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DISCUSSIONS AND POLEMICS

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SUPERFICIAL PRAISE – PART I

ABSTRACT

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This paper explores themes Dawid Kobiałka raised in his polemic discussion, "Against Gandalf the Grey: towards a Sherlockian Reading of the History of Archaeological Thought," specifically the role excavation plays in the discipline, thereby shaping narratives of surface and appearance, parallels between archaeology and detective fiction, and ultimately of scholarship. By digging below the surface of these narratives and dissecting their history, revealing the relations between archaeology and such disciplines as history and philology, and some of the metaphors held in common by any number of scientific disciplines, we come to critically examine the metaphysical assumptions of both the discipline itself potential "radical" approaches to it.

Keywords: "radical" archaeology; archaeological metaphysics; archaeology and detectives; archaeology and philology; archaeology and "*autopsia*"; history of archaeology
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INTRO

I have written the following response to the… superficial (?) way Dawid Kobiałka's polemic discussion, "Against Gandalf the Grey: towards a Sherlockian Reading of the History of Archaeological Thought" (Kobiałka 2014) addresses a number of issues I've been examining, including the history of archaeology, archaeology and detectives, archaeological metaphysics and hermeneutics.

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The first point I would like to note is a reference (Kobiałka 2014, 424) not to Tolkien's original but to the filmed version of *The Lord of the Rings*. Although perfectly acceptable as a reference to the "broader historical context of which certain archaeologists were a part of," the failure to trace this reference back to its source seems like superficial scholarship (cf. Merton 1993, 218-219 for a discussion of the "palimpsestic syndrome"). Dawid made similar use of a TV series (*Heroes*) as an example, when he could have referred to Foucault's famous discussion of Don Quixote (Foucault 1994, 46-50), a source which those who have not seen the TV show in question may access at any library.

I'd like to contrast such… superficial "scholarship" with the interesting suggestion that "post-processual archaeologies, and other archaeologies… are not radical enough" (Kobiałka 2014, 418). While this may well be true, I don't necessarily see any great demand for more "radical" archaeologies, possibly because there are no obvious examples to emulate (and possibly because we have not yet learned the lessons of our "non-radical" history). Bearing in mind the fact that the word "radical" derives from the Latin word for "roots" (OED 1997) and is consequently associated with fundamentalism, it seems that if Dawid wants us to share his vision of a sufficiently "radical" archaeology – or "radical" history of archaeology – then he needs to dig up and expose these (historical? philological?) roots. Otherwise his work is open to the same sort of criticism which has been directed towards so much post-processualism; that it is just critical – iconoclastic (superficial?) – without offering anything of substance.

I am also reminded of the various complaints made, over the years, of how post-processualist theory has had little effect on archaeological field methodology (cf. Cobb *et al.* 2012, Carver 2012, 17, Thorpe 2012, 31-32, etc.). By addressing a related issue – *why* post-processualism has not influenced the writing of histories of archaeology – Kobiałka is indirectly discussing the relations between archaeological theory and praxis. And however much academic and theoretical archaeologists would like us to recognise what they believe to be their contributions to the discipline, it is still not clear whether archaeological theory has ever had much of an influence on the basics of observation, excavation and documentation (cf. Carver 2012 for an historical example). This raises metaphysical issues of *who* writes histories of a given discipline (histories of archaeology are generally written by academics, not fieldworkers) and *why*, issues which Kobiałka ignores in favour of questions of *how* histories of archaeology are written and *what* they say.

As a temporary explanation for why it is so important to examine such metaphysical issues as the question of *why* histories are written, consider the following response to discussions more closely related to my own work on the history and theory of archaeological stratigraphy:

> Post-processualism has failed to further the practice of excavation and interpretation of stratigraphy because in making its initial case… against straw people, it has either ignored or created a jaundiced historiography of the development of British archaeological fieldwork and has re-cast practices

which were not uncommon twenty five or thirty years ago as new, specifically post-processual, developments (Thorpe 2012, 48).

Histories are written for a reason, and the problem might not be that histories of archaeology "are not radical enough," but rather that Kobiałka may have unrealistic (idealistic?) expectations of what the purpose(s) of any given history of archaeology may be. It is also possible that – as a sub-discipline – the history of archaeology has not yet reached a critical mass, a point where it might makes sense to discuss a "historiography" of archaeology.

We may also be witnessing a direct result of an inability to reconcile the underlying opposition between what – in a paper which I am truly grateful to Kobiałka for bringing to my attention – Carlo Ginzburg (1980, 24) identified as "anatomical" and "semiotic" approaches first to medicine and then to the human sciences (bearing in mind the questions of whether archaeology should be grouped with the arts, humanities, social or (given its ties to geology and palaeontology) natural science (cf. Kristiansen 2014, 26 for a recent discussion of Snow's "two cultures" thesis: Snow 1964), or whether archaeology is merely a "technique" (Taylor 1948, 43, 155; contrast Hodder 1999, 103; cf. Barker 1998, 160, Collis 2001, 1, Trócoli 1993, 53, Edgeworth 2003, 26, Jones and Richardson 2012, 88, etc.).

EXCAVATION

Although Kobiałka (2014, 423) notes that archaeology is often identified with excavation –

> Archaeology has been identified for many years with its own method, that of excavation. It is the way in which society sees archaeology and many archaeologists think of themselves too –

despite his stated interest in hermeneutics, he does not seem to consider the historical contexts for this identification. He does, however, raise the interesting issue of repeating a claim to the point where it becomes a "lie" (Kobiałka 2014, 420). I have noted elsewhere (Carver 2012, 19) how variations on the "excavation is destruction" argument (cf. Lucas 2001) have been repeated too many times to be believable. The following examples are just from Hodder's *Archaeological Process*:

- Excavation itself involves the removal of deposits in order to record them. As a result it becomes impossible to repeat the procedure. Digging is thus not like a laboratory experiment which can be repeated at different times and in different laboratories (Hodder 1999, 26);
- As so many have pointed out, a badly recorded excavation is worse than no excavation at all. Since excavation is destruction, the record has to be as accurate as possible (Hodder 1999, 31);

• Once the excavation of a particular block of soil has taken place, it cannot be repeated. The sampling must therefore be carefully constructed. And the sampling strategy depends on what it is that the archaeologists think they are excavating (Hodder 1999, 52);

• Archaeological excavation is destructive and non-experimental – we cannot repeat the experiment of the excavation (Hodder 1999, 55);

• A fixed definition of objects and contexts is required in archaeology. This is because… excavation destroys evidence. While we can return to the excavated artifacts to remeasure and redefine them into new categories, this cannot be done with soil contexts, etc. (Hodder 1999, 93);

• This emphasis on the act of digging is essential because… excavation is destructive (Hodder 1999, 103);

• It is not possible to go back to the soil contexts which have been destroyed in excavation (Hodder 1999, 118).

Kobiałka attributes such repetition to myth-making, and although it's fairly clear why Hodder might want to repeat the "excavation is destruction" "myth" (if in fact it is one) in order to emphasise the need for accurate documentation, it is not clear why the identification – or metaphor – of archaeology as excavation should be singled out for special emphasis.

Like other such myths, this question "why?" seems to have some – perhaps superficial – answers. We all know the story about how everything came together in 1859 for a "revolution in antiquarian thought which transformed the dilettantism of antiquaries into the historical research of archaeologists" (Daniel 1975, 52). Variations on this theme include Renfrew and Bahn's list (2000, 25) of "three great conceptual advances" that "offered a framework for studying the past, and for asking intelligent questions about it": "the *anti-quity of humankind*, Darwin's *principle of evolution*, and the *Three Age System*" (original emphasis). Compare Daniel's "three contributory sources" for "prehistoric archaeology":

> Prehistoric archaeology as we know it has three contributory sources – the advance of geology, the pushing backwards of the frontiers of history by archaeological means and, thirdly, the growth of archaeological technique out of antiquarianism (Daniel 1975, 54).

A French genealogy broadly parallels this schema:

> At the start, in the middle of the nineteenth century, French prehistoric archaeology was influenced both by the natural sciences, geology and paleontology, and by the new-born cultural anthropology. From the former two, it borrowed a chronological frame and notions of stratigraphy…. From the latter, it acquired an ethnological vision of prehistoric man. From all three, it adopted the leading paradigm of the century: evolutionism (Audouze and Leroi-Gourhan 1981, 170).

And as an example of a genealogy to a more general archaeology, consider the following:

> Three major intellectual currents reached fruition in the middle of the nineteenth century, setting the conceptual basis for archaeological interpretation. First… the geologist Charles Lyell proposed his principle of superimposition, or uniformitarianism.… Second, Thomsen and Worsaae proposed the three-age system… Third, Charles Darwin published his *Origin of Species* (Redman 1999, 49).

More important is the suggestion that – in contrast to any number of academic histories which emphasise theoretical development within the discipline, such as Renfrew and Bahn's "framework for studying the past" and Redman's "three major intellectual currents… [which set] the conceptual basis for archaeological interpretation," etc. – it was *not* some combination of the 3-age system, uniformitarianism and Darwinian evolution but "perhaps stratigraphy [which] symbolized the… difference between the old antiquarianism and new scientific prehistory" (Briggs 2007, 248). And, just as the changing relations between antiquarianism, numismatics, philology and "natural history," etc., reflected wider changes as a formerly gentlemanly pursuit – part of "a Romantic past where the polymath and antiquarian was a central figure" (Kristiansen 2014, 27) – evolved into the "scientific" discipline of archaeology, changing concepts of stratigraphy (Steno, William Smith, Schliemann, Pitt-Rivers, Wheeler, Harris) reflect wider changes *within* archaeology.

My own work – which has focussed on the history of archaeological stratigraphy and the problem that apparently no one ever set out to establish "the principle of stratigraphy… as a reliable technique for inferring chronology" (Trigger 2006, 9) – examines repeated assertions that "modern archæology is founded on the basic principle that dating is arrived at by study of stratification" (Noël-Hume 1953, 25), that stratigraphy is "one of archaeology's most fundamental tools" (Helwing 2009, 26) and "the most fundamental of archaeology's field methods" (Maca 2009, 31), "allows archaeology" (McAnany and Hodder 2009, 7), is "probably the most basic concept in the theoretical structure of the discipline" (Taylor 1948, 16), etc.

The question I keep coming back to is *why* – despite such repetition – why should stratigraphy have been singled out as being part of "an edifice of auxiliary theories and assumptions which archaeologists have agreed not to question" (Hodder 1992a, 125)?

In that vein, I would like to ask Dawid Kobiałka… why? Why – despite archaeology being identified with excavation – *why* are there so few histories of excavation methodology per se (Eberhardt (2011a; 2011b) providing a rare exception)?

Or – by extension – *why* do we need this "myth"? what purpose does it serve?

On the surface, Kobiałka's identification of archaeology with excavation is understandable, given that archaeology has been defined as:

> The systematic description or study of human antiquities, esp. as revealed by excavation (OED 1997).

It should be noted, however, that since the clear divisions between archaeologists, technicians and unskilled excavation "helpers" in – for example – Germany (cf. Planck 1999, 16/VLA 2006, 9) bring this identification into question, it might make more sense to qualify that broad identification of archaeology with excavation, by noting that "Field Archaeology" has been defined as

> the application of scientific method to the excavation of ancient objects (Woolley 1961, 18; compare Woodbury 1954, 295; Willey and Phillips 1958, 2).

Use of the word "systematic" in the OED definition – and "scientific method" in Woolley's – implies that archaeology aims at being *scientific*. It is not arbitrarily directed only at masterpieces of fine art, treasures, the unusual and superlative, etc.:

> We are concerned here with methodical digging for systematic information, not with the upturning of earth in a hunt for the bones of saints and giants or the armoury of heroes, or just plainly for treasure (Wheeler 1954, 6).

This aim to be "systematic" is one of the criteria which distinguishes archaeology from the chaos Thomsen faced when he started to organise the collections in the Danish National Museum, where the "rarities came chiefly from accidental finds, not from careful excavations, and they consisted principally of objects of intrinsic value, of gold and silver" (Worsaae 1881, 57; cf. Arnold 2006 for a description and discussion of juxtaposition and contrast in early museum collections), and contrasts with earlier variations on studying the material remains of the past. "The Greeks and Romans," for example, were not "systematic" in their studies, since they

> did not develop the necessary prerequisites for writing prehistory, namely the collection, excavation, classification, description and analysis of the material remains of the human past (Daniel 1975, 16).

It might also be worth emphasising the fact that archaeology is the description or study of *human* antiquities (i.e. Daniel's "material remains of the *human* past"). Archaeology does not deal with dinosaurs or the fossil remains of other species, which is the domain of geology. It does not deal with human ancestral forms (i.e. archaeology is *not* palaeontology):

> Archaeology... deals with a period limited to a few thousand years and its subject is not the universe, not even the human race, but modern man (Woolley 1961, 14).

Archaeology is also the description or study of human *antiquities* (i.e. "artifacts," "material culture" and/or "material remains of the human past"). At a low level, archaeology is

"the study of bones, arrowheads, fragments of pots, oystershell middens, figurines and other relics that survive as hard evidence from the past" (Dawkins 2004, 12) – a study of *things* – through which the archaeologist aims to interpret or infer human *activities* (cf. Hawkes's (1954, 161-162) "ladder of inference"):

> Archaeology is the study of past peoples based on the things they left behind and the ways they left their imprint on the world (Deetz 1996, 4).

And finally, archaeology is the description or study of human antiquities, *especially* as revealed by excavation. Human antiquities are also studied in the form of written documents; this is called history. The study of inscriptions is called epigraphy. The study of human antiquities as revealed through the comparison of ancient and modern languages is part of philology. The study of human antiquities as revealed in graphic images is part of iconography. Etc.

In order to bypass pointless semantics and provoke discussion, I often refer to a definition of archaeology as

> the discipline with the theory and practice for the recovery of unobservable hominid behaviour patterns from indirect traces in bad samples (Clarke 1973, 17).

These disciplinary definitions are complicated by the recent attempts to *re*introduce hermeneutics to archaeology (i.e. Hodder 1991/1992d; 1992b; 1992c; 1992f; 1992g; 1992h; 1992i; 1999; Tilley 1989b; 1991, etc.), attempts which seem to be based on a... superficial (?) analogy between material remains and text, an analogy which not only tends to blur the distinction between history and archaeology, but also ignores the long struggle to free archaeology from its former role as "handmaiden of history" (cf. Van Riper 1993, 30, 215). One historian of the discipline attributes advances in British *pre*historic archaeology (an extension of historical and philological methods into the *pre*-textual past) to

> The publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* and the belated arrival of hermeneutic methods from Germany [which] clashed with the long-standing penchant of the British for blending science and theology (Van Riper 1993, 13).

This attempted *re*introduction suggests that archaeologists do not learn from the history of their discipline and that, by extension, the history of archaeology is not well integrated within archaeology as a whole. Given archaeology's traditional role as "handmaiden to history," this may seem ironic, but – given that the histories of scientific disciplines often tend to be "cardboard" (Gould 1987, 104, 134; compare Fara 2010, xv) or "Whig" histories (Butterfield 1931; cf. Gould 1987, 5, Kuhn 1977b, 135, Hacking 2002, 24, 182; cf. Brück 2007, 238 for the relations between archaeology and Whig history) intended to

serve pedagogic purposes (Kuhn 1977a, 186, 1977c, 105, 110, 1977e, 327/1998b, 440) – may be understandable.

And the relations between history and archaeology are further complicated by the fact that, historically, archaeological research was not seen in terms of being an end in itself, but rather as a means to confirm, clarify or "illuminate" otherwise obscure texts: "to determine an ancient text of western culture by exposing [its] objects of reference" (Schmidt 2001, 220). Familiar examples include "Biblical archaeology" and Schliemann's attempt to verify Homer's account of the Trojan wars (for an example of this process in reverse, cf. Bulwer-Lytton 1946). The now less familiar example of Champollion will be discussed below. And in this sense, perhaps, Daniel's "antiquarian revolution" did represent a great leap forward (towards an archaeology that was *not* text-based, but could "illuminate" the "obscure page" of prehistory (cf. Warne 1846, 171)), except that – by leaping straight into prehistory – it contravened uniformitarian principles of moving from the known (historic or ethnographic) to the unknown (prehistoric).

Lacking this wider historical context, Kobiałka apparently fails to recognise that archaeology is identified with excavation partly because classical sources are often vague, full of terms that had no referents – signifiers with no known signifieds – effectively reducing portions of some of the greatest works of classical literature to…

> a Tale
> Told by an Ideot, full of sound and fury
> Signifying nothing (Shakespeare 1990, 939 [V. v.]).

"Textual" topics debated by antiquaries included attempts to locate places named in Roman itineraries (E.W.S. 1852; 1853; Still 1853), to calculate the date when Caesar landed in Britain (Halley 1686; H.L.L. 1846; Robson 1866; 1866; Dunkin 1846), to determine whether Caesar's "*vitrum* [was] a reference to woad or was it something quite different like glass" (Finlay 2004, 322), etc., while the seemingly endless discussion over what was meant by "Samian ware" (a.k.a. "terra sigillata" [Kempe 1844; Chaffers 1844; 1845; 1845; Price 1844; 1845, etc.]) led Samuel Birch (1845, 567) to finally ask, "If these are not the Samian vessels, what are?"

Even at the time such researches seemed quite trivial. In "Democritus to the Reader" (prefaced to *Anatomy of Melancholy*), for example, Robert Burton (1850, 72) grouped "curious antiquaries" with "supercilious critics, grammatical triflers, note-makers" who

> puzzle themselves to find out how many streets in Rome, houses, gates, towers, Homer's country, Æneas's mother, Niobe's daughters.… What clothes the senators did wear in Rome, what shoes, how they sat, where they went to the close-stool, how many dishes in a mess, what sauce.

Peter Burke (2003, 278) explains that Burton's "reference to 'how they sat'" refers

> to a book on the *triclinium* by the Spanish scholar Pedro Chacón. In similar fashion one character in Addison's *Dialogues on Medals* (1854, 276) pokes fun at scholars who "are amazed at a man's ignorance, who believes that the toga had any sleeves to it till the declension of the Roman Empire."

While it might be suggested that Burton utilised an effect calculated to serve his satirical ends – and Burke essentially agrees with Burton that early "attempts to write the history of ancient togas, triremes, chariots, bracelets or lamps are likely to seem insufferably trivial and pedantic" – given that some might find the "trivial and pedantic" results of his encyclopaedic treatment of melancholy less interesting than the discourses on togas, sandals, toilets, etc., that he disparaged, his criticisms might also be seen as a last defence by reactionary scholastics defending the primacy of the written text, despite its many shortcomings.

And yet… early "antiquaries" like Halley (1714, 299) and Malthus (1993, 20) did – and later archaeologists like Martin Biddle (1968, 109) continue to – pose legitimate questions (cf. Gould 1991b, 455) that could not and cannot be answered using historical sources. Although – as Burke explains – Burton's "reference to shoes is probably to a book by Nigronius, *De caligula veterorum*, published in 1617, three years before the first edition of Burton," as late as 1684 one Thomas Machel still had trouble identifying "several *Sandals*" found in a well:

> When I first discovered *them*, I thought peradventure, that the people here, in former times, might have worn such *Shoes*, as they do in *Ireland*, and in the *High lands* of *Scotland*, which they call *Broagues*: and that these might be such; but having the opportunity of discoursing an *Highlander* that travelled by, while we were digging: and another *Gentleman* the very next day, who had traveled those *Countryes*; I was fully satisfied that they were not *Broagues* (Machel 1684, 558).

Machel explains that, of all the artifacts recovered, "the Sandals were most admired by me, because I never saw any before" (Machel 1684, 558), adding that – failing any other means for dating – their mere presence "may serve to bespeak the *Antiquity* of [the well], for sure 'tis long since any *Sandals* were worn in this *Country*" (1684, 556).

Such issues indicate how close ties linking archaeology and philology – "an art which traditionally entailed the formal interpretation of words in classical books" (Mali 2002, 4) – were, historically. Indeed, "throughout the whole of the nineteenth century, 'archaeology' in Germany meant either philology or classical art history" (Ottaway 1973, 105), and its importance may be judged by the fact that

> Alexander von Humboldt recreated the educational system with philology at its core. His brother, Wilhelm, played a remarkable part in bringing home from the South Pacific new languages to study

and new thoughts about how to do it. Philology became the premier academic subject in Germany. Nietzsche may be its most remembered professor (Hacking 2002, 126).

The sub-disciplines of "Classical and Near Eastern archeology continued their long-standing affiliations with philology and art" (Taylor 1948, 17). Moreover, archaeology uses a comparative method which "had achieved great success in philology" (Harris 2001, 170).

The philological emphasis on words (logocentrism; cf. Ryle 1971a: 271, Baines and Brophy 2006, 238, Hacking 1975) did not just dominate 20th-century philosophy –

> Traditional scholarship has lost this [graphic] root to our past. Most research is reported by text alone, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. Pictures, if included at all, are poorly reproduced, gathered in a center section divorced from relevant text, and treated as little more than decoration (Gould 2007b, 427) –

but may have been the norm in all sciences since the very beginning:

> The purely literary transmission was so important, that thing which we call science, and which might rather be called natural philosophy, was first and foremost a series of ancient texts upon which one commentary after another would be compiled, often by people writing, so to speak at a desk. If even at the Renaissance philology was considered the queen of the sciences, this was because the man who was master of the classical languages did in fact hold the key position (Butterfield 1982, 78).

This superimposition of "one commentary after another" created the palimpsests more radical scholars sought to read through.

Before the use of paper was widespread, texts were written on parchment or vellum (animal skin), which was so valuable it was often reused, with any number of corrupt texts being superimposed, one atop one another. A palimpsest therefore reflects a profoundly different cultural context from Hodder's text, and – by combining loss and noise (cf. Shannon 1948; Ascher 1968, 47; Schiffer 1983, 676) – provides a better metaphor for archaeology. Given all Clarke's "bad samples," archaeology is less like reading a text and more like decryption, philology, or trying to reconstruct the transmitted message from a bad copy (cf. Weaver 1962, 103).

This textual approach also contradicts the general trend to equate archaeological deposits with geological sediments and raises conceptual problems because, among other things, it points back to Natural Theology, where "reading the past" from the "Book of Nature" (e.g. Hutton 2007, 156; Malthus 1993, 142; Whewell 1832, 117; cf. Harrison 1998, 3, 45; Kemp 2004, 169; Van Riper 1993, 52-53; McLuhan 2003a, 181; 2003b, 125; etc.) was believed to complement "reading God's word" in the Bible: "we must learn to read the records of creation in a strange language" (Mantell 1857, 26; cf. Zimmerman 2001, 32; compare Colt Hoare 1812, 2).

Digging down to reveal the foundations of the original text was also radical in ways and to an extent now difficult to imagine; as radical as exposing European scholars to classical texts in the so-called "Renaissance" or making the bible accessible to those who did not read Latin, Greek or Hebrew (cf. Kuhn's discussion (1977d, 57-58) of "the so-called Merton thesis" (Merton 1970)):

> In the course of his preparations, Luther had arranged for the university printer to prepare a text of the Psalter which was free of the glosses and commentaries of the Fathers and Doctors. The wide margins of this text, which in the normal course of events would have been reserved for the exegetical insights of past authorities, were left blank to enable students to record their own comments and observations. This seemingly innocent event was to have far-reaching implications, and has not unfittingly been described as 'the symbolic moment of transition between ancient and modern hermeneutics' (Harrison 1998, 93).

Granted, of course, this heroic image of Luther has been questioned:

> If so much of the modern world has been placed on the shoulders of Luther, this has been due at least in part to the historian's optical illusion, to certain features in the technique of history-writing, and to the exploitation of that dubious phraseology which has become the historian's stock-in-trade (Butterfield 1931, 61).

Historians learn about such "optical illusions" as part of their professional training, but archaeologists – who are generally amateurs when it comes to writing history – apparently do not. Historians are also aware of the contrast between the way von Ranke and Niebuhr approached their subject, the former focusing on the deeds of "great men" (cf. Kobiałka 2014, 426-427), the latter looking at what is now generally known as "social history" (i.e. the history of ordinary people and, by extension, such "insufferably trivial and pedantic" objects as "ancient togas, triremes, chariots, bracelets or lamps"; cf. Schnapp 1996, 305; Zimmerman 2001, 112, etc.). The fact that historians recognise that Niebuhr's approach was just as radical (and, perhaps, just as threatening; cf. Wordsworth 1994a, 1994b, 1994c) as, for example, a history of archaeological excavation methods should serve as a reminder that we study history partly so we can see the present from a different perspective.

Ideally, of course (and as will be argued in detail), contrasting these approaches to history – the schools of von Ranke and Niebuhr – helps enforce awareness of the rather Hegelian fact that there are different ways of seeing the world. And in archaeology we could also talk of contrasting theory and grand narratives with what James Deetz (1996) called "small things forgotten."

Although not quite as "insufferably trivial and pedantic" as Burton's "togas, triremes, chariots, bracelets or lamps,"

> In his historical investigations… Vico did not deal with heroic achievements of individuals and their world-views, the common stuff of the Renaissance tradition in cultural history, but rather concentrated on the attitudes of ordinary people toward everyday life. And he was not interested so much in their conceptual ideas as in their sensual images of life, death, marriage, work, sex, family, and so on. What was needed, Vico rightly saw, is a new kind of philology, a truly New Science, that would enable us to recover those common-sensual and truly 'human' ideas from the high-minded and mostly authoritative sources of the past (Mali 2002, 264).

Mali's "New Science" – as a reaction against the scholastic reliance upon textual evidence and traditional "history" – is reminiscent of the agenda Francis Bacon described in *The New Organon* (Bacon 2000); while the idea(l) of "a new kind of philology" was explored by Foucault, (among others):

> Key words in Foucault's work would be, for example: Labor, Language, Life, Madness, Masturbation, Medicine, Military, Nietzsche, Prison, Psychiatry, Quixote, Sade, and Sex (Hacking 2002, 73).

This basic dichotomy would probably be well-known to those well-versed in history in general and the histories of disciplines other than archaeology; within the broader *cultural* context within which archaeology and the history of archaeology play just a very small role.

Only by doing something as "radical" as stepping back – deliberately alienating ourselves in order to change our perspective – can we hope to move beyond (for example) apparently superficial criticisms of our tendency to reduce archaeology to excavation by considering archaeology's historically more limited role of "illuminating" text; or by looking at these issues in terms of the older, more fundamental opposition between textual authority and *seeing for yourself*, with your own eyes.

Such alienation is an integral part of my own general critique of archaeology, one that aims to move away from the traditional pathway – from the "known to the unknown" (Hume 2004: 68-69 [footnote]); Lyell 1990, 160; Woolley 1961, 54); or, rather, from the hypothesised to the deduced – because of the recognition that "An objective perspective on the workings of science cannot be attained from a viewpoint situated *inside* the very activities that one seeks to describe" (Edgeworth 2003: 9 [original emphasis]). Hence, in searching for possible antitheses, the present study follows Atkinson's advice (1946, 129-130), not to look at a profile or a section but rather at the entire discipline "upside-down" with the expectation that, from such an "unaccustomed posture it is frequently possible to notice details not apparent to the normal view." The problem is not only in trying to envision *what* another type of history of archaeology or stratigraphic analysis might look like, but also *why* it is necessary to do so:

how can we possibly examine something we are using all the time? How can we analyse the terms in which we habitually express our most simple and straightforward observations, and reveal their presuppositions? How can we discover the kind of world we presuppose when proceeding as we do? (Feyerabend 1993, 22).

For that you have to go outside, to adopt a different perspective and look back at yourself – reflexively, counterintuitively – which is the indirect goal of many social sciences. Consider, for example, "a fact of profound importance," the fact that "anthropology can be trained on the culture of which it is itself a part, and it increasingly is" (Geertz 1993, 14 [footnote 1]). Anthropologists like Geertz recognise that this kind of self-reflection "raises a few tricky and rather special second order problems"; do archaeologists?

Given the success antiquaries had in providing an alternative to or corrective control upon written history with their researches into medals and medallions – a success which later geologists sought to emulate – material remains were seen to be more complete and trustworthy than text:

In 1559, the Venetian Sebastiano Erizzo noted that the medals of the Roman Empire "reveal the whole history of these emperors".... In 1587 the Spaniard Antonio Agustín declared that he had "more trust in medals, tablets and stones than in anything written".... In 1697, John Evelyn described medals as "the most Authentic and certain Reporters, preferable to any other" (Burke 2003, 276-277).

Like philology, numismatics was once "an important branch of archaeology" (Pettigrew 1848, 8, cf. Kemmers and Myrberg 2011, 88), in part because of the ("insufferably trivial and pedantic"?) way coins and medallions illustrated (illuminated?) ancient life:

Would you see a patterne of the *Rogus* or funeral pile burnt at the canonization of the Roman Emperors? would you see how the *Augurs* Hat, and *Lituns* were made? Would you see the true and undoubted models of their Temples, Alters, Deities, Columnes, Gates, Arches, Aquæducts, Bridges, Sacrifices, Vessesl, *Sellæ Curules*, Ensignes and Standards, Navall and mural Crownes, Amphytheaters, Circi, Bathes, Chariots, Trophies, Acnilia, and a thousand things more; Repair to the old coyness, and you shall find them, and all things else that ever they did, made, or used, there shall you see them excellently and lively represented (Peacham 1634, 123-124).

This importance not only reflects the success antiquaries had had using images on medallions to either correct errors or aid in interpreting historical documents, but also the fact that, unlike documents (which are prone to copying error, mistranslation, etc.), coins were believed to be *authentic*:

Bookes and histories and the like are but copyes of Antiquity bee they never so truly descended upon us: but coynes are the very Antiquities themselves (Peacham 1634, 123).

No less a personage than Robert Hooke (Pugliese 2004; cf. Merton 1970, 146) observed that "Shells and other Bodies are the Medals, Urnes, or Monuments of Nature" (Schneer 1954, 267, Schnapp 1996, 231), and in that sense William Smith's (1817, ix) comment that "Organized Fossils are to the naturalist as coins to the antiquary" was high praise indeed. As the antiquary (or archaeologist?) Charles Roach Smith (cf. Rhodes 2004) was later to state, "It is a received axiom, that no work of art so fully sets forth the civilization of a country as the coinage" (Smith 1859, 8). Smith may have been paraphrasing Camden (1610; cf. Arnold 2006, 71):

> it is agreed upon among all learned men, that there ariseth very much light to the illustration of ancient Histories out of ancient Coines.

Difficulties then arose when trying to reconcile historical documents with material remains:

> Herodian, a Roman soldier and a Greek historian of the middle of the third century, in his description of the Britons in the time of Severus, says: "They are a very warlike and bloody people; their arms are only a narrow shield and a lance with a sword that hangs at their naked side." Of the sword and the lance we have abundant instances, but how are we to reconcile the narrow shield with the circular form only discovered? The author says he was an eyewitness to what he has written, and yet he makes no mention of the axe or celt, by far the most numerous of the British weapons known (Kirkmann 1865, 138).

Similarly,

> From these drawings and remarks it will be seen that the description which Agathias gives us of the angon of the Franks is verified by archæological discovery. But we have yet to account for the fact that no weapon of this character has been discovered in the Merovingian cemeteries of France – a fact which we may venture to explain by supposing that, as the Ripuarian and the Salic Franks, though of one great Teutonic family, were governed by different laws, so also they may have differed in many usages both in peace and in war, and among others in the adoption of the weapons so minutely described by the historian (Akerman 1855b, 79).

Obviously there will always be problems when trying to reconcile different ways of seeing the world; and however good Hegelian synthesis may be in theory, it is something else in practice.

As archaeology, though, the present study presents a clear reversal of general trends by focusing on textual problems like those which initially spurred interest in material culture as an object of study:

Like the humanist movement out of which it developed, antiquarianism was originally text-centered, focused on the reading of inscriptions on monuments and coins, marble, and metal. However, in the course of time some antiquaries made what we might call a "visual turn," becoming more and more interested in the material culture of the past, including images (Burke 2003, 273).

Some of the problems with textual interpretation – the philology and hermeneutics associated with "the reading of inscriptions on monuments and coins, marble, and metal" – have already been introduced. Since "any segment of past actuality which is verbalized, in writing or orally, is not that segment itself but merely an abstraction filtered through the mind of the verbalizer" (Taylor 1948, 31 (i.e. by being "inscribed" it has become "data" or a "signifier")), in contrast to semiotics (theoretically) and the deliberately limited meaning inherent in a "stop" sign, text can be contradictory or unclear (i.e. "There is a certain ambiguity in the phraseology of these ancient chronicles which should make us the more careful in our interpretation of them" (Smart 1865, 281)), and/or incomplete, often lacking "those minute details which are so essential to satisfactory appropriation." Although, at the small – Niebuhrian or "insufferably trivial and pedantic"? – scale at which most archaeology is done (i.e. at the scale of the individual site),

Historical records rarely provide a complete sequence of events for a particular site. On the one hand they record specific major events such as natural disasters and political developments in a national or regional overview. On the other hand, at a more local level, they can provide details, such as transfers of title deeds, which identify the individuals concerned (Hammer *et al.* 1993, 15),

even at the scale of the history of English towns, relevant historical documents are "primarily evidence of the state of mind of the person who write them," and

they record for the most part political, legal, financial and administrative matters, both secular and ecclesiastical. They do not record the facts of daily life, the plan and character of the town, of its streets, houses, shops, churches, palaces and defences; they do not record, except incidentally, the historical processes of origin, growth and decline as these would appear in the changing fabric of the town (Biddle 1968, 110).

We are also warned against the von Rankean approach in reminders that "one must be suspicious of élitist prejudice in the documents that have been produced and preserved" (Embree 1987, 76); and that "the histories of mankind that we possess are histories only of the higher classes" (Malthus 1993, 20).

So when T.G. Bonney (1866, 6), for example, noted that "there is no mention whatever of stone circles in any of the Roman accounts of Britain," the question arises: How did the Romans miss something as "fixed in the earth as not to be mistaken or misplaced" (Smith 1816, i) as Stonehenge?

One answer is: they probably didn't; their records are simply incomplete. Discussing "the manuscript sources for the topography of Roman Britain as Stukeley would have known them (and as indeed we know them today, the only significant additions being derived from place-names recorded on inscriptions)," Piggott (1985, 134) points out that,

> Apart from scattered references in the Greek and Roman geographers and historians from Pytheas in the mid-fourth century BC to Procopius in the sixth century AD, and the explicit historical material in Caesar, Tacitus, Dio, and Ammianus Marcellinus (to mention the most important), the essential documents are five in number.

Thus the lack of written references to Stonehenge may only reflect sampling error, given the relatively small number of Roman sources now extant. Similarly, Lyell noted how a dearth of classical references to the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum enabled an Italian Wernerian by the name of Lippi to contend "that neither were the cities destroyed in the year 79, nor by a volcanic eruption, but purely by the agency of water charged with transported matter." As with much Wernerian geology, despite now seeming too ridiculous to be believed by even the most incredulous, "His arguments were partly of an historical nature, derived from the silence of contemporary historians, respecting the fate of the cities which, as [Lyell had] already stated, is most remarkable" (Lyell 1990, 351).

Such gaps may help explain why *historians* have long compared their textual sources to what we would consider to be *archaeological* remains:

> Si d'un grand Palais ruiné, on en trouvait tous les débris confusément dispersés dans l'étenduë d'un vaste terrain, & qu'on fut sur qu'il n'en manquât aucun, ce seroit un prodigieux travail de les rassembler tous, ou du moins, sans les rassembler, de se faire, en les considerant, un idée juste de toute la structure de ce Palais. Mais s'il manquoit des débris, le travail d'imaginer cette structure seroit plus grand, & d'autant plus grand qu'il manqueroit plus de débris, & il seroit fort possible que l'on se fit de cet Edifice différens plans, qui n'auroient presque rien de commun entr'eux. Tel est l'état où se trouve pour nous l'Historie des temps plus anciens [let us assume that we are able to find the fragments from the ruins of a huge palace, which have been scattered over a large area of land. Should such be the case, and if we were certain no piece was missing, it would be a prodigious work to collect them all, or to come up with an accurate idea of the entire structure of this palace just by looking at them. Moreover, should there be some pieces missing, it would be even harder to imagine the structure. Indeed, the more fragments that were missing the more difficult it would be. Under these circumstances we would be likely to produce different plans of the building that had almost nothing in common with the original. This is the state, at present, of our most ancient history] (Fontenelle 1740, 377-378; English translation: Cohen and Wakefield 2008, xxxii).

Geologists like Lyell, in turn, used used such faulty texts as analogies for the geological record:

In order to set this in a clear light, let the reader suppose himself acquainted with just one-tenth part of the words of some living language, and that he is presented with several books purporting to be written in the same tongue ten centuries ago. If he should find that he comprehends a tenth part of the terms in the ancient volumes, and that he cannot divine the meaning of the other nine-tenths, would he not be strongly disposed to believe that, for a thousand years, the language has remained *unaltered*? Could he, without great labour and study, interpret the greater part of what is written in the antique documents, he must feel at once convinced that, in the interval of ten centuries, a great revolution in the language had taken place. He might, undoubtedly, by comparing the conventional signs already known to him, with those not previously acquired, and by observing the analogies and associations of terms in many of the old books, come at length to discover the true import of much of the ancient writings, and guess at the meaning of nearly all the rest; but if he is entirely shut out from all communication with those who now use the same language, he will never fully understand the value of some terms (Lyell 1990, 461-462).

Just as archaeologists sought to establish a noble pedigree for their discipline – first by emphasising ties to biology (Darwinian evolution) and geology (uniformitarianism, Steno's stratigraphy) – geologists and evolutionary biologists tried to establish *their* pedigree by making similar analogies… to antiquaries.

Darwin, in *his* turn, "following out Lyell's metaphor," looked

at the natural geological record, as a history of the world imperfectly kept, and written in a changing dialect; of this history we possess the last volume alone, relating only to two or three countries. Of this volume, only here and there a short chapter has been preserved; and of each page, only here and there a few lines. Each word of the slowly-changing language, in which the history is supposed to be written, being more or less different in the interrupted succession of chapters, may represent the apparently abruptly changed forms of life, entombed in our consecutive, but widely separated formations (Darwin 1859, 310-311; cf. Gould 1989, 60; compare Dawkins 2004, 133; 2006, 16).

Philip Barker (1998, 13) was perhaps most effective at applying this metaphor to archaeology and extending it to its logical conclusion:

Every archaeological site is itself a document. It can be read by a skilled excavator, but it is destroyed by the very process which enables us to read it. Unlike the study of an ancient document, the study of a site by excavation is an unrepeatable experiment.

And again:

To dig holes, however well recorded, in an ancient site is like cutting pieces out of a hitherto unexamined manuscript, transcribing the fragments, and then destroying them, a practice which would

reduce historians to an uncomprehending stupor, but whose counterpart is accepted by the majority of archaeologists as valid research (Barker 1998, 79).

Classical sources can be vague or untrustworthy for other reasons. Isaac Newton (1964, 3), for example, noted that "The Greek antiquities are full of poetical fictions; because the Greeks wrote nothing in prose, before the conquest of Asia by Cyrus the Persian." David Hume (2004, 53) made a similar comment about the Romans –

> The veracity of Quintus Curtius is as much to be suspected, when he describes the supernatural courage of Alexander, by which he was hurried on singly to attack multitudes, as when he describes his supernatural force and activity, by which he was able to resist them –

and Vico's theories of the evolution of language (cf. Vico 2001, 24-25, 44 [52], 86-87 [173], 173 [432], etc.) seem to have been founded upon similar observations. Antiquarian writers expressed a similar distrust of text:

> The infancy of history has been chiefly preserved in the language of poesy, and has come down to us delineated and modelled conformably rather to the capricious taste and prevailing raptures of the votaries of the muses; and it is admitted that the pagan writers and historians of that early period were the mere creatures of fanciful imagination, which in after ages obtained the substantial belief which is almost inseparable from the proverbial principle, "that what is obscure is necessarily sublime" (Post 1848, 66-67; cf. Burke 2015, 48).

As an example of how futile it could be to try to answer some questions simply from textual sources, Thomas Wright would later reject "ingenious attempts" made "to reconcile the appearance of the country" near Church Stretton "assumed" to have been the "real site of the last battle of Caractacus" against the Romans:

> I will not throw away time in examining what appears to me so futile a question. The description of Tacitus is given merely from hearsay; it is so extremely indefinite that we might find twenty portions that would answer to it in any hilly country, and it does not appear to me to apply at all, at least without very great stretches of the imagination. It is, at the best, one of those fruitless discussions which antiquaries would do better to avoid (Wright 1853, 41).

The overall effect would be too reminiscent of the old debate over the number of angels dancing on the head of a pin (cf. Gould 1992: 149, Warburton 2011: 193, etc.), perhaps, were it not for Schliemann's success at Troy.

Ultimately we are asking "How trustworthy are written sources?" and wondering why – if text is so questionable that we had to do archaeology in order to make it compre-

hensible – *why* we are going back to making text a standard in our analogies (i.e. claiming that "the archaeological record is like text")? There are any number of ways to analyse and evaluate historical texts, including comparison with other texts (checking, among other things, for "copying-fidelity" [Dawkins 2006, 194, 195; cf. Dawkins 2004, 133) – coherence (cf. Hodder 1999, 61; Feyerabend 1993, 138) and/or consistency within a net/web of meaning – and archaeological excavation. Ultimately, though, for periods where there is textual evidence, textual and material sources should be complimentary:

> The artifacts studied by archaeologists tell us about history but not in the language of the historian. The archaeologist deals in things and not words (Hodder 1992h, 11).

Although merging these studies of "things" and "words" (i.e. *Les Mots et les Choses* [i.e. the original French title of Foucault's *Order of Things* (Foucault 1994)) provides the basis for historical archaeology (cf. Hammer *et al.* 1993), history is also subject to problems which parallel many of those which plague archaeological documentation:

> What has to be stressed... is that we are compelled to take Thucydides on faith. He left no ground for re-examination or alternative judgement. We cannot control the reliability of his informants, since they are not named. We cannot check his judgement of what was irrelevant, since he omitted it ruthlessly; or of what he decided was a false report or a wrong explanation, since he left that out too (Finley 1972, 29).

We essentially face the same problem in archaeology to the extent that we cannot go beyond making "rigid statements, which we can either accept or reject, but not question" (Collcutt 1979, 291).

Although Kobiałka's "identification" is more neutral, Tilley (1989a, 275) is one of those who perceives "the notion that [archaeology] is primarily about excavation" as "a major problem which has always dogged" the discipline.

Neither Kobiałka nor Tilley seems to question the reason(s) for this strong identification, an identification which makes sense within a "broader historical context" which opposes archaeology and history, archaeology being concerned with material objects obtained through excavation, and history dealing with written documents. One might even expect some conflicts to arise when considering the history of *all* archaeology, if only because archaeologists are neither historians nor historians of science.

Given such problems with text, it should perhaps be obvious why archaeology has been identified with excavation. Within a "broader historical context," archaeology as excavation was a (perhaps) inevitable result of the paradigm shift away from the texts studied by medieval scholastics to "autopsy."

AUTOPSY

"Traditional" or "cardboard history" depicts early archaeologists – *antiquaries* – as Gandalfs: sterile scholastics (a stereotype which parallels their depiction as Romantics). If anything, early archaeologists – antiquaries – opposed scholastic adherence to the written authority of classical authors and later commentaries:

> In a passage which has often been quoted in the last thirty years the fifteenth-century Byzantine humanist Manuel Chrysoloras used the term *autopsia* – in other words eyewitnessing, seeing with one's own eyes – to refer to the evidence of material remains such as sculptures for "what kinds of arms the ancients had, what kind of clothes they wore... how they formed lines of battle, fought, laid siege" (Burke 2003, 276).

The concept is actually much older –

> when men first began to philosophise crudely, they used the evidence of their senses, which the Greeks call *autopsía*, seeing for oneself (later, this was used by Epicurus who, being a philosopher of the senses, was content to base his judgments on sensory evidence) (Vico 2001, 204 [499]) –

and one might consider the derivation of "the original Greek term for 'historian,' which means an 'eyewitness,'" as

> the one who obtains truth about what happened not merely by repeating 'what they say' (this is, literally, an act of 'mythmaking'), but rather by examination of witnesses and through enquiry into the actual causes of what happened (Mali 2002, 214).

This etymology seems to have been forgotten, somehow, over time. When Galileo ("everybody's favorite hero" (Hacking 2002, 185); cf. Ginzburg 1980, 15) "boldly writes '*observavi*' – I have *observed*," it seems

> No other word could capture, with such terseness and accuracy, the major change in concept and procedure (not to mention ethical valuation) that marked the transition to what we call "modern" science (Gould 2000d, 30).

What was revolutionary (radical?) to an extent now difficult to recognise was the way antiquaries – early archaeologists – deliberately sought remains of *material* culture to help address the shortcomings of written text. As a literal "rebirth", the Renaissance – "when *re*discovery of *classical* knowledge became the primary goal of scholarship (Gould 2000c, 148 [added emphasis]; cf. Gould 2000b, 53) – was largely text-based:

> Universities had been founded in the Middle Ages not so much to create *new* knowledge as to preserve *old* knowledge. This meant that knowledge, almost by definition, came from books. Whatever you saw with your own eyes didn't qualify. Even if it was true, it wasn't knowledge. Potters learned about clay from the clay itself; miners and quarrymen learned about rocks from the rocks. But scholars, if they had even the mildest curiosity about these materials of the earth, generally contented themselves with what they could glean from the pages of Aristotle or other texts. To dirty one's hands with the things themselves was beyond the pale for academics (Cutler 2003, 19 [original emphasis]; cf. Quinton 1980, 29).

In opposition to the Renaissance and scholastic – academic? – traditions we find Steno's dissections (Cutler 2003, 38-39), Leonardo's autopsies (Nicholl 2005, 444-445), Galileo turning his telescope to the moon and later Jupiter and Saturn (Gould 2000d, 29-31), Agricola (1974; 2006) studying geology and mining science, etc.

To some degree, a distinction is maintained by continuing to oppose "pure" (von Ranke?) and "applied" (Niebuhr?) sciences (cf. Gould 1991a, 496; Kuhn 1998a; Hollinger 1998, 107; etc.) – between theory and praxis – and it might be argued that by *idolizing* text (i.e. returning to textual metaphors of reading archaeology and doing hermeneutics) we are making an error similar to that made by those social scientists who idealise the "natural" sciences from an external vantage point.

I should perhaps point out that I have no objections to using hermeneutics so long as we understand what it means, not only in terms of its application to the archaeological record, but also – potentially – as a tool for the reflexive study of the texts archaeologists have published over the years in order to produce the "radical" histories Kobiałka and I would like to see. Ironically, of course, the danger in adopting a hermeneutical approach is of taking hermeneutics out of context…

The "dirty hands" to which Cutler referred to were those of that celebrated dissector, Nicholas Steno. In archaeological contexts, of course, "dirty hands" result not from handling "things themselves" but from that other form of dissection: excavating, which means that for an antiquary/archaeologist, "autopsy" is something very different from what as it is for an astronomer:

> Galileo simply said: I have observed it; I have seen it with my own eyes. How could old Aristotle, or even the present pope himself, deny such evidence? (Gould 2000d, 30).

Thus it should not be so surprising to find that, according to another analogy so common as to almost be cliché, archaeological excavation is like an autopsy or "careful…dissection of the earth" (Brown and Harris 1993, 10; cf. Binford 1964, 431, Simmons *et al.* 1993, 182; etc.; for the distinction between dissection and autopsy, cf. Crossland 2009, 103, 111). Philip Barker (1998, 101-102) penned one of the most developed versions of this analogy:

Compare an excavation with the dissection of a human body. A trench across the chest will give a certain amount of information about the heart and lungs and part of the spine, but nothing at all about the brain or the kidneys, or, for that matter, the kneecaps. The only logical way to 'excavate' a body is to dissect it layer by layer, taking the skin from the muscles, the muscles from the skeleton and so on, eventually dissecting each organ down to the nerves and tiny blood vessels which make it up. So it is with an archaeological site. It should be dissected logically from the surface down, in the way that the site dictates, layer by layer, feature by feature, down to the smallest visible unit, and sometimes beyond (for example, the mechanical or chemical analysis of deposits in order to understand their structure or their contents).

Its use may date back to the Swedish naturalist Rudbeck:

In one of his pictures, he dissects the earth and lifts up its "flesh" – the ground – in order to prove that Sweden actually was the golden land that many classical authors had written about…. As we all know, dissecting is preferably done on dead bodies! (Jensen 2004, 74; cf. Bahn 1996, 37; Schnapp 1996, 200-202).

Historically, as well, it should be noted that

the histories of medicine and antiquarianism are intimately linked. Certainly, the orienting analytical metaphors of modernism – of depth and surface, of coming-to-light and of discovery – are held in common by archaeology and anatomy…. It is well known that curiosity cabinets and early museums were filled with medical specimens alongside antiquities… but perhaps less attention is paid to the medical training of antiquarians such as Thomas Browne and William Stukeley. By the 19th century, an interest in anatomy went hand in hand with the study of the past, and it was common for medical men such as Robert Knox, Joseph Barnard Davies and Samuel George Morton to collect and analyse ancient human crania alongside modern (Crossland 2009, 112).

Since the "antiquarian revolution," archaeology has been tied less closely to philology, numismatics and medicine, and more closely tied to geology (cf. Van Riper 1993, 75, ff.), a discipline which has always been concerned with "getting below the surface." As early as 1684 Martin Lister (a "master physiognomist, assessing what lies in the depths by scrutinizing often minute surface traces" (Bohrer 2011, 89); cf. Merton 1970, 150) had suggested mapping the distribution of different soil types as a means for *reading* what lies below, since "Such upper *Soiles*, if natural, infallibly produce such under Minerals" (Lister 1684, 740; cf. Anonymous [William Henry Fitton] 1818, 315; Mantell 1844, 4). Stukeley is said to have had a similar idea:

"I have often wished," he wrote, "that a map of soils was accurately made, promising to myself that such a curiosity would furnish us with some new notions of geography, and of the theory of the earth, which has only hitherto been made from hypotheses" (Piggott 1985, 61).

William Smith used the same argument –

The organised Fossils… furnish the best of all clues to a knowledge of the Soil and Substrata (Smith 1816, i) –

when he went on to create just such a map (cf. Winchester 2002):

The organized Fossils which may be found, will enable him [i.e. "The virtuoso"] to identify the Strata of his own estate with those of others: thus his lands may be drained with more certainty of success, his buildings substantially improved, and his private and public roads better made, and repaired at less expense (Smith 1817, v).

We might note here that that Sherlock Holmes's rather… superficial study of soils –

Tells at a glance different soils from each other. After walks has shown me splashes upon his trousers, and told me by their colour and consistence in what part of London he had received them (Conan Doyle 2003d1, 14) –

granted him the ability to recognise the provenience of the "quite distinctive" "clay and chalk mixture" which he saw on a prospective client's toe caps (Conan Doyle 2003u, 105).

Such literacy – the ability to *read* beneath the surface – ultimately relates geology and archaeology to witchcraft since "The procuring of treasure, like the bringing of victory in battle, falls under the general heading of the prosperity of the tribe" (Butler 1993: 8), and thus becomes a job for sorcerers. Droop (1915, 31), for example, writing in the days before metal detectors, soil resistivity, Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), or even the widespread use of aerial photography, etc., noted "that people credit the excavator with dealings in black magic or at least with the use of a divining rod; for the question that I have met most often is "'How do you know where to dig?'" Wishing "that there were a 'dowsing' rod that we could use," Droop notes that "the choosing of a site is chiefly guess-work, yet always guess-work guided by signs and tokens" (i.e. the stuff of semiotics medieval and modern) in the form of "ancient worked blocks, portions of old wall, or the like." Although, as Binford noted (1964, 437; cf. Derks and Tarlow 2011, 1; Carver 2011, 26), "Ideally, we should have an X-ray machine which would allow us to locate and formally evaluate the range of variation manifest in cultural features," for the archaeologist of today, as for Droop, "the surest indication of ancient habitation is the presence of ancient potsherds" (contrast the situation in geology (Carter 2007, 188)).

To some degree the same concept – faith in one's own ability to read beneath the surface – finds expression in archaeological prospection (or site survey):

it is of interest to note that exposing less in excavations stimulated surface surveys as a new research strategy. In a way the information that could be deduced from the surface was considered as

a substitute to that of excavations. As it was assumed that the surface material would be a reflection of the subsurface deposits, considerable time and energy was given to the analysis of surface material and the production of graphic representations derived from statistical evaluations (Özdođan 2006, 160).

One of the points Özdođan makes is that all-too-often it is merely *assumed* that the surface "signifier" reflects the subsurface "signified"; that too little work has been done either to evaluate whether this is in fact the case, or to identify causes which may have changed the relationships between surface and sub-surface over time (i.e. post-depositional transformations; ploughing, downhill soil slump, etc.).

Among other things, results will be subject to all the subjective factors of collection (what we see, visibility, size, etc.). Then there is the paradox that – if these relationships were so obvious, self-evident and unquestionable – then there would have been no need for professional geologists, archaeologists (and sorcerers!) to do the job. Like all magic, it's easy if you know how. The irony is that magicians play on perception (as do Sherlock Holmes (Conan Doyle 2003d1, 18) and his model, Dupin (Poe 2011c, 325-328)); the fact is that the assumption of correspondence – *structural* relations – between surface "signifier" and subsurface "signified" proved to be just as unfounded as the "assumption that there was a one-to-one correspondence between cultural and natural stratigraphy" (Triggs 1998, 24). Writing about the outer appearance of barrows, for example, Frederick Corbin Lukis (1844, 142-143) noted that

> The outward evidences which present themselves to the eye of the observer are sometimes few, and, in many instances, vague and unsatisfactory; in such cases, if the spade and the mattock can be resorted to, these powerful auxiliaries will disclose much useful information. The value of these means can scarcely be questioned, but the careful and judicious use of them must be impressed on the mind of the student, who, in his zeal after hidden treasures, may mar or ruin the most interesting points of his practical researches.

This is relevant because of Kobiałka's reference to a paper (Harrison 2011) where it was argued that surface survey could provide an alternative to the excavation "trope" or paradigm. And although there is no question that we need to consider different ways of seeing the world, history shows that – just as archaeology rejected the textual paradigm in favour of that of *autopsia* – archaeologists rejected Harrison's "surface" approach long ago.

This is related to the point Kobiałka raised (2014, 418) about the way histories present "progress" as being "linear"; reality often follows a more complex path. But as his point was related to issues of hermeneutics and "pre-understanding," perhaps what we are seeing is evidence of how difficult it may be to separate seeing from reading, and/or to distinguish between metaphors of *seeing* and *reading* (Ginzburg's "anatomical" and "semiotic" approaches?), especially for those of us who are embedded in the "broader historical context" –

the print-dominated world of academia – which Marshall McLuhan (2000) dubbed "The Gutenberg Galaxy."

On the other hand, since the weakest link might also be the easiest to repair, we could certainly do worse than to rephrase Feyerabend (1993, 155) –

> Trying to develop a new theory, we must first take a *step back* from the evidence and reconsider the problem of observation [original emphasis] –

in archaeological terms:

> it is often helpful to look at the section upside-down (standing, that is, with the back to the section and bending down to look through the legs); from this unaccustomed posture it is frequently possible to notice details not apparent to the normal view (Atkinson 1946, 129-130; cf. Harris 1989, 73).

In order to raise awareness of alternate perspectives in archaeological practice – something as apparently straight-forward as drawing profiles (sections) – I have repeatedly (cf. Carver 2010) contrasted the drawing styles of the German archaeologist Gerhard Bersu and Sir Mortimer Wheeler, and the photographs of Marey and Muybridge (cf. Braun 1992, Dagognet 1992). One might also contrast Single Context Planning with Polish "hyper-realism" (Kobyliński 1993, 58).

David Clarke (1973, 10) typically went further, arguing that

> We must move from the traditional model of archaeological knowledge as a Gruyère cheese with holes in it (compare Shanks and Tilley 1987, 21; cf. Wells 2004, 158) to that of a sparse suspension of information particles of varying size, not even randomly distributed in archaeological space and time.

Harrison tries to stimulate awareness of such alternate perspectives in his paper on the surface paradigm. But this alternative is based upon an assumption that seeing – perception, observation, etc. – is a weak "link," easily repaired. Philosophers (i.e. Descartes 1997, 40 [12, 413]; 1997, 40 [12, 413]; cf., for example, Carnap 1998, 317; Hanson 1998: 347, Hempel 1998: 213, Machlup 1998: 142, Matheson and Kline 1998, 380; Ziman 1998, 51, etc.) – and many archaeologists familiar with some of the concepts raised in discussions on hermeneutics – would disagree. One might also consider how much of what makes the Sherlock Holmes stories so appealing is the *Hegelian* contrast between the keen-sighted Holmes and the bumbling Dr. Watson, and how the ability to see things from different perspectives is part of a *creative* process:

> Peering at the puzzle first from one viewpoint and then from another can often trigger new ideas (Thorne 2014, 44).

Stimulating such creativity might have been easier to do in an earlier, essentially pre-scientific and/or pre-disciplinary (Foucault again!) age; seeing and – perhaps more importantly – classifying the world differently, according to a vision which found expression in the juxtaposition commonly found in early museum collections intended to invoke a sense of wonder through the use of "contrast and variety" (Whitaker 1996, 87; cf. Arnold 2006, 257; Burke 2015, 6), but it is not quite analogous to the situation Kobiałka tries to describe with his contrast of Gandalf and Frodo – the contrast between the learned expert and the zealous student – one which will be familiar to every generation of "Young Turks" to come along, fuelled by visions of iconoclasm. This liberating, exciting vision – so reminiscent of Francis Bacon's "idols" (see Part II) – risks providing further proof to Santayana's famous warning (2007, 284) that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." And we might note how Sherlock contrasted his own knowledge with that of one of his French colleagues:

> "He possesses two out of the three qualities necessary for the ideal detective. He has the power of observation and that of deduction. He is only wanting in knowledge; and that may come in time" (Conan Doyle 2003a1, 126).

This "want of knowledge" is consistent with the suggestion that "the subject of the history of archaeology is usually left to the older, more experienced archaeologists who simply know more, and more deeply about the history of their own discipline" (Kobiałka 2014, 424).

And even though I don't really want to complicate matters further by considering issues of knowledge and experience, I would like to suggest that there is something contradictory in criticising Gandalf for being too knowledgeable – too unlike Frodo – while ignoring that quality in Sherlock…

And I wonder if I observe – or if I perceive – such apparent contradictions simply because I am an "older, more experienced" archaeologist who simply knows more…? Or is it simply because I'm willing to get my hands dirty by digging below the surface?

The issues of observation and perception are examined more closely in the following sections. Essentially, though, what archaeologists perceive and, hence, record depends upon such variables as "relevance" (Collis 2001, 1), "prescribed sets of characteristics" (Triggs 1998: 46), "significant attributes" (Clarke 1978, 14), theoretical perspectives, specific research goals, standards of precision and/or accuracy in measurement, Feyerabend's (1993, xi) "compromises, exhaustion, lack of money, national pride and so on," "mix of historic accident, oversight, propinquity, imposed biases of key personalities" (Johnson 2002, 9), etc.

This is just another way of stating the obvious, i.e. the fact that

> Data are never as straightforward a matter as they seem; just deciding what information to collect involves judgements about what's important…. The frequently heard claim that 'the data speak for themselves' has to be one of the most misleading sentences in the English language (Goldston 2008, 15).

"Consequently" – as with Hanson's example (1998, 342) of Kepler and Tycho not seeing "the same thing at dawn" –

> *all* observations, *all* perceived facts depend on the observer, *his* frame of reference and personal idiosyncrasies. The observer consciously or unconsciously selects the 'facts' to be perceived and recorded and no two observers need record the same perceptions… archaeological facts or data change in the changing light of what the archaeologist deems 'significant attributes' (Clarke 1978, 14 [added emphasis]).

We therefore need to see for ourselves – "*observavi*." Or, failing that, we need to establish "control and authority" by creating a system of what Ian Hacking (2002, 10) called "scrupulous observers" able to provide data of a quality that turns readers into "virtual witnesses" (Tucker 2005, 7), a scientific discipline with professional – scientific – standards.

As has been noted, reasons for the Renaissance break with medieval scholasticism included problems interpreting text, which can be incomplete and/or misleading (i.e. "vague and unsatisfactory"); and in this sense, for archaeologists and geologists to return to a pre-scientific, pre-dissection metaphor of "reading the earth" seems as perverse as the suggestion that modern field practice retains traces of medieval belief in semiotics (i.e. an ability to decipher "signs and tokens" or William Smith's "clues"). And yet… an interesting study linking Lyell and Darwin with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle highlights the connections between geologists and sorcerers (and detectives and philologists; compare Evans 2006 (a paper which explores parallels between the careers of Lt.-General Pitt Rivers and Jules Verne's Captain Nemo!!!)):

> The detective and the geologist are sorcerers, part philologists, part Poe-esque cryptographers, living after Babel, who consult literal and figurative documents no longer written in a single, unchanging language (Frank 1989, 377).

This was in response to a comment Sherlock Holmes had made to the effect that

> "That gravel page upon which I might have read so much has been long ere this smudged by the rain and defaced by the clogs of curious peasants" (Conan Doyle 2003w, 34; cf. Frank 1989, 368).

Holmes had been prevented from reading "the gravel page" by a combination of rain (a force of nature) and peasant curiosity. Although curiosity may or may not be a "natural instinct" (cf. Burke 2015, 27; Daniel 1975, 13-14; MacEnery 1859, 54; Vico 2001, 89 [18]; Whitaker 1996, 75; contrast Austin 1994, 141; Forster 1949, 83; Verne 1994, 51), Holmes contrasts his ability – the specially-trained powers of observation with which he so liked to amaze (cf. Conan Doyle 2003g, 770; 2003e1, 228; McLuhan 2002, 108-109) – and which granted him the prestige of a sorcerer with more… egalitarian (?) idea(l)s, such as the

belief that stratigraphy may be understood by all, "even the most illiterate" (Smith 1816, i). Similarly, in a novel that pays more than passing tribute to Holmes (cf. Shanks 1996, 38),

> "Snow… is an admirable parchment on which men's bodies leave very legible writing. But this palimpsest is badly scraped, and perhaps we will read nothing interesting on it" (Eco 2004, 97; cf. Conan Doyle 1994a, 489).

In the beginning, though,

> British geologists agreed, as an article of faith, that the strata and fossils making up the Earth's crust told a clear, complete, unambiguous story. They believed that the geological chapters in the book of nature could be read by any observer willing to approach them with an unprejudiced mind (Van Riper 1993, 52-53).

Although Van Riper's use of words like "faith" and "believed" are – perhaps unintentionally in this case – misleading (contradicting as they do the "unprejudiced mind"), this can be read in terms of science: the results must be reproducible and/or transparent if they are to be "read by any observer" who, like Frodo, is "willing to approach them with an unprejudiced mind".

And this is where things get strange. In some ways it seems wrong – unscientific – to see having "an unprejudiced mind" as being "radical." And yet… scientific disciplines – like all systems – promote homeostasis (i.e. "normal science"; cf. Kuhn 1996), and maintaining and/or justifying the current status of any given *discipline* is, apparently, one of the main reasons for writing its ("cardboard" and/or Whig) history.

Such system maintenance – homeostasis – was suggested by Hodder's identification of stratigraphy as being part of "an edifice of auxiliary theories and assumptions which archaeologists have agreed not to question."

It has already been noted that what Martin Luther did was radical. Historically, what Alexander the Great did to the Gordian knot was "radical." In archaeology, what Nabonidas (cf. Schnapp 1996, 13-17; Bahn 1996, 1-2; 1999, 56; Trigger 2006, 44; Renfrew and Bahn 2000, 20) did in excavating temples in order to bring about religious reform was "radical." Kobiałka suggests that what Frodo did was "radical."

The question now is whether or not what Sherlock Holmes did was "radical," or… "elementary."

WATCHING THE DETECTIVES

In his discussion of the similarities between archaeologists and detectives, Kobiałka (2014, 421, ff.) refers to Shanks (1996, 37-41), Holtorf (2007, 75-76), and Ginzburg (1980).

In addition to also citing Ginzburg, Shanks refers to "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez" (Conan Doyle 2003h) – Kobiałka to "A Study in Scarlet" (Conan Doyle 2003d1)

and "The Boscombe Valley Mystery" (Conan Doyle 1994c) – as primary sources. Discussing physiognomy, Ginzburg (1980, 8), refers to "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box" (Conan Doyle 2003c). Holtorf refers to Agatha Christie (cf. Adams 2013, 154-181), Glyn Daniel, an interesting German study (Gründel. and Ziegert 1983), etc., but not refer to Sherlock.

Ginzburg links the symptomatic way Holmes reads physiognomy – ears (Conan Doyle 2003v, 586-587), a tattoo (Conan Doyle 2003v, 587-588) – to the way he reads objects, such as Watson's watch (Conan Doyle 2003a1, 128-130; cf. Frank 2003, 142), a pipe (Conan Doyle 2003f1, 549), a hat (Conan Doyle 1994b, 378), slippers (Conan Doyle 2003c1, 567), the pince-nez (Conan Doyle 2003h, 971-973) Shanks (1996, 39) also discussed, sleeves (Conan Doyle 1994d, 66-67; cf. Shanks 1996, 37, where this sequence is quoted at length, but wrongly attributed to "The Golden Pince-Nez" (Conan Doyle 2003h; note that Kobiałka repeats the mistake on page 421)), walking sticks (Conan Doyle 2003w, 1-7; 2003v, 586), etc.

Within a "broader historical context," physiognomy (cf. Burke 2015, 95) was not just a contemporary scientific issue – Sherlock captured the main point of Darwin's (1872) *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (as Frank (2003, 151) noted) in his assertion belief that "'the features are given to man as the means by which he shall express his emotions'" (Conan Doyle 2003z, 664) – but also reflected a need to reveal character in novels (i.e. Haggard 2002, 41; Brontë 2009, 34-35, and just about everything written by Dickens; cf. Bierce 1996, 187, Robin 1993, 172, etc.):

> Never have I seen features so deeply marked with all bestiality and cruelty. His small eyes glowed and burned with a sombre light, and his thick lips were writhed back from his teeth, which grinned and chattered at us with a half animal fury (Conan Doyle 2003a1, 204).

Sherlock's predecessor Dupin gave the most extreme (and perhaps most celebrated) example of such "reading" in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (Poe 2011c, 326). Although Sherlock copied the process (Conan Doyle 2003c, 357-358; 2003e, 806-807; 2003z, 663-665), he claimed to have little respect for such a display:

> "That trick of his of breaking in on his friends' thoughts with an apropos remark after a quarter of an hour's silence is really very showy and *superficial*. He had some analytical genius, no doubt; but he was by no means such a phenomenon as Poe appeared to imagine" (Conan Doyle 2003d1, 18 [emphasis added]).

This "medical semiotic" approach went out of fashion, though; perhaps because Freud directed his "clinical gaze" inward, perhaps because physiognomy was too much like phrenology, "in which character was indicated by bumps on the head, which themselves indicated particular development of parts of the brain" (Knight 1981, 190; cf. Bierce 1996, 187; Knight 1981, 150; Poe 2011b, 189-190; Ginzburg 1980; 34 (endnote 77)); possibly because it fails – as Gilbert Ryle (1971b, 480-482) noted in his discussion of "thick description" (cf.

Geertz 1993, 6; Flannery 1982, 268) – to distinguish between a wink (which is intended to send a message) from a blink (which is not); possibly because it was too superifical, a return to a paradigm that pre-dated autopsy and dissection.

Whatever the cause of its demise, within the "broader historical context," it was believed that objects – like physiognomy – reveal character; that Holmes himself, for example, can be represented by synecdoche or metonym (cf. Foucault 1994, 111; Frank 2003, 17; Ginzburg 1980, 13; Hodder 1992e, 203; Lévi-Strauss 1966, 25; Mali 2002, 69, 167; Zimmerman 2001, 40, etc.):

• the violin, the shag tobacco, the old black pipe, the index books and others (Conan Doyle 2003d, 653);

• The scientific charts upon the wall, the acid-scarred bench of chemicals, the violin-case leaning in the corner, the coal-scuttle, which contained of old the pipes and tobacco (Conan Doyle 2003j, 559),

or simply by his distinctive hat and pipe.
Consider how

A sample of hair, a photograph, a piece of well-worn clothing, indeed anything that readily suggests the lives of people closely associated with it carries an in-built and potentially well-charged emotional battery (Arnold 2006, 92).

Or consider Dickens' *Old Curiosity Shop* –

One of those receptacles for old and curious things which seem to crouch in odd corners of this town and to hide their musty treasures from the public eye in jealousy and distrust. There were suits of mail standing like ghosts in armour here and there, fantastic carvings brought from monkish cloisters, rusty weapons of various kinds, distorted figures in china and wood and iron and ivory: tapestry and strange furniture that might have been designed in dreams. The haggard aspect of the little old man was wonderfully suited to the place; he might have groped among old churches and tombs and deserted houses and gathered all the spoils with his own hands. There was nothing in the whole collection but was in keeping with himself; nothing that looked older or more worn than he (Dickens 1995a, 6; compare Dickens 1995b, 222-223) –

and the power an ensuing sense of anonymity, or lack of identity – or of never having *existed* (cf. Dostoevsky 1993, 103; Orwell 1984, 21, 223) – transforms (in the vision brought by the Ghost of Christmas Future) the *Old Curiosity Shop* into the place where Scrooge's belongings would be sold even before his body had been buried (Flanders 2011, 422):

Far in this den of infamous resort, there was a low-browed, beetling shop, below a pent-house roof, where iron, old rags, bottles, bones, and greasy offal, were bought. Upon the floor within, were piled up heaps of rusty keys, nails, chains, hinges, files, scales, weights, and refuse iron of all kinds. Secrets that few would like to scrutinise were bred and hidden in mountains of unseemly rags, masses of corrupted fat, and sepulchres of bones (Dickens 1994a, 61; compare Dickens 1995b, 222-223; Flanders 2011, 56).

The same might be said of any apparently random list of objects –

books, boots, papers, shoes, philosophical instruments, clothes, pistols, linen, crockery, ammunition, and phials innumerable, with money, stockings, prints, crucibles, bags, and boxes, were scattered on the floor and in every place; as if the young chemist, in order to analyze the mystery of creation, had endeavoured first to reconstruct the primeval chaos… an electrical machine, an air pump, the galvanic trough, a solar microscope, and large glass jars and receivers, were conspicuous amidst the mass of matter (Hogg 1858, 69-70; cf. Adams 2009, 80-81) –

if there was nothing to indicate that this particular example listed the contents of Percy Bysshe Shelley's rooms at University College (cf. Ackroyd 2008, 5; compare Pamuk 2009).

In another "Curiosity Shop" we encounter Mr Charrington:

Mr Charrington, thought Winston, was another extinct animal. He usually stopped to talk with Mr Charrington for a few minutes on his way upstairs. The old man seemed seldom or never to go out of doors, and on the other hand to have almost no customers. He led a ghostlike existence between the tiny, dark shop, and an even tinier back kitchen where he prepared his meals and which contained, among other things, an unbelievably ancient gramophone with an enormous horn. He seemed glad of the opportunity to talk. Wandering about among his worthless stock, with his long nose and thick spectacles and his bowed shoulders in the velvet jacket, he had always vaguely the air of being a collector rather than a tradesman. With a sort of faded enthusiasm he would finger this scrap of rubbish or that – a china bottle-stopper, the painted lid of a broken snuffbox, a pinchbeck locket containing a strand of some long-dead baby's hair – never asking that Winston should buy it, merely that he should admire it. To talk to him was like listening to the tinkling of a worn-out musical-box. He had dragged out from the corners of his memory some more fragments of forgotten rhymes. There was one about four and twenty blackbirds, and another about a cow with a crumpled horn, and another about the death of poor Cock Robin. 'It just occurred to me you might be interested,' he would say with a deprecating little laugh whenever he produced a new fragment. But he could never recall more than a few lines of any one rhyme (Orwell 1984, 133-134).

This scene not only draws upon Orwell's earlier writing on the subject of junkshops –

Its finest treasures are never discoverable at first glimpse; they have to be sorted out from among a medley of bamboo cake-stands, Britannia-ware dish-covers, turnip watches, dog-eared books, ostrich

eggs, typewriters of extinct makes, spectacles without lenses, decanters without stoppers, stuffed birds, wire fire guards, bunches of keys, boxes of nuts and bolts, conch shells from the Indian Ocean, boot trees, Chinese ginger jars and pictures of Highland cattle (Orwell 2002, 983) –

but also echoes the diversity Kemble (1849, 2) listed as being the "lawful prize of the Archaeologist" (note the textual and/or philological elements, and the medals):

In his estimation an old song is as valuable as an arch Pointed or Round. An Anglo-Saxon, or Norman, or Early English spell, prayer, law, legend, nay, even word, has its profound meaning: so has a mullion, a corbel, a clerestory, a whole cathedral. So has a cabinet of medals, a pot, a pan, a battle-axe, or a woman's jewel, if properly appreciated, without exaggeration, and above all, without exclusiveness.

Similar lists of artifacts were published by Kemble's predecessors and contemporaries:

• burnt wood, bones, ashes, broken paterae, urns, other pieces of vessels of different shapes, Roman coins, boars' tusks, nails almost eaten with rust, pieces of lead, brass, &c. (West 1779, 99);

• a curious helmet and visor, a standard, and sundry sacrificing instruments (Anonymous 1798, 165);

• four perfect sickles, several iron rings, part of an iron rod, the ferule or spike-end of a staff, a small engraved bronze buckle, and the fragments of a Roman cinerary urn (Smith 1866, 141), etc.

Given the obvious difficulties of "reading" things in real life, it should come as no surprise that even the great Sherlock was sometimes unable to "read" anything from "a handkerchief, a large knife, and a small folding card-case" (Conan Doyle 2003j, 678) or an anonymous victim when "there was no name on his clothing, and nothing in his pockets save an apple, some string, a shilling map of London, and a photograph" (Conan Doyle 2003n, 930). After all, if "medical semiotics" were foolproof, there would have been no need for Ginzburg to contrast them with his "anatomical model"; nor for the x-rays, MRIs, and all the other prostheses which extend the "clinical gaze."

As an extension to this "medical semiotic" – symptomatic – approach, Ginzburg (1980, 12, ff.) linked this "reading" process to hunting. Sherlock was described as having the "energy of a hunter who is at the very heels of his quarry" (Conan Doyle 2003f, 480). Following the trail of a missing racehorse, Sherlock and Watson act very much like a pair of hunters (Conan Doyle 2003b1, 536). In another case, having set a trap, Watson and Sherlock "were the hunters" (Conan Doyle 2003g, 771). This theme was expanded upon in another adventure:

It was a long and melancholy vigil, and yet brought with it something of the thrill which the hunter feels when he lies beside the water-pool, and waits for the coming of the thirsty beast of prey. What savage creature was it which might steal upon us out of the darkness? Was it a fierce tiger of

crime, which could only be taken fighting hard with flashing fang and claw, or would it prove to be some skulking jackal, dangerous only to the weak and unguarded? (Conan Doyle 2003m, 895).

McLuhan (2002, 109) noted that "in the literature of crime detection the concentration of specialized thrill is crudely focused on the hunt and the kill," and I find the contrast between Sherlock as a "hunter of men," and Jesus – who promised to turn his disciples into "fishers of men" (Matthew 4,19) – interesting, especially given the "broader historical context" within which Conan Doyle was writing.

But then… Sherlock is, if not exactly superficial, somewhat… subversive:

Holmes, the home-hater and woman-hater, is the hero of the "home-loving" and feminized middle class. The arrogant, sterile Holmes and the happy prolific homes of the late Victorian world are fused in a single image which arrests the mind for contemplation and insight. The passion for Holmes and man-hunting literature… goes along with the commercial passion for exploiting the values of childhood, femininity, and domesticity. On paper there has never been such a cult of the home. In entertainment there has never been such a cult of the sleuth (McLuhan 2002, 107).

It was as a hunter – a modern "noble savage," the updated hero from some novel by James Fenimore Cooper (McLuhan 2002, 109) – that Sherlock "read" a "dog's spoor" (Conan Doyle 2003i, 685), "the track of a horse" (Conan Doyle 2003b1, 535), bicycle tire tracks (Conan Doyle 2003m, 866, ff.), and the lack of a "sign" of a carriage (Conan Doyle 2003k, 1002).

And if I am reading Ginzburg right, Holmes applied the medical "science" of reading symptoms to the art of hunting; and I'm arguing that archaeology – "the application of scientific method to the excavation of ancient objects" (Woolley 1961, 18) – was an analogous application of the scientific method to the traditional art of antiquarianism.

Sherlock's faith in his art – or science – was so strong that, in response to his recognition that "'There is no branch of detective science which is so important and so much neglected as the art of tracing footsteps'" (Conan Doyle 2003d1, 116), he wrote a "'monograph upon the tracing of footsteps, with some remarks upon the uses of plaster of Paris as a preserver of impresses'" (Conan Doyle 2003a1, 126).

And yet… continuing – almost with the same breath – Sherlock linked footprints and physical attributes (i.e. physiognomy):

"Here, too, is a curious little work upon the influence of a trade upon the form of the hand, with lithotypes of the hands of slaters, sailors, corkcutters, compositors, weavers, and diamond-polishers."

Whether science or art, given Sherlock's success, it should probably come as no surprise to find that his professional rival, Lestrade, followed his lead:

"'We have their footmarks, we have their description, it's ten to one that we trace them'" (Conan Doyle 2003a, 923).

These weren't the "footprints" we know today, but rather "footmarks" (Conan Doyle 2003e, 822; 2003l, 794; 2003m, 856; 2003t, 753) and "'foot-marks'" (Conan Doyle 2003s, 652) or their absence ("no indication of a footmark" (Conan Doyle 2003f, 475-476)); "footsteps" (Conan Doyle 2003n, 928) or *their* absence ("'I do not think we have anything more to learn here. There were no footsteps, you say?'" (Conan Doyle 2003r, 642)), etc.

Some cases were more specific: "'there were no indications of bootmarks about this ditch'" (Conan Doyle 2003y, 640; compare Dickens 1994b, 318); and "the mark on the lawn where his heels had come down. That one dint in the short, green grass was the only material witness left of this inexplicable nocturnal flight" (Conan Doyle 2003m, 862-863), or simply "marks" (Conan Doyle 2003x, 725).

And – although on one case Sherlock noted how under ideal circumstances he had "'obtained a clearer impress of his foot than might otherwise have been possible'" (Conan Doyle 2003f, 475) – just so it doesn't all start to look too easy (and superficial?), Sherlock was presented with a lack of signs because "the ground is iron hard, and one would not expect them" (Conan Doyle 2003b, 1019) – "I am afraid there are no signs here,' said he. 'One could hardly hope for any upon so dry a day'" (Conan Doyle 2003q, 950) – or because potential footmarks may have been erased from "the gravel page" by the weather:

"It has been pouring rain and blowing a hurricane ever since," said he. "It will be harder to read now than that palimpsest. Well, well, it can't be helped. What did you do, Hopkins, after you had made certain that you had made certain of nothing?" (Conan Doyle 2003h, 970).

One might also make much of the reference to the related issue of "thumb-marks" (i.e. a "thumb print" (Conan Doyle 2003l, 797), and its possible relation to fingerprints; cf. Ginzburg 1980, 26-27; Shanks 1996, 40; cf. Gründel and Ziegert 1983, 190 for a clear linkage of foot and fingerprints).

And it is interesting to see how Kobiałka (2014, 421) goes from claiming that "Sherlock is in a way very superficial" to criticising Shanks for… being superficial. And maybe the whole issue is whether or not Sherlock really is "superficial." He constantly amazes Watson and many others because he doesn't just perceive, he *observes*. And he doesn't simply observe facts – clues – which even Watson can list:

The Indian treasure, the curious plan found among Morstan's baggage, the strange scene at Major Sholto's death, the rediscovery of the treasure immediately followed by the murder of the discoverer, the very singular accompaniments to the crime, the footsteps, the remarkable weapons, the words upon the card, corresponding with those upon Captain Morstan's chart – here was indeed a labyrinth

in which a man less singularly endowed than my fellow-lodger might well despair of ever finding the clue (Conan Doyle 2003a1, 168).

Sherlock repeatedly refers to "links" in a chain (compare MacEnery 1859, 40), or "threads," and complains when the thread gets tangled ["'It is a tangled skein'" (Conan Doyle 2003d, 654)].

Although he is referring to a logical chain –

• "'the whole thing is a chain of logical sequences without a break or flaw'" (Conan Doyle 2003d1, 119);

• "'The principal difficulty in your case," remarked Holmes, in his didactic fashion, "lay in the fact of there being too much evidence. What was vital was overlaid and hidden by what was irrelevant. Of all the facts which were presented to us we had to pick just those which we deemed to be essential, and then piece them together in their order, so as to reconstruct this very remarkable chain of events'" (Conan Doyle 2003x, 734-735) –

built link by link until "'Every link is now in its place and the chain is complete'" (Conan Doyle 2003r, 652), the metaphor also draws on the idea of a chain's strength (compare Flanders 2011, 301):

• "'No chain is stronger than its weakest link'" (Conan Doyle 2003e1, 164);

• "It is a long chain, and yet every link rings true" (Conan Doyle 1994e, 287);

• "I have forged and tested every link of my chain, Professor Coram, and I am sure that it is sound" (Conan Doyle 2003h, 981).

It also reflects a way of *looking* at the world – a worldview, a *Weltanschauung* – a different way of *seeing*:

"the so-called Porlock is a link in the chain some little way from its great attachment. Porlock is not quite a sound link – between ourselves. He is the only flaw in that chain so far as I have been able to test it" (Conan Doyle 2003e1, 164).

The "chain" itself could also refer to the medieval "chain of being" (i.e. "organic chain" (Darwin 1859, 280), "chain of descent" (Darwin 1859, 476), the "links" (Darwin 1859, 282) that went "missing" and became clichéd, etc.; cf. Knight 1981, 28, 83, 88, etc.) –

"'all life is a great chain, the nature of which is known whenever we are shown a single link of it'" (Conan Doyle 2003d1, 16) –

links which are, of course, suggestive of Darwin's "missing links":

"I think that, with a few missing links, my chain is almost complete" (Conan Doyle 2003b, 1023).

And in this last sense – and in the "broader historical context" sense of 19th century politics and/or science – I find it interesting that Conan Doyle mentioned Cuvier and not Sir Richard Owen (cf. Knight 1981, 111; Gould 2000a, 184, ff.; 2007a, 91; Gruber 2004, etc.), his English counterpart.

And I would like to emphasise again how – when viewed *without* the links Sherlock found so obvious – how these clue-lists resemble the artifact-lists our predecessors published as the results of their antiquarian and proto-archaeological investigations –

• Innumerable tiles…. Some staghorns, a dagger, portions of bronze ornaments, and pottery pavements (Kempe 1845, 332);

• flint arrow-heads, and rude jet ornaments bead-like in shape, and ruder half-baked urns (Anonymous (John Christopher Atkinson?) 1861, 202);

• coins, a balance, bronze pins, bone pins, bone bodkins, fragments of Samian ware in relief, vases, amphoræ, urns, fibulas, celts, the tipper and lower jaws of a wild boar, etc. Fragments of Roman pottery (Anonymous 1863, 594) –

and which we include in spreadsheets and databases, or the chaos Thomsen faced when he started to organise the collections in the Danish National Museum, where the "rarities came chiefly from accidental finds, not from careful excavations, and they consisted principally of objects of intrinsic value, of gold and silver" (Worsaae 1881, 57).

Conan Doyle (2003p, 616) recognised the resemblance, even if no one else did (note the coin):

The room was as curious as its occupant. It looked like a small museum. It was both broad and deep, with cupboards and cabinets all round, crowded with specimens, geological and anatomical. Cases of butterflies and moths flanked each side of the entrance. A large table in the center was littered with all sorts of débris, while the tall brass tube of a powerful microscope bristled up among them. As I glanced round I was surprised at the universality of the man's interests. Here was a case of ancient coins. There was a cabinet of flint implements. Behind his central table was a large cupboard of fossil bones. Above was a line of plaster skulls with such names as "Neanderthal," "Heidelberg," "Cro-Magnon" printed beneath them. It was clear that he was a student of many subjects. As he stood in front of us now, he held a piece of chamois leather in his right hand with which he was polishing a coin.

Whether or not this "polymath and antiquarian" was a "Romantic," he was certainly the opposite of Sherlock's own ideal:

a man should keep his little brain-attic stocked with all the furniture that he is likely to use, and the rest he can put away in the lumber-room of his library, where he can get it if he wants it (Conan Doyle 2003u, 344).

Given such parallels, it would probably be surprising if detective fiction did not draw inspiration from archaeology. Among other examples, Holtorf refers to archaeological themes and settings in the works of Agatha Christie (2007, 79) and detective novels written by archaeologist Glyn Daniel (2007, 80). In addition to a reference to "the singular contents of the ancient British barrow" (Conan Doyle 2003h, 964), Sherlock tested the somewhat ridiculous antiquary in "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs" with his claim that

"I am a bit of an archæoloigst myself when it comes to houses," said Holmes, laughing. "I was wondering if this was Queen Anne or Georgian" (Conan Doyle 2003p, 620).

In "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot,"

The vicar of the parish, Mr. Roundhay, was something of an archæologist, and as such Holmes had made his acquaintance. He was a middle-aged man, portly and affable, with a considerable fund of local lore (Conan Doyle 2003f, 467).

Taking a break from this adventure, Watson reports how

For two hours [Holmes] discoursed upon Celts, arrowheads, and shards, as lightly as if no sinister mystery were waiting for his solution (Conan Doyle 2003f, 476),

as the two of them explored a suitably Gothic landscape:

In every direction upon these moors there were traces of some vanished race which had passed utterly away, and left as its sole record strange monuments of stone, irregular mounds which contained the burned ashes of the dead, and curious earthworks which hinted at prehistoric strife. The glamour and mystery of the place, with its sinister atmosphere of forgotten nations, appealed to the imagination of my friend, and he spent much of his time in long walks and solitary meditations upon the moor. The ancient Cornish language had also arrested his attention, and he had, I remember, conceived the idea that it was akin to the Chaldean, and had been largely derived from the Phœnician traders in tin (Conan Doyle 2003f, 467).

Much as one of the most important clues in one of the Sherlock Holmes stories was something that *didn't* happen – "The curious incident of the dog in the night-time" (Conan Doyle 2003b1, 541), i.e. a dog that didn't bark – I find it interesting how Shanks and

Kobiałka do *not* refer to any of these examples, nor to *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, set as it is in a stone age landscape:

> When you are once out upon its bosom you have left all traces of modern England behind you, but on the other hand you are conscious everywhere of the homes and the work of the prehistoric people. On all sides of you as you walk are the houses of these forgotten folk, with their graves and the huge monoliths which are supposed to have marked their temples. As you look at their gray stone huts against the scarred hill-sides you leave your own age behind you, and if you were to see a skin-clad, hairy man crawl out from the low door fitting a flint-tipped arrow on to the string of his bow, you would feel that his presence there was more natural than your own. The strange thing is that they should have lived so thickly on what must always have been most unfruitful soil. I am no antiquarian, but I could imagine that they were some unwarlike and harried race who were forced to accept that which none other would occupy (Conan Doyle 2003w, 71-72).

It is almost as though they either did not read all the Sherlock Holmes stories, or did not know how to deal with the way they touched upon archaeological issues.

And to some degree such… *linkage* seems to be missing in the discussions of the parallels between archaeology and detective fiction; none of the *archaeological* authors – Kobiałka, Holtorf, Shanks – is able to give a convincing argument as to *why* archaeology is like detection. Holtorf (2007, 76) does suggest that both archaeology and (forensic) criminology "used advanced technology," but since physicists, biologists, and practitioners of most sciences also "used advanced technology," this isn't very convincing, especially when one considers how strong a case might be made for arguing that some archaeologists study archaeology in order to escape the modern world, and are in fact technophobic; more like Ginzburg's hunter than stereotypical scientists, perhaps…

Kobiałka's similar explanation for this link – "The private detective is a metaphor of rational, scientific reasoning" (Kobiałka 2014, 425) – leaves the question of *why* this might be important unanswered. Within the "broader historical context of which certain archaeologists were a part of," one of the most important reasons for wanting to link archaeology to "a metaphor of rational, scientific reasoning" was the ridicule that antiquaries were – or felt themselves – subject to. In addition to lingering associations with the Gothic and/or Romanticism that was regressive and conservative (in contrast to the ideology of "progress" Trigger argued for), as collectors they had once held a status equivalent to that of their fossil-collecting counterparts, but had since been eclipsed by the prestige and respect directed towards the science of geology. This is sort of suggested by the contrast between Sherlock's "rational, scientific reasoning" and the antiquaries he encounters in his adventures, and should have been expected. Given that the objects of many supposedly scientific studies (which might be nothing more than stray lumps – "pigs" – of lead (Pegge 1779; 1785; 1789; cf. Bray 1783; 1784), or of "the Roman brick that was found about seventy years since in Mark Lane" (Tovey 1770), etc., had all-too-often been found by "a farmer…

happening to be employed in digging up earth for manure" (Hitchins 1806, 1806), "by a person getting up potatoes" (Sharp 1817, 306), "behind the wainscot" (Akerman 1855a, 73), or "in 1848 in the Greta, near Keswick, Westmoreland, by Mr. Donaldson, while angling" (Brent 1880, 299), it is but little wonder that "the very mention of an object of antiquity called forth the shafts of ridicule" (Pettigrew 1846, 1).

Although Pettigrew did not specify either the source or the nature of this ridicule, either here or in a later introductory address (Pettigrew 1848, 1), some idea may be gained by considering contemporary caricatures of antiquaries and museum visitors (Berghaus 1983, 118-122). One by James Gillray – dating to 1801 – depicts "A Cognocenti contemplating ye Beauties of ye Antique." An aged gentleman stands in a room surrounded by antiquities. Given the paintings on the wall behind him – an erupting volcano, Lord Nelson (labelled "Mark Antony"), someone assumed to be Lady Hamilton (labelled "Cleopatra"), and the "cogocenti" himself (labelled "Claudius," with what looks like the head of an Irish Elk [big antlers!] adorning the frame) – and the bust of a bull's head (the horns being a traditional symbol of cuckoldry) standing on the table before him, the "cognocenti" is clearly meant to be Sir William Hamilton (Morson 2004), shown peering through the wrong end of his glasses (Berghaus 1983, 119; cf. Sontag 1992, 330).

Again: it pays to understand the "broader historical context" within which "a fine collection of South American utensils and weapons" (Conan Doyle 20030, 602), for example, could be transformed into mere "curiosities upon the wall" (Conan Doyle 20030, 603).

And perhaps one reason why none of the authors – Kobiałka, Holtorf, Shanks – is able to give a convincing argument as to *why* archaeology is "like" detection is because they fail to consider either the "broader historical context" of their examples (Sherlock, Agatha Christie, perhaps Glyn Daniel), nor the "broader historical context" within which – for example – detective fiction and photography were roughly contemporary:

> The philosopher Walter Benjamin noted the coincidence of the birth of detective fiction with the birth of photography, 'this most decisive of all conquests of a person's incognito' (Flanders 2011, 387; cf. Ginzburg 1980).

Since archaeology and photography were also roughly contemporary (Bohrer 2011, 27), it might also be inferred that archaeologists and detectives were, likewise… roughly contemporary (coinciding with a switch from personal testimony to physical evidence, as occurred in Germany around 1850 (Gründel. and Ziegert 1983, 176); cf. Burke 2003, 275-276). In the next section it will be argued that scientific revolutions occur when perceptions change, as when Galileo looked through a telescope or when Hooke and van Leeuwenhoek looked into microscopes, or when Lyell and Laplace looked deeply into time and space. And to some degree Kobiałka suggests this change in perspective when he contrasts Frodo and Gandalf (and although he does not mention it, it is also implied by the contrast between Sherlock and Watson).

At the same time, of course, recognition that there are different (subjective) ways to see the world contradicts (objective) uniformitarian ideals (cf. Burke 2015, 15). And I would like to suggest that part of the relation between archaeology and detectives reflects such a paradigm shift, a search for new *metaphors* with which to describe and/or understand – through which to see? – the brave new world. Eddington (1930) – a physicist writing near the beginning of the quantum revolution – provides a good example of this search; other commonly discussed examples include the influence Lyell had on Tennyson's poetry (cf. 1995).

The problem is that – as Kobiałka acknowledged – the cliché that "archaeologists are like detectives" has become an article of faith; something (like stratigraphy) which we have "agreed not to question," even though that "agreement not to question" contradicts the very idea that… archaeologists are like detectives…

Because, of course, a good detective – like Sherlock – knowing that "'There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact'" (Conan Doyle 1994c, 79; cf.Kobiałka 2014, 428), questions *everything*.

And even if "archaeologists are *like* detectives"… so what?

Archaeological excavation is also "like" autopsies and dissection, certain astronomical events (cf. Oebbecke 1998, 218) and other irreproducible – yet scientific – experiments (cf. Barker 1998, 13-14). These are examples of what William Whewell (1837, 481; cf. Frank 2003, 25) labelled "palætiological sciences": "researches in which the object is, to ascend from the present state of things to a more ancient condition, from which the present is derived by intelligible causes." "The sleuth" – like the archaeologist and all the other practitioners of palætiological (and possibly post-modernist?) sciences (one is also reminded of how "Marx calls for the backward reading of history" (Kobiałka 2014, 427)) –

> The sleuth pursues his clues backwards to the cause which produced them. He investigates the possible motives of each suspect. Then he assembles all these different perspectives as though he were piecing together a movie that had been shot in separate sections. When all is assembled, he then projects, as it were, the continuous film before the assembled house guests at the scene of the murder. He relates the events in their true time sequence, thus *automatically* revealing the murderer (McLuhan 2002, 106 [original emphasis]).

This "palætiological" explanation was emphasised by Frank (1989 and 2003), in another study which linked archaeology and detectives but which was not referenced in any of the other studies mentioned thus far (i.e. by Kobiałka, Holtorf or Shanks). Frank looked at both Poe (specifically "The Gold Bug" (Poe 2011a) and the classic detective stories, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (Poe 2011c), "The Mystery of Marie Rogęt" (Poe 2011d) and "The Purloined Letter" (Poe 2011e)) and Sherlock in detail, with a specific focus on *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Conan Doyle 2003w).

Poe's detective stories are now perhaps less well known than his "Tales of Mystery and Imagination." They – and their protagonist Dupin – have largely been eclipsed by their

successors (i.e. Holmes, Hercule Poirot, etc.), but are generally viewed as having been the first of their kind (although as Flanders (2011, 374-375) noted, this "origin myth" is still subject to debate).

The links between archaeology and "The Gold Bug" are, though, potentially more interesting, since – as Frank explains – it essentially inverts (or deconstructs?) the genre before it was proplerly established:

> William Legrand, entomologist and natural historian, reconstructs the past from dubious evidence, leading him to pirate treasure, perhaps by chance alone (Frank 2003, 6).

Without going into detail, the "gold bug" (i.e. a scarab) suggests hieroglyphs, which essentially gives Legrand justification for doing the kind of reading Champollion did.

To his contemporaries (note that Bahn (1996, 68), Schnapp (1996, 298), and Trigger (1989, 39; 2006, 68) fail to note Champollion's impact upon his broader contemporary context):

> Champollion appeared "as a new Alexander… to cut the Gordian knot [of the hieroglyphics] which men had vainly sought to untie." In his feat he redeemed the historical discipline that, now, were to verify the historical accuracy of the Old Testament. Bacon's "book of God's word" and his "book of God's works" remain to explain the human situation: "Providence, whose operations are so sensibly exhibited in the whole physical constitution of the world, has not abandoned to chance the government of the moral or intellectual world" (Frank 2003, 65).

It was within this "broader historical context" that Sherlock – a new Champollion – read his palimpsests:

> Holmes and I sat together in silence all the evening, he engaged with a powerful lens deciphering the remains of the original inscription upon a palimpsest, I deep in a recent treatise upon surgery (Conan Doyle 2003h, 964).

This textual approach contradicts the general trend to equate archaeological deposits with geological sediments and raises conceptual problems because, among other things, it points back to Natural Theology, where "reading the past" from the "Book of Nature" (e.g. Hutton 2007, 156; Malthus 1993, 142; Whewell 1832, 117; cf. Harrison 1998, 3, 45; Kemp 2004, 169; Van Riper 1993, 52-53; McLuhan 2003a, 181; 2003b, 125, etc.) was believed to complement "reading God's word" in the Bible.

And this basically brings us back to where we started, with pre-scientific, scholastic metaphors of reading and textual authority taking precedence over the scientific method, observation and personal experience (i.e. *autopsia*).

And this is another way that – as Kobiałka recognises (2014, 422), when he criticises the way even a "sophisticated theoretician like Shanks repeats clichés about Sherlock" – this is ultimately a superficial analogy; but this criticism itself seems superficial.

Why?

I would argue that Kobiałka's critique is superficial in part because his knowledge of the context is, too; perhaps because he relied too much on secondary sources; perhaps because he failed to probe the "broader historical context" deeply enough, or even broadly enough to see, for example, how not just detective fiction but many other writers and artists drew inspiration from archaeology.

In part of a fascinating study, Zimmerman (2001, 2009) examined parallels between London and Pompeii and themes of stagnation (the homeostasis of living in ruins, or in prison) in *Little Dorrit* (Dickens 1996). Given his reputation, this may seem surprising, but Dickens explored themes of archaeology and detection from the very start of his literary career, making fun of antiquaries in his first novel, *The Pickwick Papers* (Dickens 1994c, 167, 179), before contrasting amateur (the villains and friends searching for – hunting? – Oliver) and the ridiculous pair of "professional" detectives (Blathers and Duff) in various subplots of *Oliver Twist* (Dickens 1994b). An antiquary also plays an important – and more positive role (compare Scott 1907) – in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (Dickens 1995a), where much of the story concerns the search for Little Nell.

Some of the inspiration for the imagery in *Little Dorrit* derived from Dickens' friendship with Layard. Among other things, Layard and Dickens climbed Vesuvius together (Zimmerman 2001: 210 [note 50]; Dickens (1846) did not mention any of his fellow-travellers by name; for more on Dickens's visit to Pompeii and Herculaneum, cf. Ackroyd 1990, 457). Understanding Layard's relationship to Dickens actually helps explain one of the novel's many subplots (Arthur Clennam's progress through the "gloomy labyrinth" of the Circumlocution Office, a nightmare of government bureaucracy in an attempt to free the Dorrits), since Layard and Dickens worked on a campaign of government reform together (cf. Ackroyd 1990, 733-736):

> The figure most popularly associated with the ruins of ancient civilizations was Austen Henry Layard. In fact, for Dickens, Layard represented one of *Little Dorrit's* peculiar and powerful conjunctions: the relationship between archaeology and administrative reform. The most famous archaeologist of the mid-nineteenth century, Layard took London by storm with his *Nineveh and its Remains* (1849). Layard and Dickens were close personal friends and traveled together in Italy in 1853. In 1855, when Dickens was writing *Little Dorrit*, he joined Layard, then an MP, in a campaign to reform administrative inefficiency (Zimmerman 2001, 162).

An example of this "administrative inefficiency" can be found in the reforms to the "fragmented apparatus" of London's sewage system:

a system of about three hundred different boards responsible for paving, lighting, drainage, and other amenities which had been established by over two hundred and fifty Acts of Parliament, creating some ten thousand commissioners for the purpose (Halliday 1999, 60; cf. Flanders 2011, 13; 2012, 215).

Strangely enough, although Dickens and Charles Roach Smith (my favourite British archaeologist of the time) were neighbours for some time in Rochester (which in turn provided the setting for *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Dickens 2005); cf. Preston 2005), some misunderstanding apparently prevented them from ever meeting (Hughes 1891, 231-232).

It is against the background provided by this "broader historical context" that Dawid makes his claim that "Sherlock is in a way very superficial" (Kobiałka 2014, 421). And maybe the whole issue is one of whether or not Sherlock is "superficial," since Sherlock doesn't just perceive, he *observes*; and because he doesn't simply observe *facts* (clues)… since even Watson can list those (as could our antiquarian predecessors, in the days before spreadsheets and databases).

So it's not just a case of repeating clichés about Sherlock, since other historians of archaeology seem to have no regrets repeating clichés about purported ties to evolution, uniformitarianism, laws of stratigraphy, etc.

The problem, as I see it – and I paraphrase Sherlock – is that there is no branch of *scholarship* which is so important and so much neglected as the art of tracing citations back to their source. And it is all well and good to contrast Frodo and Gandalf, until it comes time to compare the expert hunter (Chabon 2007, 41) and peasants (Eliot 1994, 75-79)…

Or consider how,

If an untrained crew member or student is placed in front of a section and told 'draw what you see', the product is often gobbledygook! There are limitless numbers of lines, lenses, changes in colour and texture than can be observed on any complex section. The untrained eye has no way of discerning the relevant patterning in the soil (Hodder 1999, 53).

Playing with variations on an ancient theme – Parzival asking the questions which brought relief to Anfortas; the gadfly so essential in the story of "The Emperor's New Clothes," etc. – Kobiałka's critique risks becoming cliché, and makes his paper difficult to appraise.

He is going in the right direction, trying to gain that alternative perspective Atkinson and Feyerabend and Wittgenstein and Galileo, etc., all strove to evoke and/or describe, but… because his criticism seems so… superficial… lacking the weight and/or authority of scholarly research, he seems to miss the mark, and fails to convince.

Or maybe it's a question of differing aims: where Dawid aims to critique the writing of histories of archaeology, I want to use the history of archaeology to critique archaeology itself, its pretensions, origin myths, conceits, beliefs, etc.; in short, to question the metaphysical foundations I intend to examine more closely in the second part of this study.

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