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## VII. Announcements

**Pamela Jane Smith** advises that the next Personal-Histories retrospective discussion for 2008 is now scheduled for Monday afternoon, 3 November 2008 in Cambridge; this event will be fully advertised closer to that time but, as a brief preview, the speakers are Leslie Aiello, Rob Foley or Marta Mirazón Lahr, Meave Leakey, David Pilbeam, Chris Stringer with Adam Kuper as Chair; the narrators will recall memories and recount experiences of their study of human evolution during the last 40 years.

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## VIII. Conference reports

### Report on Childe Conference Held in Durham

Report by **Rana Daroogheh**, AREA/PhD Student, Department of Archaeology, Durham University

More than fifty guests from local and foreign archaeological organizations visited Durham University on December 1 2007, to pay tribute to the late Professor Gordon Childe on the 50th anniversary of his death. The conference was funded by the Prehistoric Society, the Department of Archaeology at Durham University and the AREA Project, with the aim of celebrating Childe's vast contributions to the field of archaeology with a series of lectures reflecting his many archaeological interests, such as: the origins of civilizations, economic pre-history, settlement typologies and Marxist ideas in theory of archaeology.

Lectures were divided accordingly into two parts: the first – 'Childe in History' and the second – 'Childe and Knowledge'. The first speaker was Professor Jacek Lech (Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw) who appropriately started the conference with an overall evaluation of Childe's achievements throughout his life. He was followed by Professor Timothy Champion (University of Southampton) who analysed Childe's reasons for choosing Oxford to broaden his education after leaving Australia. Professor Ian Ralston (University of Edinburgh) continued to trace Childe's career in Britain by assessing his achievements at the University of Edinburgh as teacher and researcher. Professor David Harris (University College of London) moved on by examining Childe's experience as the director of the London Institute of Archaeology and his influence on the formation of archaeology as a global discipline. The first part of the conference was brought to an end with a lecture by Dr. Margarita Díaz-Andreu (Durham University) who focused her discussion on the influence and reception of Childe's ideas in an international context, before and after his death.

The second part of the conference began with a lecture from Dr. John Chapman (Durham University)

who surveyed Childe's views on Danube pre-historic settlement, settlement topology and the influence of economic systems on settlement patterns. The next paper by Professor Elizbieta Jastrzebowska (Accademia Polacca di Roma) reviewed the influence of Childe's historical and political interests on his perception of the late antiquity and its evaluation as a 'Dark Age'.

The conference continued with a presentation by Mr Mark Manuel and Professor Robin Coningham (Durham University) who analyzed Gordon Childe's contributions to the understanding of social organization and the origin of Indus civilization. Professor Peter Rowley-Conwy (Durham University) followed by discussing Childe's views on the concept of culture. The next paper by Mr Peter Gathercole (Darwin College, Cambridge) was concerned with Childe's Marxist ideas and the traces of its presence in his academic work. The conference was appropriately brought to an end by Professor Don Brothwell (York University) whom having been one of Childe's many students managed to both 'put a face to' and describe the man who had achieved many great things in the field of archaeology.

The conference was well attended and was followed by lively discussions not only during the conference, but also at coffee and lunch breaks, and later over dinner. Over the past few years, the Department of Archaeology at Durham University has managed to become one of the most prominent departments in the history of archaeology due to the interests of many of its researchers in this relatively new but already well-established field of archaeology. It is this interest that had led to the privilege of being able to hold, and continue to hold many significant conferences on the history of archaeology in this department at Durham University. Details about its conferences and workshops can be found on [http://www.dur.ac.uk/archaeology/research/groupings/history\\_of\\_archaeology/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/archaeology/research/groupings/history_of_archaeology/).

## IX. Dissertations

### **Town and Gown: Amateurs and Academics. The Discovery of British Prehistory; Oxford 1850–1900, 'A Pastime Professionalised'**

**E. Megan Price**, Wolfson College Oxford  
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This investigation into the origin of a collection of nineteenth century lanternslides revealed evidence of the social, intellectual and cultural importance of various scientific societies in Oxford, and the contributions made by those involved, particularly the creator of the lanternslides, H. M. J. Underhill, (1855–1920). Evidence gathered from primary sources showed a fluidity in the relationships between the supposed 'town and gown' in late nineteenth century Oxford which consisted of a community of citizens, amateurs and academics, all of whom were linked by a growing interest in the real and mythological British past.

Following a discussion of the key intellectual and social influences in Britain during the latter half of the nineteenth century, including the implications of the emerging evidence of an ancient human past, the thesis focuses on individual case studies. They illustrate the roles of overlooked or neglected individuals whose work contributed to the growth of today's discipline of British prehistory. Several people, now forgotten, including Underhill were contemporaries of Arthur Evans and Edward Tylor whose social circumstances made it easier for them to become prominent academics.

The results of this research indicate that a new approach is required in the history of archaeology; one that would draw attention to the vital contributions made by forgotten or overlooked individuals,