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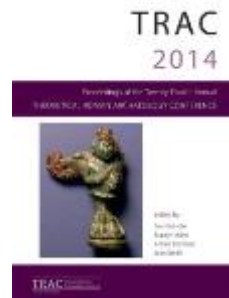
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Place Theory, Genealogy, and the Cultural Biography of Roman Monuments

Darrell J. Rohl

Introduction

This paper draws on developments in humanistic geography, philosophy, and archaeology to develop a long-term place-centered theoretical perspective on monuments of the Roman Empire. The emphasis is on theory-building and an exploration of the implications of applying the proposed perspective, rather than a detailed case study of a particular Roman monument. It is argued that monuments and heritage sites are too frequently viewed as time capsules for which perceived significance derives from their original function and period of construction and primary use: the glory days effectively define the monument and set the parameters of present-day management, public presentation, and research agendas. Sites and monuments are often pigeon-holed, branded, and carefully circumscribed by chronological and thematic parameters that allow for simple and digestible messaging, but this practice establishes and reinforces a reductionist perspective in which only certain periods and functions are seen to really matter. This perspective also artificially elides time, creating the false impression that archaeological research is able to compress centuries or millennia of chronological overburden in order to bring today's experts and interested public into contact with the (supposedly) most significant period(s) in a site's past. For sites and monuments inscribed as World Heritage Sites, recent operational guidelines (UNESCO 2005) have further entrenched this reductionist perspective through the new – and retrospective – requirement for each site to have a formal and comprehensive 'Statement of Outstanding Universal Value' that objectively outlines its (allegedly) intrinsic values and authenticity (for a wide-ranging critique, see Labadi 2013). As a result, we become blind to the long and interesting lives and afterlives of these sites and monuments that, sadly, become bereft of biography in terms of research and public presentation.

This paper merges place theory and genealogy to propose and explore an alternative perspective that allows for the continued celebration of key episodes in a site's life, but that also allows for the explicit recognition that significance is cumulative and changing, and that a wider range of activities, events, memories, and stories augment and enrich traditional period-limited views; such a perspective also provides opportunities for new research, cross-disciplinary and cross-period collaboration, and (hopefully) an expanded pool of potential funding sources. As this paper is primarily concerned with outlining a theoretical perspective that draws on developments outside of archaeology, the bibliography emphasises non-archaeological publications. Further, while the paper targets an audience that is chiefly concerned with Roman archaeology, it is hoped that it will offer stimulation and points for wider debate across disciplines and period/regional specialisations.

Place Theory

Current perspectives on place have been most rigorously developed in the fields of geography and philosophy. Among foundational works are those of the geographers Tuan (1974, 1977) and Relph (1976) and the philosophers Casey (1993, 1996) and Malpas (1999). Other writers have elaborated on the ideas of these theorists, creating a rich body of place-centred works across multiple disciplines (e.g. Agnew 2002, 2005; Auburn and Barnes 2006; Cresswell 1996; Devine-Wright and Lyons 1997; Feld and Basso 1996; Hornstein 2011; Massey 1994; Saar and Palang 2009; Sack 1992, 1997; Seamon 1979). There is not always general agreement, and important differences abound within the works of these various scholars, but several key ideas dominate. Human geographer Cresswell (2004) has provided a succinct and useful summary and introduction to this broad discourse, including an excellent overview of the genealogy of place (Cresswell 2004: 15–51). Drawing on this summary, and some of the individual works included, I will now set out to define place as used within this paper. This primarily references works from the disciplines of geography and philosophy, where place has been most substantially theorised; archaeologists – particularly in North American anthropological archaeology (e.g. papers in the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 11.1–2) – have made some use of these sources, but archaeologists of all periods and regional specialisms will benefit from exposure to these ideas.

Cresswell (2004: 7) simplifies the concept of place and its emerging discourse by offering what he calls ‘the most straightforward and common definition of place – a meaningful location.’ Citing Agnew (2002), Cresswell identifies three key elements of place: *location*, *locale*, and a *sense of place*. Agnew (2002: 16) gives initial definition to each element, as follows:

Location – a ‘node that links the place to both wider networks and the territorial ambit it is embedded in.’

Locale – a ‘setting in which everyday life is most concentrated for a group of people.’

Sense of place – ‘symbolic identification with a place as distinctive and constitutive of a personal identity and a set of personal interests.’

Cresswell (2004: 7–8) further elaborates these elements. In common usage, the term place usually refers to a *location*: typically a fixed spot that can be mapped at a certain set of objective coordinates on the earth’s surface, or in relationship to other fixed objects, e.g. on the table, in the room, etc. ‘Places are not always stationary,’ though, and this is illustrated by the example of a ship, which ‘may become a special kind of place for people who share it on a long voyage, even though its location is constantly changing’ (Cresswell 2004: 7). For *locale*, Cresswell (2004: 7) moves slightly beyond Agnew’s initial definition to emphasise that this ‘means the material setting for social relations.’ ‘Places, then, are material things’ (Cresswell 2004: 7), made up of concrete objects and a tangible materiality of surfaces, structures, geology, vegetation and other possible forms of biological life, etc. Using the example of the Harry Potter novels’ Hogwarts School, Cresswell (2004: 7) notes that ‘even imaginary places [...] have an imaginary materiality of rooms, staircases and tunnels that make the novel work.’ For Agnew’s *sense of place*, Cresswell (2004: 7) re-states this as ‘the subjective and emotional attachment people have to place’ – this gives place a ‘relationship to humans and the human capacity to produce and consume meaning.’

Much of the work on place since the mid-1970s has centred on moving place from a relatively universal concept of fixed location, as exemplified in the then-dominant spatial analysis approach,

and toward a conception that emphasised the roles of human experience and attributing meaning to such locations. In the introduction to the seminal work on contemporary place theory, Tuan (1977: 4) raises two interesting questions: ‘What is a place? What gives a place its identity, its aura?’ Citing a conversation that occurred between the physicists Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg during a joint visit to Denmark’s Kronberg Castle, Tuan highlights the way in which human experience – and the communication of such experience, even in the form of myth and legend – helps to shape the way in which places are perceived. Bohr tells Heisenberg:

Isn’t it strange how this castle changes as soon as one imagines that Hamlet lived here? As scientists we believe that a castle consists only of stones, and admire the way the architect put them together. The stones, the green roof with its patina, the wood carvings in the church, constitute the whole castle. None of this should be changed by the fact that Hamlet lived here, and yet it is changed completely [...] No one can prove that he really lived, let alone that he lived here. But everyone knows the questions Shakespeare had him ask, the human depth he was made to reveal, and so he, too, had to be found a place on earth, here in Kronberg. And once we know that, Kronberg becomes quite a different castle for us. (Tuan 1977: 4; originally published in Heisenberg 1972: 51)

Tuan uses this example to argue for a new type of geographical approach to place, one that moves beyond the purely spatial methodologies of mapping and measuring of space and place to include consideration of the psychological and sensory experience of human engagement with place. Along with his earlier (Tuan 1974) book *Topophilia*, Tuan’s (1977) *Space and Place* is central to many current approaches to place across a variety of disciplines, and served as a focal point for a developing form of humanistic geography.

Experience. For Tuan, the key term is ‘experience.’ Tuan (1977: 199) also distinguishes between ‘space’ and ‘place:’ space is abstract and unknown – ‘lacking significance other than strangeness’ – while place is concrete and meaningful. It is the phenomenon of experience that allows space to become place: ‘what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value’ (Tuan 1977: 6). Later, Tuan (1977: 136) remarks that ‘space is transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning.’ Tuan (1977: 6) also notes that space and place are integral to one another, each requiring the other for definition. While space can be seen as a geometrically bound area that has volume and room for occupancy, places are more localised and – by definition – already inhabited. Space can be *moved through*, while a place is the particular location at which *movement is paused* (Tuan 1977: 6). It is in these pauses that real experience occurs, and place is called into being. This draws on ideas of phenomenology, a philosophical concept that many place theorists (e.g. Casey 1993, 1996; Malpas 1999; Relph 1976; Sack 1997; Seamon 1979; Tuan 1977) draw from the writings of Heidegger (1962) and Merleau-Ponty (1996). As demonstrated in Bohr’s remarks to Heisenberg, quoted above, place can be ‘experienced’ through first-hand emplacement or vicariously via the reception of written or spoken communication, whereby knowledge, ideas and understanding of a place are gained.

Phenomenology. Before moving on, it may be useful to briefly examine this concept of phenomenology, just mentioned. It is also important to emphasise at this point that while phenomenology is an important element in the definition of “place,” it is used here in an entirely separate context from the now-familiar and much-contested adoption of the term in prehistoric landscape archaeology (e.g., Tilley 1994; Bender 1993; Bender *et al.* 1997). While

‘phenomenology’ in recent archaeological parlance often relies on the practice of embodied experience – wherein the researcher enters the landscape and examines his/her modern-day responses to sensory stimuli of vision and, less frequently, sounds – with the researcher serving as a type of analogue for peoples of the past, it frequently emphasises particular pasts without accounting for the multiplicity of pasts that have been experienced in a particular location over time. Just as traditional approaches tend to artificially compress – or reduce the significance of – the time between the present and the period under investigation, this type of phenomenology may perpetuate the reduction of an archaeological landscape’s current value to the significance it derives from the narrow parameters of the distant past; it also tends to over-privilege the role of the present-day archaeological ‘expert’ (for a selection of wide-ranging critiques, see Bintliff 2000; Eve 2012; Fleming 1999, 2005, 2006; Forbes 2008: 18–44; Hamilton 2011: 32–36). A full discussion of the utility of present-day phenomenology to recreate perceptions of past landscapes is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is important to briefly outline the role of phenomenology as a more elementary philosophical concept in the definition and redefinition of ‘place.’

Phenomenology was primarily developed throughout the first half of the twentieth century in the writings of Husserl (1963, 2001), Heidegger (1962, 1982), Merleau-Ponty (1996), and Sartre (1956), though the term itself was first used in 1736 by the theosopher Oetinger (Smith 2011). Important differences abound between these authors, and they each provide separate visions of what phenomenology is and how it works. Husserl (1963: 33) defined it as ‘the science of the essence of consciousness [...] in the first person.’ It is about the way we experience the world, from the perspective of the experiencing subject, and is bound up with *intentionality*, by which is meant ‘the directedness of experience toward things in the world, the property of consciousness that it is a consciousness of or about something,’ which serves to establish meaning (Smith 2011). Heidegger, a former assistant to Husserl, developed his own version of phenomenology, which was more existential, as a part of what he described as the essence of human being: ‘being-in-the-world’ (Heidegger 1962). This is a sharp turn away from the Cartesian perspective of much of Husserl’s thinking. For Heidegger, we are not, as Descartes (1983) argued, merely thinking things that contemplate the world from some detached perspective but are, rather, active beings who engage with other beings and entities through encounters in a shared world.

Heidegger (1962: 58) defined his phenomenology as a method ‘to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.’ Despite the often arcane and inaccessible nature of much of his work, Heidegger remains highly influential, and his ideas have been widely adopted within recent theorisations of place. Also influential in this regard has been Merleau-Ponty (1996), who drew on Husserl and Heidegger, but also on work in experimental psychology to develop a form of phenomenology that emphasised the body and its essential role in human experience; this has led to much of the recent literature on ‘embodied experience,’ some of which also forms part of the extensive literature on place. As may be evident from this short discussion, phenomenology is a complex topic; for the purposes of this paper, we may leave it for now with the following summary:

[Phenomenology] address[es] the meaning things have in our experience, notably, the significance of objects, events, tools, the flow of time, the self, and others, as these things arise and are experienced in our ‘life-world.’ [...] Basically, phenomenology studies the structure of various types of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity[.] (Smith 2011)

Space vs Place. Returning now to the distinction between space and place, Cresswell (2004: 10) notes that the difference between whether areas are perceived as space or place can be relative, citing the example (from Raban 1999) of how colonial explorers in the Pacific Northwest of America had a different sense of what constituted space and place from the perspective held by native Tlingit peoples. The explorers saw the sea as a barren, open, space, while the Tlingit recognised it as a navigable homeland full of named locations and places with mutually understood characters and associations.

Space, then, has been seen in distinction to place as a realm without meaning – as a ‘fact of life’ which, like time, produces the basic coordinates for human life. When humans invest meaning in a portion of space and then become attached to it in some way (naming is one such way) it becomes a place. (Cresswell 2004: 10)

While this distinction between space and place is now well-entrenched within the field of human geography (especially following Tuan 1977), the broader literature across disciplines can sometimes cause confusion, as space and place are sometimes used interchangeably. Importantly, much work on the social ‘production of space’ (e.g. Lefebvre 1991) uses the term ‘space’ in a manner that is very similar to the function of ‘place’ in human geography. From the perspective of Tuan (1977) and those who have followed his form of humanistic geography, however, space cannot be *produced*, but is, rather, *transformed into place* through the agency of individual and communal experiences and memories. Thus, if one is situated within this perspective, it would be preferable to re-state the ‘production of space’ as the ‘production of place,’ but even this may be redundant, as the term place, by itself already presupposes a process of production, a process grounded in phenomenological experience.

Scale. ‘Places exist at different scales’ (Tuan 1977: 149), from an armchair or corner in a room to the entire earth (Tuan 1974: 245, 1977: 149). This matter of scale adds greater tension to the relationship between place and space, and raises important problems for purely spatial analysis approaches. This is further complicated by the fact that individual places may be nested, e.g. a chair is located in a particular room, in a particular flat, on the third floor of a building, in a certain area of the city, etc. The relationship between such nested places – as individual locations of particular meaning and significance – may be one of independence, but is more likely to involve inheritance, whereby two or more are defined – at least in part – by the characteristics and meanings of the other(s). Such inheritance may work in either direction: a chair may hold particular meaning and significance because of its location within a certain room, or the room may derive its essential character from the existence of the chair; of course, it could also be argued that the relationship is bi-directional, with both the chair and room depending on one another for meaning and definition.

Static or Dynamic? If place is pause, as Tuan (1977: 6) notes, it may logically follow that ‘place [...] is essentially a static concept’ (Tuan 1977: 179). In his chapter on ‘Time and Place,’ Tuan (1977: 179–226) says that ‘place is an organized world of meaning [...] and] if we see the world as a process, constantly changing, we should not be able to develop any sense of place’ (Tuan 1977: 179). This view has been challenged by the geographer Pred (1984: 279), who criticised the humanistic geographers’ conception of ‘place as an inert, experienced scene,’ and offered his own formulation of place as ‘what takes place ceaselessly, what contributes to history in a specific context through the creation and utilisation of a physical setting.’ Building on the ideas of Giddens’ (1984) structuration theory – which seeks to understand the relationships between structures and individual agency – Pred’s (1984) argument is that, while the structures

of place (e.g. institutions, ideologies, established routeways, etc.) give meaning to our actions, human agents are responsible for the creation of such structures and, through this agency of action, the structures of place can be overturned, transformed and supplanted by new structures through repetitive practices that may change over time. From this perspective, place cannot be viewed as static but, rather, as a continual process. In this respect, a place is never completed, but is constantly in the process of becoming.

Is it possible, however, to reconcile these contradictory perspectives: can place be both static and dynamic, both pause and action? I think so. If we return to Tuan's original idea of place as a meaningful location constructed by experience, this formula suggests that the meanings we ascribe to a place are based on the *totality* of our experience in and of that location. From this perspective, the place – as a particular combination of location and meanings derived from this totality – is constructed and exists only in the present, for moment-by-moment and experience-by-experience, place gives way to new place. Going back to the previous discussion on phenomenology, whether place exists within our consciousness, following Husserl's (1963, 2001) neo-Cartesian phenomenology, or is a more elemental aspect of our mode of being-in-the-world, as in the existentialist form of phenomenology developed by Heidegger (1962, 1982), it is always perceived and experienced in the present. Thus, place as the comingling of location and experience in the present is static, and provides a type of snapshot image that encapsulates the particularities of that present experience, building on previous iterations.

Time, too, is experienced in the present: while we may have memories of the past and hopes or fears for the future, we can live only in the present. As with place, moment-by-moment and experience-by-experience, each present gives way to new present. This, I argue, is where the dynamic nature of time and place comes in: not in slight or even substantial changes to the nature of a particular place or a particular present, but in the passing of one for another. This may be illustrated by the notion of *nostalgia*, literally meaning an 'aching to return home' (νόστος, 'return home' + ἄλγος, 'pain, grief, sufferings'; Liddell and Scott 1940), that is the emotional longing for the places and experiences of the past, from which we have become dislocated. Malpas (2011) effectively argues for an understanding of nostalgia as relating to both place and time, and reinvests the term with its original meaning of 'suffering and estrangement,' rather than the more common idea of nostalgia as thoughts of 'familiarity and comfort.' While it is possible that the act of remembering, and dwelling on the memories of past places and experiences, may help to soothe the longing for them, the pain of loss can never be fully satisfied because the sought-after places and experiences can never be truly revisited, as they belong to a past-present. With this in mind, we can accept both Tuan's and Pred's notions, as the dynamic 'process of becoming' is reframed as an iterative transition from place-to-place and present-to-present. In this reconciliation of the notions of place as static or dynamic, the dynamic nature of place is not one of biography but, rather, genealogy.

Contestation. Places are often loci of contestation, and may be characterised as areas of inclusion, exclusion and, sometimes, both simultaneously. Cresswell (2004: 25–29) summarises this issue with several insightful examples, including works by a variety of feminist and so-called 'radical' geographers. While many humanistic geographers have regarded the idea of 'home' as the most familiar and ultimate type of place, providing senses of rootedness, security, rest, and nurturing (e.g. Tuan 1991; Seamon 1979), Rose (1993: 55) has called this into question, noting that 'to white feminists who argue that the home was "the central site of the oppression of women," there seemed little reason to celebrate a sense of belonging to the home.' In contrast, the black feminist writer bell hooks (name intentionally uncapitalised at hooks' preference) describes her

childhood home as a place of refuge, care, and a centre of resistance in a segregated world of white oppression (hooks 1990). Beyond these examples, it is important to acknowledge that the very process of definition, while bringing clarity, is essentially a process of exclusion: by specifying what is included in a term's or place's meaning, many things – or, many people, ideas, etc. – are left out. If places are socially produced or constructed, 'these constructions are founded on acts of exclusion' (Cresswell 2004: 26), and from this critical perspective, places are socially bound up with issues such as power, class, gender, and race. Sometimes places can be means of empowerment and normalisation – as in the case of the incorporation of West Hollywood by the gay community in the 1980s (Forest 1995). Other times, social norms and expectations of what/whom is accepted in certain places may be mechanisms of devaluation and oppression, whereby certain people and practices are viewed as transgressors or transgressions of place, and some people may choose to respond to this through various types of subversive action (Cresswell 1996).

Particular locations may also be at the heart of competing place definitions, where two or more individuals or groups may hold contradictory interpretations, claims, and valuations; sometimes these locations may bear multiple names, depending on which place concept is accepted. Some key contemporary examples include Taiwan/Chinese Taipei, Jerusalem/Al-Quds, Falkland Islands/ Islas Malvinas, and important cultural locations such as Stonehenge. Some of these competing places are parts of disputes over territorial control and access to resources, while others are about historical claims, interpretation, and the ability to have a hand in determining daily activities and the future; all are tangled up in issues of power, politics, ideology, and identity.

Summary. To summarise so far, places are more than just sets of coordinates or dots on a map and can be seen as a combination of *location*, *locale*, and *sense of place*. These terms, when unpacked, invest place with important ideas of (sometimes) mobility, materiality, memory, and meaning. Places do not exist *ab aeterno* ('from the beginning of time'), but are created, made, and produced – by individuals, communities, and at the national and global levels. Places depend upon experience, and are thus inhabited spaces where human activity occurs and time is spent. Places can also be seen as paradoxically static and dynamic, as forming and existing only in the present, but also participating in an iterative genealogy in which place gives way to place as present gives way to present. Places also exist at multiple scales and are often nested, from a single chair to the room it is in, to the house, town, region, country, etc., and the experience and meaning of sub-places within a larger enclosing place may differ from one another and for different people; there may also be a bi-directional relationship, whereby nested places depend on one another for definition. Unless an experience of place is shallow and superficial, the meaning and essence of place is often cumulative, with each new activity and experience adding new layers and nuances to the ways in which a place is perceived and valued. Following Foucault's (1972, 1977a, 2002) ideas on the 'archaeology' and genealogy of knowledge, ideas and concepts, this process is even more complex through time, with ideas being dislocated, lost, and re-discovered – or re-excavated – rather than being merely cumulative. Taken altogether, this is the conception of place adopted in this paper.

Genealogy

I have already mentioned genealogy, a theory and methodology developed in the writings of Michel Foucault, whose development of a genealogical approach centred on the investigation and writing of 'history,' but I want to take this concept beyond the examination of written texts

to apply it to broader approaches to place that involve both written accounts and the unwritten engagements people have with place and the ways in which this creates new and multiple meanings.

For Foucault (1977b: 139), ‘genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times.’ Foucauldian genealogy, as a new mode of historical writing, rejects linear concepts of time and the evolution of ideas on a preset trajectory; genealogy is, thus, opposed to teleology and ‘the search for ‘origins’ (Foucault 1977b: 140). Such a search, Foucault argues, is a particularly ‘English tendency’ but Foucault’s approach is substantially different: genealogists do not assume that words retain their initial meaning, that desires continue to point in a single direction, or that ideas maintain an original logic; rather, genealogists recognise that ‘the world of speech and desires has known invasions, struggles, plundering, disguises, [and] ploys’ (Foucault 1977b: 139). To understand history and its deeper complexities, Foucault’s genealogists must look beyond received knowledge to investigate pluralities and contradictions, and to write new histories that include normally excluded, forgotten, and marginal discourses (Best and Kellner 1991: 49–50). The aim is to develop an understanding of the past that is freed from the limited concerns and sanctioned views of established power structures and ‘the tyranny of globalizing discourses,’ or established epistemes (Foucault 1980: 82).

Following Nietzsche (1887), Foucault (1977b) particularly targets the notion of ‘origins.’ He challenges the metaphysical view of essential essences, noting that things do not appear with some ‘primordial truth fully adequate to [their] nature[s]’ but, rather, reveal ‘the secret that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms’ (Foucault 1977b: 142). Foucault (1977b: 143) also attacks lofty views of the solemnity of origins: ‘we tend to think that this is the moment of their greatest perfection, when they emerged dazzling from the hands of a creator or in the shadowless light of a first morning. The origin always precedes the Fall.’ Origins – and the quest for origins – are also closely related to notions of ‘truth,’ which Foucault (1977b: 144) brands an ‘error,’ but one which ‘cannot be refuted because it was hardened into an unalterable form in the long baking process of history.’ Thus, while the term ‘genealogy’ has connotations of origins and descent, viewed by many as a linear development that can be traced from one end to another – as in family genealogies – Foucault subverts the term to directly challenge the supposed ‘truths’ of linearity, origins and descent. Importantly, Foucault does not completely reject the idea of descent but, rather, seeks to problematise the complex ways in which knowledge and ideas develop and spread, are detained and submerged, and sometimes re-emerge from obscurity.

While much of Foucault’s writing is abstruse and – perhaps intentionally – open to conflicting interpretations, particular aspects of his genealogical approach are sometimes clearly communicated, e.g.:

Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things; its duty is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present, having imposed a predetermined form to all its vicissitudes. Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations – or conversely, the complete reversals – the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for

us; it is to discover that truth or being do not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents. (Foucault 1977b: 146)

A full exposition of Foucault's genealogy is beyond the scope of this paper, but what is important here is that genealogy provides an alternative approach to the past, and an alternative to standard modes of reading and writing history. This approach seeks to reinvest the past with the people, events, and ideas that typically lie outside of traditional 'history,' particularly emphasising those aspects that have not necessarily provided a direct contribution to present-day standard interpretations. When combined with the concept of 'place' defined above, genealogy also provides a valuable framework for the interrogation of places and their meanings, particularly in terms of the noted iterative nature of place, but also its fragmentation and non-linear development as former concepts are re-appropriated to forge new – and sometimes competing or contradictory – concepts of place. Here, the 'genealogy of place' is not limited to just the physical development and activities that have taken place in the past, but also the experiences, stories, and various significances that have accumulated (and sometimes disappeared and, perhaps, resurfaced later) to create the wide range of meanings that are associated with a particular location.

Discussion

So far this paper has provided a detailed theoretical breakdown of the definition of 'place,' and a summary description of Foucault's genealogy, along with some thoughts regarding the use of genealogy beyond Foucault's textual emphasis. But how can this be useful in archaeology and, more specifically, what benefits would it have for the investigation and presentation of Roman sites and monuments?

The term 'monument,' I argue, is problematic and its wide use to describe archaeological sites requires challenging: there is a sense in which this term has become synonymous with 'artefact,' a seemingly static object that can be carefully circumscribed by typology and chronology and conceptually/ideologically separated from the present and more recent pasts. When sites are viewed from the *monument* or *artefact* perspective, their primary relevance may be constrained to their period of construction and initial use, and this often becomes the sole focus of archaeological research. Within the wider discipline, however, some practitioners have moved away from a focus on the initial use-life of artefacts to adopt a welcome long-term *biographical* approach to objects (e.g. Gosden and Marshall 1999). Similar biographical approaches to sites and monuments have also been adopted, notably in prehistory (e.g. Bradley 2002) and the early medieval period (e.g. Semple 1998; Williams 1998), but Roman archaeologists have made comparatively little contribution to this field of study (see, however, Hingley 2012 for a recent example). *Monument* and *artefact* both connote something that belongs – or points, as a reminder – to the (sometimes very specific) past; *biography*, also, implies that significance is to be found within the past. For this reason, I remain uneasy with the 'biography of monuments' approach, although it offers perhaps the closest parallel to the perspective I advocate in this paper.

If the biography of monuments approach remains unsatisfactory, what does an archaeological 'genealogy of place' offer? Most importantly (but also, perhaps, controversially?), it shifts the frame of reference from the past to the present. By considering archaeological sites as 'places,' using the definition discussed above, we begin not with a site's chronological point of origin, but with its present-day existence. This requires an explicit recognition that archaeology is not a means of time-travel to some 'authentic' past but, rather, a field of practice in which elements

and material remains of the past are explored and interrogated because of their relevance in the present (Shanks 1992, 2012). An archaeological genealogy of place does not necessarily attempt to reconstruct sites as they existed in the past, nor as they may have been subjectively experienced by past peoples; rather, it focuses on each site as it exists today, as a present-day place that has been physically and ideologically produced, re-produced, and transformed from the time of its original construction until the present (see Rohl 2014 for an example centred on the Antonine Wall in Scotland). This requires investigation of the site's material remains and its history as an object of discourse; using archaeology in the traditional sense, but also as a metaphor, examining the formation processes that have created the site as it exists – physically and cognitively – today, 'excavating' and peeling back the layers of material evidence, written accounts, varied interpretations, and antiquarian and/or archaeological investigations that have been selectively curated to form the basis for its currently accepted significance. This approach is necessarily diachronic and wide-ranging, and does not privilege any one period over others, although it may reveal that particular episodes in the past exert greater influence over the present than others, and may help to expose disparities in the level of knowledge currently possessed for each period due to the biases and agendas of inhabitants, officials, and researchers. Rather than pigeon-hole archaeological sites, monuments, and landscapes into rigidly circumscribed historical periods and functional use categories, such an approach will illuminate aspects that are often overlooked and under-investigated, but which could genealogically contribute to the place as it exists in the present.

Deep narrative approaches to archaeological sites and landscapes are about more than just presenting long-term sequences of material evidence, and share much with the classical and renaissance tradition of 'chorography,' which characterised much antiquarian work before the establishment of modern 'scientific' archaeology as its own discipline (see Rohl 2011, 2012; Shanks 2012; Shanks and Witmore 2010). Folklore can play an important role in such deep narrative approaches, providing key insights into the ways in which people engaged with the site, and revealing memories and meanings that are not visible within the material archaeological record or in authoritative historical documents. Although archaeology and folklore have had a contentious past throughout the twentieth century, they have substantially shared genealogical roots (Gazin-Schwartz and Holtorf 1999; Paphitis 2013). The approach to folklore often taken by archaeologists, however, is to leave such traditions unconsidered, as they are deemed of little or no value to understanding 'the actual past.' This lack of consideration of – or engagement with – folkloric traditions betrays many modern archaeologists' obsession with the identification of the discipline as an 'objective' science. Shanks (1992: 15) calls this 'the sovereignty of science in archaeology, the methodological hegemony that would have of archaeology an empirical science.' Such a perspective, largely held by those archaeologists who identify as 'processual', has been subjected to significant critique by post-processualists (Shanks 1992: 20–25 provides a good summary), yet whether archaeology is a science or part of the humanities remains open to interpretation with strong proponents on either side (see, for example, recent sessions and discussions at the Theoretical Archaeology Group conferences: <http://journal.antiquity.ac.uk/antplus/tag>).

The common rejection of myth, legend and folklore may be justified by rigid adherence to a scientific, facts-based, approach to archaeology. This fundamentally misunderstands, however, the essential purposes and characteristics of such traditions. In many cases, literal interpretations are neither required nor desirable, and folk traditions are not designed to communicate objective facts nor reliable and authentic accounts of the past but, rather, subjective meaning and significance:

When meaning is taken as the most significant aspect of folklore, the question of its authenticity becomes moot: if it has become part of the folk tradition about the past, it is part of that tradition whether or not its origins are in literature or commercial invention. (Gazin-Schwartz and Holtorf 1999: 12)

Archaeologists' noted aversion to the inclusion of folklore also highlights a particular problem in common approaches to archaeological sites, monuments, and artefacts. In modern practice there is a tendency to assign sites or artefacts to carefully circumscribed periods based on generally accepted dating of the most obvious features, time of initial construction, and the period in which these features were primarily used for their initial purpose(s). Thus, the sites of Roman forts are often labeled 'Roman' and are primarily investigated by period-specific (i.e. Roman period) and genre-specific (i.e. Roman Military) experts. This leads to research agendas shaped by the concerns of a limited subset of archaeologists and historians, emphasising particular questions of direct relevance for the assigned period and site type. While this allows for specialised analyses that contribute to a shared discourse, it also serves to pigeon-hole sites into just one or two primary periods, leaving subsequent or intervening periods unconsidered and seemingly irrelevant.

Such is the case with the most recent edition of John Collingwood Bruce's *Handbook to the Roman* [i.e. Hadrian's] *Wall* (Breeze 2006): while the volume remains 'the primary source for those who wish to study the monument in detail' (Hingley 2011), there is virtually nothing about the Wall's later history and, while previous editions had included a variety of folk traditions (e.g. Blair 1921: 133–35; Richmond 1966: 108–10; Daniels 1978: 79–80, 134–35), these have been excised in the new edition. The recent AHRC-funded 'Tales of the Frontier' Project (<http://www.dur.ac.uk/roman.centre/hadrianswall/>), drawing on academic and popular sources from the time of Bede until the present, has helped to fill the gap by exploring the continued significance and reception of Hadrian's Wall (some selected publications from this project include: Hingley 2010a, 2010b; Nesbitt and Tolia-Kelly 2009; Witcher 2010a, 2010b; Witcher *et al.* 2010). In his recent book on Hadrian's Wall, Hingley (2012) compares the approaches of imaginative antiquaries and artists (Hingley 2012: 203–29) to those of scientific archaeologists (Hingley 2012: 231–53). While the scientific approach emphasises certainty and has provided much valuable information about Hadrian's Wall's structural details and chronology, the accumulation of detailed facts has been unable to establish its exact sequence or the reasons behind particular feature locations and changes, and also serves to kill the monument by erecting a rigid barrier between a 'closed' Roman past and the present: 'the monument becomes effectively dead – a product of a past society, highly relevant and accessible in the present but also entirely closed to imaginative interpretation' (Hingley 2012: 253). The imaginative approach represented by some antiquarians and popular writers, on the other hand, 'collapse[s] time into place [...] draw[ing] upon archaeological materials to create "eddies in time" that bring the writer and reader into contact with the Roman population of the Wall' (Hingley 2012: 229).

To return to archaeology and heritage more generally, instead of pigeon-holing sites and monuments into particular periods for which the physical evidence is most abundant, or wherein the particular interests of our specialisations lie, archaeologists should seek to investigate all periods, and to think beyond the detailed analyses of form, structure and original function. This diachronism is an important part of the chorographic place theory approach, building on the premise that:

archaeological sites and artefacts belong to all the times following their building or manufacture. If we are interested in what monuments mean, it is our task as archaeologists to study the complete history of monuments rather than restrict our interest to the motivations that led to their first construction. (Gazin-Schwartz and Holtorf 1999: 15)

Coupled with other historical and archaeological material, folklore – when available and considered appropriately – can provide access to the meanings and significances of monuments and sites for later periods. While it is difficult, or even impossible in some cases, to tie myths, legends and folklore to specific sites via firmly contextualised material evidence, the consideration and analysis of these tales can still qualify as a legitimate part of archaeological practice. This need not imply that the researcher grants any degree of authenticity or factuality to the myths, but merely reflects an acknowledgment of the role such stories have played in the life of the site, monument, landscape, or artefacts under investigation. Consideration of myth, legend, and folklore should, thus, have an important role in the exploration of archaeological landscapes, which ‘incorporate aspects of mythic, past, and current histories concurrently’ (Anshuetz *et al.* 2001: 186). Paphitis (2013) has offered a valuable deep narrative case study using folklore to inform archaeological understanding at Cadbury Castle (also known as South Cadbury hill fort; Somerset, England), concluding that ‘a deeper examination of the investigative history of a [...] site [...] shows that we can say much more about it than its simple “archaeological” narrative, and view it within wider contexts through its folklore, which is just as important as, say, finding out what clay was used for a particular pot’ (Paphitis 2013: 15).

More broadly, specialisation and fragmentation are endemic within the academic world, creating an environment of competing ‘academic tribes’ with overlapping intellectual territories (Becher and Trowler 2001). Within archaeology, our tribes are often defined by a combination of factors that include regional and period specialisations, methodological and theoretical outlook, and academic or professional identity, among others. Periodisation is one of the key mechanisms used to set boundaries between archaeological specialisms, and those who specialise in the Roman period frequently use terms like ‘Pre-Roman’ and ‘Post-Roman’ to refer to dates and materials that fall outside accepted chronological parameters for Roman occupation and/or domination in particular regions. It is unfortunate that – for many within the discipline – these could probably be restated as ‘Pre-Interesting’ and ‘Post-Interesting,’ highlighting that Roman archaeologists are chiefly concerned with the Roman past at the expense of ignoring or side-lining other periods (it is important to note that this type of period-privileging is not unique to Roman archaeologists). There is nothing wrong with holding tightly bound personal or professional interests in any particular period or theme, and generalists benefit greatly from the insights that only very detailed and targeted research by specialists can offer. In an era of austerity, however, funding is increasingly difficult to acquire, for both new archaeological research and for the protection and preservation of archaeological sites. Sadly, not everyone is interested in the past and – perhaps to the horror of those of us within Roman archaeology – even some of those with historical interests find the Romans boring, stuffy, and Pre- or Post-Interesting (Mills 2013: 1–4); taking a broader view of Roman sites/landscapes and their continued – and changing – significance into other periods may help to address this problem.

Reframing sites and monuments as places (i.e. meaningful locations) in the present opens a wide range of interdisciplinary and cross-period collaboration opportunities, while also providing a coherent framework for communicating rich layers of meaning and significance that may

attract wider public interest and more sustainable funding (e.g. a present – rather than narrow past – focus may provide increased opportunities for ‘engagement’ and ‘impact,’ which are increasingly required for many grant funding schemes) for future research and site preservation.

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