Archaeological Movements in Theory and Practice
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Recent scholarship across a range of disciplines has begun to unpick the relationship between body, mind and material world (Ingold 2011; Malafouris 2013) Building on the success of last year’s “Walking the Archaeological Walk” session, this session hopes to continue the conversation considering the relationship between archaeological thought and movement. However, the proposed session broadens the scope of the previous session and calls for a consideration of any movements that might be deemed distinctively archaeological, from walking a site, to the act of excavation, from the movement of archaeological objects to the reorganisation of archaeological archives. How does an embodied engagement with the material culture that surrounds us as we practice archaeology affect the way we think about the past? Do the tools and finds of archaeology afford us specific ways of moving? The session aims to explore how we might approach archaeology as an embodied way of living in the world, and how this recognition of the body might feed into movements between the frontiers of archaeological theory and practice.

We invite papers that consider topics including, but not limited to:

- The movement of archaeological objects
- Archival movements and object biographies, objects moving in and out of classifications
- Embodied archaeological actions
- Moving between theory and practice

Keywords: movement, embodiment, object biography, material culture

Papers

Journeying to the Centre of the Earth
Jodie Lewis (University of Worcester, jodie.lewis@worc.ac.uk)

The idea that the “world below” could be a refugium for extinct species and lost civilisations gained prominence in 19th-century literature, leading to the genre of “subterranean fiction”. Danger and derring-do abound in these stories. In this paper I want to think about how Neolithic/Early Bronze Age populations encountered and responded to subterranean spaces. In particular I will consider the bodily experience of moving downwards into the earth; the challenges inherent in these journeys and the preparations necessary to complete them. Drawing on archaeological evidence and early caving accounts, a different type of subterranean 'fiction' will be offered.

The results of isotopic, DNA and sourcing studies in archaeology are allowing us to model the long distance movement of people, animals and things. By contrast, most of the human journeys considered in this paper involved moving less than 20 metres. But risk is not measured by distance.
Moving and mapping images: aerial photographs, cropmarks and movement

Kirsty Millican (Historic Environment Scotland, kirsty.millican@hes.scot)

Aerial photographs of cropmark features are static archaeological images taken in motion, movement paused. Although made in movement they are used at rest, with most engagements taking place at the desk and on the screen. Such seemingly static engagements, though, still involve movement and bodily engagement. From the twisting and turning of the printed aerial photograph in the hand as we seek to see and understand, to the transformation of an oblique image to a plan view using computer software, to the tracing of archaeological features on the screen. Each involves movement, bodily engagement and an interpretation undertaken in motion. The end result, mapped features on the screen or on paper, represent archaeological interpretations solidified and movement made solid. This paper will consider these movements and engagements, discussing implications for the construction of the archaeological record and cropmark archaeology, as well as changing movements in the era of digital aerial photography.

“Through hollow lands and hilly lands”… Moving on and around Neolithic Mendip

Jack Rowe (University of Worcester, rowj2_11@uni.worc.ac.uk)

My research seeks to explore Neolithic human movement through an investigation of the karst uplands of the Mendip Plateau, Somerset, and the valley landscape of the Walton Basin, Powys. The selection of two archaeologically rich – and topographically contrasting – Neolithic landscapes will allow for a consideration of how movement around them may have influenced the placement of sites and monuments, and how these may, in turn, have influenced the movement of people, post-construction.

This presentation focuses on recent fieldwork and observations made on Mendip, looking at how movement between and around monuments, sites and areas of concentrated activity (e.g., lithic scatters) might feed into broader-scaled movements, and how natural features may afford potential routeways between the plateau and its surrounding lowland landscapes, including the Somerset levels.

Locating Micro-Histories in Background Movements

Samantha Brummage (Birkbeck, University of London, sbrumm01@mail.bbk.ac.uk)

This paper considers scale and pace in past practice, and looks at why divergent movements can be missed in more ubiquitous patterns and chronologies of prehistory. Significance is often given to an archaeological record which fixes and homogenises the narrative, maintains similar parameters and suggests episodic, uni-scalar and uni-directional worlds by giving import to the same categories of material. For example, fixed features or dense ‘site’ signatures, in situ materials, sealed deposits and absolute dating are considered the holy grail of archaeological investigation, while flint scatters or isolated spot finds, for example, can be considered to contain too much ‘background noise’.

The River Colne is a northern Thames tributary with a prehistoric valley of major assemblages and sites spanning the Mesolithic-Neolithic. But it also has an extensive distribution of ‘background noise’; small scatters, chance finds and residual material. This
paper considers those dispersed signatures or background movements, alongside material from larger excavations and ‘site-based’ archaeology. It reveals some of the smaller movements and connections in people’s daily micro-histories, and how these came together in the making and re-making of landscape.

**Troublesome Cultural Heritage on the Move**

*Irmelin Axelsen (Museum of Cultural History/University of Oslo, irmelin.axelsen@khm.uio.no)*

Metal objects from the ploughsoil can be seen as direct links to past societies by some, and a time- and cost-consuming nuisance, with little scientific value, by others. Removal from their archaeological context has put them in an interpretive limbo. Seasonal movement is displacing them more every year. Sometimes finds end up in the “wrong” place after being removed from the dirt. Rare objects are nonetheless used to promote the area it was found as a possible tourist attraction, and as representatives of something uniquely “Norwegian” – functioning as mnemonic devices for collective memories. The country’s increase in private metal-detecting finds the last five years have drastically changed our knowledge about—and view of—certain find groups and time periods. The focus will be on how perceptions of the usefulness of metal-detecting finds, and, as a result, how notions of what can, and should, be defined as cultural heritage has shifted.

**OGS Crawford’s Feet: Photography, Movement and Presence at Sutton Hoo**

*Beth Hodgett (Oxford University, beth.hodgett@prm.ox.ac.uk)*

Print 2.114 in the Crawford archive is something of an oddity, a pair of feet intrude into the bottom of the frame. Is this a deliberate step into the sightlines of the camera? Or is the intrusion unintentional? What can this photograph tell us about movement and photography? Archaeological photography has, in recent times, been characterised as embodying themes of absence and stillness. In this paper I invert this formulation, and argue instead that Crawford’s photography is infused with motion and presence. Using Print 2.114 as a springboard into this discussion, I demonstrate that by attending to the serial and temporal relationships between photographs, and the agency of the camera, it is possible to reflect upon Crawford’s movements around the excavation site. In doing so I argue that archaeological photography must be understood as a fully embodied ecology of practices that extends far beyond the simple press of a shutter.

**The Embodiment of Prehistory? Archaeological Literature as Artefacts: Do these Powerful Tools of Past Archaeological Practice tell us Much about the Subject Matter we Research?**

*Robert Leedham (University of Central Lancashire, rob.stonesofcontention@gmail.com)*

This paper was conceived when I purchased a book off a second-hand book website. Unbeknownst to the seller, or purchaser, until I opened the packaging, was the personal copy of Stuart Piggott’s *Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles* by V. G. Childe (1940). This sparked an excited flurry of Facebook chatter on the Prehistoric society group, but, it also led me to start thinking that there was a story to tell surrounding archaeological publications. The books of these publications have important cultural biographies that cannot be ignored.
Focusing mainly on the literature of the Mesolithic and the Neolithic, I hope to demonstrate that the relationships among different archaeologists writing about these periods, the embodiment of which are the books, have had a profound and lasting impact on how we view both the Mesolithic and Neolithic as well as the transition between both distinct periods in prehistory.

**The Phallus in the Closet: Boundary Objects and the Movements of Classification**

*Helen Wickstead (Kingston University, London, h.wickstead@kingston.ac.uk)*

Before 1660, John Bargrave purchased two ‘priapisms’ from Naples for his “Cabinet of Rarities, Antiques and Coins”. For three hundred years, these objects hardly moved. Meanwhile, across Europe, phallic collectables circulated promiscuously between excavations, forger’s workshops, cabinets and museums. These far-flung activities influenced some miniscule, but potentially significant, shifts in the environment surrounding Bargrave’s static priapisms: an eighteenth-century catalogue placed other phallic objects alongside them, and, the nineteenth century publication of Bargrave’s catalogue was bowdlerised.

In this paper, I approach movement via translation theory and its concept of the Boundary Object. I explore how phalli arose as collectables and curiosities. I examine encounters over phalli in the closets of Gentlemen of Letters. And, I investigate how the movement of objects and images temporarily stabilized a boundary object called “phallus”. This image - which itself represents a movement arrested in time - had a prominent presence in the antiquarian imagination.

**Motor Launch M.L. 286-A Movy for All Time**

*Suzanne Taylor (Birkbeck, University of London, suzannemarie@btinternet.com)*

Motor launch M.L. 286, also known as a Movy, is a veteran of World War I and World War II. Built for speed in 1916, she began her adventurous life as a spirited submarine chaser as a part of The Grey Patrol in World War I. In World War II, M.L. 286 was one of the Dunkirk Little Ships, which took part in Operation Dynamo in 1940-by which time, she was named Eothen. In the 1980s, Eothen was a houseboat until she was abandoned on the Thames Foreshore at the back of BJ Wood & Son Boatyard in Isleworth Ait. In the present, it would seem that M.L. 286 lies stationary in the boatyard of Isleworth Ait. Yet, is she stationary? This paper will examine M.L. 286 as vibrant material culture which is continuously moving and evolving, and becoming a dynamic part of the boatyard landscape. This paper will be looking at the biography and personhood of M.L. 286, through the disciplines of archaeology; history; poetry; and the arts. This paper will highlight how M.L. 286 continues to evolve and affect people by looking at her life within The Thames Discovery Programme, and how she affects the volunteers who care for her. This paper will also examine how parts of M.L. 286 still live on in the alternative environment of the houseboat Calliach. In this holistic approach to naval archaeology, this paper aims to show that M.L. 286, is still very much a Movy.

**Digital Paper**

Reassessing Existing Material Culture by Widening Appreciation of Skin-Based Material

*Sally Herriett (University of Bristol, arxsch@bristol.ac.uk)*
Whilst deposition allows for artefact preservation, the environment from which some organic materials are recovered has the potential to alter them. This is particularly significant as this alteration has the ability to over-shadow original processing methods applied to skin-based materials. This can make it difficult to relate to the artefact in its primitive pre-depositional incarnation and can result in a misrepresentation within modern literature and the museum environment of both the artefact and thus the material culture. Recent research into production methods, resulting diverse materials and the effects that the depositional environment has on skin has demonstrated the need to widen appreciation of skin-based material and the diversity of items that can be made from it. This paper will shed light onto the variety of methods that can be used that all produce viable skin-based material and will include discussion of an innovative production method for the Clonbrin shield.