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How to help making critical, innovative and independent scholars -  
between giving and suffocating in the process of supervision.

The case of Swedish Archaeology.



- The character of higher education varies considerably both in formal terms and in terms of content between countries and universities
- Our experience comes from Sweden, the University of Gothenburg and concerns the discipline archaeology



## Higher education in Sweden – general model

BA level 3 years

MA level 2 years

PhD level 4 years





# The field of archaeology

- The many dimensions of archaeology
- Not only an academic field
- Research and investigation
- Archaeology at museums and archives
- Contract archaeology and archaeological field work
- Archaeology in public administration
- Popular archaeology
- **Thus how should we form an archaeologist?**





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## Different possible answers

- Focus on the practical procedures in the laboratory, sciences as craft and the doctoral student as an apprentice
- Integrating a wide range of knowledge on administration, management, pedagogics etc, and downplaying specialized knowledge in a particular discipline
- Or some other approach?



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## Our main concern in doctoral supervision

- **How to create advanced, critical, and independent scholars in archaeology**





# Between suffocating and giving

- Focusing on the intellectual and critical development of the student
- Awareness of the intricacy of the investigation and the importance of critical and innovative approaches
- Learning to think both on the particular research process and the same time being able to look at it to some extent from the outside.
- The importance of details and deep diving into empirics
- The wider questions of relevance and quality – encounters with other settings and ideas
- Voice of the student





## Experiences of PhD supervision in archaeology and some pedagogical experiments, 1

- PhD students tend to share certain steps in the learning process of a PhD
- Each PhD student has a particular learning process, which demands particular solutions
- Comparing the situation today to our own experiences as PhD students (mainly 1980s)



## Experiences of PhD supervision in archaeology and some pedagogical experiments, 2

- Continuity in supervision. In the ideal case scenario the same main supervisor and secondary supervisor follow the students through the 4 years.
- Multivocality. Inviting guest researchers from different branches of archaeology, and occasionally from other disciplines, who read and discuss texts produced by students.
- Study groups with PhD students from different disciplines under the coordination of one or two tutors
- Tutorials in groups of 2 students and 2 tutors. Students comment on each others' texts
- The tutor follows recent currents in the discipline, in this case in archaeology. At the same time the tutor has regular contact with scholars in pedagogics and discusses common problems with tutors working in other disciplines. We also regularly visit scholars in other countries and compare experiences and organizational forms.



## Inspiration by certain ideas from among others

- Vygotsky
- Freire
- Haraway
- Trinh T Minh Ha





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