
Three agendas that linked prehistory, archaeology, and technology: A. H. L. Pitt-Rivers (1827-1900), A. Leroi-Gourhan (1911-1986) and F. Sigaut (1940-2012)

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Résumé

There are numerous bridging links between technology and archaeology. I would like to illustrate some of them by referring to three major figures in the discipline. The ambition of Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers (1827-1900) was to chronicle the intellectual and technological advances of humanity based on the forms of objects that were created. Being an archaeologist, he understood very early on that the relative position of artefacts in relation to each other could be tied to the chronology of successive levels of site occupations. He therefore contributed to the development of stratigraphic methods. André Leroi-Gourhan (1911-1986) created a general classification of technology before becoming interested in prehistory where he advocated an ethnographic approach for interpretations. He therefore revamped archaeological excavation methods and the interpretation of remains in the ground. François Sigaut (1940-2012) was both a historian of technology and an anthropologist who studied technology. He extolled a *rapprochement* between technologists and archaeologists in order to better comprehend the relation between people and tools, and he proposed a new theory about the origin of human tools. These men represent three different eras and three different ways of approaching the evolution of humans and their technologies.

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