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# The Temporality of the Landscape Revisited

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This is an essay about the connections between the passage of time and the condition of archaeological knowledge. It revisits Tim Ingold's 1993 paper 'The Temporality of the Landscape', considering its relationship with the phenomenological and interpretive archaeologies of the 1990s and what we learn from it today. Engaged not so much in an 'ontological turn' as in a kind of archival return, the essay compares Ingold's discussion of Bruegel's painting *The Harvesters* (1565) with an archaeological photograph from 1993. A discussion of the after-effects of performance follows, and four theses about temporality, landscape, modernity and revisiting are put forward: 1) The passage of time transforms archaeological knowledge; 2) Archaeological knowledge transforms the passage of time; 3) An archaeological landscape is an object that is known through remapping; 4) Archaeological knowledge is what we leave behind. The essay concludes that archaeology is best understood not as the study of the temporality of the landscape, as Ingold had argued, but as the study of the temporality of the landscape revisited.

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## I

*The Temporality of the Landscape*. Why revisit an archaeological paper a generation after it was published? One possible motivation is remembrance. For example, Andrew Sherratt marked the 25th anniversary of the publication of his tutor David Clarke's influential paper 'Archaeology: the Loss of Innocence', 22 years on from Clarke's untimely death. Sherratt distinguished Clarke's 'puckish sketch of the contemporary scene' from the valedictions written by Gordon Childe before his suicide, noting how new arguments can, over time, come to be mistaken for retrospection (Childe 1958a, 1958b, Sherratt 1998, pp. 700–701). 'Can the past *only* be interpreted in terms of the present?' Sherratt asked.

Another reason is critique. In one such instance, Laurie Wilkie and Kevin Bartoy (2000) sought to 'recenter', through recollection, a seminal 1987 paper that defined some of the aims of Marxist-Americanist historical archaeology (Leone *et al*. 1987). Where Mark Leone and his colleagues had looked ahead 'Toward a Critical Archaeology', Wilkie and Bartoy reversed this future-orientation from an alternative present: discerning 'drawbacks' in theory, noting 'hark-backs' to 19th-century German philosophy, and describing their own aims (using the words of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*) as a come-back 'to the apparently accomplished in

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order to begin it afresh' (Wilkie and Bartoy 2000, pp. 750, 752, 754, 761). 'My effort has been to adopt a theory that would link past and present,' Leone replied (2000, pp. 765–766), since archaeology seeks 'to show us how to think through change'.

A third is the resurrection of neglected ideas, a well-known instance of which is James Deetz's reconsideration of Walter Taylor's account, in the second chapter of *A Study of Archaeology*, of the relationships between history and anthropology (Taylor 1948, Deetz 1988). Taylor's discussion of 'contemporary thought' and 'past actuality' suggested that to understand the latter fully and comprehensively 'would take as long as the happenings themselves' (Taylor 1948, p. 29). As with archaeological knowledge, Deetz suggested, so with archaeological thinking:

> 'Were it still 1948, this essay could be little more than a paraphrase of Taylor's thoughts in the subject. However…a lot has happened in the intervening time' (Deetz 1988, p. 13).

Remembrance, critique, resurrection. For none of these reasons, the present essay returns to Tim Ingold's paper 'The Temporality of the Landscape', first published in the autumn of 1993. The paper has not been forgotten. There is so much of value in its argument that it would surely resist any attempt at 'recentering'. Archaeologists, in any case, should probably be more aware than most of the probability that critique will add only 'fresh ruins to fields of ruins' (Latour 2004, p. 225). And neither the paper nor its author has been neglected. Indeed, during the intervening 23 years Tim Ingold (an anthropologist) has become arguably the most influential, and certainly the most consistently interesting, contemporary voice in archaeological thinking. 'The Temporality of the Landscape' was a milestone in wider impulses to revitalize the idea that anthropology and archaeology form 'a necessary unity': different parts of 'the same intellectual exercise' connected through the themes of 'time and landscape' (Ingold 1993, p. 152). It was an early waymarker in the movement away from archaeology's 'science wars' between processual realism and post-processual relativism, highlighting 'the sterile opposition between the naturalistic view of the landscape as a neutral, external backdrop to human activities, and the culturalistic view that every landscape is a particular cognitive or symbolic ordering of space' (Ingold 1993, p. 152). By introducing two new concepts – the 'dwelling perspective' and the 'taskscape' – the paper was a landmark in moving archaeological debate beyond the bland assertion that 'any reconstruction of the past is a social statement in the present' (Hodder 1985, p. 18), towards the redefinition of archaeological practice as just 'the most recent form of dwelling on an ancient site' (Thomas 2001, p. 181).

Waymarker milestone, landmark. The place of 'The Temporality of the Landscape' in late 20th-century archaeological thought is clearly marked out. The paper has been repeatedly reprinted: in Julian Thomas' *Interpretive archaeology: a reader* (Thomas 2000), in Bob Preucel and Steve Mrozowski's *Contemporary archaeology in theory: the new pragmatism* (Preucel and Mrozowski 2010), and in Ingold's own collection *The perception of the environment* (Ingold 2000). Its argument has been put to work to inform interpretations of many varied archaeological situations, from Palaeolithic Europe (Gamble 1999, pp. 86–87) to Roman Britain (Gosden 2004, p. 32), to the archaeology of daily life in the Outer Hebrides during the early 19th century (Symonds 1999, p. 107); from the comparative archaeology of the body (Harris and Robb 2013, p. 18) to the comparative archaeology of time (Murray 1999, p. 2). The lasting value of the paper has been to inspire 'an archaeology that is less interested in symbolic landscapes than it is in taskscapes…and less interested in the mirror game of semiotic reflection and discourse analysis than it is in real-world encounters with the (material) past' (Kolen 2011, p. 41).

This essay is an exercise in a form of repetition. It aims to revaluate the connections between time and the condition of

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archaeological knowledge. In considering this theme, archaeologists have generally adopted one of two positions. They have either imagined unidirectional improvements in methods and data, driven by paradigm shifts in ideas that can then be applied to material culture on the one hand, or else they have argued that knowledge emerges in contemporary moments of interpretation, which can be comprehended through reflexive self-awareness or identified with a kind of craft 'firmly situated in the present' (Shanks and McGuire 1996, p. 75) on the other. My suggestion here is that both approaches, teleological or presentist, are mistaken, in that they neglect the primary role of the material production of archaeological knowledge – practices that are usually glossed as nothing more than objective documentation or recording. On the contrary, archaeological knowledge, always already implicated in the metamorphosis of material, human, sociocultural, physical and natural environments (Hicks 2003, Hicks and McAtackney 2007), emerges through techniques of temporal protention, central devices for which include the museum and the archive (Hicks 2013) but also encompass the site and the landscape, transformed. Archaeological knowledge requires the creation of these proxy terrains. In other words ideas, for the archaeologist, are at once places in the landscape and displacements in material and textual form. *Archaeological knowledge is what is left behind.*

For the purpose of exploring this idea, this essay revisits 'The Temporality of the Landscape' as if revisiting a place. It retraces steps in order to return to a fault-line in the paper's line of argument: one that begins with a peculiar form of English Romanticism, and passes gradually towards a central initial question for archaeology today: What are the connections between the passage of time and the condition of archaeological knowledge?

## II

'The Temporality of the Landscape' (1993, pp. 152ff.) was a dense and meandering paper, but drawing out some of its main ideas is a necessary point of departure. The argument relied on connecting one idea – that the experience of 'human life is a process that involves the passage of time' – with another – that 'this life process is also the process of formation of the landscapes in which people have lived'. Anthropologists, Ingold argued, can study time and landscape by 'bringing to bear the knowledge born of immediate experience'. And although archaeologists' focus is on the past they might join this endeavour by re-imagining the purpose of their work as 'to carry out an act of remembrance, engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past'.

The paper introduced four keywords to move archaeology beyond dichotomous thinking about 'nature and humanity', 'natural and artificial', or 'use' and 'manufacture' – those 'sterile Cartesian dualisms of mind and nature, subject and object, intellection and sensation, and so on' (Ingold 2000, p. 167). The challenge, Ingold suggested, was to 'move beyond the division that has afflicted most inquiries up to now, between the "scientific" study of an atemporalized nature, and the "humanistic" study of a dematerialized history' (Ingold 1993, p. 172). The new jargon relied in turn on further series of conceptual oppositions, which can be summarized as follows:

1. *Landscape* is not 'land', or 'nature', or 'space', or 'a picture in the imagination', or 'an alien and formless substrate awaiting the imposition of human order', or 'on the side of humanity against nature', or ontologically separate from the 'human perceiver', or 'built', or 'unbuilt', or 'an object…to be understood', or 'a totality that you or anyone else can look *at*'. Instead, it is 'the world *in* which we stand in taking up a point of view on our surroundings'; 'perpetually under construction'; 'qualitative and heterogeneous'; 'a living process' and 'a work in progress' that 'becomes part of us, just as

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we are part of it'; it is 'constituted as an enduring record of…the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in doing so, have left something of themselves'. It is 'the congealed form of the taskscape'. Far from 'transforming the world', human actions 'are part and parcel of the world's transforming itself'.

2. *Temporality* is neither chronology nor history. It is not constituted by events as 'isolated happenings, succeeding one another frame by frame…strung out in time like beads on a thread'. Instead, temporality is a sort of general quality of the landscape, 'immanent in the passage of events': experienced rather than measured, as 'each event encompasses a pattern of retentions from the past and protentions for the future'.[1] Any present moment is not separated by a 'chronological barrier' from other moments, but instead 'gathers the past and the future into itself, like refractions in a crystal ball'.
3. *Dwelling* is not cartography or surveying. Through embodiment, dwelling does not map or 'inscribe', but 'incorporates' landscape – unlike 'the rather peculiar and specialized project of the surveyor or cartographer whose objective is to represent' the landscape. There are 'centres' rather than places: with no boundaries, emerging through 'people's engagement with the world', not as 'fixed forms' 'cut out from the whole'.
4. *Taskscapes* do not involve labour, but 'dwelling activities', emerging through rhythmic, patterned social interaction. They reveal neither form nor 'final product' as 'an object of contemplation' but performance, process and 'the actual work'. Whereas 'the currency of labour…is time of a very peculiar sort, one that must be wholly indifferent to the modulations of human experience', in contrast taskscapes operate like orchestral performances, existing 'only so long as people are actually engaged in the activities of dwelling, despite the attempts of anthropologists to translate it into something rather equivalent to a score'.[2]

The definition of each keyword – landscape, temporality, dwelling, and taskscape – relied on a further overarching dichotomy: between modern Western and non-Western or counter-modern thought. The 'ancient inclination in Western thought to prioritise form over process' represented for Ingold 'a systematic bias', grounded in 'an insistent dualism, between object and subject, the material and the ideal, operational and cognized, "etic" and "emic"', etc. Ingold put forward accounts of performance drawn from Howard Morphy's discussions of Yolngu painting in Australia's Northern Territory and from Keith Basso's studies of story-telling, 'names, places and moral narratives among the Western Apache'. 'In many non-Western societies', Ingold argued, 'what is essential is the act of painting itself, of which the products may be relatively short-lived'. By 'temporalizing the landscape', archaeologists could avoid neglecting the primary significance of such enactments, he suggested, as distinct from their products.

The argument was illustrated not with reference to an archaeological site or landscape, but through an extended discussion of one of the earliest examples of European landscape painting – Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Harvesters* (1565) (Fig. 1). The discussion was part thick description, part *ekphrasis* – that rhetorical technique of presenting a highly detailed, vivid account of a painting in which 'the mental image conjured up is almost equal to the actual embodied visual and physical apprehension of the artefact…transcend[ing] scales of time and geography' (Buchli 2016, pp. 84–85). 'Imagine yourself set down in the very landscape depicted, on a sultry August day in 1565', Ingold wrote, revealing a strange ideational geography: hills and valley emerging through James Gibson's *Ecological Approach*; paths and tracks leading to Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*; a tree evoking duration, perhaps

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Fig. 1. *Pieter Bruegel the Elder's* The Harvesters *(1565). (OASC on* www.metmuseum.org*)*

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Durkheimian, perhaps Bergsonian; the wheat field representing Johannes Fabian's account of coevalness; the church an index of the Bakhtinian chronotope. When, where and what is this landscape? What are the connections between the passage of time and the condition of archaeological knowledge?

## III

*The Temporality of the Landscape*. When we revisit Ingold's paper, *The Harvesters* is neither a landscape nor a representation of a landscape. Four hundred and fifty years after the 40-year-old Bruegel layered oil paint on the wood, the summertime rural idyll hangs, some 6000km from Antwerp, in the European Paintings galleries of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, where the museum curators describe its rich pigments as 'a timeless study of man in nature': 'the first modern landscape'.[3] But the image that is in front of me this afternoon as I type at my desk, this representation of a representation, is lit up in greyscale: a pixilated, rasterized digital bitmap matrix within a JSTOR pdf file, pushed to both extremes of the tonal range: whitened, blackened, and shot through with dotted diagonal rows and columns of halftone pixels (Fig. 2).

'Imagine yourself set down in the very landscape depicted.' Is this Antwerp 1565, Manchester 1993, or Manhattan 2016? At my desk in Oxford still, or maybe drifting much further afield? The invitation self-consciously reaches back along bookshelves of the anthropological library to the opening pages of the foundational text of the modern ethnography,

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***Plate 1*** ***The Harvesters*** **(1565) by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Reproduced by permission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.164).**

Fig. 2. *Reproduction of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's* The Harvesters *(1565), from Ingold (1993).*

Bronislaw Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*:

> Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone on a tropical beach close to a native village, while the launch or dinghy which has brought you sails away out of sight. Since you take up your abode in the compound of some neighbouring white man, trader or missionary, you have nothing to do, but start at once on your ethnographic work. (Malinowski 1922, p. 4)

*Argonauts* represented of course anthropology's reinvention through the idea of ethnography. Not so much a paradigm shift, the metaphor of a watershed – those lines blotted across the landscape through catching rainfall where it will drain through the soils – perhaps better captures the lasting effect of Malinowski's interwar Pacific text. The idea sought to take anthropology outdoors, away from objects, museums or archives into the vividness of the moment evoked through detailed description of the *mise-en-scène* – a picturesque and self-consciously 'imaginative' narrative style that, half a century before Geertzian 'thick description', Malinowski arguably learned from James Frazer (who wrote the preface to *Argonauts*) and from Joseph Conrad (whose *Tales of Unrest* he took with him into the field) (Thornton 1985, pp. 8, 11–12). As disciplinary ur-trope the 'imaginary first visit ashore' (Malinowski 1922, p. 55) catalysed a century of thinking in which descriptions of the ethnographer's own body set down far away percolated and persisted, largely substituting the idea of momentary human experience (what came to be called the 'ethnographic present') for material collecting as the primary device for creating anthropological knowledge (Hicks 2007, 2010). Just as anthropology sought to translate such fleeting moments of encounter into ideas of function and institution in the new social anthropology, so too inter-war archaeology made a long-term turn towards spectral

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abstractions the lasting effects of which still haunt us today: culture, process, context, post-process.

Seventy years after the publication of *Argonauts*, 'The Temporality of the Landscape' pushed this Malinowskian thinking about time, experience, fieldwork and imagination to the limit, in that it presented archaeology (quite unlike anthropology) as a kind of indigenous knowledge:

> *The practice of archaeology is itself a form of dwelling*. The knowledge born of this practice is thus on a par with that which comes from the practical activity of the native dweller and which the anthropologist, through participation, seeks to learn and understand. For both the archaeologist and the native dweller, the landscape tells – or rather *is* – a story. (Ingold 1993, p. 152).

The 'necessary unity' of archaeology and anthropology was revealed as a wholly asymmetric alliance. Ingold's paper presented the archaeologist as a kind of native hunter: alert, journeying through the landscape with special knowledge of the terrain. Archaeological practice was identified with excavation, so that hunting merged with 'discovery' – archaeologists 'probing ever more deeply', since 'every feature is a potential clue'. 'Like the Western Apache' they are 'truly "at home" in the world'.[4] Amid the extended analogy of *hunting*, practices of archaeological *gathering*, which would direct us back to a consideration of objects and museums, went unmentioned. We are reminded of an observation by Joan Gero who, in a different context, noticed

> certain strong parallels between the male who populates the archaeological record – public, visible, physically active, exploratory, dominant, and rugged, the stereotypical hunter – and the practicing field archaeologist who himself conquers the landscape, brings home the goodies, and takes his data raw! (Gero 1985, p. 344)

These lone figures had long populated landscape Romanticism when they colonized the newly phenomenological environment of archaeological theory in the early 1990s, which was the very atmosphere in which Ingold's paper was developed. There was no 'base-camp laboratory or museum' here (Gero 1985, p. 344.). On the contrary, some kind of alternative approach to landscape and time was presented. This was grounded in the idea that the distinction between 'Western' and 'non-Western' attitudes to 'work, time and industry' are implicit in 'the temporal dynamic of industrial society itself' (Ingold 1995, p. 27), and that 'in reality… reified clock time has not replaced the intrinsic temporality of lived, social experience; it has only changed its meaning' (Ingold 1994, p. 338). The suggestion was that archaeology could resist modern conceptions of time and space. Perhaps even that it *must*.

In such a view, the archaeological excavation represents, to borrow the terminology of 1960s counter-culture, a kind of 'happening' – standing somehow outside disembodied technologies such as clocks, or radiocarbon dating, or labour as commodity. Indeed, Ingold's more recent writing, in parallel with the explicitly 'counter-modern archaeology' developed by Julian Thomas (Thomas 2004), has expanded on this view of the experience of time and place through a scepticism about the kind of knowledge that develops from modern devices. Malinowskian encounters give way to an ideal of the counter-cultural, counter-modern beyond the interfering mediation of technology. Taking a cue from Heidegger, Ingold suggests that the typewriter 'severs the link between gesture and trace' (Ingold 2011, p. 190). He distinguishes between 'descriptive endeavours' that make use of 'the pen or pencil' on the one hand, and 'the camera or keyboard' on the other, glossing the latter as 'studying *of*' rather than 'studying *with*' (Ingold 2011, p. 226). And, just as for the hand the typewriter 'breaks up the flow of manual gesture', so for the eye 'the still camera arrests a moment…and effects an instantaneous capture' (Ingold 2013, p. 140). Cartography and photography are intimately connected, in Ingold's view, with the

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identification of 'landscape' with 'an art of description that would see the world spread out on a canvas…projected onto a plate or screen, or the pages of an atlas' (2011, p. 127). One of photography's antecedents, he suggests, is a commitment in landscape painting to 'composition and totalization', in which 'the world is played back to the viewer' – something which he suggests it shares with ethnographic thick description (Ingold 2010, p. 310). Such technologies include not just the camera, but also the museum, where we are forced to 'confront things as objects', since in museums 'there seem to exist just persons like ourselves and objects on display' (Ingold 2007a, p. 313).

'Truly at home in the world.' How did such an influential account of archaeology come to confuse a modern western academic discipline with some imagined ideal pristine nonwestern indigenous culture? How did an anthropologist come to mistake his archaeologist colleagues as hunter-excavators dwelling in an endless series of first-contact moments as the premodern past meets the western present, standing quite outside modern techniques of knowledge production?

The answer relates to the dominant kind of English landscape archaeology with which the paper was in dialogue at the time – which was no doubt inspired by, but totally failed adequately to represent, the environmentalist movements with which the practice of British salvage archaeology was so closely bound up at the time (see Macinnes and Wickham-Jones 1992). 'The Temporality of the Landscape' was written for a session on 'Place, time and experience: interpreting prehistoric landscapes' at the Theoretical Archaeology Group conference at Leicester in December 1991. This was the beginning of a high tide for archaeological phenomenology in the study of English prehistory in the early 1990s. Books like Chris Tilley's *A phenomenology of landscape: places, paths and monuments* (1993), Julian Thomas' *Time, culture and identity: an interpretive archaeology* (1993), and Chris Gosden's *Social being and time* (1994) sought to move beyond Eurocentric, modern, 'ideological' notions of landscape. Archaeological phenomenology relied on a conception of the body in the landscape that used Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty to try to re-introduce to archaeology a sense of life and inhabitation that captured 'activities' rather than just 'representations'. 'Who said', the most articulate and challenging voice to emerge from this literature asked, 'romance was dead?' (Edmonds 2006).

Of course, the conception of the multi-temporal nature of archaeological remains in the landscape was already a central element of modernist archaeological thought and practice in the English landscape. The idea of the juxtapositions of the fragmentary traces of multiple time periods in contemporary topography was a central notion in landscape archaeology even before W. G. Hoskins' evocation of the English landscape as a 'palimpsest', as he railed against modern development (Hoskins 1955). This idea of the presence of the past was at the heart of the 20th-century archaeological English landscape imaginary that David Matless (1998) has called 'planner-preservationism'. It was also at the heart of the emergence of modern conceptions of 'heritage', and all that has resulted from that. These developments reveal the intimately modern character of this kind of landscape thinking, rather than its standing somehow outside it.

'The Temporality of the Landscape' has been criticized as failing to consider power, inequality and the historical specificity of social relations (Bender 2001); as evoking an 'overall tone of harmonious coherence, in part because of his human-centred focus on a quotidian taskscape', which risks the 'human and often individualistic self-absorption' of mere performativity (Massey 2006, p. 41). But its most puzzling incoherence lies in its presentation of archaeology as somehow the opposite of a modern Western discipline, without its intimate and ambivalent connections with the Western colonial project, the European landscape tradition,

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the development of state control of the past, modernist regimes of urban and rural planning and the industrialized construction industry. Archaeologists document the landscape through writing, drawing, photography and collecting, transforming material traces into the archaeological record. We draw maps and survey the landscape; define sites and features as fixed forms. Our work is not inhabitation but labour. Our taskscape can be loudly heard, in the roar of the 360 excavator engine, the click of the camera shutter or the sound of steel tools striking stone. We engage not in wayfinding or dwelling but in creative destruction, or the mitigation of erasure through roads or housing estates yet to be built. We understand environments not as always ongoing, but as subject sometimes to interruption, intervention and loss. Time for us is not an inherent quality of landscape, but a creation that makes periodization, sequence and understanding of the past possible. Less a non-Western hunter, the archaeologist is a kind of modern gatherer.

Where do these observations lead? Alongside *The Harvesters*, let us consider a photograph (Fig. 3) of one part of the English landscape, taken during rescue archaeology in advance of the construction of the A435 bypass (now A38) between Alcester and Evesham in rural Warwickshire. I took the photograph in in the summer of 1993, just as 'The Temporality of the Landscape' was going to press, and came across it again in spring 2014 in Warwickshire Museum's stores. As we return to this photograph, Ingold's four keywords flip into reverse:

1. The archaeologist's '*Landscape*' is a place revisited. Documentation re-enacts ideas of land, nature, space, like a picture in the imagination. The road has been built, and the time and place of excavation is gone. It is no

Fig. 3. *Photograph of open area archaeological excavations for the A435 Alcester-Evesham Bypass, Warwickshire, August 1993 (photograph: Dan Hicks).*

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longer 'under construction', 'a living process' or 'a work in progress' that 'becomes part of us, just as we are part of it'. What has outlived that time and place is the archive, built to mitigate loss, where fragmented remains have been separated off from the past 'human perceiver'. Building and unbuilding is artificially stopped in these fragments, each of which has become 'an object…to be understood'. The secondary landscape of the museum storeroom, conservation laboratory, objects, archives, databases and grey literature has been ordered as a provisional totality. It is this second landscape that is now 'constituted as an enduring record of…the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in doing so, have left something of themselves'. Together, the actions of the archaeologist and the road-builder have 'transformed the world'.

2. There is no generalized primary essence of *Temporality* in the archive, but the inherited times of chronology and history. The archaeological archive is constituted through the documentation of past events as 'isolated happenings, succeeding one another frame by frame, … strung out in time like beads on a thread', as the horizons on the stratigraphic matrix are drawn out in sequence, and rendered as phases in the post-excavation process. Here, archaeological time is not 'immanent in the passage of events': it is measured rather than experienced, as each object, layer, horizon or context number is distinguished as 'chronological barriers'. There is no crystal ball.
3. The proxy landscape of archaeological knowledge is constituted not through Dwelling but through cartography, surveying and representation; with inscription not 'incorporating'. Archaeological records mark sites and locations, not centres with no boundaries; they cut fixed forms out from the whole.
4. Archaeological knowledge is not a *Taskscape* or a document of a '*Taskscape*' as rhythmic dwelling; it is the product of the archaeologist's labour. The archive is wholly indifferent to the modulations of the human experience of the excavator. There is nothing but relics of form and 'final product' – objects for contemplation or knowledge. The performance and process that might appear to be 'the actual work' is gone.

The problem for 'The Temporality of the Landscape' lay with the unreliability of Ingold's archaeological informants. Archaeology in the landscape is engaged in the work of chorography not the taskscapes of choreography. And this work exists long after the performance of tasks is over, through the technologies of the archive and the museum. The irony is that phenomenological archaeology relied not only on an ideal of the detached, sole, disinterested viewer, but also on the modern history of the preservation of scheduled ancient monuments – Stonehenge, Cranborne Chase, Hambledon Hill, etc. – at which these apparently unmediated, noninterventionist, momentary and timeless encounters with the prehistoric present took place.[5]

The failure of these counter-modern modern archaeologies was their thin and banal assertion that archaeology takes place in the present – wholly neglecting how archaeological knowledge is constituted not from 'real' human experience in the field, but from retrospect upon what is created through practices of documentation. This failure is shared with the post-processual archaeologies more generally (*pace* Hodder 2004), through the misguided privileging of the fleeting experiences of archaeological practice, inspired by the reflexive idea that as a method interpretation is 'always momentary' (Hodder 1997, p. 694). In other words, when archaeological theorists suggested that 'material culture is not a *product*

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of a past social world, it is a part of that world which intrudes into the present' (Thomas 1996, p. 10), what was missed out was that archaeological material culture must always be the product of archaeological practice.

What are the implications? The primary connection between archaeology and anthropology is not simply temporality and landscape, but the creation of knowledge in the form of proxies for time and place. Our two disciplines share the central legacy of the idea of salvage, from which their allochronic impulses towards the spatialization of time emerged. They are technologies for enacting finitude in the face of constant change – for trying to make provisional stoppages of time and place. This much has been obscured by the obdurate and yet ephemeral presentism of the idea of the ethnographic: something captured by the opening lines of the forward to *Argonauts*:

> Ethnology is in the sadly ludicrous, not to say tragic, position, that at the very moment when it begins to put its workshop in order, to forge its proper tools, to start ready for work on its appointed task, the material of its study melts away with hopeless rapidity. (Malinowski 1922, p. xv)

A persistent functionalism obscures how, while moments of fieldwork may be transitory, our museums and libraries are filled with their detritus, forming secondary indoor landscapes. Anthropological and archaeological knowledge can be constituted only through what is left behind. And what is left is never stable, even when the work of the curator serves to give that appearance. When do we know the archaeological past? What are the connections between the passage of time and the condition of archaeological knowledge?

## IV

*The Temporality of the Landscape*. In seeking to move beyond processual and interpretive definitions of archaeological knowledge, the paper anticipated by two decades the present radical questioning of archaeology as a representational practice that is associated with the shift in emphasis from epistemological to ontological concerns. Today there is the prospect of an *Archaeology after Interpretation* (Alberti *et al*. 2013), of rekindling *The Archaeological Imagination* (Shanks 2012), of new ways of *Understanding the Archaeological Record* (Lucas 2012), of an archaeology that operates *In Defence of Things* (Olsen 2010), engages with *The Dark Abyss of Time* (Olivier 2011) and explores the status of archaeology as *The Discipline of Things* (Olsen *et al*. 2012). Taken together, in different ways these works represent the first clear indications of a fundamental reorientation of archaeology that is just getting under way, focused on a revaluation of the material dimensions of archaeological knowledge (Hicks 2010). How can our return to 'The Temporality of the Landscape' contribute to this endeavour? Time has passed, and there are new conceptions of archaeology that we can make use of. Let us put an alternative vision of archaeology – neither phenomenological nor interpretive – into dialogue with Ingold's thinking, engaged not so much in an 'ontological turn' as in a kind of *archival return*.

Ingold has recently expressed concerns about describing anthropologists' encounters with informants in the field as 'ethnography', since this relies on a 'temporal distortion that contrives to render the aftermath of our meetings with people as their anterior condition' (Ingold 2014, p. 386). His argument recalls Johannes Fabian's critique of the denial of 'coevalness' between the ethnographer as subject and others as the object of enquiry, which showed how anthropology contrived 'to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of the anthropological discourse' (Fabian 1983, p. 31). But the danger for anthropology, Fabian indicated, was its ability not just to collapse distant places into the remote past, but to relegate others to a timeless now through the literary conceit of

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the ethnographic present (Fabian 1983, p. 80). In this light, Ingold's account of fieldwork, as distinct from 'ethnographization' in which 'experience is schizochronically put behind us, even as it is lived' (Ingold 2014, p. 393), is surely inoperable in the field of archaeology. It would represent an unconvincing attempt to distinguish between artifice and reality. The objective of archaeologists is not the direct experience of the past in the present – outdoors in the landscape in 'the same elements that, through the ages, have battered, eroded and smothered the monuments to past activity they seek to recover', 'bathed in the light of the open air, infused by its scents, blown by its currents or immersed in its pulses of sound' (Ingold 2005, p. 122). Instead, it is knowledge of the past through what can be left. This is not a question of taphonomy, or residuality (Lucas 2010); instead our question must be: what does archaeology produce?

The archaeological archive has been treated as epiphenomenal. For Ingold, it is the epitome of the conceit of the 'finished product' that denies a more real 'process':

> The more that objects are removed from the contexts of life activity in which they are produced and used – the more they appear as static objects of disinterested contemplation (as in museums and galleries) – the more, too, the process disappears or is hidden behind the product, the finished object. (Ingold 2000, p. 346)

But, for the archaeologist, the archive is a method through which landscape and time are connected. Ingold suggested that the temporal quality of his taskscape is like an orchestra's performance, but the archaeologist might recall Lévi-Strauss's observation about the commonality between music and myth. Both serve to 'immobilize the passage of time', thus 'overcoming the antinomy of historical and elapsed time' (Lévi-Strauss 1966, p. 61). The technologies of the museum and the archive – the museum label, the ziplock bag, the conservation lab – are analogous interventions. They are forms of notation: *dal segno* (go back to the mark). Enaction gives way to re-enactions. Among the outcomes of these technologies are provisional and contingent stoppages in time, rendering fragments as objects, which are wrought as cadences. A form of secondary deposition emerges in the new spaces of the museum and laboratory, like curtain calls or encores. So, while Ingold (2014) is undoubtedly correct to interrogate the temporal conceits of ethnography, the pressing challenge for archaeology is to dismiss the idea of the unmediated, pristine, archaeological present. We must rethink the assumption that archaeology is an 'outdoor science' that should resist 'retreating indoors to the safety and seclusion of the laboratory, library or study' (Ingold 2005, p. 122) – an idea that eschews end product in favour of the 'original' performance, as if that were somehow more real because it was longer ago.

Recent developments in performance scholarship and curatorship provide some important ideas for this rethinking. In this field, a generation ago ephemerality and disappearance were seen as central attributes of liveness, while documentation was nothing but a vain effort at 'saving'. Thus, Peggy Phelan's influential account of the 'ontology of performance' argued that:

> Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology. Performance's being…becomes itself through disappearance. (Phelan 1993, p. 146)

In this approach, which had much in common with that of 'The Temporality of the Landscape', the idea of 'being there' was central. There was the sense that theatre is 'the art of the present', from which 'the ontology of subjectivity' emerged through

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the 'undocumentable moment of performance' (Phelan 1993, pp. 146, 148).

> The challenge raised by the ontological claims of performance for writing is to re-mark again the performative possibilities of writing itself. The act of writing toward disappearance, rather than the act of writing toward preservation, must remember that the after-effect of disappearance is the experience of subjectivity itself. (Phelan 1993, p. 149)

In contrast, Philip Auslander suggested that performance and mediatization are more entangled, since 'the very concept of live performance presupposes that of reproduction' (Auslander 1997, p. 55). Matthew Reason has gone further, understanding the archive not as representation or mimesis, but as 'detritus': the 'fragments and echoes of the performance' (Reason 2003, 2006, p. 3). In this view, far from being an authoritative archive of the past, the archive is partial. For Reason the researcher's task is to 'examine what impressions the representations leave on our understanding of performance' (Reason 2006, p. 5). Documents made during performance 'often assert themselves to be the true record of what really happened', or else have that capacity ascribed to them (Pearson 2010, pp. 191–192), but gradually in performance studies the idea of performance as 'original' or more 'real' than its documentation has started to break down. Jane Blocker has imagined 'a history that does not save in any sense of the word', since 'we need a history that performs' (Blocker 1999, p. 134). And, most recently, Heike Roms has defined an 'archival turn' in performance studies, in which documentation is redefined as 'constituted through a continual performance of collaborative practices of care' (Roms 2013, p. 48).

What might such a shift from a privileging of 'being there' in the moment (something by definition no longer possible), to a sense of the unfolding of performance 'beyond the confines of the single live event' (Roms 2013, p. 37) through an ongoing performativity of the archive look like in archaeology? Unlike dance, perhaps, archaeology can self-evidently never be an art of the present. Indeed, far from generating documents through which the events of fieldwork can be reconstructed, which are then made to last in archives, archaeological practice is wholly archival in character. In archaeology, the documents *are* the performance. They are part of the destruction of a place: not a representation of the landscape, but fragments of it. Archaeology is a kind of 'craft' for sure, as Michael Shanks and Randy McGuire have argued, but to understand craft we cannot just focus on its secondary 'cultural productions' – which they described as 'reports, papers, books, museum displays, TV programs, whatever' (1996, p. 76), but which are not just outcomes but archival refractions. To understand the condition of archaeological knowledge and to fashion its uses we must attend no longer to momentary process (whether method or interpretation), but to the aftershocks of scientific practice. For this reason, the purpose of this essay has been a form of revisitation – part restatement (where a theme, motif or hook can reignite a melody), part *antanaclasis* (that rhetorical device where repetition reshapes effect). What are the connections between the passage of time and the condition of archaeological knowledge?

## V

*The Temporality of the Landscape*. We find ourselves a generation beyond Ingold's attempt to dispel from archaeology the modern knowledge that comes from mapping, surveying, photographing and many other methods for treating things as objects and putting them in museums. And this present time and place in thought, in turn, is hardly a fixed or singular state of affairs. The ontological arguments that Ingold's paper made about Western and non-Western times and places are still important. The present essay is not simply an alternative reading of Ingold's paper, since time has passed.

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Archaeology is changed, and 'The Temporality of the Landscape' has changed as well. Re-reading, re-tracing, there are new directions in which we might take the paper's arguments as archaeological questions. In letting go of the privileging of that most simplistic conception of the archaeological present that has dominated archaeological theory since Walter Taylor, and which reached its logical conclusions in the phenomenological-reflexive moment of the post-process 1990s, a new kind of ontological question can be addressed (compare Lucas 2015).

Consider Alfred Gell discussing the anthropology of time: 'The illusion of time-travel engendered by the contemplation of ancient objects is a strong one, stronger perhaps than mere logic' (Gell 1992, p. 28). Since this one field of our anthropological discipline relies so much on this illusion, we might not just follow Gell in studying how it is put to use, but also enquire into how the archaeologist's trick is done. The most significant, and currently underexplored, element of the growing literature in anthropology's ongoing 'ontological turn' is the unexpected relativizing of any given ontological constitution of the world, of humans, of material culture or indeed of landscape and time. For our purposes, the major implication of Philippe Descola's presentation of four alternative ontologies, located in different regions and periods of time – animism, naturalism, totemism and analogism (Descola 2013) – is to reveal the inadequacy of seeking to see past one ontology (in this case modern Western 'naturalism') to another that is somehow more real. Instead a new, pressing question emerges: how to understand the place of archaeological practice in the material constitution of western ontologies of time and place.

The themes of 'The Temporality of the Landscape' remain central to the future of how we understand what archaeological knowledge can be. Its critique of our discipline's conception of choosing between cultural ecology as either adaptation or symbolism (Ingold 2000, p. 154) remains important. It was influential in the growing awareness of the failure of the 20th-century experiment of defining archaeology and anthropology as a kind of 'social science' (Ingold 1992, p. 693). But, in dismissing the idea of landscape as a commodity, or a picture, or a disembodied representation, or an object, or chronology, or history, or inscription, or labour, or cartography, the paper fails archaeology today. Ingold was misinformed about what archaeological knowledge is. The yearning to look beyond Western conceptions of time and landscape seems now, a generation later, to be a period piece: a failed attempt to short-circuit archaeology's central status as a Western form of making knowledge, through the same shortcomings that meant that phenomenological archaeology failed the ambitions of environmentalist archaeology. Ingold's informants missed the point: rather than denying the existence of objects and subjects, or past and present, our challenge is to understand how such distinctions are enacted through the modern craft of archaeology.

How to proceed? By concluding that 'Heidegger was not a very good anthropologist of science and technology' (Latour 2004, p. 235)? That is for sure – but so what? Any critique of the ideas of a previous generation should be anathema to the anthropological archaeologist, for whom the past is the principal resource. Instead, let us suggest a handful of new definitions for how we understand what archaeological knowledge is, by updating Ingold's four keywords to read: temporality, modernity, landscape and revisitation.

First, let us acknowledge that all we can know through archaeology comes through a form of collective *Nachlass*. The word *Temporality* is most confusing here. For exactly the same reasons as Ingold himself has pointed out in his critique of the phenomenologists' use of the idea of 'materiality' rather than 'materials' (Ingold 2005, p. 124), we must be careful to avoid evoking with the

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term 'temporality' any false sense of a 'fixed essence' of unvarying time – something that characterized the longstanding mistaken archaeological conception of the present, by processualist, reflexivist and phenomenologist alike, as an unproblematically shared, coeval moment in time. On the contrary, the archaeological use of the term 'temporality' might be reclaimed to describe time as a highly varied, uneven material creation – an effect of (among other things) our modern craft, the consequence of which is to open up the conditions for incremental repetition. Archaeology is a mode of scientific production (Lucas 2012, pp. 231–234) for sure – but what comes next? *The passage of time transforms archaeological knowledge*.

Second, archaeology must reclaim and embrace its *Modernity* as a principal object of enquiry, rather than trying to escape or shortcut Western modes of knowledge to access some more real vision of the past. If archaeology is to treat its scientific objects ontologically, since the epistemological game is up, then it must understand them anthropologically. Archaeology can never be a form of knowledge that stands wholly outside Western thought and science: it is a means of re-enacting distinctions between past and present, objects and subjects. Archaeology is interventionist (Lucas 2001a, p. 40, 2001b) for sure – but what comes next? *Archaeological knowledge transforms the passage of time*.

Third, we need a new kind of documentary archaeology, which can fulfil the potential of our discipline's long overdue archival return. Our *Landscapes* are at once indoors in the museums and libraries and outdoors at sites and monuments and at the lay-bys of 20-year-old trunk roads. Could a new kind of archaeological thinking awaken from a 'long hibernation in the basements of museology' (Ingold 2007b, p. 5)? Perhaps it will, since archaeological knowledge does not exist outside the secondary, proxy landscapes of the archive. Archaeology involves *Acts of Discovery* (Edgeworth 2003) for sure – but what comes next? *An archaeological landscape is an object that is known through remapping*.

Fourth, all archaeological knowledge must be made through *Revisiting*. Archaeology is a method for going back. This essay has returned to some of the Romantic dimensions of Ingold's classic paper, as both an idea and a place. As we conclude, we might quite without irony recall Wordsworth's observation, when revisiting Tintern Abbey, that, when 'we see into the life of things' through recollection, memory itself is 'as a dwelling place' (Wordsworth 1798). The museum and archive are not end products. Rather, there is no archaeological knowledge that lies outside some kind of product of our craft. For this reason, archaeological knowledge must always start with a return – to a place, an idea, an object. That is how the connection between landscape and time is made by the archaeologist. Archaeology is a craft (Shanks and McGuire 1996) for sure – but what comes next? *Archaeological knowledge is what we leave behind.*

***

Concluding his paper, Tim Ingold asked, 'What is archaeology the study of?' His answer was: 'The Temporality of the Landscape'. But as we learned at the start of this essay, archaeologists do not interpret the past *only* in terms of the present (Sherratt). Archaeology shows us how to think through change (Leone). And archaeological knowledge emerges through a kind of 'intervening period' (Deetz). So let me the question for a second time. 'What is archaeology the study of?' *It is the study of the temporality of the landscape revisited*.

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## NOTES

[1]Here, Ingold follows Alfred Gell's use of John McTaggart's (1908) idea of 'A-series' and 'B-series' time (Gell 1992, p. 165). For Ingold, temporality is distinct from the B-series, which 'reflects the temporal relationships between events as they really are, out there', but is identified with the A-series of subjective perception, which Gell explores through Husserl's phenomenology of time consciousness.

[2]Ingold distinguishes between landscape and taskscape through an analogy with the difference between painting and music, but ultimately collapses the opposition.

[3]Thomas Campbell and Keith Christiansen interview. http:www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/19.164

[4]In a later note on this point, Ingold reflected that, 'unlike native dwellers, archaeologists do not incorporate into their own practice the modes of environmental engagement of the characters of whom they tell. That is to say, the peoples of the past whose lives are revealed through excavation were not themselves excavators' (Ingold 2000, p. 428). This is an odd suggestion, since so much archaeological excavation quite precisely re-enacts and re-traces past practices of excavation and construction.

[5]As Kathleen Jamie has observed, similar problems face the new nature writing today: 'What's that coming over the hill? A white, middle-class Englishman! A Lone Enraptured Male! From Cambridge! Here to boldly go, "discovering", then quelling our harsh and lovely and sometimes difficult land with his civilised lyrical words' (Jamie 2008).

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# The World is Living Memory

Laurent Olivier

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# The World is Living Memory

LAURENT OLIVIER

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In our darkness, there is not one place for Beauty. The whole of it is for Beauty.
(René Char, *Feuillets d'Hynos*, fragment 237)

No, my dear Dan Hicks, 'The Temporality of the Landscape' has not been forgotten. How could it? It may well have been many years since Tim Ingold's article was published, but what that article demonstrated has not faded away to general indifference, for he inscribed it in the mesmerizing landscape of Bruegel the Elder's *The Harvesters*. Like artists and primitive people, Ingold thought and felt *through* things. Or rather, he re-conferred upon things their status as objects of thought. In Bruegel's painting, what might have been too complicated to grasp and too laborious to explain becomes obvious, light, and elegant. In the end, what we are talking about here is the way we relate to the world, that is, to the world as it is given to us, in its immediacy and materiality, its fleetingness and permanence. For archaeology is first of all a matter of our relation to *things* – all those things that mankind has produced and transformed – and to those *places* in which these things have accumulated and been preserved as they have come down to us. But these things are not inert; they are animated by people, who give them life and allow them to live on, which is why archaeology, which focuses on things and places, and anthropology, which studies mankind, form, as Ingold put it, 'a necessary unity'.

To be convinced that this is so, you need only concentrate deeply on a landscape painting. You need only let yourself be drawn into it, and imagine that you can become a part of the scene depicted on the canvas, much as the amateur artist in Akira Kurosawa's film *Dreams* entered Van Gogh's landscapes and moved about from place to place. You need only realize that the work by Bruegel is not just something we call an old painting, but rather a work that reveals a reality that exists in itself, and is the world as it is.

Bruegel's *The Harvesters* is not just the rendering of a landscape on canvas. It is in itself a landscape. The angle of view places us well above ground level, offering us the kind of overview we occasionally experience in our dreams. In the foreground we see peasants sitting on the ground, having lunch in the shade of a tree. One of them is asleep, with his mouth open, his features drawn with fatigue, his legs apart, and his fly half-open. If we raise our eyes, we see a hill and, through the trees, the familiar outline of a church, and then houses surrounded by fields. In the distance, the horizon opens onto a mist-covered bay with boats heading out to sea.

You could gaze upon this painting for hours, just as you can gaze upon a real landscape for hours, for little by little you notice details that had previously escaped your attention. You had not seen the fallen fruit

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that children are picking up as a man up in the tree shakes the branches. You had not noticed, further back, villagers in cruel amusement killing a goose tethered to a pole, or the bare-assed monks swimming in a pond, or, all the way in the back, the tiny silhouette of a man crouching as he defecates by a house. And there are surely many other details that have gone unnoticed, but which are nonetheless there, in the depths of the painting. There is something going on everywhere. Events are taking place that will soon fade away; some of the objects there will remain and endure while undergoing barely perceptible transformations, and some occurrences will return, the same as before and yet different each time, like a summer's harvest. The landscape is not so much history as it is living *memory*, captured in one moment.

Bruegel painted *The Harvesters* in 1565, but how do we situate it in time when we look at it today, from where we are now? It is easy enough to say that it dates from 450 years ago, but we nevertheless sense that we are not completely removed from it. We know this place that we have never been to, and that certainly never existed as it appears. Some details, like the picnic basket with the bread wrapped in cloth, or the white tablecloth spread out on the ground with fruit on it, are as clear as images that come back to us from our childhood. Others are foreign to us, like the lampshade-looking hats that the women are wearing. The large ceramic ewers are familiar because we have seen others like them in museums, but we had never seen anyone drink directly out of one, nor known how they were kept cool in the shade by placing a loaf of bread on top. And, like a flash across time, the luminous yellow of Bruegel's wheat, with its reddish streaks, recalls the yellow that Van Gogh was later to paint beneath the deep blue, almost black, of the sky around Auvers-sur-Oise. We find ourselves immersed in temporality, which blurs the boundaries between past, present and future. Temporality involves breaking down the barriers between time periods that come together in one moment of the materiality of the world, such as the one that Bruegel captured in his landscape.

I was a child when I first saw *The Harvesters*. I remember being fascinated then by the perfectly hewn path that slices through the wheat field, whereas now I see a weary man trudging up to the group of peasants with a jug in each hand, one red and one black. It is Bruegel's landscape that makes us come back to it over and over; and it is this remembrance that has been calling to me ever since, from that distant past that is no more. Today, the two birds that are flying away and the three girls who are going off somewhere carry with them the memory of past moments I experienced and images of those that I have loved and lost. Nor are the faces and postures of the anonymous people huddled together under a long-gone tree in a now vanished landscape unknown to us, even if we do not know who they were. They are our forgotten family, from an age long gone. Bruegel's painting is an invisible spring from which new meanings constantly emerge, meanings which, like us, undergo change. One could spend a lifetime gazing at this landscape. Young and old, we have been gazing at it for centuries now, and others still will come to look at it when we are gone. Because of the temporality of this landscape, which is merely a particular moment of memory inscribed in places and things, all we can do is come back to it again and again, for we live and grow old. Life itself is but an 'eternal recurrence'.

This is why archaeology is basically a kind of 'revisitation', as you, Dan Hicks, pointed out. Things in our memory take on meaning only after the fact, as we reinterpret them. And this explains why, in view of this 'past-memory' that surrounds us like a landscape, 'a truly historical thought must', as the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer noted (1976, p. 321), 'include its own historicity'. 'Archaeology must,' as you say, 'reclaim and embrace its modernity as a principal

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object of enquiry'. For, as the historian François Herzog noted, we are now living under the reign of presentism, at a disquieting time when we know ourselves to be both cut off from the past and fundamentally uncertain of the future (Hartog 2003). History, in effect the past, now unfolds exclusively as a 'return of', a phantom presence haunting the present, as with *The Harvesters*.

Michel Foucault compared the history of ideas to an almost geological process of sedimentation in the course of which layers of interpretation are slowly superimposed, forming 'strata' that build up 'bases' (Foucault 1969, pp. 9–10). To carry the metaphor further, we could say that these 'substrata' rest on unstable continental plates whose underground movements produce 'fault lines' that create rifts in the prevailing views, or 'eruptions' that spew forth from the depths incandescent, shapeless 'magma' that blankets the surface deposits and makes them illegible. Tim Ingold's 'Temporality of the Landscape' was an unusually atypical piece, and one that was manifestly the result of one of the 'eruptions' that marked the beginning of the end of the post-processual era. It exposed the 'sterility' of the academic debate that interminably pitted the new, self-proclaimed 'post-processualists' against the supposedly old 'processualists'. 'The Temporality of the Landscape' demonstrated that the controversy between them was fundamentally flawed by what both groups understood to be the subject matter of archaeology. In their desperate attempts to reconstruct 'history' solely as that which has been produced or desired by mankind, 'processualists' and 'post-processualists' alike were adhering to an illusion, for we have come to understand that the subject matter of archaeology is a hybrid manifestation of 'memory', jointly shaped by things, places and beings.

There is a great deal more to say about this than the space allotted here for commentary allows. The articles by Tim Ingold and Dan Hicks are profound and rich in their meanderings and their unexpected and inviting ramifications. In the time since 'The Temporality of the Landscape' appeared, we have been lingering on the threshold of a major, conceptual revolution that goes well beyond the coining of some new 'ism', for it involves a wholly new way in which to conceive our relation to the past and to the world. We are reluctant to dive into these unfamiliar waters, to let go of archaeology's traditionally historicist perspective that would lead us to believe that it is possible to reconstruct 'what really took place' on the basis of what has come down to us from the past. But the subject matter of archaeology is not so much the past – what actually was – as it is that which has been constructed over time, and which has been both transmitted and transformed. The true subject of archaeology is in effect *temporality*. Clearly, we do not yet possess the tools with which to conceive it as such; we are not yet ready to take the plunge. It is only natural that we hesitate to risk losing all our conventional points of reference and the conceptual divisions that provide us with a sense of security. But we have been given the opportunity to view things differently, like some gift bestowed upon us freely and directly. We have only to sit down in front of a landscape, like the one in *The Harvesters*, open our eyes and, with every fibre of our bodies, look at what lies there in the beauty of a summer morning's light: that elusive and marvellous thing that is the world.

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# Phenomenology of Landscapes and Taskscapes in Excavation Archives

Matt Edgeworth

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# Phenomenology of Landscapes and Taskscapes in Excavation Archives

MATT EDGEWORTH

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It is good to return to major papers after intervals of time, to re-read them in the light of changes that have taken place in the world, or indeed in ourselves. In revisiting such an important work as 'The temporality of the landscape' by Tim Ingold (1993), inviting us to view it differently, Dan Hicks writes a compelling paper. He reminds us that there is more to the production of archaeological knowledge than taskscapes and acts of discovery or material encounters/transformations that take place out on site during excavation. The temporality of archaeological data is not limited to events of digging. Indeed, objects of knowledge may continue to be transformed on a range of different kinds of sites long after the excavation report has been written. Far from going into some fixed timeless state, he argues, they emerge 'through techniques of temporal protention, central devices for which include the museum and the archive'.

I appreciate what Hicks is driving at and agree – up to a point. In reaching an understanding of archaeological objects, or grasping how that understanding is obtained through the practices of archaeology, it is crucial to consider all the sites of knowledge production. This applies not just to archives, and not just to museums and excavations, but also to commercial archaeological field unit offices, libraries, consultancies, laboratories, centres for aerial photo analysis and so on. Acts of discovery and acts of remembrance and acts of revisiting can take place in all these locations. The problem comes not so much from taking a multi-site approach, but rather in going from one extreme to the other with regard to theoretical stance. Even if Hicks is right in his assertion that too much emphasis has been placed on the taskscape of excavation and the phenomenology of landscapes, and I am not so sure that he is, his 'archival return' goes much too far in the other direction.

Hicks' rationales remind me of those of a writer who was at the height of his influence in the early 1990s when Ingold wrote his paper – the French post-modernist philosopher Jacques Derrida. In his later work he identified a condition called archive fever which involves 'a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive' (Derrida 1998). But it is an assertion he made in his earlier work that is most relevant here. In famously stating 'there is nothing outside of the text' (Derrida 1974), he seemed to dismiss the possibility of any non-textual phenomenological reality. His work represents a strand of continental philosophy that Ingold may have been partly reacting against in writing 'The temporality of the landscape'. And, in his retrospective critique of Ingold's paper, Hicks takes us back to a similar theoretical position. He seems to be saying (to paraphrase his argument in the manner of Derrida): 'there is nothing outside of the archive.'

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According to Hicks, 'Archaeologists document the landscape through writing, drawing, photography and collecting, transforming through creative destruction material traces into the archaeological record. We draw maps and survey the landscape; define sites and features as fixed forms. Our work is not inhabitation but labour.' Thus archaeologists do not get into a site to inhabit it or dwell within it, but instead work upon it, rather as one might work upon various kinds of documents (original source materials, copies, translations, reinterpretations, representations). They collect rather than actively probe the material. They are not so much hunters, according to Hicks, as gatherers.

This is highlighting one important aspect of excavation (the measurement, documentation and recording of the site), while at the same time playing down or neglecting another equally important aspect (the inhabitation, active exploration and probing into emerging material). When I carried out my ethnographic study of archaeological practice in 1989–90 (later published as Edgeworth 2003), I observed how both of these are important facets of fieldwork. They can be loosely characterized metaphorically as gathering and hunting activities I suppose, but I preferred to call them 'acts of inscription' and 'material transactions', and my report describes how field archaeologists alternate between the two in the course of everyday work. Acts of inscription such as drawing plans or writing context descriptions necessarily involve a degree of physical disengagement from the material evidence. Documentary equipment, such as context sheets, planning grids, drawing paper, cameras, pencils, etc., is deployed. Material transactions, on the other hand, involve a re-engagement and physical closeness with material evidence, usually mediated through the use of hand-held digging tools such as trowels. In their material transactions with the site archaeologists do actually come into contact with entities from deep in the earth that are non-documentary and nothing to do with archives.

What is interesting is how differently material evidence appears according to whether a worker is engaged in acts of inscription or in material transactions. In the case of the former, material evidence manifests as essentially static and passive. Being disengaged from it, workers perceive the evidence in terms of the 'fixed forms' of Hicks, and it is these that get reproduced or documented. But once we put down the planning board/camera/writing implements and jump back into the feature we happen to be excavating – picking up the digging tools to re-engage with the material field – the evidence starts moving and unfolding once more. In inhabiting the material field and directly engaging with the practical problems of interpretation it presents, by probing into it and uncovering surfaces that were formerly hidden, we experience its flows and phase transitions. This is the phenomenological side of excavation. It is also a specific variation of the taskscape that Ingold describes, as manifested in the context of an archaeological dig.

The challenge is to show how both (Ingold's taskscapes and Hicks' archiving) are present as facets or phases of the archaeological process of knowledge production, distributed through time on multiple sites which include museums and archives as well as excavations. The difference between the two facets is stark, but ultimately there seems no good reason why documentary and phenomenological aspects should be polarized or seen to be in opposition. There are archival aspects of excavation and phenomenological aspects to archives. It is not necessary to play down the one aspect in order to highlight the importance of its perceived opposite. We can have the best of both worlds. Both are part of archaeology, and could potentially enrich (and be enriched by) the existence of the other.

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## COMMENTARY ON THE ARCHIVE PHOTO OF THE EXCAVATION TASKSCAPE

Hicks selected a photo (his Fig. 3) as a counterpoint to Ingold's selection of Bruegel's painting *The Harvesters*. As he explains, the image was found in an archive in 2014. It depicts a rescue excavation that took place in 1993 in advance of road construction. He gives an interesting account of it as an archive object – now removed by several decades from the events of the original excavation. It is described in terms of a landscape of loss, mitigated only slightly by the fragments of images and other documentary evidence collected together to form the archive. Without in any way arguing against his account, I would like to add some further commentary on aspects which Hicks does not cover. For me the photo is just as redolent of the taskscapes of excavation as Bruegel's picture is redolent of past agricultural taskscapes for Ingold.

The photo catches a moment in time – it is a snapshot only – but there is enough information there to see what has happened a moment before and what is likely to happen a moment later. The earth-moving machine is in the process of swinging its bucket over the spoil-heap, emptying its burden of soil, having just scraped over the ground surface to reveal new patterns of evidence. It will shortly swing back again to scrape off another spit of earth. In the background (more easily visible if the image is enlarged) a row of three workers is trowelling over a surface that has already been cleared by the machine. They are engaged in a collective material transaction or task, crouched over the ground in order to better work the evidence that emerges under the moving blades of their trowels. There is rhythm here. The rhythmic scrape of the machine, the rhythmic scrape of the trowels (though not in synchrony) are metronomes for the tasks being performed. The material evidence itself, as a result of the ways it is being worked, emerges in short rhythmic bursts.

Closer to the foreground is a standing figure with back turned to us. It seems as though he or she is just waiting there, hands in pockets, watching what is going on rather than participating. In a sense this is true. But the appearance of detachment and disengagement is an illusion. Here I will explain the task being performed and attempt to explicate the essential structure of the taskscape depicted, because (while part of everyday routine) there is something quite extraordinary about it.

The archaeologist in question is engaged in the activity of 'machine-watching'. Do not be fooled by the description, for the task is by no means as passive as the term implies. The machine is technically operated by a machine-driver sitting in the cab, but he is taking instructions from the archaeologist monitoring the operation, referred to here as the 'machine-watcher'. As the blade of the machine bucket scrapes the ground surface, the machine-watcher communicates to the driver through hand gestures whether he should go deeper or shallower, more gently or more roughly, faster or slower. The instructions may vary according to the configurations of material evidence that are emerging from the ground. That is, if a sought-for archaeological surface or soil boundary is reached the driver may be instructed to follow the surface along. Or, if the expected surface does not turn up, then the driver may be asked to take off deeper spits. In the event of the outlines of archaeological features starting to appear the driver may be required to gently scrape over the top in order to delineate them better. Sometimes quite unexpected evidence comes to light, in which case an impromptu response deemed to be appropriate will be signalled to the driver. If the archaeologist watching the machine is unsure what the significance of newly emerged evidence is, or what action is required to deal with it, he or she is likely to spring into action, gesturing the machine to stop, and jumping into the trench to investigate the evidence further with a spade or trowel.

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The structure of the taskscape in this case can be described not just in terms of enacted tasks and flows of materials, but also, mixed up with these, a loop of information flow in which humans, machines and (crucially) unfolding material evidence all actively participate. The machine-watcher observes newly emerging evidence and decides on the basis of this the best course of action, communicating a response by gesture to the machine-driver, who puts those instructions into practice via the controls and hydraulics and other moving parts of the machine. The blade of the bucket scrapes the ground accordingly, revealing new and perhaps surprising configurations of evidence, to which the machine-watcher responds. And so the loop goes on.

In his account of archive fever, Derrida (1998) pointed out that archives not only curate and preserve memories, but bury them as well. Buried in the archive of excavation documents, photos and plans – now just as much fragments of the past as the site they document – are the congealed memories of the taskscape of excavation.

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# Archaeology with Its Back to the World

Tim Ingold

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# Archaeology with Its Back to the World

TIM INGOLD

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I am relieved to know that Dan Hicks' motives for revisiting 'The Temporality of the Landscape' are in the spirit of neither remembrance, nor critique, nor resurrection. Fortunately I am still alive, and can indulge the privilege of the living to keep up with the times. Anxious to move on, I have no wish to disinter what was never buried. Nor, recalling my struggle to write the paper, would I ever want to go through it again. Personally, I had hit a low point in a cycle of depression; intellectually I was still coming to terms with the collapse of the thesis of complementarity by which, until then, I had sought to both separate and unify the social and environmental domains of human existence. Realizing that the separation was unsustainable, I had been compelled to start all over again, with an approach that would restore persons and their relations to the continuum of organic life. And, having acknowledged that humans are beings in a world, part of the problem was to ascertain how best to describe the world of their being-in (Ingold 2000, p. 193). The idea of landscape looked promising. At that time, largely for reasons unconnected with my own travails, this idea was beginning to gain some traction in social anthropology, and I wondered whether it might help to overcome the naturalistic bias that continued to adhere to the concept of environment. In many ways, 'The Temporality of the Landscape' was an experiment that failed. In the end, I decided that I would do better to stick with 'environment' and seek instead to establish its value as a relational term with a salience quite distinct from such ideas as 'nature' and 'the physical world'. It would be many years before I would return to the concept of landscape, and then in the context of a renewed interest in the atmospherics of weather and the relations between earth and sky (Ingold 2011, pp. 126–135).

The questions of how we should best understand past and present human lives in relation to their surrounding conditions continue to trouble both anthropology and archaeology, and remain topics of lively debate. They do not appear, however, to rank high on Hicks' agenda. He has other axes to grind. Chief among them is his desire to inaugurate an 'archival turn'. He wants to restore what he calls 'techniques of temporal protention' (p. 3) – above all in the practices of the archive but also in those of museum curation – to the centrality they deserve in the production of archaeological knowledge. Far be it from me to begrudge Hicks his 'turn'. Bring it on! I do find it odd, however, that he should have chosen 'The Temporality of the Landscape', of all things, as the stone on which to grind his axe. For the paper was simply not about museums or archives. I am neither a curator nor an archivist, and, unlike Hicks, I have no particular authority to write on these matters. I am unclear, therefore, whether Hicks' invective is directed at 'The Temporality of the Landscape' itself or at me for not having written a paper on another topic closer to his heart.

That the latter might be nearer the truth is suggested by the fact that in his laying out of the argument of 'The Temporality of the

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Landscape', and the terms in which it is conducted, Hicks completely sidelines the principal conclusion I draw from it. For while I began by distinguishing taskscape from landscape, comparing the difference to that between music and painting, I ended up folding the one into the other:

> By re-placing the tasks of human dwelling in their proper context within the process of becoming of the world as a whole, we can do away with the dichotomy between taskscape and landscape – only however by recognising the fundamental temporality of the landscape itself. (Ingold 1993, p. 164, 2000, p. 201)

For me, this is the single most important sentence of the entire paper. For Hicks, however, it warrants no more than a footnote (fn. 2). What was my central purpose in the writing of 'The Temporality of the Landscape' reappears here as barely more than an afterthought.

Nor is Hicks much impressed with my other purpose, less central perhaps but equally important, which was not to represent the discipline of archaeology, let alone to tell archaeologists what to do, but rather to offer some suggestions, from the point of view of an anthropologist friendly to archaeology, on where the common ground between our respective disciplines might best be found. It seemed to me then, and still does now, that concerns with time and landscape are shared by both, and that they could provide a platform for mutual understanding. Moreover I thought then, and still think now, that as ways of learning, discovery and transformation – if not of 'knowledge production' – the practices of excavation by which archaeologists conduct their operations in the field have much in common with anthropological practices of participant observation (Ingold 2013, pp. 10–11). They are ways of *knowing from the inside*, of participating with the earth and its manifold inhabitants in their differential becoming (cf. Barad 2007, p. 185). And the comparison with hunting still seems to me apt for both participant observation and excavation, a point that Matt Edgeworth has explicitly made for archaeology in the pages of this journal. The excavator who sets out to 'follow the cut', Edgeworth writes, initiates 'a kind of active searching like the tracking of an animal along the trail or spoor it left behind' (Edgeworth 2012, p. 78).

But in his determination to paint me as a died-in-the-wool Romantic, Hicks fundamentally misunderstands both what I had to say about time and landscape in 'The Temporality of the Landscape', and the significance of the comparison with hunting. Apropos the former, my argument was that landscapes are continually in formation, shaped by concurrent processes – of work and rest, of seasonality, of growth and decomposition, building and ruination, erosion and deposition – that are going on now as they have ever done, and that their rhythmic resonances describe the passage of time. This is totally at odds with the objectifications of memory promulgated by 'planner preservationism' and the heritage industry, which sever the present from a completed past and hold up the latter for nostalgic commemoration. My argument was about 'the temporality of the landscape' and not, as Hicks would have it, about 'the multi-temporal nature of archaeological *remains* in the landscape' (p. 8, emphasis added), and to have confused the two is a blunder of the first order. To add insult to injury he compounds the blunder by associating the figure of the native or indigenous hunter with the Romantic stereotype of the rugged super-male, heroically engaged in the exploration and conquest of untamed wilderness. Having once made this unwarranted association, he cannot resist a few snide remarks about the misogyny of the comparison (p. 6 and p. 9 fn. 5). There is of course a strand of nature writing, much in vogue today, which indulges such fantasies (e.g. Macfarlane 2012). But the entire argument of 'The Temporality of the Landscape' is set against the polarity of humanity and nature on which they rest.

'The Temporality of the Landscape', Hicks concludes, 'fails archaeology today' (p. 13). It fails because I was allegedly misinformed

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about what archaeological knowledge is. Well, that probably depends on whom you talk to. I doubt whether archaeologists can agree on what their knowledge is any more than anthropologists can agree on what is theirs. That, in itself, is not a problem. The important thing is that we can keep the conversation going. I am afraid that trying to sell the concept of salvage, as Hicks endeavours to do (p. 10), will hardly encourage my anthropological colleagues to join in. Most are only too glad to have seen the back of it. But there is surely more to both disciplines than 'knowledge production'. Archaeological knowledge, Hicks proclaims, is '*what we leave behind*' (p. 15, emphasis in original). Yet how is anything left behind if we are not ourselves moving forward? We move forward in our teaching, by which we kindle the curiosity of our students beyond what they might otherwise have dreamed, in our continuing collaborations with the communities with whose pasts we reckon, and in our engagements with the earth itself in the process of excavation. Yet with Hicks it seems that archaeology begins only at the point when this forward movement gives way to the retrospective interpretation of its archival and museological depositions. To take the archival turn, in short, is also to turn our backs to the very formative processes of the worlding world to which 'The Temporality of the Landscape' was intended as an opening.

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DISCUSSION

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# Reply to Comments: Meshwork Fatigue

Dan Hicks

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'What is archaeology the study *of*?' (Ingold 1993, p. 172, emphasis in original). That is the question that Tim Ingold asked 23 years ago, to which my essay returns, and with which this response thinks through the comments from Olivier, Edgeworth and Ingold.

## RECOLLECTION

Over the past two decades Olivier has set a new agenda for archaeological conceptions of time, re-imagining concepts of multi-temporality, duration, contemporaneity and memory. He has shown us how 'archaeological finds and the people who find them are inextricably entwined', understanding archaeology as 'an investigation into archives of memory, which is what remains are', an examination of 'what has happened to things from the past' (Olivier 2011, p. xv, 2013, p. 124). Olivier and I are in firm agreement when he suggests that 'since *The Temporality of the Landscape* appeared, we have been lingering on the threshold of a major, conceptual revolution that…involves a wholly new way in which to conceive our relation to the past and to the world'. For me the metaphor of an uncrossed threshold is helpful not as a prediction of a paradigm shift, but as a suggestion of the provisional boundaries that archaeology marks out between indoors and outdoors. We have spent those 23 years imagining archaeological time to be grasped only in the open air, rather than forged through constant trafficking between archive and field. What archaeology leaves behind is not passive detritus but the very fragments of life through which our knowledge of the human past is constituted.

Alongside Olivier's account of memory and duration my essay contributes the idea of archaeology as a method for *recollection*: for gathering together again, for reuniting, for something akin to what Bjørnar Olsen calls 're-membering' (Olsen 2012). Archaeological recording protracts time, producing secondary, mimetic topographies of fact and imagination: notebook, drawing, photograph, museum, archive. Recollection requires a reciprocity with the human past. The double morphology of archaeological time brings a double obligation: to receive landscape into archive as object, to reconnect archive with landscape as subject. For archaeologists 'time is the outcome of our own work, among other things' (Witmore 2013, p. 131).

*What is archaeology the study of*? To a Francophone ear 'recollection' might suggest that stagnant Anglicized term 'souvenir'. But the archaeological archive is no mere keepsake but a productive 'antiquarian device' with its own 'theory of history' that 'contracts the world in order to expand the personal'. Archaeology comes in for a time from the rain. Glass cases and filing cabinets can hold shut no longer. It is as if the silent archaeological photograph extends some cartographic component of the older technology of the pressed flower (Stewart 1993, pp. xii, 138). Which is to say: *An archaeological landscape is an object that is known through*

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*remapping; archaeological knowledge is what we leave behind.*

## CUTTING THE MESHWORK

Over the same two decades, Edgeworth has called on archaeologists to rethink the standard view of the production of their knowledge of the past. His account of 'double-artefacts', attending to the enactment of the idea of material culture through the 'shaping, inscription and wrapping' of things in the field and the museum (Edgeworth 2007), holds much in common with the approach set out here. But his comment on my essay, alongside his recent work towards an archaeology 'grounded in Tim Ingold's flowing materials' (Edgeworth 2014, p. 226), reveals that we have a basic disagreement about the relationship between the passage of time and the condition of archaeological knowledge.

Our disagreement begins from a difference in emphasis. My commitment is to the significance of *disciplinarity*, through which we can attend to the place of archaeology's lines of thought, method, practice and consequence in the creation of our knowledge of the human past (Hicks and Beaudry 2010). In my view archaeological knowledge emerges as a kind of after-effect from production and revisitation. Edgeworth's more extreme position involves a scepticism toward any kind of theory that 'originates outside archaeology and is applied onto archaeological evidence…from Latour to Lacan, from Lyotard to Lévi-Strauss (and that is just the thinkers beginning with L, who happen to be French)' (Edgeworth 2012, p. 76). In an uncanny echo of the Manchester School of Social Anthropology, which sought to develop knowledge from particular ethnographic field sites through the conceit of the case study, fixing the extraction of anthropological interpretations from 'field data' *geographically* (Gluckman 1961), Edgeworth goes a step further emphasizing the production of archaeological knowledge from particular moments through the conceit of the thick description of field practice, fixing the extraction of archaeological interpretations not just by location but *temporally* – right at the time and place in which the fieldwork is happening.

*What is archaeology the study of*? For Edgeworth it is the study of 'the past in the present' (Edgeworth 2006, p. xi), while for me it is 'the temporality of the landscape revisited', which allows for archaeological knowledge to involve more times and places than the here-and-now of the trowel's edge, for example through archives, museums or libraries.

But wait. Has Edgeworth now abandoned his Eurosceptic mistrust of non-archaeological thinking? Whyever else would he choose to frame his discussion of my essay with reference to some turgid writings from poststructural philosophy? Now, I have no doubt that, in more skilled and patient hands than mine, much of interest can be made of the Derridean philosophy of the *mal d'archive*. For example, the recent thoughtful accounts by Lesley McFadyen and Jen Baird of future-orientation of the archaeological archive make inspired use of 'archive fever' (McFadyen 2011, Baird and McFadyen 2014). Alfredo González-Ruibal too uses Derrida's account of memory and the future as a resource for building a new philosophical archaeology, and Laurent Olivier borrows from his account of the archive as vestiges that have escaped destruction (González-Ruibal 2013, p. 22, Olivier 2013, p. 121). Such work may put non-archaeological ideas to archaeological work, but each represents an important contribution to what my essay describes as 'a fundamental reorientation of archaeology that is just getting under way, focused on a revaluation of the material dimensions of archaeological knowledge'. But I can see nothing in my essay that bears any trace, impression, memory, *Verdrängung* or *Unterdrückung* of Derrida. Indeed I would venture that Derrida's diagnosis of the 'archive fever' in Freud's approach to memory and traces, to

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which Edgeworth directs us, describes the precise opposite of my own rather more schizophrenic approach to the double historicity of the archaeological object (see Hicks 2013). In fact it seems to me to bear a marked similarity to Edgeworth's own approach. Compare this narrow focus on fleeting performance, on the taskscapes of some originary moment of excavation – in isolation from what is created, documented, collected or outlasts the *mise-en-scène* of fieldwork – with Derrida's account of a malaise that 'always attempts to return to the live origin of that which the archive loses while keeping it in a multiplicity of places'; in which *archive* and *archaeology* are imagined to be

> radically incompatible, *heterogeneous*, that is to say, different with regard to the origin, in divorce in regard to the arkhē…. A moment and not a process, this instant does not belong to the laborious deciphering of the archive. It is the nearly ecstatic instant Freud dreams of, when the very success of the dig must sign the effacement of the archivist: the origin then speaks by itself. The arkhē appears in the nude, without archive. It presents itself and comments on itself by itself. 'Stones talk!' In the present. Anamnēsis without hypomnēsis! The archaeologist has succeeded in making the archive no longer serve any function. It comes to efface itself, it becomes transparent or unessential so as to let the origin present itself in person. Live, without mediation and without delay. (Derrida 1995, p. 58)

That Freudian ecstatic instant resurfaces in Edgeworth's re-reading of my photograph. For Edgeworth it 'catches a moment in time', 'rhythms' of movement, split-second judgements while banking the machine, the fleeting passage of 'information flow' between 'humans, machines and unfolding material evidence'. He settles on the image of an unending, traceless loop starting and ending in the trench, as if archaeological knowledge were constituted by pure occurrence emptied of duration. Could any more vivid picture of the *mal d'archive* be imagined? Grounded in the *coup de théâtre* of technical archaeological practice that only a select few will ever witness, this is an exclusive, privileged vision of our knowledge of the past, resistant to return, revisitation, rethinking. My essay seeks to find alternatives to this nostalgia for the present, for some spectral moment of archaeological field discovery where past, present and future collapse into an instant – for the Freudian *Geisterstunde* ('hour of ghosts': Derrida 1995, pp. 54–55). For Edgeworth the archive and the museum are epiphenomenal, while in my view the drawn, written, photographic, material and topographical archive *is* archaeological knowledge.

Edgeworth and I share a concern with 'doing archaeology'. But our difference in emphasis becomes a disagreement through the extent to which his comments are beholden the eclectic Ingoldian philosophy of 'meshwork studies' (Hicks 2010, p. 78). How are we to square Edgeworth's stated cross-disciplinary scepticism with his reliance on a world view that he praises for 'ranging freely…as though there were no such thing as disciplinary boundaries' (Edgeworth 2016)? Edgeworth calls for a phenomenology of excavation, experiencing 'the flow of materials'. I prefer to understand archaeology as productive, creating provisional stabilities, stoppages or time-warps in archives, museums and landscapes. For Edgeworth archaeology goes with the flow. To me, our interventions are cuts in the meshwork. Even Derrida explored 'how one phenomenon stops the flow of others' – an idea profitably developed by Marilyn Strathern who suggested that network-cutting represents that 'specific abridgement of nature and culture' through which Western ideas of ownership emerge, transforming things into objects as property (Strathern 1996). Archaeology – modern, Western, disciplinary – enacts things as objects, present as past. It *makes* cuts rather than just *following* them (*pace* Edgeworth 2012). Our cuts are material interventions that endure, filled up and truncated over time, that can be recut through revisitation. The 'cut' that Edgeworth *follows*

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is an immaterial stratigraphic unit, an interface and relationship with form but no substance, unlike layers, fills, or structures. But the cuts that we *make* silt up with knowledge, collections, landscapes – products and erasures. In knowing the archaeological past we revisit enduring traces, prolonged and redoubled. Which is to say: *The passage of time transforms archaeological knowledge; archaeological knowledge transforms the passage of time*.

## MESHWORK FATIGUE

'It is none of my business for me, as an anthropologist, to be telling archaeologists what to do,' concedes Ingold (Ingold 2012, p. 98). Nevertheless *The temporality of the landscape* was a sustained anthropological account of 'what archaeology is the study of'. My essay highlights the unequal terms on which that account proposed to fix the 'common ground' of anthropology and archaeology, defining archaeological knowledge as 'on a par with that which comes from the practical activity of the native dweller and which the anthropologist, through participation, seeks to learn and understand' (Ingold 1993, p. 152). Ingold's reply reminds us that the lines taken in the intervening 23 years by meshwork studies – so many further 'friendly suggestions' for archaeological thinking – have served not just to deepen this asymmetry, but to naturalize it.

Ingold makes three criticisms of my essay. First, although Ingold is 'neither a curator nor an archivist' I unfairly exhort him to transport himself back in time to 'write a paper on another topic closer to [my] heart'. *What is archaeology the study of*? Perhaps Ingold wishes that he had asked something different? But it is hardly unfair for my essay to seek to find a more adequate answer than that provided by Ingold to his own question.

Second, I neglect what Ingold chooses in hindsight to define as the paper's central purpose: to 'do away with the dichotomy between taskscape and landscape' by recognizing 'the fundamental temporality of the landscape itself' (Ingold 1993, p. 164). As so often in the paper, the jargon sets up a dichotomy and then negates it. But this is no routine trilemma. *Taskscape*, inspired perhaps by the ethnoscientific idea of 'taskonomy' as 'a practical approach to knowledge structures' (Dougherty and Keller 1982), is defined as 'a pattern of dwelling activities'; *Landscape* as 'an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations' (Ingold 1993, pp. 152, 153). But the third keyword – *Temporality* – changes in meaning during the course of the paper. At first *Temporality* is said to 'inhere in the taskscape', emerging through practice (Ingold 1993, p. 153). But later, once taskscape has collapsed into landscape, *Temporality* comes to inhere in the perception of 'a particular vista of past and future… available from this moment and no other' that 'constitutes my present, conferring upon it a unique character' (Ingold 1993, p. 159). *Temporality* becomes not so much a model for dwelling as a theory of time and place. *The Temporality of the Landscape*. At the dénouement this aphorism has trapped archaeological study in the field and fixed it in the present.

Third, Ingold repudiates the very analogy between indigenous hunters and archaeological excavators that his own paper introduced. He condemns my wish to explore the implications of his choice to compare archaeology with 'hunting' rather than 'gathering'. He scorns my account of 'archival returns' as some kind of 'snide', 'axe-grinding' and modish 'turn'-spotting that reveals my 'blundering' naivety. I have no reply for these words, other than to reflect that Ingold's former propensity for suggesting how archaeology ought to think has, through the doctrine of meshwork studies, developed into an urge to neutralize new archaeological thinking about the material past through this destructive tangle of critique, debunking, obscurantism and word play. Chris Witmore calls it 'anger' (Witmore 2014, p. 241). It's exhausting. Like all critique

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it is grounded in a false claim of 'privileged access to the world of reality behind the veils of appearances' (Latour 2010, p. 474–475). Our discipline is told it 'must be distinguished from the kind of pre- or proto-historiography that has as its objective to arrive at descriptively plausible reconstructions of everyday life in the past' (Ingold 2013, p. 10). Any prospect of archaeology producing knowledge of the human past is erased. Forget *Archive Fever*: archaeology has come down with a serious bout of *ennui* that can be diagnosed as *Meshwork Fatigue*.

***

Ingold dismisses my essay as *Archaeology with its back to the world*. Let us think this accusation through. Archaeology has not collapsed in the gutter. Do we not all have our back to some part of the world at any given moment? Or does Ingold believe himself to have found a place to stand where he can face the whole world with nothing behind him? Ingold does not even resort to that old idea that archaeology and anthropology might stand back-to-back, Janus-like, alternative tenses of a common verb. He wishes to *turn archaeology around*. In this synoptic yet asymmetrical vision for archaeology and anthropology, our retrospective discipline of archaeology must face forward, move ahead, 'dro[p] the pretence that what is past is any older, or more ancient, than the present' (Ingold 2010, p. 60).

An archaeology that does not look back? That would require us to misrepresent the archaeological record as a readymade encountered in the field, rather than the lasting product of fieldwork with which archaeologists recollect the human past. As Ingold attempts to turn archaeology around to face 'the worlding world', an instinct that was refracted through Edgeworth's account of fieldwork flashes up: a yearning for the momentary, the temporally pristine, the immediacy of the hunt not the slow business of gathering. The 'zero time fiction' of the ethnographic present (Vansina 1970). Against my account of *returns*, Ingold presents one decisive *turn* for archaeology. While Edgeworth's argument echoes the Manchester School, Ingold seeks to reenact what functionalism inflicted on anthropology half a century earlier: abandoning the material production of knowledge in archives and museums in favour of the spectres of social relations, or ecological meshworks. Where Ingold extends this century-old anthropological 'turn' to archaeology, I suggest that this is precisely what must be undone if we are to reconnect our two disciplines (Hicks 2013).

*Archaeology with its back to the world*. Let us resist Ingold's attempt to turn our discipline around by reclaiming archaeology as a method for facing away from the present, looking back at what we have produced, returning, revisiting, recollecting. Studying the past. How to explain what meshwork studies has back-to-front? Should we recall Walter Benjamin's papers *On the Concept of History* (Benjamin 2003 [1940]), where the Angel of History turned His back the future, facing the past to witness 'rubble piled on top of rubble'?[1] Or maybe Marshall Sahlins' account of the Maori conception 'of the future as behind them' through which is found 'in a marvelous past the measure of the demands that are made to their current existence' (Sahlins 1985, p. 55)? No, instead let us return to Jacquetta Hawkes' archaeology of the British landscape, which she introduced with a description of her custom, after writing late on summer evenings, of going outside for a time, coming back to the patch of grass in her garden, lying down with her back to the earth, and feeling the hard stratified ground 'press my flesh against my bones': topsoil, humus, London clay. Flesh, bone, earth. 'I am concerned with other forms of memory, those recollections of the world and of man that are pursued…by geologists and archaeologists,' Hawkes wrote (1951, pp. 7–11).

Ingold asks: 'How is anything left behind if we are not ourselves moving forward?' But archaeology is a method for leaving knowledge

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behind by going back. Which is to say: 'What is archaeology the study *of*?' *It is the study of the temporality of the landscape revisited.*

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## NOTE

[1]A further twist on this account is provided by Bruno Latour (2010, pp. 485–486).

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