aspects of a state, from Geology and Topography to population statistics, history and folklore.

**Chris Evans**, Cambridge Archaeological Unit: *'Lay' Pasts and Building/Landscape Histories*.

This contribution outlines the active community-construction of ethnic pasts that occurred, with the advent of the Democracy Movement, within Nepal during the 1990s. It will particularly concern the Gurung of the Central Annapurna highlands, who, effectively commissioned us to find 'their past' and which resulted in some ten years of fieldwork (only ending with the advent of Maoist insurgency in the Country and new past/present agendas). The paper will focus upon community 'lay' historians and shamans, as, together being the 'knowers of the past', and compare their role to European antiquarian practice viz. the establishment of authoritative knowledge, rhetoric and 'facts' (in the light 'outside' intervention).

**Heather Sebire**, Archaeological Officer, Bailiwick of Guernsey: *The Lukis Family of Guernsey and megalith studies in the 19th century*.

**Ana Cristina Martins**, Centre for Archaeology (Uniarq), University of Lisbon: *From localism and regionalism to nationalism: Narratives of Estácio da Veiga (1828–1891) in search of lost time*.

Most 19th century Portuguese intellectuals who were dedicated to archaeological studies explored the Portuguese territory in a more or less opportunistic fashion, in accordance with their particular interest. The study of megaliths proceeded in this way, with prehistorians seeking distinctive elements of the Portuguese ones. In contrast to this general practice, S. F. M. Estácio da Veiga (1828–1891) developed in southern Portugal – in the region of the Algarve – a unique kind of project that served to bolster local and regionalist interests, although it lacked any agenda of autonomy or independence.

Basing himself, exclusively, on in-depth and systematic archaeological investigation, Estácio da Veiga attempted to challenge the prevailing monogenetic vision of Humanity and emphasized the autochthonous character of the ancestors of contemporary Algarvians, who were viewed as belonging to the 'Iberian race'. It was to this race, and not Phoenician activity, that he attributed the invention of writing known as 'The Southwest Script' and which had been identified in stone stele from some locals of the Algarve, and which he thought originated the Egyptian hieroglyphs.

With these data, he attempted to combat the idea of Asia as 'the hearth of Humanity', as embodied in the notion of *ex oriente lux*, and created a 'cohort of occidentalists,' who highlighted the genius of those people that had always lived in the region of the Algarve. Furthermore, he envisioned 'Iberian colonization' as a process in which the south of Portugal contributed to the political landscape of the entire country, specifically at the time of the 15th and 16th century discoveries. He opposed, therefore, the official discourse that emanated from the nation's capital, Lisbon, that appeared to completely ignore his compatriots in the Algarve and worked toward the elevation of their self-esteem.

In addition the efficient methodology he applied in the field, the work of Estácio da Veiga proved itself to be politically relevant even in the 20th century, when the well-known Portuguese archaeologist and anthropologist, A. A. E. Mendes Correia (1888–1960), resurrected one of the topics which da Veiga had initiated, though in a completely different political context: Salazar's Novo Estado (New State). Mendes Correia noted that:

The Portuguese people have the smallest average cephalic index in Europe, a fact that attests to their

antiquity and relative ethnic purity<sup>1</sup> ... Prehistoric cultural anthropology recognizes the existence of an Atlantic focus – which is Portuguese or Galician-Portuguese – which is independent of the Mediterranean world, which is original, creative, expansive, and can be discerned in the Portuguese megalithic civilization and the appearance of the most remote examples of the most ancient scripts, which I called proto-Iberian.

In this way, archaeological evidence originally appropriated to construct a local and regional myth was reused to create a nationalist narrative that increasingly needed to be strengthened and consolidated to produce its own independence. This is a paradigmatic example of diversity in unity: the region of the Algarve in the context of the Portuguese country.

**Ulrike Sommer**, UCL: *Of Dwarves and Druids – the antiquarian creation of historical landscapes*.

One of the most famous works of the antiquarian period of Saxon archaeology is Benjamin Preusker's 1849 'Blicke in die vaterländische Vorzeit', which only unsatisfactorily translates as 'Glimpses of a patriotic past'. Preusker attempts to use all available sources, artefacts and monuments, folktales, and historical accounts, to present the reader with a landscape full of meaning. This landscape is described in romantic terms, but it is not only meant for contemplation and enjoyment, but also acts as a call to action, both for preservation of historical remains and for political reform. Tales about brewing cauldrons were taken as a sure sign of Celtic sanctuaries, whereas dwarfs were taken as the memory of vanquished races, having 'shrunk in memory'. Both pagan sanctuaries and medieval towns were also presented as the remains of a more democratic past, and thus imbued with political meaning.

**Margarita Andreu-Díaz**, Durham University : *Memoryscapes: Numantia as a case study*.

This paper discusses the narratives created about the Celtiberian and Roman town of Numantia, from the 16th century to the present day. It will be argued that there have been competing views regarding the role of Numantia in the creation of national history. There have been many understandings of Numantia, and I argue that its ruins have constituted – and still constitute – an arena of negotiation.

**Tim Murray**, La Trobe University/UCL: *Rethinking Antiquarianism*.

Following Schnapp's impassioned defence of antiquarianism as a legitimate and intellectually coherent field of study and not some wrong turning on the path to a science of archaeology, historians of archaeology have begun to look more deeply into its practitioners and the contexts of their practice. The initial results of such inquiries are that antiquarianism is a far more complex entity than earlier histories of archaeology had led us to believe. Although antiquarians can still be considered to be figures of fun and eccentricity (as they were in the 18th and 19th centuries), there is little doubt that significant contributions to the study of human history (and to the histories of human landscapes) and material culture were also made by them. In this short paper I want to move forward on this theme of the significance of antiquarianism by exploring other contexts of activity – particularly those of preliterate societies, and the challenges posed by the politics of the past in settler societies such as Australia.

**Pamela Smith**, Cambridge University: *Geography of knowledge approaches*.

The work of 'geographers of knowledge' such as David Livingstone, and how that work illuminates the history of archaeology will be explained and illustrated.

---

<sup>1</sup> A. A. Mendes Correia, *Introdução à Antropobiologia*, Lisboa, Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 1933, p. 33. Id., *Gérmens e Cultura*, Porto, Instituto de Antropologia da Universidade do Porto, 1944, p. 160.