

During the past twenty-seven years, the objective of providing first-class training to students in archaeology has remained unchanged. The department, at least within its own perception, has remained oriented toward graduate work, and largely gauges its undergraduate success by its ability to turn out students prepared to carry on graduate studies elsewhere.

The graduate programme has not been changeless. The early emphasis on instruction in the natural sciences (especially in geology, vertebrate palaeontology and palynology) has gradually declined, and with it the environmental approach. Sessional instructors who were specially suited to offer courses, not only ancillary fields, but also in specialized archaeological subjects, have by and large disappeared from the scene as a result of budgetary cuts. Course offerings by other departments have offset these losses to a certain extent.

At the same time, the field of archaeology itself has developed greater sophistication and requires more in-depth instruction at both graduate and undergraduate levels. If anything, the department has taken a swing back in the direction of the Social Sciences, particularly in its theoretical stance. But probably not one of the archaeology faculty would go so far as to subscribe to the notion that "archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing," an aphorism widely accepted by North American archaeologists 25 or so years ago.

Method and theory courses are given more prominence in recent years. While the concern is primarily archaeological, the issues lately have moved toward broader concern with contemporary society. Method and theory are emphasized in all courses. On a more particularistic level, advanced undergraduate instruction includes such courses as museology, ceramic analysis and computers. Seminars are given largely to discussions of current issues in archaeology, and include a wide range of topics.

Areal coverage has expanded appreciably in response to the special interests of new faculty members. Until 1974 the Faculty of Graduate Studies insisted that the department limit its scope to New World archaeology, but when this stricture was laid to rest, African studies rose into prominence. Aside from Europe and Oceania, staff members have not personally specialized in regions outside the Americas and Africa. The department does, however, offer courses in general Old World archaeology as well as topical courses which are not confined geographically.

The subtle shifts that can be detected in the archaeology program can be seen as moves away from the natural sciences, environmental studies and descriptive reconstructions of the past to great concern with contemporary archaeological problems; contemporary not only in the sense of keeping up-to-date in relation to modern trends in world archaeology, but also in the sense of addressing modern social issues from the archaeological perspective.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/bha.03103>

## **Archaeology and Cultural Nationalism in the American Southwest, 1895-1920**

by

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### **Introduction**

Traditional histories of archaeology have been described by a recent commentator as resembling travel journals, providing "...an account of the slow journey out of the darkness of subjectivity and speculation towards objectivity, rationality, and science" (Murray 1989:56). In recent years new approaches to this subject have taken a more critical look at the tangled social and intellectual currents surrounding the development of archaeology. One of the least contestable points to arise from the current theoretical debates within the discipline is that of the fundamental relationship between the observer/scientist and the production of knowledge (for example, Leone 1986). This topic is central to modern sociocultural anthropology (Stocking 1983) and is particularly pertinent to the history of the field.

In North America research on the history of prehistoric archaeology has been dominated by considerations of administrative and intellectual contexts (for example, Meltzer 1983; Dunnell 1986; Hinsley 1987; Fowler 1989; Trigger 1989). Few scholars, by comparison, have dealt with the role of social history in this process (but see Patterson 1986; Hinsley 1989).

The present study adopts the perspective of social history in examining archaeology as it developed in the southwestern United

States between 1895 and 1920; particular emphasis is placed on the influence of nationalism as a motivating ideology. The brief history of the dominant culture in the United States as compared to that of the indigenous population has led Trigger to suggest that the type of archaeology that evolved in this country was 'colonial' rather than 'nationalist' in nature (1984:360-361). It is clear, however, that the social and political pressures which led to the rise of European nationalist ideologies and archaeologies in the 19th century were felt in the United States as well (Hobsbawm 1983:279). The relationships between these social processes and American archaeology thus pose interesting questions.

Popular writings are more meaningful for this type of analysis than are articles written by scholars for other scholars. A sample of the publicly-oriented writings of two important figures of turn-of-the-century southwestern archaeology, Edgar Lee Hewett and Frank L. Springer, will be examined here. Taken together with the social and intellectual contexts in which they were made, these statements provide a case study that illustrates the close relationship between nationalistic ideology and a particular school of American archaeology.

### **Cultural Nationalism and 19th Century American Society**

Several authors (Lowenthal 1985:110,116; Wallace 1986b; Runte 1987; Weighand 1988) have made the point that American intellectual thought through the first half of the 19th century was strongly ahistorical. The belief that the American Revolution had severed ties with Old World traditions and provided a social setting free from the constraints of precedent was an important aspect of national ideology.

It has been argued (Hosmer 1965; Wallace 1986b) that in the years following the Civil War the elite classes of American society came under increasing stress. Causal factors include the rise in immigration, entrenchment of capitalism, and the beginnings of American imperialist expansion abroad. Increasingly these threatened classes turned to ideological sources to support the legitimacy of their social position (Lowenthal 1985: 121). One such reaction was the rise of what can be loosely termed "cultural nationalism", following Runte (1987). This required the creation of a specifically American heritage, which could then be used to legitimize the actions of those whose position it enshrined (Wallace 1986b).

The rise of cultural nationalism in the US reflected regional and class associations and thus took several different trajectories. Interest in historic preservation, a frequent source of ideological legitimation, increased dramatically during this period (Wallace 1986b; Hosmer 1965). Interest in national parks is arguably the product of similar pressure. In spite of the efforts of activists, preservation of areas of scenic beauty in the American West was not seriously undertaken until rising American aspirations required tangible ideological foundations (Runte 1987).

The intellectual traditions of archaeology suggested that it also had potential in providing legitimation for nation and class (Gjessing 1963; Kehoe 1989). As an academic discipline, archaeology in America at the turn of the century was as firmly rooted in classical studies as it was in anthropology, a fact often overlooked by modern Americanists. The classically-oriented perspective of archaeology as the "handmaiden of history", particularly as concerned 'western civilization', colored the academic curricula in which most members of the middle and upper classes at the turn of the century were educated. Archaeology provided material underpinning for Plato and Aristotle, and its potential in support of cultural nationalist ideologies was well established.

A role for archaeology in the creation of the specifically American civilization being shaped at that time by members of those same classes was less evident. There were few credible assertions of common historical ground between ancestors of Native Americans and of the dominant Anglo-European society. In an environment where indigenous peoples were demonized or ignored and the material remains of their pasts considered mere curiosities, archaeology remained irrelevant to social concerns.

### **Cultural Nationalism in the American Southwest**

Conditions in the southwestern United States after 1890 modified this situation. Urban life in New Mexico Territory and surrounding states at that time was dominated by a growing class of educated migrants from the East and Midwest (Goetzmann 1966; Larson 1968; Gibson 1983). The stimulus towards expressions of cultural nationalism manifest in other parts of the country can be considered to have been even more acute in an area such as the Southwest, which had only been incorporated into the United States fifty years previously. A certain amount of insecurity can be inferred for a class of citizens who were both members of an increasingly nationalistic society and immigrants to a new land.

It is under these circumstances that local interest in the prehistoric ruins in the Southwest began to increase. Earlier in the 19th century formal archaeology in the region had occurred within a context of general scientific inquiry. This pursuit was dominated by scholars associated with eastern institutions (Willey and Sabloff 1981:50; Goetzmann 1966:304). The growth of a

resident college-educated class versed in the classical model of archaeology (Hinsley 1986), increasing cultural nationalism, and the presence of ancient ruins practically on every side provided fertile social conditions for the widening relevance of archaeological research. In combination with a rising sense of regional identity, these factors promoted the development of a new research "tradition" based on the populist and utilitarian ethics of the west. A principal component was the linkage of American nationalism with Native American history through archaeology.

Intellectual justification for this approach can be found in many popular works of archaeologists and writers active in the Southwest during this period. Public speeches, along with articles from the pages of such journals as *El Palacio*, *Art and Archaeology*, and *Records of the Past*, suggest two broad trends; the 'classicizing' of the achievements of Native Americans, and the use of nationalist rhetoric in defining the role of archaeology in regional and national societies.

### "Classicizing" American Antiquity

The two individuals on which this study is particularly focused exemplify western science and thought at the turn of the century. Traditional archaeological histories characterize Edgar Lee Hewett as having been more of a politician than a scientist, a poor fieldworker and a malign influence soon cast off by a younger generation of scholars. What is frequently overlooked in the disparagement of Hewett is his political power and influence in western society of the day (cf. Chauvenet 1983). Through membership in dozens of organizations, extensive correspondence, involvement in state politics and above all frequent public lecture tours Hewett reached a broad audience and thus played an important role in setting the agenda for the conduct of archaeology in the Southwest.

A consistent thread running through Hewett's popular writings was the use of analogies between ancient southwestern peoples and more familiar old-world civilizations. This tendency to "classicize" local antiquities stands in marked contrast to the sober, ethnologically-based reports from earlier decades, such as those of Adolph Bandelier. Examples are plentiful; in just two paragraphs of one 1916 article Hewett compares the city of Santa Fe to Damascus, refers to a local hilltop as an acropolis, and concludes that

...in truth, there is no reason why the Indians of the towns on the site of Santa Fe should not have been living their simple lives in the same days that the aboriginal Latins were basking in the sun of the Seven Hills, baking pottery by precisely the same methods as the Indians and, in the same way, folding up the bodies of their dead for burial along the Via Sacra (Hewett 1916b: 324).

This brand of 'classicizing' was not unique to Hewett. Laudatory poetry comparing the ruins of New Mexico to those of Babylon and other old world monuments was a standard feature of *El Palacio*. Which was published by Hewett from his School of American Archaeology. Charles Lummis, who wrote extensively on the Southwest at this time, described its ancient people with heroic imagery analogous to that used for the ancient Israelites or the heroes of the Trojan War;

Here on the grim mesa, amid a wilderness of appalling solitude, they worried out the tufa blocks, and built their fortress-city, and fended off the prowling Navajo, and fought to water and home again, and slept with an arrow on the string (Lummis 1906:145).

Over time this classically-inspired imagery became commonplace in regional literature. One 1923 brochure from a Santa Fe hotel compared local antiquities with Pompeii, Grecian temples, and the tombs of the pharaohs (Bishop's Lodge 1923).

This consistent theme played upon the strong cultural and historical associations that classical antiquity held for the educated classes in America. By making favorable comparisons between these icons and ruins in the Southwest, the history of southwestern peoples was given legitimacy. Hewett's background was in education; his use of such imagery cannot be considered simply a matter of literary fashion. At one point Hewett describes his predecessor Bandelier as "the Pausanias of the Rio Grande" (1909:34). Pausanias' works on historical Greek sites, written in the 2nd century AD, would have been a familiar reference to his readership. By implicitly comparing Bandelier's work to this standard, the pasts these two authors describe are placed on equal footing. The only difference, Hewett argues, is that Native American history has had to, in his words, "maintain its sacred fires" (1916a:259). In this fashion Hewett and his contemporaries made this archaeologically-derived history a subject worthy of incorporation into the cultural heritage of a predominantly Anglo-European nation.

## Archaeology as the "Appropriate Study" of Americans

The second trend evident in this approach concerns establishing nationalistic motivations for the study of this newly-respectable past. Following the turn of the century a series of attacks on archaeological preoccupation with the classical world can be found in the popular archaeological press (For example, Baum 1902:2). In a 1902 speech the New Mexican attorney and scientist Frank L. Springer took this point another logical step. Referring to ruins within New Mexico, he noted that

They invite the hand of exploration and science to uncover their mysteries and interpret their meaning... For that fair and ancient land, touched at last by the spirit which has made the great West what it is, has awakened to a new life. Inquiry and investigation have joined hands with industry and commerce to wrest from it its secrets and its wealth...(Twitchell n.d.: 97-98).

Springer was an appropriate spokesman for the goals and ambitions of the Anglo-European elite class in the west. Hewett's patron, politically influential in addition to being a paleontologist and sponsor of scientific research, he can with some justification be called the "grey eminence" of New Mexico archaeology after the turn of the century.

With this speech and others Springer articulates the sentiment that, for Americans, and in particular residents of the Southwest, the study of American archaeology should be considered an important national endeavor. That this attitude was widely shared is reflected in a local newspaper headline from 1913, which blares "Should competent or incompetent semitic, Egyptian and classical professors direct AMERICAN archaeology?" (Santa Fe New Mexican, Wednesday 11/12/1913).

It was during this period that the slogan "See America first", coined by Charles Lummis, first gained wide circulation (Fiske and Lummis 1975). In 1917 Springer suggested that "know America first" (Springer 1917: 17) would be a logical, patriotic corollary. That these sentiments had influence at the national level as well can be seen in a draft of federal antiquities legislation from 1899; where earlier versions had sought preservation for its own sake, this example relied upon unflattering comparisons between the treatment of antiquities in the US and in other parts of the world in an attempt to provoke congressional action (Lee 1970:49).

A final aspect of the nationalistic tenor of southwestern archaeology during this period is the insistence of its practitioners on the practical utility of their work. Frank Springer, in particular, consistently described archaeology as a pragmatic and utilitarian enterprise appropriate to American ideals and ambitions. The study of the ancient Native American, he notes in an address inaugurating the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, has specific value;

For we may learn from him many things on which it is useful to reflect - reverence for the powers of the universe; the value of the spoken word when passed; respect for Age, obedience to Authority, and devotion to the State - which should make for better citizenship, for more unselfish patriotism, and for the greater security of our national ideals...(Springer 1917:16-17)

What these authors were providing for the public were not the dry facts produced by their contemporaries in the Bureau of American Ethnology (Hinsley 1987). They were attributing to these earlier, unrelated peoples a history which embodied the values that their own social classes sought to promote in the present..

## Conclusion

Ultimately, the nationalist school of southwestern archaeology promoted by Hewett, Springer, and their contemporaries failed to outlive their generation. The trend away from regionalism following the first world war and the increasing entrenchment of the anglo population in the Southwest may have reduced pressures for the construction of distinct regional identity. Within archaeology itself, the aggressive professionalizing of the discipline referred to by Fowler (1989) as "Harvard vs. Hewett" (see also Hinsley 1986) resulted in the deemphasis of public outreach. At the national level the National Park Service became the custodian of cultural heritage and emphasized scenic splendor over archaeology. The material component of American history also became increasingly respectable (Unrau and Willis 1987). As interest grew in the genealogical ancestors of modern America, archaeological heritage became less relevant. In this sense, the vision of colonial Williamsburg supplanted the vision of prehistoric Santa Fe.

The clearest statement of the motivations of the nationalist school of southwestern archaeology came from Nels Nelson, a relative outsider to the region. To conclude here, it is his comment that deserves to be quoted at length;

...It is all very well, the slogan, 'See America First', but what have we in America to show that is of personal interest? some natural wonders, to be sure, sublime and overpowering...but after all, they are only natural wonders. Few of us go to Europe primarily to see the Alps...we go to Europe rather

because every nook and corner of it is stored with historical and literary memories... We go to Europe, in short, to come into full possession of our cultural heritage.

Now America as yet has few of these things. Our history as a nation is brief. All that we possess that can lay claim to antiquity is of the red man's conception, and seemingly concerns us not at all. Nevertheless, whether or not the American Indian shall ever amalgamate with the white race, his life and character have already made their mark upon us as a people, and the day is surely coming when we shall recognize ourselves as in some measure indebted to him. In that day the Indian's past culture will have become our heritage and we shall regret having ruthlessly destroyed all concrete evidence of it. (49-51).

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### Acknowledgments

This research was stimulated by my residence at Bandelier National Monument in the summer of 1991. Additional impetus came from papers heard at an invited session on archaeology and nationalism at the 1991 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Chicago, organized by Phillip Kohl. Phil Weighand, one of the discussants, encouraged my interest and provided me with a copy of his paper on the topic. Orlando Romero and Willow Powers of the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe provided assistance in several areas. Dean Robert Warner of the University of Michigan School of Library and Information Science directed my attention to the Francis Kelsey Papers at the Bentley Historical Library, which contain relevant correspondence between Kelsey and Edgar Lee Hewett. Discussions with Monica Smith, Bob Powers, and Courtney White were also influential.

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Discovery, Historical Frameworks, and Scientific Status: Joao Moleiro\* and the History of Archaeology

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