Theme Issue

Archaeology, Nation, and Race – Critical Responses

Edited by Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis

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Archaeology, Nation, and Race: Confronting the Past, Decolonizing the Future in Greece and Israel (Cambridge University Press, 2022; henceforth *ANR*) was conceived in the wake of an undergraduate seminar conducted jointly by the authors at Brown University in 2020. Our initial, recorded conversations at the end of the course were transcribed and formed the basis of a manuscript which was expanded, incorporating new research and ideas. Emerging from the dialogue between ourselves and with our students, the published work, also in dialogic form, is intended primarily as a stimulus to further discussion among archaeologists, anthropologists, classicists and anyone concerned with the way archaeology impacts the public imagination.

From the outset, we sought to go beyond what each of us had done individually in our critique of the two national imaginaries of Greece and Israel (e.g. Brown and Hamilakis 2003; Greenberg and Keinan 2007; Hamilakis 2007, 2008; Greenberg 2009, 2015; Hamilakis and Ifantidis 2016), and take the discussion to areas neither covered by previous writing on the social and political contexts of archaeology in Greece and in Palestine/Israel nor included in the burgeoning literature on decolonial archaeology in the region and across the globe. We therefore pursued a comparative approach that would highlight commonalities and differences between two "Holy Lands" which, we argue, should be recognized both as "ground zero" for imperial and colonial archaeologies and as fundamental building blocks of Western moral, cultural and political entitlement (i.e., "birthplaces" of democracy and the Judeo-Christian ethos). Alongside conceptions of nationhood, the two other crucial threads were coloniality (viewed both as an epistemic and as a political project) and race, both instrumental in bringing about and shaping racialized, capitalist modernity.

Viewing both cases from within, as engaged members of Greek and Israeli collectives, but also as partial "outsiders" based in universities abroad and/or actively participating in the international discussion, our first dialogue focuses on the forging of the two modern national projects and their ancient imaginaries within the 19th and 20th century colonial matrix. The second dialogue treats the extent to which the two nations and their archaeologies remain in the thrall of a crypto-colonial narrative, which establishes each country as a western outpost and as a buffer between Judeo-Christian Europe and an Islamic East. Our third dialogue dwells on modernist archaeology as a logic of purification and on the practical archaeological measures taken to ensure the delivery of purified pasts for the modern nation-state and our fourth on the racial implications of the cooptation of Greece and Israel by narratives of whiteness and indigenous exceptionalism. These narratives are often supported by the terms in which ancient DNA research is conducted and presented to the public. Our concluding dialogue dwells on the possibility and potential for pursuing decolonial archaeologies in each setting, drawing on our current and on-going projects of the contemporary archaeology of border-crossing and refugee camps (e.g. Hamilakis 2022) and of destroyed Palestinian villages (Greenberg 2022; Greenberg and Sulimani 2023).

The timing of this discussion is, of course, not accidental: we have both been engaged in the discipline-wide discussion and critique of archaeological complicity in national and trans-national instances of oppression and injustice and in field-projects that question the core values of archaeological practice in the contemporary world (e.g. Hamilakis 1999, 2009; Hamilakis and Duke 2007; Greenberg 2021a, 2021b). Moreover, in the year of massive Black Lives Matter protests and the coronavirus pandemic, we were both deeply affected by the vigorous, profound discussion and exposure of the reach and impact of racism and of white supremacy within our discipline (Blakey 2020; Carruthers et al. 2021; Flewellen et al. 2021; Jurman 2022; Reilly 2022). *ANR* is thus a response to the call of many colleagues for self-reflection, for epistemic reorientation, and for archaeological un-disciplining (sensu Haber 2012). It is also call to archaeologists who have been constructed as white to problematize the processes of racialization that constituted their scholarly apparatus and their disciplinary identities and to confront the privileges that such an acquired status has conferred on them. It is even, we would like to hope, a tentative step toward reparation and epistemic, if not social, justice.

As our dialogue covers a broad field of archaeological entanglements in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, and with each of us drawing on their own set of historical, aesthetic, and political-philosophical sources, it was clear to us from the get-go that *ANR* would be an open-ended product, with many strands that could be taken up with a wide range of interlocutors. Our engagement with colleagues thus began, even as we wrote, in conferences, round tables, and virtual meetings conducted with colleagues from Europe and North America, as well as Greece and Israel; and it has continued after the book's publication, first in English and then in Greek (Hamilakis and Greenberg 2022; a Hebrew version is contracted for publication as well). These engagements revealed to us the extent of the need for a reckoning felt by archaeologists across the Global North, as well as the anxieties induced by a questioning of bedrock assumptions in the discipline.

In the Fall of 2022, two incisive discussions of *ANR* and the issues that it foregrounds took place, the first in the Graduate Center at City University of New York (CUNY), and the second at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Overseas Research (ASOR) in Boston MA. These form the core of this special section. Between the two venues, our conversation with colleagues from the worlds of classics, literary and political theory, anthropological archaeology, art history, and West Asian archaeology ranged across many of the matters covered in our book, while delving deeply into a few and forcing us to confront some of their contradictions. At the same time, it expanded the discussion into new areas that need to be tackled more systematically in the future.[1]

In the essays that follow, historical sociologist Despina Lalaki and literary and political theorist Bruce Robbins take contrasting approaches to the values at stake in the discourse on modernity and our critique of archaeology's contribution to it, the former calling for the adoption of a "southern standpoint" characterized by "a critical engagement with the dominant knowledges", and the latter querying whether we are justified in making modernity, and the prestige it confers on the past, "the villain in the piece". Matthew Reilly, an anthropologist and archaeologist of the Atlantic world, questions whether archaeology can or should be completely detached from post-colonial nation-building, where it often serves a purpose that we would otherwise view as laudable. Allison Mickel and Lynn Swartz Dodd, anthropological archaeologists who have worked in West Asia, expand on the de-centering of Western conceptions of purity and anthropocentrism in archaeology, with Mickel exploring the various kinds of "messiness" inherent in archaeological work and Dodd reflecting on how an illusion of purity can be used to mask ongoing injustices in ancient Jerusalem/Silwan. Art historian Erhan Tamur underscores the imperial endurances in archaeological scholarship, particularly calling into question the Western notion of "discovery", and lastly, south Levantine archaeologist Ido Koch illustrates possible avenues of decolonial archaeological practice in Iron Age Israel and a 20th century Palestinian village. Following up on these matters and more, we respond with further thoughts and questions of our own.

We are grateful to all commentators and to the editorial board of FKA for this opportunity to expand the reach of the dialogue across disciplines, in the expectation of more conversations to come.

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1   The essays were submitted in March–April 2023, with final revisions completed in September 2023.

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Hellenism, Hebraism, and the Ideological Underpinnings of Modernity

Despina Lalaki

Hellenism, Hebraism, and the Ideological Underpinnings of Modernity

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Following the authors' lead I would like to introduce my commentary on the book *Archaeology, Nation and Race: Confronting the Past, Decolonizing the Future in Greece and Israel* (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022) with a short autobiographical note explaining my way into and out of the field of archaeology. I am a sociologist working in the areas of historical and cultural sociology. My first degree, however, from the University of Athens is in archaeology. It is still unclear to me why I chose to study the subject, but I am convinced that it had something to do with the Indiana Jones franchise that was popular in Greece at the time and the fact that I wasn't that good in math. If that was the case, I would have probably become an architect. At the university I quickly developed an interest in prehistoric archaeology. Moving beyond the formalism of classical archaeology that still dominated the discipline, the "anthropological" questions raised in the field of the Greek Bronze Age – questions about culture, social and political organization and so on – were rather intriguing.

Up to this point I think my trajectory sounds much like what Yannis Hamilakis describes in the book as his experience. In my case however, realizing that I would have to build a career studying pots and pans from all possible angles, measuring, photographing, drawing, cataloguing, and comparing them with similar objects to neatly fit them into categories without raising any bigger questions, did it for me, and I left archaeology to study first some art history and then sociology. Had books like *The Nation and Its Ruins* (Hamilakis 2007) been published or had I been exposed to the theoretical inroads that anglophone scholarship was making in archaeology at the time, I might have followed a different academic path. In retrospect, archaeology seemed to me like a straitjacket, limiting and detached from any social realities. It certainly appeared disconnected from politics. The little that I knew! First loves never die, however, and today I do what one could describe as sociology of archaeology and the archaeology of the state, exploring the role that the American political imagination has played in the formulation and transformation of some of the foundational ideas and cultural schemes of the modern Greek nation-state. I investigate the ways in which Americans engaged with modern Greek political culture as they searched for Greek antiquity.

What I am trying to say with this short autobiographical and self-referential introduction is that books like the one in discussion, *Archaeology, Nation and Race: Confronting the Past, Decolonizing the Future of Greece and Israel* by Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis are an oasis in the field of archaeology that still, to some extent, looks like a desert of sherds and ruins waiting to be catalogued, organized and some of them exhibited for their aesthetic value. Trying on the other hand to unravel, as Michael Herzfeld (2002) suggests in his book endorsement, the ideological underpinnings of global modernity is thrilling and certainly not a small task. Doing it in such a way also that is engaging and accessible to a broad audience of non-specialists, that's also a big achievement. The book is also deeply political, directly addressing current issues of race, territoriality and cultural hegemony. It will be extensively debated and will inevitably find itself at the center of public controversies, some of them already simmering.

I have the honor to be part of a collective called *Decolonize Hellas*. On the occasion of the celebrations for the bicentennial of the Greek Revolution, we held an international conference with the objective to examine the founding of the Greek nation-state in the context of/in a background defined by the colonial legacies of white supremacy, nationalism and racial capitalism. The notion of Greece as a crypto-colony (Herzfeld 2002) over the years had gained acceptance – in Greece at least, because in Israel, as Raphael Greenberg suggests, it never had

much traction, as the attention has been on the fact that Israel is first and foremost a settler colonialist state itself. However, to explore notions of race and nation, going back to the time of the Greek state's inception and applying decolonial theory developed mainly in the Americas, was not very well received, at least not by everyone. Slaves and plantations were not part of the Greek historical record after all, and Greece had never been a colonial power. The accusation is that we are applying methodologies and theoretical approaches that can't be grounded in the Greek experience. I am sure that in many Israeli quarters one would hear the same regarding Israel understood or studied as settler colonial state. How do we respond to these criticisms? How can colonial theory help us to better understand the history of Greek and Israeli nation-states and what is the relevance of colonial history? These questions are also at the heart of the book *Archaeology, Nation, and Race.*

To this day, the legacies of colonialism are felt around the globem while neocolonial practices perpetuate long standing relations of inequality and hierarchies of power. The entanglement of Greece and Israel with British colonialism in the Eastern Mediterranean and American postwar imperialism in the region call for a closer examination. Conventional Greek historiography tells the story of the Greek state – but also of the state of Israel – as one of victimization and manipulation at the hands of the 19th century Great Powers, United States, or primordial enemies like Turkey for Greece or the whole Arab world for Israel. At the same time, there is no engaging with the histories of other groups or nations which have similarly suffered the effects of imperialism, capitalist exploitation and outright violence. Victimhood has played a central role in driving xenophobia, racial hatred and other nationalistic attitudes. Instead, what we should call for – and that is something that Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis do alongside scholars coming from a post- and anti-colonial perspective – is a radical critique from what is identified as the "southern standpoint". This is not a point of essentialist identities but of marginality, a particular social position within national and transnational hierarchies of power. That is the direction, I think, that Greenberg points to at the end of the book where he calls for a close collaboration of Israeli and Palestinian scholars/archaeologists. Such an approach will also allow for a systematic analysis and understanding of Greece's and Israeli's position within imperialist circuits of capital, fields of knowledge and cultural production but also networks of collective struggles and emancipatory politics.

A few words to further qualify the "southern or subaltern standpoint" (Bhambra 2007; Santos 2014; Connell 2016; Go 2016) are needed. The argument is not that we should be looking for a pristine space of "non-Western" indigeneity – this is definitely what Hamilakis does not argue for when he talks about "indigenous Hellenism" – but a kind of postcolonial thought that emerges from the colonial space through a critical engagement with the dominant knowledges imposed upon that space. While analogous to the critical race and feminist standpoints, our approach should give primacy to geopolitical hierarchies and social positionality, the point where the colonial engages with the West, unraveling in the process subjugated knowledges, legacies of marginalization and colonial domination. Our conceptualization of the "southern standpoint" should be understood in conjunction with what has been described as "postcolonial relationism," an approach that acknowledges the interconnectedness and fluidity of social interactions and the mutually constitutive relationships between colonized and colonizers (Go 2016). Both concepts should be central in our efforts to interrogate the imperial episteme. Here one would locate the centrality of classical scholarship, biblical studies and archaeology, and bring also social theory – a body of thought that embeds the standpoint of empire – and postcolonial thought – an anti-imperial project – in dialogue. From a "southern standpoint" one can explore the forceful Hellenization of ethnic and religious minorities in Greece, for instance, or the colonizing power of biblical archaeology in Israel, yet not from a space that allegedly exists outside the European thought or theoretical traditions but in relation to them.

It is imperative that we foreground the ambivalent and reciprocal relations between the Greek and Israeli nation-states and western colonial and neocolonial genealogies (Lambropoulos 1993; Gourgouris 1996). Liberal capitalist democracy, for instance, lies at the core of the postwar western civilizational onslaughts and the classical Greek heritage as well as the Judaic tradition remain central in narratives about civilizational clashes and the end of history. To this day, the "cradle of democracy," a Cold War construct which carries the imprints of modernization theory and American and European hegemonic hierarchies, conditions our cultural dispositions and political imagination. Israel also projects itself as such, in a sea of autocratic and dictatorial regimes. In that sense, Israel and Greece serve as buffers against the onslaughts not only of brown Muslim bodies ready to invade the borders of the Christian West at any given time, as the book explains, but also as the last frontiers of democracy, a metonym for western civilization.

These social and political significations invested in Hellenism and Hebraism have developed into internalized structures of domination, coherent identities which perpetuate durable inequality. The inability to perceive alternative modes of political and social organization are intrinsically connected and closely intertwined with identities that are far from immanent or as primordial as they appear. They are, instead, socially and historically grounded on configurations and events that date back to the 19th century but also, and I would argue predominantly, to the 20th century; they constitute responses to the American and European Cold War order, fierce anti-communism, transatlantic militarism and free market economy (Lalaki 2012).

Critical and historical anthropological and sociological positions that capitalize on meaning, cultural codes, and systems, much like what this book does, can better illuminate the trajectories of nation-state, Greece and Israel in this case, and empire, the American or British empires, for instance – an empire that resides at the outskirts as much as at the heart of these nations. Studied in conjunction with international and transnational processes, the political agency of the "Hellenic" and the "Judaic" can be better understood.

Greek classical and biblical archaeology have undergone a series of transformations, being repositioned repeatedly within multiple metanarratives about race and cultural evolution even as aesthetic preoccupations continued alongside questions of ethnic origin. Greek and Judaic antiquity, appropriated in various ways by the nation-states of the West, have been written up as the unquestionable progenitors of Western civilization against which other cultures were to be measured, most often to be found less developed, less sophisticated or less complex. Colonization and the increasingly imperialist domination of the West over the rest of the world was cushioned on a civilizing rhetoric inadvertently exposing both the shortcomings of the Enlightenment's universalistic tendencies and Romanticism's darker side of cultural particularisms. Archaeology has not just been part of the wider battle for cultural hegemony. It defined the nature of the battlefield itself.

The comparative approach of Greek and Israeli archaeology is also very timely as civilizational discourses have made a comeback to couch the emergent Islamophobia of the early 21st century, and one can look at the relationship between the two from many different angles. In a religious pilgrimage I followed a few years ago in the Holy Land, I became very aware, for instance, about the role of Christianized Hellenism in the Israeli settler colonial project. As the second biggest landholder in Israel after the state of Israel itself, the Greek Orthodox church has been directly involved in the Zionist statehood project. One can also look at the ways that the Hellenic and Judaic traditions have been recently employed to legitimize the antagonisms over fossil fuel extraction in the Eastern Mediterranean, possibly fueling new rounds of conflict along with capital accumulation. The relation of archaeology and capitalism run in many different directions, in addition to that of tourism and the monetization of cultural heritage. The most recent agreement between the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Greek government and the collector of illicit Cycladic antiquities, Leonard Stern, is only one case in point (Hamilakis 2022; Koutsoumba 2022).

I would like to conclude with a couple of images from two separate state visits in Greece, one of Netanyahu in 2017 and the other of the American president Barack Obama in 2016. Netanyahu met with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades, after the three countries had signed a joint declaration in Tel Aviv the previous April, to promote construction of what is known as the EastMed pipeline. Netanyahu stressed the shared economic interests between the three countries, spoke of Jerusalem and Athens as the "two pillars" of our modern civilizations, and further grounded the relationship on their alleged democratic traditions: "There's a simple fact with Cyprus, Greece and Israel that brings us very close together. We are all democracies – real democracies [...] and when you look at our region… that's not a common commodity" (Kantouris 2017).

The previous year, in his final overseas trip as President, Barack Obama visited crisis-stricken Greece, and against the carefully selected background that featured the Acropolis and the Parthenon, he affirmed the U.S. commitment to transatlantic ties and NATO. The ancients, the Founding Fathers and President Truman featured prominently in a speech that meant to endorse liberalism and capitalist democracy, in face of the challenges that austerity economics, the "waves" of refugees from Middle East and Africa and the ensuing rise of the extreme-right posed.

The above appear like cliches, rather predictable statements, which, however, point to one of the important conclusions that the book offers: "The elites in both national projects, in an act partly of self-colonization and partly of expediency, still hark back to […] this modernist and humanistic heritage, seeing it as an emancipatory project

worth celebrating. […] Yet these laudatory performances conceal the racial and colonial grounds of such edifices" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 182). When it comes to the question of how to cope and counter these self-congratulatory civilizational narratives Greenberg and Hamilakis are quite to the point: let's "forge alliances with the colonized 'others'" (2022: 182).

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Modernity as the Villain of the Piece

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Modernity as the Villain of the Piece

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I read this book (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022) with enormous excitement and admiration. I also read it with a strong feeling of solidarity as I tried to imagine the resistance the authors must have faced from some of their fellow archaeologists in their respective countries. I feel honored to be given a chance to express my feelings, unprofessional as they are. Still, speaking as a person with zero expertise in the field of archaeology and, what is worse, as an unrepentant modernist, I also feel an obligation to do some conceptual quibbling from the sidelines, and that's what I'll do.

To begin with, I want to underline a point that is made in the book, but is not underlined there, perhaps out of disciplinary wariness or personal modesty. It's a point about archaeology's object of knowledge, the distant past, or (more precisely) about what allows archaeology to establish itself as a discipline based on that object: the prestige that is accorded to the distant past. As the book abundantly illustrates, the prestige of the distant past has been weaponized for nationalist and racist purposes. But the fact that the prestige of the distant past has been weaponized doesn't mean that the distant past doesn't deserve its prestige. It doesn't mean that archaeologists are wrong to benefit from that prestige. The question remains open of what value we do or don't want to ascribe to that distant past – whether we want to see it as a modern myth or a vestige of theological reverence that should be erased, or something quite different, like a chapter in Fredric Jameson's "single great collective story" (1981: 19). In the field of literature, the danger of presentism is matched, as I have argued, by a danger that is symmetrical although it usually goes unnamed: what might be thought of as *pastism*, the substituting of reverence for the past *as such* for explicit arguments about the value and values for us now of the old texts that we are asking our students and readers to appreciate. What is also missing when reverence for the past is hard-wired in is explicit discussion about the continuity or discontinuity between our time and theirs, a discussion that seems mandatory in the sense that even absolute discontinuity, today's default setting, cannot be taken for granted. In short, it seems to me that, for all our shared suspicion of origins, the question of the meaning the deep cultural heritage ought to have for us remains unanswered.

While awaiting an answer to that question, we might decide, pragmatically, to weaponize the symbolic capital of the distant past ourselves, but to point that weapon at different targets. That's what I tried to do, in a minor way, in the early 1990s, at the height of the Culture Wars, when a right-wing think tank in North Carolina invited me to defend what they saw as a turn away from teaching the Great Books. Journalists, and some scholars themselves, were pretending that Homer and Shakespeare were no longer being taught, that syllabi were filled with nothing but Chinua Achebe and Alice Walker. This was blatantly untrue, of course, but something did need to be said in defense of changes in the curriculum that were indeed happening. I told my hosts that the humanities' recent interest in the victims of colonialism and of lives lived in what was then called the Third World was just a continuation of ancient Greek cosmopolitanism, which queried the habit of according greater moral value to the lives of fellow citizens than to the lives of distant strangers. I wrote Diogenes's name on the blackboard. In Greek (Διογένης). I can't say it pacified my listeners, but it did at least give them pause.

If I understand *Archaeology, Nation, and Race* correctly, the book sees the exaggerated, even theological value ascribed to the distant past not as a genuine attribute of that past but as an invention of modernity. It ought to

be possible to admit this without presenting modernity as the villain of the piece, as I think the book tends to do. Modernity, for Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis, wants to impose continuity on a history that is in fact radically discontinuous. Let me say two quick things about that scenario, if indeed I'm getting it right. One: modernity can also enjoy seeing itself as *dis*continuous with the distant past – think of someone like Steven Pinker, exemplary champion of modernity though not, I think, a nationalist. He is more enthusiastic about capitalism than about nationalism. The point is that modernity contains both, and much more besides. For that reason, modernity doesn't need continuity; it can happily embrace discontinuity (this is what the book acknowledges, I think, when it identifies modernity as a theory of temporal break). The contradiction is especially obvious if you think of the exemplary agent or representative of modernity as capitalism rather than as the nation-state.

My second quick point: can you really see modernity as the villain while also embracing Bruno Latour (1993), who says that we have never been modern?

There is something strange about the way modernity is discussed here. It's treated as a real phenomenon, not (in Latourian fashion) as a mere ideological illusion. But its reality is presented as if it were composed exclusively of bad things. The one modification that's offered to Latour's famous "we have never been modern" dictum is that Latour "erases historically situated processes such a colonization, capitalist commodification, and racialization, with their specific ontological and epistemic grounding on progress, hierarchy, and civilization" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 87). Let me pause on this sentence. Here the only processes that are associated with modernity, the only processes that Latour forgets, are extremely undesirable ones: colonization, capitalist commodification and racialization. Those undesirable processes are grounded on other undesirable things, also uniquely modern: progress, hierarchy and civilization. This is not accurate history. It is highly moralized history. Or if you prefer, it is undialectical history. Is it plausible that nothing good has come out of modernity at all, only colonization, commodification and racialization? Is it plausible that any historical period can be properly associated only with bad things? What about, to take a pertinent example, the sensibility exemplified by Hamilakis and Greeenberg? Surely they would not want to claim that their perspective on archaeology would have been possible at any point in the past. Surely they would admit, if only under duress, that there are positive aspects of modernity that fed into their own scholarly and political perspective, indeed made it possible. This is not a personal point: the same question could have been asked (I'm sorry we no longer have the chance to do so) of the recently departed Latour or David Graeber. To me, the idea that modernity has given us only colonization, commodification, and racialization seems no more plausible than it would be to suggest that there was no colonization or ethnic cleansing in classical antiquity, propositions that I'm sure the authors would properly and indignantly reject.

Can we have another, more serious think about the terms progress, hierarchy, and civilization? Among other things, these terms don't fit well together. However skeptical we may be about progress, are we ready to deny that modern democracy achieved some measure of progress, and did so, indeed, precisely by colliding head-on with "hierarchy," the signature blood-based hierarchy of feudal and pre-feudal society? The fact that, under conditions imposed by capitalism, democracy has created new hierarchies of its own, a fact that cannot be doubted, does not erase the real differences that the achievement of formal political rights has made in, say, the life chances of women and people of color. Everyone knows this, but it remains more acceptable than it should be to speak as if these aspects of modernity were merely complacent ideological fantasies.

In much the same contrarian spirit, I also object to the mainly unarticulated skepticism that surrounds references to the concept of civilization. Everyone quotes Walter Benjamin's endlessly useful line: "There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (Benjamin 2007 [1940]: 256). Not everyone chooses to notice that that line does not try to dispense with the concept of civilization entirely (nor the fact that – I thank my erudite friend Christian Thorne for the reminder – Benjamin's reference in the original German is to "Kultur," not to "Zivilisation," a difference about which more might be said). The fact that there is barbarism within civilization doesn't mean that there is no such thing as being civilized. One mark of being civilized is to recognize that, as C. P. Cavafy (1975 [1904]) said in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, "Those people were a kind of solution." The inhabitants of the city were afraid of a threat that they had themselves constructed, and that had served their purposes – including the purpose of hiding the city's truth from itself. The barbarian was a construct. To recognize that the barbarian is a construct, as educated common sense in the modern period tends to recognize, is one way of being civilized. If that's what educated common sense teaches, then to that extent civilization is real, and it is a verifiable aspect of modernity. As is democracy, however imperfect and imperiled. If that were not true,

we would be forced to hold that the passionate democratic values that clearly inspire this book come from some other planet. Ditto for the abolition of slavery, equal rights for women, consciousness of what Edward Said called Orientalism (1978), and the rest of the litany of what, to me, are quite real accomplishments – accomplishments without which the writing of a superb and necessary book like this one would have been inconceivable.

I understand that in some ways a critical view of modernity is a convenient premise for the discipline of archaeology, even when that discipline is working in its most self-critical mode, as it is here. Still, a less one-sided view of modernity would have certain advantages. For one thing, it would allow for the possibility of a *non-nationalist* appropriation of the distant past, an argument that (say) might serve present purposes without subordinating itself to the instrumentality of nationalism, as in the Greek and Israeli cases examined here. One obvious example would be *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*, by Graeber and David Wengrow (2021), a book that renews our sense of the open-endedness of history and yet cannot be accused of flattering the origins of anyone's modern nation-state.

What *The Dawn of Everything* could perhaps be accused of, at least in the eyes of some critics, is idealizing the premodern, indigenous cultures that preceded the modern nation-state. This is another danger to which a one-sided view of modernity leaves archaeology's self-critique vulnerable. How celebratory ought modern archaeology to be of "indigenous archaeologies practiced by ordinary people as well as scholars […] long before the arrival of official, authorized archaeology" (Graeber and Wengrow 2021: 89)? It can sometimes seem as if taking any critical distance whatsoever from the ways antiquities were treated by "ordinary people" in the pre-modern period "would be to reproduce the colonial distinction between the 'West' (in its various forms) which possesses science and scholarship, and the 'rest' which possess custom, ethnological interest, and folklore" (Graeber and Wengrow 2021: 90) as well as "beliefs" about the supernatural power and agency of these antiquities (Graeber and Wengrow 2021: 91). Here, as in other arenas, it seems to me a mistake to assume that oppression confers on the oppressed a decisive epistemological advantage, and that the professional archaeologist is duty-bound to defer to it. The virtuous self-effacement of the modern archaeologist, under threat of seeming to further the work of colonialism, is not more edifying than the spectacle of colonialism itself.

One no doubt unintended effect of the recent generalization of the concept of colonialism, and the accompanying imperative to decolonize, an imperative that this book embraces, is the extension of colonialism to cover, or appear to cover, *all* nation-formation. As the authors are well aware, colonialism does not apply equally to Israel, where it is so glaring a fact that no sentient observer could fail to acknowledge it, and Greece, where it can indeed be applied (most flagrantly, to the 1919 invasion of Asia Minor). In the case of Greece, other and later instances would need some hard arguing, and would bring Greece closer to the case of the newly independent nations that resulted from twentieth-century anti-colonial struggles. Even there, speaking of colonialism is not a self-evident mistake: many of the indigenous peoples that have joined together as an international movement in the past decades would claim to have been colonized by people who had themselves been colonized. But recourse to the concept of colonialism hides an ambiguity that needs to be exposed. The intended object can be to restore a collectivity whose oppression has been neglected, as when (for example) the Vietnamese or Cambodians are accused of mistreating the indigenous population of the Cham or the Algerian Arabs are accused of mistreating the Berbers/Amazigh. But the emphasis can also fall not on the fact that the colonized (by the Europeans) were and are themselves colonizers (of their own indigenous peoples), but rather (again) on the Europeans as the source of all evil – that is, the way in which European powers inspired and controlled the archaeological project in Israel and Greece from above and outside, turning that project to their own purposes.

It is this second emphasis that seems to follow from Michael Herzfeld's (2002) concept of "crypto-colonization." I listened in recently to a zoom conference in London commemorating the "Great Catastrophe" in Smyrna in 1922, a hundred years ago. From one perspective, it's the anniversary of an atrocity in which thousands of Greek and Armenian Christians were killed and many tens of thousands more were expelled. From another perspective, it's the anniversary of the emergent Turkish republic, overthrowing the Ottoman Empire and kicking out the European armies that were trying to carve Turkey up. The speakers were Greek and Turkish historians. How did they manage to find common ground? They did find common ground, as against their respective nationalisms, but as I saw it they did so only by giving the lion's share of the agency to the European powers that were manipulating the fate of both their nations. That is, they found common ground by seeing themselves as colonized, or crypto-colonized – by rediscovering the not so hidden secret that they had both been pushed around by the European powers. There

is a certain convenience in the label. But as with modernity, it works only by concentrating all the villainy in one place. And it permits a certain evasion of national responsibility.

Both authors are careful to present their nations as colonizers as well as colonized, and as I've said in the Israeli case there is no possible quarrel with that. But I worry a bit that Herzfeld's term crypto-colonization undoes some of that good work. "Crypto" puts the emphasis on hidden or secret. I wonder whether it might be better to use something like "semi-colonialism," as I understand has been used in the case of China. That would take the emphasis off the hiddenness and put it more on the *partialness* and – I think this is in the spirit of the book – the fact that, as with China, the colonized also has to be seen as a colonizer. I don't know how far we want to go in this direction; I can imagine an extreme argument that *every* nation-state is a colonizing power, that there is no effective difference between imperial conquest and nation-formation. That would be a mistake, I think, if only because it would erase whatever critical power remains to the term colonialism and because it would erase a significant difference between nation-states and empires. Empires were forced by their defining dynamic to conquer other territories. The rough estimate is that Alexander the Great was responsible for something like 500,000 deaths, a higher proportion of the world's population in his day than was killed by the Nazis in theirs. That doesn't let the Nazis off the hook; it doesn't let modernity off the hook. But it does suggest that we need better meta-narratives linking the present to the distant past. I am very grateful to the authors for inspiring me to go in quest of such narratives. Their book is a major step in that direction.

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Decolonize Whom, What, or When?

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The book of Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis (2022) comes at a time when archaeology could be said to be at an inflection point. For many of the reasons outlined in this book, it is less and less possible to undertake business as usual as we recognize the politically charged nature of our work and the absolute necessity of engaging with communities and the public more broadly. I therefore want to focus on two pressing archaeological themes that emerge throughout the text, namely the archaeology of coloniality (or the coloniality of archaeology) and archaeological epistemology.

Reading this book was a refreshing reminder that antiquated temporal and geographic siloing is no longer hindering valuable archaeological scholarship. It's the tethering of temporalities that allows for pivoting from the Bronze Age, to the Ottoman Empire, to the contemporary to be fruitful in understanding how sites that date to antiquity play a role in (often contentious) claims of national identity and belonging. Archaeology is never neutral or apolitical. This point is now widely accepted within the field, but it bears repeating for the heightened role that the past, or perhaps a perceived past, is playing in the present.

This moment of archaeopolitical reckoning allows us to reflect on previous archaeologies of comparative colonialism while simultaneously grappling with a newer brand of coloniality within archaeological science. It was roughly two decades ago that comparative colonialism took hold as one of the most prominent archaeological endeavors (Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002; Gosden 2004; Stein 2005). This was in part sparked by the postcolonial turn, which later became more explicitly theorized within the field (Liebmann and Rizvi 2008; Lydon and Rizvi 2010). Clamoring for vocabulary, models, and processes to put imperial projects of the past in dialogue with one another, archaeologists thought critically about the convergences and divergences of Romanization, the Assyrian Empire, and the expansion of European empires into the Americas. Such projects are less popular than they once were, though Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis inspire a reflection on comparative coloniality from a different perspective.

The authors are quite careful in articulating that Greece and Israel represent spaces that did not go through more violent or geopolitical forms of colonialism as did regions like Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and South Asia. They also point out how the crypto-colonized, borrowing from Michael Herzfeld (2002), can become the crypto-colonizer. Perhaps this represents a spectrum of coloniality, though I imagine they wouldn't put it so tepidly. Still, I wonder what such a spectrum might mean for a comparative approach to colonialism in the midst of ardent calls for decolonization. As anticolonial thinkers from colonized regions mentioned above have proclaimed for generations, there's hardly anything cryptic about colonial violence and forces of White supremacy. Do we therefore need to reconsider how we analyze colonial pasts, or do we need to be more careful in how approaches to archaeological decolonization are deployed?

Parsing or typologizing colonial pasts may prove to be a hinderance to the kind of anticolonial or, more specifically, decolonial project that Greenberg and Hamilakis espouse. Despite its wide usage across the field, archaeologists have yet to fully unpack decolonization as a conceptual framework, methodological tool, or practice. It has of course been used metaphorically, though our authors are explicit that it must also be practical, methodological,

political, and active. In response to the swift ascension of decolonization, Nigerian philosopher Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò recently published *Against Decolonisation: Taking African Agency Seriously* (2022). The author, while at times essentializing the broader scope of the decolonial mission, makes compelling arguments for how current uses of decolonization can unconsciously erode the revolutionary efforts of anticolonial movements. For one, he sets boundaries between what he refers to as decolonization 1 and decolonization 2, the former being the geopolitical work of ridding the colonial territories of their colonial overlords, the latter being the ongoing struggles to eradicate the social, political, economic, and cultural colonial leftovers. Táíwò also cautions against colonialism carelessly being used synonymously with related yet distinct tropes like modernity, the West, White supremacy, and capitalism. Finally, he notes that in the frenzy to sever the colonial, whatever it might mean, we run the risk of erasing the agency of those who labored under the forces of colonialism to produce something novel in terms of thought, practice, and resilience. For the latter point, Greenberg and Hamilakis should be commended for taking such a charge seriously, noting throughout the text the alternative forms of what we might consider "archaeology" bubbling below the surface for centuries.

To return to the troubling terminology, is crypto-colonialism a useful framework for explicating the colonial nature of archaeological epistemes? With careful attention paid to the subtleties that separate colonialism/crypto-colonialism or colonizer/colonized, how might we avoid ambiguity and simultaneously draw careful lines between discursive projects from the real and persistent violence of colonialism? Uzma Rizvi masterfully articulates that, "This epistemic decolonization is not a new name for epistemic critique: decolonization is an active and purposeful undoing and un-disciplining that we acknowledge as required" (2019: 158). Rizvi's embrace of the speculative is the kind of disciplinary humbling needed to make the shift from archaeological studies of the colonial to a wide-eyed awareness of the coloniality of archaeology. What must follow is figuring out where that leaves us in terms of archaeological futures and what we can offer the communities we serve and broader publics who consume the knowledge we produce. This brings us to archaeological epistemology.

Our authors refer to a colonial ideology that's responsible for the kind of purification efforts at work in both Greece and Israel; I'm here referring to their treatment of site sanitation, cleansing, and mythic pasts of whiteness. Despite such ardent efforts to scrub eons of interaction and social ties across supposed "racial" groups, our authors demonstrate that the patina of multiple temporalities proves difficult to wash away, if only we care to look. Yet, as is made clear, some temporalities and materials speak, as it were, louder than others. This has serious implications for how we typologize the archaeological record and for how such interpretations reach public audiences.

Archaeology has long had a troubling relationship with the pots-to-people analogy. It's a 19th-century inheritance, often associated with the likes of Gustaf Kossinna, that found primacy in the culture-history school of archaeological thought. Well over a century later, the habit proves hard to break, with critiques of typology referencing how lingering dangers of overdetermination can often seep into archaeological interpretation/translation. Ceramic and site typologies are now joined by the science of ancient DNA to serve as material or biological markers of group identity. While the book highlights how the cases of Greece and Israel are cautionary tells of the dangers of pots-to-people, sites-to-people, or DNA-to-people, anticolonial struggles have often harnessed such power to reclaim, or even decolonize.

Are there geopolitical moments in which nationalistic agendas for archaeology are to be celebrated and others when they should be condemned? Perhaps the dichotomy isn't productive, as political shifts can dramatically alter how archaeological paradigms and individual sites are interpreted or remembered, but it's worth considering the work being done in the name of building national industries of archaeology and heritage. For instance, in a famous example from the Sub-Saharan world, an anticolonial shift in Rhodesia in the second half of the 20th century breathed life into a national identity tethered to archaeological heritage, birthing the nation of Zimbabwe, named after a magisterial medieval urban center. As Shadreck Chirikure has recently articulated, Great Zimbabwe "provided inspiration for the struggle for African independence" (2021: 6). Chirikure is careful to frame his anticolonial argument as an indictment of colonial violence and the erasure of African pasts rather than an embrace of postcolonial nationalism, but the hard-fought battles in the name of geopolitical decolonization can nonetheless to tethered to new forms of archaeological knowledge put into the service of nationalism.

As Greenberg and Hamilakis frequently point out, the press often misrepresents archaeology through soundbites and click-bait headlines that serve vitriolic nationalistic agendas. Such an acknowledgement highlights not only

the warping of archaeological knowledge but also how the public perceives our field and what they believe is its utility. Many archaeologists may not be comfortable with it, but the public has come to expect and rely upon quick and dirty "facts" from archaeology. Archaeogenetics is the latest confirmation of this state of affairs. As DNA testing continues to come under scrutiny, including with more attention being paid to what Alondra Nelson (2016) has called the social life of DNA, how should archaeologists approach a fallible science?

Greenberg argues that "[DNA] is being bandied about and used in such loose ways that undermine almost everything that we try to do in the archaeology that we practice, which talks about identity being a construct, something that is imagined, negotiated and re-evaluated" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 143). While I don't disagree, it's worth asking: of what utility is such an approach in moments of heightened political fractures and social catastrophe? If we are to denounce, as we should, the sensationalizing headlines of population replacements and the antiquity of racial "belongings" to specific landscapes, what can archaeology offer in its place? Rebuttals that simply point to the complexity and messiness of the human past may not do the trick. Even if the majority of archaeologists denounce bad science and the determinism of archaeogenetics, such protestations may not prohibit the return of race science (Saini 2019).

Perhaps we as archaeologists can spill less ink over ontology and engage more seriously with epistemology. The expansive critique of purity and purification that runs throughout the volume is an essential contribution in the battle to eradicate epistemic violence from the field and denounce the influence of White supremacy in how archaeology has been practiced and publicly interpreted. We should be cautious, however, in such pursuits if the historical construction of whiteness becomes synonymous with that of White supremacy. Philosopher of whiteness Linda Martín Alcoff has warned that, "The left-wing push to abolish whiteness is not based in denying racism or the power of white identity so much as it is motivated by a fatalism about the ability of whiteness to disentangle itself from white supremacy" (2015: 150). This disentangling might be crucial for recognizing the mutability of whiteness and eschewing the fool's errand of charting purity. Archaeology is well-positioned for such an endeavor (see, for instance, Epperson 1997; Orser, Jr. 1998; Hall 2000; Paynter 2000; Bell 2005; Matthews and McGovern 2015; Reilly 2022), but it means thinking carefully about what we can meaningfully say about the construction of race in the past through the material record.

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Purification in Practice & Dialogue

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Purification in Practice & Dialogue

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> YH: …*Purification was sanitation exercise as well as an epistemic, aesthetic, and ideological exercise.*
> (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 93)

Archaeology & Purification

Across contexts as disparate as the United States, Australia, China, Japan, India, Russia, Spain and Europe more broadly, concepts of national identity are deeply intertwined with racial "purity" (Segal 1991; Weiner 1995; Dikötter 1997; Ang and Stratton 1998; Collins 1998; Tolz 2007; Goode 2009; Ghoshal 2021). Scientific rhetoric and technologies, from phrenology to genetics, have often been co-opted into shoring up myths about homogeneity and purity, and archaeology is no exception (Díaz-Andreu 1995; Epperson 1997; Arnold 2006; Challis 2013; Hakenbeck 2019; Pai 2020). What Rafi Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis add to this discussion with their book *Archaeology, Nation, and Race* (2022) is a deep consideration of the myriad ways in which the metaphor of purification shows up throughout archaeological practice. Their discussion invites a consideration of what it is about archaeology in particular that lends it to arguments about the salience of nationalist racial categories and homogeneity.

One of the clearest examples of how archaeological practice pursues purity is a temporal sort of purification – the division and classification of layers and structures according to their time period. In trying to tell a story of a site through time, archaeology necessitates determining what deposits and stones belong to *what* time, exactly. Layers are assigned to ages or phases, and as Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis point out, decisions around heritage management often pursue the presentation of a clean, uniform period of time. At the Athenian Acropolis, this has meant erasing traces of pre- or post-classical occupation (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 95). Between the 19th century demolition of the medieval Propylaea and the 2021 pouring of concrete over much of the surface, there has been a refusal of multitemporal mixture and instead, an embrace of an idealized "masterpiece representing one point in time" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 97). Greenberg points to a related historical project in Israel, where "the very first archaeologists would have been saying that they've got to get beneath the layers of Ottoman filth," and where the British mandate government determined that any artifacts or monuments dated later than AD 1700 would not be considered antiquities (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 79). This designation established a pure binary of before and after – worth researching and protecting versus easily discarded as refuse.

Archaeological methods more broadly carry through principles of purification. Stratigraphic excavation, identifying and removing "clean" layers, and avoiding "contamination" by later periods or animal burrows, are essential to the scientific process of excavation but are also means by which archaeologists confer purification – however imperfect – upon the archaeological record. Greenberg makes this point in *Archaeology, Nation, and Race,* adding that even the act of delineating the boundaries of a site and laying a Cartesian grid "is all about reducing the chaos of the archaeological site into an order that we can control" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 77). Hamilakis furthermore discusses the photographic conventions of Félix Bonfils, who intentionally took photographs of

Classical Greek monuments during times with minimal human presence (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 19), calling to mind the traditional archaeological practice of taking photographs of stratigraphic layers, features, and sites with all tools removed, footprints brushed, and even shadows of human bodies out of frame (Fotiadis 2013; McFadyen and Hicks 2020). Documentation and photography are additional archaeological methods that concretely impose ideals of purity.

In *Archaeology, Nation, and Race*, Greenberg appeals to Bruno Latour for a theoretical understanding of archaeology's relationship with purification. Archaeology has been entwined with the same project of modernity that Latour describes, looking for dichotomies – in particular of nature and culture – rather than acknowledging and interrogating the messy hybrids that actually shape the conditions of life, according to Latour (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 76). By this explanation, the material ways that archaeological methods tie into the pursuit of purification are no accident. Instead, this linkage is a reflection of the underlying logic underpinning archaeological knowledge production.

Archaeology is additionally bound to principles of purity in its relationship with hygiene and "sanitation discourse." From the earliest days of archaeology in Greece, the presence of animals, and more to the point – animal waste – was framed as a toxic intrusion that needed to be cleared. This concern reached a practical expression in the Athenian Agora project of the 1930's, which was as much about aesthetics and epistemology as it was about sanitation, clearing the site of dirt, contamination and disease (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 93). In recent years, archaeologists and heritage practitioners have continued to express grievances with the presence of birds, dogs, insects and animal dung at monumental sites such as the Acropolis. In Israel, ancient water reservoirs function as a locus for anxieties about tainted water. Through these periods and contexts, archaeology has served as a reliable mode of the requisite clearing and cleaning.

With all of these attachments and affordances in mind, archaeology's connections to racial purification hardly seem random. Archaeology isn't just any science; it is a science dedicated to sorting, categorizing, and cleansing. Its theoretical underpinnings and its suite of methodologies lend themselves to this project, and the logic not only molds typologies and time periods but contemporary communities as well. If animal waste is polluting, it is a short leap to labelling people (and their waste) as polluting as well. If later periods are denoted as intrusive or contaminating, certainly the same can be said of people living on archaeological sites today, the latest period of all. Greenberg and Hamilakis (2022: 76) offer the specific example of Silwan, where city authorities justify the removal of makeshift houses in al-Bustan neighborhood on the premise that they are built upon the biblical Kings' Gardens. I am reminded too of Petra, Jordan, where in 1985, Bedouin communities were removed from living in the caves and tombs and relocated to a village outside of the park. The rhetoric for doing so was the same principle of archaeological purity – that having these contemporary residents inhabiting the stones would be anachronistic to visitors and would defile the stones (Bille 2012). The pursuit of purity and sanitation that suffuses archaeological theory and methods thus carries through to the decision-making around management of archaeological sites and the spaces around them.

Why Is This, When Archaeology Is So Messy?

As much as archaeology is bound to concerns about hygiene and cleanliness, archaeology itself is anything but clean. Field archaeology, in particular, is dirt under our fingernails, the mix of sweat and dust caking our eyelids, the clothes that never quite return to their original color, no matter how many washes. Digging in the dirt means encountering insects and spiders, worms that wriggle and roots that ooze. Research team members numbering in the dozens or hundreds share toilets and showers where they wash unshaven faces and unpeel greasy hair from tangled ponytails or braids. Archaeological excavation entails intimacy with sand and soil, with stickiness and stink. Breathing, beading, bathing, bleeding bodies brushing up against each other necessarily means that these bodies break down, get sick. Contrary to "sanitation discourse," viruses and bacteria invade our excavations. Indeed, illness and disease have directly shaped the development of the discipline for centuries. At Khorsabad, for instance, in 1843 Paul Émile Botta fell ill with malaria. Khorsabad at the time was also called "Khastabad" – translatable as "a place where illness dwells." As a result, he decided to build a dig house and plan the excavation

schedule around the weather and mosquito cycles in the area (Genç 2019). The house, however, aroused tensions with village residents, causing many stoppages and changes to the excavation plan.

Bruce Kuklick's (1996) *Puritans of Babylon*, which tells the story of American expeditions to Nippur at the turn of the 20th century, is as much a medical history as it is a history of archaeology. At the time of these expeditions, cholera, typhus, malaria, and ague were sweeping the region. The American researchers documented their bouts with these illnesses, as well as with locusts and cutaneous leishmaniasis, a scarring dermatological lesion caused by sandfly bites (Kuklick 1996: 47). Team member after team member needed to return home because they became ill (Kuklick 1996: 50). In 1894, Joseph Meyer – who had been responsible for overseeing and documenting the excavations – became so sick he could no longer fulfill those duties (and later died). Kuklick links this explicitly to the archaeological record produced by this excavation, discussing the poor quality of the reports and the photographs produced by Meyer's substitute (Kuklick 1996: 71).

Illness has been as constitutive of the nature and practice of archaeology as has hygiene and health. Sickness and disease have determined not only who participated in expeditions and who didn't, but furthermore the rate and pace of excavation, the seasonality of excavation, relations with local residents, and the content of the documentary record. All of this has fundamentally shaped what we have found, what we have written, and what we know about the past.

The professed alliance between archaeology and hygiene in examples like the Athenian Agora project is accordingly an uneasy one. Field archaeology necessitates compromises in cleanliness, confronting bodies with pathogens and pests. This is something I imagine most excavators would agree with – many even proudly! Still, many of the same people who cherish the memory of their dirtiest dig might also remain committed to principles of purification in archaeological methodology. Yes, we as excavators may still be shaking sand from our socks months after the field season has ended. But our stratigraphic control couldn't be faulted. We excavated pits and fills with precision. We photographed and recorded each layer removed, and drew nicely-labeled elevations. Certainly, people make occasional mistakes, but in general our methodology remains sound and *clean*.

Perhaps, though, there is something to be gained from continuing to pick apart the tight bind of archaeology with purification by challenging this inherent ideal. Does archaeological knowledge production always benefit from a commitment to purification? What about archaeological photography? Oftentimes, the most helpful photographs are the uncleaned, unplanned photographs, the candid photos of work in progress or even a funny moment. In the background of the photo, there is a particular artifact *in situ* or the last remnants of a particular soil deposit, verifying whether it was cut, or cut by, or abutting another. It is not simply that there are some aspects of archaeological practice that we must compromise and allow to be a little dirty, sometimes. Rather, I argue that there are many aspects of archaeological practice that are best served by embracing mess, chaos and impurity.

For one thing, a pursuit of purification is ultimately a pursuit of something that never existed in the first place. Archaeological sites have always been in flux – from construction and use to abandonment and decomposition. And, as Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbins (2019) demonstrates in her book *Waste Siege*, trash and mess are especially good at evading control. Waste grows and seeps and besieges us in ungovernable ways. Landfills leak and contaminate and pollute, watersheds mix and systems of reuse and disposal are unpredictable. This unpredictability and leakage was true for the people we study through archaeology and for the places we delineate as archaeological sites in order to study them. And if all of the power and resources of the modern state are not enough to keep pathogens and garbage in line, surely even our most precise archaeological methods will fall short as well.

A methodological and interpretative commitment to purity is furthermore a denial of the power of the palimpsest. Archaeologists like Geoff Bailey (2007) and Gavin Lucas (2010) have used the metaphor of the palimpsest to talk about archaeological landscapes and to introduce nuanced approaches to thinking about temporality in archaeology. One exception to archaeology's methodological adherence to purity over palimpsest is the pedestrian survey. In pedestrian survey, the palimpsest becomes the mode of inquiry – thinking of all the people who have occupied a particular place over time and seeing evidence of them all at once. It is ironic, perhaps, that Greenberg and Hamilakis see the themes of purity so vividly in Greece and Israel – two areas where pedestrian survey has been so essential and so widely practiced. Something happens between pedestrian survey and excavation or

heritage development – an about-face, away from the palimpsest as a guiding metaphor and instead an objective to clinically sort and streamline the archaeological landscape.

While such temporal purification can be aesthetically pleasing and instructive in some ways, it can also represent an epistemic *loss*. For example, Eric Gable and Richard Handler (1996) have pointed out the ways that Colonial Williamsburg is not a fully accurate portrayal of what life in 18th century Chesapeake would have been like, but is rather a reflection of 1930s ideas about what life in 18th century Chesapeake would have been like. The paint colors would not have existed in the 1770s and the gardens are not quite right. Many of the furnishings are ahistorical. Gable and Handler discuss this, though, as a negotiation – that yes, there is overall a desire to correct misrepresentations and to portray as accurate a picture of colonial America as possible. But at this point, Rocke-feller's image of Colonial Williamsburg is nearly 100 years old itself. Is there not some value, from a historiographic perspective, in preserving a 1930s idea of the 1770s? Ultimately, embracing this messy historiography was one way that Colonial Williamsburg responded to what Gable and Handler termed the "too-clean critique" (1996: 570) – the argument that the park was too clean to be an accurate representation of history. Viewed in this way, temporal purification represents a loss.

In reality, archaeology and purification are uncomfortable bedfellows. Archaeology itself is hardly hygienic, and neither its methods nor its analytical approaches are (always) best served through clean classification and separation. Loosening and teasing apart the supposed cohesion of archaeology and purification perhaps lays the groundwork for disconnecting archaeology from the rhetoric of racial and national purity, which archaeology is so often stolen to serve. Turning to public policy rather than archaeology for a moment, intentional integration remains one of the most effective strategies for actually dismantling the systems of stratification that protect and preserve myths of an eternal uniformity, myths about who belongs. When people of different racial and class backgrounds share the same local infrastructure (same trash pickups, same bus lines, same sewer and water systems), when their children attend school together, material inequality and xenophobia appear to decrease (Massey and Denton 1988; Orfield 2005; Vaughan 2007; Mishra and Mohanty 2017; Ayscue and Frankenberg 2022). Perhaps a parallel effort on the part of archaeology – to reject purification and instead seek out the entangled, the commingled, the mixed-up – would lead to a more complex and nuanced science. Perhaps an archaeology disentangled from principles of sorting, hygiene, and cleanliness would be an archaeology less useful to myths of national and racial supremacy. How can we build that kind of archaeology?

Let's Write More Impurely

In addition to writing *about* what archaeology stands to gain from embracing its messiness, the dialogic format of *Archaeology, Nation, and Race* illustrates the affordances of writing in ways that mimic the mess and nonlinear experience of archaeology. The book is written as a longform conversation between Greenberg and Hamilakis. Standard archaeological writing – particularly monographs – proceeds generally from literature review to conclusions, or, in the case of site reporting, from site overview to methods to results. Normally, headings and paragraph breaks help the reader to navigate the text. But *Archaeology, Nation, and Race* has little of this. There are chapters, but the authors speak at length about some topics and only briefly about others. They do not signal in advance where the discussion will wind up. They repeatedly open a topic, then state that they want to return to it later. And there is plenty of room for tangential asides, even minor ones, that might otherwise seem distracting (if there was an organization to distract *from*). Who would expect, for instance, a book about archaeology's role in nationalism to reference the 1898 invention of cosmetic surgery (to correct the "Jewish nose"), as Greenberg mentions briefly on page 113? Such a digression, however, would seem entirely natural in a casual academic conversation. This is how we talk; this is how we think. But it is not, very often, how we write.

Greenberg and Hamilakis's text is, of course, not the only example of this. Others have experimented with dialogue as a novel form of writing that would more accurately capture the ways that archaeologists form ideas and create new knowledge (e.g. Bapty 1990; Tringham 1991; Bender 1998; Praetzellis and Praetzellis 1998; Hodder 2006). Such experimentation, though, peaked in the 1990s and remains relatively uncommon. Part of the project of disentangling archaeology from principles of purification – from theory to practice – will necessitate more impure, disorderly, unpredictable forms of writing that more closely resemble what archaeology is and what it feels

like. What will it mean to write in unsanitized, untidy ways? How can we write in ways that disrupt the idea that archaeological work is solitary, pre-planned, and linear? How can we write to convey that archaeology does not actually allow an easy, clean recognition of discrete populations in the past – and therefore has nothing to do with arguments for displacement and segregation of communities in the present? I have argued in the past not only for dialogues, but furthermore for fictive writing on the basis of the freedom to "mess" with traditional structures and orders of archaeological writing (Mickel 2012). But if we are to extricate archaeology from purity politics, we will need to continue to seek out more ways of writing that represent the ruptures of our work, the unanswered questions, the creeping and seeping and leakage, the fact that even when we close out a project, our ideas about the past are anything but neat and compl

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The Discussion of Who or What Matters

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Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis argue for archaeology's revolutionary potential, borne of its ability to see what is hidden by typology, process and projection. I admire the project that these scholars advance in their individual life's work which includes actions of professional commitment, archaeological expertise, and activism that draws others to enhanced awareness. Their interchanges, as captured in *Archaeology, Nation, and Race* left me newly aware of potentials and responsibilities for me as an archaeologist, as an agent engaging in activities that span pasts and presents. I particularly appreciated their willingness to lay bare the possibilities for an archaeologist to do better in understanding and even untangling, rather than reproducing, structures of power and advantage. The maneuvers that diminish those who experience systemic limits on their access to knowledge, opportunity and narrative control are more apparent to me following my engagement with these interpretations of Israel and Greece. I am prompted to consider anew the processes of typologization, of defining archaeologies as plural, and also allowing space for concern with *things* which may possess "sentient, affective and emotive properties" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 91).

Archaeologies are redefined as discourses and practices involving things from another time (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 89). If I take seriously the narrative limitations that emerge from my acts of categorization, of typologization, of my assigning value, I am drawn to think toward dismantling or radically expanding my bounded concepts of "who" matters, which can emerge from limiting concepts of race and which may be understood as "a technology of power and control" (Osanami Törngren and Suyemoto 2022: 2; Lentin 2020). I am drawn to consider "what" matters, too, both to me as an agent, actor, empathetic being in the world and archaeologist. In this, there is considerable new terrain to explore, which Hamilakis and Greenberg engage as they define archae-ologies and the project of understanding crypto- and overt colonialism. One domain of expansive thinking looks toward the genius and scientific ideas that are embedded in certain indigenous ontologies about which I am informed and updated by culture bearers fairly regularly (personal communication, June 2022, Cindi Alvitre, Craig Torres). In Los Angeles, where these exchanges occurred, the expression of relatedness among animals, plants, land, water, trees is lively and potent, with responsibilities and reciprocity expected and expressed. When the archaeological project stands in opposition to the interests of all, that is, when archaeology is not living up to its potential to deliver benefits with justice, widely for all, I find myself feeling diminished about my contribution and the outcomes, and wondering what community investment is even possible to redress such an imbalance among those with whom I can consider myself to be related. I may envision myself related to everyone, for we all have a place on the Tree of Life and all species of *Homo* are members of the biological kingdom known as eukaryotes, with humans standing alongside animals, plants, and fungi in a conceptual relatedness that grows out of our shared morphological evolution. We all possess cells with a membrane-isolated nucleus (Woese et al. 1990). Likewise, scientists such as ecologist Suzanne Simard identify adaptations among plants and fungi that sound eerily human, such as defense signaling and kin recognition, yet these occur in underground forest communication networks (Simard 2009, 2021). Eduardo Kohn (2013) opens a rich conversation on nature of agency and interrelatedness for the Runa, a people whose percep-tions of their forest, animals and themselves in it, are expressed in ways that we might speak of other people in a city. A wider conception of relationality prompted Tim Ingold (2021) to think through relationality and related-ness with beyond-humans, whether earth, wind, sky or materials with which a doer does things, as constitutive of being alive, affected, connected and thus (my interpretation) co-diminished when these other relationships are

not noticed, embraced, attended to by one seeking to fully live. Greenberg and Hamilakis reflect on inter-species interactions, *Homo* or otherwise. Entities which we designate as other, as not us, as not in connection with us may be agents or affective nonetheless, and so there are values in deciding to accord respect, notice and reciprocity, as well as necessities for limiting them, too. Post-humanism thinking takes seriously the ways in which subtleties of mobilizing socially constructed categories (e.g., race, consciousness) are pathways in discourse and viaducts for parsing out rights and respect. The potential of beyond-human relationality is obvious to those already enmeshed in such an ontological framework, and it is typically equally strange to those who see distinctions and separations. However, there is a history of crossovers in the realm of policy that at least hint that, even within a logico-positivist conceptualization of the world, there may be levers and linkages within and between realms of life, and that these can become visible or indirectly mobilized. One case relates the unhappy irony of child protection laws in the UK, where it was possible to advance laws to protect animals from abusive treatment, and then only secondarily to use those laws to finally extend protections to children. Concepts of property and hierarchy gave way somewhat to allow for the limitations of non-majority.

In a somewhat similar vein, Chiara De Cesari (2014) explains that the ancillary interest in nature and cultural heritage provided the needed traction for an Israeli High Court in a case concerned with the protection of the archaeological site of Battir from the route of the wall. In this instance, perhaps in a situation of reverse advocacy, heritage was an agent for human benefits when arguments founded on human rights had lost their discursive and persuasive force.

Greenberg and Hamilakis mention that "archaeology was a part of the project of acquiring the land through study-ing it, mapping it and quantifying it." These processes, too, entrain value through "the on-going dynamic of crypto-colonizing (and being crypto-colonized), which is tightly entangled and interwoven with the on-going nationalizing process" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 44). Meanwhile, we are able to see "the national making and remaking of the country through its archaeologization [as] an on-going process, not an old and nearly forgotten story" (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 24). In Jerusalem, this process of national narrative making occurs partly through people's moving through a space given psychic charge for tourists or pilgrims, whether internal or from abroad. These are seductions (come to Jerusalem!) that require transformations via movement and story, as well as through a deft, planned and vast overcoming of the archaeological status quo, both overtly and covertly.
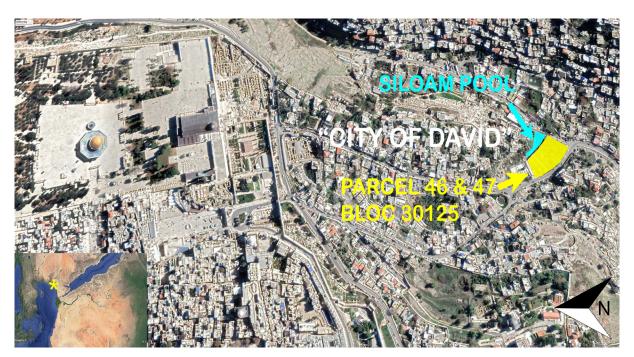

Fig. 1. An annotated aerial image © Maxar Technologies from Google Earth dated January 2022. The image shows the relationship between the Haram el-Sharif / Temple Mount (on left) and the City of David excavation and tourism devel-opment area within the Silwan neighborhood (on right). The tunnel system not seen in the image links up to the Siloam Pool which itself lies adjacent to the large area (parcel 46 & 47). The southeastern parcel is shown being excavated rapid-ly in this video (https://bit.ly/DiggingUpSilwan) and in Fig. 2.

The focus is an Israel in which the visitor sees themselves and their aspirations. Archaeologists have been hard at work refashioning places for such experiences to unfold, as many spent their pandemic years contributing to massive changes in the subterranean realities of East Jerusalem under the Muslim quarter, the Western Wall Plaza, near the Temple Mount, across the City of David (Silwan) and under the Old City and Its Walls. Most of this took place invisibly, underground. This process also was ongoing above ground on a day in February, 2023 when I happened to visit Siloam Pool. Over the course of approximately an hour, two large mechanical excavators continued their multi-day moving of thousands of square meters of soil, uprooting olive and citrus trees on a plot of land at the southern tip of the Silwan neighborhood that has been recast in the past 60 years as the City of David. Their project is reconfiguring the space adjacent to the slim Siloam Pool perhaps to test or prove the estimated size of the pool based on Bliss and Dickie's estimate back in the 1800s when they visited the site that, even then, was filled with layers of accumulation.

A short film of this clearance underway is posted at this location: bit.ly/DiggingUpSilwan. See Fig. 2 for a still photograph taken at this same location, at the southern end of the City of David, a section of East Jerusalem that extends down the spine of the hill southward from the Haram el-Sharif or Temple Mount and Ophel. A map (Fig. 1) depicts the location of the pool and the land that was officially taken possession of in December, 2022. The sliver of the Siloam pool and its steps that currently comprise the southern end of the City of David, play a role in which Israel stages its narrative of Iron Age nascent nationhood for visitors from near and far. Also, the location of Siloam Pool is traditionally associated with the story of a blind man's healing by Jesus in the New Testament.

Fig. 2. Image of earth moving equipment at work in the approximately 500 square meters of land directly adjacent to the Siloam Pool, formerly owned by the Greek Patriarchate (Orthodox Church). Photograph by author dated 20 February 2023.

Purportedly, a long term lease or purchase of this plot transferred control of the property from the Greek Patriarchate and their leaseholders, the Sumarin family (Terrestrial Jerusalem 2022). Its transformation was intended to uncouple it from its former identity. It had been an orchard and garden on property owned by the Greek Patriarchate, a Christian church, and apparently leased to a Palestinian family. The site managers – the El'ad settler organization – hoped it would become the southern half of a grand Siloam Pool that would enable people to experience a time when the temple was still accessible.

Images that are posted in various locations throughout the City of David depict this pool. For example, in this video: https://youtu.be/FdhvksoXGvI?t=770 the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque are depicted atop a pilgrim road that is constructed from archaeological data, contemporary details and historical reconstruction. It is noteworthy that a different version of this image shows the Second Temple at the top of the pilgrim road. However, I did not see it used in the City of David site or tunnels where it would have been visually incongruent with reality as well as potentially inflammatory: https://bit.ly/pilgrim_road_2nd_temple. Even though Church lands are not necessarily subject to the same antiquities regulations as state land or other property owned by private parties, archaeology and archaeologists play a constitutive role in making the experience as well as the conduits in which they unfold.

Thus, while the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) seeks to work collaboratively with such institutions (churches and other religious entities, such as the Western Wall Heritage Foundation), it is not always certain that usual, required procedures of professional archaeological work are being followed. So, I wondered what was known about the cotents of the soil located there in this large plot of land. The archaeologists with whom I visited the site were not able to tell me who had done or was doing the archaeological assessment there in advance of the soil removal. Legally, an archaeological test should have been done once the church no longer owned the property. The IAA archaeologist involved in the assessment required to be undertaken in advance of the earth clearance reports that publication of the results of the investigation is forthcoming (personal communication Nahshon Szanton). The underlying excavation records should exist on file with the IAA. For the sake of discussion, we may assume that the assessment was done, and that significant remains predating 1700 CE were not found. Had they been located, these would have required archaeological documentation or protection in accord with expected professional practices. The rapid clearance of soil that I witnessed would be unremarkable if this area had been deemed not to have been of any archaeological importance, in accord with Israel's antiquities laws and practices. Obviously, while we may not categorize remains as "archaeology" from a legal perspective (not pre-1700 CE), there is certainly much that an archaeologist or historian could learn about a half-dunam plot of land at the southern tip of such a sensitive site (the City of David). In the 323 years since 1700 CE, the world has witnessed the making of modern nations, a global history of colonialism, a local imperial collapse (Ottoman), two world wars that left traces often curated in other states, and other wars associated with the establishment of the State of Israel and of Palestine in their current configurations. The Israel Antiquities Authority delegated to the backhoe operator, through its relationship with the El'ad organization, the permission to ignore those possible stories in order to reveal (or create) the envisioned width of the Siloam Pool.

This feature is to become a part of the recreated pilgrim's ascent through tunnels which penetrate an underground mélange of materials that derive from the Hellenistic (Hasmonean) through Ottoman periods (see imaginative reconstruction at this URL: https://bit.ly/siloampool_reconstruction). Details shared at the site and in publications suggest that this pool was used in Hasmonean times and later as a purification site for the faithful on their approach to the temple precinct. In preparing this purification experience, the soil containing whatever it may contain is removed. In accord with the ideas of Greenberg and Hamilakis, the purification tool is the bucket of a backhoe. Greenberg's (2019) 'digwashing' is apropos here, as the process is excavation amid a massively funded complex of being-revealed archaeological spaces resulting from entrepreneurial activity within underground tourism complexes that are being developed by El'ad, the East Jerusalem organization which works in collaboration with Atheret Cohanim and other settlers. A range of archaeological traces, from nearly every period post-dating the Hasmonean period, have been revealed by archaeologists tunneling up to and around the Haram el-Sharif or Temple Mount and extending beneath the Old City and Its Walls, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Greenberg's and Hamilakis' critique of the project of purification seems particularly apt in view of the millions of shekels being committed to this project annually. The entire experience unfolds within a Palestinian neighborhood which has no access to the benefits of the tourism development. The City of David experiences enable the visitor

to avoid interactions with anyone except the members of their tour group, their guide, the staff at the City of David and people who smile their 2-D smiles from images attached to the walls (Kletter 2020: 8). This is a highly curated experience in which the tourist never needs to be aware of divided Jerusalem, of second-class citizens or need to see a single face that is not involved in the creation of the tourism experience (Greenberg 2009: 44–45; Hasson 2011; Mizrahi 2012; Kletter 2020: 55). Disputed Jerusalem is overcome by Desired Jerusalem in which pilgrimage and purification is again possible, using both archaeologies and "archaeology's therapeutic reputation as healer of ruptured memories and supplier of salutary pasts" (Greenberg 2018: 375).

Another kind of purification is at issue under the Western Wall plaza where ever-enlarging tunnels have uncovered walls blooming with green algae resulting from light encountering ancient (and possibly modern) sewage seepage underground in close proximity to sacred space. The structures of the state intended to protect antiquities were subordinated to tourism access and service needs and, thereby, antiquities, people and their alimentary processes became conjoined in direct proximity (Kletter 2020). This alliance speaks to a vast and thorough transformation of audience understanding, now not for those seeking purity but rather relief, now not for those arriving in ritual obedience but in search of spectacle and story, each of them contributing to the narrative of a nation colonizing disputed and occupied territory to recreate a period of time in which the forebearers whom the narratives recall were themselves subjected to occupation, a story neither old nor forgotten but whose remains leave lessons to be learned.

Acknowledgements

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The "Discoverer" and the "Informant"

Erhan Tamur

The "Discoverer" and the "Informant"

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The first object that was accessioned by the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the Louvre Museum was a statue of the ruler Gudea (c. 2120 BC) from Tello (ancient Girsu) in southern Iraq (Fig. 1). When one looks at the hands of this statue closely, signs of damage and restoration can easily be discerned. In fact, the earliest photographs published in the excavation reports show this statue without its hands (Fig. 2). This absence was interpreted by the Louvre curator André Parrot as an ancient act of iconoclasm carried out in the late third millennium BC, after the time of Gudea: "By breaking the hands, the vandal believed to annihilate more completely the effectiveness of the statue erected in the Eninnu [temple of Ningirsu]" (Parrot 1948: 162).

Fig. 1. Statue of Gudea, ruler of Lagash, c. 2120 BC; from Tello, Iraq. Musée du Louvre, AO 1. Photos: Musée du Louvre.

Yet, if we combine the few existing sources in western languages with a variety of local sources from that period, including the documentation in the Ottoman Imperial Archives on the construction and maintenance of telegraph lines between Baghdad and Basra, it becomes clear that a French telegraph inspector named Juilletti was led to this statue by an unidentified local person in early 1876. Juilletti then broke the statue's hands, took them with him to Baghdad, and sold them to a local antiquities dealer (most likely Michel Marini), who then resold them to the British Museum curator George Smith that same year. The hands of this statue were kept at the British Museum until 27 May 1958, when they were brought to the Louvre to be reunited with the rest of the statue in a ceremony

celebrating the friendship between the two nations. However, the related publication (Rey 2019) did not make any mention of how these hands got to the British Museum in the first place. This, then, was not an act of ancient iconoclasm, and the ancient "vandal" was a modern French telegraph inspector. In fact, I do not believe that the statues of Gudea were subjected to iconoclasm in the late third millennium BC at all – a topic upon which I elaborated elsewhere (see Tamur 2022).

Fig. 2. Statue of Gudea, ruler of Lagash, c. 2120 BC; from Tello, Iraq. Musée du Louvre, AO 1. From Sarzec and Heuzey 1884–1912, Pl. 9.

I decided to begin with this example because it seems permissible today to publish comprehensive books on Mesopotamian archaeology or on the history of excavations without citing a single source in local languages. This neglect concerns not only the Ottoman Imperial Archives or 19th-century local accounts but also modern scholarship that has been produced in the region. For instance, half a century after the bylaw of 1869 was discussed by Ahmet Mumcu (1969), and later published in full by Halit Çal (1997), there are still prominent western scholars who argue that the earliest Ottoman regulations on the protection, excavation and export of antiquities date to 1874 (e.g., Bernhardsson 2005: 39; Dalley 2021: 31). The issue here is not only a matter of leaving out five critical years, during which these two starkly different laws helped shape the convoluted path of the institutionalization of the Ottoman Imperial Museum, but it also has to do with the politics of citation[1] and is the symptom of a deeper theoretical and methodological flaw. The systematic neglect of sources in local languages, coupled with established citation practices, serves to sustain asymmetrical power relationships in academia.

Rafi and Yannis (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 64) very eloquently speak of that sense of exceptionalism felt by the local scholar working in the crypto-colonies, who sometimes derides the foreigner who does not speak the local languages. Although I understand that sentiment, I do believe in the necessity of scholars and students learning not only the ancient but also the modern languages of the region. It is important to push universities, research institutions and museums to make modern language instruction an integral part of their professional training, as well as an employment prerequisite. As I noted, it is first and foremost a matter of correcting major empirical fallacies upon which ancient and modern historical narratives are founded. However, I do agree that the situation

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1　Magnus Bernhardsson's source for this information is Wendy Shaw (2003). Stephanie Dalley cites Matthew Ismail (2011: 87), who, in turn, provides a single reference, namely the aforementioned book by Shaw.

at hand requires much more than correcting empirical fallacies. Let me bring in another, recent example, this time from a museum context.

The British Museum recently organized a touring exhibition titled "Ancient Iraq: New Discoveries," one of the stops of which was the Great North Museum in Newcastle upon Tyne (7 March–2 August 2020). A virtual tour of the galleries has been made available online.[2] One of the highlights of the show is a partially preserved standing statue of Gudea which was taken by the British geologist William Kennett Loftus in 1850 from a site called Tell Hammam in southern Iraq. After mentioning that the statue was "discovered" in 1850, the label, titled "A Battered Survivor," continues as follows:

> "Made of dolerite and showing a life-size worshipper with clasped hands, it lost its head and limbs a long time ago. In recent times it was hacked at by local tribesmen who believed it concealed gold – which it didn't – and was also used in target practice by local warriors! It was the first Sumerian sculpture to reach Europe […] The archaeologist who found the statue was William Kennett Loftus, who was educated at the Royal Grammar School in Newcastle."

If we look at how Loftus himself described the "discovery" of this statue, we read that it was only after his "new guide Mahmud […] mentioned the existence of a large statue at a ruin named Hammam" that Loftus decided to visit and explore that site (Loftus 1857: 113). Once there, Mahmud told Loftus that the statue was recently used for target practice by "the Arabs" and also attacked by the Sabaeans who work in iron. However, Loftus found this unlikely as "it is not their [Sabaeans'] custom to travel with large implements of their trade" and that "the fractures bore evidence of having been effected at an earlier period than my informant [Mahmud] admitted" (Loftus 1857: 115).

Whether or not the statue actually suffered in the hands of local populations is impossible to ascertain – it might well have. My point here is how that possibility, one that Loftus himself doubted, is given in a museum label today as an unquestioned "fact." Additionally, although this is one of those rare occasions that the local person who guided the western archaeologist to the monument was named in the original source, the "discovery" is again entirely attributed to Loftus himself. It is astonishing how the temporal-logical contradiction this attribution leads to goes unnoticed in such narratives. How can a statue that is documented to have been known by local populations prior to the arrival of Loftus be regarded as "discovered" by him in 1850? The putative singularity of the moment of "discovery" is negated even within the same label. Finally, one expects to see one sentence or a separate wall text concerning the socio-political settings that made this statue "the first Sumerian sculpture to reach Europe." Instead, the narrative that is offered in this label in 2020 is akin to the tired glorification of how Europeans "saved" antiquities from oriental ignorance and superstition. I would argue that the disappearance of Mahmud and the "pre-discovery" histories from this museum narrative is another form of what Rafi and Yannis (Greenberg and Hamilakis: 75–108) called purification – the adherence to a single, linear, academic narrative of "discovery" at the expense of one that is complex, multitemporal, and open to non-academic forms of knowledge.

Further, the generic designations that have been used to describe local populations are part and parcel of that process of purification. Loftus, as we saw in the aforementioned quotation, used the word "informant" when referring to Mahmud. Others, such as the British Museum curator Wallis Budge, asserted that the French diplomat Ernest de Sarzec who led the excavations at Tello "questioned the *natives* in the district as to the possibility of finding an untouched site" (Budge 1925: 197, my emphasis). Although this statement implies that local populations were more than just a passive backdrop or a cause of disturbance, the use of the collectivizing term "natives" effectively denamed and defaced them. Similarly, Sarzec's excavation photographs further perpetuated this tendency by categorizing local collaborators as his "escort" (Sarzec and Heuzey 1884–1912: Pl. 63; see Fig. 3). Such rhetoric is still perpetuated today. A case in point is Paul Collins's otherwise brilliant recent book, where the same people are referred to, without any serious engagement, as "local informants" (Collins 2021: 43).

On the other hand, a closer analysis of a diverse set of local sources makes it clear that Wallis Budge knew by name all of those people whom he called "natives" in his book. He had met many of them in person and bought various types of ancient objects from them. Elsewhere (see Tamur 2022), I visualized the intricate relationship between such individuals and institutions in a social network graph, which demonstrates the existence of a world of local and international relationships that remained concealed behind the narratives of "discovery" glorifying the

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2   See https://greatnorthmuseum.org.uk/visit-us/virtual-tours-ancient-Iraq. Last viewed 28.9.2023.

individual, European excavator. Then the use of the collectivizing terms "informants," "natives," and "escorts," as well as the nature of the power relationship implied by the act of "questioning" (see the aforementioned quote by Budge) do not derive from ignorance; they are intentional elements of a broader narrative informed by a distinct colonial logic that regards these lands as *terra incognita*. Rafi and Yannis note similar processes taking place in Greece and Israel as well.

Fig. 3. "Ernest de Sarzec and his escort." From Sarzec and Heuzey 1884–1912, Pl. 63.

Finally, I would like to return to the issue of "discovery." If it is not Loftus, then who is the "discoverer" of this statue? Is it Mahmud? Someone else? What happens if we go further back in time, say to the 10th century AD, when an Iraqi judge and collector of stories named Al-Muḥassin ibn ʿAlī al-Tanūkhī (939–994) noted the existence of:

> "[…] a statue of a man made of smooth black stone, of vast size, known to the people of that region as Abu [Father] Ishaq […] The inhabitants state that they have heard their elders calling it by that name from time immemorial […] On its chest, back, and shoulders there was ancient writing inscribed, in an unknown character." (Margoliouth 1930: 368)

Al-Tanūkhī continues with another story of a "square stone of great size" that bore "images and engraving" at a place called Tell Hawār, which was known as "an ancient site, containing relics of antiquity" (Margoliouth 1930: 368). Already in 1931, Tell Hawār (or Tell Ḥawwāra) was proposed as the Medieval name of Tello by Yaʿqūb Sarkīs, one of the most prominent local historians of Iraq (see Sarkīs 1948: 293–301, 1949). However, his

arguments on the etymology of Tello as well as his works in general have never been taken into consideration in western scholarship.[3] By drawing on classical and modern Arabic sources on the history and historical geography of lower Mesopotamia as well as recent archaeological surveys and excavations, I was able to further identify several other key geographical markers mentioned in Medieval texts and trace both of Al-Tanūkhī's stories to the vicinity of Tello. In other words, it is highly likely that the sculptures mentioned by Al-Tanūkhī were statues of Gudea. Finally, Al-Tanūkhī added that several people tried to move the statue named Abū Ishāq, but the local people "came crying" and requested the statue back. Stressing that their village "was its [the statue's] home," they stated: "We come to it for company at night, and the wild beasts keep off us when we are near it, as they approach nothing which resorts to it for protection" (Margoliouth 1930: 368).

Such accounts refute one of the major arguments against restitution and repatriation as espoused by James Cuno and others, namely that local populations had no relationship whatsoever with these ancient monuments prior to the arrival of the European "discoverer" (e.g., Cuno 2007: 11–12, 2008: 146). Yet I believe that the aim should not be to reverse that narrative by replacing the name of one "discoverer" with that of another, but to dispense with that kind of logic altogether. The fundamental problem with narratives of "discovery" is how they strip the object or concept in question of its surrounding context and deny it any existence prior to and independent of the moment of "discovery." In other words, its "history" begins with its modern "discovery."

While countering these narratives by expanding the range of sources is imperative, a critical engagement quickly reveals that many of the sources resist any inherent classification into the fixed categories of "indigenous" or "European." Further, the prevailing discourse of "discovery" often pervades the literature of the time regardless of such categorizations. For example, the Assistant Director of the Ottoman Imperial Museum, Halil Edhem Bey (1897: 106) claimed that the site of Zincirli in southern Turkey was "discovered" by the Director of the same institution, Osman Hamdi Bey, although Osman Hamdi Bey himself noted that members of the local Kurdish population had already unearthed the sculptures of Zincirli prior to his arrival at the site (see Eldem 2010: 51). Similarly, Ferruh Gerçek, a modern, Turkish historian who wrote a comprehensive book on the history of museology in Turkey could write that "Nineveh was discovered by Carsten Niebuhr [1733–1815]" (Gerçek 1999: 28), while the tenth century geographer Ibn Ḥawqal had already noted how the ruins of Nineveh [Nīnawā] were easily discernable from the city of Mosul (see Johnson 2017: 264).

Instead, the emphasis should be on the entanglement of the past with the present and on the temporal plurality of artworks and landscapes. Yannis, in particular, has been stressing this point for many years now, and this emphasis is also reflected in the discipline of art history with the recent shift from the negatively connotated "anachronism" to the productive capacity of the "anachronic." In that sense, as with the issue of sources and the politics of citation, I find the critique of the notion of "discovery" to be an integral part of a decolonial project. Only then, perhaps, would modern histories of Mesopotamian "discovery" no longer begin with the account of Benjamin of Tudela from the twelfth century, and local sources from across the centuries, which have generally been relegated to myth or tradition, would be critically read and integrated into our narratives.

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3   Instead, the name of Tello has generally been explained as meaning the "mound of the tablets" in Arabic – "tell" (تل) meaning "mound," and "lawḥ" (لوح) referring to a writing board. This explanation goes back to the French orientalist Charles Henri-Auguste Schefer (1820–1898) as noted in Sarzec and Heuzey, 1884–1912: 1: 8, n. 1.

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The Study of the Ancient and Recent Past in Israel: The View from Tel Ḥadid

Ido Koch

The Study of the Ancient and Recent Past in Israel: The View from Tel Ḥadid

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In recent years there has been growing scholarly interest in the social context of archaeology in Israel. As amply demonstrated, ideologies, politics and religions have been entangled with the practice of archaeology in the southern Levant since Ottoman times, and they form the foundations of common current approaches. True, interpretive frameworks and methodological approaches gradually changed in response to studies of the history of scholarship during the 1980s and 1990s, as well as exposure to critical archaeological studies, and the perspective of archaeologists educated in recent decades differs from that of their predecessors, but many still adhere to paradigms and concepts that developed and crystallised almost a century ago by agenda-driven scholars. Accordingly, this contribution joins the call for a reflective discourse – which is needed now more than ever. It deals with the entanglement of the ancient, the recent and the present, as reflected in the ongoing work at Tel Ḥadid, a multilayer mound in central Israel, following Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis' (2022) call to "demystify" the ancient and imagination and consequently our scholarly approaches.

Studying the Ancient in a Contemporary Context

During the 2019 season of archaeological fieldwork at Tel Ḥadid,[1] a hand grenade was found just below the surface. Work was halted for several hours, and as the team waited for a police bomb squad to come and dismantle the threat, they could identify the grenade as an artefact dating back to the days of British rule over Palestine (1917–1948).

This was our team's introduction to the first full season at Tel Ḥadid, during which we invested our efforts in four main areas, three of which yielded significant remains dating to the Iron Age II (primarily 7th century BCE), the Hellenistic period (2nd–1st centuries BCE), and the Byzantine period (4th–7th centuries BCE). Our initial aim had been to investigate the Iron Age II, a context already explored at the site in the 1990s (Brand 1996, 1998; Beit-Arieh 2008; Koch and Brand Forthcoming). Specifically, we were intrigued by the remains of a community of deportees who were forcibly relocated and settled in the region by the Neo-Assyrian empire in the late 8th century BCE (Naʾaman and Zadok 2000; Koch et al. 2020). These remains offered us a rare opportunity to explore this historically well-known yet archaeologically understudied episode in the history of the region (Koch 2022).

We began the exploration with questions on the transformative capacity of 'uprootedness' – the forced relocation of communities from their homelands or habitual surroundings. Such questions included:

- What would the uprooted take with them on their journey?
- How would they adapt to the local climate, flora and fauna of their new homes?
- What would the nature of their interactions with their new host society be?

1　The project is co-directed by the author and by James Parker (Baptist Theological Seminary of New Orleans).

As work progressed and with the discovery of new contexts, new questions came to light, yet the Iron II remains constitute the main attraction of the site in the eyes of the scholarly community and the general public. The proximity of the site to the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, its elevation, towering above the neighbouring communities, and its development as a leisure site by the Jewish National Fund all make it a popular site with the public. Tel Ḥadid and its surroundings host hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, especially in the summertime. Naturally, the sight of our black excavation tents and equipment, alongside the sound of tools (and our team's vocal enthusiasm) attract visitor attention. We decided, therefore, from the beginning, to adopt an inclusive approach by collaborating with local communities and visitors and regularly sharing our thoughts and plans with them. Many visitors would approach us and ask questions, most frequently about the Iron II or, more accurately, about the biblical period. As all our staff members can testify, one of the most common questions was: "Have you found proof of the Bible?"

Our staff members, most of whom are Tel Aviv University students, engage in such conversations daily and present their own perspectives. Here, however, is when things can get tricky, and where we must tread with care, since the entanglement of archaeology with politics, ideologies and religions is at the core of our field in Israel. Such views derive from the colonial origins of earlier scholarship and the nationalistic archaeology of the first decades of the State of Israel that have evolved to become the legacy of modern scholarship (see, among others, Silberman 1993, 2003; Shavit 1997; Kletter 2006; Feige and Shiloni 2008; Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022, esp. 24–28). Even nowadays, decades-old approaches dictate research questions, methods and interpretations. News media and politicians often cherry-pick the latter, which are harnessed as "proof" of their views and sacralised as part of a political agenda (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 103–105, 144).

To counter such insidious entanglements, we highlight the need to maintain the independence of the analysis of material remains from the tyranny of texts and their scholarly interpretations. The prioritisation of data over paradigms is essential if we are to release the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant from its *biblicised* past and protect it from the threat of manipulation in the name of nationalist agendas. Following Greenberg and Hamilakis (2022: 162–163), archaeologists must engage with the public and discuss the roots of the myths, the complexity of interpretation and the production of alternative narratives.

The work at Tel Ḥadid has exposed yet another entanglement between the past and the present. Each visitor to the site, armed with their own mindset, interests, beliefs and political views, passes through hundreds of olive trees, organised in plots framed by crumbling fences and prickly-pear cacti. Some would engage in conversations on the ancient past and its contemporary context under the shade of Tel Ḥadid's serene, aged olive orchards. Those who climb the mound to see the panoramic view of the Lydda Valley and the Tel Aviv metropolitan area are probably unaware that when they reach the summit, they are standing on top of a cemetery. Just behind them lie the ruins of houses, blending in with the vegetation, covered by thick underbrush under a canopy of trees planted in the past 50 years. These are the sparse remains of the Palestinian village of al-Ḥaditha that was destroyed on 12 July 1948.

These paltry remains of the village have shaped the direction our research was to take. The grenade of the 2019 season was a vivid illustration of the site's violent past during the 1948 Arab–Israeli War. It became clear to me that the study of uprooted communities in the ancient past could not continue without creating the space to consider the nature of *our* current role in the story of this place and its recent episode of uprootedness. Thus, a new collaboration was co-initiated with Prof. Yoav Alon (Department of Middle Eastern and African History, TAU) to study the village of al-Ḥaditha and its remains. Together we intend to investigate the village through a detailed archaeological analysis of material remains and a thorough historical inquiry.[2] As such, the project underscores the promise embodied in historical-archaeological investigations into Israel's recent past, illuminating unknown aspects of recent material culture and shedding light on under-studied communities that leave few conventional records of their experience.

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2   The project is funded by the Israel Science Fund, Grant No. 1316/22.

Our Academic Location: At a Turn in the Archaeology of Israel's Recent Past?

As we began to plan the project, we faced a well-known challenge. In contrast to the established scholarly community of Israel's modern history in all Israeli universities, institutes and departments of archaeology have few members who study and teach the archaeology of the Ottoman and British Mandate periods. Thus, while historical archaeology is a vibrant discipline in Europe and North America (Orser, Jr. 2002; Majewski and Gaimster 2009), Israeli archaeology has contributed little to the field, even though material remains from recent centuries are found in abundance throughout the country.

The roots of this phenomenon date to the early archaeological explorations of Ottoman-period Palestine (1517–1917), which focused on Judeo-Christian remains alone. At first, this was due to the (generally negative) Western colonial perception of the "Orient" and its people. This was compounded by the British Mandate Antiquities Ordinance (1920), which decreed that only remains predating 1700 CE should be considered antiquities. This same perspective of past remains was later endorsed by Israeli lawmakers and archaeologists (Melman 2020; Baram 2009; Kletter 2006).

Although the remains of Arab villages from the Ottoman and British Mandate periods have been uncovered in many salvage excavations (e.g., Ustinova and Nahshoni 1994), only a few projects have focused on the rural sites from these periods. These include Glock's study of Ti'innik (Ziadeh 1995; Ziadeh-Seely 1999, 2000) and Hirschfeld's excavations of the village of Umm el-'Aleq (Hirschfeld 2000). Other studies have explored burial practices (Simpson 1995) and objects, predominantly smoking pipes and drinking vessels (Baram 1999; Simpson 2002). Nevertheless, and despite the well-established field of historical archaeology, no sub-discipline for the archaeology of the modern era in the southern Levant has emerged. In Baram's (2000: 139) words, "for a land which has been overturned in nearly every corner with the archaeologist's spade, the recent past is the least understood archaeologically."

This situation has improved in recent years. First, the significant and extensive development of Israel over the past three decades generated salvage projects that focused on the modern era. Some of these projects involved historical-archaeological studies, primarily in Jerusalem and Jaffa (e.g., de Vincenz 2015; Arbel 2021), but also in other regions (e.g., Majdal Yaba: Tsuk et al. 2016; Kafr 'Ana: Arbel and Volynsky 2019; al-Muzayri'ah: Taxel and Amit 2019). Second, an outreach project in Lydda promotes the study of the city, specifically during the Ottoman and British periods (Daʿadli 2017; Shavit 2022). Third, the material remains from these periods have been subjected to detailed analyses, the results of which illuminate local trends in economic activity and consumption during times of increased exposure to European material and technological innovations, followed by political domination (Walker 2009; Shapiro 2016; Vincenz 2018; Arbel 2019; Daʿadli 2019; Shehadeh 2020). Finally, there has been an increased exploration of the political context of modern Israeli archaeology, including the role of Israeli archaeologists in demolishing pre-1948 Arab villages (Kletter and Sulimani 2016; see also Kletter 2006: 48–81).

University-based fieldwork (distinct from salvage excavations) complements this growing interest in the recent past. Such projects include Tell eṣ-Ṣâfi (Horwitz et al. 2018), Bureir (Saidel et al. 2020), and Tell el-Hesi (Saidel and Blakely 2019) in the southern coastal plain, as well as rural sites in the Western Negev (Saidel et al. 2019). To these one should add the study of the village of Qalunia, west of Jerusalem, which is based on a reanalysis of past salvage excavations (Wachtel et al. 2020; Kisilevitz et al. 2021). The most recent development is the project at Qadas, located in the Upper Galilee close to the Israeli–Lebanese border, co-directed by R. Greenberg and G. Sulimani, which endeavours to study the village and its destruction following the conquest in 1948 (Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 176–178).

Lastly, such an interest is reflected in special issues of peer-reviewed journals, which hitherto did not deal specifically with these periods (Saidel and Erickson-Gini 2021). This recent momentum of archaeological interest in Israel's recent past provides a new context for our project and allows us to explore aspects of past and present societies as well as consider the role of archaeology within this discourse.

Al-Ḥaditha: A Historical–Archaeological Study of a Depopulated Arab Village

The archaeological study of the recent past involves sets of data that provide high-resolution details unknown in the study of more ancient periods. First is the wide range of written sources and photos from various archives and contemporary press reports as well as oral testimonies: some are already available online, and others are compiled from al-Ḥaditha communities in Ramallah and Amman. The archival work is carried out by Alon, assisted by two postdoctoral fellows, one of whom is a native Arabic speaker responsible for communicating with the al-Ḥaditha communities in the West Bank and Amman.

A fundamental component of our project is the collaboration of the al-Ḥaditha Association (Jamʿiyyat al-Ḥaditha) in al-Bireh, Ramallah. We are trying to enable the refugees from al-Ḥaditha and their descendants to play an active and integral role in the project rather than a passive one (cf. Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022: 159). For instance, within the framework of the interviews, we encourage active participation, asking questions such as: do you have any inquiries we can explore in our excavation of your village? We plan to maintain open communication with the al-Ḥaditha community throughout the project and hopefully into the future. Focusing on narrative transmission and preservation, we ask community members to document their stories of the village – which will then be translated into English and Hebrew in our publications.

At the same time, we are aware that we should not ignore those who have lived next to Tel Ḥadid in recent decades. Inspired by the framework of community archaeology (Tully 2007; Marshall 2009; Moshenska and Dhanjal 2012), we have engaged with the regional council and called for its collaboration. In this context, we have talked to local residents and asked them for input on the site's place in their landscape. Special attention is accorded to the senior members of these communities, who first settled at the foothills of Tel Ḥadid in the early 1950s and remember the site with its ruins before the planting of the park by the Jewish National Fund in the 1970s. In addition, we have joined classes in the neighbouring elementary school and guided them to/around the site as we listened to their stories about Tel Ḥadid – stories that will also be included in our publication.

Based on the historical sources, we have built our second data set, which integrates the GIS application of historical photos and a survey of the village and its environs. This allows us to incorporate all the information amassed into a detailed digital map of the village, reconstructing its immediate agricultural surroundings and tracing land usage in the vicinity. To this end, we work on converting historical aerial photos of al-Ḥaditha and its environs into orthophotos (top-down photos stretched to scale and placed on a coordinate system), facilitating the comparison of sources from different periods. The collected data will be cross-referenced with the high-resolution survey data and archival documents (pertaining to land ownership) to create a holistic view of the village and its environs.

The third (and archaeologically more "conventional") data set would be the excavation of al-Ḥaditha's built-up area, which will commence in the summer of 2024. The excavation team will work following the insights provided by the historical research during three seasons of excavation of the village (2024–2026), and ongoing analysis of the material remains will be framed in comparison with the historical evidence. This excavation will involve the detailed documentation and removal of ruins to study destruction processes, followed by the excavation of underlying habitation levels. We initially planned to conduct the digging of two sections along the slope and one wide area in the village's core. However, as we continue the interviews with the al-Ḥaditha community, our final excavation plans will be amended in line with their questions and approval.

We aim to publish a comprehensive presentation of the project and its components as an open-access edited volume in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. The main contributors to this volume will be the project's PIs and staff members, along with former residents of al-Ḥaditha and their descendants.

Our consultation on the final storage location of the unearthed objects is another facet of this project. According to the Israeli Antiquities Law, the excavation director is responsible for handing over all excavated finds to the state authorities. However, since the recent date of the finds excludes them from the law, it is the excavators' responsibility to decide how to process them. We plan to work with the community and conduct consultations to determine

how the recovered objects are to be treated regarding their display in museums or exhibitions, their preservation and storage, and their eventual return to the descendants of their former owners.[3]

The project's final phase (to take place in the summer of 2026) will consist of a reflective discourse on the collaborative effort to uncover the story of al-Ḥaditha. We will convene for a summary workshop to present the results of the project and our conclusions on theory, methods and practice. Alongside the need to discuss disciplinary boundaries that should be at the very least revisited and perhaps revised, there is the fact that both Alon and myself are Jewish Israelis and thus must be aware of the need for a self-reflective component in the project, as it directly relates to Israeli and Palestinian history within the context of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

As I am writing this contribution after concluding the first year of the project and after some years of studying uprootedness in the ancient past, I wonder how my personal experience has shaped my research. Ever since I was a child, I have heard the stories of my grandparents – holocaust survivors who lost their families, were uprooted from their homes, migrated to Palestine in 1947 and built a new life while joining the war. What elements of these stories and the details I have collected during the years became part of my research? And how much of my grandfather's stories on his participation in the 1948 War are lying in the back of my mind as I read the testimonies of the people of al-Ḥaditha?

Indeed, this is only the beginning, and I look forward to the ultimate results of this project. I already feel, however, that although our task is not easy, we are not alone. We have colleagues to consult with, the willingness and generosity of the al-Ḥaditha community, recent awards of generous funding for our research, and the support of a passionate and kind-hearted student community eager to join the project. It is my hope that more projects like this will be developed in the future.

Acknowledgements

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3   I am grateful to Rafi Greenberg for his advice on this matter.

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Archaeology, Coloniality and Modernity: A Response

Raphael Greenberg and Yannis Hamilakis

Archaeology, Coloniality and Modernity: A Response

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RG: So, Yannis, having read and reread the essays, I thought we might exchange a few impressions and respond to some of the challenges that have been offered in them, whether directly or indirectly. One of the first things that struck me, both in this set of papers and in other reactions to *ANR* (published, online and in academic settings), is how varied and "undisciplined" they are: each response seems to spin off in a different direction! I know that it was our intent and hope to engage a diverse readership, but I began to wonder whether there is true communication, as Despina Lalaki suggests there should be, or if we are talking to ourselves and past each other. I'm also thinking of the eye-rolling reproach that I often encounter, not least from colleagues within the profession, of those who would prefer that we 'stay in our lane,' do what we do best and what we are paid public money to do; that is, dig, publish and tell stories about the past. Why trouble the world with our half-baked meditations? And now we have gone and lured more well-intentioned, mostly young scholars to join us in this pointless exercise!

I think that what does bind these responses – and our own work – together is something that we mention in both the introduction and conclusion to our book, and that is the sense that many of the things that we were born into, whether economically, politically or disciplinarily, have reached a breaking point: we can no longer continue to do whatever it was that we were doing before. Neither our discipline nor any related to it can continue to run along the same tracks, based on an economy of incessant extraction and founded on violence and tremendous imbalances of power and privilege. Moving forward thus calls on each of us to look inward, personally and intellectually, and stake out a position, as each of our interlocutors has done, whether explicitly or implicitly. And by looking inward, each naturally focuses on what is nearest to them or most immediately affects them. So while they are each reacting, knowledgeably and thoughtfully, in a different idiom, they are resonant. More specifically, that resonance is founded on a discomfort with the continuing, troublesome ideological link between self-serving visions of biblical and classical antiquity and Western modernity (Robbins, Reilly, Koch), archaeology and coloniality (Tamur, Lalaki), or disciplinary purity and ethnic/racial supremacy (Mickel, Dodd). Archaeology – and especially that of the two countries that have been so fundamental to the Western world view – has too many real-world consequences to be allowed to preserve the fiction that nothing we say really matters, and that we bear no responsibility for people who are displaced, histories that are ignored, or racial inequalities that are rationalized or naturalized through our complicity. It is completely our business to understand the history of our discipline and the political and intellectual contexts in which it was formed, and we have much to learn from those who join us in this quest.

In the months that have passed since we published *ANR*, the linked political, environmental and ideological crises that were its very prominent accompaniment have only increased, as has the weaponization of "neutral" or "scientific" archaeological discoveries by racist and nationalist actors. Yet many colleagues cling to a belief that they should have no impact on the way we ply our craft. I think what these essays are telling them is that they are in for a rude awakening: the old ways of archaeology will not long be tolerated. Where our interlocutors do not agree – and what might leave any reader at loose ends – is what should be done about it. Lalaki and Tamur seem

to advocate most forcefully for the adoption of "a southern standpoint", but how far should that affect our praxis? Mickel and Koch (and I think Dodd as well) are suggesting various modes of reform in how we go about our business, with the former pushing for a more radical unlearning (but how radical can it get, without losing sight of our craft?), while Reilly and Robbins perhaps play devil's advocate by inquiring if there is something to be salvaged – or even unabashedly embraced – in emancipatory aspects of modernity and nation-building.

Getting to the heart of the matter, do you think that we have argued that archaeologists are complicit in some sort of conspiracy that "western modernity" has imposed on the world, and that this requires us to tear down our discipline and condemn all the work that has been – and continues to be – put into the discovery and interpretation of the material past? Or should we in fact cherish aspects of modernity and 'civilization', as Robbins suggests, as well as the empowering qualities of post-colonial nation-building, as Reilly implies?

YH: Well, let's first say how grateful we are for these engaging and deeply insightful responses. They add to the reviews already published (Rizvi 2022; Bowman 2023; Gazi 2023; Havstad 2023; Lambropoulos 2023; Nakassis 2023; Papagiannopoulos 2023) and to the passionate engagement that I have experienced during public presentations of the book in Greece. If, twenty or thirty years ago, a discussion on the politics of our discipline was a niche matter, today, as you say, it is seen as essential and existential not only for archaeology, but well beyond it. Archaeology cannot continue its business as usual, with a few modifications here and there. Neither can it adopt an opportunistic attitude, adapting to the new conditions and benefiting from the current crises, a kind of archaeological disaster capitalism. What is needed is its drastic refoundation as an undisciplined discipline, no longer a servant of colonialist and nationalist narratives and of commodifying practices.

Our book was deliberately broad ranging, and it is no surprise to me that the responses here follow diverse directions. Yet there are certain shared themes that run through them. For example, the theme of purification which is central in Mickel's piece can be also detected in Dodd's contribution, when she emphasizes the need to re-establish relational connections with the messy world of non-human beings and entities, and in Tamur's response reminding us of the need for epistemic justice, also central in Mickel's article. Tamur problematizes the neat and sanitizing narratives of official archaeology which foreground discovery as a story of adventurous feats of white, western (male) archaeologists. Another example: the themes of polychrony, anachrony or multi-temporality surface in many contributions, notably the ones foregrounding the archaeology of the contemporary (primarily Koch) but also the ones that challenge the highly problematic, arbitrary divisions of time, imposing a time mark on when "real archaeology" starts. I see a real dialogue here, taking different paths but motivated by similar concerns.

As to the points raised by Reilly on the certain benefits of nationalism and the objections posed by Robbins that we present a flattened and rather unfair view of modernity, much can be said. Briefly, I do not deny that in certain contexts nationalist archaeology has fueled anti-colonial struggles. The case of Great Zimbabwe was mentioned. The site became a national symbol, but it mostly served to show that great feats were indeed the work of local, African people, not Mediterranean or European colonists. I see such a narrative, supported as it was by strong empirical evidence, as an example of decolonial archaeology, not so much of a nationalist one, although I would not deny that such narratives could take (and indeed, have taken occasionally) nationalist overtones. The notion of strategic essentialism is often presented as an argument here, the deliberate use, by subaltern groups, of essentialist narratives to describe themselves in order to advance anti-authoritarian or anti-colonial goals. While we all agree that nationalism is an essentialist concept, it can have at times strategic benefits, the argument goes. But even Spivak, who has been the proponent of this concept, has disowned it in an interview as it "simply became the union ticket for essentialism" (Danius et al. 1993: 35). So no, we should insist that nationalism is a derivative concept, sharing the same ontological and epistemic principles with colonialism, they are both different strands of an overarching regime of coloniality. In *ANR* we presented several examples of such a convergence, and we have spoken at length about the colonizing work of nationalism, its violence over bodies, territories, local/indigenous cultures and traditions.

Reilly also urges us to consider the critique of Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò (2022) who has argued that, from an African point of view, the recent drive towards decolonization denies African people's agency, and their ability to creatively adopt institutions and practices of European modernity. There is much to agree with in his book, and we would certainly concur with the thesis that we should not "define the colonised strictly by the colonial experience" (Táíwò 2022: 183). There is also much to disagree with, and while in our book we have engaged in the careful, historically

situated, and contextually specific analysis he is urging us to do, giving due agency to the non-metropolitan cultures we are analyzing, we should rather concur with other African and Africa-based scholars and intellectuals in showing the intricate connection and mutual constitution of western modernity, colonization and racialization (cf. Mbembe 2017).

As for Robbins's strong but fruitful objections to our thesis, I feel that they are partly an outcome of different disciplinary traditions. We never intended to embark on a wholesale assessment of modernity or to produce a balance sheet of its positive and negative qualities. Our critical use of concepts such as progress and civilization was deliberate, as these are some of the most loaded terms in modernist archaeological narratives, often connected to discourses of cultural evolutionism, so popular with much of western archaeology since the 19th century. The critiques of such models, on both empirical and theoretical grounds, have been plentiful and systematic, with the most recent being David Graeber and David Wengrow's *The Dawn of Everything* (2021; for a critique see Hamilakis 2022). I feel that when we utter terms such as progress or civilization, we and Robbins conjure up different images, we hear different things: we have in mind these teleological and hierarchical narratives, often with racist undertones; he perhaps hears a story of gradual improvement, with echoes of the 20th century, political emancipatory narratives. After all, in the political vocabulary of the Left, progress is still a future horizon to be achieved, a path full of possibilities, along the lines of a linear and developmental conception of time.

But beyond these disciplinary misunderstandings, I feel that there are genuine differences of perspective here which we should not attempt to conceal. Let's consider only a couple of points. "[T]he fact that the prestige of the distant past has been weaponized doesn't mean that the distant past doesn't deserve its prestige", he writes, but in our book we wanted to complicate the notion of pastness, arguing that it is inscribed in a specific modernist conception of temporality, while also pointing to the selection process at play, to the insistent foregrounding of certain pasts at the expense of others. Colonialism existed before modernity, he claims, but without wishing to idealize any period, no serious scholar would equate ancient colonization with that of European modernity despite some formal similarities; the latter was grounded on a specific construction of Anthropos as a white, male superior human being, entitled to "civilize" the world through conquest and plunder.

Moreover, Robbins seems to adopt here the liberal narrative of continuous progress of "humanity", despite the odds. We take it he does not subscribe to a teleological understanding of progress, and, like us, he would agree that these positive, emancipatory developments (the abolition of transatlantic slavery, the universal right to vote in elections, the right of workers to unionize?) were the outcome of often ferocious and bloody struggles. Nonetheless, Western modernity is worth rescuing, Robbins seems to argue, since, along with its horrors, it left us many good things. As we mentioned already, we are not in the business of producing a balance sheet of modernity but rather examining its specific entanglement with archaeology and with Hellenism and Judaism. And we would concur with scholars such as Lisa Lowe (2015) or Sylvia Wynter (2003), amongst others, that an examination of the emancipatory developments in western or European modernity cannot happen in isolation, since they were often achieved at the expense of the Others of Europe and of the West, at a serious cost for the colonized non-white beings. Can we really afford to discuss the French Revolution without examining and reflecting on the lessons of the Haitian Revolution at the same time? Or can we continue referencing the abolition of the Atlantic slavery without discussing its connection to the mass displacements of the colonized from China and South Asia as indentured labor, due to the associated labor shortage (Lowe 2015: 5)? In other words, to use Robbins's own argument elsewhere (Robbins 2017), we, the privileged of the Global North, need to accept that we are the beneficiaries of the long histories of extractive colonization of the rest of the world.

RG: I think, Yannis, that we can be even more specific: If we allow the methodological and technological advances in archaeology to be wielded without any accounting of the manner in which they are the wages and gratifications of coloniality and whiteness, then we invite not only the continuation of stark global (North-South) disparities in the practice and consumption of archaeological knowledge, but also the naturalization of modern ethnic and cultural categories and the inevitability of the late-modern order in our interpretation. Just as archaeologists universally recognize that using outdated excavation methods will lead to unreliable results, so should they accept that thinking with colonial categories will result in a pervasive, violent structuring ideology that colors every interpretation, beginning with material typologies and ending with "state formation" and "world systems" (Omilade Flewellen et al. 2021; Reilly 2022). It is an ideology that inhibits understanding no less than the crude excavation methods of the colonial looters of the past.

Thinking, along with Mickel, Dodd, and Koch, about what we might need to unlearn in the way we practice archaeology in the field and teach it in universities, we might be hesitant and uncomfortable with, for example, Mickel's call for "messiness." Does this imply relinquishing the care and precision upon which we often pride ourselves in the field? Are we turning our backs on the very nature of our "craft" (*sensu* Shanks and McGuire 1996)? I think not. Just as contemporary medicine has turned away from the absolutes of complete isolation from "germs" or the utter separation of mind and body in achieving physical wellbeing, so do archaeologists need to recognize the advantages of uncertainties and multiplicities, including those which occur at "the trowel's edge." The moment of understanding might not occur in tandem with that of maximum "cleanliness", but perhaps in relation to a failure to distinguish, or to a juxtaposition of incompatible observations (Greenberg 2022), or as Dodd suggests, at the moment of decentering the human agent. In fact, as in the cases both of the Silwan orchard described by Dodd or the hand grenade described by Koch, the "intrusion" of the present can be the moment of the most profound understanding.

Implicit in Koch's program of integration of the study of the contemporary ruin of al-Haditha in what would traditionally be termed a "biblical" excavation is the possibility of radical changes in both research paradigms and teaching curricula in Israeli academia, but we are very far from that objective, which would require a thorough restructuring of archaeological departments and the consequent loss of political clout, prestige and privilege that are attached to "Biblical" and "Near Eastern" archaeology. It will not be enough to merely "add diversity and stir." This is how I read Tamur's contribution as well: once the theme of "discovery" is removed from archaeological narratives (imagine the void in our online feeds, absent "discovery"!), and with it the themes of exploration and adventure that are so central to the current marketing regime of archaeology, what will replace them? I suspect that as the terrible cost of the extractive ideologies of capitalism and colonialism continues to manifest itself in our world, there will be an ever-growing demand for both a deeper understanding of the contemporary condition and the potential histories and political imaginaries encoded in pastness. This is how I understand the reverberation of books like *The Dawn of Everything*, or of our own discussion. Perhaps we are on the threshold of a new archaeological regime of care and healing (hooks 2009).

YH: Your comments, Rafi, bring up an issue which should be central to a discussion such as this one, and to any discussion on the politics of archaeology and of the material past in the present. For some time now, I have been uncomfortable with the compartmentalization of the critical debate in archaeology. It takes place mostly amongst two discrete camps: the "theory crowd" which is currently engaging in debates on ontology, on assemblage thinking, on relationality or the Anthropocene, and the "politics crowd" which is currently dealing with decolonization, whiteness and white supremacy. The two crowds often publish in different fora and go to different meetings, as if the topics are unconnected, while this division also carries implications for teaching. This, of course, is explainable and speaks of the divergent histories in archaeological thinking. It is also related to the political naivety of some of the mainstream archaeological thought, and the philosophical naivety which is often seen in the political discussion in archaeology. In our book, and in previous work, we have tried to bridge this gap, and this set of comments advances this cause further. In several commentaries and most notably in Dodd's, decolonization is also an ontological struggle, a matter of decentering the Anthropos of racialized modernity. Our efforts on decolonization cannot really succeed if they fail to confront not only the colonial conceptual and epistemic regimes but also the colonial bodily and sensorial apparatuses (cf. Hamilakis 2023); the cultural evolutionist thinking was not simply a false narrative on the past and the present, with no empirical grounding but with clear power effects. It was also an anaesthetic regime of panopticism, lacking the sensorially activated affectivity that is central to any relational connection, past and present. In addition, it was a temporal regime of linear progressivism and "development", a mode of thinking that is not unrelated to the current and on-going climate catastrophe.

But to echo your final sentence on care and healing, let's finish on a positive note: there are signs, here and elsewhere, that the landscape of critical archaeological debate is slowly and gradually changing. It is now much more diverse in terms of both practitioners and ideas, it is no longer dominated by a few "big men" of theory (situated in two or three centers in the global and mostly anglophone North), while an activist and openly political archaeology attempts to bridge the ontological, the epistemic and the political terrains, striving towards an affective archaeology of care. We hope to have collectively shown that in this pertinent moment and in this bridging effort, the materially and historiographically rich contexts of Greece and Israel, and the critiques of the foundational narratives of modernity such as Hellenism and Judaism, will need to be prominently present. They offer the potential to dismantle colonial and Eurocentric epistemic and political regimes from within, revealing at the same

time their internal logics. Furthermore the indigenous worlds of the Eastern Mediterranean, issues of potential essentialism and idealization notwithstanding, can teach us much on alternative sensorial and bodily states, on other relational understandings and temporalities.

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