ANTIQUITY and the scope of archaeology

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The beginnings of world archaeology

Our field is the world, our range in time a million years or so, our subject the human race.

CRAWFORD 1927: 1

In this short paper I want to make several bold claims for ANTIQUITY, and for the achievement of the man who founded it in 1927, O.G.S. Crawford, and his successor Glyn Daniel, who edited the journal from 1958 to 1986. For, in a world today with what seems like too many periodical publications and with numerous places for discussion, it is possible to overlook that for a whole generation ANTIQUITY was perhaps the only journal in the world which already had a vision of what was later to become world archaeology. Perhaps the full potential of a global view could fully be realized only with the development of radiocarbon dating (itself first brought to wide public attention in the pages of ANTIQUITY in 1949): its systematic application by Grahame Clark, one of Crawford's younger colleagues and a regular contributor from 1931, resulted in the publication in 1961 of *World prehistory, an outline* , dedicated to the memory of Crawford and of V. Gordon Childe. But already, decades earlier, ANTIQUITY was blazing this global trail. To quote the concluding words of Crawford's autobiography *Said and done* (1955: 312):

I find it difficult to dissociate my views about the future of archaeology in general from the future of ANTIQUITY, for I want the one to reflect and influence the other. To some extent ANTIQUITY is already just such an open forum. It has both readers and contributors in every country in the world, and when choosing a reviewer distance is no object. No other archaeological publication has this world-wide basis.

To justify that claim I would like to draw your attention to the very selective TABLE 1 of the date of first publication of various mainly archaeological publications, principally in the English language. I have divided them using the *annus mirabilis* of 1859 (the year of Dar-

Before 1859

1770 *Archaeologia*
1821 *Atti della Pontificia Academia Romana di Archaeologia*
1843 *Archaeologische Zeitung* (later *Jahrbuch der k. Deutschen archäologischen Instituts)*
1844 *Antiquaries Journal*
1851 *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*

After 1859 until 1914

1862 *Archaiologike Ephemeris*
1872 *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (from 1901 to 1994 published as *Man*)
1885 *American Journal of Archaeology*
1888 *American Anthropologist* (from 1882–87 *Transactions of the Anthropological Society of Washington*)
1890 *L'Anthropologie*
1892 *Journal of the Polynesian Society*
1904 *Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Française*
1906 *Anthropos*
1908 *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia*
1914 *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*

From 1918 to 1939

1919 *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
1927 ANTIQUITY
1934 *Iraq*
1935 *American Antiquity*
1935 *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*

After 1945

1946 *Ancient India*
1948 *Archaeology*
1958 *Archaeometry*
1960 *Current Anthropology*
1964 *Archéologia (Paris)*
1967 *Current Archaeology*
1969 *World Archaeology*
1974 *Journal of Field Archaeology*

TABLE 1. *The date of first publication of selected archaeological journals.*

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win's *On the origin of species* and of the establishment of the antiquity of humankind) and utilized also the boundaries offered by the dates of World War I and World War II. In general I have omitted local regional journals, despite their early date and frequently their excellence.

From this list it may indeed be claimed that ANTIQUITY was the first archaeological journal with a world-wide scope. Of course pride of place must go to the very early antiquarian publications, such as those of the Society of Antiquaries of London (i.e. *Archaeologia* and *Antiquaries Journal*), but these were devoted primarily to English antiquarian studies. They continue today to have a mainly English bias and to deal to a significant extent with the surviving material culture of the Middle Ages and later periods. Other journals (such as *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* or *Archaiologike Ephemeris*) were indeed pioneering journals, but devoted mainly to the archaeology of a single country. Certainly there were some early anthropological journals which reflected the world-wide scope and interests of 19th-century anthropology (*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*; *L'Anthropologie*; *American Anthropologist*), but these were never primarily archaeological journals, although they did and still do contain important archaeological contributions.

It might have been argued that *American Journal of Archaeology* would be the first archaeological periodical to have a world-wide coverage, and such was indeed the stated intention of its founders (Renfrew 1980), but it soon developed a preoccupation with the classical and pre-classical archaeology of the Mediterranean lands. Thus it fell to ANTIQUITY, from its foundation year of 1927, to take on that innovatory role.

Since then, of course, it has been joined by several newcomers or even rivals. While *American Antiquity* is mainly (but not exclusively) devoted to the archaeology of the Americas, the coup in 1935 at the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, engineered by Grahame Clark and C.W. Phillips (Crawford 1955: 251), by which the designation 'East Anglia' was dropped and that body became a national society (of which Crawford became President in 1938), produced another journal with an often international outlook, edited by Clark: *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*. But this was still a journal produced by a learned society whose interests were predominantly focused upon a single continent: Europe. It can indeed be argued that ANTIQUITY did not find a true rival with a worldwide coverage until 1948, when the Archaeological Institute of America initiated a new popular journal *Archaeology* (some 63 years after the institution of the *American Journal of Archaeology*). With the arrival of the popular French periodical *Archéologia* in 1964 and then of *World Archaeology* in 1969 there were other runners in the field.

The editorship of Glyn Daniel from 1958 to 1986 maintained this worldwide coverage, and brought a new flavour to the journal, with Glyn's own keen eye for the foibles of humanity and with his delicious wit. The tenure of Christopher Chippindale admirably reinforced the global coverage, with a more pronounced emphasis upon American archaeology and with a special interest in Australia and the Pacific. That coverage has subsequently been well maintained under the editorship of Caroline Malone and Simon Stoddart.

Crawford was concerned to develop not only a worldwide coverage in his new journal. He wanted also to develop a worldwide readership, and he succeeded in doing so. At that time there were few professionals in the field of archaeology, and so the journal was directed towards a non-specialist audience: of course the readers would have to be seriously interested, but the level was that of a serious reader of the broadsheet newspapers of the day, not of the committed specialist. As he later expressed his intention (Crawford 1936b: 386):

> What I had in mind was to found a journal which would raise the general status of archeology, and would popularize its achievements without vulgarizing them — in a word which would take a place equivalent (both in form and content) to that already occupied by the monthlies and quarterlies in regard to public affairs generally. The main outlines of the evolution of human culture are now firmly established, and it was time that this knowledge should become diffused. But it seemed nobody's business to diffuse it. Here was a demand without a supply. I decided to supply it.

There can be no doubt that he succeeded: as Sir Mortimer Wheeler said, in an article written shortly after Crawford's death in 1957 (Wheeler 1958: 4) : 'He was our greatest archaeological publicist; he taught the world about

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scholarship, and scholars about one another'. And he quoted Crawford's own words: 'You know, I am a journalist. What I want is simple clear-minded stuff that any intelligent fool can understand'.

These qualities were celebrated by Jacquetta Hawkes, another great communicator, in 1951 as she reviewed the approaching first quarter-century of ANTIQUITY (Hawkes 1951). They were possessed in ample measure by Crawford's successor as Editor, Glyn Daniel, and indeed by Wheeler himself. Wheeler and Daniel were chosen as 'Television Personality of the Year' in successive years in the 1950s, following the success of the television quiz programme *Animal, Vegetable Mineral?*. Glyn Daniel shared Crawford's aptitude for communicating ideas in an informative yet non-technical way: a process which he sometimes termed '*haute vulgarisation*'. But the process implied for him none of the lofty intellectualism which that term might seem to suggest. For Glyn the pervasive fascination was people, living individuals, and especially archaeologists, and his editorials always had up-to-date news, *personalia*, about the *dramatis personae* of the archaeological world. Crawford and Daniel both had the key gift for a communicator: they were readable, and the nub of their readability was their own intense interest in their subject matter.

The aspirations of ANTIQUITY: early processual approaches

Today ANTIQUITY seems exceptional mainly for its global coverage, as noted below and in the paper by Chippindale, although it must be admitted that neither Crawford himself nor his mentors (including V.G. Childe) was closely interested in the archaeology of the Americas. But Crawford's own statement of his aims, as expressed in the peroration of his autobiography, makes other claims also. On reflection we can see that these too are true, and that many of the features which then seemed novel have now become so routine, so much a part of our thinking, that we no longer notice their novelty, or appreciate how radical they must have seemed in 1927.

As Crawford (1955: 311) put it:

> I wanted first of all to rescue prehistoric archaeology from the dilettantism of object-worshippers, to get at the *people* of the past and their manner of living by an application of scientific methods and modern technique . . . As a geographer I wanted to set prehistoric man in his environment and that led to maps and the distributional method. I remember feeling at the start that we could not begin to understand prehistoric Britain until we had found by means of distribution maps where the inhabitants lived and how far the areas of settlement were controlled by the factors of soil, evolution and climate . . .
>
> All that was needed now was a place to publish the work of those of us who were thinking along the same lines. ANTIQUITY provided this, and it was perhaps the most important item in the programme. For it gave me and others the means of publicizing our discoveries and our view and it gave them the prestige that was needed — that of a journal that was something more than provincial or professional.

Crawford was himself a pioneer in the archaeological use of air-photography: his *Wessex from the Air* was published in 1928. Above all, he was an exponent of field archaeology, that is to say of field survey and the distributional study of archaeological sites. These were interests which developed from his study of geography at university and from his work as the first Archaeology Officer of the Ordnance Survey (the official national cartographic survey of the British Isles). His *Notes on archaeology, for guidance in the field*, published in 1921 for the use of people who were helping the Ordnance Survey voluntarily, formed the basis for his *Archaeology in the field* (1953) which we can recognize today as one of the pioneering works of landscape archaeology.

ANTIQUITY was conceived 'as the organ of the very live and active group of archaeologists then working in England' (Crawford 1955: 175). Among the new friendships which Crawford established in the year 1925 were those with Nowell Myres, Christopher Hawkes and Gordon Childe — 'I had been influenced more by his writings than by any other person' (Crawford 1955: 174). Others whom he knew well were R.G. Collingwood and R.E.M. (later Sir Mortimer) Wheeler. The intellectual climate of the period is perhaps difficult for us to assess today: it was only in the years immediately preceding the foundation of ANTIQUITY that it first became possible to follow a degree course in Archaeology as such at any British university — at Cambridge and at Edinburgh — and there were few takers. So the intellectual preoccupations of the time are probably best assessed from the pages of the early years of ANTIQUITY itself.

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Volume I (1927)	
Raymond Firth	Maori hill forts
Gordon Childe	The Danube thoroughfare and the beginnings of civilisation in Europe
E.A. Hooton	Where did Man originate?
Randall MacIver	The Etruscans
Flight Lt. Maitland	The 'Work of the Old Men' in Arabia
H.A. Sayce	The Aryan problem – fifty years later
E. Cecil Curwen	Prehistoric agriculture in Britain
R.G. Collingwood	Oswald Spengler and the Theory of Historical Cycles
G. Caton Thompson	Explorations in the Neolithic Fayum
H.M. Hilton Simpson	Algerian hill-forts of today
C.E.P. Brooke	The climate of prehistoric Britain
Volume II (1928)	
C. Leonard Woolley	The Royal Tombs at Ur
T. Zammit	Prehistoric cart tracks in Malta
H.R. Hall	The discoveries at Ur and the seniority of Sumerian civilisation
Eric Thompson	The 'Children of the Sun' and Central America
Douglas Newbold	Rock-pictures and archaeology in the Libyan desert
Gerard de Geer	Geochronology
D. Talbot Rice	The monasteries of Mount Athos
J.M. de Navarro	Massilia and early Celtic culture
Volume III (1929)	
Count Bégouen	The magic origin of prehistoric art
Georg Kraft	The origin of the Kelts
Henri Martin	The Solutrean sculptures of Le Roc
O.G.S. Crawford	Durrington Walls
M.C. Burkitt	Rock carvings in the Italian Alps
Christopher Hawkes	The Roman siege at Masada
Ch. Virolleaud	The Syrian town of Katna and the Kingdom of Mitanni
J.H. Hutton	Assam megaliths
Group-Captain L.W.B. Rees VC	The Transjordan desert
G. Caton Thompson	Zimbabwe
Oscar Reuther	The German excavations at Ctesiphon
Guy Brunton	The origins of Egyptian civilisation
Volume IV (1930)	
Sir T. Zammit	The prehistoric remains of the Maltese Islands
H.J. Randall	Population and agriculture in Roman Britain: a reply
R.E. Mortimer Wheeler	Mr. Collingwood and Mr. Randall: a note
E. Cecil Curwen	Prehistoric flint sickles
Sir Flinders Petrie	The linking of Egypt and Palestine
J. Leslie Mitchell	The end of the Maya Old Empire
L.A. Cammiade & M.C Burkitt	Fresh light on the Stone Ages in Southeast India
Oscar Reuther	Recent discoveries in Persia, a review
J. Leslie Mitchell	Yucatan: New Empire tribes and culture waves
F.A. Schaeffer	The French excavations in Syria

TABLE 2. *Early World Archaeology: selected titles from the first four volumes of* ANTIQUITY.

The early years

The wide geographical range and the processual scope of those early years is well indicated by a selection of some of the authors and titles who were publishing in ANTIQUITY at that time (TABLE 2). For although up to half the articles related to topics in British or European archaeology, the other half ranged in their subject matter (and sometimes their authorship) well beyond the British Isles.

The geographical spread of the articles is evident from this listing. However, it takes a

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reading of the papers themselves to judge how far the authors had gone beyond what Crawford had called 'the dilettantism of object-worshippers', and successfully addressed broader themes, some of which dealt with issues of environmental archaeology and the workings of culture process.

However, although it is possible to represent the interests of Crawford and of many of those who wrote for ANTIQUITY in the early years as in some senses what a later generation of archaeologists would call 'processual' — and this is well borne out by Childe's *Man makes himself* published in 1936 and reviewed by Crawford (1936c) in the same year — they were nonetheless still imprisoned by the rigorous requirements of chronology. For until there could be found a source for chronology which was independent of prior assumptions about contacts between cultures and about the alleged working of diffusionist principles, that underlying preoccupation about the need for dating was always present. The point was expressed by Crawford (1936a: 1) with remarkably clear insight already in an editorial in the tenth volume of ANTIQUITY:

> Modern archaeology is primarily concerned with two main problems:— To construct a secure and rigid chronological framework, and to determine the extent and relationship of cultures. The former is itself a prime necessity, but it is also inextricably interwoven with the latter; and as soon as we begin to investigate the precise relation of one culture to another in a separate region, we are at once confronted with the fascinating mysteries of diffusion. Where were certain technical devices invented? How did they spread over the world? These mysteries deserve the closest scrutiny for it is the business of science to dispel such (not to mystify). Furthermore, the same process of diffusion is still active and therefore of current interest.

As remarked at the beginning of this short paper, this Gordian knot was not cut until the moment where the impact of radiocarbon dating offered the possibility of an independent chronological framework and hence of a true world archaeology. Once again, Crawford the journalist as well as Crawford the archaeologist was on the ball and on the spot. He recognized the significance of the discovery, and he ensured that it was announced first in ANTIQUITY. As Sir Mortimer Wheeler (1958: 2) later wrote, shortly after Crawford's death, of an evening together:

> We . . . talked as we walked across Oxford one night in 1949 after an evening in the Senior Common Room of Christ Church. There Lord Cherwell, who had just come back from America, told us for the first time of the new radiocarbon method of dating ancient organic substances — probably the first occasion on which this tremendous discovery was mentioned in this country, at any rate to an archaeologist. I remember how Crawford's eyes lighted up as the conversation proceeded, and how under his breath he whispered to me, 'It's a scoop'. And so it was. It made the next editorial in ANTIQUITY and opened a new era.

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