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'Newgrange, Heritage and the Irish Nation: two moments of transformation' (First draft)

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Chapter X

Newgrange, Heritage and the Irish Nation: Two Moments of Transformation

David Harvey

Introduction: cultures of heritage and the Irish nation

Recent years have witnessed a significant increase in both popular and academic interest into heritage matters – a trend that has been mirrored in Ireland by increasing awareness of how heritage practices and meanings are related to issues of identity and tourism (Graham et al, 2000; Brett, 1993; Johnson 1996, 1999; 2000; Graham, 1996; McManus, 1997). A distinct strand of this work has focussed on the iconographic meaning, portrayal and uses of monuments and memorials in Ireland (Johnson, 1994, 1995; Whelan, 2001, 2002, 2003). However, while some archaeologists have made a general link between the presentation of 'ancient monuments' with a distinctly nationalist agenda (Cooney, 1994, 1996; McCarthy, 2002), there has been much less interest in the changing meaning of 'ancient heritage' in general, and in the process of their reification into 'national' monuments in particular. In addition, a great deal of the heritage literature, particularly that of a popular nature, continues to portray heritage as an unchanging physical attribute that has only recently been recognised, implying that any heritage practices and uses are recent developments (Harvey, 2001, pp. 321-327). This chapter seeks to instil a sense of temporal depth into the presentation of heritage by charting the biography of the changing heritage experience of the ancient monument of Newgrange (County Meath), and its relationship to the construction of the Irish nation over the last two centuries.

Rather than being a physical object, heritage is a historically contingent cultural process, and is an instrument of cultural power that involves the mobilization of the past for present circumstances. Despite an incessant framing within an idea (or ideal) of the past, heritage can only be understood within the context of the present – heritage value only has significance in the here and now, and therefore, reflects our present society as well as our desires for the future. In addition, this present-centred context that heritage possesses holds true, whatever the particular time frame of the 'present' that is under review (Harvey, 2001). Heritage interpretations of early nineteenth century Ireland, for instance, have meaning within, and reflect the particular academic, societal, political and cultural context that existed at the time. Through examining the interpretation and presentation of the important archaeological site of Newgrange during two specific moments of the site's life history, this chapter explores how a specific construction of ancient heritage came to be associated with the status of the Irish nation.[1]

Ancient monuments, by definition, comprise a set of structures for which the original meaning is not (and, indeed, can never be) known.[2] This allows for endless re-interpretation by later societies. Ancient monuments, therefore, have literally been invented and re-invented by many people over successive generations, with each site open to a multiplicity of readings, which often compete for legitimacy and dominance (Harvey, 2003, see also Bender, 1998). One finds that several stories about the past of any particular site have been related and received over a very long period of time, requiring us to interpret their meaning with respect to the context of their production and consumption (Kurtz, 2002, pp. 45-7). It is with this sentiment that Howard (2001) has put forward a notion of heritage meaning being translated through a cycle, with the meaning of ancient monuments being produced and consumed within the socio-cultural and personal context of each individual that interacts with it (see figure 1). This suggests that there are several Newgranges, with the physical site – basically a group of stones and earthworks – being discovered and inscribed with meaning again and again and again. Newgrange, therefore, is not a passive store of memory. Rather, its value is determined by the meaning that each successive reader places on it. Knowledge about Newgrange in this sense, is always manufactured, serving, reflecting and driving contemporary interests in whatever period. The idea that the meaning of Newgrange is neither stable nor singular, suggests that certain meanings and knowledge constructions reach and maintain a situation of dominance, or at least hegemonic acceptance, by certain sections of society. We need to examine the context of how this knowledge is produced, consumed and competed over. In other words, we need to know how and why we ended up knowing what we ended up knowing!

FIGURE 1 NEAR HERE

With respect to Newgrange, two episodes within its life-history of knowledge production and interpretation would seem to stand out with respect to its association with a sense of Irishness. 1833 saw the publication of George Petrie's article on the site (Petrie, 1833). This was the first popular publication to hammer home the notion that Newgrange was built, not by Phoenicians, Egyptians or even Danish mariners, but was built by Irish people, and reflected a previous period of insular achievement in Ireland's history.[3] Petrie's paper established the ancient site of Newgrange in the popular imagination as representing Ireland's past greatness, and contributed to an evolving sense of national identity. This chapter charts how Petrie's intended meanings of Newgrange came to be translated and read within the emerging context of a more overtly separatist Irish nationalist agenda in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries – in other words, how Petrie's 'prospective memories' of Newgrange came to be the 'retrospective memories' of Newgrange held by later Nationalists such as MacSweeney.[4] This analysis of how heritage meaning is produced and consumed in association with an evolving concept of how the Irish nation is imagined, allows one to explore the successive meanings of Newgrange during the last two centuries. Most recently, the opening of a multi-million pound heritage centre at the site in ~~1991~~ THIS SHOULD BE 1997!! has begun a new chapter in Newgrange's heritage biography, the meaning of which one can, as yet, only speculate.

Newgrange and the Irish Cultural Nation, 1833

Recently, academics such as Cooney (1994, 1996), Cussack (2001) and McCarthy (2002) have argued that ancient sites in Ireland are utilized today in order to invoke ideas of a distinctly Irish sense of rurality, of a continuous and stable Celtic and Gaelic past, and are used unproblematically to express ancestral connections. It is the contention of this chapter that this relationship has a history that needs to be explored, and that Petrie's (1833) publication of his essay on Newgrange, forms one of the cornerstones of its development. Of course, this is not to say that Newgrange is entirely unique in its role in the evolution of the relationship between nationalist identity and ancient monuments.[5] However, in terms of how representative the site is, Newgrange was recognized by contemporaries as 'special' – placed on a pedestal, as being somehow representative of wider communal groupings, and in this sense, should be seen as 'untypical' by dint of its very claim to be representative. This 'non-typicality' however, should be placed in the context of how it was perceived by contemporary archaeologists. Although Newgrange can be seen to be 'untypical', it was seen to be not just representative, but emblematic, and holding a key status when trying to untangle the nature of previous societies. Archaeologically-speaking therefore, Newgrange is seen to be very important in the attempts that have been made over the last few centuries to interpret the nature of what we now term the Neolithic (c. 4,000-2000 BC). This paper, however, is not interested in the archaeology of the site *per se*, but in the way that the 'routes of interpretation' at the site since the early nineteenth century inter-twined with the much wider course of emerging identity politics in general, and with the construction of the nation in particular (Harvey, 2003).

Petrie (1833, p 306) implies a very real sense of competition over the meaning of Newgrange in his denouncement of previous interpretations of the site as "puerile, and scarcely deserving of serious notice", before going on to describe Newgrange in glowing terms as 'the Pyramid of Ireland', built by native inhabitants and reflecting a native civilization of high standing. For Petrie, therefore, it was a matter of the nation's honour that Newgrange should be seen as indisputable evidence of a great and glorious 'Golden Age' of an Irish 'deep past'.[6] In this sense, Newgrange can be viewed as a badge of legitimacy and honour for an emergent Irish nation, and Petrie's work, therefore, can perhaps be seen as an excellent and early example of the sort of 'nationalist archaeology' that many writers have outlined (Trigger, 1984; Tierney, 1996).[7] Crucially, however, one needs to uncover and explore the 'sort' of nation Petrie had in mind in his 'nationalist' interpretation of Newgrange.

In the early twentieth century, MacSweeney (1913) wrote about George Petrie as a hero of Irish nationalism, and placed him very much within an intellectual lineage of Irish Republicanism and separatism (Crooke, 2000, 2001, p. 58). Put simply, he was a forerunner of the Irish separatist politics of the first decades of the twentieth century. This 'received interpretation', or 'retrospective memory' of Petrie's Newgrange as a totem for the Irish nation as it emerged during the early decades of the twentieth century, however, requires a large dose of hindsight in order to make sense. Born in 1789, Petrie came from a 'respectable' middle class Protestant and Unionist family, and often railed against Republicanism and separatist politics in his writings. In order to understand fully Petrie's intended heritage interpretation of Newgrange – in other words, the 'prospective memories' of Newgrange, we

have to examine George Petrie's wider intellectual context, and look at some of his other work of the period.

Along with many other archaeologists of his era, Petrie's intellectual tradition should be seen to reflect a movement away from seeking the supposed 'truth' in the Bible and Classical scholarship, and instead as a tradition in which interpretations were based upon contemporary scientific measurement and examination (Crooke, 2001, p. 59). In order to make sense of and interpret these new scientific observations, Petrie also followed many other archaeologists working at this period, by using the framework of the nation. Importantly, therefore, rather than constructing an ardently 'nationalist' archaeology with an overt political agenda of separatism, George Petrie's academic endeavour was informing an Irish imagined community through utilizing the academic security that ideas of the nation offered. One can uncover and explore the sort of nation that Petrie was trying to promote in his interpretation of Newgrange through his editorial writings in both the *Dublin Penny Journal* and the *Irish Penny Journal.*

The *Dublin Penny Journal* was founded by the Reverend Caesar Otway in 1832 (Lee, 2000, pp. v-vi). A graduate of Trinity College Dublin, Otway was founder/editor of the *Christian Examiner* magazine from 1825-1832 (Hayley, 1987). Hayley (1987, p. 32) describes Otway as both watchful against 'Romish superstitions' and yet at the same time, a leading light in "the early glimmerings of what was to be a concerted and conscious Irish literary movement". These 'glimmerings' are brought to the fore with the establishment of the *Dublin Penny Journal*, and the associated assemblage of regular contributors that, as well as Petrie, also included John O'Donovan (Gaelicist scholar), William Carleton (writer of Irish rural literature), Eugene O'Curry (later Professor of Irish history at the new Catholic University in Maynooth) and the poet, James Clarence Mangan. George Petrie took over the editorship of the *Dublin Penny Journal* for a while and later founded the *Irish Penny Journal* in 1840-41 (Lee, 2000). With circulation figures measuring up to 50,000 copies per week, these penny journals should be considered as very important means through which information and constructed knowledge about Ireland's heritage was presented to the population of Ireland, even down to fairly low social classes (Lee, 2000).

The need to reach out to the 'humbler classes' within these journals is conspicuous, as is the solidly 'national' framework within which the journals are situated. Put simply, Petrie used the penny journals to advance scholarship on all things that he considered were of exclusively Irish national interest. From items on population change in provincial Irish towns and corn production in Irish counties, to historical descriptions of Irish archaeological sites, and from publishing translated Gaelic manuscripts, to items on seaweed around Ireland's coast, these penny journals should be seen as key vehicles through which the Irish nation was imagined.

Comments in specific articles, as well as editorial notes, were very forthright in their purpose, firstly to dismiss previous interpretations of Irish cultural backwardness, and secondly to expound on a sense of scientifically-supported authenticity that was to be found in Gaelic Ireland, which was completely distinct from the contamination of British (and especially English) civilization. The exposition of ancient monuments formed an important and repeated strand of this message, with Petrie (1832, p. 84) noting that:

> If a judicious selection of the antique monuments and other remains found in Ireland, were carefully drawn by some competent artist, and published, our claims to an early civilization would be instantly conceded by the unprejudiced and learned (Petrie, 1832, p. 84)

This faith in the ancient monuments of Ireland being seen as totems of national culture, however, was not founded upon fable and legend, but upon a growth in contemporary archaeological science. Petrie sets out his stall very clearly in terms of how his work differs from previous descriptions of Irish culture:

> The early civilization of Ireland has been a favourite theme with the Irish writers of Milesian origin for nearly two centuries, while all claims to any removal from utter barbarism, previous to the arrival of the English, have generally been denied with equal warmth by Anglo-Irish and other writers. Prejudices, springing chiefly from political feelings have equally blinded both sides, and an able and impartial work on the ancient state of Ireland is still a desideratum (Petrie, 1832, p. 83).

In other words, Petrie sees his work as rehabilitating an Irish cultural nation, against both those who see everything in Ireland before the Anglo-Norman conquest as barbarous, and also against the so-called Milesian Romantic writers who weave their 'histories' from legend and fable – who Petrie describes as 'visionary etymologists, monkish chroniclers and ignorant bards' (Petrie, 1832, p. 84). For Petrie, it is the contemporary scientific analysis of the island's ancient past, through utilization of the fashionable framework of the nation that holds the key to what is actually a very broad and inclusive sense of an Irish cultural nation. Far from being consciously embroiled in Irish political affairs, whether

unionist or separatist in nature, George Petrie saw his job as leading his readers towards an enlarged and non-sectarian concept of the nation:

> To Our Readers: The want of a cheap literary publication for the great body of the people of this country, suited to their tastes and habits, combining instruction with amusement, avoiding the exciting and profitless discussion of political and polemical questions, and placed within the reach of their humble means, has long been a matter of regret to those reflecting and benevolent minds who are anxious for the advancement and civilization of Ireland (Petrie, 1840, p. 8).

Far from being the conscious fount of later separatist and Republican intellectual endeavour that MacSweeney makes Petrie out as a generation later, George Petrie instead, seems to be attempting to create a strand of Irish national consciousness akin to that which Officer and Walker (2000) see as a multifaceted cultural nation that was only later appropriated and homogenized into a separatist nationalist story.

Petrie's last editorial of the *Irish Penny Journal* in 1841 noted:

> The pleasing conviction that the volume now brought to a termination will leave in the literature of Ireland as one almost exclusively Irish, and possessing…a spirit through its pages wholly national, and untinctured by the slightest admixture of prejudices, either political or sectarian (Petrie, 1841, p. 416).

This quote shows Petrie's self-proclaimed 'duty' to bring about a more deeply felt and structured imagining of an Irish cultural nation. In many senses, one can say that he engineered this through the construction of prospective memories of ancient sites such as Newgrange, though this process of 'engineering' must be understood within a wider cultural and intellectual context. This process of discovery and interpretation of Newgrange by Petrie in 1833 can be seen as part of a specific and nationally bound circuit of the heritage cycle (see figure 2). Having recognised the site as being a significant artefact of 'cultural heritage', Petrie makes an inventory and designates it as being representative of the *Irish* nation. Importantly, he presents the site to a wider public through the pages of the *Dublin Penny Journal.* These pages, and the interpretations within them are then consumed. This process of consumption, however, is neither stable nor necessarily what Petrie intended. Over time, as the wider political and social context changes, so the meaning of the cultural capital that is imbued by the heritage of Newgrange also changes.

FIGURE 2 NEAR HERE:

Over the long-term, the consumption of Petrie's Newgrange took on the form, not of the broadly based and non-sectarian guise of the cultural nation, but a separatist and exclusive sense of Irish nationalism. Petrie's idea of Newgrange representing a broad cultural nation of an expansive and inclusive sense of Irishness is transformed into a more narrow, exclusive and separatist version of Newgrange – the sort of Newgrange that Cooney (1994, 1996) invokes when he claims that Irish archaeological monuments are used unproblematically to represent a continuous, homogenous, Catholic, rural and Gaelic Golden Age. Petrie's version of Newgrange, therefore, becomes lost – or at least is submerged by a stronger and more widely circulated version of Newgrange. Writers such as MacSweeney (1913) present the meaning of the site within this new cultural context, as Petrie's 'prospective memories' of Newgrange are transformed into MacSweeney's 'retrospective memories' of Newgrange.

Brú na Bóinne and the Irish cultural nation, 1997

In 1927, RAS Macalister said in his presidential address to the Royal Irish Academy, that "almost all roads in the study of this [Neolithic] period of our country's history lead, sooner or later, to New Grange" (Macalister, 1927, 253). Alongside Tara, therefore, we see Newgrange being raised up on to a pedestal as being 'special' – emblematic of the nation. It was seen to be representative, and it was seen to hold a key status when trying to untangle the nature of previous societies. This period saw a high water mark of Irish archaeology being used to invoke a sense of uniform Gaelic Irishness of the sort that Cooney (1994, 1996) has commented on, and it also saw information about Newgrange and other sites being broadcast and circulated ever more widely and to a popular audience. For instance, in a newspaper article in the *Irish Press* (1938), Dr. George Little proceeds in a dramatic fashion:

> Brugh na Boinne …is a place of the dead. Here, while snipe and curlew still cried in the Tiber-side marshes and, beyond the Seven Hills, Etruscan orators asserted the immortality of their race nor

dreamed of Rome, here our patient forebears reared to their dead a monument that was a temple (Little, 3rd September 1938).

In what can only be described as a fairly petty piece of patriotic competition, Little goes on to describe Newgrange as "a Cathedral to Stonehenge's parish church", before putting forward the case for the complete reconstruction of the site, which he describes as "no pious aspiration, but a demand for the execution of a national duty" (Little, 1938).

It was more than 30 years before the 'national duty' was completed, with the complete reconstruction of Newgrange taking place from the 1950s to 1970s. While archaeologists (led by Professor Michael O'Kelly) were certainly at the helm of this reconstruction exercise, the entire enterprise must certainly be seen as incorporating a great deal more than a 'mere' archaeological excavation, restoration and presentation project.[8] Several Irish government ministers and successive Taoiseachs have attended various functions and guided tours at the site, with the winter solstice featuring as the main attraction.[9] Extending Cooney's comments about archaeology invoking the nation during this period, we can perhaps compare Newgrange with the Iron Age site of Bibracte in France, where President Francois Mitterrand made visits and speeches about wanting to be buried at the site, alongside the Gaulish hero Vercingetorix (Dietler, 1998, p. 82). Indeed, in some ways it was the very success of linking the site to a notion of essential Irishness that eventually prompted further action, and, ultimately, the new presentation of a 'new' version of Newgrange. The earlier common practice of showing a picture of Newgrange in general tourist publicity for Ireland as a whole was stopped in order to decrease the visitor pressure on the fragile site.[10] By the 1990s however, the shear pressure of visitor numbers meant that a long-term heritage presentation strategy was required.

In 1997, a new heritage centre named Brú na Bóinne was opened, on a new site on the south bank of the River Boyne. Built with the aid of a significant amount of financial support from both central Irish government sources and wider European Community funds, the opening of the heritage centre can, like George Petrie's article in 1833, be seen as representing the construction of a new version of Newgrange and the beginning of a new chapter in the life history of the monument. In both 1833 and 1997, one has to recognize the complex intellectual, cultural and political context in which the heritage presentation has been made, but in both cases, one can explore how the 'discovery' of a 'new' site both inscribes or produces cultural meaning, and is consumed in complex and often unexpected or ambiguous ways.

Through the Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre, the Newgrange monument itself has been presented as an element within a wider 'ritual landscape'. In many respects, this strategy can be viewed as a practical attempt to deflect visitor pressure from Newgrange, as well as to bring to popular attention the various other exceptional archaeological sites in the near vicinity.[11] The adoption of the 'ritual landscape' term, however, also reflects a particular strand of academic archaeology (Robb, 1998). Importantly, although there is a strong intellectual basis for the adoption of this terminology, the 'ritual landscape' is often received, or consumed, by a burgeoning and multi-faceted 'earth mysteries' movement as meaning something slightly different than intended. Following the 1833 version of Newgrange, Petrie's use of the academic framework of the cultural nation ended up being appropriated and consumed within a much more narrow and exclusive essentialist nationalist construction. Interestingly, however, whatever the solid academic or practical intentions of invoking the notion of a 'ritual landscape', its consumption has allowed a much more broad and inclusive sense of cultural identification of the site than that which was current a few decades ago. This relationship between Newgrange and a sort of undifferentiated 'Celtic spirituality', hailing from a vague sense of 'deep past' is not new. However, the opening of the Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre in 1997, arguably, has opened up a new dimension of its expression and semi-official sanction.

As well as selling earth mysteries postcards and literature, the actual Heritage Centre itself can be seen to make reference to a wide-ranging sense of 'Celtic landscape spirituality'. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon using 'indigenous' materials, and the use of architectural ploys that seek to 'disturb the boundaries between natural and man-made elements' (see O'Neill, 1997; McCullough, 1997). There is even a conscious attempt to make the practice of getting on the bus that takes you from the visitor center to the site itself into what is described as an 'enigmatic experience' (Keane, 1998, p. 6). Within these contemporary descriptions of the Heritage Centre and its management strategy, the emphasis is firmly based upon issues of sustainability and open-endedness of interpretation, with the visitor experience being portrayed as a route into the 'deep past', and of an experience of self-exploration (O'Neill, 1997; McCullough, 1997; Keane, 1998). The idea of exploring one's 'routes' towards a sense of cultural identity, rather than the more narrowly-defined tracing of one's 'roots' is reminiscent of Bhabha's (1994) notion of 'cultures of hybridity'. Bhabha (1994) argues that differences of culture cannot be accommodated in any universalist frame of meaning such as that of the homogenous nation. Rather, he notes that 'national' populations are becoming evermore visibly constructed from a range of interests, different cultural histories and post-colonial lineages. With respect to the presentation of cultural identity at the Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre, its open-ended

nature fits within the context of more pluralist constructions of Irishness which emphasise aspects of diaspora identity or hyphenated Irish identity.[12]

The invocation of a sort of 'pseudo-hippy spiritual landscape' experience, and particularly its broader relationship with a sense of Irish nationhood, is taken to a new level through the re-circulation, and often explicit commercialisation, of the 'three-spiral' pattern – perhaps the defining artistic motif of Newgrange and one of the most widely recognised emblems of Ireland.[13] A transformation can be seen in terms of the context of how and where this motif is used, with its meaning now being extended beyond that of the official nation state to become a general representative image of a broad-based sense of Irishness and Celtic identity. With the demise of the Office of Public Works, the image is no longer represented within official state emblems, but it can now be seen in conjunction with shopping arcades, tourist hostels and backpacker companies, New Age literature, health food shops and even within the logo of the newly established Academy of Irish Cultural Heritages, based at the University of Ulster at Magee in Derry. The image has been recycled a number of times, with its meaning becoming less obviously associated with Newgrange, and even moving beyond any conception of a stable and homogenous sense of Irishness to become indicative of a more indefinite sense of 'Celtic' or 'pluralist-Irish' identity.

(Perhaps I need an image here – a photomontage of different examples of the three-spiral pattern?).

Whether through pragmatism brought on by the need to package a more broadly-based tourist product, its positioning within a set of World Heritage sites, or the demands of European Union funding commitments, the sense of Irishness at Newgrange, arguably now takes on a much more internationalist and pluralist guise. This is particularly visible within the Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre's exhibition that places the sites of Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth within a wider context of World Heritage sites such as the Pyramids of Egypt and Angkor Wat in Cambodia – even Stonehenge gets a venerable mention!

Newgrange continues to be presented as a site where ancestral connection can be easily made. However, rather than an ancestral connection based upon a fairly narrow and uniform sense of Irishness, Newgrange is now portrayed as a much more general, and even personal, 'portal' to the other world. In the months running up to the Millennium, visitors were asked to write personal messages, hopes and desires on little pieces of paper. These were then burnt and their ashes placed within the inner chamber on the Millennium night as a sort of latter-day ritual 'offering to the gods'. The associated live broadcast of the Millennium winter solstice on national television certainly had its hitches,[14] but whether one sees this action as a cheap publicity stunt or not, it is a very good example of how an exclusively 'national' ancestry seems to have been replaced by a much more open-ended interpretation of the site.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how ancient monuments can be seen as socially constructed phenomena that have a 'life history', with several different and sometimes competing interpretations reflecting a variety of cultural and political formulations in wider society. The chapter has focussed upon two specific moments in the life history of Newgrange, when a 'new' monument was discovered and reified in such a way as to reflect particular intellectual and cultural contingencies; specifically that of the emergence and development of the Irish nation. In both cases, one can see that, whatever the 'prospective memories' of heritage meaning that were intended, the interpretations often had unintended consequences.

In 1833, George Petrie's intended broad-based Irish cultural nation version of Newgrange, ultimately paved the foundations and even under-wrote the legitimacy of later separatist and Republican national missions.[15] It is too early to see what the consequences are for the 1997 version of Newgrange's ancient heritage. Early indications suggest, however, that the idea that ancient monuments in Ireland are presented in a uniformly 'nationalist' manner simply does not take into account the great complexity and ambiguity of how heritage in general and ancient monuments in particular are produced and consumed in society. Adapting Bender's (1993, p. 3) assertion about landscape, Newgrange is "never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate it and contest it. It is part of the way identities are created and disputed, whether as individual, group or nation state". Newgrange, therefore, always reflects the circumstances of its production, and so an examination of its life history can reveal much about the society that produced it.

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Figure Titles:

Figure 1 The Cycle of Heritage (After Howard 2001)

Figure 2 The construction and re-cycling of Petrie's Newgrange
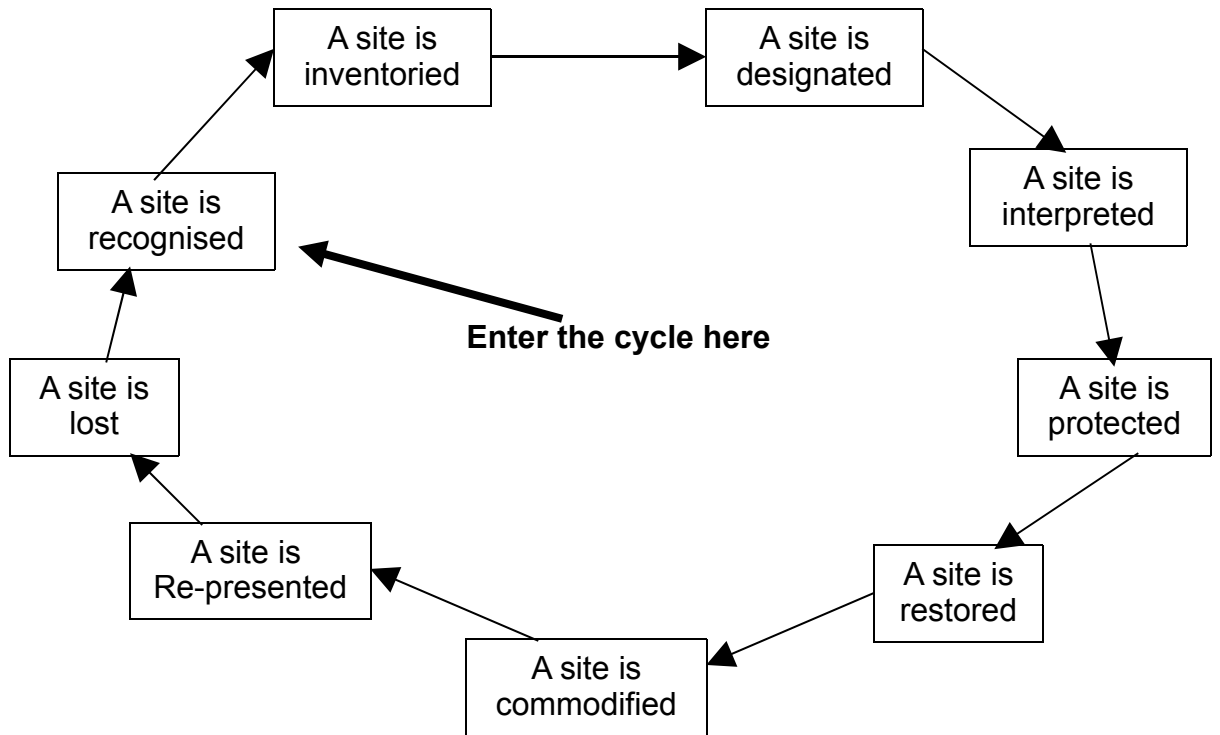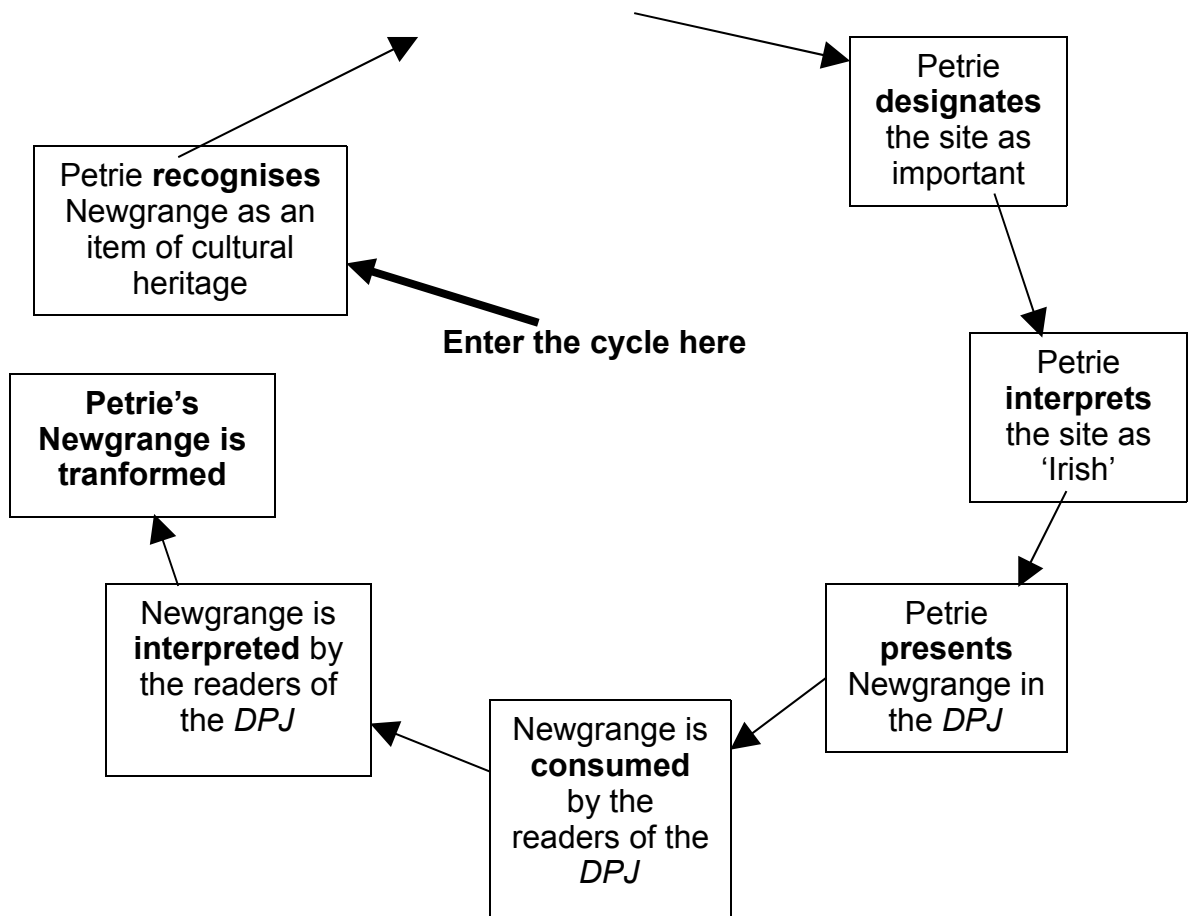
Figure 1:

Figure 2:

Petrie **designates** the site as important

Petrie **recognises** Newgrange as an item of cultural heritage

Enter the cycle here

Petrie **interprets** the site as 'Irish'

Petrie's Newgrange is tranformed

Newgrange is **interpreted** by the readers of the *DPJ*

Newgrange is **consumed** by the readers of the *DPJ*

Petrie **presents** Newgrange in the *DPJ*

Endnotes

[1] This chapter does not seek to be 'archaeological' in nature – indeed, it seeks to display the contingency of archaeology as a social practice. Archaeological directories, such as that by Harbison (1970, pp. 5-7, pp. 265-6) call Newgrange a 'passage tomb' dating from the 'Stone Age' (c. 4000-2000 BC). This chapter however, focuses on alternative stories and interpretations of Newgrange's heritage.

[2] Although we might be able to deduce that a passage tomb, for instance, was used for 'the burial of the dead', any real understanding of meaning, beyond the exceptionally simple and banal, is impossible to reach with any certainty.

[3] Although Edward Lhwyd had previously pointed out in 1700 that Newgrange was built by the Irish, he neither published his work, nor necessarily saw this fact as reflective of 'ancient Irish glory'. See TCD Manuscripts Department: MS 883/2, 284-90, '2 letters from Edward Lhwyd to Thos. Molyneux (dated 1700). For further comment, see Harvey (2002).

[4] The terms 'prospective memory' and 'retrospective memory' are from Holtorf (2001, pp. 211-15).

[5] Tara, for instance, would also be in a similar category, especially with respect of it being the site of Daniel O'Connell's mass meetings. Some of these themes are traced in Carew's (2003) recent book on Tara, which reveals a great deal of competition over the site's 'true' meaning and significance, with Irish nationalists on one side and British-Israelites ranged on the other. Also see Callary (1957) for what might be described as a 'nationalist' commentary on Tara.

[6] The importance of the sense of 'deep past' here, should not be seen as being within any particular chronological age, but simply reflects the value that is attached to a site that was indisputably 'old', and most importantly, dating from before the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland in the late twelfth century.

[7] See also papers in Kohl and Fawcett (1995); Atkinson et al (1996); and Diaz-Andreu and Champion (1996).

[8] For details of the reconstruction, see O'Kelly (1966, 1976, 1979, 1982) and Stout (2002).

[9] See Mary Cummins's article in the *Irish Times* (22/12/1987) for a description of Charles Haughey's visit for instance.

[10] Claire Tuffy, interview (Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre Manager), 17th November 1999.

[11] Claire Tuffy, interview (Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre Manager), 17th November 1999.

[12] For instance, many of the visitors to the Brú na Bóinne Heritage Centre would consider their 'nationality' to be 'hyphenated' – often 'Irish-American'. See chapters in Harvey et al (2002) for further examples of how one can view identities in terms of 'routes' rather than 'roots' within the context of identity construction within the Celtic fringes. Identities are about using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of 'becoming' rather than 'being'.

[13] The 'three-spiral' motif is very widely used in literature, pictures and other images of Newgrange, being prominent on many associated guides – both popular and academic in nature. For instance, see the front covers of O'Kelly (1982) and Battersby (1997).

[14] Much of the broadcast was blacked out by technical hitches. See comments and letter in *Archaeology Ireland*, 14 (1), 2000, pp. 44-46.

[15] The phrase 'under-writing the legitimacy' of later nationalist movements, comes from Pearton (1996, p. 1).