



Research Article

Archaeology without antiquity

Assaf Nativ^{1,2,*} & Gavin Lucas³

¹ Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

² Zinman Institute of Archaeology, Haifa University, Israel

³ Department of Archaeology, University of Iceland, Reykjavík, Iceland

* Author for correspondence: ✉ assaf.nativ@gmail.com

Antiquity—the past—has been fundamental to archaeology from the very beginnings of the discipline, and it remains the central concept around which archaeological research is developed. Over the years, however, alternative ways of doing and thinking archaeology have come forth to challenge this orientation on the past. Despite their growth in scope and sophistication, these alternatives remain at the margins of our community. In this article, the authors argue that it is in the best interests of archaeology—both as a community and as a discipline—to not brush aside these alternatives but rather to afford them serious attention.

Keywords: pluralism, memory, antiquity, waste, archaeosphere

Archaeology is about the past—but does it have to be?

Antiquity, by which we mean broadly the past, is the cornerstone of our field. It pertains to something that was but is no longer, a presence that has dissolved into absence, and it is widely perceived that the goal of archaeology is to draw on accessible materials in order to rekindle it. Thus, antiquity is both the object of and justification for archaeology, built on and driven by its categorical separation from the present. In recent decades, however, the expansion of archaeology's conceptual and empirical domain has been gnawing at these disciplinary foundations. These challenges began in the 1970s with contemporaneous material culture studies (Rathje 1979; Gould & Schiffer 1981), later evolving into archaeologies of the contemporary past (Buchli & Lucas 2001; Harrison & Schofield 2010; González-Ruibal 2019). Studies such as these recognised that archaeology could be redefined as the study of material culture irrespective of time or space, thus breaking with antiquity and effectively dismantling the past/present dichotomy in favour of historical continuity.

Since the turn of the millennium, the expansion of archaeological research into new fields—ruins, drift, waste, the Anthropocene and chorography, for example (e.g. Shanks & Witmore 2010; Lane 2015)—has considerably expanded the number and range of challenges to the centrality of antiquity and the past/present divide. Some of this research subverts the

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traditional temporal regime, emphasising that skyscrapers and Neolithic tombs are equally contemporary; both exist here and now, at the same time. This fact, which is a precondition for the very possibility of archaeology, should be recognised in practice, as well as in principle.

Yet while the challenge to antiquity initially posed by material culture studies has grown in scope and depth since the 1980s, archaeology remains, at heart, entrenched in antiquity and its attendant dichotomy of past and present. Without embarking on a systematic survey, we consider this a reasonable observation, as the majority of archaeological work today continues to seek to uncover the past. In our experience, ‘non-antiquary’ archaeologies comprise a small fraction of the various operations and elements that constitute the archaeological community: publications, conferences, fieldwork projects, funded research and faculty. To the best of our understanding, in most archaeology departments around the world, such alternative archaeologies are essentially non-existent. Thus, even if such alternative perspectives expanded in scope, they remain marginal within a discipline that has learned to tolerate such difference without necessarily engaging with it.

Accordingly, the questions we pose in this article are: how might archaeology as a discipline engage with these challenges? What do such challenges comprise, and what kinds of archaeologies do they bring forth? Can they coexist under the same disciplinary roof while maintaining mutually exclusive premises? And, most importantly, is the general tendency to overlook alternatives and challenges to the very foundations of the field justifiable? Doubtless, for many scholars, these recent studies barely resemble archaeology; and in relation to traditional archaeology, this is, of course, true. And yet, such studies still use archaeological methods and work on archaeological materials; so why do they seem so un-archaeological? Or do they? What is at stake is precisely the nature of the archaeological condition and its attendant practices. Archaeology is about the past—but does it have to be?

We do not presume to provide comprehensive answers to these questions. Rather, our goal is to make a case that it is in archaeology’s interest—both as a community and as a discipline—to give these alternatives serious consideration, and not to brush them aside or merely tolerate them. In doing so, we do not claim to present a thorough and exhaustive review of all relevant matters, but only to trace their outlines in order to offer an overview of the relations between antiquity and its principal alternatives within the archaeological community. We begin with the argument that antiquity is but one venue for archaeological research—and one that by no means exhausts its possibilities. In other words, we suggest that options other than antiquity are possible and valid. Next, we consider three non-antiquary archaeologies: memory work, the archaeosphere and waste/detritus. We briefly review their main tenets and outline the sort of archaeology that they embody. We end with an attempt to envision archaeology as a fundamentally pluralist field where it is fully appropriate to conceptualise and mobilise the same archaeological object in incommensurable ways and for incompatible purposes.

Does antiquity exhaust archaeology?

Does archaeology have to be about the past? The discipline is commonly defined as the study of the past; indeed, the very etymology of the term ‘archaeology’ would seem to support such a position. Another way to define the field, however, would be as the study of material

remains or traces of human activity. The difference between the two definitions is subtle but important: the former is goal-oriented (discovering/recreating the past), while the latter is object-oriented (remains). For the former, antiquity is the justification for archaeology, while for the latter it is a consequence; and most importantly, while the first definition denies any discussion, the latter raises the question of alternatives: could archaeology embrace other goals? Can the myriad of archaeological objects be understood to be anything other than residual? In approaching the first question, it is worth recalling that antiquity is a theoretical construct (see Hacking 1999)—specifically a construction of absence, even loss; and loss calls for redemption (LaCapra 1999). Thus, in so far as archaeology is defined as the pursuit of antiquity, it is a redemptive project. One might wonder, therefore, if this does not imply that its justification is merely a matter of historical contingency. In principle, archaeology could equally be put to the service of other agendas and values—political or environmental, for example (e.g. McGuire 2008; Lane 2015; González-Ruibal *et al.* 2018).

In relation to the second question, we now ask how are we to understand the wide range of objects and phenomena with which we engage, such as mounds, monuments, strata, artefacts and features. Adopting the notion of antiquity answers this question well: they are remains of past human activities. While this is an excellent framing, the fact that it works does not preclude the possibility that other approaches may work equally well. In so far as these archaeological entities are real and concrete, the question of their origins and the access that they provide to past times is but one aspect of what they are. Indeed, all objects can be shown to be derivative of past activities in one way or another; this does not mean, however, that their traits and qualities are reducible to preceding conditions, events and/or elements (Polanyi 1966; DeLanda 2006). Just as the nature of water, for example, is not reducible to oxygen and hydrogen, nor to the chemical reaction that brought them together, so an archaeological site is not reducible to potsherds, sediments and stones, nor to events and processes that assembled them.

To appreciate archaeological objects in terms of antiquity is to prioritise a particular aspect of their being over others. Practically speaking, such prioritisations are inevitable. Every action, whether contemplative, mechanical or classificatory, is inherently also an act of reduction and valuation. It acknowledges and engages certain features of the object, while allowing others to withdraw to the background (Goodman 1978; Harman 2011; McDonald 2012). Should we choose to allow other qualities to occupy the foreground, questions of a different order and knowledge of another kind will introduce themselves. In principle, and on the empirical grounds upon which the field is established, there is no *a priori* reason for archaeology to limit its concerns to the past: the discipline does not have to be about antiquity.

This position is sufficient to justify a more generous consideration of alternatives to be explored and developed—a point on which we elaborate below. First, however, we briefly review some contemporary examples of non-antiquary archaeological discourse, to illuminate the manner in which they challenge antiquity and to explore the sort of archaeology they constitute. We do not claim to offer a comprehensive review of such research and, no doubt, many of its practitioners may find our sketch inadequate. A brief perusal of back issues of the *Journal of Contemporary Archaeology* will give the reader a fuller impression of the variety of approaches, although not all of this research necessarily falls under the umbrella of contemporary archaeology. For current purposes, we focus on three topics: memory work, the archaeosphere and waste/detritus.

Archaeology as...

Memory work

Among recent developments, the notion of archaeology as memory work is receiving growing attention. To some extent, this continues a trend that began with the archaeology of the contemporary past (Graves-Brown *et al.* 2013). As noted above, in the 1970s, archaeologists participating in this movement shifted their focus of attention from the past to material culture, undermining the constitutive position of antiquity in the field. In doing so, they rejected the notion of a time past as categorically distinct from the present, arguing instead for continuity.

Memory takes this a step further. If there is a past, it resides in the objects themselves, as these exist in the present (Olivier 2011; Witmore 2015). As such, objects and things embody a form of memory; and memory of the past is not the same as *the* past. Memory is active; it changes, withers and transforms; it engages us and other things, participating in a complex ‘ecology of practices’ (Witmore 2014). Importantly, memory may be active or withdrawn, conscious or unconscious:

Things that are used [i.e. active, conscious] end up ruined and buried [i.e. withdrawn, unconscious]. Things can be discovered only because they have been buried, which is to say, hidden. Things can be preserved only because they have been discovered. Preserved things, too, are destined to end up ruined and buried. (Olivier 2011: 191)

The material world, including the archaeological record, need not be broken up into temporal components—this bit Neolithic, that bit eighteenth century, for instance. Rather, it should be viewed as a co-present, polychronic ensemble, a mixing of multiple pasts in which ancient Corinthian temples co-exist with modern Greek highways, or where medieval buildings live next to a twenty-first century supermarket (see also Bailey 2007; Dawdy 2016).

In this respect, archaeology as memory work also rejects the field’s redemptive function: there is no past to be (re)discovered—it has disappeared forever. Instead, it takes on a messier and more confused but also more substantial and immediate task of exploring the concrete present, where what was lingers in what has become of it, pushing forward into the future. This move inevitably implicates heritage, for if the past exists only in so far as it already operates in the present, it also follows that the inclination to view heritage as a selective and purposeful manipulation of the past for the sake of our future is limited and flawed. Rather, heritage is “the ‘raw’, unfiltered legacy passed on” (Olsen & Pétursdóttir 2016: 40), an inarticulate, amorphous, confused past inscribed into matter from which the present is made. Moreover, once the commitment of heritage to the future is triangulated with other archaeological practices, the discipline becomes reconfigured as a field engaged in future-making practices (Harrison 2016).

The archaeosphere

Another alternative for an antiquarian archaeology is a more environmentally oriented position. Archaeologists have long been engaged with environmental issues, spanning palaeoclimatology, the reconstruction of ancient environments and the investigation of

the impact of ancient societies on their surroundings. Archaeologists have also drawn extensively on environmental and ecological thinking to produce explanatory models for past events (e.g. Darwinism, niche construction theory). But all of these approaches and others operate under the antiquarian premise, seeking either to speak of the environment in the past tense or to hold onto it as a uniformitarian anchor (i.e. the hypothesis that processes that operate and are observable in the present also operated in the past) that renders the past accessible.

In contrast, the line of reasoning we consider here regards archaeological objects and deposits as constituting a particular class of environmental entities. Edgeworth's sustained development of the concept of the 'archaeosphere' (borrowed from Capelotti 2009), broadly defined as "the sum of humanly modified deposits" (Edgeworth 2016: 107), well illustrates this approach. The archaeosphere constitutes the upper stratum of the Earth's surface, bounded on the one side by the gaseous envelope of the atmosphere and, on the other, by the interface with natural geological layers—boundary A (Edgeworth 2014). The archaeosphere is

often characterized by abundant inclusions of artefacts, manufactured materials, human burials, and the remains of domesticated species. On land it is partly comprised of cultivation soils, urban occupation deposits, landfills, dumps of excavated material, earthworks, and so on. It contains archaeological entities such as layers, cuts, fills, lenses, dumps. But it also contains building foundations, constructed voids, and other architectural structures, along with infrastructure such as service pipes and cables—some still in use, some dormant, and some obsolete and abandoned [...] It is extended downwards into earlier geological strata through the cutting of mines, quarries, metros, road tunnels, wells, and other kinds of drillings, diggings and borings. (Edgeworth 2018: 21)

The archaeosphere, therefore, is not merely residual; it is not simply something left behind. Rather, it is present and concrete, growing and expanding, and partaking in social and natural processes. Moreover, the concept implies a global perspective, to be understood in the context of the four major spheres of the Earth: the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere. Constituting the uppermost part of the Earth's crust, the archaeosphere is located at the critical zone where all spheres meet and engage, rendering it an important player within the global system (Edgeworth 2018).

Thus, in embracing the concept of the archaeosphere, the field of archaeology embodies research of the largest and most expansive of human creations—the accumulated, humanly modified deposits and features on the Earth's surface. This deals with, on one hand, the study of the archaeosphere's formation, expansion and permutation on both local and global scales, and on the other, its constitutive role in shaping the world physically, biologically and culturally.

Waste/detritus

The association of waste, refuse, rubbish, garbage and detritus with archaeology is at least 50 years old, and can be traced to Schiffer's equation of archaeological contexts with refuse, defined as "the post-discard condition of an element" (Schiffer 1972: 159). This claim

was widely echoed (Staski & Sutro 1991: 1; Shanks *et al.* 2004: 65), providing a stepping-stone for a range of archaeological programmes, such as the archaeology of contemporary landfills (Rathje *et al.* 1992; Rathje & Murphy 2001).

But while the possibilities to be gleaned from the marriage of archaeology with rubbish were explored with considerable interest (e.g. Lucas 2002; Camp 2010; Sosna & Brunclíková 2017), the paradox underlying this association has been largely overlooked. On the one hand, the notion of refuse is evoked in order to render archaeological contexts distinct from social ones, while, on the other hand, the same notion effectively ties them together. For the concept operates as an emissary of social valuation (Douglas 1966; Thompson 1979; Curtis 2007; Reno 2018). Indeed, the principal function of ‘waste’ is to label objects and substances as potentially disruptive, calling for their neutralisation, whether by exclusion (e.g. landfilling), re-valuation (e.g. recycling) or destruction (e.g. incineration). Regardless, the objects hitherto designated as ‘waste’ become something else. Consequently, ‘waste’ is, by definition, contingent and elusive: one person’s rubbish is another’s treasure. It is also an inherently unstable and short-lived designation. Evidently, these qualities stand in striking contrast with the relative stability and positive valuation we commonly associate with archaeological objects and entities.

What, therefore, remains of Schiffer’s original formulation? Perhaps its most important insight: archaeological formations are ultimately a consequence of cultural mechanisms of destruction and/or alienation. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in landfills, where purposeful acts of exclusion produce (archaeological) sites of stratified cultural deposits. Landfills, and by extension, archaeological formations in general, are the positive (creative) consequence of mechanisms of social destruction, alienation and estrangement. The exclusion of cultural objects from the social sphere produces new entities that no longer abide by our classifications and engineering, constituting amorphous and incomprehensible amalgams. Some components are fragmented beyond recognition, while others are transformed through oxidation and bacterial decomposition. But most importantly, everything mixes with everything else. Entities that the social sphere would have kept apart are now in close association: the domestic and the industrial, the pharmaceutical with the commercial, trimmed foliage with silverware. It is these combinations that are possible within the landfill and other archaeological formations, and which defy the classificatory principles of social operation. Waste is a human creation that moved beyond human comprehension.

This is best illustrated by the work of Þóra Pétursdóttir, Bjornar Olsen and colleagues, especially that on abandoned industrial structures and drift formations of marine garbage on beaches (Pétursdóttir 2013; Pétursdóttir & Olsen 2017). Central to this work is the unruliness and incongruity of these entities. In these settings, the ‘afterlife’ of fabricated objects and substances is captured, as they continue to persist beyond the human sphere, whether drifting in oceans and landing on beaches, or left to their own devices (Soto 2018). They become muddled and mangled, unidentifiable and often obnoxious. Being abandoned or neglected by human care, these objects are beyond our control both practically and conceptually. Thus, an archaeology working through the prism of waste, is not an archaeology *of* waste. Rather, it is an archaeology that explores the entities produced by the human capacity to alienate its own creations.

Towards a pluralist archaeology

The observations made above about contemporary work in archaeology do not fit with the conventional notion of archaeology as being about the past. We argued that antiquity does not exhaust archaeology, and that alternative lines of research are being actively explored around the margins of our discipline. It is difficult to anticipate the long-term impact that these developments will have on the wider field, and whether they will find their way into mainstream archaeological thinking and practice. For now, this seems unlikely, if only because the knowledge claims made by these alternatives are prone to be distasteful to the antiquarian palate. After all, it is difficult to convince a listener of the value of a project that is founded on unfamiliar predicates and that are incommensurable with one's own. In Polanyi's (1958) terms, these positions are separated by a logical gap that can only be crossed by way of conversion. While we purport no missionary goals, we nevertheless wish to emphasise that it is in our community's interest to encourage the exploratory work of non-antiquary forms of archaeology; first and foremost because there is more to archaeology than antiquity. While it is true that an archaeological artefact is a remnant of past events, this does not imply that it has no environmental impact, that it is not socially rejected, or that it is not mnemonic. It is all these things and many more. An object does not have to be just one thing.

This is not only a matter of theory, but also of practice; it is not just a question of what we know and say about an object, it is also a question of what we do with it. When archaeological entities are considered as waste, environmental agents or antiquities, they are valued differently; they are constituted, rationalised and arranged along divergent lines, inviting different procedures and seeking different goals (Goodman 1978). Insofar as these alternatives are equally valid—that is, they account equally well for empirical reality as we know it—the choice among them is not a matter of scientific validity, but of valuation (McDonald 2012).

The point, therefore, is not that one framework is better than another, but that each captures something that the others do not, and that none can claim to be superior in any absolute sense. Whatever features we choose to emphasise, whatever courses of action we take and whatever goals we seek to achieve, these are inevitably partial, temporary and historically contingent (Hacking 1999: 68–80; Webmoor 2012). One might wonder, therefore, if the near complete dominance of antiquity in archaeological discourse is prudent. Indeed, in the broad scheme of things, there are good reasons to allow and even encourage the co-existence of multiple lines of enquiry, *especially* if they are incommensurable and mutually exclusive. Four such benefits are summarised by Chang (2012: 270–78):

1. Since scientific progress is unpredictable and contingent, it is helpful to keep multiple lines of enquiry open: “It is most irrational to insist that only the theory with the highest probability *at the moment* should be preserved and all others killed off. Once eliminated and forgotten, avenues of inquiry will be very difficult and costly to re-invent” (Chang 2012: 271).
2. Pluralism can promote a beneficial division of labour among domains that strive towards a fuller appreciation of an object.

3. A plural field will probably satisfy more aims and values. “Once we grant that there are multiple human needs that science is called upon to satisfy, it is easy to recognize that we will most likely not be able to come up with *the* perfect scientific system that satisfies all needs” (Chang 2012: 274). In other words, because different systems of scientific practice address different aims and values, they cover in conjunction a wider range of concerns.
4. Plurality enriches knowledge: “even if we have a system of practice that satisfies a certain aim quite well, we can always benefit from adding another system that satisfies the same aim in a different manner” (Chang 2012: 276).

All of these points hold for archaeology as well. Loosening the grip of antiquity on our field and making room for other lines of enquiry and research will promote a fuller appreciation of archaeological entities, address a wider range of values and enrich our knowledge. Pluralism also has the implication of promoting humility; first, by making clear that every programme of enquiry is at best partial, and its accomplishments are inherently incomplete; and second, by producing a variegated field with co-existing incommensurable systems of practice, inevitably ‘stepping on each other’s toes’ and producing a continuous critical discussion.

In archaeological discourse, pluralism is often discussed in relation to multivocality, as a freedom in principle to produce varying accounts of past events, processes, conditions and places, balancing, for instance, the privileged position of the professional archaeologist against those of Indigenous communities. The position formulated here, however, extends this epistemic pluralism into the ontological realm. First, we are not speaking of pluralism in relation to an absent object—the past—but to a present one: concrete archaeological entities. Reality itself is plural, not only the knowledge of it (Webmoor 2012). Second, we do not exclude judgment and do not question objectivity as a regulating ideal (or epistemic virtue). Some archaeological accounts are plausible and solid, while others are dubious and vacuous; it is of utmost importance that we work to make these distinctions. Third, unlike most references to multivocality that tend to think in terms of correspondence between theory and reality, the pluralism evoked here relies on a performative idiom, where concepts are operable in the field and laboratory, and where the events in these locations are inscribable (Hacking 1983; Pickering 1995; Barad 2007). Finally, our pluralism is not ideological but pragmatic; it follows from an understanding that the world cannot be reduced to a single account.

Having called for a pluralist archaeology in which antiquity is one of several modes of practice and reasoning, it is only appropriate to conclude this article with an attempt to articulate how such a scholarly landscape might look. Based on the above discussion, we can envision (at least) four kinds of archaeology operating side by side: antiquity, memory work, archaeosphere and waste/detritus. Their very juxtaposition will induce challenges to each other’s premises, constitute the same objects as different things, demarcate the field along divergent lines and construct different bodies of knowledge (Table 1).

To begin with, alternative archaeologies will value the same object (e.g. artefact, site or feature) differently, emphasising disparate qualities or traits, and mobilising it for other purposes. Thus, antiquity values an object for its age and mobilises it to (re)construct origins—a lost past. Memory values the same object as a vestige that carries the past into the present,

Table 1. Hypothetical outline for a pluralist archaeology.

	Object valuation	Field demarcation	Goals
Antiquity	Age, derivation	All that is old	Past, origins
Memory	Present past	All that informs the present	Temporality
Archaeosphere	Environmental impact	Humanly modified deposits and artificial ground	Ecological/geological legacy
Waste	Asociality	All that is rejected or abandoned	Alienation

mobilising it to articulate how a past inscribed in matter partakes in the constitution of our here and now. The archaeosphere values the object as a cultural component in the substance of the Earth, mobilising it to explore how a human-modified stratum forms and transforms, while affecting other environmental spheres. Finally, waste values the object as a socially alienated cultural entity, mobilised to articulate a post-human mode of cultural being.

Different archaeological elements will acquire different meanings under these various programmes. A stratigraphic sequence, for instance, constitutes a temporal order as a linear sequence for antiquity; for memory, it is a different type of temporality, a con-temporality or contiguity; for the archaeosphere, it demonstrates a physical growth and transformation of the landscape; and for waste, it is a constitutive feature of asociality. Similarly, a pit is a specifiable feature in a social setting when viewed through the prism of antiquity; a past event imprinted in matter for memory; a specifiable element in the transformation of the surface for archaeosphere; and a line of contact between deposits for waste. Moreover, each of these programmes attributes greater importance to some components of the archaeological corpus than to others. For example, the entities that might conventionally be categorised as agencies of transformation and excluded from further consideration as disturbances (e.g. earthworms, burrowing animals, frost action, bacteria) become of equal valence in studies of waste and detritus. They help define the ruin as ruin. Similarly, in the archaeosphere and in memory studies, past and present material culture co-mingle. Whereas for a conventional archaeologist digging in a field of wheat, the field and crops themselves are ‘in the way’ of the archaeology; for studies in memory work or the archaeosphere, they constitute the same matter of concern.

On account of these differential distributions of concerns and emphases, the various programmes are also inclined to trace the field’s empirical outlines somewhat differently. Antiquity decides on what it considers of interest on the grounds of age, while the archaeosphere is grounded in sedimentation. Thus, the latter will exclude exposed monuments and artefacts held in museum cases, valued by the former, although it will include a large range of recent artificial deposits and surface phenomena, such as mines, landfills and ploughed soils, which the former regards as irrelevant. Conversely, a preoccupation with waste will consider relevant all cultural materials that are abandoned or discarded, regardless of their age or their location. In this respect, it is the most inclusive among the programmes, but its approach probably downplays entities or assemblages that are commonly perceived to be of great importance. Human burials and *in situ* deposits on an occupation surface, for example, are not easily accommodated in such a programme, whereas they might form the focus of archaeological research under the sign of antiquity.

What ontological consequences do these novel ontographies create? In many ways, all offer subtle re-adjustments of the archaeological, foregrounding different sets of relations. If studies of detritus and the archaeosphere reveal the entanglement of humans/culture and nature, the focus on memory and heritage reveals the entanglement of past and present: not so much ‘what happened in the past’ as ‘how does the past happen in the present’. In both cases, deep ontological divisions between nature and culture, past and present, which sustain conventional archaeology (i.e. antiquity), are being contested in these alternative archaeologies. The differences, however, are a matter of degree or emphasis, rather than the definition of distinct approaches. Issues of memory are also important to work on ruins, just as the elision of the nature/culture divide is central to chorography.

Given these differences, the question arises as to whether or not it is preferable simply to re-name such studies as something other than archaeology, thus reducing confusion and ambiguity. While not unreasonable, we do not feel that this is wise, mainly because the exclusion of alternative programmes will serve to diminish the advantages of pluralism. Instead of maximising the points of contact and contention that continuously draw out the blindspots and valuations at work, such a regime would produce enclaves that do not communicate at all. Arguably, this is what is happening today; we need to increase dialogue within the discipline, not excommunicate those alternatives that have sought to enrich and advance it.

To conclude, we have sought to make the point that archaeology can and should be much more than the pursuit of the past. As a field of study that empirically engages with humanity’s material signature on the world, archaeology is not exhausted by the search for origins. Although such a concern with origins is undeniably relevant and worthy, it captures only one, very specific, aspect of archaeology, and there is a host of other concerns that are equally deserving of our attention. Moreover, such aspects are not loosely defined potentialities. Rather, they are programmes already at work, already taking shape, albeit on the margins of our community. We believe that it is important to encourage the further development of these programmes, as well as to remain open to others. After nearly two centuries of antiquity-orientated thinking, it is now time for archaeologists to recognise that their field holds more in its hands than is commonly acknowledged.

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