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Adventures are never fun while they're happening (Unknown).

Gone are the binary oppositions dear to the nationalist and imperialist enterprise. Instead we begin to sense that old authority cannot simply be replaced by new authority, but that new alignments made across borders, types, nations, and essences are rapidly coming into view, and it is these new alignments that now provoke and challenge the fundamentally static notion of identity that has been the core of cultural thought during the era of imperialism (Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* 1993: xxiv).

These are truly interesting times to be doing archaeology in Canada. As in many other areas of contemporary life, things are changing very rapidly in some regards while standing virtually still in others, and this is especially the case with the evolving relationship between archaeologists and Aboriginal people. People are listening to each other with greater care and new protocols are being established, yet old concerns and bottlenecks persist. The old rule book has been thrown out. Doing archaeology in the postmodern world is not simply a matter of incorporating new perspectives and partners, for as Said's commentary above indicates about the post-colonial world, entirely new alignments must be created and new relationships defined. This volume offers a glimpse into that new world.

The contributors to this volume are all involved with doing archaeology with, for, or as Indigenous peoples, often on a daily basis. In this, they represent a much larger number of people and organizations whose involvement with what we have termed indigenous archaeology has placed them on what some may consider the leading edge of Canadian archaeology's relationship with First Peoples, or what others would see as situated between the frying pan and the fire. Being on the "leading edge" of anything may carry some status (real or imagined). However, as many of us have discovered, it can also be a very uncomfortable, if not dangerous place to be, and there is the constant danger of falling off, of doing the wrong thing.

In the introduction to this volume, we have explored several dimensions of contemporary archaeological-Aboriginal relations, while the subsequent chapters present a wide variety of examples, approaches, and problems. One theme that permeates this collection is the need for seeking greater relevance in what we do, in recognizing what has meaning and importance for us (and here we speak for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal People). This, along with an increased respect for each other, remains at the center of accomplishing positive change in this arena.

Despite the successes noted here and elsewhere, the adjustments that have taken place so far probably only hint at even more significant changes yet to come. Indeed, the pace of change has accelerated in recent years in response to the changing sociopolitical and economic milieu in which archaeology is being done, to the increasingly strong voice of First Peoples, and to the many internally-generated changes (e.g., the emergence of postprocessualism) that have broadened the discipline of archaeology. In fact, what marks this decade is a suite of problems and tensions that may be best characterized as growing pains. The discomfort that we feel, as with heated debate in academic circles, should be viewed as a healthy sign of the discipline's vigor and of its willingness to debate controversial topics or make difficult decisions. We hope that this optimism is shared by others.

Reburial and repatriation remain and will continue to be sensitive topics, as well they should. Through the dialogue that has ensued on these topics in recent years, fruitful discussions and resolutions have resulted, as has growing mutual respect and understanding. Archaeologists have become more sensitive to the treatment of the dead and to other aspects of world view, while at least some Aboriginal people see that responsible archaeological methods can illuminate the past for the good of Native communities and still be respectful of their most important values. Such

dialogue is now expanding to include other issues of consequence, such as intellectual property rights, the protection and preservation of secret/sacred knowledge, and definitions of significance.

Two topics that have not received as much attention as they deserve provide a pair of alternative endings to this volume. The first concerns what can be termed the dark side of archaeological-Aboriginal relations—a topic that tends not to appear in print or be discussed in public because of its potentially incendiary nature concerning “who did what to whom.” The second topic concerns the future of archaeological-Aboriginal relations, another theme not widely discussed, but in this case it is because we don’t know what it will entail.

The Dark Side

This collection represents mainly the positive aspect of archaeological-Aboriginal relations, a point noted by Bruce Trigger in his Foreword, and certain problems and issues are not extensively discussed. That such topics as reburial or the politics of doing archaeology on Aboriginal land are not emphasized here in no way reflects their lack of importance; it merely means that the contributing authors are concerned with other issues in these particular papers.

The dark side of archaeological-Aboriginal relations is known to many through personal experience or anecdotal accounts of incompetence, conflicting interests, double standards, and unprofessional behavior, among other things. There are stories of archaeologists who have been paid off by developers, and of Natives who have bulldozed burial mounds on their own property. Some of these stories are patently false or exaggerated; others are true. However, they tend not to be spoken of publicly due to the threat of law suits for libel or other potential penalties or retaliations. As with the stories themselves, some of these fears are exaggerated, and some are very real.

Many archaeologists know of colleagues who have given up in frustration after attempting to consult with or work in good faith with particular bands or tribal organizations. Others are dismayed by the persistence of “straw-man” arguments against archaeology, of critiques of the discipline that are based upon incorrect information. For example, archaeologists in British Columbia involved in investigating “cut blocks” as part of the new B.C. Forest Code have been accused by representatives of First Nations organizations of “being in the pocket” of forest companies, yet formal complaints or evidence of such corruption have not appeared.¹

Archaeologists may also find themselves in a position whereby criticizing First Nations policies or actions may result in their dismissal or loss of access to research areas. In situations like this, it may be impossible for reputable *and* respectful archaeologists to continue their work. The result may be a loss of scientific and other knowledge not only to the archaeologists, but more importantly to the Native community. There is also a very real fear among academics of both censorship and revisionism

The danger of revisionism looms large and represents a particularly troublesome topic. Past peoples may be presented, by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal People, as being totally in harmony with each other and their environments, when the reality may be much different. More problematical are issues concerning contemporary Native groups or others interpreting past behavior or thought from a “privileged” perspective. There are many instances, for example, where rock art has been interpreted in a particular way by an elder; the degree to which such explanations may reflect *contemporary* world view is often ignored, while at the same time a static view of the past may be imposed. As another example, Russell Handsman once raised the very real possibility of the remains of a christianized 17th century “Praying Indian” in New England being reburied by a contemporary Native group. While reburial incorporating grave goods and a flexed burial position may reflect the traditional world view of that Aboriginal group, these would be inappropriate given the different world view of the christianized Aboriginal individual. A third example concerns the potential danger of “readback” (Burch 1994: 444), whereby Native consultants² may give anthropologists information on their ancestral way of life that they had acquired, not directly from their elders, but from reading archaeological and anthropological reports.

¹ The fact that the new Code requires that archaeology be done at all, when it wasn’t previously required, has been ignored.

² The more familiar term *informants* is now being used with decreasing frequency. In addition, Madonna Moss (pers. comm. 1996) notes that “readback” is something that archaeologists should be able to recognize in most cases, that it is an interesting phenomenon, and that the contemporary spin it puts on the past can be illuminating.

There may be situations in which archaeologists working with a particular band find themselves in a position to monopolize, control, or otherwise influence access to that territory by other archaeologists. On the other hand, individuals overseeing archaeological resources or projects on behalf of Aboriginal organizations may have no knowledge of archaeology, yet be making decisions that require such knowledge. Likewise, an increasing number of Native organizations is demanding that Aboriginal peoples be involved in any archaeological project in their territory, yet they are not encouraging community members to seek archaeological training.

Archaeologists may have to contend with political maneuvering by Aboriginal peoples, stemming either from the exertion of their political and cultural autonomy, or local politics. In some cases, archaeologists may end up as the "whipping boy" or scapegoat because of their visibility. Local and provincial politics may also have an equally strong influence on matters of archaeology and heritage preservation. First Peoples are being confronted by a bewildering array of bureaucratic rules and regulations, and may also be receiving conflicting advice from outside the reserve or land claims area. Many Aboriginal people are still not comfortable with the idea of archaeology, or aware that they can have a real and positive influence on it, both locally and more widely. They may lack confidence in such matters.

Aboriginal organizations and communities have had to grapple with concepts and practices common to cultural resource management. Concepts such as *site significance*, when measured in "scientific" terms, are sometimes contrary to the cultural significance of these sites. Conversely, archaeologists, heritage managers, and governments have had to learn to respect Aboriginal concepts of cultural significance, often requiring major changes to policies and procedures.

Certainly none of these problems is limited to archaeological-Aboriginal relations by any means, but are found in many other contexts (indeed the problems that archaeologists have had with "Developers" and municipal governments are legion). The point is that archaeology no longer operates in a world that can be characterized as black and white; the various social and political spheres of influence currently operating now require that we at least consider the implications of what seem simple or innocuous decisions. Part of this stems from this rapid period of adjustment, during which time the various parties involved may be oversensitive to any slights.

The bottom line then is that the relationship between archaeology and First Peoples in Canada is much more complex than this single volume can reveal. Aboriginal people need to be more patient with archaeologists and other well-meaning individuals, much as they would with children who are unaware of rules and proper manners. Non-Aboriginal archaeologists, on the other hand, need to recognize the difficulties these people now face; after having been powerless in their own affairs for so long, there are many problems to resolve in becoming self-governing again.

New Perspectives

What is the future of archaeology in the postmodern world? What will a collection of papers on archaeology and First Peoples consist of ten years from now; twenty years? Will the ethnic affiliation of the authors be broader or narrower? What new topics and issues will be covered? Regardless of whatever form it may take, the archaeology of coming decades will be as different from its present form as contemporary archaeology is from the archaeology of earlier this century, and it will be composed of many more voices, concerns, and understandings than it does today.

One area of great potential influence concerns the emerging role of Native women in Canadian archaeology. Today, more Aboriginal people than ever before are pursuing degrees in archaeology and anthropology, receiving field training, or otherwise getting involved in these disciplines. This will certainly have a significant effect on the field of archaeology. Of even greater significance is that fact that of this number of Aboriginal people, the vast majority consists of women.

Archaeology has traditionally been a male domain (Gero and Conkey 1991), although this has gradually been changing in recent years with women achieving new roles and greater status within the discipline, and also as new perspectives are incorporated into the discipline's theoretical framework. One trend that has become evident in educational programs oriented to Indigenous peoples is that women dominate enrollments. In the Secwepemc Education Institute-Simon Fraser University program in Kamloops, British Columbia, women constituted over 87% of the 1995/1996 enrollments (SCES-SFU 1997); likewise, the vast majority of students in that pro-

gram's archaeology program (including the field school) are women. Recent archaeological field schools and science camps in the Northwest Territories have also been dominated by women. Furthermore, the management of Aboriginal cultural institutions in the Northwest Territories have been largely controlled by Aboriginal women.³

The same general trends in enrollment has been noted in Maori education and heritage programs in New Zealand and elsewhere. Regardless of the reason for this skewed pattern, it is expected that Aboriginal women will become more prominent on the future archaeological and heritage preservation landscape both locally and worldwide. The perspectives that they can bring to bear on how we do archaeology and how we interpret the past will be substantial.

The future of archaeology and heritage preservation in Canada will also include a greater emphasis on co-management programs. There are already prominent examples of such programs in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, as a result of recently completed land claims. Still other models can be found elsewhere, particularly in Australia (e.g., Kakadu National Park [Press et al. 1995]; and Uluru [Layton 1989]) and in New Zealand where the indigenous Maori have a strong voice in heritage issues⁴ (e.g., Allen 1996). With land claims currently under serious negotiations in British Columbia, the potential for the development of co-management programs is substantial. Other expected developments will be aimed at maintaining local awareness within a global perspective. Greater attention will be paid to what's going on in other parts of the world, both in terms of the general practice of archaeology and the concerns of Indigenous people worldwide—an expanded view made possible by communication barriers being broken down by the Internet, among other things. Cultural brokerage by archaeologists will probably also be much more common, as should other aspects of applied anthropology, all of which will allow us to achieve greater relevance in our work.

Finally, in looking to the future, we should hope that the efforts being made, by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, will enable us to answer the basic question of "Why do we do archaeology and for whom?" with increasing clarity and conviction.

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³ Joanne Barnaby, the Executive Director of the Dene Cultural Institute was recently honoured as "Northerner of the Year" by *Up Here Magazine*, largely because of her role in heritage preservation. This year the award was given to Elizabeth Mackenzie, a highly respected Dogrib elder, for her devoted work in education and promotion of cultural heritage. The staff (2) of the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute are all women (see Kritsch and Andre, Ch. 8), and the Inuvialuit Social Development Program also have two Inuvialuit women running the organization (I. Kritsch, pers. comm. 1996).

⁴ See the Summer 1995 issue of *Northern Perspectives* 23(2) for a general perspective on Aboriginal rights and land claims in New Zealand and their implications for North America.

