



A History of Archaeological Thought

By Bruce G. Trigger

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In its original edition, Bruce Trigger's book was the first ever to examine the history of archaeological thought from medieval times to the present in world-wide perspective. Now, in this new edition, he both updates the original work and introduces new archaeological perspectives and concerns. At once stimulating and even-handed, it places the development of archaeological thought and theory throughout within a broad social and intellectual framework. The successive but interacting trends apparent in archaeological thought are defined and the author seeks to determine the extent to which these trends were a reflection of the personal and collective interests of archaeologists as these relate - in the West at least - to the fluctuating fortunes of the middle classes. While subjective influences have been powerful, Professor Trigger argues that the gradual accumulation of archaeological data has exercised a growing constraint on interpretation. In turn, this has increased the objectivity of archaeological research and enhanced its value for understanding the entire span of human history and the human condition in general.

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Review

"A History of Archaeological Thought is humbling and overwhelming in its command of ideas and evidence and the lucidity of its prose. This book would be the largest jewel in the crown of any scholar's career; that Trigger published two vast works within three years simply confirms Trigger's abilities[...]A History should be read by all professionals and budding archaeologists."

-Kenneth M. Ames, Portland State University, Canadian Journal of Archaeology

About the Author

Bruce G. Trigger is James McGill Professor in the Department of Anthropology at McGill University. He received his PhD from Yale University and has carried out archaeological research in Egypt and the Sudan. His interests include the comparative study of early civilizations, the history of archaeology, and archaeological and anthropological theory. He has received various scholarly awards, including the prestigious Prix Léon Gérin from the Quebec government, for his sustained contributions to the social sciences. He is an honorary fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and an honorary member of the Prehistoric Society (UK). His numerous books include the first edition of A History of Archaeological Thought (Cambridge 1989), The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas, Volume 1 (Cambridge 1996), co-edited with Wilcomb E. Washburn, and Understanding Early Civilizations (Cambridge 2003).

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