The Archaeological Imagination

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Archaeologists work with what remains

Imagining past lives experienced through ruins and remains: telling the story of a prehistoric village through the remains of the site and its artifacts. And more: dealing with the return of childhood memories, or designing an archive for a corporation. The archaeological imagination is a creative capacity mobilized when we experience traces and vestiges of the past, when we gather, classify, conserve and restore, when we work with such remains, collections, archives to deliver narratives, reconstructions, accounts, explanations, or whatever. The archaeological imagination involves a particular sensibility, an affective attunement to the dynamic interplay of the presence of the past in remains, and the past's absence, simultaneously witnessed by such remains. The archaeological imagination and its associated sensibility are intimately associated with the social and cultural changes of the evolution of modernity since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Thomas 2004), the growth, quite spectacular since the 1970s, of the Heritage Industry, that sector of the culture industry associated with the concept of heritage (Harrison 2013).

Let me begin with how we understand archaeology. Archaeologists work with what remains. It is a common misconception, very much propagated in popular characterizations (Holtorf 2005, 2007), that archaeologists discover the past in their excavations and fieldwork, and establish knowledge of the past in their laboratory science. This misconception is even supported in many academic accounts that, understandably, emphasize disciplinary practices (Renfrew and Bahn 2012). A pragmatic understanding of archaeological work or process, in contrast, stresses engagement, that archaeological work is a mode of production connecting past and present with a view to the future (Lucas 2001, Hodder 1999, Shanks and McGuire 1996, Rathje et al 2012, Olsen et al 2012, Preucel and Mrozowski 2012). There is a productive aspect to such work: remains are resources for constructing stories, accounts, exhibitions, academic papers, movies, artworks. And also a reproductive aspect: remains re-produce or reiterate the past, refreshing, introducing the past into the present, just as archaeologists may return to rework those remains with hindsight, in the light of new discoveries of sites and finds, or in new models, with new theories.

A conjectural faculty or capacity to piece together remains into meaningful forms, the archaeological imagination is a key component of our experiences of the past, our engagements with remains, sensory, cognitive, and emotional or evaluative (Shanks 1992). We may call this affective and embodied attunement to ruins and remains, to decay and persistence, to the possibility of recollection and reconstruction, an archaeological sensibility. We encounter the past, excavate, observe, clean and restore, gather and classify: imagination is a necessary component of this creative process or mode of cultural production that is also well-conceived as the design of pasts-in-the-present (Shanks 2013). The creative engagement with fragmentary remains, working with them, means that we must deny a radical separation of a past that happened from our representations made of that past. The archaeological imagination, conceived pragmatically and processually as working with what remains, does not deliver things that are made up, fictive, illusory, that stand in opposition to a 'real' past; it is the very faculty through which past worlds are made real to us. The archaeological imagination frames our engagement with remains of the past, frames our perception of the past, frames the possibility of making sense of the past.

Consider how time and temporality are involved. Archaeological work certainly involves chronology and chronometry, establishing and measuring dates of sites and things, and considerable effort has been made in organizing archaeological remains, sites and artifacts, according to date and provenance (see below). But prior to establishing dates and periods are two other temporal aspects of archaeological experience: duration and encounter. Any archaeological experience, any archaeological work requires duration, the persistence of remains from the past into the present, and actuality, the encounter with the remains of past in the present. With a view to the future: archaeologists seize the opportunity to intervene in the inevitable decay and loss of remains, through recovery, preservation, conservation, restoration. That archaeologists care to seize an opportunity to work with what remains is a particular *kairotic* aspect of the actuality of the past: *Kairos* is the term that refers to the temporary circumstances involving the past in the present that afford opportunity to act archaeologically through excavation, survey, conservation, and mediation or representation in text and image, for example. Kairos typically might designate the moment of discovery, a kind of archaeological decisive moment (Shanks and Svabo 2013).

Archaeological experiences extend far beyond the academic discipline. In working through remains and their dynamic of presence/absence, Archaeology is a type of memory practice, recollecting, connecting pasts and presents (Olivier 2011). Given the considerable importance of memory, as recollection, to senses of belonging and identity, the archaeological imagination is thereby implicated in the construction of collective and personal identities. Archaeologists have long been involved in creating accounts of the origins and evolution of nation states, ethnic groups, and more (Trigger 1984, Kohl and Fawcett 1995, Diàz-Andreu 2007), telling of how the French became the French, the origins of indigenous Americans, for example. This association of the archaeological

imagination with social and cultural change since the seventeenth century will be further sketched below.

In working with what remains, we are all archaeologists. Or potentially: not everyone can engage in archaeological practices, working with what remains, with the same agency. So while academic archaeologists are few and subscribe to a narrow disciplinary discourse, they have access to resources and funding far beyond those of ordinary people. State agencies, such as ministries of culture, and international agencies such as UNESCO, have extraordinary capacity to manage engagements with the past. A small community may have very limited sovereignty over its past outside the remit of state agencies. This matter of agency cuts to the heart of the cultural and personal politics of memory, identity, and representation of hegemonic and marginalized interests.

Archaeological experiences

Archaeological experiences share a distinctive set of features that, taken together, make them uniquely archaeological (Ruibal 2013). Here are three examples to illustrate this.

An archaeological landscape

The upper valley of the River Coquet just south of the English-Scottish border is a remarkable archaeological landscape, a palimpsest of traces. Circles, channels and cups were carved several thousand years ago into outcrops of the fell sandstone in and around Lordenshaws, a prehistoric defended hilltop that was remodeled as a farmstead in Roman times, or so it would seem from the earthworks and style of houses. Looking north, more hill forts, some excavated by a local archaeological society, occur every few miles, and the line of a Roman road runs west-east, crossing the river at Holystone, a sacred spring, site of baptisms from the days of the early Christian kingdom of Northumbria: Saint Paulinus of York is said to have baptized 3000 during Easter week 627. Clennell Street, a medieval drover's road, can be seen leaving the valley for Scotland; now deserted, it was renowned when the borders were embroiled from 1300 in three hundred years of raiding and warfare between England and Scotland.

The valley appear's in Scott's historical novel Rob Roy (1817) and its archaeology, history, folklore and natural history were described by a local antiquarian, David "Dippie" Dixon, at the beginning of the twentieth century (1903). He was sponsored by Lord Armstrong, a wealthy inventor and industrialist. Cragside, his grand house, little changed since he died, was donated to the state in lieu of taxes and is now cared for and managed by the National Trust, a non-government heritage agency and one of the largest landowners in the UK. It is a major tourist attraction.

An archaeological artwork

Anselm Kiefer is a contemporary artist who explores the archaeological imagination. *Die Ordnung der Engel* (The Hierarchy of Angels) (1985 to 1987), for example, is a massive wall-sized canvas of

thick layers of paint, shellac, chalk, and cardboard. A large airplane propeller, worn, broken, made from sheets of lead, sits on a dark, blasted, eroded, and barren landscape, from which hang nine rocks. In a text of the fifth century entitled The Celestial Hierarchy, attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, angels were divided into nine categories or choirs, grouped into three hierarchies, navigating the twisting space between heaven and earth. The propeller, spiraling through the air, the airpower of Germany's Third Reich, or any twentieth-century military might, now brought down to burned earth, references Dionysius's vision of heaven as a vast spiral, a topological folding in which time and space move in all directions. The rocks, as meteorites, as angels, bring heaven to earth, to a wasted utopia in this representation of a different kind of celestial hierarchy.

Since the 1970s Kiefer has dealt in the cultural landscapes of postwar Germany, with mixed media works manifesting the transmutation of materials, through references to burning and devastation, death and decay, erosion and ruin, the metamorphosis of substance, lead into gold, in the celestial models of alchemy. In some of Kiefer's works grand architectural and public monuments — ancient, Egyptian, classical, industrial — signal imperial ambition, the nation state; other locales remind us of the architectures of the Holocaust. Several series of books, with pages of text often eroded and undecipherable, of faded anonymous photographs, of empty pages, burned books, seem to be a melancholic kind of literary antiquarianism. All his work embodies complex allegories that draw on Jewish mysticism, Christian symbolism, folk legend, and, as in *Die Ordnung der Engel*, Kiefer displays his fascination with alchemical systems of thought that obsessed so many great minds before the triumph of an enlightenment will to knowledge — worlds of faith, superstition, ritual and hope.

An archaeological collection

The Revs Institute, in Naples, Florida, comprises a museum of the Collier Collection of vintage automobiles, restoration and maintenance workshops, a library and archive of photographs, documents and ephemera focused on automotive archaeology, the evolution of automobile design, the place of automobility in modern culture. The Institute attends car shows like the annual Pebble Beach Concours in California, where it runs its cars; it hosts conferences, welcomes visitors, enthusiasts and volunteers into its mission to promote awareness of the significance of the automobile to the shape of recent history. Conscious of the long history of collection and connoisseurship (specialist knowledge of material culture), the Institute explicitly raises questions of how to conserve 'active matter', complex artifacts like automobiles, how to represent their affective character and appeal, how to supply adequate context for their understanding. The Institute is at a leading edge of the emergence of a new sector in the heritage industry, as the hobby of collecting cars matures into a manifold of professionally managed institutions, developed academic apparatuses of research, conservation expertise, and a system of values applied to distinguish automobiles (historical worth, cultural significance, for example).

Matters of tradition and legacy, of heritage, of roots, memories and remains, of entropy and loss, the material transformation of decay and ruin, connections between the past, its contemporary reception, and future prospect, the place of the past in a modern society, ethical and indeed political issues regarding respect for the past and the conservation of its remains, archives, agency and the shape of history, but also judgment of responsibility in assessing what to do with what is left of the past. Such features of archaeological experience are summarized in Figure 1.
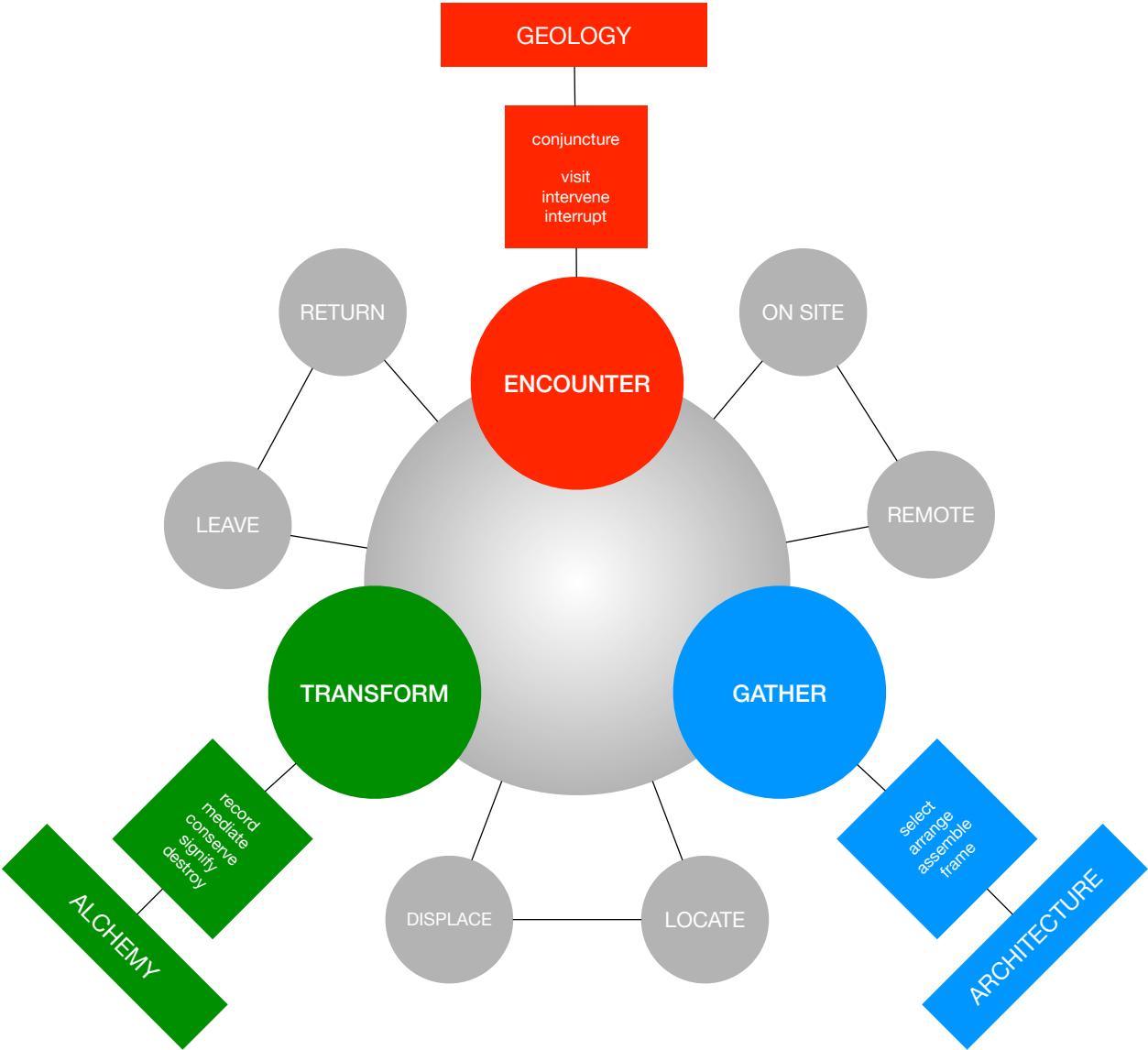

Figure 1 - The archaeological circuit

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Encounter

An archaeological experience typically involves encounter, the actuality of the past, engaging remains. Visiting a ruin, handling an artifact, excavating a site: encounters may be more or less passive and active, may occur at site, or remotely, mediated, for example, through a postcard, a video, a technical publication. Geology is suggested as a frame for the actuality of encounter, referring to processes of site formation, sedimentation of the past, faulting, polytemporal folding.

Here are some specific features of archaeological encounter.

Sense of place: *Genius Loci*. Engagement with place is often a complex affective experience. This can relate to the polytemporality of place, the topological folding of time inherent in our perception of site or place, as old things mingle with new, an ancient field boundary abuts a new housing development.

Place/event. This involves a fascination with the connection between place and event and is captured in the notion — 'this happened here'.

Forensic suspicion. An archaeological encounter often involves a particular forensic and suspicious attitude towards place in that we seek evidence that might help us piece together a story to make sense of the place and its remains.

Pattern recognition. A forensic connection between place and event involves a task of distinguishing and sorting evidence from irrelevancy, what is significant from what is garbage, signal from noise, figure from ground. Sometimes this is a kind of cryptography, seeking to decipher remains, figure out what might have happened at this place, in the ruins.

We may choose to leave the site or collection and move on, or we may return to revisit in a new encounter.

Gather

Collections are made, items sorted and classified, put in boxes, framed in different ways. The framing, containing and scaffolding involved in gathering suggests we think of architectural processes.

Sorting things out. Archaeological experiences are often concerned with classification, choosing what goes with what, in sorting finds, in making a significant collection, in deciding what matters over what is irrelevant (cf pattern recognition).

Identity and recognition. What is it that remains and of what is it remainder? Is this the way we were? There is a crucial component of identity and identification, questions of recognition in

archaeological experiences. We might ask — Are these are our ancestral traces? There may be involved an uncanny sense of a haunting past, recognizing something that was lost.

Mise-en-scène. We put things (back) in place, set things up. Mise-en-scène refers to the arrangement of things to fit the interest of viewing and inspection, a key component of archaeological work, whether it be a trench section cleaned for scrutiny, a reconstruction of a building, or an assemblage of artifacts in a museum. Consider also the idea of landscape as a way of looking and arranging things in place.

Transform

Items may be kept where they were found, at their origin, or displaced, moved elsewhere to a store room or museum, for example. Sites and artifacts fall into ruin and decay, are subject to entropy. Archaeological excavation actually destroys the past in its selection of what to preserve or conserve. Remains are transformed in conservation techniques that arrest decay, and also through their representation and description, through mediation, turning them into text and image, or into an exhibited display. The wide scope of processes of metamorphosis and transformation suggests we think of the pre-disciplinary field of alchemy.

Here are some features of archaeological metamorphosis.

Entropy. Ruin and decay and other metamorphic processes — what becomes of what was. Sometimes archaeological experience involves an active negative entropy: people, for example, can maintain and care for things so that they resist decay.

Ruin and phantasm. Archaeology works through remains and vestiges; bits remaining of the past as well as traces or tracks, impacts, footprints, imprints. It deals in a past which is not so much over and done, no longer present, as both present in ruins and remains and uncannily non-absent phantasms, hauntingly present.

Representation. How can materiality — site, practice and thing — be documented?

Displacement. The shift from past to present, the circulation of text and image beyond the findspot, beyond the site whence the photo was taken, the re-location, citation, quotation of the image, document and account.

Mortality and our abject materiality. Archaeological objects can never be completely captured in a description. There is always more to be said. Just as there is always an uneasy sense of ultimate mortality in archaeological experiences, that we too will one day be the dust of decay.

Aftermath. What comes after the event? To document, repair, restore, conserve, replicate?

Alchemy and technology. The magic of past reappearing in the present. Archaeological experiences have long included a technical fascination with recovery and reconstruction, with the technology of

reproduction/documentation. This may even verge on technophilia — a love of the technology of recovery and reconstruction for its own sake.

The archaeological imagination works in and through such archaeological experiences.

A genealogy of archaeological experiences

We can track the evolution of an archaeological sensibility through three phases since the 17th century. Such a genealogical perspective offers insight into the scope of the archaeological imagination, into current and potential agendas.

One: to the middle of the 19th century. I have argued elsewhere (Shanks 2012) that the contemporary archaeological imagination is a version of a longer standing antiquarian imagination. Antiquarians were key representatives in the development of experimental and field sciences from the 16th through 19th centuries (Schnapp 1996, Sweet 2004). Their predisciplinary, premodern outlook was focused through an interest in description and account of regions, exploring sense of place (chorography), collection, survey, systematic encounter with ancient monuments and artifacts in the sense of empirical experience, treated as the foundation for secure knowledge. Two shifts at the end of the 18th century opened up space for an expanded exploration of the antiquarian, the archaeological imagination. The first involved challenges to senses of history based upon religious teaching, biblical chronologies and Graeco-Roman historiography. The establishment in geology of the deep antiquity of the earth meant that most of human history was not covered by religious and classical texts but appeared newly empty and only accessible through the archaeological remains of pre-history, or through analogy with contemporary simpler and traditional societies.

The second shift was the development of the nation states of Europe and their focus upon constructing senses of national identity in legitimating these new polities, especially given the undercutting of religious tradition, effected as well by geological sciences. Archaeological remains offered a powerfully affective means of articulating identity, especially in association with historical narratives (see the seminal work on the invention of tradition gathered by Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Darwin's perfection of an evolutionary paradigm threw even more emphasis upon temporal process and mutability, key components of the archaeological imagination.

Both shifts brought an end to the experience of secure tradition, in the sense that the past is experienced no longer as a guarantor of contemporary order and security, in the sense that individuals are increasingly held responsible for their own security in a world experienced as more and more subject to risks to self, family and community (after Giddens 1991 and Beck 1992; Harrison 2013, Shanks and Witmore 2010 for archaeology). And this includes experiences of risk to the past itself, with impulses to protect and conserve.

Two: to the 1970s. From the second half of the 19th century especially, archaeological fieldwork has delivered enormous amounts of material evidence, remains of past and present peoples, that was gathered and systematized in a growing number of museums. This can be taken as the second phase in the development of the archaeological imagination. The challenge has been how to handle this historical debris: a question of responsibility to gather, order and comprehend, in order to protect a past that cannot be taken for granted. Museologists, from Thomsen and Worsaae in the 1840s onwards, adopted a solution that connected well-established but hitherto conjectural histories of humankind (evolutionary sequences from primitive stone age through bronze and iron-using complex societies) with administrative technologies.

An architecture was built, a time space systematics for locating and dating material remains. Databases and inventory systems mobilize schemes of historical development and change, and organized, literally, through bureaucracy: the drawers, cupboards, cases and tables of museum galleries and storerooms offer ordered containers for the remains of the past, a frame within which can be located the stories, conceived fascinating, of the discovery of lost civilizations, the reconstruction of ruins, the rescue of forgotten times.

We can follow Foucault here in seeing how the archaeological imagination was translated into knowledge building practices, often in the service of administration and government (Harrison 2018). A state-sponsored inventory of archaeological sites and remains, embodied in archives and museums, authorized by legislation, can be used to establish their relative value, how significant they are in human history, and so inform urban planning, for example, by suggesting what is worth preserving, and what is disposable; archaeological and anthropological collections have offered the means of classifying people into social, cultural, class, ethnic, gender categories that could again be used as the basis for bureaucratic administration.

So archaeological remains have come to be organized in a global time-space systematics of timelines and distribution maps rooted in universally applicable systems of classification and categorization and embodied in the fittings and architecture of museums. UNESCO, for example, has institutionalized since 1972 (after the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage) a suite of universal human values applied to cultural property and experiences, manifested in the list of World Heritage Sites. These places are held to represent the pinnacle of human achievement and civilization: the human experience captured in what are often monumental ruins. And tourists flock to see them.

This system of ordering and managing remains has nevertheless, indeed necessarily, come with a growing awareness of threats both to the remains of the past and to the possibility of creating any kind of meaningful knowledge of what happened in history. Every nation state now has legislation to protect ancient sites and artifacts, under a not inappropriate perception that the remains of the past are at risk from urban expansion, looting, fueled by a market for antiquities, war, too many

tourist visitors, and sheer neglect. Ruin and loss are key aspects of the contemporary archaeological imagination.

Here we experience a threat or risk to the past itself, as well as to the possibility of creating rich histories in the future. Systems for administering the remains of the past introduce a new dynamic between presence and absence, between the presence of the remains of the past gathered in museums, and the absence of past lives themselves, between archaeological finds and vast aeons of human history begging to be filled with what has been lost or is forever gone. In contrast to societies that experience the security of tradition, a past that serves as a reference for the present, the past in contemporary society is conspicuously not a secure given at all. It is subject to contemporary interests and concerns, infused with the interests of knowledge, a will to knowledge, and also with erosive threatening interests. We have become aware that we need to work on the past simply to have it with us; if nothing is done, it may well disappear, especially when some want to break it up and sell it off to collectors or to build a new shopping mall. The natural environment is not now seen as a given, but as a thoroughly socialized and institutionalized habitat, a hybrid under the threat of human-induced climate change, pollution and over development, raising concerns of culpability and blame, responsibility on the part of humanity to care and curate. So too the remains of the past are a matter of concern, demanding planning and foresight, another risk environment affecting whole populations' needs and desires for history, heritage, memories that offer orientation as much on the future as the past.

Three: archaeological experiences in contemporary 'super modernity' (Ruibal 2018). The third phase in the evolution of archaeological experiences since the 17th-century begins in the 1970s. The sense of risk and threat to the past is part of the massive growth in the heritage and tourist industries over the last 50 years, with archaeological and historical sites and museums the center of cultural tourism, by far the biggest fraction of this multibillion dollar economy (Harrison 2013). The dual temporality of archaeological experiences, matters of fragile persistence and duration, and actuality, the connection between past and present, here stand in contrast to senses of tradition. The paradox or contradiction is that the control that systematic knowledge affords, for example, in managing the erosive impact of development or of the trade in illicit antiquities on the possibility of a past in the future, comes at the cost of a sense of ontological security. It is not just that the past (in the present) is threatened; senses of personal and community identity are threatened, when the continuity of the past is the source of such identity. The growth of systems of calculation, management and control is intimately connected with growing political, social, cultural and indeed ontological insecurity.

The security threat which individuals face today is, at base, a threat to their very identity because of the ways in which these abstract systems of knowledge work. When who you are, including your history, is no longer given by traditional institutions and cultures, but is constantly at risk, if who and what you are is subject to changing expert research, to loss of employment, to war, to

displacement from where your family traditionally belonged, the challenge to individuals is to constantly construct and reconstruct their own identity. The growing absence of traditional sources of authority, a durable and persistent past, in answering who we are, accompanies a growing emphasis upon the individual to take responsibility for self and decisions, to monitor their self, to self-reflect and to assert their own agency, exercise discipline in being who they are, project their identity in and through social media. This responsibility is, of course, full of risk. You might not get it right. You might not even be able to create a coherent and secure sense of self identity, not least because you may not have the resources: the possibility of asserting individual agency is seriously circumscribed by horizontal and vertical divisions in society, by class, gender and ethnicity.

The cultural politics of identity and representation, with regard to inclusivity and exclusivity, dominate political agendas, and accompany crises in governance, the legitimation of nation states. The universalizing perspective on the remains of the past, associated with globalizing developments especially since the 1970s, accompanies concerns to establish authentic and distinctive local and personal identities, a prominent feature of the contemporary archaeological imagination (Shanks 1992, Ruibal 2018).

Such concerns do also find early expression in works of the archaeological imagination associated with the first modern industrial nation states in the 19th century, which is why the evolution of an archaeological sensibility is well seen as a genealogy. The Gothic and historical fictions of the likes of Anne Radcliffe and Walter Scott, through to Edgar Allen Poe, for example, explored matters of the ruin of great families, supernatural terror, haunting pasts, the shape of history, the fundamental uncertainty and mystery of personal experience and identity. The next section turns to this wide scope of reference of the archaeological imagination.

The scope of the archaeological imagination

Where do we typically encounter works of the archaeological imagination? In museums, in collections and archives of all kinds, in the application by government and non-government agencies of legislation to protect the archaeological past, tangible and intangible, in the ways that memory reaches back to connect traces of the past with something in the present that has sparked the effort of re-collection, in efforts to preserve and conserve the past, whether this be a site or an artifact, in reconstructions and reenactments of the past, whether this be in photorealistic virtual reality or in the performances of enthusiasts in medieval costume and character at a Renaissance Fair.

The archaeological imagination is much more pervasive culturally, offering, for example, a suite of powerful metaphors: digging deep through layers to find an answer, with the human mind being organized, according to Freud, a passionate collector of antiquities, in stratified layers, just like an archaeological site (Barker 1996); fieldwork as forensic detection; ruin and decay as cultural decline and loss; the haunting remains of the past as a core to one's identity, personal and cultural.

Jennifer Wallace (2004) has sensitively explored treatments of excavation, death, and the sepulchral in an eclectic selection of literature and writing mainly from the English romantic tradition and the 19th-century. Under her guiding topic of "digging", Jennifer Wallace finds the following themes in the poems and literature she studied:

• The politics of depth, and authenticity

• Stones in the landscape, monumentality

• Bodies unearthed

• Excavation and desire

• Seeking epic origins (especially Troy)

• Digging into despair

• Holy ground

• Landfill and garbage.

David Lowenthal (2013) has gathered a miscellany of literary reflections on history, heritage and the reception of the past. Here are his themes:

• Revisiting and reliving the past: dreams and nightmares

• Benefits and burdens of the past

• Ancients and Moderns: tradition and innovation

• The look of age: decay and wear

• Knowing the past: experience and belief, history and memory

• Changing the past: display, protection, reenactment, commemoration

• Creative anachronism: contemporary pasts.

Cornelius Holtorf (2005, 2007) has analysed the perception and representation of archaeological experiences in popular culture, and notes that the predominant image is that of the archaeologist as adventurer, as a maverick cowboy of science, exploring, often in exotic locations, digging, solving mysteries and finding treasure.

These surveys of archaeological themes indicate the wide valencies in perceptions of archaeology and the archaeological (see also Finn 2001, 2004; Hauser 2007; Zielinski 2006 and Parikka 2012 on media archaeology; Bailey 2018; Russell and Cochrane 2013; Andreassen et al 2010; Olsen and Pétusdottir 2014; Neville and Villeneuve 2002) . We might ask why and how these themes associated with archaeology interact and work together (after, for example, the exploration of

archaeological modernisms and modernity in Schnapp et al 2004). In keeping with an understanding of the archaeological imagination as a conjectural faculty or capacity to piece together remains into meaningful forms, an aspect of archaeological experiences of working with what remains, a dynamic model will be offered here. Holtorf outlines variations of a scenario associated with the character types of the archaeologist, with settings (from lab to the field), and possible lines of narrative or plot (exploration, discovery, mystery dispelled). Let us pursue such a conception of archaeology as performance (Pearson and Shanks 2001).

Consider three key aspects of the working of the archaeological imagination: personae, scenographies, and dramaturgies. All imply a narratology, an investigation of narrative form associated with archaeological experiences. Together these concepts can be used to map the scope of the archaeological imagination in relation to thematics offered by Lowenthal and Wallace and the qualities of archaeological experiences outlined above.

Archaeological personae include the collector, the detective, the connoisseur, the curator, the restorer, the psychotherapist and all manner of variations thereof (Shanks 1992; Holtorf 2005). All work with fragments. The settings, scenarios, stagings associated with an archaeological scenography, are those appropriate to such personae; the same applies to archaeological dramaturgy, the plot dynamics involved in working with remains. A narratology (Shanks 2012, Chapter 3) investigates the topics that run through the scenography and dramaturgy, exploring, for example, shifts between presence and absence, evidence and conjecture, place and event, destruction and restoration, surface and sedimentation, mimetic representation of remains and active intervention to conserve or restore, fakes and the genuine article, artworks and garbage, seeking meaningful signal in the chaos of the entropic noise of the garbage that is the overwhelming remnant of history.

So the archaeological imagination answers questions such as the following. Where do we encounter remains of the dead, of the past, and under what circumstances? In graveyards, in haunting memories. What are the affective qualities of such experiences of remains? Rot, melancholy, haunting, conjecture, hope? What might be done with such remains, and to what end? Restoration? Reincarnation? Reanimation? Destroy and forget? Glueing together a pot, or reviving the dead. Reenactment? Recounting a story that the past might live again? That we might lay to rest the ghosts of the past? Might we discover who we truly are in such work upon fragmentary traces? What if what is found is quite alien, so abject, distant and fragmentary that we can make no sense?

Such scenography and dramaturgy can encompass scientific fieldwork, crime scene investigation, photography (persisting actualities), seeking pattern in huge piles of data, storytelling, building utopian, or dystopian worlds, of fantasy, or in order to inspire hope and action. As so well illustrated by Lowenthal and Wallace, the archaeological imagination connects poems about bog bodies by Seamus Heaney with Piranesi's fantastical ruins, National Geographics archaeological

tourism with HBO's Game of Thrones or Tolkein's Middle Earth, M.R. James's tales of ghosts and the uncanny (Moshenska 2006, 2012), with the fictions of H. P. Lovecraft where deep and sometimes alien pasts return to haunt the present, where minds are lost in the encounter with horrific remains (the scope of the archaeological imagination even accounts for Lovecraft's racist anthropological types).

Personae, scenography and dramaturgy: these performative features offer a kind of repertoire of options for the conjectural leaps and associations applied in the working of the archaeological imagination, mobilized to make sense of fragmentary remains, of the persistence of the past and its actuality.

Agency, creativity and the archaeological imagination

What is on the agenda in contemporary debates about the archaeological imagination? What future for the archaeological imagination?

The growth of the heritage industry has accompanied the changing shape and forces of imperial reach, power and international relations in a globalist world that is not so much postcolonial, with the breakup of the old European empires after the second world war, as neocolonial, subject to the growing influence of corporate and financial power, the hegemony of the United States, the rise of East Asian economic strength and 'soft power' since the 1990s, the rise of populist politics (Gonzàlez-Ruibal et al 2018). This is the context for what remains the key focus for concern in the academic and professional fields that service and offer commentary and critique on the contemporary heritage industry, including its mobilization of the archaeological imagination. The debates are predominantly about representation and agency, and, in the academy have taken the form of ideology critique of vested interests (Harrison 2013 for an overview; Shanks and Tilley 1987 for an inception of archaeological critique). Who gets to explore the archaeological imagination, with whose remains, and to what ends? Whose pasts are featured? In what narratives of origin (answering questions of where one belongs)? Advocacy for the rights of minority interests to exercise the archaeological imagination in their own way, constructing spiritual narratives of the past, for example, that run counter to 'authorized heritage discourse' (Smith 2006) comes from academics working in critical heritage studies (Harrison 2013; see also, generally, the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*), and is openly embraced by professional associations such as the World Archaeology Congress and the European Association of Archaeologists.

The identification of the archaeological imagination presented in this chapter connects with four shifts of attention in contemporary archaeology and heritage.

Archaeological and heritage conservation long focused upon sites and artifacts, material remains. The orthodoxy is now that intangible cultural values and customs are equally deserving of respect and attention, especially since this was acknowledged by UNESCO (1972) and in the Council of

Europe's Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005). This is a significant challenge to the separation of people and their artifacts that seems so fundamental to archaeology, when, in actuality, this is not the case (a posteriori, the argument of this Chapter).

The temporal scope of archaeology has expanded markedly since the 1970s. In particular, beginning with "garbology", the study of garbage (Rathje and Murphy 1992), an archaeology of the contemporary past applies archaeological thinking and method, and thereby the archaeological imagination to all aspects of the contemporary world (Schnapp 1997, Buchli and Lucas 2001, Harrison and Schofield 2010, Holtorf and Piccini 2009, Graves-Brown et al 2013).

The academic fields of Material Culture Studies and Design Studies since the 1970s have addressed the character of things and likewise have come to explore the rich heterogeneous associations, the (im)materialities, the interplay of maker and material, agent and object hood at the heart of making, creativity, cultural experiences. Joining the challenge to the radical Cartesian separations of mind and matter, culture and nature, subjective experience from the natural physical world, person from artifact, present interests from the remains of the past, archaeologists have asked how artifacts can have agency, proposing a fundamental symmetry between human and artifact, orienting their archaeological interests on objects themselves (in object-oriented ontologies). Some archaeologists are less interested now in seeking the maker behind the artifact, in determining the human intentions, values expressed or represented in and by an artifact (a representative selection: Malafouris 2013, Witmore 2007, Knappett and Malafouris 2008, Olsen 2010, Olsen et al 2012, Hodder 2012, Shanks 1998).

Also since the 1970s the field of Science Studies has shifted from philosophy of scientific method to establish an understanding of science and technology as situated practices, scientific knowledge a social achievement rather than a discovery of the way things have always been, technology a mobilization of resources around people's perceived needs and desires as much as an application of science in the service of innovation and to engineer solutions to problems (consider the works of Bruno Latour as exemplary of these trends).

These shifts are part of the current resurgence of support for a process-relational paradigm, associated with American Pragmatists, James, Dewey through to Rorty, A.N. Whitehead, Giles Deleuze, Michel Serres, Isabelle Stengers. Two propositions or theses summarize this paradigm and inform the treatment of the archaeological imagination in this essay.

First. Look to practices and processes, dynamic flows of energy and resources, if you wish to understand any phenomenon. This thesis challenges the primacy that is often given to representation, in the premise, for example, that scientific knowledge represents the essential qualities of timeless nature. Instead, focus upon iterative relations and engagements, capacities to produce, make, design. In this regard, the archaeological imagination concerns creative processes

that constantly rearticulate pasts and presents, producing all manner of things without necessarily representing the past in a mimetic fashion.

Second. Always begin *in medias res*, with (human) experience conceived relationally as engagement. This thesis is post phenomenological in that it questions the primacy of a self-contained human subject with an essential identity experiencing an external world, and treats identities as constantly re-imagined, re-performed, re-created, distributed through ongoing experiences, engagements, relationships, assemblages of people and all manner of things. This thesis directs attention to (cognitive) information processing, affective qualities of things and environments, inherent evaluative (emotional and embodied) dispositions towards things, bodily engagement in experiencing and making. In this regard the archaeological imagination is about thinking, sensing, feeling, with remains.

The archaeological imagination is the only means of forging a bigger picture within which we have a chance of understanding the shape of history, and contemporary challenges of inequality, our cultural ecologies, sustainability, framing our understanding of where we've come from, where we are, and where we are heading (Gonzàlez-Ruibal 2018). And more: the archaeological imagination is all about our shared creative agency. We are part of what we seek to understand, are part of the past, are part of the world in its constant creative remaking of itself.

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