

PART I

Knowledges

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Archaeology has been defined as the discipline that uniquely provides a world history extending humanity back into prerecorded time. It gives primary evidence for the three “rites of passage” in the human career, namely the emergence of anatomically modern humans, the origins of agriculture/first settled villages, and the rise of civilizations. The resulting narrative is a linear and processual story of technological progress and cultural evolution. Archaeology has also been described as the discipline that reveals the details of past human existence, including how people made their living, how they organized themselves into social groups, how they worshiped their gods, how they mourned their dead. In this case, the resulting account is a description of an individual’s, family’s or group’s lived experience at a particular point in time. There is, therefore, for archaeology, even more so than for history, a natural tension between the individual and society, agency and structure, event and process that must be mediated by social theory as it articulates with the special characteristics of the archaeological record.

And yet there is another aspect of archaeology which we might call “social archaeology” that has always been present alongside the investigation of evolutionary questions and the study of past lives. Social archaeology refers to the ways in which we express ourselves through the things that we make and use, collect and discard, value or take for granted, and seek to be remembered by (Hall 2001). It is linked to how we conceptualize the relationships between ourselves and others, society and history in both past and present contexts. It involves an appreciation of the multiple entailments of our very being-in-the-world. This perspective is implicit in the organizations and institutions we have created to preserve the past, institutions such as English Heritage, UNESCO, Cultural Resource Management, the Louvre, and World Heritage monuments. It is implicated in nationalism and globalization because every form of political economy requires its own history and past narrative. The broadening influence of archaeology today across the humanities, social sciences, and beyond reveals a growing appreciation of archaeology in this “social” sense.

A social archaeology conceptualized as an archaeology of social being can be located at the intersections of temporality, spatiality, and materiality. To take these concepts as a focus of research is to explore the situated experiences of material life, the

constitution of the object world and its shaping of human experience (Gosden 1994; Meskell 2004). This is related to, but not necessarily the same as, studying time, space, and material culture, categories that have often been identified as the dimensions of archaeology (Chang 1967; Spaulding 1960). Just as humans produce notions of time and space to mediate their existence in the world, so too do they produce notions of materiality and, indeed, these concepts are fundamentally interdependent because material culture practices serve to concretize and reproduce particular modes of space-time. There is now a large literature on social conceptions of time and historicity in the humanities and social sciences (Baert 1992; Fabian 1983; White 1973) and there is a developing literature on spatiality (Gregory 1994; Soja 1989). Without denying the significance of these contributions, what is missing from the majority of these formulations is a principled consideration of the materiality of human existence. This, we feel, is one of the areas where archaeology can make significant contributions to contemporary social theory.

The Social in Archaeology

Before discussing what we see as key constituents of a social archaeology, it is appropriate to review some of the different characterizations of the social in archaeology. Archaeology has always included a concept of the social, even if it has been understood in diverse ways and from a variety of perspectives (see Hodder, chapter 1, and Patterson, chapter 3). Without providing a comprehensive history, we wish to distinguish three broad engagements with the social in Anglo-American archaeology that might be termed “the social and the cultural,” “the social and social theory,” and “the social and contemporary society.” At any one point in time, the discipline can be seen as a variegated field largely constituted by competing interpretations of these different relationships.

The social in archaeology can perhaps be said to begin with V. Gordon Childe (although see Chippindale 1989). As early as 1935, Childe argued that the study of past societies should be the goal of archaeology. For him, human consciousness could not be conceived of as being separate from society. Like the social anthropologists of his day, he distinguished society as a network of organic, self-perpetuating social relations from cultural traits as specific components of society that were transferable across societies through diffusion. Society was structure and culture was its content. Trigger (1980:144) has termed Childe’s commitment to the social as “societal archaeology” and observed that it increased over his lifetime. There is little doubt that Childe’s engagement with Marxism caused him, more than his contemporaries, to appreciate the close interrelationships between archaeology and modern society. He was particularly interested in creating an archaeology conceived of as a “science of progress” that would help elucidate major social issues and help establish a future (Childe 1946, 1947).

Grahame Clark regarded society as the central focus of archaeology. In his influential book *Archaeology and Society* (1939, 3rd edition 1957), he noted that the study of the production and use of artifacts is coextensive with the life of society. This meant that archaeologists needed to be conversant with the work of social and economic historians as well as the findings of social anthropology. For him, the emergence of a class

society was not merely a consequence, but also a cause of social evolution. Clark also appreciated the social context of the practice of archaeology. He saw its main purpose as providing “sentiments needful to the stability and indeed to the very existence of society,” since it “multiplies and strengthens the links which bind us to the past.” This social use of archaeology was not to be confused with totalitarianism. In a sharp critique of Soviet archaeology, he argued for a “scientific humanism” committed to the study of universal world history that would appeal to both the underprivileged and the educated classes. For him, prehistory achieved its highest social purpose in promoting human solidarity and creating the conditions for freedom.

For K. C. Chang, the social was essential in the construction of archaeological interpretations. This is made clear in his statement that archaeology should “identify and characterize the social groups of archaeological cultures [and] ... look at archaeological sites as local social groups instead of as cultures or phases” (1958:324). Chang drew attention to the community (a camp, a village, or a town) as the elementary social group and considered it universally manifest in the archaeological record in terms of settlement (1967:15). This had implications for archaeological typologies, and he suggested that the standard archaeological practice of using “cultural” instead of “social” relationships was the result of privileging artifacts over settlements. Chang, like Clark, also recognized that the goals of archaeology were linked to contemporary social interests. He wrote: “[t]he greatest power of archaeological knowledge is at the mercy of its users, and it is the archaeologist’s social responsibility to see that its use is appropriate to his own social consciousness and conscience” (1967:154).

With the emergence of processual archaeology in the 1960s, the social was defined as a subsystem within the broader cultural system. Lewis Binford (1962, 1965) defined the cultural system as the human organism’s extrasomatic means of adaptation, and culture process as the dynamic articulation of environmental and sociocultural subsystems. This focus on culture process was legitimized by neoevolutionary theory borrowed from cultural anthropology, particularly Leslie White (1959) and Julian Steward (1955). One of the first applications of systems theory was Flannery’s (1968) study of subsistence change in Mesoamerican societies. In an influential case study, he argued that hunter-gatherers altered their subsistence regimes to take advantage of genetic changes in maize and beans and this process set in motion a cycle of intensive agriculture that permitted the development of social hierarchies.

During this period, the study of complex societies reemerged as a key interest. Especially influential was the band–tribe–chiefdom–state typology introduced by Elman Service (1962). Considerable research focused on identifying and characterizing chiefdoms as the transitional type dividing simple and complex societies. According to Service, chiefdoms are kinship societies where authority is vested in a priest-chief. Archaeologists were quick to operationalize the chiefdom concept by focusing on food production and storage facilities. Renfrew (1973a), for example, provided a list of twenty characteristics of chiefdoms in his analysis of Neolithic Wessex society in southern England. However, problems soon began to emerge. Earle (1978), for example, called into question the trait-list approach to chiefdoms by showing that redistribution, a trait previously considered to be an essential requirement, did not exist within the Hawaiian context. Feinman and Neitzel (1984) conducted a cross-cultural survey of ethnographically known chiefdoms and documented considerable variability.

Their survey demonstrated that variation was continuous rather than discrete and implied that there were no readily apparent societal modes or subtypes. This result prompted a rethinking of neoevolutionary theory (e.g., Yoffee 1993).

Almost from the beginning, there were critiques of the technological determinism of the early processual archaeology. In his inaugural lecture at Southampton University, Renfrew (1973b) challenged the field to explore the emergence of symbolic systems and art styles. He attributed the reluctance to consider the social to the tendency to artificially separate mind and matter. It was widely believed that the material in the form of technology and subsistence was somehow more accessible than the spiritual as indicated by religious practices. Renfrew then argued that this view was erroneous and the religious and ceremonial observances of societies are not epiphenomenal, but rather crucial to their functioning. For him, social archaeology refers to the reconstruction of social organization of past societies, and “the way they themselves looked upon the world” (1973b:7). Similarly, Redman et al. (1978:1) expressed a frustration with the treatment of the social in contemporary archaeology. They observed that the debates over archaeological epistemology tended to yield two results. On the one hand were “theoretically bold” statements that often went beyond the sophistication of archaeological methods and, on the other, there were “theoretically timid” views often qualified as speculative and tentative. They advocated a social archaeology that integrated increasing methodological expertise and meaningful interpretations.

Among processual archaeologists, Renfrew (1984a) has provided perhaps the most explicit characterization of social archaeology. He is careful to distinguish it from social anthropology, noting that the concerns of the archaeologist overlap with, but are not identical to, those of the social anthropologist. The archaeologist is concerned with the social unit, its political organization, and its relationships with its neighbors. And most significantly, the archaeologist is concerned with material culture – the artifacts, buildings, and other human products that constitute the archaeological record. This has led archaeologists to conduct ethnoarchaeological research among contemporary societies with the goal of understanding regularities in the manufacture and use of material culture. Although Renfrew acknowledged that it was too early to write a manual of social archaeology, he specified five basic topics that it should tackle: societies and space and how landscapes of power are created; networks and flows (trade and interaction); structures of authority concerning monuments and the structure of pre-urban societies; the dynamics of continuous growth as approached through systems thinking; and issues of discontinuity and long-term change (Renfrew 1984b:10).

For most processual archaeologists, social relevance was assumed rather than explicitly discussed. In those cases where it was addressed, it was usually discussed in the context of the application of behavioral generalizations to the management of modern society. Fritz (1973), for example, suggested that since major contemporary problems result from undirected and poorly assimilated technological growth, greater understanding of these processes through archaeological research would be of considerable social benefit. Martin and Plog (1973) went so far as to argue that the analytic objectivity and archaeological derived statements about human behavior might help expose social prejudices and lead to more effective ways of designing social programs and public

education. In a more critical vein, Ford (1973) noted that archaeology had yet to demonstrate its relevance and that its serviceability to humanity would be determined by expanding its research interests. Perhaps the most sophisticated considerations of relevance have been offered by those processual archaeologists influenced by Marxism. Paynter (1983) has observed that the increasing specialization of archaeological work most clearly seen in contract archaeology can be related to corporate interests in controlling a deskilled labor force. Patterson (1986, 1995) has extended this insight by developing an analysis of the class structure of American archaeology.

In 1980, Ian Hodder organized a series of graduate seminars at Cambridge University that, in retrospect, can be seen as the first explicit moves toward a postprocessual archaeology. In his introduction to the volume published from the seminar papers Hodder (1982) offered a sustained critique of processual archaeology and sketched the outlines of a new contextual approach. Hodder's critique singled out the artificial dichotomies between culture and function, individual and society, statics and dynamics, history and process, and the limits of positivism. He argued against Binford's view of culture as man's extrasomatic means of adaptation in favor of the perspective that it is meaningfully constituted. His contextual archaeology, later to be named postprocessual archaeology, was based in part upon Anthony Giddens's (1979) theory of structuration to mediate the excesses of both functionalism (the focus on ecology and economics) and "high" structuralism (the focus on rules and codes). The key element of this approach is the insight that material culture is not simply reflective of social practice but, rather, constitutive of it. He writes: "[t]he effects of symbols, intended and unintended, must be associated with their repeated use and with the 'structuration' of society" (Hodder 1982:10).

Shanks and Tilley (1987b) extended Hodder's critique in their view of social archaeology. Inspired by Laclau and Mouffe (1985), they argue against a social archaeology that is reductionist and essentialist, based upon a priori categories. They questioned the hierarchy of determination whereby the "economic" was privileged in social interpretation as opposed to other institutions such as the "political" and the "religious." Related to this is a skepticism toward universal social units, such as band, tribe, lineage, and mode of production. For them, the social is not a subsystem within the cultural system, but rather the practice of the construction of the social order. Finally, they argue that archaeology itself is a discursive practice and in the mediation of the past and present neither can be reduced to the other. They affirm the importance of rhetoric and the polemic since it is only in the context of the political that reason presents itself as a total system of representing reality. Some have interpreted this as espousing relativism (e.g., Watson 1990). But this seems too harsh, since while Shanks and Tilley (1987a:245) argue for a "radical pluralism" which recognizes multiple pasts produced in congruence with various ethnic, cultural, social, and political views, they explicitly say that all pasts are not equal. Their thesis is that archaeology as a social practice embedded in contemporary power relations should itself be subjected to ideology critique.

There have been several attempts at establishing a dialogue between processual and postprocessual approaches, often with a view toward constructing a unified approach (Preucel 1991; Schiffer 2000a; VanPool and VanPool 1999). Michael Schiffer, for example, has argued that the differences between various approaches are artificial since

all archaeological theory is social theory. He writes: “virtually all theories that archaeologists use to explain behavioral and/or social variability and change, including theories of Darwinian evolution and behavioral ecology, qualify as social” (2000b:1). In one sense, of course, he is correct since all human practices, including archaeology, are social. But it is not the case that all theories take the social as the object of inquiry. It seems overly generous to claim that an approach like selectionism (O’Brien 1996), that considers human agency only in the context of producing variation, can be considered to be social. Bruce Trigger (Chapter 2, this volume) suggests that processual and postprocessual approaches are not so much contradictory as complimentary.

There are, of course, significant non-Anglo-American approaches to the social that have had and continue to have an effect on world archaeology. Here one can identify European, Soviet, Chinese, and Latin American traditions (Hodder 1991; Malina and Vasícek 1990; Patterson 1994; Trigger 1989). The social is often constituted as part of, or alternatively, in reaction to, Marxist perspectives about social welfare in the nation-state. One can also identify indigenous approaches that are beginning to emerge as part of a broader postcolonial discourse (Layton 1989a, 1989b; Watkins 2000). In this case, the social is often located in community health and well-being and not necessarily associated with notions of the individual and free will. The relationships between ideologies expressed by Western and non-Western archaeologies were showcased at the World Archaeological Congress in 1986 where academic freedom and apartheid came into sharp conflict (Ucko 1987). This event, perhaps more than any other, demonstrated the indelibly political nature of archaeology. We now turn to a discussion of social archaeology conceived of as an archaeology of social being and address the concepts of temporality, spatiality, and materiality.

Temporality

It is no exaggeration to say that time is the central obsession of archaeology. The profession is devoted to understanding, in Childe’s (1942) words, “what happened in history.” What counts as the past spans the gamut from “deep time,” the domain of Paleolithic archaeology, to the modern world, the domain of historical archaeology. However, archaeology is itself a product of Time. It exists as a particular kind of disciplinary practice with a historically situated character. Indeed, these two temporal issues are intimately bound together since the birth of archaeology as a discipline is intertwined with the question of the origins of humanity. Archaeology is both about and of Time.

The history of time in archaeology is one of the transition from religious to secular chronologies and increasing technical control in measurement. In 1658 Archbishop Ussher held that “from the evening ushering in the first day of the world, to that midnight which began the first day of the Christian era, there were 4003 years, seventy days, and six temporarie howers” and from this deduced that man was created on Friday, October 28 (quoted in Daniel 1981:34). This view was extremely influential and lasted until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Two developments finally laid it to rest. These were the doctrine of uniformitarianism developed in geology by Charles Lyell and the recognition of the co-occurrence of stone tools and extinct animals by prominent antiquarians such as Boucher de Perthes. In 1859 Charles

Darwin published his major work *On the Origin of Species*. Although it had little to say about the origins of man, later of his publications and those by Thomas Huxley presented the principles of human evolution. This new view of the antiquity of man and evolution of life was controversial among the devout, since it was seen as contradicting the book of Genesis and thus potentially dangerous to the Christian faith. Even today the tensions between religious fundamentalism and science are most concretely expressed with respect to evolution.

The necessary step in the control of time was the introduction of absolute dating as a means of marking universal Time. Prior to absolute dating, scholars such as Oscar Montelius and V. Gordon Childe relied upon relative dating based upon stylistic similarity to correlate archaeological sequences across broad geographical regions. The prevailing assumption was that basic technologies, such as metallurgy or megalithic architecture, emerged in “civilized” areas of the ancient Near East and diffused to the “barbarous” areas of Europe. In the late 1940s, radiocarbon dating revolutionized archaeology by permitting comparisons of archaeological sequences anywhere in the world. Later dendrochronological calibrations led to the discovery that monuments of Europe were older than those that had been posited to be their progenitors (Renfrew 1973c). Numerous other absolute dating methods have now been used in or developed for archaeology including potassium-argon, thermoluminescence, archaeomagnetism, obsidian hydration, etc. (Aitken 1990). The theory underlying these techniques varies, but the principle is the same. Time’s arrow runs in one direction only and the passage of time can be measured by means of standardized units.

Coupled with the refinement of methods of indicating absolute time is a growing appreciation of different scales and rhythms of time. Especially influential has been the *Annales* school of social and economic history and the work of Fernand Braudel (1973). This approach is best known for its emphasis upon multiple temporal scales defined by short-term events or sociopolitical time, medium-term cycles or socio-economic time, and long-term trajectories or environmental time. Hodder (1987), for example, has been inspired by this conception of time even as he has criticized it in favor of a structure and agency perspective. Similarly, Bradley (1991) uses Braudel’s typology as a starting point, but argues that there are elements of social time, such as art styles, monuments, and depositions, that are better understood from the perspective of the long term. Knapp (1992) has observed that while most scholars find Braudel’s structural-ecological determinism to be seriously flawed, they are attracted to its flexibility and capacity to grow with the demands of new developments in method and theory.

But time and temporality are not the same thing. Temporality can be glossed as the temporal imaginary. It is an inseparable part of our very being-in-the-world. Temporality is ultimately grounded in how people articulate with both the linear and recursive elements of their lived experience – initiations, marriages, divorces, the birth of children, the death of friends and relatives. According to Martin Heidegger (1962), humans possess no pre-given essence, rather we are what we become through our experiences in the life course. Our existence is “ahead of itself” in that our dealings with specific situations serve as models for future courses of action and each of our actions plays a role in shaping our lives. Edmund Husserl (1970, 1977) holds that we are aware of perceptual objects by virtue of being aware of our bodies and how they interact with

objects. Stated another way, all awareness is mediated by our bodies. For Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the Self only exists as an embodied temporalization. He writes: "I am installed on a pyramid of time which has been me. I take up a field and invent myself (but not without my temporal equipment), just as I move about in the world (but not without the unknown mass of my body)" (1964:14–15). Taken together, these perspectives reveal the phenomenological nature of time as an embodied temporality.

In what is perhaps the first explicit archaeological engagement with temporality, Mark Leone (1978) has suggested that time can be seen as an ideology of capitalism and we, as archaeologists and as people, must understand how we use it to conceptualize the past. As he puts it, "the content of a segment of time as well as the segmentation of time itself is a creation stemming from a cultural assumption about what time is" (1978:35). This insight has been crucial to all subsequent treatments of temporality, even those from radically different theoretical frameworks (e.g., Ramenofsky 1998). Shanks and Tilley (1987a, 1987b), for example, have adopted this view and made it central to their vision of postprocessual archaeology. Their thesis is that time is not simply a neutral concept associated with a radiocarbon chronology or a book publication date. Rather it is a political judgment made in the present about a particular lived past. They are especially critical of cultural evolutionary theory which, they argue, promotes a homogeneous and abstract notion of time in order to permit cross-cultural comparisons. For them, in order to preserve the time of the past we must accept the past's coexistence with the present.

The notion of temporality has most recently been addressed by archaeologists inspired by the writings of Heidegger. Gosden (1994), for example, argues that time is not simply a mental ordering device but rather an aspect of bodily engagement with the world. It is a style of existence, a human dimension that unfolds in action. He observes that "human beings have a peculiar temporal relation to the world, and this temporality must be the starting point for all exploration" (1994:9). Similarly, Thomas (1996) has proposed that history is a lived process in which the relationships between humans and their world are continually transformed. He notes that it is "impossible to investigate time scientifically [as an external reality] without first having the kind of experiential temporality which distinguishes human beings" (1996:236). Karlsson (2001:55–56) has suggested that there is no gap between the past and present that can be bridged. Rather the temporality of the interpreter is such that "the character of having been" is intimately interwoven with both "the present" and "the future as approaching." Because our temporality is known only through our use of time, the traditional view of time is anchored in temporality.

In Chapter 5, Clive Gamble and Erica Gittins draw attention to the temporality of social archaeology through a consideration of Paleolithic archaeology. Their central thesis is that a social archaeology must acknowledge its origin myths, and preeminent among these is the idea of the Paleolithic. Origins research has considerable purchase because it is so deeply rooted in Western thought (Conkey with Williams 1991; Moser 1998). Indeed, the significance of the Paleolithic as a time period and type of archaeology is derived from its relationship to the origins of humanity. Inspired by Derrida's notion of logocentrism, Gamble and Gittins critique standard origins research as constraining and even misleading in its entanglement with "top-down" theories of social evolution. They advocate "bottom-up" theories of how individuals are constituted

through their bodies, culture, self, and personhood because these issues relate to the creation of society through interaction. They conclude that a new Paleolithic archaeology constituted in these terms would significantly alter not only the Paleolithic's relationship with the rest of archaeology, but also the relationship that the West has with its own identity and past.

Spatiality

Archaeology is similarly about and located in space. It is about peoples, societies, and cultures that once inhabited, or indeed still inhabit, particular localities in the landscape. It addresses the movement of peoples and population diasporas, the trade and exchange of goods and commodities, and the circulation of ideologies and beliefs. Simultaneously, it is also a social practice largely based in Anglo-American institutions and largely dominated by the English language (Olsen 1991). Indeed, its spread throughout the world can be associated with the processes of colonialism (Trigger 1989) and, significantly, the emergence of postcolonial discourses is intimately tied to this process (Gosden, chapter 7 and 2001; Schmidt and Patterson 1995).

The history of archaeology's engagement with space can be characterized by a trend toward increased precision with which space is rendered. As Clarke (1977:2) has noted, while there was a strong interest in spatial information among all contemporary schools of archaeology, from the Russian to the Australasian, there has been a marked difference in emphasis. For example, the Austro-German school of anthropogeographers (1880–1900) developed the formal mapping of attributes and artifacts to explain the distribution of past cultures conceived of in ethnic terms. This was taken up most notably by Gustaf Kossinna (1912) in an attempt to support German nationalism. By the turn of the nineteenth century, archaeological distribution maps were a standard, if intuitive, approach in European archaeology. In many ways, British archaeology parallels the German model. There was a long tradition of relating archaeological sites to their environmental setting in the landscape. Both Crawford (1912) and Fleure (1921) were trained as geographers and their mapping helped establish a standard for future archaeological work.

By contrast, in America, the emphasis was largely upon ecological setting, social organization, and settlement pattern. Steward's (1938) pioneering work in Great Basin ethnography, in particular, stimulated the mapping of sites on a regional scale with the purpose of relating them to their environments. It directly stimulated Willey's (1953) settlement study of the Viru valley in Peru which established "settlement pattern archaeology." Willey (1953:1) defined his approach as the study of

the way in which man disposed himself over the landscape on which he lived. It refers to dwellings, to their arrangement, and to the nature and disposition of other buildings pertaining to community life. These settlements reflect the natural environment, the level of technology on which the builders operated, and various institutions of social interaction and control which the culture maintained. Because settlement patterns are, to a large extent, directly shaped by widely held cultural needs, they offer a strategic starting point for the functional interpretation of archaeological cultures.

This approach involved the mapping of sites according to their functional and hierarchical places within the settlement system and became broadly influential throughout the world.

In the late 1970s, both British and American archaeologies converged upon a geographical paradigm consistent with the growing influence of positivism in the social sciences. They imported a series of sophisticated spatial techniques in order to enhance explanatory rigor (Flannery 1976; Hodder and Orton 1976). Among the techniques adopted were nearest neighbor analysis, network analysis, and activity area analysis, each of which were applied at different scales. These approaches permitted the comparison of empirical patterns to expectations under a random model. Although maps continued to be used, especially in the context of diffusion and trend surface simulations, graphic representations of site data fitted to probability distributions became an influential form of analysis. This approach to spatial representation, however, can be seen as mechanistic and asocial and a number of archaeologists, like many human geographers, began to have doubts about its ultimate value in understanding the past.

Unquestionably the most sophisticated spatial technique used in archaeology today is Geographical Information Systems (GIS) (Aldenderfer and Maschner 1996; Allen, Green, and Zubrow 1990; Lock and Stancic 1995). This approach was introduced in the early 1980s and has now come to dominate spatial analysis in both academic and cultural resource management contexts (Westcott and Brandon 2000; Wheatley and Gillings 2002). Basically, GIS approaches are spatially referenced databases that permit the collection, manipulation, and visualization of data through time and across space. They typically consist of two parts, a relational database which allows searching and a graphing database which permits visual representation. GIS has now been effectively applied to a range of problems such as predictive modeling, landscape analysis, and human ecology (Aldenderfer and Maschner 1996). Some have argued that GIS is a pure method, that is to say, "theory-free," and there is no necessary correlation between a particular data type or category and the use of GIS to solve a problem (Aldenderfer 1996:17). This view, however, cannot be maintained since the categories deemed relevant are in fact linked to, if not isomorphic with, the kinds of GIS techniques that are used in analysis.

Spatiality refers to the "objective" conceptions of space that are necessarily created through material practices and processes in the reproduction of social life. It has developed as a key issue in critical postmodern geography. One of the most important moves toward a consideration of spatiality is Gregory's (1978:120) observation that the analysis of spatial structure is not derivative and secondary to the analysis of social structure. As an example, he notes that class relations are not merely expressed within a spatial structure, they are in fact constituted through that same structure. Spatial structures and social structures have a recursive relationship: the one cannot be theorized without considering the other. Soja (1989) has provided a historical account of the devaluing of space brought about by the emergence of modernization. He notes that modernization can be linked to objective processes of structural change associated with the ability of capitalism to develop and survive. It is thus a continuous process of societal restructuring that is periodically accelerated owing to geographical and historical dynamics of modes of production. In a influential critique, Harvey (1989) has

argued that capitalism is characterized by time–space compression where innovations in transportation annihilate space through time. There is a speeding up of the pace of life such that the world always seems just about to collapse on us. The despatialization of life is part of what he calls the “postmodern condition.”

Spatiality has also been explored in anthropology through the creation of identities within local and global societies. Moore (1986), for example, has emphasized how spatial categories and orientations are linked to the ordering of social experience in her ethnographic research among the Endo. She notes that the importance of village life lies in its “architectonic” integration of the social, symbolic, and economic experiences. The houses, storage units, house compounds, and divisions of the fields all contribute to a sense of social being. Appadurai (1996) has emphasized the fragmentation of modern subjectivities and deterritorialization due to electronic media and mass migration. The product of this is the creation of ethnoscares inhabited by people with hybrid identities and allegiances to multiple places. These new transnational and diasporic identities are gaining political power and he suggests that they pose a challenge to the dominance of the nation-state.

The study of spatiality is beginning to emerge as a significant focus in social archaeology. Much of this literature has been influenced by phenomenology. Tilley (1994), for example, has proposed that Neolithic British society can be understood from a consideration of the experience of the landscape. He notes that cairn and barrow, cursus and causeway enclosures signify a will to make manifest in the land ancestral powers, and that this is in turn linked to the control of knowledge of the ancestral past. These monuments objectified ancestral powers as resources to be manipulated according to the interests of particular individuals or social groups. Robin (2002) has proposed a concept of “lived space” that merges the material and the symbolic, and is socially constructed and socially experienced. She argues that the ways in which people organize living spaces defines and is defined by all aspects of their lives – social, political, economic, and ritual. In her study of the Maya community of Chan Noohol she shows that the ordered construction of place came into being as people lived out the spatial rhythms of their daily lives. She writes: “[j]ust as the places and meanings people construct influence subsequent actions in the world, people’s ongoing actions continue to construct and reconstruct spatial meanings” (2002:262).

Materiality

Material culture is the traditional domain of archaeology and, in many ways, its very reason for being. It is seemingly an unproblematic category referring to the physical traces of past human activities, classically referring to artifacts, but also encompassing buildings, graves, caches, hoards, monuments, and the like. It is an indicator of humanity’s intrusion into the natural world and our way of demarcating the natural and cultural with the knowledge that they inhabit permeable categories (Glassie 1999:1). And yet, material culture is not a natural category; it has its own genealogy. Material culture, as we understand it today, could be seen a product of the Victorian collecting traditions of the nineteenth century and intimately implicated in Enlightenment notions of universality, colonial expansion, industrialism, and the birth of consumer culture

(Buchli 2002:12). Archaeology has more recently moved from analyses of material culture as a corpus of objects and things, to understanding the more dynamic relationships forged under the rubric of materiality. Meskell (2004) argues that materiality “takes as its remit the exploration of the situated experiences of material life, the constitution of the object world and concomitantly its shaping of human experience.”

There is a growing body of scholarship on materiality in anthropology and sociology (Appadurai 1986; Attfield 2000; Bourdieu 1977; Miller 1987; Strathern 1988; Toren 1999). It is now possible to identify a series of topics or research areas ranging from the philosophical to the practical including objectification, the social life of things, and consumption. Objectification is usually defined as the process by which people constitute themselves through things. This means more than simply objects signifying a particular kind of social distinction. Rather it implies that the meanings we give to things are intimately bound up in how we give meaning to our lives. Gell (1992, 1998) has even argued that artifacts have agency. His point is that although artifacts are inanimate they can be seen as agents because they produce real-world effects. The implication here is that the traditional subject–object divide can no longer be maintained and what is needed are studies of people–thing relationships. A sophisticated example from a semiotic perspective is Munn’s (1986) study of the material practices of bodily spacetime among the Gawa in Papua New Guinea.

The social-life-of-things is a research focus on the circulation of objects though and across different commodity states. Appadurai (1996) positions commodities as things with precise forms of social potential and which are thus distinguishable from products, objects, goods, and artifacts. Specifically, he is concerned with the classic issue of exchange, circulation, and value as culturally embedded, and traverses the familiar ground of *kula* and *keda*, cargo cults, and commodity fetishism. Kopytoff (1986) provides a historical dimension to this view by considering things as having mutual or overlapping biographies. No object is isolated, unconnected from other objects or a dense network of relationships. Yet Kopytoff refers to inherently alienable commodities and networks of exchange. Perhaps his most evocative statement is that society constrains the world of people and the world of things, and in constructing objects society also constructs people. As Meskell (2004) suggests, archaeologists influenced by Kopytoff have tended to focus upon the afterlife of artifacts, the shifting contexts of things in and out of their original archaeological contexts (Hamilakis 1999; Seip 1999). Often these reflect the politics of museum display or colonial collection and disembedding, the renegotiation of meaning through the life-history of the object (Gosden and Marshall 1999: 170).

Yet another direction for approaching materiality is through the notion of consumption (Carrier 1995; Miller 1987, 1995, 1998b). The standard view of material culture drawn in part from Marxist perspectives on labor value has emphasized production and exchange. Indeed, Marx paid very little attention to consumption. This has had the unacknowledged consequence of treating consumption as a nonproblematic practice. There is a growing awareness of consumption as a social process and not as a simple economic transaction (Miller 1987, 1995). Indeed, consumption is part of how people define themselves and their identities from the clothes they wear to the furnishings in their homes. Social practices of consumption serve as ways of conforming to social norms and beliefs as well as a means of challenging power and authority. Recent

research is focusing on seemingly mundane activities such as shopping, reconstructed as a social process mediated by values of love and sacrifice (Miller 1998a; Miller et al. 1998).

Archaeology is addressing materiality from several different directions, including social technology, material-culture-as-text, and embodiment. Elements of the social technology approach are seen in Lechtman's (1977) early work on "technological style" and her observation that technologies are not simply a means of adaptation, but "particular sorts of cultural phenomena that reflect cultural preoccupations and express them in the very style of the technology itself" (Lechtman and Steinberg 1979:139). This approach has been more fully developed through a consideration of the interrelations of technology and social agency. Dobres (2000) regards technology as embodied social practice that is a part of performance unfolding in, but not dictated by, the material world. For her, technology is best conceptualized as a verb, not a noun, and, as such, an unfinished process. Following a relatively independent French intellectual tradition, Leroi-Gourhan (1993) and, more recently, Lemonnier (1992, 1993), have pursued the material aspects of technology, interrogating the cultural logics that underlie choice and ultimately transform society.

The material-culture-as-text approach was an early move in the poststructural engagement with materiality. In his book *Reading the Past*, Hodder (1986) proposed the idea of material culture as a text to be read. His perspective is thoroughly structural and he argues that objective meanings need to be built up through a contextual consideration of similarities and differences. By 1988 Hodder (1989) adopted a poststructural interpretation of text. He regarded material culture to be implicated in practices designed to accomplish social goals. He outlined a series of comparisons between linguistic and material meanings, emphasizing the non-arbitrary nature of material meanings, their non-discursive and often subconscious quality, their inherent polysemy, and their durability. He concluded that the study of material culture raised, even more so than the study of language, the relationship between structure and context. This approach was initially influential among some postprocessualists (Tilley 1991), but has now been subjected to critique. Tilley (1999), for example, has proposed the concept of metaphor as a way of linking thought, action, and material culture.

Embodiment is emerging as a key approach to understanding materiality, specifically addressing the locus of the body as a material grounding for subjective experience. This is yet another significant domain where the once rigid taxonomies of subjects and objects are gradually being rethought through nuanced contextual analyses. According to Joyce (chapter 4), embodiment can be understood as the shaping of a person's experience of subjectivity that is simultaneously the outcome of material and discursive actions. Joyce (1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2002) has carried out a series of analyses of material culture from pre-Columbian Maya and Aztec societies using insights drawn from the work of Judith Butler. These include ceramic and stone vessels, figurines, and ear ornaments, as well as burial practices. She identifies recursive relationships between the treatment of living and dead bodies that are mediated by artifacts in the objectification of moral values and bodily ideals. Meskell (1996, 1999, 2002; Meskell and Joyce 2003) has linked embodiment to bodily experience, focusing on the materiality of the body, the social context of the body, the operation of sex and/or gender on the body, and the singularity of living through our body. In her studies of ancient Egypt, she

emphasizes the textual and material culture dimensions of Egyptian individuals whose very embodiment transcended death.

The challenge posed by the study of materiality entails deconstructing our own notions of objects and subjects as discrete and essential entities that inhabit particular, impermeable worlds. Recent writing on the specific contours of agentic objects or fetishes, as interlocutors between persons, things, and worlds, undermines the fixity of our imposed boundaries. Meskell (2004) cautions that we should acknowledge that humans create their object worlds, no matter how many different trajectories are possible and how subject-like objects become. Materiality manifests a presence of power in realizing the world, crafting thing from non-thing, subject from non-subject. This affecting presence is shaped through enactment with the physical world, projecting or imprinting ourselves into the world (Armstrong 1981:19). Studies of materiality cannot simply focus upon the characteristics of objects but must engage in the dialectic of people and things.

Conclusions

Archaeology is popularly regarded as the purveyor of knowledge about human evolutionary processes and past lives. It provides an appreciation of where we are by revealing where we came from and, in this, gives us guidance for where we might be going. This is clearly an important social use of archaeology and one closely associated with its Enlightenment origins. It is part of the ethic of universal humanism espoused by science. In different ways, it is adopted by all types of nationalist archaeologies from Israel, to Iraq, to China, to the United States. Archaeology is also being used in a developing counter-hegemonic discourse by indigenous peoples throughout the world as they seek to control the representation of their pasts as a means of reclaiming their presents. This can best be seen in the debates over the antiquities trade (Brodie, Doole, and Renfrew 2001; Renfrew 2000) and repatriation (Fforde, Hubert, and Turnbull 2002; Fine-Dare 2002; Mihesuah 2000). This too is an appropriate social use of archaeology, given the historical legacy of colonialism and the new homogenizing tendencies of globalization. The moving articulations of these different discourses will contribute to the shaping of future political forms and social interests.

While recognizing the centrality of these perspectives, we wish to offer a different, but related, view of archaeology, one that acknowledges the social construction of time, space, and material culture as constituent of social being. We have called this social archaeology. This approach is somewhat different from the study of the relationships of the social to culture, or the social to social organization, or the social and contemporary society. Rather it engages with how different peoples inscribe meaning in time-space, spacetime, and embodied time and, through this process of inscription, construct themselves. As Soja (1996:46) writes: “all social relations become real and concrete, a part of our lived social existence, only when they are spatially ‘inscribed’ – that is, *concretely represented* – in the social production of social space.” Material culture is fundamentally implicated in the process of this concrete representation. Archaeology is particularly well positioned to address the material configurations of social time and

social space. In this way, it can contribute to the broader project of developing social theory for the twenty-first century.

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The “Social” in Archaeological Theory: An Historical and Contemporary Perspective

Ian Hodder

The central importance of the social in archaeological theory has emerged over recent decades. Through the twentieth century as a whole one can identify an overall shift from the “cultural” to the “social” in theoretical discussions within archaeology. This is a grand claim and there are many exceptions and vicissitudes, but I hope in this chapter to demonstrate the shift and to explain its importance.

An Historical Perspective

It has long been recognized that the archaeology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Europe and North America was primarily concerned with documenting culture-historical sequences and influences. In the United States these interests were intimately tied to the way in which cultural anthropology as a whole developed through the Boasian school and the codification of the four-field approach. In Britain and Europe, the concern with cultural definition grew out of the closer links between archaeology and history and the Classical world. Later changes in the definition of culture and society within archaeology also followed or responded to changes within anthropology and related disciplines. But my concern here is to focus on the effect of these changes within archaeology.

The culture concept, insofar as it was theorized by Childe and others, concerned shared traits. Stereotypically these shared traits were pot styles and fibulae types, but for many authors they included social features. Thus the social was seen as part of the cultural. For Walter Taylor (1948:103) the subject matter of archaeology was “cultural,” and in his theorizing, the social aspects of culture are those involving shared traits. But there is little specific attention to the social itself; the focus is on culture.

A partitive notion of culture, in which the social is a subset of the cultural whole, is perhaps most clearly indicated in Hawkes’s (1954) response to Taylor. Hawkes, in presenting his famous “ladder of inference,” argued that in achieving understanding of past cultures it was relatively easy to infer from archaeological phenomena the techniques that produced them. On the next rung of the ladder it was possible to infer

subsistence economies. Harder was inference about the social and political institutions of the group, and hardest of all, at the top of the ladder, was inference about religious institutions and spiritual life. For Hawkes, the social rung dealt with settlement patterns and it involved analyses in order to see if special, larger, chiefly huts could be identified. It dealt with burial data to see if ranking could be observed (1954:161–162).

For Grahame Clark too, the social was a subset of culture as a whole. As a prehistorian he valued information from social anthropology in assisting the interpretation of early cultures. In his book *Archaeology and Society* (1939 [1957]) he saw culture as made up of component parts such as transport, technology, trade, and religion, but also social organization (1939 [1957]:175). Social units are “the main groups through and by which culture is shared and transmitted from one generation to another” (ibid.:169). Clark certainly gives social organization a central role in the cultural system because of its place in the transmission of culture. He also discusses demography, trade, specialization of production, and social differentiation as key parts of the archaeological account of the social. Language, writing, art, science, and law are also seen as inextricably social. Although for Clark the social remains a component of the cultural, his links at Cambridge with social anthropologists possibly led him to a greater emphasis on the social than is found amongst American colleagues influenced by the opposing tradition of cultural anthropology.

Childe is often identified as one of the major theorists regarding the notion of culture in archaeology (e.g., 1925). But his Marxist interests also led him to describe (1960) the evolution of societies in stages defined by social theorists and ethnographers (as the savagery, barbarism, civilization scheme of Morgan). These same Marxist leanings also led Childe to discussions of the internal workings of societies that involved sophisticated accounts of social relations. In his 1939 book *Man Makes Himself* he looked at how cultural development in the Near East is very much concerned ultimately with adaptation to the environment. But he also recognized that it is social mechanisms that allow adaptation. He showed how information about survival is passed down through social traditions. He saw language as a social product, with its meanings created through the agreement of people. He saw discoveries and inventions in technologies as being social, linked to the emergence of specialized production and concentrations of wealth. Social and ideological mechanisms can also come to retard progress in his model, and in other work (e.g., 1952) he argued that cultural development became stagnated in the Ancient Near East in comparison with Europe, because of social differences between despotic and superstitious elites in the East and more entrepreneurial, independent specialists and elites in Europe. But in the end, even for Childe, the social was just a subsystem within a wider cultural whole. It was thus dependent on other aspects of life, especially the economy and environment. Thus, for example, “on the large alluvial plains and riverside flatlands the need for extensive public works to drain and irrigate the land and to protect the settlement would tend to consolidate social organization and to centralize the economic system” (1939:159).

There was another sense, too, in which archaeology had a social dimension during these culture-historical, diffusionist, and evolutionary periods. For many, archaeology had a social role. Many archaeologists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries felt a social responsibility to provide museums for wider publics, even if the message advocated in those museums was paternalistic, nationalist, and imperialist. Some theo-

rized at great length about social responsibility. At the end of his *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* published in 1904, Flinders Petrie argued that the study of the past and archaeology led to social union and "the responsibility of man for man" (1904:193). Grahame Clark discussed in 1934 the political links between archaeology and the state, and Childe (1949) discussed the social construction of archaeological knowledge.

The notion that the social is a part of the cultural remained in the New Archaeology, and in processual archaeology. The social was now often identified as a subsystem within an overall system. The frequent use of the term "sociocultural system" to describe the system as a whole perhaps identifies an increased emphasis on the social in processual archaeology. Indeed, much emphasis was expended using social terms such as band, tribe, chiefdom or state to describe archaeological assemblages. Today a parallel practice is found amongst processual archaeologists who categorize societies in terms of social complexity (Johnson and Earle 1987). But in practice in much processual archaeology it remained the case that the social subsystem remained subordinate to the environment and to economic and technological subsystems. The intellectual debt owed by processual archaeology to ecological and materialist approaches assured that social relations were seen as deriving from or based upon other areas of life.

The continued partitive view of culture and the social is seen in Binford's (1962) distinction between technomic, sociotechnic, and ideotechnic artifacts. Some artifacts were part of the social subsystem but others were not. For David Clarke, too, the social was a subset of the overall "sociocultural system." The "social subsystem" is "the hierarchical network of inferred personal relationships, including kinship and rank status" (1968:102). His own work on the Iron Age Glastonbury site attempted to infer kinship organization from settlement data and material culture distributions (1972). In the United States, a parallel move sought postmarital residence behavior from ceramic distributions within sites (e.g., Longacre 1970). Although these early attempts to "play the ethnographer" in the past and infer prehistoric kinship were ultimately unsuccessful, they were part of a wider and successful effort by processual archaeologists to use settlement and burial data to make inferences about social group size and ranking.

A good example of a processual archaeologist with a strong commitment to the social is Colin Renfrew. He argued for the ability for archaeologists to reconstruct past social subsystems in his inaugural lecture at Southampton University (Renfrew 1973). Later, in his book *Approaches to Social Archaeology*, he said that he was concerned to make "inferences of a social nature from the archaeological data" (1984:4). Like Clark before him, he wanted to make alliances with social anthropology, and he defined social archaeology as the reconstruction of past social systems and relations. Most of his work at this stage involved trying to identify the degree of social ranking in society and the systems of exchange between elites and social groups. He was also interested in issues of past identity and ethnicity. In a later inaugural lecture, at Cambridge University (Renfrew 1982), he argued for a further shift from the social to the cognitive. In defining a cognitive-processual archaeology (see also Renfrew and Zubrow 1994), it can be argued that Renfrew saw the cognitive as somehow separable from the social — one can separate cognitive processes in the mind from their social contexts. This is a claim denied by much social theory and by postprocessual archaeology, as we shall see. The definition of a cognitive-processual archaeology again shows that for Renfrew the

social is just a subsystem that can be separated from other realms of life, including the cognitive.

The Centrality of the Social in Postprocessual Archaeology

In recent decades, not only the mind, but even the economy and the environment have come to be seen as social. The body and sex, too, have been pried from biology and placed firmly within the social realm. The overall goal of interpretation in archaeology has come to be to understand the past in social terms (e.g., Tilley 1993). It is important to make a distinction here between society and the social. Shanks and Tilley (1987b:57) argued that “society, in the sense of the social totality of a logic of necessity, doesn’t exist” and, because of this, it is impossible “to specify society as the object of archaeology.” Their argument here was directed against the notion of society as a totality. They argued that it would be unhelpful to shift from cultural “wholes” to the societal “whole.” Rather, the focus was to be placed on the active negotiation of social roles and processes as part of a continual process. All aspects of daily life could be seen as part of this social process.

This shift to the view that, crudely, “everything is social” has a number of causes. One is the shift within Marxist approaches inside and outside archaeology from the 1960s onwards toward the centrality of the social relations of production. Writers such as Friedman and Rowlands (1978) had much impact on European archaeology when they espoused a structural Marxism in which the search for prestige goods could be a prime mover in the evolution of social complexity. This move perhaps opened the way for postprocessual archaeologists to embrace social theorists from social anthropology (e.g., Bourdieu 1977) and sociology (Giddens 1979) who were interested in examining the micro-processes of daily life rather than the macro-economic constraints and interactions. These small-scale practices were seen as fundamentally linked to power. They were thus seen as social rather than as simply the product of “cultural” differences between societies. They were not just another cultural trait, but were the building blocks of society as a whole. Everything, from the body and its daily practices in the home, to the technology, economy, and landscape, came to be seen as social. There was no separate social subsystem or social rung on the inferential ladder as all aspects of life were seen as integrated and dispersed along chains of social meaning (Tilley 1993:20).

Thomas (1993:76) looks back from a postprocessual point of view and suggests that “generally, ever since we have had something which could be called a *social archaeology*, we have tended to set our sights on what might be seen as somewhat grandiose targets: social organization, ranking, stratification, empires.” In a postprocessual perspective, the aims are perhaps yet more grandiose, as everything becomes social. But on the other hand, Thomas is right that in practice the focus becomes less grand as every mundane aspect of daily life is explored for social meaning. The aims become more particular and specific; more holistic and less partitive.

Another important factor that encouraged an emphasis on the social in all aspects of life was the critique of positivism. Most processual archaeologists had espoused some version of the idea that theories could be tested in archaeology. From whatever source

hypotheses derived, there could be an independence and an objectivity in the testing process. Theory could be confronted with data. In particular, much play was given to the idea of “middle-range” theories that could mediate between high-level theory and data (Kosso 1991; Tschauer 1996). But the critiques of these positivist views had emerged early and continued through the last decades of the twentieth century. Wylie (1989) pointed out that it was ironic that processual archaeology should adopt a framework – positivism – just as it was undergoing radical critique within philosophy and in the social sciences. Gradually, this critique spilled over into archaeology and it is one of the main reasons behind the emergence of postprocessual archaeology.

But there were also more down-to-earth reasons for the critique of positivism. It became clear that many of the communities served by archaeology saw the idea of neutral testing of theories as itself a socially biased claim. Many indigenous groups found themselves in conflict with archaeological scientists over the idea that science was socially neutral. On behalf of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, Langford (1983) argued that objective science does not have a natural right to study her culture. Mamani Condori (1989) talked on behalf of the Aymara in Bolivia and maintained the value of traditional knowledge in opposition to the positivist scientific attitude. In the United States, the conflict over the reburial of human remains of Native Americans has resulted in much disillusion over the sustainability of a neutral science perspective. “Scientific knowledge does not constitute a privileged view of the past that in and of itself makes it better than oral traditions. It is simply another way of knowing the past” (Anyon et al. 1996:15). A critique of neutral science also emerged from a feminist critique – a wide range of studies have shown both flagrant and subtle gender bias in supposedly neutral archaeological science (e.g., Gero 1996).

In more general terms, I have argued (Hodder 1999) that the increased concern with alternative perspectives, multivocality, and identity issues in archaeology is linked to globalism, post-industrial societies, the information age, and so on. Writers such as Castells (1996) have looked at broad globalizing trends in economic systems, and Arjun Appadurai (1996), working from an anthropological perspective, has discussed the cultural components of this process, describing a new fluidity whereby the emphasis is on transnationalism and diaspora. Archaeology developed as a discipline in relation to nationalism and colonialism. Its embrace of the natural science model was a necessary part of its role as guardian of the nation’s past. It can be argued today that the nation-state is being undermined by international companies, by the dispersal of production, consumption, and exchange, by large-scale environmental changes, by the internet, and so on. There has been much discussion of global and local processes that play off each other and together undermine the nation-state. This is still a highly unequal process that favors the already developed centers of economic wealth, but it has new characteristics in which fluidity and diversity are important components, and in which a wide range of alternative voices have made themselves heard.

So what is the alternative to a positivist, hypothesis-testing archaeology? Many positivist archaeologists have stuck to some form of watered-down version of the hypothesis-testing idea because they fear that the only alternative is a form of relativism in which “anything goes.” In other words, they fear that if there is no possibility of objective testing, then anyone’s statement about the past, including fascist manipulations of the past, is equally as good as anyone else’s. I know of no archaeologist who

would take this line. There are various forms of relativism (Lampeter Archaeology Workshop 1997; Wylie 1994), and most archaeologists would accept that archaeological interpretation is and should be answerable to data. The question is really just a matter of “how.”

Most postprocessual archaeologists, and in my view most processual archaeologists in practice, use some form of hermeneutic relationship with their data. Even if processual archaeologists claim to be doing a positivist science, in my view (Hodder 1999) this is often false consciousness, and a desire to ape the natural sciences. In practice, archaeology is not for the most part an experimental science. Rather, it is an historical science that works not by testing theories against data but by fitting lots of different types of data together as best it can in order to make a coherent story. This emphasis on fitting rather than testing is at the heart of the hermeneutic approach. Hermeneutics deals with the theory of interpretation as opposed to explanation (Ricoeur 1971; Thomas 2001; Tilley 1991). Within the positivist, processual approach it was claimed that events in the past could be explained by showing that they were examples of general covering statements. Theories of interpretation place more emphasis on making sense of the event in relation to what is going on around it, whilst acknowledging that generalizations have to be used. In the hermeneutic approach it is recognized that the researcher comes to the data with much prior knowledge and prejudices. The data are perceived within these prejudices. The researcher then works by fitting all the data together so that the parts make up a coherent whole. The interpretation that works best both fits our general theories and prejudices and it makes most sense of more data than other interpretations. The process is not circular – that is, one does not just impose one’s prejudices on the data. The objects of study can cause us to change our ideas about the whole. But never in a way divorced from society and from perspective. There is thus a dialectical (dialogical) relationship between past and present and between object and subject. There is never a socially neutral moment in the scientific process, but equally, socially biased accounts can be transformed by interaction with objects of study.

For all these reasons, then, postprocessual archaeologists came to place more emphasis on the social than in earlier approaches in archaeology. In early postprocessual archaeology, two good examples of this tendency are the ideas that material culture is meaningfully constituted and that it is active. One source of such ideas was ethnoarchaeological research carried out in the 1970s and 1980s by myself (Hodder 1982) and a group of students based at Cambridge (e.g., Braithwaite 1982; Donley 1982, 1987; Lane 1987; Mawson 1989; Moore 1982, 1987; Welbourn 1984). These studies, and the early development of postprocessual archaeology, were very much influenced by semiotic and structuralist approaches in anthropology (e.g., Barthes 1973; Douglas 1970; Leach 1976; Lévi-Strauss 1968, 1970; Tambiah 1969; Turner 1969). But parallel developments were underway in the United States within historical archaeology (Deetz 1977; Glassie 1975) and in feminist-inspired prehistoric studies (Conkey 1989). These semiotic and structuralist ideas led to the notion that material culture has a meaning which goes beyond the physical properties of an object, and derives from the network of social entanglements and strategies within which the object is embroiled. This idea was explored in relation to historical archaeology in the United States (e.g., Leone 1982), in relation to ethnoarchaeological studies of modern material culture (e.g.,

Parker Pearson 1982), and in relation to feminist understandings of, for example, space and ceramic variation (e.g., Moore 1986).

The second, and overlapping, idea is that material culture is not just a tool that is passively used by humans as they follow strategies dictated by environment, adaptation, or societal rules. Rather, material culture is used actively to have an effect in the social world. It is used by agents intentionally pursuing strategies and monitoring outcomes – even if the intentions are often not consciously understood. Thus it is difficult to predict how material culture will be used – an interpretation of particular strategies is needed. This second idea partly derives from the ethnoarchaeological work already described. For example, in my work in the Lake Baringo area in Kenya, I found that despite frequent interaction between three regional groups (“tribes”), their material culture exhibited a number of distinct stylistic differences (Hodder 1982). Rather than attributing such patterning to “cultural” norms, I argued instead that material culture styles were used strategically to maintain notions of difference between the three groups, and that in this sense material culture could be said to play an active role in the creation and re-creation of identities. The notion that material culture is actively involved in social processes rather than being merely a passive reflection of human behavior was subsequently elaborated upon by others (e.g., Shanks and Tilley 1987a). The development of this perspective was heavily influenced by the “practice” or “action” theories of social forms as developed by Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1979). The emphasis on material culture being actively manipulated in order to legitimate or transform society was also found in Marxist-inspired archaeological studies in prehistoric Europe (e.g., especially Kristiansen 1984) and in historical archaeology in the United States (Leone 1982).

These two ideas reinforce the pervasiveness of the social and they lie behind many of the later developments in the various approaches termed postprocessual archaeology. The underlying context for this shift toward a fuller recognition of radical cultural difference (differences in social meaning of material culture), and for the view that material culture is active, rather than passive, together with the shift from positivism, was the various economic, social, and cultural changes described by the term globalism (see above). The two ideas also led to two key areas of research in recent archaeology. The first concerns material culture as text, and the second theories of agency.

The Text Metaphor, Reading the Past, and Poststructuralism

If material culture is always meaningfully constituted, then perhaps it can be seen as a text that is read (Hodder 1986). This idea has several attractive aspects. It puts the emphasis on the reader – on the notion that meaning does not reside in the object itself, but in the way that the reader makes sense of that object. The “reader” here is both the past social actor and the present archaeologist. The reading metaphor foregrounds the fact that different people will read the same data differently, a tendency for which there is much historical evidence. The reading metaphor refers to interpretation and thus links us to hermeneutics as discussed above. It recognizes that interpretations are fluid and will change through time. The material object has to be read in

terms of prejudgments but also in terms of contextual clues. The text metaphor encourages us to focus on context – “with text.” Rather than studying pottery and animal bones separate from each other and from their find context, the emphasis is placed on looking at pottery, animal bones, and find circumstances in relation to each other. In each context there may be distinct or subtle changes of meaning, but there may also be overall codes or rules used in the “language” of the material objects. The text metaphor thus invites us to make use of the world of semiotics – the study of signs and the systems in which they are embedded.

There has in fact been widespread use of semiotics and structuralism in archaeology over recent decades (Bekaert 1998; Helskog 1995; Parker Pearson 1999; Yentsch 1991), and there has been a recent revival of interest as a result of a shift from Saussurean to Peircean perspectives (Preucel and Bauer 2001). There are clearly advantages to be gained from considering material objects as organized by codes and rules that give them meaning. Knowledge about symbols, signs, indices, icons, and so on can usefully be applied in archaeology. The layout of settlements or of decoration on pottery, the discard of animal bones, and the arrangement of artifacts in graves have all been subject to semiotic and structuralist analysis. But there are also difficulties with the text metaphor when applied to material culture. In some important ways, material culture is not like a written text. Perhaps most significantly, the relationship between a word and its signifier is normally arbitrary; but this is seldom the case with material culture. In most, if not all, material culture usage, there is some non-arbitrary link between material culture and its meaning – as when gold is used to indicate high status because it is rare and enduring. Also, material objects, such as those in a living room, are not arranged in a simple sequence as is the case with words in a sentence – there are often fewer clues about the sequence in which one is supposed to read objects on entering a room. In addition, many of the meanings of objects are sensual and non-discursive – they are less open to conscious definition. The very fact that one cannot often be sure of the meanings of objects, their sensual nature, and non-arbitrary relations, suggests that material objects are important mechanisms for manipulating social situations. Although the Peircean approach deals with many of these criticisms of the text model, it remains the case that semiotic approaches often deal inadequately with the social.

This same notion, that meaning cannot be adequately studied by reference to abstract “linguistic” codes, lies behind many of the poststructuralist approaches that have influenced archaeology (Bapty and Yates 1990; Derrida 1976; Tilley 1990). In Derridean poststructuralism, the critique focuses on the structuralist notion that signifiers have meaning through their difference from other signifiers. But these other signifiers themselves only have meaning by being opposed to yet other signifiers in an endless chain of signification. Also, the meaning of a signifier varies depending on the context in which it is found. It is thus always possible to deconstruct any analysis which claims a totality, a whole or an original meaning, a truth, because these “origins” of meaning must always depend on other signifiers. These forms of critique have been effective in undermining many of the a priori assumptions made by archaeologists. In other forms of poststructuralism influenced by Foucault (1979), the focus is on the forms of power that sustain particular forms of knowledge and regimes of truth. Foucault radically decenters the subject actor who is seen as caught within webs of power/knowledge. The meaning of texts or material culture is situated within discourse. By discourse I

mean particular forms of knowledge that are historically generated within specific relations of power. Thus knowledge and meaning are always situated and always social. Meaning is not just meaning. It is always *of* something and *for* someone.

The poststructuralist critiques take us a long way from the interpretation of meaning divorced from society. They have led to large numbers of studies that explore the relationships between material culture, meaning, and power (e.g., see the volumes of collected papers edited by Hodder et al. 1995, Thomas 2001, and Tilley 1993). They have also led to attempts to explore new ways of writing that open up the meaning of the past to alternative readings by different groups, and which undermine the notion that there is only one valid interpretation. These experimental studies, often influenced by a parallel debate within feminist archaeology, involve the production of new textual strategies, ranging from self-reflexivity and dialogue, to hypertext and the inclusion of semi-fictional vignettes (Edmonds 1999; Joyce 1994; Moran and Hides 1990; Tringham 1991, 1994).

We thus see the importance of the social for any attempt to interpret meaning. But does all this critique of the text metaphor mean that we can no longer talk of “reading the past”? If material meanings are closely linked to power and to material context, if material culture is related to unconscious motivations and sensual experience, if its meanings are nonlinear and ambiguous, perhaps the very idea of reading the past is unhelpful. In my view, taking these various criticisms into account, it remains important to retain “reading” and interpretation as components of archaeological procedure. This is because we do not only read texts. As social actors we are involved in daily acts of making sense of, “reading,” what is going on around us. This wider sense of reading refers to the larger process of interpretation – including making sense of textures, sounds, smells, power dynamics, and so on. Reading is a wider process than interpreting words on a page. It involves being thoroughly engaged in a social context and interpreting that context through a variety of senses.

Agency

One of the limitations of the structuralist and poststructuralist approaches is that, as we have seen, they often downplay the role of social agents. As already noted, the view that material culture is active, that it is wielded by agents to achieve social ends, was an important strut of early postprocessual archaeology. But what is meant by agency theory, and how can material objects be seen as active?

The emphasis on agency began as a reaction to the processual emphasis on behavioral responses to environmental and other forms of change. Is there really nothing to societies and their long-term development than the passive stimulus–response that seems implied by much processual and behavioral archaeology? In his recent description of a behavioral theory of material culture, Schiffer states:

readers may be nonplussed at the absence in the new theory of much vocabulary ... such as meaning, sign, symbol, intention, motivation, purpose, goal, attitude, value, belief, norm, function, mind, and culture. Despite herculean efforts in the social sciences to define these often ethnocentric or metaphysical notions, they remain behaviorally problematic and so are superfluous in the present project. (1999:9)

The discussion of agency is a reaction against types of social theory in which intentionality is seen as irrelevant to the understanding of human behavior.

But beyond this starting point, how much can we say about past agency? Certainly, there has recently been increased archaeological interest in discussions of agency (e.g., Dobres and Robb 2000). In my view, the first step in making sense of these discussions is to recognize that agency is itself a complex process that needs to be broken down into its component parts. Different authors in archaeology refer to different aspects of agency. For example, Barrett (1994) mainly discusses the context for action – the fact that the actor has to be situated in relation to power/knowledge in order to have knowledge and resources to act. He discusses the mobilization of space and resources in prehistoric monuments in Britain in these terms.

A rather different approach argues that there is an intentionality to agency and that this intentionality cannot be reduced to the context for action. Of course, some intentions may be non-discursive in the sense that actors may not be fully consciously aware of their motivations. Intentions need, therefore, to be interpreted. Archaeologists routinely make these interpretations. When claiming that a ditch is defensive or that a large wall around a settlement was built to provide prestige, intentions are imputed. The defensive nature of the ditch may be determined from its shape, size, and position, and from evidence of warfare, and so on. The prestigious nature of the wall may derive from its non-defensive nature (in terms of construction material, location or effectiveness) and from a larger context of competitive symbolic behavior. Another form of intentional social action that has recently attracted the interest of archaeologists is resistance to dominant groups. The older Marxist view that subordinate groups are duped by dominant ideologies has suffered from theoretical and empirical inadequacies in the social sciences (Giddens 1979), and many archaeologists have sought to demonstrate that subordinate groups use material culture to counteract dominant forms of discourse. For example, Shackel (2000) detected hundreds of hidden beer bottles in his excavations of a nineteenth-century brewery in West Virginia. Shackel concluded that the workers were intentionally and covertly consuming the products of their labor, thus drinking the owner's profits (see also Beaudry, Cook, and Mrozowski 1991). As another example, Joyce (2000) argues that at the regional heart of Rio Viejo, on the Pacific coast of Oaxaca, Mexico, non-elites inhabited the monumental platforms of the site's civic-ceremonial center after the collapse of centralized institutions at the end of the Classic period. According to Joyce (2000), these commoners rejected the dominant ideology of the previous era by dismantling and denigrating the architecture and carved stones. Likewise, Brumfiel (1996) suggests that powerful Aztec ideologies of male dominance expressed in official carvings at the capital city are contested in the countryside by popular images that assert the high status of women in reproductive roles.

There are problems in these accounts of intentional resistance. As Joyce (2000) notes, is it not inadequate to reduce intentionality to a response to dominant groups – surely in most cases there are many more dimensions to agency? Also, resistance is often discussed as if groups acted as wholes, when in fact most societies have many cross-cutting divisions. This point has been made effectively by feminist archaeologists who have recently resisted the notion that “women” or “men” form one category. In fact, there may be many differences amongst women (or men) on the basis of age, class, sexual orientation, and so on. Meskell (2002b) in particular has attempted to

break down social groups and study the varying actions of individuals within them. This raises the issue of whether groups can have intentions. In my view the existence of a group is part of the resources used for individual agency. To get at the intentionality of agency properly involves understanding the construction of self and private individual lives. While some examples are provided by Meskell (see also Hodder 1999), for most archaeological contexts the aim of accessing individual intentionality is an ideal. But it remains important to consider variability in intentionality within groups and to study the processes used within groups to negotiate and coordinate group behavior and consensus. It is also important to recognize that the atomized individual is itself a Western concept and that the very idea of “individual” agency is itself a social product. Conceptions of individuals and body boundaries vary through time and space. Indeed, these conceptions are part of the resources available to agency.

Any act can have intended and unintended consequences. Indeed, another approach to agency takes the focus away from intentionality and focuses more closely on the impact of action on others and on the material world. These consequences can be short-, medium- or long-term. They can be local or “global.” Perhaps the main way that this impact-view of agency has been used in archaeology is in terms of “power over” (Miller and Tilley 1984). Dominant groups are described constructing a monument, controlling exchange, or holding a ritual that persuades others or manipulates them ideologically. Or elites may control the labor of others through the use of force. In these cases, there is almost no attempt to infer the intention of the actors: it is assumed that the intention is irrelevant to the outcome – domination. Since the specific intention or meaning behind the action is of little concern, analysis focuses narrowly on the effects of actions (see Barrett 1994:1).

To say that material culture is active is thus to argue that material objects are given meaning within agency. Material objects are part of the stocks of knowledge that provide the context for action. They are manipulated as part of intentional strategies (to hide, mask, legitimate, disrupt, and so on). And they endure, often resulting in unintended consequences long after individual actions – they spread agency over time. But consideration of the agency of material objects also leads to another nuance. Gell (1998) has provided many anthropological examples of objects that are apotropaic – that is, they protect people from illness or evil spirits. Boric (2003) provides archaeological examples from the prehistoric sites of the Danube Gorges. In some cases, apotropaic objects appear to act as people, to be agents themselves. In such cases the objects (appear to) have intentionality because they bring to mind associations that are meaningful to the person affected by the object. Indeed, much intentional action only has effects because it is perceived to be agentful. Thus we “give” powers to others and to objects such that they can act on us. Much ideology works in this way. So in exploring agency as intentional action we need to recognize two phases — the intentionality of an actor before or within an act, and the ascription of intentionality to an act by participants or observers.

Agency is likely to remain a fruitful area of discussion in archaeology. On the one hand, archaeologists deal with huge expanses of time in which change often seems slow and incremental. There seems little room for intentional action outside the structures within which agency is embedded. On the other hand, archaeologists deal with intimate moments – the loss of a bone awl (Spector 1993) or the burial of a relative.

To what extent are these small events determined by larger structures? To what extent is agency involved in transforming structures of power? To ask such questions is not to search for “free will.” Such a notion implies that will and intention can somehow be external to society. The individual, will, and intentionality are themselves social. Rather, the aim is to understand the relationships between structure and agency when viewed over the long term.

Bodily Practices

It can be argued that these discussions of agency deal too much with power and with rather abstract agents. We get little sense in many discussions of agency of embodied individuals. Theorizing the body has become a central theme in many areas of research, including philosophy, literature, cultural studies, queer theory, and anthropology. In archaeology, the route toward a problematization of the body derives from two main strands – practice theory and feminist theory.

From early in the development of postprocessual archaeology, the writing of Pierre Bourdieu had a special place. His outline of a theory of practice (1977) was attractive to archaeology because it foregrounded the mundane aspects of daily life which archaeologists spend most of their time excavating – the pots and pans view of the world. Bourdieu showed how the daily practices of movement around domestic space, the discard of refuse, the construction of an oven, all had social weight. Alarm bells went off for archaeologists when Bourdieu said that it was possible to instill “a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as ‘stand up straight’ or ‘don’t hold your knife in your left hand’” (1977:94). In his own ethnographic work, Bourdieu described how children learned social rules as they moved around the house, moving from “male” to “female” areas, from “light” to “dark.” Boys may be encouraged to stand up straight, like spears, and girls to look down and be deferential. In this practical way, people gain an understanding of the world that is both practical and socially meaningful. Often they cannot articulate the understandings in conscious speech very well – they remain a set of dispositions or orientations – a habitus that is practical rather than conscious and verbal.

In fact, similar arguments had been made by a long line of sociologists from Goffman to Giddens, and anthropologists, from Mauss to Leroi-Gourhan. But it was Bourdieu and Giddens who had most direct impact in archaeology. Bourdieu in particular dealt with material very close to archaeology, and it was easy to see the application of his work. Also, he attempted to bridge between structuralism and Marxism while at the same time to give an adequate account of agency. Bourdieu recognizes that the habitus is not the only way in which practice is produced. The regularity that we observe in behavior is also produced by norms, symbols, rituals, and objective material considerations, such as the location of actors in socioeconomic hierarchies. But he was able to foreground the habitus in ways attractive to archaeologists. In doing so, he also pushed archaeologists toward a discussion of the body. He was concerned with bodily stance and with bodily movements about houses and other spaces. These were the prime mechanisms of social enculturation.

A similar move toward a consideration of the body derived from debates within various strands of feminist archaeology. One of the main aims of much feminist archaeology has been to put people back into the past, and to put faces on the "faceless blobs" that stalked the multi-hyphenated systems of processual archaeology (e.g., Tringham 1994). Beyond this general aim, in much early feminist archaeology a distinction was made between sex and gender, the first referring to the biological sex of the body, and the second to the cultural and social way in which that body was adorned or given meaning. This distinction was seen as being important methodologically, since skeletons in graves could first be identified by biological anthropologists, and then, on this reliable basis, patterns of artifact associations could be studied. More recently, archaeologies of sexuality have responded to a wide range of historical, literary, and anthropological work (e.g., Laqueur, Foucault, Haraway, Butler) which argues that simple dichotomies between sex and gender are difficult to maintain (Joyce 1998; Meskell 1999; Schmidt and Voss 2000; Yates 1993). Sex is not in fact a "given." Rather, descriptions of bodies and sexes change through time. There is no natural, stable sex, but rather a set of discursive practices that help define what is natural and biological.

Some examples of archaeological studies that use the idea that bodies are socially constructed include Treherne's (1995) account of the appearance of toilet articles at a particular horizon in the European Bronze Age. He argues for a changing aesthetic of the body and of personhood as a part of wider social changes. Joyce (1998) discusses human images from Prehispanic Central America and shows how they actively constituted theories of the body. Only certain postures were selected from the range of daily bodily movements to be represented in durable material such as fired clay and stone. This discourse, which materialized some representations of the body but not others, reinforced and naturalized a particular social philosophy.

At least in relation to practice theories, it can be argued that insufficient account is given of ways in which agents can transform structures. We are still left with rather faceless agents determined by larger forces. How can we get closer to what it feels like to "be," or to be inside someone's body? In an attempt to achieve a fuller account of embodiment, many archaeologists have been influenced by the phenomenology of Heidegger (e.g., Thomas 1996). Some of the most important aspects of the discussion of Heidegger in archaeology have been the critiques of binary oppositions between culture and nature, and between mind and body. What this means in archaeological applications is that attention is again focused on the ways in which bodies move around sites and landscapes. Rather than looking at the plan of a monument, attention is paid to the ways in which people moved around and experienced the monument.

In many of these archaeological accounts, the emphasis is placed on the way that relations of power are served in the layout of monuments and landscapes (Barrett 1994; Thomas 1996; Tilley 1994). In these accounts it is suggested that social actors are forced to perceive the world and to interact with each other in certain ways because their movements are constrained by the built environment. This focus on power again threatens to take the discussion away from lived experience and toward the structures of power that are seen as binding bodies and their movements. Often the accounts seem to assume a universal body. But two bodies moving around the same landscape or monuments may not see it in the same way. Much depends on the

social meanings and values that are given to sites in the landscape, and much depends on the specific social positioning of actors.

It is inadequate to describe the movements of bodies and sensual experience without embedding bodily experience within social meaning. The studies discussed in this section have made great strides in that they have moved away from the body as a natural substance onto which the social is mapped, and they have rejected the idea that space is an abstract entity, a container for human existence. Rather they see space as part of the structuring of social existence, part of the process by which social actors experience and respond to the social world (Tilley 1993:10). But phenomenological approaches have their own problems. In particular, they need to be sensitive to radical cultural and social difference in basic ways of seeing the world, and they need to be reflexively critical about the different ways that different bodies can experience the same monuments and landscapes.

Conclusions

I hope it has become clear in this account how in contemporary social theory in archaeology “everything is social.” We have seen how concepts that might seem neutral, natural or biological, like space, bodies, sex, the environment, have all come to be seen as social. The same could also be said for other terms not discussed here such as time (Lucas 2001). Certainly good arguments have been made that technology cannot be separated from the social (Dobres 2000; Lemonnier 1993). Even materiality itself is now seen as social, and Latour (1988) argues that objects are like people, in that both have agency or can act in the world. The notion that the meaning of a thing is not stable but depends on context and social entanglement has been made by Nicholas Thomas (1991). But we can go a step further and argue that our very selves develop in relationship with the object world, and that the boundaries between self and object vary historically and socially (Merleau-Ponty 1945).

The reasons for this shift from the dominance of culture to the centrality of the social have been discussed above, but they are part of a wider move against universalist and essentialist assumptions. Even truth is now seen as an effect of the social (Foucault 1979). In critiquing “culture” and “society” as essentialist or Western, the aim is to focus on the particular and the variable. No attempt is made to argue for a universal definition of the “social” and its workings. Rather, the term refers to the diversity of human experience. Of course, in other quarters of the social sciences there are counter-moves toward the real, the universal, and the evolutionary. Certainly one of the main challenges in social archaeology over coming decades will be reconciling the tensions between new advances in biological and biomolecular archaeology (Jones 2001) and social theoretical approaches.

I have not discussed at any length other “social” approaches in archaeology. This is because they do not attempt to engage with social theory in the social sciences and humanities as a whole. For example, Schiffer (2000) has edited a book entitled *Social Theory in Archaeology*, and in this and other work he has developed a behavioral theory of material culture. But I noted above that in developing his theory he rejects everything that most anthropologists, sociologists, and historians would regard as central

components of the social. He focuses on material interactions and performance as if they could be isolated outside the social. Even in his edited volume, the tensions involved in trying to build a social theory without the social become clear. In that volume, Feinman describes an interesting categorization of societies into network and corporate. But he accepts (2000:49) that the important *why* questions remain. Unless one is allowed to explore the daily manipulation and reproduction of social micro-practices, knowledge, and power, it is difficult to see how a fuller account can be achieved. As another example, Nelson criticizes behavioral approaches to the choices involved in artifact deposition, saying “the social context of the choices could be more fully explored” (2000:61). She recognizes the need to introduce agency-based approaches to abandonment studies, but her account does not benefit from the full range of available social theory.

A similar indication of the need to embrace a fuller social theory is seen in Darwinian evolutionary archaeology. For example, O’Brien and Lyman (2000) try to build bridges to social theory by discussing the role of history in their theoretical perspective. Their own account of history focuses on the selective environment that led to the appearance of cultural traits and then on pursuing the historical lineages of the traits that ensue. A full account of the selective environments and performance characteristics that lead to some cultural variants being selected would need to consider social power, agency, meaning, and so on – i.e., all the rich social world (environment) in which cultural traits are embedded, are selected, and transmitted. Once all that has been done one is back with the full world of social theory, and with history as social, cultural, constructed, and created as well as being materially based. In order to provide an adequate account of an evolutionary process, a full social theory would need to be incorporated.

Much the same point can be made about cognitive processual archaeology (e.g., Renfrew and Zubrow 1994). Here an attempt is made to argue that one can talk in universal, non-social ways, about the mind and its cognitive processes. The focus is on the early evolution of the mind, the strategies used in knapping flint, the systems of weights and measures used by complex societies, and so on. The difficulty is again that this approach is underlain by the assumption that mind can be separated from society. For Bourdieu and Merleau-Ponty, the mind is born of the social world of objects. But Renfrew and his colleagues wish to maintain an objectivist position untrammled by the meanings, desires, and intentions of the social world. Lakoff and Johnson in their book *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999), however, argue that even color has no independent reality. “The qualities of things as we can experience and comprehend them depend crucially on our neural makeup, our bodily interactions with them and our purposes and interests” (1999:26). Cognition is not outside the social, and cognitive processual archaeology needs to become fully postprocessual if it is to be successful in understanding past minds.

On the other hand, to argue that everything is social is not to argue that it is only social. Clearly there are aesthetic, emotional, and material aspects of life which, while being thoroughly social, cannot be reduced to the social. Rather, the more important aim in foregrounding the social is to recognize the indivisibility of human experience – its non-partitive character. Most of the approaches discussed here try to be non-dichotomous – in terms of culture/nature, mind/body, agent/structure, self /society.

The central point is that everything is infused with the social, so that attempts to ignore the social are bound to be limited and partial. Future developments in the discipline, however biologically and naturally science they might be in initial motivation, will need to engage with the full range of social theory.

It might be argued that recognition of the social nature of material culture and of the way the past is constructed derives its influence from anthropology, history, and related disciplines. But there is also a sense in which recognition of the centrality of the social acts as a springboard for archaeologists to contribute to other disciplines. Certainly, there has been a widespread increase in the use of the archaeology metaphor in the social and humanistic disciplines. This metaphorical use of archaeology goes back to Freud, Husserl, Benjamin, and more recently to Foucault and Derrida. But there are more specific recent links that suggest a social archaeology can contribute more widely. Certainly, there is a widespread interest in many disciplines in materiality, in the ways that the social is constructed in the material, and in the ways in which materiality is active and constitutive. The success of the *Journal of Material Culture* is one indication of the extent of these interests and the archaeological contribution here is clear. Archaeology and heritage come together in accounts of monuments, identity, and memory (Meskell 2002a; Rowlands 1993) that are part of wider discussions in the social sciences (e.g., Connerton 1989). The archaeological and the material also allow windows into the non-discursive aspects of social life, especially when viewed over the long and very long term. The social present can be seen as the long-term product of slow moves in daily, non-discursive practices (e.g., Hamann 2002). In these various ways, the focus on the social in archaeology allows a port of entry for archaeology, heritage, materiality, and the long term to contribute to debates in a wide range of related disciplines.

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