

## The Last Quarter Century in Canadian Plains Archaeology

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**ABSTRACT.** Over the past 25 years Canadian Plains archaeology has been transformed from a modestly funded, self-disciplined, scholarly enterprise based in provincial museums, archaeological societies, universities and national historic parks, into a government-regulated concern dominated by cultural resource management imperatives, funded largely by developers, and sensitive to Aboriginal interests. This article focuses on change and development in four areas — heritage legislation, Aboriginal involvement, expanded public interpretation, and additions to archaeological knowledge.

**SOMMAIRE.** Au cours des 25 dernières années, l'archéologie des Plaines canadiennes est passée d'une entreprise académique auto-disciplinée et modestement financée au sein des musées provinciaux, des sociétés d'archéologie, des universités et des parcs historiques nationaux, à une industrie réglementée par les gouvernements, dominée par les impératifs de la gestion des ressources culturelles, financée en général par les agences de développement, et attentive aux intérêts des Autochtones. Cet article examine les changements en fonction de quatre thèmes : la législation sur le patrimoine, l'engagement autochtone, l'interprétation du public en général et l'accumulation des connaissances archéologiques.

### **Introduction**

During the past 25 years, many of the objectives for an archaeology of the Canadian Plains, set during the early 1970s by archaeologists, public and private interest groups, bureaucrats and politicians, have been advanced to a significant degree. One thinks, for example, about desires for broader and more systematic exploration; for a more synthetic knowledge of the archaeological past; for better infrastructure to carry out the necessary work; for increased preservation of archaeological remains; for development of more empathetic connections among archaeology, archaeologists and Aboriginal peoples; and for greater public recognition. We have seen substantial progress in all these areas.

In the following pages I will attempt an overview of the last quarter century through a discussion of four themes. The first theme concerns passage and implementation of comprehensive heritage legislation. This had a profound effect on many aspects of Archaeology. In simple terms, ownership and responsibility for archaeological remains, formerly in the hands of landowners, collectors, scholars and collection-holding institutions, was vested in government. As governments began to exercise their new powers, Archaeology became a truly public enterprise affecting many interests beyond the traditional ones. One of the affected groups, Aboriginal peoples, responded by expressing special interest in archaeological objects and by demanding a measure of control over how those

materials are treated. Their involvement is my second theme. Another result of government-imposed direction has been a marked increase in the level of public interpretation. That is my third theme. Finally, there have been notable advances in the discovery, analysis and interpretation of prairie archaeological remains. Consequently, subject development will be my fourth theme.

### **Heritage Legislation**

In regard to heritage legislation, during the 1970s each of the prairie provinces responded to public pressure by passing comprehensive heritage acts. Modelled, at least in principle, on international conventions issued by UNESCO (1956, 1968, 1970, 1972a, 1972b; see also Jones 1978), one of the important results of these acts was that they formally vested ownership of archaeological remains in the provincial Crown. Another result was that they enabled the application of regulations governing the treatment of such remains. Alberta was the first with new legislation in 1973. Manitoba and Saskatchewan followed suit in 1974 and 1975. Later federal efforts at control of archaeological materials, developed most fully at the policy level, have had somewhat parallel effects at the national level (cf. Government of Canada 1988, 1990, 1993, 1999, 2000; Burley 1994 and attached dialogues; see also the federally supported work of Nicholson, Pokotylo and Williamson 1996). Returning to the provinces, through their acts, later amplified by policies, regulations and revised legislation, the legislatures assumed responsibility for preservation, study, interpretation, co-ordinated development and promotion of the "heritage resources" on lands in their domain. Some archaeologists had reservations about putting the fate of their discipline so fully into government hands. Most, however, were imbued with the idea that this change would be a positive thing. Not only would it enhance public awareness of the ancient human occupations of Canada, but it also was expected to prompt increased government support for the study and protection of what actually remains of such occupations. Thus, archaeologists generally found themselves sympathetic to heritage legislation. With its passage they took satisfaction from the fact that archaeological materials had been formally acknowledged as a significant public issue and a government responsibility.

When governments began to implement the new statutes, they set in motion a string of consequences that have had a profound effect on the course of Canadian Plains archaeology. For one thing, they created a new class of archaeological positions — regulators — to oversee control systems involving research permits, centralized archaeological records, and legislatively mandated attention to land-altering developments. By necessity, the regulatory group also assumed responsibility for devising the accommodations necessary to make the legislation effective in a world of government, corporate, individual and group interests. This drew them into numerous consultations regarding matters such as the type and scale of archaeological interventions that would be required in non-archaeological activities, who would pay for these activities, who was competent to discharge the work, the standards to be met, the kinds of access to sites, collections and information that would be allowed, the importance of public education, the contributions that Archaeology could make to cultural tourism, and many other issues. Out of these involvements came numerous implications for archaeological practice, subject development and public image.

One of the outcomes was development of a substantial group of private

archaeological consultants in each province. Consultants now do most of the field-work related to impact assessment and mitigation preceding major land-altering activities. In scale and frequency, this kind of archaeology has come to dominate all others. Moreover, from the beginning it has been a highly controlled form of investigation — by virtue of the regulatory power exercised by government and the financial controls held by developers (cf. Germann and Spurling 1987). Nevertheless, development-driven archaeology has produced huge numbers of new site records and some very interesting explorations. One thinks, for example, of the Oldman Dam project in Alberta where more than 175 sites representing all periods from Early Precontact to Early Twentieth Century were recorded and where more than 50 sites were subjected to detailed investigation (cf. Ives 1991: 6–8; Balcom 1991; Van Dyke *et al.* 1991; Landals 1991; Krozser 1991); or the Alameda/Rafferty Dam project in Saskatchewan which had similar results (cf. Finnigan 1986,1992; Russell 1989; Finnigan *et al.* 1990; Shay *et al.* 1990), or the TransCanada Pipelines project in Manitoba (Kelly 1991; Landals and Fedirchuk 1993; Landals 1994). Many other examples could be cited. There is simply no doubt that during the past quarter century the corpus of archaeological records and collections, now largely under government control, has expanded enormously.

Initially, the regulatory agencies, particularly in Manitoba and Alberta, placed great importance on dissemination of research results to the archaeological community and the public via publication. Indeed, new publication outlets such as Alberta's *Occasional Papers* and *Manuscript Series*, Saskatchewan's *Pastlog* and *Research Council Publications*, or Manitoba's *Preliminary Reports*, *Final Reports*, *Miscellaneous Papers*, *Publications in Archaeology*, and *Planning District Studies*, all blossomed during the mid 1970s. These reports quickly doubled and then redoubled the scholarly literature on the archaeology of these provinces, but the outlets survived only about 15 years and then disappeared. Unfortunately, alternative publications in museums, archaeological societies and universities also declined at about the same time leaving an insufficient number of outlets for a large body of reports, the so-called gray literature. This gray literature continues to grow and to be a major disappointment for its low level of contribution to archaeological knowledge.

Coincident with the decline in scholarly literature has been a marked increase, strongly supported by government, in public interpretation of archaeological information. I will come back to this shortly. Another consequence of heritage legislation is that the interests of many traditional advocates for Archaeology, namely non-professional members of archaeological societies, have been dislocated. The practice of amateur archaeology has become a much more passive affair during this period as regulatory emphasis on professionalism has limited the practical range of amateur activities. Amateur archaeologists, however, are not the only ones who have been forced into a narrower corridor. The unbounded research of professional scholars, although still quite strong at the beginning of this 25-year period, was effectively discouraged in later years when support was shifted to conservation, public education and other issues. This is worrisome, because the health of Archaeology requires sustained research and unconstrained circulation of results. Without them, the intellectual capital and vitality of the discipline can only decline. Fortunately, there are recent signs, especially in some universities and museums, that the pendulum may be swinging back to a position of greater support for this important activity.

One last point I would like to make with respect to heritage legislation is that government agencies have become crucibles for the expression and accommodation of differences between Aboriginal and archaeological objectives. Eventually, most people in the archaeological community will have been drawn into the resolution of these differences.

### **First Nations Involvement**

Over the past 25 years, Aboriginal issues have been one of the foremost public concerns in the country. Few Canadians remain unaware of the 1969 federal government White Paper on Indian Affairs and its repercussions, or the dismal living conditions experienced by some First Nations groups, or the abuse suffered by Aboriginal students in residential schools, or the massive land claims process, or the armed confrontations at Oka and Gustafson Lake, or the many other environmental, educational, cultural, medical and spiritual issues which focus on Native peoples. In recent decades, First Nations activists have added archaeology to this list. By a series of demonstrations, occupations, accusations and boycotts, they have forcefully expressed dissatisfaction with Archaeology, beginning with treatments given ancient Aboriginal remains by archaeologists, museums and other collections-handling institutions.

During the early 1970s, members of the American Indian Movement occupied the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History and the rotunda of the Provincial Legislative Building until the government agreed to remove all Aboriginal skeletal remains from its public exhibits. A few years later the new archaeological regulatory agency in Manitoba was confronted by First Nations protestors during salvage excavation of human remains within the city of Selkirk. After intense consultation and rapid development of new burial investigation procedures, the remains were reburied (Saylor 1978). In 1985 the accidental discovery of a Postcontact burial ground in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, launched a multi-sided confrontation among the province's Indian community, a land developer and the provincial government (Spurling and Walker 1987). In this instance the Saskatchewan archaeological community sided with the district chiefs and withheld their support from archaeological regulators. Under intense media attention, the matter escalated into ministerial offices and law courts. Finally, after more than six months of deliberations, the premier stepped in and announced that he would not ratify any agreement on the burial site until the Native population was satisfied. Ultimately, half the land in question was used for construction of a provincial courthouse and the other half was devoted to a commemorative park in which all the disturbed interments were reburied. These incidents, and several others, crystallized government willingness to recognize First Nations' sensitivities and to accede to their wishes in respect to human remains. Other events widened the field.

In 1988 the "Spirit Sings" exhibition, organized by the Glenbow Museum, became the object of a boycott by the Lubicon Cree of northern Alberta. The ensuing political debate ringed the globe (cf. Harrison 1988a, 1988b). Although initially tied to a land-claim dispute, questions about exhibit content, plus control of artifacts and interpretations, soon entered the scene inciting divisive debate among anthropologists and archaeologists (cf. Trigger 1988; Ames 1988). The boycott finally ended in the fall of 1988 when the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association organized a conference, funded by the

Departments of Communications, Multiculturalism and Secretary of State, entitled "Preserving Our Heritage: A Working Conference Between Museums and First Peoples." Out of this came a task force, which later issued a report promoting principles and recommendations for future partnerships between First Peoples and Canadian museums (Hill and Nicks 1992; Nicks 1992). These included prescriptions for museum responsibilities regarding First Peoples' involvement in museum research, planning, exhibition presentation, and collection management. Also included were guidelines for repatriation of collections, professional and technical training of First Nations people for museum work, training of non-Aboriginal museum professionals in Aboriginal cultural knowledge and so forth. All of this had a direct bearing on the operations of museum archaeologists, and ultimately on all archaeologists involved with Aboriginal archaeology.

Prompted by such events, Canadian Plains agencies and archaeologists began to implement the task force principles and recommendations. The still-evolving situation is a highly complex one and I will only attempt to touch some of the major features here. As a first step, regulatory agencies in the prairie provinces developed working procedures regarding the investigation and handling of unmarked burials. Implementation of these procedures has included a considerable amount of repatriation and reburial of funerary collections, plus direct involvement of First Nations in subsequent burial investigations (cf. Germann 1995).

Archaeologists have also reached out to Aboriginal elders for opportunities to discuss matters of mutual concern and to gain deeper insight into traditional Aboriginal cultures. One example of this occurred in May 1990 when a special joint meeting of the Alberta and Montana archaeological societies was organized around the subject of sacred sites and featured presentations by Native and non-Native speakers (Reeves and Kennedy 1993). Another example was a pair of workshops organized by the Saskatchewan Association of Professional Archaeologists to bring First Nations elders and archaeologists together (Hanna and Gibson 1993; Ramsay 1994; Hanna 1997). About the same time as these meetings were taking place, two prairie people, B.A. Nicholson and E. Yellowhorn, were selected by the Canadian Archaeological Association as co-chairs for a Canada-wide series of consultative committees which eventually produced a "Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples" (Nicholson, Pokotylo and Williamson 1996). This statement outlined a comprehensive set of responsibilities that archaeologists were expected to discharge in respect to the interests and sensitivities of Aboriginal peoples and was aimed at all Canadian archaeologists working with Aboriginal remains.

Exhibition and interpretation is another area in which prairie archaeologists have taken steps to involve Native peoples. Major developments such as Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump Interpretive Centre (cf. Sponholz 1988), Wanuskewin Heritage Park (Walker 1987a, 1987b; Warden et al. 1992), the First Nations Gallery at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (Conaty 1989), and the Syncrude Gallery of Aboriginal Culture at the Provincial Museum of Alberta (Jenkins 1998; Cartmell 1998) have all been created during the past dozen years, in each case with direct involvement of First Nations in planning, construction and programming. Some of these also involved Native people in the administration and operation of the facility.

Training in Archaeology and Museology is another area in which archaeologists have contributed to the involvement of First Nations. Over the years, numerous

archaeological projects have employed Native people as labourers, but in the last decade museums, universities and other organizations have created special programs to foster the education of Aboriginal students in technical and scholarly aspects of the field (Scribe and Nicholson 1994; Syms 1997a; Musser 1997). A fair number of Aboriginal students have graduated from these programs in each of the prairie provinces, several having reached the master's level. At least three of these have accepted archaeological employment with government agencies.

One final area of increased involvement is co-management of cultural resources. Once again, several examples could be cited, but the one I will use is that of Parks Canada. In recent years, Parks Canada has made adjustments to its traditional focus on the commemoration of Euro-Canadian achievements, and is now giving greater emphasis to Aboriginal history. One result is that, over the past half-dozen years, most Parks Canada commemorations in the prairie provinces have been at sites associated with the 1885 Riel Rebellion. Moreover, existing texts and interpretive programs are being reviewed and an agreement has been reached with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan for co-management of Batoche National Historic Site (Fox 1999: 35,41). Since 1994, the Prairie and Northern Region has had an Aboriginal affairs coordinator in Winnipeg to deal with the complexities of land claims, new park developments, and policies concerning resource management within existing parks (Fox 1999: 37). In addition, Parks Canada has hired an Aboriginal person as an archaeological collections manager for its Winnipeg office (Fox 1999: 38).

Thus, as the list of examples mounts, it is evident that prairie archaeologists and archaeological institutions have taken many steps toward the accommodation and encouragement of greater First Nations involvement in the discipline (see Pettipas (1993) and Syms (1997b) for the range of one institution's experience, and Anon (1998) for a recent conference on the subject). There still remains a question about what effect this involvement has had. For most non-Aboriginal archaeologists whom I've consulted, the process is viewed as necessary and desirable. Many would defer a specific evaluation by saying that archaeologists have much to gain, that such matters take a long time to develop, or that relationships do seem to be improving. Indeed, some archaeologists are now comfortable in recording their thoughts about what benefits archaeologists should have a right to expect in such relationships (cf. Trigger 1997; Nicholas and Andrews 1997). On the Aboriginal side, the point has been reached where one First Nations archaeologist thinks that "nineteenth-century attitudes seem to be abating and it is now generally acknowledged that Native concerns are not subordinate to scientific ones" (Yellowhorn 1996: 36). The same archaeologist advances a four-stage historical scheme for Indian involvement in archaeology, claiming that Native activists are now leaving a third or "Reactivist" phase and entering a fourth phase which he labels "Nationalist" (Yellowhorn 1996: 27-28). In any case, between Aboriginal and archaeological efforts, First Nations involvement in Canadian Plains archaeology is now an important aspect of the discipline.

### **Public Archaeology**

My third theme is public interpretation of archaeology, a facet of prairie experience which has expanded considerably during the past 25 years. Newspapers, and, to a lesser extent, electronic media such as radio and television, have long

done an important job by broadcasting news about major archaeological advances as they occurred. This is not an area of expansion since the flow of stories in these media seems to have remained roughly constant over the past 25 years. There have been expansions, however, in other forms of dissemination. By the mid-1970s, governments, museums and archaeological societies were becoming more generous in their support for printed materials aimed at the general public. As a result, large numbers of booklets, leaflets and posters were made and distributed. Yet, by the early 1980s priority had begun to shift toward more expensive forms of interpretation. I have already mentioned several of the major exhibitions and heritage parks created as a means for facilitating public exposure to Aboriginal cultures and their archaeological histories (see also Kooyman 1987). Projects such as these started opening in the 1980s and continued into the 1990s. They are one of the most obvious expansions of public archaeology during the period.

Coincidentally, interpretive programs relating to Euro-Canadian cultures were also expanding to represent a fuller cross-section of Canadian heritage. Part of this diversification was achieved by highlighting previously uninterpreted aspects of existing sites, and part by development of new sites. Almost all of it had an archaeological component (cf. Murray 1981). National Historic Parks was one of the major proponents with significant developments at sites such as Lower Fort Garry, The Forks (of the Red and Assiniboine rivers), Motherwell Homestead, Batoche, Fort Battleford, Fort Walsh, and Bar U Ranch. Similarly, the provinces and municipalities increased their investment in public archaeology with new or refurbished programs at places like Victoria Settlement, Writing-On-Stone, Fort Carlton, St. Victor's Petroglyphs, Wood Mountain NWMP Post, Lockport, and a host of local museums.

During the last two decades, archaeological societies have turned a stronger face to public education with such projects as travelling demonstrations and exhibits, public field schools, cross-country bus tours and, in one case, participation in a cable television series on Archaeology (Anon 1991; Jones 1994a, 1994b; Thomas 1996; Burns and Larcombe 1997). In addition, all prairie societies, including some of their local chapters, are now represented on the Internet. At least two of them have moved beyond the minimal Home Page stage and are supplying information about their programs plus Internet links to other archaeological sites (see also Beaudoin 1997).

As to the most traditional outlets for archaeological information, books and articles, the overall number of new books referring to the prairies seems to have peaked and then declined through the period under consideration. Nevertheless, several popular works aimed at a general readership have appeared in recent years (Helgason 1987; McLeod 1987; Bryan 1991; Epp 1991; Huck and Whiteway 1998). One of these provided the first comprehensive treatment of Precontact archaeology spanning all three provinces (Bryan 1991). To my knowledge, the public impact of such books has not been studied.

One area in which prairie archaeologists have had discouraging results is in their attempts to breach school curricula. In Saskatchewan, during the early 1990s a manuscript prepared under the aegis of the Archaeological Society was proposed to the Saskatchewan Department of Education for use in schools (Epp 1991). The critical analysis and outright rejection it received from departmental bureaucrats was stunning, especially to the author who was, himself, a former school teacher

(Epp 1992). It seemed that for such a book to be acceptable it would have to add things unjustified by archaeological evidence, or remove sections which did have a firm archaeological basis. In Alberta, the Archaeological Survey of Alberta employed Heather Devine as a public education officer for several years. Her task was to coordinate the development and dissemination of instructional and informational materials for the general public and for schools. In the course of her work, Devine did a careful analysis of the Alberta school curriculum and prepared recommendations for the inclusion of Archaeology (Devine 1986, 1990). Even after much lobbying by the Archaeological Survey of Alberta, however, her efforts were frustrated by the Department of Education. In the end she found that the small amount of Archaeology already in the curriculum was to be reduced and limited to discussions of ancient Greek civilization (Devine 1990: 198). I will not go into her analysis of why this happened except to say that it provides valuable insight into the obstacles that must be overcome if Archaeology is ever to reach beyond the personal efforts of a few interested teachers and actually penetrate the curricula of prairie school systems.

In summary, during the past 25 years considerable money and effort has been spent, mainly by governments, in attempting to facilitate public exposure to Archaeology, particularly in venues such as museums and heritage parks. This effort has spanned all the different kinds of Archaeology — precontact, protocontact, fur trade, ethnic, agricultural, industrial and so forth — in much the same way that heritage interpretation, as a whole, has been gradually broadened to better represent Canadian society. Beyond vastly improved public access to archaeological information, one of the results should have been greater public appreciation for the nature and heritage value of archaeology to prairie people. Unfortunately, whether public archaeology programs are actually having this effect is not known. It would certainly be useful to have a public opinion study for the prairie provinces of the type recently conducted by Pokotylo and Guppy (1999) for Greater Vancouver and the lower Fraser River Valley.

### **Subject Development**

At this point I will turn to my final theme which is subject development. A first observation, and one that surprised me as I prepared this paper, is that a very important aspect of the past 25 years has been the amount of archaeological synthesis it produced. Syntheses are now so numerous and varied that they can be divided into a number of types.

Provincial syntheses — covering, for example, the Precontact archaeology of the prairies or adjoining transitional regions — have been prepared for Alberta (Vickers 1986; Ronaghan 1986), Saskatchewan (Dyck 1983), and Manitoba (Buchner 1979; Steinbring 1980; Pettipas 1984; Nicholson 1987a).

Multi-province syntheses — spanning the prairie regions of all three provinces have also appeared (Bryan 1991; Wright 1995, 1999).

There have been period syntheses — giving detailed examinations of the Pre-Clovis and Early periods (Wilson and Burns 1999; Buchner and Pettipas 1990), the Middle Period (Buchner 1980; Forbis 1992) and the Late Period (Reeves 1983 [1970]; Syms 1977; Meyer and Epp 1990; Vickers 1994; Duke 1991; Walde *et al.* 1995).

Complex or phase syntheses — have dealt with entities as such Oxbow (Millar *et al.* 1981), Pelican Lake (Foor 1982) and Avonlea (Davis 1988).



Ethnohistorical and ethnoarchaeological syntheses — have supplied information about peoples of the Postcontact Period, particularly Aboriginal peoples (cf. Bonnicksen and Baldwin 1978; Kaye and Moodie 1978; Hanson 1980; Brassler 1982; Syms 1982; Brink 1986; Magne *et al.* 1987; Nichol森 1987b; Smith 1988; Russell 1988,1991; Epp 1993; Kennedy 1993).

Topical syntheses have provided overviews for subjects such as *geoarchaeology* (Campling 1980; Wilson 1983, 1990; Johnson 1986; Beaudoin 1989, 1993, 1999; Beaudoin *et al.* 1996; Bobrowsky *et al.* 1990; Burns 1995; Low 1995; Wilson and Burns 1999), *radiocarbon dates* (Wilmeth 1978; Vickers 1983; Brumley and Rushworth 1983; Dyck 1983; Beaudoin 1987a, 1987b; Walker 1992; Morlan 1993, 1988, 1999; Morlan *et al.* 2000), *bison hunting* (Arthur 1975; Davis and Wilson 1978; Morgan 1979; Gordon 1979; Verbicky-Todd 1984), *tipi rings* (Quigg and Adams 1978; Quigg 1979; Finnigan 1982; Davis 1983; Wilson 1995), *boulder monuments* (Steinbring and Buchner 1976; Kehoe and Kehoe 1977, 1979; Quigg 1981; Wilson 1981; Brace 1987; Brumley 1988; Vogt 1990; Mirau 1995), *rock art* (Keyser 1977; Jones 1979; Brink 1981; Klassen and Magne 1988; Barry 1991; Fedirchuk and McCullough 1991; Fedirchuk 1992; Brenner 1994), *human burials* (Millar 1978; Syms 1978; Walker 1978, 1984; Saylor 1980; Meiklejohn *et al.* 1994; Finch and Waddell 1996), certain aspects of *Postcontact material culture* (cf. Sussman 1979, 1985; Ross 1980; Jones 1981; Lunn 1981, 1985; Gusset 1984; Morton 1984; Karklins 1985, 1992; Dueck *et al.* 1994), and *histories of archaeology* within the region (Forbis 1977, 1999; Dyck 1980, 1987; Syms 1980; Coutts 1981; Putt 1984; Johnson 1987; Pohorecky 1987; Meyer 1987; Spurling 1987; Jones *et al.* 1988; Pettipas *et al.* 1998).

Finally, we have also had critiques of such particular subfields or approaches to Archaeology as, for example, *historical archaeology* (Pyszczyk 1989), *fur trade archaeology* (Adams 1981; Klimko 1994,1998), *tipi ring studies* (Burley 1990), *resource management versus academic archaeology* (Epp and Spurling 1984), and *medicine wheel astronomy* (Haack 1987).

Altogether, there has been a lot of synthesis. There have also been important developments in each of the archaeological periods, some of the highlights being as follows:

*Pre-Clovis Period:* by now long-standing contenders for this degree of antiquity, the Taber child remains, for example, have been reanalyzed and reassigned to a younger age (Wilson *et al.* 1983; Moffat and Wainwright 1983; Brown *et al.* 1983; Wilson and Burns 1999; see Stalker 1983 and Pohorecky 1988 for opposing views). There have been new searches for evidence of Ice Age human occupation (Magne and Ives 1991), and more discoveries (Chlachula 1994,1996; Chlachula and Le Blanc 1996). Unfortunately, these, too, remain in doubt after critical examination (Wilson and Burns 1999). Consequently, there is still no clear sign of human occupation in the Pre-Clovis Period.

*Early Period:* Clovis points have recently been recovered from conflated multi-component deposits in St. Mary Reservoir (Chandler 2000), and a broad spectrum of archaeological complexes beginning with fluted points is represented in compressed deposits at sites such as Sibbald Creek (Gryba 1983,1985) and EkPu-8 (Ronaghan 1993). Agate Basin has been found in considerable quantity at the Parkhill site in Saskatchewan (Ebell 1980). Cody complex remains have been reinvestigated at the Fletcher site, mainly producing new data on paleoenvironmental conditions (cf. Wilson *et al.* 1991). The Dunn (Ebell 1988) and

McLeod (Joyes 1997) sites have provided large surface collections of Cody-like materials. However, at the Heron-Eden (Linnamae 1990; Corbeil 1995) and Niska sites (Meyer 1985; Meyer and Liboiron 1990) fragments of Cody complex occupation floors have also been found. On the northeastern fringes of the Plains a new archaeological entity, the Caribou Lake complex, has been identified, apparently representing a transition from grasslands bison hunting to a forest adaptation about 8000 radiocarbon years ago (Steinbring and Buchner 1980; Buchner 1981,1984). Overall, our record for the Early Period has improved, but it still remains shadowy. We have yet to uncover a substantial, well-preserved, unmixed occupation for this time period.

It is in the Middle Period that advances in knowledge have probably been greatest. We have identified distinct new complexes belonging to the *Early Middle Period* at places such as the Stampede site (Gryba 1975,1976,1980), the Boss Hill site (Doll 1982), the Anderson site (Quigg 1984), the Hawkwood site (Van Dyke and Stewart 1985), the Gowen sites (Walker 1992), and the Norby site (Zurbug 1991). The old Altithermal cultural hiatus, which was insightfully reconsidered in Reeves' 1973 review, is now being filled with solid evidence of occupation. Meanwhile, the *Late Middle Period*, whose contents were roughed out before the 1970s, has been given much greater substance and detail. There has been considerable work on the Oxbow complex (Dyck 1977, Walker 1981; Amundsen 1986; Nero 1997; Green 1998), and the McKean/Duncan/Hanna series (cf. Brumley 1975; Quigg 1986a; Frey 1997; Mack 1999), some work on Pelican Lake (cf. Duke 1985; Brink and Baldwin 1988, Van Dyke *et al.* 1991; Dyck and Morlan 1995), and there is growing evidence that the Besant series straddles the Middle and Late periods and is more complicated than was previously known (cf. Quigg 1986b; Ramsay 1991; Van Dyke *et al.* 1991; Dyck and Morlan 1995).

In regard to the Late Precontact Period — our knowledge of the Avonlea complex is steadily improving (cf. Brumley 1976; Wilson-Meyer and Carlson 1985; Davis 1988; Dawson and Walker 1988; Dyck and Morlan 1995), the Miniota site being one of the best discoveries to date (Landals 1994, 1995). For later complexes, there has been considerable sampling of various site types (cf. Adams 1977; Walker 1983; Finnigan 1988; Linnamae 1988; Vickers 1989; Brink and Dawe 1989), some development in functional analysis of pottery (Malainey 1995; Malainey *et al.* 1999), and much work on ceramic classifications (cf. Syms 1979; Meyer 1988; Malainey 1991; Walde 1994); but we still have too few sites with large exposures, clear depositional context and secure dating. This places most of the archaeological constructs for this period (such as Old Women's, Moose Jaw, Devil's Lake-Sourisford, Wascana, One Gun, and Mortlach) on an insecure foundation. In contrast, there has been some excellent work on ceramics at the northeastern edges of the Plains and in the western fringes of the Boreal Forest (Tisdale 1978; Meyer 1981, 1998; Meyer and Russell 1987; Lenius and Olinyk 1990; Hanna 1992; Gibson 1998). This promises to be an area of continuing development as important discoveries such as the excellent series of Blackduck components found at The Forks are analyzed and reported. It should also be noted that the Vickers Focus (cf. Nicholson 1990,1994; Nicholson and Hamilton 1999), our sole contender for a Precontact horticultural complex on the Canadian Plains, has received virtually all of its development during the period under review.

As to the Postcontact Period, although some progress is being made on *Indian*

sites of various kinds, campsites are still surprisingly elusive (cf. Milne Brumley 1978; Quigg and Adams 1978; Kelly 1986: 93; Brumley and Dau 1988). There has been new archaeology on the *fur trade* (Hurlburt 1977; Losey *et al.* 1977; Priess 1978, 1997; Priess and Sears 1979; Steer *et al.* 1979; Hamilton 1979, 1986, 1991; Tottle 1981; Klimko 1983, 1987, 1989; Monks 1983; Forsman 1985; McLeod 1991; Klimko and Hodges 1993; Pyszczuk 1997; Kroker 1999), on *Métis-related subjects* (Forsman 1977; Donahue *et al.* 1978; Grainger and Ross 1980; Burley 1980; Lunn *et al.* 1980; Brandon 1981; McLeod 1982, 1983; Lee 1983; Proch 1986; Ebell 1987; Doll *et al.* 1988; Burley *et al.* 1992), on the *RCMP* (Adams *et al.* 1977; Campbell 1977; Cumbaa 1977; Murray and Sciscenti 1977; Forsman 1981; Fifik 1986a, 1986b; Seyers 1986; Heitzmann 1990; Klimko *et al.* 1993), the *whiskey trade* (Wells *et al.* 1984; Kennedy 1987, 1991, 1997), mission sites (McLeod and Hart 1986; Kennedy 1986) and *Rebellion sites* (Minni 1986; also references to Batoche under Métis-related subjects). There has been study of *agriculture and ranching* (Adams 1978; Adams *et al.* 1978; Heitzmann 1980; Badertscher 1984; McLeod and Seyers 1988), scattered work on *ethnic groups* such as Ukrainians (Pyszczuk 1985, 1987), Doukhobors (Pohorecky 1993; Kozakavich 1998) and Mennonites (Priess 1998), and occasional ventures into *urban and industrial archaeology* at field hospitals, cemeteries, brickyards, sawmills, and coal mines (McIntyre 1978; Forsman 1980; Finnigan 1981; Klimko 1987, 1988; Kennedy 1990, 1995; Buhr 1997, 1999). In short, the archaeology of the Postcontact Period has become much more complex and interesting in the past 25 years. Moreover, the gap between the Precontact and Postcontact periods has narrowed and may eventually disappear, allowing a continuous panorama of the archaeological past. A major synthesis of the Postcontact archaeologies is needed to facilitate this process.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the past quarter century has been a time when field archaeologists have adjusted to tight regulation and land developers have become Archaeology's principal financiers. It has also been a time when the focus of field activities has shifted from amateur societies, universities and museums to regulatory agencies and consulting companies. Direct challenges by Aboriginal activists have been met with substantial efforts at accommodation. There have been major accomplishments in public interpretation, but archaeologists have been largely unsuccessful in influencing school curricula. As to subject development, large numbers of new site records have been produced, together with a growing amount of gray literature. Academic studies have tended to focus on synthesis, relying mainly, but not exclusively, on pre-1980s data. Notable progress has been made in some aspects of the Middle and Late periods, while Postcontact Period archaeology has ramified far beyond traditional focus on fur trade and military sites to encompass a much broader cross-section of historical experience. In the end, Canadian Plains archaeology has survived in all its major facets, producing a marvellous array of new information. The fact that so much has been learned and so many theoretical and ethical adjustments have been made means that disciplinary objectives are now in need of review.

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