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| Session ID | 8 |
| Session Title | The politics of things, agencies, and ontologies: finding common ground |
| Start Time | Wed Dec 18 14:00:00 |
| Room | 826 |

Theoretical debate in archaeology might not be as polarised today as in the 1980s, but it still grapples with absolutely fundamental questions. Among the foremost trends in the current century so far are the emergence of new materialisms and approaches that ask ontological questions. These seek to challenge much of the conceptual and terminological framework employed in archaeology hitherto. As we approach 2020, though, there are signs of a push-back against these developments, and a number of critiques of different strands of these theories (e.g. symmetrical archaeology, entanglement theory) are beginning to emerge. One critical issue has to do with the ethical and political implications of different positions on objects, agents and ontologies. For, while there is considerable variety in the moral and ethical interpretations attached to different perspectives on the being of humans, animals and things, archaeologists on both sides in these exchanges actually tend to have much in common as progressive scholars with similar values and goals. In this round-table discussion, we seek to cut through some of the theoretical debate to understand better the basis for this common ground, and to find a positive unity of purpose for practical action that might make a difference in the world we inhabit. We intend to structure the discussion around four key questions:

1. How do politics and ethics intersect with ontology?

2. What have different archaeological approaches to objects achieved?

3. Is anthropocentrism inevitable, and what are its limitations?

4. How can we work more collaboratively to make future debate more constructive?

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| 14:00 | Oliver Harris, University of Leicester; Andy Gardner, UCL; Eva Mol, UCL; Alice Samson, University of Leicester; Artur Ribeiro, University of Kiel; Israel Hinojosa Baliño, Durham University; Helia Marçal, Independent Researcher / Tate, London; Rhys Morgan, Southampton University | Panel | Theoretical debate in archaeology might not be as polarised today as in the 1980s, but it still grapples with absolutely fundamental questions. Among the foremost trends in the current century so far are the emergence of new materialisms and approaches that ask ontological questions. These seek to challenge much of the conceptual and terminological framework employed in archaeology hitherto. As we approach 2020, though, there are signs of a push-back against these developments, and a number of critiques of different strands of these theories (e.g. symmetrical archaeology, entanglement theory) are beginning to emerge. One critical issue has to do with the ethical and political implications of different positions on objects, agents and ontologies. For, while there is considerable variety in the moral and ethical interpretations attached to different perspectives on the being of humans, animals and things, archaeologists on both sides in these exchanges actually tend to have much in common as progressive scholars with similar values and goals. In this round-table discussion, we seek to cut through some of the theoretical debate to understand better the basis for this common ground, and to find a positive unity of purpose for practical action that might make a difference in the world we inhabit. We intend to structure the discussion around four key questions:<br><br>1. How do politics and ethics intersect with ontology?<br><br>2. What have different archaeological approaches to objects achieved?<br><br>3. Is anthropocentrism inevitable, and what are its limitations?<br><br>4. How can we work more collaboratively to make future debate more constructive? |

| 15:15 | **BREAK** | **BREAK** | **BREAK** |
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| 15:45 | Oliver Harris, University of Leicester; Andy Gardner, UCL; Eva Mol, UCL; Alice Samson, University of Leicester; Artur Ribeiro, University of Kiel; Israel Hinojosa Baliño, Durham University; Helia Marçal, Independent Researcher / Tate, London; Rhys Morgan, Southampton University | ...Continued | ...Continued |
| 17:30 | **END** | **END** | **END** |