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Conceptualising historical project studies – A complementary partnership

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1. Rationale – the opportunity for a historic turn in project studies

Since the early years of the current century academics interrogating themes relating to project management have articulated a need to move their discipline to a broader yet deeper and perhaps more meaningful approach to discovery. Projects, defined by Söderlund (2004) as economic or social activities with the universal elements of uniqueness, task complexity, and time-limitedness (p.185) were felt in need of an evaluation and explication ranging beyond the field's classic focus on engineering and construction (Geraldi & Söderlund, 2018). It was felt that this early location of the discipline, reinforced by field histories which conceptualise its emergence from highly complex and technologically innovative American defence projects of the 1940s and 1950s (Hughes, 1998; Lenfle, 2011; Morris, 1994) had brought a very empirical, functional, and prescriptive focus characterised by the rise of tools for controlling complex systems (Lenfle & Loch, 2010, pp. 42–43). Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm (2002) discussed the prospects for a broadening of project management into *project studies* which would apply a broad social science approach to incorporate social challenges into the field to better address the variety of challenges faced by practitioners. Powered by an awareness that the P-form organisation was perhaps becoming more mainstream and that society was becoming a 'project society', the field has continued to evolve and search for new, broader approaches and meanings, including an interest in exploring the institutional context typified by the three level hierarchy proposed by Morris and Geraldi (2011). The interest in deeper structures further led Lenfle and Söderlund (2022) to evaluate the macro issues and elements of projects which require a multi-level approach as discussed by Geraldi and Söderlund (2018). To add to this activity there has been increased typologising to attempt to locate reflexivity and social action concerns into project studies. Geraldi and Söderlund (2018) proposed further research on (1) broader levels of analyses based on micro and macro level concerns around projects and (2) different forms of research furthered through a new agenda of 'type 3 research' which tries to integrate theory development and engagement with practice. Most recently Locatelli et al. (2023) discuss the opportunity to create cross

fertilization between project studies and other branches of business and management as well as the broader social sciences. This developing openness to the concepts of multiple disciplines in journals such as *IJPM*, the *Project Management Journal* and *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business* is undoubtedly a key feature of project studies and can be further expanded to learn epistemologies and methods from the humanities. This essay builds on Söderlund and Lenfle (2013) to postulate that engaging with historical methods and the business history tradition would be an enriching partnership for project studies with the potential to open new theoretical frontiers through a creative synthesis (Suddaby, Hardy, & Huy, 2011).

Historical study allows for the potential to retrospectively assess a project by studying it throughout its lifetime (Hughes, 2013, p. 682). The historiography of project management is rich and predominantly descended from the literatures around the history of science and technology management, especially the works of Hughes (1983, 1998) which emphasises the creation and evolution of large technical systems (Johnson, 1997; Lenfle & Söderlund, 2022, p. 2). Morris's (1994) pioneering study emphasises how project management emerged as a rationalising force to apprehend the risk and uncertainty surrounding ever more ambitious American defence projects from the Second World War onwards. Morris takes the Manhattan project as his starting point, highlighting how the challenges facing the multidisciplinary teams working on the project were more organisational and engineering than scientific. Morris then moves on to consider how 'modern project management' emerged in the context of later defence and engineering projects including Atlas, Polaris and the US space programme. He puts forward a three-pronged proposition: this a) involved new conceptualisations of systems engineering; b) advanced ideas of horizontally aligned interdisciplinary organisational design and team building; c) computing technology which allowed for the processing of complex information required for advanced planning and control systems. Other contributors such as Hughes (1998), Johnson (1997, 2013), and Lenfle (2011) reinforce this narrative by further unpacking the ways in which Manhattan and its successors enabled forms of complex systems management which could be rolled out to large scale technological and engineering projects. The focus of project history was widened both

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empirically and conceptually by the 2013 Special Issue of *IJPM* which included studies of the standardisation of models (Garel, 2013), inter-organizational history (Levering, Ligthart, Noorderhaven, & Oerlemans, 2013), project escalation (Winch, 2013), low cost approaches to spaceflight (McCurdy, 2013), path dependence during the project appraisal process (Hellström, Ruuska, Wikström, & Jäfs, 2013), complex military projects (Johnson, 2013), the rehabilitation of projectors during the 19th century (Hughes, 2013) and the alternative narratives around projects (Marshall & Bresnen, 2013). These papers demonstrate the potential for project history to cover diverse topics but apart from Hellström et al. (2013) most draw on already published materials, restricting the potential for empirical novelty.

Project histories are therefore insightful, but we propose for project studies to be enhanced through a more directly archival approach to historical research which would foster a more insightful engagement with time. As Hughes (2013, pp. 683–684) notes the foundational work of Morris (1994, 2011) and Johnson (2002) has a difficult relationship to temporality. While Morris widens his research focus to the ‘management of projects’ in a broad sense, his study is essentially a teleological ‘chapter 2’ history (Cummings & Bridgman, 2016; Jacques & Durepos, 2015) in that it hunts for phenomena in the past that are recognisable to contemporary scholars and practitioners as features of PMBOK rather than starting from the understandings of actors in the past and working forward. This has led to a sense that projects predating the era of complex systems management may be less relevant to study even if earlier institutional, societal, and economic developments might have value for project history. There is further the danger of taking a ‘lonely project’ view that overlooks the earlier experience of managers thus overlooking the value of antecedents as insights into formative practice (Engwall, 2003). Further, PMBOK centric writing has created a paradigm that there is a decontextualizable ‘static recipe’ for managing projects even as evidence shows that actors in the 1950s took more fluid approaches than those characterised by dominant accounts (Lenfle & Loch, 2010). Thence a whiggish focus of study which overstates the value of progress (Lamoreaux, Raff, & Temin, 2004) based around the continuous improvement of control systems in megaprojects generally located in the Anglosphere was emphasised (Hughes, 2013) at the cost of broader understandings of smaller and more diverse cases of temporary organisation. There has further been a methodological confusion about how empirical integrity in historical study can be achieved because of the inaccessibility of actors involved in past projects (Hughes, 2013, p. 682) and this has led to a reliance on secondary sources or published reports in much of the literature despite the broad availability of archival sources on many of the topics studied, the potential of which we discuss in more detail below. This may arise from a discomfort with utilizing data created by the research object but there is a long tradition of historical research methods which project studies researchers who seek conceptual alignment with scholars of organization can draw upon.

A closer engagement with the methods and approaches of historians would allow for engagement with a broader range of topics while bringing project scholars into discussion with business and management historians, expanding publication horizons. Business and management historians such as Scranton (2014) and Gillett and Tennent (2020) have themselves discussed how their field, traditionally rooted in single firm-based studies, could be enriched by an improved historical understanding of projects. This opportunity was identified by Söderlund and Lenfle (2013, p. 656) and further developed by Gillett and Tennent (2017) when they demonstrated how archival research could be used to generate theoretical novelty. They illustrated how the four sublimas (Flyvbjerg, 2014) could be enhanced by considering the new agendas which stakeholders may seek to load onto projects, the additional dimension of time highlighting the changing and interacting nature of the sublimas which they describe as dynamic. Applying historical research to conduct longitudinal studies beyond those predominantly concerned with engineering or construction can also help us to understand how and why temporary organisations can successfully change

their activities, operations and even their legal entity over time, to fulfil a project and to then administer its financial and societal legacy (Gillett & Tennent, 2022). Such opportunities for direct integration are legion where the investigation of past projects allowing an evaluation of the entire enterprise through time can produce novel theoretical conclusions. Further, a sympathetic understanding of historical methods can allow for a more nuanced investigation of the intellectual development of project management as a field, mitigating Clegg’s (2023) critique of Slavinski, Todorović and Obradović’s (2023) retrospective literature review of *IJPM*’s output. Clegg critiqued this paper for lacking historical integrity; as a literature review it was felt to amount to an unreflexive and aetheoretical discussion of the past. A closer engagement of the source material taking account of the historical context of its production might have allowed for a more complex and nuanced discussion of the history of the journal and the thinking within it to emerge. We first introduce historical methods from an archival perspective before explicating their potential contribution to project studies.

2. Introducing historical methods and approaches

Historical methods offer a holistic system of thought for evaluating our interaction with time and how it affects practice, moving beyond a mere longitudinal study or study of the past. Historical study starts with the traces that are left behind by historical actors and as such is empirically nested but not atheoretical as historians typically seek to extrapolate patterns of practice or behaviour from the past. The empirical starting point of a historical study is of potential utility firstly because it can focus on the traces of a chosen past project or programme but then the potentially unbounded approach it affords (Braudel, 1980) can permit outward expansion of focus into the institutional layer of temporary organisation (Morris & Gerdali, 2011), thus enabling macro project studies (Gerdali & Söderlund, 2018, p. 62). Tuning into historical thinking can give us a close understanding of a past project, allowing us to retrieve forgotten knowledge (Foucault, 1971) from its participants long after it has come to fruition or failed. Using the same techniques, we can look at broader programmes or commissioning organisations, and with a focus on documentary analysis we can almost step inside the shoes of the stakeholders. Often archival documents may lie untouched for years, containing details which escape the memory or were considered too commercially confidential for contemporary dissemination (e.g. those used by Gillett and Tennent (2018) in their study of a football club which constructed a leisure facility with public finance), and so an opportunity is allowed for new generations to recover the work of the old anew. Archival research can also be used to further micro project studies (Gerdali & Söderlund, 2018, pp. 62–63) through microhistorical research (e.g. Ginzburg, 1992) using the materials gathered over a career. Such an approach would provide an opportunity to activate Söderlund and Lenfle’s (2013, p. 657) suggestion of researching the history of project management practice. In this synthesis the knowledge that escapes us may be as valuable as that which we think we know in retrospect (Decker, 2013).

Historical research foregrounds source analysis and evaluation with a focus on the quality of evidence and how it is interpreted by the researcher. This approach is well established and has been in existence for around 180 years. It has roots in the ‘empiricist model’ favoured by Elton (2002) and Evans (1997) that engagement with primary sources, usually archival, is the best way to recover knowledge of the past. Archives, or archival sources can be used to mean a repository in which historical documents are held, or a collection of documents in themselves (Tennent & Gillett, 2023), but are typically created by the historical actors under study themselves. These documents can take many forms – they could for example consist of the correspondence between project stakeholders, the finances of a project, or the minutes of meetings of the team delivering a project. They might be less formal, for instance the notes of a manager scribbled in the margins of another document, or a quote from a small subcontractor for piece of work – but

which might offer clues into the broader *mentalities* or institutional assumptions at play of the people being studied (Hutton, 1981). Frequently the documents used by stakeholders are marked with a date, allowing us to understand the chronology of a project. The professionalisation of past projects based upon bureaucracy and record keeping can play to our advantage in allowing us to interpret how they played out over time, from the inside, although the survival of documents can also be fragmentary.

Therefore, the work of historians is nested in terms of the methodological choices and epistemological perspective of the researcher, as the outcomes of a historical study can be heavily based upon both the sources available and selected, as well as the ways that a researcher chooses to work with them (Tennent, 2020). Collingwood (1993) and Carr (1990) are more cautious around empirical orientation and draw attention to the need for historians to be aware of the interpretive nature of what they do. As Marwick (2001, p. 29) notes all historical knowledge must be retrieved through the work of the historian who should be reflexive of method in the material process through which they access material to develop through a series of stages into a pattern or meaning. Historians need to use imagination and interpolate their thinking around missing sources and engage in sensemaking to triangulate sources, a necessary part of joining the parts of the jigsaw created by fragmentary sources. Thus Collingwood (1993) and White (1987) illustrate the need for a clear declaration of sources by historians to provide transparency. Historical research is therefore a humanity in which generalisability is unlikely to be achieved because two different historians could work with the same sources and interpret them in different ways. This is a strength of historical research because it can lead to different and divergent interpretations of phenomena allowing for richer knowledge sets allowing us to understand how organisations both functioned and rhetorised themselves. Heller (2023, p. 999) offers us a useful framework for topologizing sources as reportative or performative allowing us to analyse both how organisations reported and enacted their existence, activities, and organisational life through narratives.

History is more than just source analysis; Andrews and Burke (2007) make the implicit approaches of historians explicit through the Five Cs of historical thinking, an analysis framework based around the concepts of change over time, causality, context, complexity and contingency, which can be applied to enhance the historical integrity of explanation. We suggest that this framework, already applied to international business and strategic management by Perchard, MacKenzie, Decker, and Favero (2017) has direct cogency because its research vectors are compatible with many of the core concerns of project management. Change over time, which envelopes continuity and change, is a straightforward concept to analyse the changes that happen during a project and the continuities that endure in the environment in its process. It also allows us to evaluate the macro environmental changes which make projects unique considering the impact of deeper institutional continuity. An understanding of context is useful because it forces us to consider the background for the object of study; historians seek to understand the social, political and cultural settings of the phenomena they study. The study of the context of a project can lead us to better understand the sublimos or motivations of decision makers for pursuing it and also key regulatory, resource, cultural or technological constraints which influence its execution. Causality is proximate to Maclean, Harvey and Clegg's (2016, p. 617) concept that historical knowledge should 'ring representationally true' in that it encourages researchers to think about change over time and context carefully to analyse and evaluate the factors behind an event or phenomena to build logical explanations for its likely cause. This is not a falsifiable process and may encourage the formulation of alternative explanations based upon the available evidence about the phenomena and its related context, something that may unsettle some researchers, but which ultimately adds to the diversity of possible explanations open to us because it does not close off topics for research. New generations of historians are able to revisit events, often as new evidence is opened up, for instance through the

25–30 year archival release period or the addition of sources to digital repositories, and in the case of project management this could mean that documents unavailable to contemporary researchers become available later to historians, allowing for novel explanations.

Contingency is a valuable concept which pushes causality even further because it relies on the idea that one event is formative to another, creating causal chains which allow us to think about the inter-relatedness of events. Such contingency is a key assumption of frameworks such as CPM and PERT (Morris, 1994, pp.27–34) but thinking about this historically could help researchers more critically consider the utility of such approaches as rational explanations of project processes because it encourages us to avoid teleological explanations. This helps us to avoid the idea that an event is somehow inevitable or a pre-determined outcome of an earlier event, perhaps by recovering the stages in-between which are often more complex and subject to the vagaries of experience than it might appear at first sight. Complexity is also a core facet of projectification and its institutional context; especially in the case of the megaproject where the contributions of stakeholders, perhaps running into the hundreds or thousands need to be co-ordinated by a management team. Historical thinking avoids conceptualising historical processes as straightforward and causally simple as chroniclers who list dates or nostalgists who seek to portray the past as uncomplicated might, by applying conceptual rigour to attempt to uncover the messiness of the past world in all its uncertainties. Many sources reveal historical actors thinking about future outcomes as characterised from their perspective and assumptions, and by triangulating these views together we begin to realise that there might be no single unified motivation for a project or driver for the participation of stakeholders in it. Rather, reality is complex and messy, and often non-linear, as well as ever changing, and so the Andrews and Burke (2007) conceptualisation of historical thinking is entirely complementary to the ethos of project studies.

Maclean, Harvey, and Clegg (2016) demonstrate the utility of bringing such historical thinking to bear in an integral way to organisation studies through that they conceptualise as dual integrity. This fusion incorporates historical thinking to evaluate, explicate, conceptualize, and narrate forgotten knowledge while creating possibilities for the testing, refining and extension of existing theoretical constructs or for revealing new ones. Project studies has already incorporated many of the core concepts of organisation studies which emphasises the role of social forces and practices in the shaping of organisations and institutions (Clegg & Bailey, 2008) into its toolkit. *Historical project studies* would extend the synthesis by remaining epistemologically compatible with historical organization studies and therefore inherit its principles of dual integrity, pluralistic understanding, representational truth, context sensitivity and theoretical fluency (Maclean et al., 2016, p. 616–9). The synthesis devised by Maclean, Harvey and Clegg (pp. 619–622) allows for a flexible use of historical thinking which can be applied in a social science mode as a resource to evaluate or explicate theory from processes – or through the writing of narrative to generate new constructs or explain the form and origins of contemporary phenomena. We posit that both approaches require the implicit application of the 5Cs to fully achieve historical integrity following the recommendation of Kieser (1994) that project histories need to fully understand the values of history.

Historical thinking as a strategy for knowledge investigation is directly contingent on the ability of researchers to work with the traces left behind by those whom they study. Tennent and Gillett (2023) propose a research methodology known as CLUMOP (Table 1). CLUMOP directly taxonomises the forms of archive that the project researcher might consider consulting when formulating a historical research question. Archival research has the advantage of lower thresholds around access as well as offering stable resources within the bounds of archival preservation. With a view to this, current project practitioners might consider their archiving practices to enable access by future researchers. The access hurdles of CLUMOP may often be lower than using

Table 1
CLUMOP Framework.

Archive Type	Explanation
Corporate	The records of a private or otherwise not government owned organization, held by that same organization.
Local Authorities	The records of a municipal organization, usually useful for research questions about public administration, or local government interfaces with projects.
Universities	Often hold their own records for the purpose of governance, but this activity is often expanded to encompass holdings from related bodies, such as local healthcare and religious organizations.
Museums and Libraries	Primary activity is not keeping archives, but usually historical collections of artefacts or books, normally about a specific topic, although they do often have collections of archival materials.
Others	Endowed or voluntary research institutes additional to those already described.
Public	National public record offices usually maintained by government, federal/national or state level.

interview or ethnographic approaches, especially for archival resources held by the public sector, which often include national level infrastructure projects in defence, electricity generation or transport, or third sector institutions such as universities or hospitals, which are typically released after a 25- or 30-year period. As engaged scholars with excellent professional networks project scholars can raise awareness of the value of archives amongst practitioners and so contribute to the preservation of materials for future generations of scholars to utilize. For instance, they can influence their employers and professional bodies such as the PMI to maintain archives as well as keeping good personal records. Guidance is available from professional and advocacy bodies in the archival field such as the Business Archives Council. Because they embody the core concepts of contingency and complexity archives can be an excellent resource for developing historical consciousness in learners (Tennent, Gillett, & Foster, 2020) answering the call of Geraldini and Söderlund (2018) to lead theorists and practitioners alike towards a more reflexive approach to the study of projects. The incorporation of historical thinking and their proximate historical methods with their ability to challenge assumptions of teleology and unsettle can therefore directly stimulate ‘Type 3 research’ with an activist stance.

3. What historical investigation might contribute in terms of theoretical novelty

We now finally consider how historical investigation in project studies might contribute to theoretical novelty and propose a framework for doing so. In Fig. 1 we demonstrate how researchers might bring together components of historical analysis and organisation studies through a pyramid of theoretical fluency to attain historical integrity with conceptual compatibility with project studies.

First, a research question should be identified, and appropriate sources utilised. The existence of competing explanations and viewpoints reminds us that projectification is by nature contingent with much uncertainty. Approaches such as PRINCE2 directly build on the rationalisation of contingency to help manage causality and complexity – yet much causal ambiguity remains. An improved understanding of change over time and the context within which projects are nested can be derived through micro, meso and macro-level historical analysis of projects based on archival study which through CLUMOP can allow us to apprehend the motives of different actors in a project system. Archives can open access to a vast range of projects and institutional settings from government, private sector and third sector in a range of countries and territories while oral history provides complementary research potential in settings where archival holdings are less complete (Decker, 2013). Archives can also allow for a functional understanding of what project managers do and have done in both a reportative and performative sense through what documents they produced (Heller, 2023, p. 999), what

roles they have played and who they interacted with, giving an overall picture of what role project management played in the overall development, positive or negative, of organizations. Further, the opportunity to open more diverse and longer time scales for analysis may help us to explore antecedence – the situational genesis and development of concepts (Hall, 1992), and pre-conceptualisations – sometimes leading to understanding that a concept or a form of that concept is older than first thought (Casson & Casson, 2013).

Secondly, project management constructs should be rigorously analysed using the archival evidence through one of the four strategies of evaluation, explication, conceptualisation, and narration identified by Maclean et al. (2016). *Evaluation* allows us to consider the dynamics of a process to establish its relevance and revise relevant theory, something which Gillett and Tennent (2017) achieve with the dynamic sublimations. This demonstrated that a change in project sublimations was based on change over time and led to increased complexity and causal ambiguity. Opportunities undoubtedly exist to consider the impact of change of time and its related contingency throughout project studies, while *explication* is consistent with institutional theory concepts and considers the interplay of theoretical ideas and historical evidence allowing us to reinterpret the relationship between past and present. This would enable long run comparisons between projects across space and time much as Fligstein’s (1990) classic study on the role of the state in American capitalism allowed for the comparison of corporate case studies. *Conceptualization* can further elicit the process of change over time within projects as it aims to use theory to inspire analysis by mixing the observational with the conceptual, as Burgelman (2002) did through his classic study of strategy change over time at Intel. Finally, *narration*, a strategy considered more normative in humanities orientated historical writing uses storytelling as an analytical device, building arguments out of a rich discussion of events and phenomena which are crafted by the historian based on the colligation and triangulation of available evidence (Bryant, 2000; Gill et al., 2018; Kipping, Wadhvani, & Bucheli, 2014). This approach which tends to keep theory in the background retains relevance for project management because it is well suited to the analysis of specific sets of events and circumstances, which often form the background to specific projects. Narrative can also be used as an explanatory strategy to foreground competing explanations or viewpoints of a phenomenon, a device explored by Tennent and Mollan (2020) in their work on music retail.

Fig. 1 is our interpretation of how Maclean et al. (2016) can be applied to project studies based on our own application and adaption of historical organisation studies. Box A is concerned with what we call process analysis, which involves the specifics of project timeline. The researcher could begin with notes based on Geertz’s (1973) thick description which allows the researcher to use the Andrews and Burke (2007) ‘5 Cs’ approach to highlight the extent to which historical specificity matters. Here researchers can use an archival investigation of context and change over time to investigate ‘what’, ‘when’, ‘where’ and ‘how’ to uncover the project timeline. It is possible to use the historical imagination to interpolate, determining some reasonable assumptions as to the ‘why’ based on the empirics, but it is in the next step where theory will be used to explore the ‘why’ and ‘how’ with conceptual rigour. Researchers may find it useful to identify temporal phases that can be behavioural rather than contractual and outline the evolution of the project organisation for planning and delivery. For example, Gillett and Tennent (2022) studying the 1994 FIFA World Cup in the San Francisco Bay area identified four project phases through dating between 1987 and 2010. These phases encompassed the initial conceptualisation and preliminary planning through to the delivery of a social and economic legacy for the locality. These were identified through a sensemaking process that required a close engagement with change over time and the context of the study which allowed the authors to wade through complexity to consider causality and contingency.

Steps B and C involve the researcher using lenses to reflect the case study back on itself – these could be lenses based on the historiography

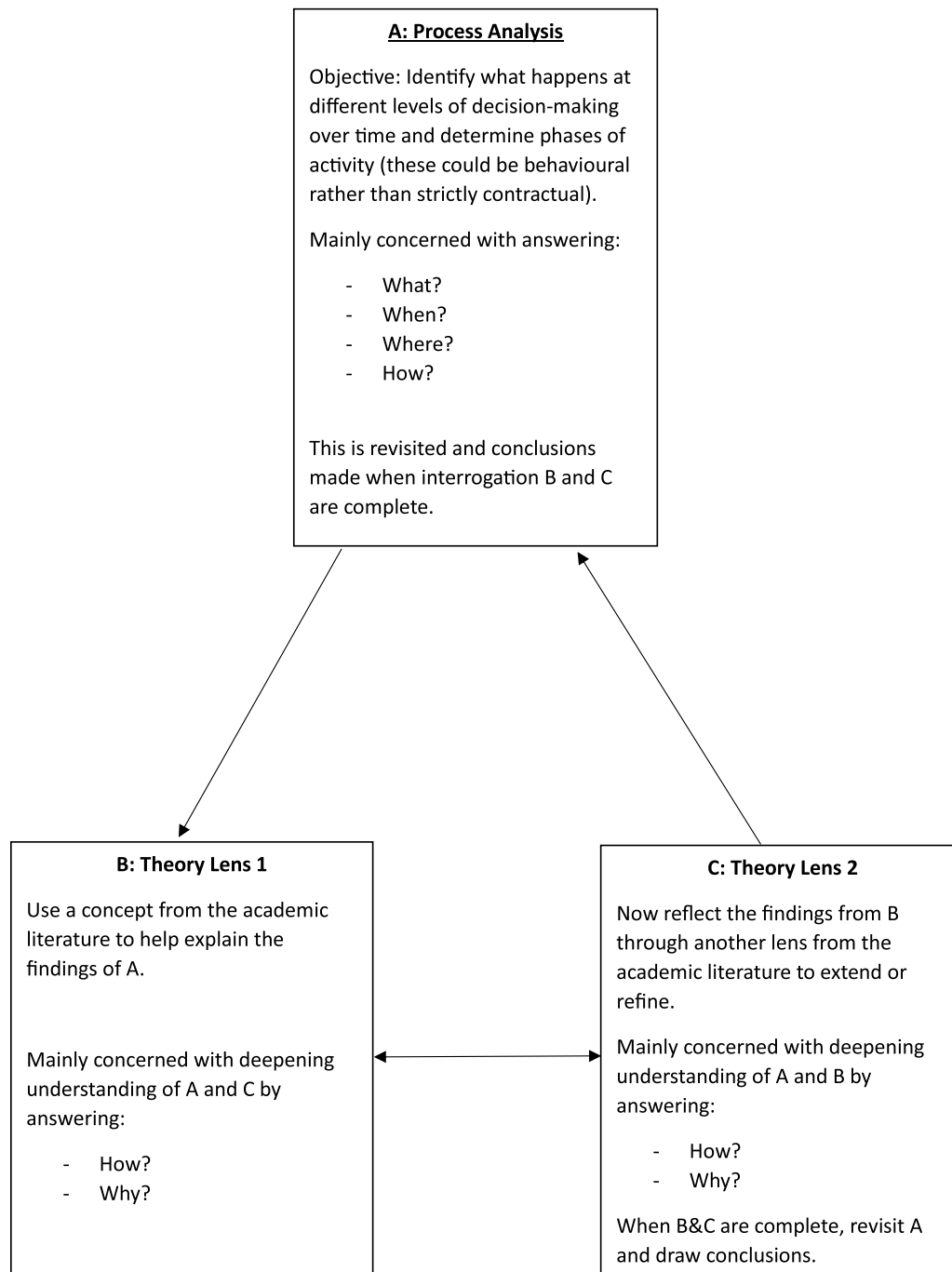


Fig. 1. Pyramid of theoretical fluency.

or the social science literature. For example, [Gillett and Tennent \(2022\)](#) explored the dynamics of institutional complexity while drawing on findings from the historical economic geography and public management literatures, while [Gillett and Tennent \(2017\)](#) used [Flyvbjerg's \(2014\)](#) four sublims together with [Morris and Gerald's \(2011\)](#) three levels of project organization.

Finally to draw conclusions researchers should reflect back on the process they determined in step A to develop and refine their narrative with the theoretical underpinning from steps B and C. By reflecting on the historical research process researchers can attain historical consciousness in themselves and the learners that they seek to influence. Historical Project Studies based on the synthesis of temporal ideas with theoretical approaches are optimally aligned because the study of archives is inherently a reflexive process which leads the researcher to

relate more directly with the research object as proposed by [Farge \(1989\)](#). This brings not just the temporal and complexity factors into focus but the contextual and contingent emphasis of the 5 Cs allows for a sympathetic engagement with uniqueness, a synthesis which social science approaches encourage scholars to shy away from. Representational truth and context sensitivity through the study of specific historical phenomena ([Maclean et al, pp, 617–618](#)) can boost context enhancement while adherence to historical conceptualisations of context can reduce the implicit fictionalisation of entities based on their abstraction to increase generalisability ([Clark & Rowlinson, 2004](#)). The past as a research object further reduces the need to anonymise of firms and actors as they sit in an 'other time' ([de Certeau, 1988](#)) and allows a deeper more culturally sensitive exploration of the impact of institutional level context onto projects. Understanding context can help us to

better conceive our own context and how we ourselves impact it and create change through historical consciousness (Tennent et al., 2020). Thence we can better theorise contingency which is affected by the time horizon and unforeseen externalities across three levels including uncertainty about what might happen over the project life or after completion.

Historical project studies can bring an identifiable epistemological and methodological framework to help us develop a temporal understanding of project management. It allows the concerns of the episodic to be integrated and developed into a broader understanding of the evolution of the profession and its broader relationship to society. We have demonstrated the research strategies that are necessary to attain this synthesis by utilizing historical thinking which emphasizes the episodic, a characteristic which gives it particular intellectual compatibility with the concerns of project studies. We believe that this can enrich project studies by providing a framework for incorporating historical underpinning.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Kevin D. Tennent: Writing – original draft, Conceptualization. **Alex G. Gillett:** Writing – review & editing, Conceptualization.

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