TIMETABLE, ABSTRACTS & GENERAL INFORMATION

X FACTOR

TAG

FRIDAY
15th December

THE X-FACTOR

The X-TAG Plenary Session
2pm – 5.30pm Friday 15th December 2006, Newman A

In contrast to previous TAG conferences, the X-Factor plenary will be student-led. The X-TAG committee has selected 8 presentations by current students of archaeology, each of 15 minutes duration, that will address from different perspectives the important question:

'What factors and ideas will direct the future archaeological theory?'

The session will culminate in a general discussion addressing the key issues identified in the papers

2pm Introduction

2.15 On Meaning, Significance, and the Limits of Archaeological Theory
Ben Edwards, (University of Durham)

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to critically examine post-processual theory and its deployment in the search for past 'meaning', for answers to the questions of 'why' past peoples and societies undertook particular actions in particular ways. It will be argued that the quest for 'why', and the interpretations that follow from it, represents proof of the limitations of much of twentieth century social philosophy as applied to archaeology. The essential premise of this argument is that 'why' is the wrong question, as it is unanswerable, to the extent that even an informed, contextual interpretation cannot hope to encompass the vast variability contained within that one little word. However, this is not an entirely negative assessment because this paper also seeks to address the alternative to the search for meaning: how we can read relative levels of significance in past actions and still reach conclusions as to the nature of past social life without invoking unlikely hypotheses. It will also be stressed that much of archaeological interpretation already adheres to these principles, so that this paper does not seek to criticise the majority of archaeological thought, as much as define ontologically what we already do.

2.30 Ex Machina: Archaeology In A Post-Human Future
Stephen O'Brien (University of Liverpool)

ABSTRACT

Recent research in disciplines as varied as medicine, robotics, and artificial intelligence has raised the prospect that, during the 21st Century, humans will be increasingly able to alter themselves physically, through both biological and mechanical means. The consequences of such alterations to humans may have serious implications for the study of humanity. Indeed, they have led to some researchers speculating that we may see the emergence of "post-humanity", a development which has caused Francis Fukuyama to revise his previous assertion that human history essentially ended in 1989 (Fukuyama, 2002). The purpose of this paper, therefore, is twofold: to introduce some of the means by which humanity may become post-human, and to speculate as to how archaeology as a discipline might respond to the challenge of interpreting a human past from a post-human viewpoint.

2.45 My Name is Bourdieu: the Karma of Practice
Greig Parker (University of Sheffield)

ABSTRACT

You know the kind of archaeologist who is always jumping on the latest theoretical bandwagon and then wonders why his work sucks? Well that's me! That's when I discovered Karma. Suddenly all those theories made sense!" This paper outlines the relationship between Karma, Practice Theory and archaeology. It briefly explores issues ranging from the archaeology of the Practice of Karma to the Karma of the Practice of archaeology. It suggests that the adoption of a "Karmic Archaeology" may (perhaps) offer a resolution to some of the theoretical problems currently faced by archaeologists. In so doing, this paper hopes to illustrate some of the problematic issues that can arise from attempts to incorporate radical new theories into the discipline. In addition, it highlights the difficulties archaeologists may encounter when investigating alternative ideologies using contemporary western modes of thought.

3.00 Predictions of the Past: What will influence the future of archaeological theory?
Krish Seetah (University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

At a recent informal 'round table' of some of the key minds of processual and post-processual theory, Robin Dennell highlighted the influence that external factors such as rising inflation in the 60's and 70's had on the development of archaeological theory and method.

This presentation will attempt to identify the agendas that will influence the next generation of archaeological theorists. On the one hand, I will raise a number of external issues that have the potential to greatly influence the way archaeological theory develops and the manner in which archaeology is viewed and used by society. For example, how will current political affairs and the 'state of the environment' – two areas to which archaeology can contribute a singularly unique perspective – influence the way we theorise? Complementary to this, how will internal development from the new archaeological 'sub-disciplines', armed with novel techniques and methods (often developed from non-archaeological backgrounds), embrace and advance archaeological theory?

3.15 Visualising Archaeology: A Manifesto
Andrew Cochrane (Cardiff University) and Ian Russell (Trinity College Dublin)

ABSTRACT

Since the 1980s some scholars have proclaimed that archaeology is in a state of crisis. Despite the growing investment in theoretical research, archaeology has not moved beyond modern epistemological and representational crises, nor has the discipline addressed the tradition of criticism of material essentialism in modern visual arts, such as in the Futurist Manifesto (1909) or in the work of Marcel Duchamp or Joseph Beuys. Visually, archaeological research has traditionally relied on two dimensional, black and white plans and schematic drawings of objects and sites, while utilising scientific flowcharts to demonstrate social and temporal relationships. These representational mechanisms visually perpetuate scientific realism, thus creating a peculiarly modern archaeological interpretation. This paper seeks to contest traditional mechanisms for representation and spectatorship by questioning the status that visual images occupy in archaeological discourse and proposes a move towards archaeological expressionism. We call for archaeologists to seek out new methods of visualising and presenting complex philosophical and methodological theories in media which transcend the line drawing. The paper will situate archaeological visual traditions within traditions of art historical thought and visual culture studies, while suggesting ways in which we can begin to move towards a visual archaeological practice. In doing so, we cite examples from our own and other contemporary artists' work.

3.30 Coffee

4.00 Stew or à la carte? Choosing a new theory dish.
Imogen Wood (University of Exeter)

ABSTRACT

The call for a truly multi-faceted archaeological theory in current discourse, to realize the 'new era' of theoretical archaeology, has led to a critical focus on how it is taught to a new generation of archaeologists. The unwitting archaeology student has received a great burden in recent years in being encouraged to meet this challenge. Is enough being done to enable and foster their ideas in this environment? I suggest that the structural historic approach to introducing theoretical archaeology should be reconsidered, and that heuristic approach enabling its individual components, to float free in a theory stew could inspire the subjective selection and use of theoretical ingredients irrespective of the culture-historical, processual and post-processual constraints.

However this may require a decision establishing what the end product should be before we introduce it, or whether we need one. Are we introducing the use of theoretical archaeology, to resolve questions or to enable a state of enquiry? Therefore the future of archaeological theory is in the hands of a new generation who may not need to adhere to the 'theory cookbook' currently used, in creating new theory dishes robust enough to meet these challenges.

4.15 Get published! Creating a forum for creative thinking and writing
Herdis Hølleland (University of Oslo)

ABSTRACT

If we as students are to develop a sense of critical thinking and become a driving force in archaeological theory our work needs to be seen not only by those marking our essays. Starting a student journal has proved to be a good arena for students' work to be seen as well as create debate in the archaeological community. Nicolay Arkeologisk Tidsskrift was established in 1967 by the students at the University of Oslo. A large number of the archaeologists now working at the Universities and museums once published their first articles in Nicolay. Getting your theories out in the world matters, so get published!

4.30 The Archaeological Review from Cambridge: Leading theory through student publication
2006 ARC Committee (University of Cambridge)

style. Power is the constraint / control of its products of knowledge.

The first issue of the Archaeological Review from Cambridge (ARC) was released in July 1981, by a group of young, enthusiastic PhD students who sought to "battle against the tides of tradition and the storms of oppression in archaeological thought". This may seem a somewhat melodramatic statement, issued naively in the early days of research, prior to the stagnation in motivation so-often felt in last few leg of dissertation writing. Yet, in the long-run of theoretical development such an exclamation, in hindsight, could be seen as the sounding bell for the post-processual critique.

ABSTRACT

Indeed, these now successful academics, enthused by Ian Hodder's ideas, responded to and influenced archaeology in the formative years of interpretative approaches, through the initial platform of the ARC.

Twenty-five years on from the ARC's gestation, the professional territory of archaeology is very different and the challenges faced by graduate students greater. When the ARC emerged, there were few other platforms for student publication or for the presentation of research in progress. Nowadays, the library shelves are crammed full of journals with similar goals, and student publication is seen as an integral part of academic training. Are the motivations behind publication early in the career therefore less about idealist aspirations for the wider development of archaeology and more about the taken-for-granted necessity of academic career progression? Has this affected the quality and value of such publications? What relevance do articles within publications such as the ARC now have on wider debates within the discipline as a whole? Within this paper, we seek to look back over the ARC's lineage, from its conception to the present day to address such issues in student publication, and comment upon the direction that might be taken in the future.
4.45 - 5.30 Discussion

X -TAG Wine Reception: 7pm
Royal Albert Memorial Museum
on Queen St, next to Exeter Central Station
Sponsored by *World Archaeology*

GENERAL INFORMATION

SOME EXETER RESTAURANTS AND BARS

DIGGING up a great dish or tipple is easy in Exeter's eclectic and varied range of restaurants and bars. From the stylish surroundings of the Royal Clarence Hotel, home of the award winning chef Michael Caines, to the take aways on Sidwell Street, Exeter has something to offer for every budget.
Price range: *** executive; ** waged; * students / diggers

Restaurants:

1. Royal Clarence Hotel
Contemporary British cuisine of the highest standard using fresh, local seasonal ingredients. Price range: *** Cathedral Yard

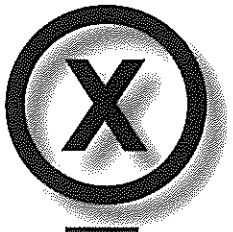
2. The Blue Fish Brasserie
Seafood restaurant, serving local produce in a modern and stylish atmosphere.
Price range: ** 44 Queen Street

3. Red Square Restaurant
Traditional Russian Restaurant serving great russian favourites. Price range ** Rougemont House , Castle St

4. Al Farid
A Moroccan restaurant with a Bedouin style downstairs, where you can lounge on cushions and have a variety of tapas dishes, and an upstairs restaurant with a separate menu. The food is gorgeous. Price Range ** Cathedral Yard

5. Cohiba
A Tapas bar and restaurant with an extensive menu, including many vegetarian options. Price range: **36 South Street

TIMETABLE & ABSTRACTS



Theoretical
Archaeology
Group

SATURDAY
16th December

TIMETABLE

Saturday 16th December - Morning Sessions

1. Steps to a neuroarchaeology of mind: Bridging the gap between neural and cultural plasticity
2. Towards Social Maritime Archaeologies
3. Archaeology for the Community
4. Déjà vu: from space to place in Prehistory
5. Transforming materials: rendering the invisible tangible
6. Future Archaeologies: Future Geographies
7. Archaeologies of the immediate: forensic science and archaeology

Saturday 16th December - Afternoon Sessions

1. Scaling and Networks
2. Against Remembrance: Space and the Politics of Forgetting
3. The Spade Cannot Lie
4. Déjà vu: from space to place in Prehistory
5. Beyond the Fringe: theorizing liminality in the historic city
6. Environmental Imperatives Reconsidered: Theorizing Culture Change in the Face of Climatic Change
7. What has function to do with theory?

- What is the Future of Public Archaeology? - at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter
- Pub-Theory Discussion Group- at the Ram Bar, Devonshire House, Exeter University
- Film. 'The Van Project' - Newman B, 1.15pm

Antiquity Quiz (7pm) – The Lemon Grove, Cornwall House, Streatham Campus

The Great X-TAG Party (8pm) - The Lemon Grove, Cornwall House, Streatham Campus

SATURDAY AM

Session 1 – Newman B

Steps to a neuroarchaeology of mind: Bridging the gap between neural and cultural plasticity

Lambros Malafouris and Colin Renfrew (University of Cambridge)

SESSION ABSTRACT

Despite the many significant research breakthroughs in the cognitive neurosciences, especially over the last decade, within archaeology, there has been little awareness of the important questions constantly arising from current findings in this field. Although archaeologists do not excavate neural tissue, we should bear in mind, that the development of functional neuroimaging has allowed the investigation of a whole new set of questions about, for example, the self and the body, social intelligence and interaction, aesthetics, religion and economics. These are questions which raise a host of archaeological and anthropological issues and thus demand our attention and critical evaluation.

The time seems ripe for archaeology to start responding to, and engaging with, this emerging and rapidly expanding field of neuroscientific research. Thus the aim of this session is to stimulate a first reflection on neuroscience's claims and their possible archaeological implications: How can the new findings of neuroimaging be utilized in the context of cognitive archaeology and material culture studies? How archaeological experience might inform the questions to be asked in the environment of the brain (MRI) scanner? What might be the analytic potential of neuroimaging as a method in archaeology? Can there be a neuroscience of material culture?

The general objective is (a) to promote the understanding of some key recent developments in neuroscience, (b) to articulate some of the possible questions and approaches that can be seen as emerging at the interface between cognitive/social archaeology and cognitive/social neuroscience, and (c) to investigate the possible role and contribution of archaeological and anthropological research to key debates within the neurosciences.

9.00 From material engagement to neuroscience: the challenge of the tectonic phase

Colin Renfrew (McDonald Institute, University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

The cognitive development of humankind can be divided into two phases. The first, speciation, phase down to about 150,000 years ago, represents a period of co-evolution where the mutational and selective processes of Darwinian evolution interacted with processes of development in material culture, culminating in the emergence of our species, Homo sapiens sapiens. By the time of the out-of-Africa expansions of c. 60,000 years ago, the human genome had become established, and the remarkable cultural developments after that time, seen in different trajectories of development in different regions of the world, were not governed by variations in the genotype of the human populations in question. Cognitive development subsequently took place during what one may term the 'tectonic' phase, where significant changes are the product of engagement processes between humans and the material world – processes that began in the speciation phase (with the use of tools, fire etc.) but which now become dominant. It is a remarkable fact that the genetic composition, the genotype, of a child at birth today must be little different from that of one born 60,000 years ago.

It becomes necessary to explore a new kind of cognitive archaeology, recognising that the differences in behaviour of humans born into a specific cultural context today and those of 60,000 years ago are the product of successive and progressive early life experiences of enculturation. It is now understood that the structure, the 'wiring' of the brain is changed during the early years of development of each person through the social experience of action, including speech and material engagement activities. The field of neuroscience is the area where some of these processes must be explored, if we accept that (in a general and approximate sense) the genotype may be regarded as a given, with little variation over those 60,000 years. The processes of engagement with the material world are now beginning to be explored through the techniques of neuroscience. The human mind is indeed to be understood as embodied, extended and distributed and as not restricted to the brain within the skull, yet the activity within that brain remains a crucial component of all cognitive processes. We can hope to learn much about the remarkable plasticity of mind during the tectonic phase of human development by exploring the neuroscientific basis for learning and for the development of material culture.

9.20 The neuroarchaeology of stone toolmaking: a multidisciplinary experimental approach

Dietrich Stout (University College London)

ABSTRACT

Stone artefacts provide some of the most detailed remaining evidence of pre-modern hominin behaviour and cognition. However, definitive interpretations of this record remain elusive, and it is all too common for cognitive archaeologists to provide incommensurate or contradictory interpretations of the same evidence. Establishing testable, empirical links between brain structure, cognitive function, and archaeologically observable behaviours like stone knapping is thus a central challenge (and promise) in the development of a true neuroarchaeology. The current paper summarizes the recent results, ongoing work and future prospects of a multidisciplinary experimental research program investigating the neurobehavioral foundations of stone toolmaking skill acquisition. Key elements include ethnoarchaeology, lithic analysis, functional brain imaging, and video-based behavioural analysis.

9.40 Stone Tools and Social Brains: The socio-cognitive context of stone tool manufacture

Matt Grove & Fiona Coward (British Academy Centenary Research Project 'From Lucy to Language: The Archaeology of the Social Brain', Royal Holloway, University of London)

ABSTRACT

The manufacture of stone tools is an integral part of the human evolutionary trajectory. Standard archaeological typologies, however, generally attempt only to recognise variation among finished tool forms, with very little research directed towards the social and cognitive context of the process of manufacture. The current paper aims to focus on the process of manufacture using insights from contemporary neuroscience. Of particular interest is the discovery of a class of visuomotor neurons in the prefrontal cortex that fire both when an agent performs an action and when s/he observes the same action performed by another. Such 'mirror neurons' are thought to be a basic mechanism underpinning many aspects of human social cognition including empathy and, potentially, theory of mind.

We explore these issues via an examination of knapping as a socially situated, distributed process, and argue that during this process the artefact is an active component in the extended cognitive system. The artefact is a product of a shared intentionality created via the mirror neuron system and the interactions of the social group. It can therefore be viewed as an emergent object – a product generated by the interactions of many networked minds rather than the isolated mental template of any single agent. Such a perspective, drawing from both archaeological and neuroscientific insights, reveals rather more about the context of stone tool manufacture than a traditional static typological stance.

10.00 It's all in the mind: Language and handedness in prehistory

Natalie Uomini (Centre for the Archaeology of Human Origins, Southampton)

ABSTRACT

Traditionally, laterality of hand use has been associated with laterality in the brain, particularly for language functions. From the archaeological and fossil records we extract information about the emergence of right-handedness in the hominin lineage. Researchers in language origins and hand laterality have focussed on the evolution of Broca's Area, assigning an important role to the left hemisphere. Recent data from language pathology, functional imaging, and psycholinguistics are now highlighting other areas of the brain. The question is then, how to identify the effects of these areas in the archaeology of our ancestors? This paper will present a brief and structured summary of the evidence for handedness in prehistory, and will propose an approach which connects this data with the current knowledge of functional language lateralisation.

10.20 - 10.40 Discussion

10.45 - 11.15 Coffee

11.15 Digging Human Imaginary: A Mathematical Theoretical Model applied on Rock Art

Dimitriadis George (Hellenic Rock Art Center, Philippi-Greece & Dept. of Arts & History, University of Lecce)

ABSTRACT

Human interaction with the environment produces symbolisation. Landscape ecofacts stimulate the imagination and reality comprehension follows mythological and iconographical paths. This special link with rocks and raw materials could be detected in the production of petroglyphs and paintings. Different theories were presented and new ones are day by day development in order to penetrate the meaning of such "landmarks" of the ancient mentality. I believe that is possible to give in the reading of rock art a logic coherency. The present paper, still work in progress, is a summary of a past mathematical work to treat "possibilities" to link and consequently read carved images and prehistoric artefacts. The mathematical model follows basic logic principles that are used by neuro-psychoanalysts in order to analyse schizophrenia and fit well with several physical phenomena as predicted by quantum physics.

11.35 Can we talk of a 'neuroarchaeology'?

Helen Coleman (School of World Art, University of East Anglia)

ABSTRACT

Current archaeological explanations see the emergence of the earliest art decisively linked with language and symbolic thought, and a principle trait of anatomically modern humans. This assumption is, as Mithen has argued, evidence of "just how complacent archaeologists have become in believing that their own interpretations of the evidence are indeed established fact" (Mithen, 1999:128). The rate at which language and symbolic thought evolved are still unclear, and their relationship needs to be established, not just asserted or assumed.

In reassessing these assumptions, which have been current for several decades, a new tool has appeared in the form of neuroscience, which has offered substantial fresh insights into the anatomically modern brain. The major advances and breakthroughs in brain research in the past two decades have provided exciting new insights into both primate and human brain functions, and we have never been better placed to apply this research to modern human behaviour in prehistory. This paper looks again at the earliest art, discussing the artefacts not necessarily, as evidence of art or symbolism, but when particular neural processes responded to a particular environment. The main argument made is that knowledge of such areas as mirror neurons and neuroplasticity provides an opportunity to rethink the relationship between art, symbolic thought and language. In the end what is argued is that many issues in prehistory can be reconsidered within a new framework, that of neuroarchaeology.

Mithen, Steven. 1999. Response to Nicholas Humphrey. 'Cave Art, Autism, and the Evolution of the Human Mind' in Journal of Consciousness Studies, 6, No.6-7, 1999, pp:116-43.

11.55 'Neuroarchaeology' and the extended mind: Between brains, bodies and things

Lambros Malafouris (McDonald Institute, University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

What is the causal efficacy of the material world in the human cognitive system and the functional physiology of our brain? How active is the 'active nature' of material culture at the level of interaction between neural growth mechanisms and environmentally derived neural activity? Current neuroscientific research may well testify that even a few weeks of tool use can effect important changes in the connectivity of neuronal networks and the boundaries of our 'body schema'. Given then that our plastic brains constantly changing by engaging the material world – from the molecular or synaptic level to that of large-scale neural networks – what can we learn from these changes about the cognitive life of things and their possible causal role in the shaping of human intelligence?

In this paper, I explore some possible ways the perspective of neuroscience can be embedded within the wider context of cultural prostheses and artifacts that delineate the long-term socio-technical boundaries of the human cognitive map. Focusing on some archaeological examples from the Aegean and the Near East, I discuss how some key findings in the cognitive neurosciences can be understood, utilized and interact with the archaeological perspective on human becoming and the hypothesis of the extended mind.

12.15 From Mind to Brain: implications for archaeology

Chris Gosden (University of Oxford)

ABSTRACT

One of the chief results of neuroscience has been to point up the confusion between minds and brains. The mind is often seen as a disembodied virtual space in which mental operations take place and the relationship between this and the brain, as an organ of the body, has been confused. Brain scanning has shown, amongst other things, that the brain is profoundly influenced by the workings of the body and its overall biochemical states. The way in the brain works and the sorts of thoughtful operations it produces cannot be understood apart from the workings of the body, rendering suspect notions of mind. The body in turn is intimately linked with material culture and the physical world generally, so that human actions and reactions derive from a complex relationship between bodies and the worlds they inhabit or create. The contribution of archaeologists in the emerging cross-disciplinary field of human intelligence is to provide a focus on the material world and its long term histories as these shape all aspects of the body, including the brain.

I shall argue for a non-mentalist view of human intelligence, which stresses instead the processes of coping and creating through which the body engages with the material world. Views of plasticity of the brain and the body, also emerging from neuroscience, raise questions about cause and effect. Archaeological typologies indicate that objects can change relatively slowly over many human generations. Brain scanning seems to show that the process of socialization produces brains with different capacities, sizes and shapes. If the material world changes slowly, but people alter quickly, does that mean we are shaped by objects, with objects the cause and humans the effect? I shall use our understanding of Iron Age metalwork to briefly explore these issues.

12.35 - 1.00 Discussion

Session 2 – Newman C

Towards Social Maritime Archaeologies

Robert van de Noort and Jason Rogers (University of Exeter)

SESSION ABSTRACT

In the last decades, maritime archaeology has developed from the study of boat construction and use, to a discipline that is focused on the human interaction with the sea, lakes and rivers through the study of boats and ships, waterfronts, cargoes and long-distance exchanged goods. This transformation was discussed at TAG in 2002, and several following conferences. However, despite this new contextualisation of nautical activities, the social processes that enabled seafaring and inland navigation to take place in the prehistoric and early historic period remain poorly understood.

This session is intended to explore the people that built, maintained, loaded, manned and commanded the ships and boats in the past. These explorations can be based on ethnographic work, psychological work on ships' crews, historical myths and legends, rockart depicting boats and their crews, or, indeed, excavated shipwrecks. This session will look at papers on aspects of social maritime archaeology which will consider:

- the skills and craftsmanship of boat builders;
- the social composition of the crew, and role of leaders and specialists;
- the social identities of the 'closed communities' on seafaring and inland craft;
- the ritual significance of travel and ritual use of boats
- experience, knowledge and navigation skills of inland waterways

9.00 Introduction to Social Maritime Archaeologies
Robert Van de Noort (Exeter University, UK)

9.15 Spiritual pathways: ritualisation and fragmentation of Torres Strait canoes
Ian McNiven (Monash University, Australia)

ABSTRACT

Elaborately decorated double-outrigger canoes, made from single dug-out hulls imported from the adjacent New Guinea coast, were once central to Torres Strait Islander society. These canoes, up to 20m in length and capable of carrying 25 people, were the largest and most complex transportation device recorded ethnographically for Indigenous Australians. While much has been written about the secular use of Torres Strait Islander canoes in moving people and items between islands, it is clear that canoes had a range of functions along a secular-spiritual continuum. This paper explores the spiritual dimensions of canoe use and travel in the context of my 'seascapes as spiritscapes' approach to coastal archaeology. I argue that Torres Strait canoes were mobile, floating ritual sites involved in socially negotiated pathways through a seascape inhabited by spiritual beings and energies. Rituals often involved special hull decorations, carvings and attachments (including animal parts) to imbue canoes with zoomorphic and anthropomorphic qualities and agency to provide greater success in voyaging, hunting and warfare. After a hard ritual life on the sea, canoes would be fragmented and various pieces brought onto land to be recycled into a range of new secular and sacred roles. The universality of seascapes as spiritscapes amongst marine specialists suggests that ritualisation and fragmentation of canoes may have been widespread in the past.

9.40 On Mediterranean Ship Representations: Some Theoretical Approaches About Their Use and Significance
A Garcia-Ventura , M. Krueger and M López-Bertran (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain)

ABSTRACT

The representations of ships, sailors and seafarers are common in many ancient societies. They are carved, drawn, painted or designed on a great variety of raw materials; stone, wood, metal, textiles or pottery and found in different contexts for instance caves, burials or real palaces. This allows us to think about the symbolic and ritual implications of these variety of ship representations. To analyse this topic, in this paper we develop three main steps. Firstly, we show different examples of Egyptian, Phoenician and Punic ships' representations in order to understand the role of both, their authors and their audience. Secondly, we concentrate on these images to analyse their main technical and historical contexts. Thirdly, we think about the social and religious aspects of ancient Mediterranean navigation. Specially, we concentrate on the relevance of the symbolic power of the sea and the navigation in constructing not only sailing practices but also daily life.

10.05 The diversity of boats - function or fashion?
Colin Palmer (Southampton University, UK)

ABSTRACT

One of the most striking features of the boats used by traditional 'folk' societies is their diversity, a diversity that has a long history. Functional or 'survival of the fittest' arguments have been invoked to account for this diversity, but on closer inspection such explanations seldom prove to be robust and are sometimes demonstrably wrong. But if function and 'optimal environmental adaptation' cannot explain the diversity, what can?

Boats are often amongst the most complex and highly prized elements of the material culture of the people who build and use them. As such, they are embedded in the people's culture, so one approach to their interpretation is through cultural evolutionary theories that seek to understand the social transmission of information and behaviour. This paper will apply these models to investigate the extent to which cultural influences might have generated and sustained the diversity of boats.

10.30 From Navigation to the Quantification of the World in Prehistory
Helen Farr (Cambridge University, UK)

ABSTRACT

Indirect evidence for seafaring in prehistory has forced maritime archaeologists beyond the study of boat technology towards that of skill, experience and social organisation. This paper builds upon this research to investigate early navigation in terms of quantification and measurement in prehistory with reference to ethnographic work from Polynesia. Research into how people conceived of and perceived the passage of time, as well as how they orientated themselves within space, helps to shed light upon prehistoric understanding and engagement with the world.

10.55 - 11.20 Coffee

11.20 Land-locked logboats: elite exchange systems and local boatbuilding traditions
Jason Rogers (Exeter University, UK)

ABSTRACT

The significance of watercraft to maritime communities is a well-explored theme- people who depend on the sea for a living develop unique and enduring skill sets and traditions. This "maritime world-view" is well attested both ethnographically and archaeologically. The significance of boats and vessels to inland communities (especially prehistoric) is not so well studied or understood. But in some regions, especially those astride the great waterways of Europe, watercraft have played an extremely important role. In such areas, boats have provided means not only for local subsistence, but for gaining important elite status goods and knowledge via long-distance exchange. This is certainly the case for Bohemia and Moravia, the constituent lands of the historical Czech kingdom. This paper will explore the significance of prehistoric watercraft in the Czech lands (and beyond), focusing on various localized logboat-building traditions.

11.45 Are the skills of boat builders reflected by classification of small water craft from Poland?
Waldemar Ossowski (Centralne Muzeum Morskie, Gdansk, Poland) - TBA

12.10 Towards social maritime archaeologies? Beyond boats and 'maritime' cultures
Jesse Ransley (Southampton University, UK)

ABSTRACT

The last few decades might have seen maritime archaeologists broaden their horizons beyond the study of boat construction and use, but we remain boat-fetishists. If producing 'social maritime archaeologies' means simply looking up from the frames and futtocks and addressing boat crews, boat-builders and the 'ritual' significance of boat use, then we've still a long way to go.

This paper argues that critical examination of the epistemological assumptions and constructions that pervade our discourse, and this session's abstract, is the crucial first step. It suggests that in order to move towards the production of social archaeologies, we need first to employ a reflexive critique of our practice. It argues that the false privileging of boats within reconstructions of past cultures inhibits our potential understandings of those cultures. A fact reflected in both the problematic notions of 'ritual use' and 'maritime cultures'.

Using ethnographic research from the backwater communities of Kerala in southern India, and drawing on the work of Strang, Ingold and Palsson, it further proposes a re-conception of maritime archaeological studies as an exploration of the enmeshed relations between people and their environment. By refocusing on people and water, it is possible to examine the web of meanings, interactions and negotiated relationships, the human ecology, within in which boats, along with other artefacts, play a part.

In the end, 'contextualising nautical activities' alone is a flawed endeavour, and one that carries with it the weight of unchallenged constructions and the limitations and power dynamics of an uncontested, modern, Western paradigm.

12.35 - 1.00 Discussion

Session 3 – Newman D

Archaeology for the Community
Faye Simpson and Sean Hawken

SESSION ABSTRACT

Community archaeology is now more than a fashionable phrase. A multitude of theories lie behind the various methodological approaches to community archaeology. This session seeks to explore whether one particular approach is right, or whether the focus should be an anthropological one. It could serve the wider community if more than one strategy is adopted, more than one methodology.

The focus could be on context instead, seeking to explore individual communities with their own values.

This session will explore the plethora of issues raised by participants' submissions, which will outline their experiences of community archaeology and provide a starting point for the discussion. It will investigate theories and methods adopted on these groundbreaking projects, examining community values in more depth. The aim will be to draw together common themes, forming critiques and examining subsequent strategies for maximising the values of community archaeology as a resource.

9.00 Community Archaeology: general methods and standards of practice
Gemma Tully: Southampton University

ABSTRACT

Community archaeology is currently being practiced in various forms. A growing number of projects, some of which have been alternatively defined or adopted a guise outside of the archaeological realm, share many of the same core principals of this rapidly expanding facet of archaeological research. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that although community archaeology has been evolving since the 1970s and 1980s it still lacks a clear sense of research focus, a sound methodological structure and a set of interpretive strategies. Nonetheless, it appears that a similar 'set' of methodological components are being independently promoted by a variety of projects worldwide that have not, as yet, been clearly articulated in publication.

Through numerous case studies, focusing around my experiences as a team member of the Community Archaeology Project Quseir (CAPQ), Egypt, this research has collated the essential methodological elements for effective community archaeology, crossing disciplines and continents, with the aim of proposing a more rigorous community methodology. Although the very nature of community archaeology appears to discourage such a uniformity of approach as

every community is different, by explicitly outlining a set of core principles more effective collaboration can occur. Demonstrating that an 'instinctive underlying system' already exists for the practice of community archaeology, and formalising this through a clear methodology is vital if the discipline is to get the respect it deserves and benefit the cultures and knowledge systems it represents.

9.20 Telling tales: Exploring ways of story telling in the 21 st Century
Sophie Allen: University College London

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to explore ideas of story telling as a means of engaging people with their surroundings, with material culture and ultimately with archaeology. As archaeologists we are all story tellers, we piece together information, facts and figures to form a narrative but often we forget that this is, in essence, what we do and our stories become monotonous and drab. This is something that needs to be addressed in terms of widening participation within archaeology.

Story telling can take many forms; the same facts may produce a number of different stories. Each community will have a different story to tell in respect to 'their' archaeology and within that community each person will have a number of different stories to tell. This paper will address the issue of context raised in the session abstract and will explore how the writing and telling of stories with communities is a vital part of community archaeology.

9.40 Community Archaeology: What is it? Where is it Going?
Chris Tripp

ABSTRACT

In this paper I will be discussing how archaeology can be used to communicate a sense of place to Key Stage Two children, allowing them to touch and explore the past and develop interpretative skills through hands-on workshops. I will be looking at the partnerships I have developed, the successful workshops I have present and the projects that are being planned. I will also be analysing how archaeologist across the profession must set up avenues for communication between themselves and the public. That we must not look back at a 'golden age' of community archaeology that never existed, be see this aspect of the profession as 'cutting edge' and new. We must look at how community archaeology needs to develop, why it needs to address this question and who should be involved in the answers. The most important aspect of this development most allow the public to be at the forefront and to take the lead in what they want to take from and give to the subject. I will argue that we should not set ourselves up as educators but as facilitators, supporting qualified educators and the public to use archaeology in gaining sense of place and community identity.

I will also be talking about why community archaeology should be at the core of the profession and not just on the periphery and how this would benefit both the profession and the community. How community will develop a continuous and fluid debate between all interested parties where active involvement stimulates discovery. Finally I will be discussing why the public will be eager to work with us in making the most exciting development in archaeology since the subject was recognised as a scientific discipline in its own right.

10.00 Archaeology in British Primary School education and the potential for Portable Antiquities Scheme involvement
Ann Oldroyd

ABSTRACT

The National Curriculum allows for easier incorporation of archaeology into Key Stage 1 and 2 education than any other age range. As the largest community archaeology project in the country, the Portable Antiquities Scheme is well placed to facilitate this area of learning, and to raise awareness of the study of material culture from a young age. This paper looks into previous usage of archaeology within primary school education and the potential for greater PAS involvement in hands-on teaching methods

10.20 - 10.50 Discussion

10.50 - 11.20 Coffee

11.20 Community Archaeology - archaeological benevolence or money-spinning?
Sean Hawken: University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

University-based archaeologists have recently been vilified for using community archaeology for the 'wrong reasons': jumping on a bandwagon to simply secure research funding. This paper begins by asking: Are these projects simply circuitous methods of funding research with little interest in community's pasts and objectives? Are University research objectives in opposition to effective community archaeology? Or is this evidence of professional archaeologists enabling new possibilities for both archaeological research and community participation in this research?

The second discussion point juxtaposes the first by considering whether genuine community-led archaeology projects provide greater value when it comes to the aims of community archaeology, especially when community leaders often work free of cost. Can communities effectively manage their own projects? Are 'bottom-up' community projects free of their own veiled agendas? Are they more effective than University and Institution orientated community project in providing communities with knowledge of the past and senses of place and identity?

This paper offers a challenging stance and questions the argument that only projects directed by communities themselves are the 'ideal' and 'true' form of community archaeology. The paper also questions the expectation that archaeologists should facilitate the future of public interest in archaeology with limited funding. Rather, here the suggestion is that the best way to ensure success in community archaeology might be for the funding bodies, such as Heritage Lottery, to provide long-term sustainable funds to archaeological bodies to support full-time, paid archaeologists to manage mulit-aimed, well-integrated community archaeology objectives. It is argued that only in this environment will communities be provided with the support they need, and a realistic future for their pasts.

11.40 From Ulster to the Somme: Community Archaeology and Conflict
Martin Brown: Ministry Of Defense

ABSTRACT

For two years No Man's Land (NML) has been working in Thiepval Wood, Somme, alongside members of the Somme Association from Northern Ireland/Ulster and soldiers, both full-time and volunteer reserve, from the Royal Irish Regiment. The project is exploring the site of trenches used by the 36th (Ulster) Division in the days around the 1st July 1916 (The first day of the Battle of the Somme). The trenches are being excavated and restored to assist public interpretation connected to the Association's memorial at the Ulster Tower 500m from the site and their heritage centre in Newtonards (NI). However unlike many community projects the Thiepval Wood is being run at some little distance from its principal stakeholders residences but it is also unusual because of the resonance the events under investigation have for the Loyalist, Protestant community in Northern Ireland.

Many of those involved in the project feel ties to the events through blood, as relatives of combatants, or through wider kinship as soldiers in successor units of the various units comprising the 36 Division or through membership of the Orange Order. However the political situation over 30 or 300 years in Northern Ireland makes the kinship and involvement in the project a potentially murky area. The 36 Div and the Somme are significant moments in Ulster Protestant history and appear alongside The Battle of the Boyne and the Siege of Derry in popular iconography, including gable end murals and Orange lodge banners. Each July the Ulster Tower is the focus of commemoration that focuses on the heroes of Ulster.

The paper will briefly describe the project and some of its findings and will then go on to consider the issues attendant around the presentation of the site and the Somme 90th anniversary. It will also reflect on the fact that the site has become iconic for one community although it was part of the battlespace for almost the entire war.

Finally there may be some reflection on the fact that the author's own grandfather was from Ulster and fought in the Great War, which raises issues of personal involvement, identity, community and ambivalence flowing from the background, identity and experience of Pte Brown J., RAMC and Martin Brown MIFA.

12.00 Romania : Working with Developers and Communities
Gerry Wait: Gifford - TBA

12.20 - 1.00 Discussion

Session 4 – Newman E (All day session)

Déjà vu: from place to space in prehistory
Laura Basell and Tony Brown (University of Exeter)

SESSION ABSTRACT

Humans, and arguably, hominins do not inhabit optimal spaces but places. This aspect of human experience has long been the Achilles heel of ecological archaeology. Because it was conceptually and analytically difficult it was the great omission from locational theory and the processual approaches to archaeology so popular in the 70s and 80s. Attempts at archaeologies of natural places (cf. Bradley) and phenomenological interpretations of place (cf. Tilley) have to some extent tackled the problem. They have supplemented (but rarely incorporated) the functional and ecological with locales, rhythms and lived-through bodies. Places are undoubtedly more than locations in an inhabited landscape, and more than an expression of everyday life. They involve relationships: spiritual, habitual, corporeal, territorial and emotional (cf. Schama, Bender).

This session invites papers from any period in Prehistory, which analyse and discuss if and how we can understand what "place" might have been in the past. It is clearly not simple, involving memory, activity, social practice, belief systems and most difficult of all meaning. As such, "place" cannot exist independently of humans/hominins, and must be dynamic and negotiated. Theories of place have been borrowed from anthropology, geography, psychology and history, yet archaeology's position as a discipline concerned with histories, should enable us to consider creation of place in space, and actively engage in the cross-disciplinary debate. Does archaeology allow us an insight into the construction

of place? Can we see whether and how it varies both culturally and chronologically? And what can this add to the wider debate?

Bender, B. (2002) Time and Landscape. Current Anthropology, Volume 43, Supplement 4 pp. 103-112
Bradley, R. (2000) An Archaeology of Natural Places. Routledge
Schama, S. (1996) Landscape and Memory. Vintage Books.
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9.00 Understanding Place is Child's Play

Sophie Allen, Institute of Archaeology, London

ABSTRACT

Within much of the work cited in the session abstract it is posited that places are meaningful because people exist within them; but are places meaningful to people? If so, what aspects hold particular meaning? This paper aims to address a question asked in the session abstract: Does archaeology allow us an insight into the construction of place?

Through asking questions of the present about how places are created, what meaning they hold for different groups of people and how people experience them we can explore questions of space and place within prehistory more fully. Academics often take a leap of faith between the present and the past without fully exploring people's experiences of the landscapes of today.

The focus of this paper is the relationship between children and place. It will examine the role of archaeology in the construction of place by children and it will question how important the past is (and the remains of the past) in the construction of a locale.

9.20 Cyclical spaces, permanent places: Settlement and activity in the Alpine zone in the southern French Alps

Kevin Walsh & Nick Trustram Eve, Dept of Archaeology, University of York

ABSTRACT

The exploration of human engagements with supposedly liminal zones has often been characterised by discourses imbued with notions of marginality (environmental, economic and cultural). Moreover, many assessments of activity in high altitude areas are dominated by economic models where seasonality is the key defining characteristic. Eight years of field work in the Southern French Alps (in the Parc National des Ecrins and the Ubaye Valley) has allowed us to reassess the complex network of human relationships within the sub-alpine and alpine zones (2000m and above). Previous models have treated these zones as spaces visited by people within a cyclical round of economic activities; hunting and transhumance for example. Here, we wish to consider the network of connections that existed between people and these places; concentrating on the notion that such places, although often only visited during the summer months, had a permanency as places constituted in social memory through ritual (rock art, burial) as well as economic practices.

The presentation of data from two study areas (the Ecrins and the Ubaye Valley) will contrast two quite different zones. The first study area has produced a sequence of sites and palaeoecological evidence spanning the entire Holocene and provides evidence for the recurrent use of specific areas in the high altitude zone. An important increase in activity occurred during the late third and second millennia, with an apparent reduction in the popularity of this zone during the first millennia BC. Economic rationale alone cannot explain this waxing and waning of activity. In our second study area, structures and stone tools are complimented by Rock Art and burial evidence and allow us to fully explore the complexity of activity in, and attitudes towards, this landscape.

9.40 Paul Cloke, Department of Geography, University of Exeter (title TBC)

10.00 Space Carve or Curve Time? Some Reflections on Prehistoric Mentality throughout Rock Art

George Dimitriadis, Dept. of Arts and History, University of Lecce, Italy

ABSTRACT

Wittgenstein and Jung demonstrate that the human mind finds refuge in spatial metaphors in order to visualize its proper conceptual structures. By individuating the elements that construct place, it becomes possible to understand the place itself. In sum, the landscapes created by the man are precious cultural evidences and for this reason space is defined not only according cultural needs but also material ones. Space and Man are completed by each other. There is no space without matter or matter outside of a spatial context. Space wraps human beings and man is projected to the future and new dimensions: the myths of the primates. Man dreamed at all times according space dimensions and in space terms has led his pilgrim.

The space and the various places inside it can be considered as a topos based on a hank of social relations between the actors who carried the space with its symbols and significances. It is necessary to recall the action dimension as the landscape was modelled, in order to make sense of it. Recalling the fragmentary elements of the place enable us to read the landscape. Thanks to the "Place" the man and the objects are collocated acquiring value and entity. To discover the "Place", the fundamental quanta which re-enact the space, means rethinking the space according the relations and the inter-relations which existed inside it. The present paper explores the relationship between human and environment: humans and rocks. Petroglyphs and paintings, ecofacts and artificial "ceremonial" places are studied in order to bring in evidence the spirit of the "place".

10.20 Debating Architecture: Place and monumentality in Northern Portugal in the III-II millennia B.C.

Gonçalo Leite, Instituto Politecnico de Tomar

ABSTRACT

In the third millennium B.C., the Iberian Peninsula witnessed the development of monumental structures. First seen as colonies and later as fortified settlements, these places are now regarded as monumental places (Jorge, S. O.1994). This means a change in the interpretation scale, to an almost semiotic level.

In this paper I will assess the importance of these sites within Ingold's (1993) view of a "temporality of landscape". I will analyse the importance of a sense of 'place' within architecture, through a reading of Heidegger's seminal works and the recent studies of Ingold (2000) and Thomas (1999). This will lead to an interrogation of the notion of 'architecture' itself. As I will discuss, Castelo Velho and Castanheiro do Vento are two sites in which building relates very closely to 'placeness' or to dwelling. It's techne and poiesis, who "brings them forth" in the world.

10.40 - 11.00 Discussion

11.00 - 11.30 Coffee

11.30 Creating places: an embodied approach

Vasileios Tsamis, University of Southampton Archaeology Department

ABSTRACT

The role of built space has been extensively analysed in archaeology. In particular its relation with phenomenology (e.g. Tilley and Bennett 2004), social organisation (e.g. Grahame 2000) and identity (e.g. David and Wilson 2002) has been central in the interpretation of Prehistory. In addition, studies on access analysis (e.g. Hillier and Hanson 1984; Ratti 2004) have provided additional tools in its interpretation. Nevertheless, the majority of the above work focuses on functional and socio – economic connotations. Little is said about the role of remembering (or forgetting) and the impact of bodily senses in the interpretation of space.

Late Bronze Age central Macedonia, Greece, will provide three examples (the mounds of Kastanas and Assiros and Thessaloniki) in order to demonstrate the role of memory and body senses in the past. Their manipulation and control will be seen as central in the creation of places.
This approach will put forward an alternative interpretation putting people back in the places they created. Bodily senses and memory will be introduced when interpreting the role of place. Moreover, it will illustrate the importance space in the creation of locality and sense of belonging.

11.50 A Place in Nature

Tony Brown, Department of Geography, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

Spaces can have utility but places have meaning. Does the early Neolithic in Europe mark an 'appropriation' of nature or a more complex shifting relationship between people, natural events and natural entities? Or is there continuity of reference and meaning but with an additional and potentially destabilising addition? Do events create places in the sense that they confer meaning through memory and this frequently promotes revisitation, commemoration and ironically desecration? Although these questions are immensely difficult to answer, it is possible to ask them of archaeological record. Their importance lies in their implications for much wider questions such as the rise of monumentality and the creation of landscape. This paper will explore these questions using Early-Mid Neolithic data from Midland and SW England.

12.10 Unknown and Known Places in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age of the Irish Sea Region

Bronwen Price, Department of Archaeology, University of Cardiff

ABSTRACT

This paper considers how travel incurs repeated designation and characterisation of place based upon pre-existing expectations. Movement generates engagements with a succession of constituted places, each differentially acquainted with the traveller/s. Comprehension of such encounters necessitates the constant renegotiation of social knowledge, a phenomenon which invariably avoids explicit contradictions with contemporary cosmologies. As a result of this process, certain places can become designated as 'known' or 'not known about' within social psyches, and this is archaeologically accessible through the differential treatment of taskscapes (Ingold 1993).

With reference to the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age of the Irish Sea region, I argue that labelling places as unknown or known was agent-driven rather than based on any universalities, and therefore that the perceived character of a place was entirely irrespective of the extent of people's acquaintance with it. Entirely un-encountered places may have become instantly established as known, whereas places pivotal to daily life may have become entangled with taboos due to their ongoing designation as unknown. Indeed the nature of what unknown and known meant at this time may share little resemblance with our modern conceptualisation of it, and I therefore challenge common assumptions about the nature of prehistoric engagements with places such as caves (e.g. Barnatt and Edmonds 2002).

The discovery and understanding of places conceded as unknown and known can guide us on the complex processes of the construction and deconstruction of place. This paper will discuss issues of familiarity, normality, memory and knowledge formation, and world-views.

12.30 - 1.00 Discussion

1.00 - 2.00 lunch

2.00 A place for everything and everything in its space

Fraser Sturt, Department of Geography University of Southampton

ABSTRACT

Despite protests to the contrary much of archaeology is about categorisation; of placing things in boxes in order to facilitate interpretation. Space and Place represent two such arbitrary containers within which we attempt to force the tangled and confusing threads for the evidence of past people's lives. This paper explores alternative ways of thinking about spatiality that do not focus on a space/place divide but on a continuum of engagement with the physical world.

2.20 Waterland: changing environments, human perception and monument construction on Hatfield Moors during the Neolithic

Benjamin R. Gearey and Henry P. Chapman, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, Birmingham

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a case study of Hatfield Moors, east England and considers how the incorporation of multiple datasets regarding the rate and character of the environmental changes that this landscape underwent during prehistory can be built into a coherent narrative. This may be used to 'situate' – both in a physical sense and also within broader themes of debates surrounding people, space and places in this period - the construction towards the end of the Neolithic of a rather unusual monument. It stresses how any exploration of the significance of 'place' in prehistory requires an appreciation of processes and rates of environmental change, on a range of scales from site to landscape, and that it is at the interface between archaeological and palaeoenvironmental data that meaningful dialogue on such issues might be found.

2.40 Making places, making people: Movement, materiality, emotion and memory at the Neolithic timber hall at Lockerbie, Scotland

Oliver Harris (University of Cardiff), Phil Richardson, University of Newcastle and CFA Ltd.

ABSTRACT

The production of place cannot be separated from the construction of people. People make themselves as they make their worlds, as they move through it, dwell through it, and interweave with each other and particular materialities. Places are thus not bounded either, following Ingold, but rather are produced through the intersection of movements of both people and things. The production of place also involves its texturing and shaping through emotion and memory, and this in turn limits how people can feel about a certain site and what they can remember. In this paper we will examine the creation of place through the ways in which movements, materialities interwove in the construction and occupation of an Early Neolithic timber hall at Lockerbie, Scotland, recently excavated by CFA ltd. In presenting the results of this excavation we suggest that the multiple materialities inherent in its construction (including clay, stone, wood and turf) would have textured the hall with emotions and memories, and helped to create a sense of place in the Early Neolithic. In so doing other places, including the sites these materials had been obtained from would also be changed, as would the people themselves.

3.00 The place of place in the Mesolithic of the Northern Irish Sea Basin

Hannah Cobb, Department of Archaeology, School of Arts, Histories and Cultures, University of Manchester

ABSTRACT

When we consider past hunter-gatherer groups, such work appears to lend itself perfectly towards the examination of patterns of hunter-gatherer movement around, and exploitation of the landscape. Yet I would argue that in fact this consideration is fraught with contradictions. Such perspectives require us to see landscape in a two dimensional sense; as a commodity, as something to be objectified, to be subdivided into territories, to be exploited, and to be moved over mechanically. However, over a decade of concerted critiques of such views of landscape from within Archaeology and Geography has demonstrated clearly that such perspectives are entirely particular to the modern west. As such there is now a growing body of literature that demands we reject such modernist frameworks for conceptualising hunter-gatherer understandings of and interactions with place and landscape.

Yet how can we consider this without reverting to our own Cartesian frames of reference? In trying to answer this question a number of approaches have been employed, yet these have drawn criticism for projecting methodologies that work within later prehistoric periods back onto hunter gatherer sites. Indeed it has been suggested that such approaches produce only "banal phenomenological truisms" (Jordan 2003, 130). However in this paper I will suggest that we must not simply dismiss phenomenology out of hand. Instead, by drawing upon the case study of the Mesolithic of the northern Irish Sea basin and exploring the myriad of intimate connections that Mesolithic materialities enabled between people and places, I will outline a series of suggestions as to how we can now find new ways of examining hunter-gatherer conceptions of place.

References

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3.20 - 3.45 Discussion

3.45 - 4.15 Coffee

4.15 Whose "place" is it anyway? Space and Place in the Middle Stone Age and Middle Palaeolithic

Laura Basell, Department of Geography, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

Issues of place are more readily discussed in relation to later periods of prehistory from the Upper Palaeolithic onwards. This is related to availability of wider array of material culture on which to draw and the fact that Homo sapiens sapiens were the only extant hominin species by that time. During the MSA and Middle Palaeolithic however, different hominin species or sub-species co-existed, and it is during this period that Homo sapiens sapiens appeared. This paper will explore two themes using the MSA/Middle Palaeolithic archaeological records of Africa and Europe. Firstly, whether it is possible to consider "place" during these time-frames, beyond ecologically based interpretations, given the resolution of the archaeological record and the type of artefacts we have. And secondly what the implications of hominin co-existence might be to such interpretations.

4.35 Space and Place in the Palaeolithic? The importance of context and association in the Lower Palaeolithic

Geoff Smith, Institute of Archaeology, University College London

ABSTRACT

The appreciation of space and place during the Lower Palaeolithic has been advanced by notable discoveries of large open air localities e.g. Boxgrove (Roberts and Parfitt 1999). The ability to discuss the spatial association of artefacts and modified bones at points within a palaeolandscape (places) allows for greater understanding of past hominin use of space for activities such as subsistence and lithic production. Such an approach views these areas as functional locations within a landscape, and the idea of 'special places' appears a loaded term. However, there is some evidence for repeated return and re-use at some Palaeolithic sites (e.g. Boxgrove) though whether these represent 'special places' or functional locations within a Lower Palaeolithic context is difficult to assess (e.g. Pope and Roberts 2005). However, such open air sites are rare and the necessity for accurate contextual understanding at all Palaeolithic sites is identified as a vital component to accurately reconstructing hominin use of space both within the palaeolandscape. Without understanding the depositional regime, and its impact on assemblage formation, there is no definitive evidence for association between lithics and bones. Only once such an association can be demonstrated should consideration of hominin use of space in the Lower Palaeolithic be considered. In addition, by considering the palaeoecology of the site locale, and change through time, can allow for discussion about changing resource potential and how this may have necessitated changing use of space.

References

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Roberts, M. B. & Parfitt, S. (1999) Boxgrove: A Middle Pleistocene hominid site at Eartham Quarry, Boxgrove, West Sussex., English Heritage.

4.55 The Extended Ape: 'place' as a semiotic construct in early prehistory

Matthew Pope, Institute of Archaeology, University College, London

ABSTRACT

Early human groups crossed a profound behavioural rubicon once they began to leave a durable record of their occupation through the discard of stone tools. From 3 million years ago it is likely that Australopithecines were beginning to occupy material environments in which traces of earlier occupation would have begun to accrete at key ecological affordances. By 1.5 million years ago patterns of discard left by Homo Ergaster had become highly contextualised and structured, they were also beginning to contain distinctive tools types with non-functional characteristics. This paper explores this behavioural trajectory and the possibility that the presence of stone tool scatters within palaeolandscapes had a direct contextualised effect on early human behaviour, cueing specific behavioural triggers and establishing patterns of simple information feedback. It is suggested that the human sense of 'place' began to be formed at this time, as much through the evolutionary advantages of semiotic transmission as through more traditional explanations of resource distribution and food sharing.

5.15 From Typology to Behaviour: The Meanings of Intersite Variability in the Early Stone Age of East Africa

Matt Grove, Dept of Geography, Royal Holloway

ABSTRACT

A central problem with lithic typologies is that they are likely to reflect categories imposed by archaeologists rather than differences experienced by the toolmaker. The current paper argues that this problem is also true of archaeological site typologies; in the Early Stone Age (ESA) of East Africa, it is questionable whether those localities identified as 'living floors' or 'butchering sites', for example, were afforded such meanings by those who created them. Despite such debatable affiliations, studies of prehistoric land use often rely extensively on site typologies to reconstruct hominin subsistence and settlement patterns.

This paper combines quantitative and qualitative analyses of ESA assemblages from Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, and Koobi Fora, Kenya, to examine the relationship between recurrent patterning in the archaeological record, the context of such patterning at the time of deposition, and its meaning as reconstructed by the archaeologist. Discriminant Function Analysis is used to examine the integrity of the typological schemes applied to these assemblages, with the result that the classifications of Leakey and Isaac are found to be essentially mathematically robust. Given these findings, and the

implication that variation was present and observable at the time of deposition, the latter part of the paper examines a series of individual ESA localities in much the way that Gell (1998) examines the Maori Meeting House. In particular, the possibility that recurrent associations and combinations of particular artefacts and agents at given localities establish meanings in the minds of those agents is examined in some detail.

Reference

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5.35 - 6.00 Discussion

Session 5 – Newman F

Transforming objects: rendering the invisible tangible

Linda Hurcombe, Mary Ann Owoc, Rhiannon Pettitt

SESSION ABSTRACT

Object narratives involve changes of form, material, and context, as items created in one material are replicated or transformed into other materials in new, signifying arenas. The processes of transformation involved in such narratives may relate to understandings of the relationship between transience and permanence, invisibility and visibility, or other changes of form, appearance, and use that characterize both object biographies, and the opposition of contrasting items of material culture. Through processes of transformation, object meanings are altered and redefined in new signifying contexts, and complex and powerful metaphors underpinning practice are created. The materiality of impermanent objects may be of particular relevance here. Wood or textiles were commonly rendered in or replaced by more robust materials, or, materialized in decorative ceramic impressions and artistic depictions. Further, organic materials come from living things, which can be husbanded or killed to obtain raw materials, thus the individual, gender and communal relationships between people and particular plants and animals may be embedded within the choice and use of craft items. Finally, the lives of artifacts both transient and permanent involve important changes of context and use that affect their signifying properties over time.

This session seeks to further exploring the complex web of associations and practices involved in object narratives of the past in an effort to critique our sometimes fragmented notion of practice, and enhance our understanding of past materiality.

9.00 A Flow of Substances

Jane Downes, Orkney College UHI

ABSTRACT

The way in which prehistoric technologies, or crafts, have been differentially theorised will be presented in the first part of the paper. Differences are immediately apparent between those activities called technologies whose product is an artefact of a durable nature (such as metalworking) which more adequately theorised, and those called crafts whose products are perishable (such as dyeing, fulling, tanning and brewing) which are generally neglected in theoretical discourse and are instead a focus of experimental archaeology. In this paper the emphasis will shift from the products or artefacts of technologies to the impermanent, transient substances and essences that effected transformations, and, in particular, to fluids. Rather than focussing on object such as pots which could be said to be the end point or collecting mechanism of fluids, I will present forms of material culture and architecture which enabled substances to get from one point to another – a prehistory of conduits. Aspects of the part that the 'natural' flow of substances played in life, and the role that the deviation, control and manipulation of the flow played in the transformative practices of various technologies will be explored, as will the wider symbolic dimensions of these processes.

9.20 Bone, fur and feathers: some man/animal relationships in the British Bronze Age

Ann Woodward, University of Birmingham

ABSTRACT

The role of animals in Early Bronze Age Britain is a neglected subject. This neglect may be due to the general absence of settlement sites and domestic assemblages; also the relevant data from burials has often been ignored at the expense of artefacts made from exotic substances such as gold, amber or faience. Detailed study and identification of items made from bone, horn, antler, ivory, teeth and animal skin is now under way.

Preliminary study suggests that materials derived from particular species relate to artefacts of different form and function. Also some of the species represented may have been valued for the colour, texture and flamboyance of their fur and feathers – perishable materials which seldom have survived in archaeological contexts. The selection of raw material may have involved symbolic as well as practical choices, with such choices reflecting the particular cognitive relationships that existed between humans and certain species of bird and animal.

9.40 Understanding a soft landscape: a narrative of stone, wood, sods, pottery and metal.

Marjolijn Kok, University of Amsterdam m.s.m.kok@uva.nl

ABSTRACT

Large parts of the western Netherlands are a soft landscape in the sense that no natural rocks or stones occur. Everything in the landscape can be shifted and moulded with relative ease and several estuaries constantly changed the borders between land and water. This paper discusses the way in which people actively constructed narratives about this landscape through the use of different materials in one of these estuaries – the Oer-IJ area – during the pre- and proto-historic period.

The geological circumstances have led to an excellent preservation of organic remains, like wood, bone, rope, basketry and pollen. Large scale excavations of several hectares have made it possible to study a range of materials from different contexts and practices. The analysis of all material categories in a similar degree of detail is crucial for the research into materiality. Comparisons can only be made when information is available about the different materials and their archaeological context. The Oer-IJ area has also been intensively studied from a geological and ecological perspective, which gives the possibility to reconstruct the landscape in a relatively detailed manner.

Here the focus will be on how people created narratives about the landscape at local offering sites through the use of different materials. These narratives can not be understood when only one category of material is studied. The combination of the different characteristics of the materials used in depositions and earthworks bring to the fore how the landscape was perceived. The materiality of the objects, like colour, durability, origin, and transformability appears to be of major importance in the ritual practices of deposition and the construction of earthworks. Organic and inorganic (natural) objects will be discussed in relation to each other and the surrounding landscape. From the earthworks and offerings it can be shown that the people of the Oer-IJ through the use of different materials were paying special attention to the relations between wet and dry places and the softness of their landscape.

10.00 Built to last? Transformation as process in the British Bronze Age

Mary Ann Owoc, Mercyhurst College, USA

ABSTRACT

The processes of monument creation and ceramic production in the British Bronze Age incorporated transient materials and actions which were crucial in the production of more permanent sites and objects. A fuller understanding these most visible products of the past, it is suggested, necessitates a closer examination of their earlier forms and, the various actions and perishable materials that helped to bring them into being. Issues of representation, metaphor, presence, and the changeable nature of substances are examined as important matters influencing both the production of monuments and material culture in this period and, the manner in which we categorize sites and objects in the archaeological record. It is argued that invisibility and disappearance in the past be given equal attention in our analyses of Bronze Age visibility and presence.

10.20 - 10.40 Discussion

10.40 - 11.10 Coffee

11.10 The phenomena of skeuomorphs: transforming materialities

Linda Hurcombe, Exeter

ABSTRACT

Some prehistoric objects deliberately make visual reference to objects in other materials as skeuomorphs. They may do so for a variety of different reasons ranging from toys, tokens, evocations or forgeries as a deliberate intent to deceive. Skeuomorphs are not a unified issue but offer multiple phenomena, each having its own aspect to contribute to a better understanding of complex people-artefact-material interplays. These show the potential for skeuomorphs to be a source of comfort, allow physical roleplay, or embody conservative tradition; to shock, deceive or offer a visual witticism. The physical manufacture of the visual/tactile echo, and the materials of referent and skeuomorph all raise questions of materiality and the relationships between materialities. The latter may include the intentional transposition of transience and permanence and reveal how such concepts were deployed and understood by prehistoric societies. These issues and the multiple phenomena of skeuomorphs will be explored using a range of archaeological examples, case studies from contemporary societies and experimental archaeology.

11.30 Making visible 'containers' in the prehistoric Levant

Brian Boyd, Columbia University, New York

ABSTRACT

Starting from a brief outline of the use of the excavation strategy "l'anthropologie de terrain" in elucidating post-depositional decomposition processes of the human body, I will discuss how certain perished materials can be made visible through employing a similar method. I will present examples from the Epipalaeolithic and Pre-Pottery Neolithic Levant of artefacts which may have been deposited/kept in organic containers. This will include consideration of worked bone microwear to identify the use of basketry, cordage and textiles, and questions current assumptions about the gender roles ascribed to the practices involved in the production and use of such materials.

11.50 Form is Temporary
Duncan Brown, Southampton City Council

ABSTRACT

Pottery and medieval living, part 242 in a never-ending series. Pottery appears permanent to us archaeologists because it survives so well in the ground, and yet it is almost the ultimate disposable material, if only because once broken it is very difficult to repair and impossible to recycle. It was therefore perhaps not viewed as a 'permanent' material type at all, but one that was constantly replaced. Add to this skeuomorphic references to vessels made in other materials, both more durable (metal) and organic (leather), and one could argue that ceramics occupied some sort of marginal material cultural territory. Medieval society was riddled with convention, order and hierarchy, as expressed in the sumptuary laws and associated elitist encumbrances. This talk will attempt to illuminate the place of pottery within the medieval material melange. This will hopefully inform the session and subsequent discussion, and perhaps give rise to reflections on the pottery of other periods.

12.10 Witchsticks, tobacco, and the super-organic: cache caves in California.
David Robinson, University of Bristol

ABSTRACT

While Alfred Kroeber's cultural idea of the Superorganic has faded from current anthropological memory, organic remains of the cultures he studied remain in crevices, cracks, and cache caves. This paper explores these poorly understood hidden places and the manners in which organic materials exerted multiple valences in terms of palpable agency. In this instance, where basketry was a far superior choice to pottery, human-plant-relationships were enmeshed within an environment teaming with potency, and potential: certain species of plant enhanced that potency, elevating them to supernatual status and mythologization.

12.30 Temporality, Materiality and the Transformation of Objects and Bodies
Rhiannon Pettitt

ABSTRACT

Using case studies from the Bronze Age in Wales this paper will explore notions of materiality and temporality of objects as part of social relations and construed identity. To build up an idea of how objects were used and perceived in the Bronze Age we must move the focus to include dynamic fluid forms rather than objects exclusively as bounded and final. Instead, objects can be seen as a part of changeable social life, as entangled within relationships with people and as a mediator of social expression. With the emphasis on the lifecycle of objects and bodies, fractured and whole, we are able see how metaphors can be enabled and disabled, or, constructed and deconstructed. During this period we may see key concepts being used such as the interchange of objects with the body, the manipulation of objects as part of social change and the play of meanings between permanent and impermanent objects. With a focus on such concepts I hope to bring into discussion the renegotiation of the body in relation to the renegotiation of objects in there permanent or impermanent form.

12.50 - 1.00 Discussion

Session 6 – Laver LT3

Future Archaeologies – Future Geographies
Catherine Brace & David Harvey (University of Exeter)

SESSION ABSTRACT

The purpose of the session is to bring together Archaeologists and Geographers interested in the challenges that face the respective disciplines in dealing with, making or representing the future. Archaeology and Geography are both disciplines that are reasonably comfortable with dealing with the past, but all around us are the geographies and archaeologies of tomorrow: the symbolic spaces, the material remains, the relicts and artefacts, the knowledges, rituals, practices, performances and customs of our present. The questions that surround the archaeologies and geographies of the future are many and range across the epistemological, methodologicial, conceptual and theoretical. They deal with what future archaeologists and geographers will make of our present; the future trajectories for each discipline; how and what to preserve for the future; how to communicate into the distant future; virtual spatialities and how to remember them; how to dig in a digital place; the meaning of memory; futures that did not come to pass; counterfactual futures.

This session would be aimed at Geographers and Archaeologists interested in the connections between their disciplines as well as the knotty questions of imagining and preparing for the future however close it might be.

9.00 Digital Artefacts: theory and method in a postmodern world
Adam Spring

ABSTRACT

In my paper I aim to bring together advanced methods in archaeological surveying and theories pertaining to archaeological practices and artefacts. Looking at high density surveying in particular I want to explore the way in which digital artefacts are constructed and, as technology progresses, how they will play a greater role in reconstructing the past.

The advent of technologies now able to digitally render entire landscapes, as well as individual objects, as three dimensional models marks an advancement in archiving that has huge implications for archaeology. Never before has there been the opportunity to record entire excavations as they progress as digital artefacts should one wish to do so, or preserve an entire monument within its setting for as long as the data generated can be preserved. Though cost of such equipment is still high, the advent of high density scanning will inevitably make archaeology a more self-evaluating discipline / process than ever before. Much like excavation archives and reports can be revisited and revaluated in the present, digital scanning is potentially shaping a future in which particular windows in time can be preserved, with a blow by blow account of investigative techniques employed being visually preserved also.

It is clear that digital reconstructions of the physical world are playing an ever-increasing role in monitoring and preserving the past. This paper aims to draw from a number of sources in an attempt to explore future archaeology in a digital world.

9.30 Tomorrow's World: Technology Enthusiasm and Museum Collections
Hilary Geoghegan, Royal Holloway, University of London

ABSTRACT

Identified as individuals with a keen interest in the material cultures and histories of technology and industrial sites, technology enthusiasts often cite nostalgia as a significant motivating force behind their fascination with old and often obsolete technologies; thus taking comfort in the past and its material cultures. However, technology enthusiasts are nervous; they are worried about where the next generation of technology enthusiasts will come from, which institutions will look after their personal archives and collections when they are gone and who is collecting, monitoring and recording the recent past. Technology enthusiasts identify (science) museums as a potential solution. Museum professionals are also worried. Holding in trust the material record of human development for future generations, museum professionals are uneasy about whether they will have the space to store these (future) collections, how they can capture the fast disappearing expertise relating to these technologies and what they should collect to represent the present.

Drawing on ethnographic work with enthusiast societies relating to telecommunications heritage, computer conservation and industrial archaeology, as well as in-depth interviews with staff at the Science Museum (London), my paper reflects on these worries to consider the present archaeologies and future geographies of technology enthusiasm and its associated museum collections.

10.00 The Elephant in the Room
Paul Graves-Brown

ABSTRACT

If the past is a foreign country, then the future might as well be another planet. Walter Benjamin saw the Angel of History forever falling backwards into the future whilst McLuhan remarks, "we look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future". In my own recent work on the privatisation of experience, I found that whilst it was possible to detect long-term trajectories in the past, it was hard to say how they might extend into the future.

All this being said, there seems some certainly that climate change will impact on the future of archaeology and geography, and for that matter, just about everything else. There seem to be two ways that we might approach this phenomenon. First, we may consider how the past offers both potential solutions to future problems, and also predictions as to how humanity will cope with catastrophic environmental change. Alternatively, we might consider the impact of climate change on the world's cultural heritage resource. The consequent loss of archaeological resource seems a rather trivial concern, yet a new map of the world will clearly alter the ways in which humanity defines itself, where it comes from and where it is going. In any discussion of the future, it seems that climate change is the elephant in the room. In this paper, I shall attempt to assess what its impact will be.

10.30 - 10.50 Discussion

10.50 - 11.20 Coffee

11.20 Future geographies and the enchantment of collections
Jude Hill, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

This paper traces the histories and geographies of a group of British amulets and charms which became part of museum collections in London and Oxford during the early twentieth century. The first part of the paper explores how the enchanting potential of the collected objects disrupted the narratives of evolution and progress presented in these exhibition spaces. A study of amulets beyond the locus of the museum at this time also sheds light on the potential agency of such objects and the spatialities of magical materialities in other contexts.

A focus on the ongoing lives of these magical objects, and a recognition that their haunting power necessarily leaves analyses open and unfinished, also offers opportunities to consider how magical materialities might be researched in relation to contemporary and future geographies, both inside and outside museums.

11.50 'Once and Future Things': Archaeological Visions of the Future
Dan Hicks, University of Bristol

ABSTRACT

Archaeological discussions of the future are by no means new. This paper begins by considering some of the disciplinary history behind the current session, tracing the changing ways in which archaeologists have imagined the future. In this context, the paper explores how archaeologies of the recent and contemporary past increasingly generate results that hold the potential to inform social policy. It is argued that contemporary archaeology holds a significant, but underdeveloped, potential to make distinctive, and politically-engaged, contributions to the construction of better futures.

12.20 - 1.00 Discussion
discussant - John Wylie, University of Exeter

Session 7 – Laver LT6

Archaeologies of the immediate: forensic science and archaeology
Jennie Robinson, University of Central Lancashire

SESSION ABSTRACT

Forensic science is a relatively new discipline which borrows its method almost entirely from different aspects of archaeology. Its objective, of constructing what happened at a site from the artefacts left behind, seems at one with the most basic aims of archaeological excavation. However, this fast-growing and popular science is polarised from archaeology in its lack of engagement with any theory, and little attempt at discourse has been made. This is despite the fact that very strong claims of absolute truth, which have a vital impact on living people, are made on the basis of its methods.

Can theoretical frameworks be applied to forensic science, and should they? Is theory unnecessary when studying the archaeology of living people, or does the immediacy and vitality of its subject mean that it is all the more important to adequately discuss its approaches and interpretations?

This session seeks to demonstrate the diversity of archaeological applications in forensic science, and to provide a forum for discussing the issue of theoretical approaches in the discipline. Case studies on current research are invited from anthropologists, osteologists, entomologists, palynologists, psychologists, zooarchaeologists and other interested parties involved in the forensic arena of archaeology, to demonstrate the breadth and variety of applications. Further, papers discussing theoretical models which may be applied to the study of living human behaviour are welcomed. In particular, the nature of 'proof' and 'truth' about past events, and the use of human remains as evidence in terms of concepts and treatment of the dead, are themes which the discussion following papers will seek to address.

9.00 Jennie Robinson: Introduction and welcome

9.20 Archaeological Theory: A Matter of Life or Death? The Application of Reflexive Practice on the Major Crime Scene
Karl Harrison, West Midlands Police

ABSTRACT

Forensic archaeology would appear to be a sub discipline currently devoid of theoretical content or discourse. In this, it shares common ground with a broad range of forensic disciplines, and is set in clear contrast to mainstream archaeological thought.

This lack of a theoretical framework affects not only analytical aspects of forensic investigation, but also operational ones. This paper aims to detail the current method of deployment for archaeological resources on major crime scenes, to set this deployment within the context of current forensic practice laid down by investigative best practice. It will then consider whether the explorations of reflexive practice within traditional archaeology might offer a constructive framework on which to base the fieldwork of forensic archaeologists.

9.40 Sex and Stature Estimation Based on Calcaneus, Talus, and Metatarsal Length
Dawn Strohmeyer and Tal Simmons, University of Central Lancashire

ABSTRACT

It has long been known that a relationship exists between lower long limb bone lengths and stature; this is often used to estimate stature. However, all too often an individual is only represented by fragments of the long bones, or the smaller, more compact bones of the feet. Although a relationship exists between the maximum length of these bones and an individual's height, very little research documents the utility of estimating stature from foot bones. The purpose of this study was to provide investigators with stature regression formulae for use on the bones of the feet.

Ultimately, the aim of this study was to aid in the identification of servicemen from the Vietnam and Korean Wars who are recovered from archaeological contexts with poor skeletal representation or preservation. The robust and compact nature of the foot bones used in this study make them among the most commonly and completely preserved amid human remains, regardless of environmental factors surrounding death and decomposition. Therefore, this investigation was completed on these bones in order to offer investigators an alternative method of stature estimation when the use of other methods is not possible.

10.10 Hominin Sexual Dimorphism: does one size fit all?
Andrew Gallagher, University of Witwatersrand

ABSTRACT

Reliable determination of variability in sexual dimorphism is a crucial facet of forensic, archaeological and palaeoanthropological analyses. The rule is that individuals drawn from a comparative distribution of known skeletal size dimorphism (SSD) can be inferred on the basis of size distribution around a measure of central tendency. Nevertheless, SSD manifests itself at markedly different levels within the hominid skeleton. Cranio-faical perspectives on SSD in earlier hominins, such as Australopithecus and early Homo suggest a level of sexual size dimorphism akin to that of the extant great Apes, particularly Gorilla. More recent analyses of postcranial remains reveal a contrasting picture. How do such radically different interpretations influence socio-ecological hypotheses of fossil hominin life history?

This analysis employs Exact Randomization comparisons of 10 postcranial dimensions commonly preserved in a representative sample of 8 human samples with a worldwide distribution and the extant African apes (Pan and Gorilla). Exact Randomization comparisons are used to estimate variability in SSD in recent humans compared with that seen in Pan and Gorilla. The implications for reconstructing fossil hominin social structure and mating strategies are discussed.

10.30 - 10.50 Discussion

10.50 - 11.20 Coffee

11.20 New light on old bones
Jennifer Hiller, Rutherford-Appleton Laboratories

ABSTRACT

This paper will discuss the use of large central scientific facilities such as synchrotron light sources to answer archaeological and forensic questions, and the applicability of this new information in a theoretical framework. I will not delve into the nature of scientific enquiry in forensics and archaeology, but will investigate the need to ask the right questions in order to get usable information. The interaction with 'living' branches of bone research will also be examined. Finally, I will address the burning question of whether brighter (and more expensive and complex) light is always better light.

11.40 Archaeology and Law
Roger M Thomas, English Heritage

ABSTRACT

Strictly speaking, the word 'forensic' means something which pertains to the courts of law, or to debate and argument more generally. In that sense, archaeology as a whole is, or should be, a forensic discipline: evidence, inference and argument lie at the heart of archaeology. There are some very interesting similarities between the legal process and the process of archaeological enquiry, but these seem to have gone remarkably unnoticed before now. This paper will present an initial exploration of the parallels between archaeology and law.

12.00 Not so Silent Witnesses: British archaeologists in the Balkans
Emma Tetlow, University of Birmingham

ABSTRACT

Since the mid 1990's teams of archaeologists have been excavating mass graves associated with the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, often working in remote locations and in the early days of their efforts, under military guard. The material recovered as a result of these excavations, demanding working conditions, both physical and mental, are alien to those who work on 'typical' archaeological sites. On a regular basis, archaeologists do not interact with the family of the deceased or potential criminals associated with violent crimes on such a huge scale. The domestic politics of such areas is also incredibly complex and quite often impacts on the day-to-day work of the field teams. What effect does this have on 'Joe Archaeologist'?

This paper aims to discuss the attitudes of archaeologists, both those who have worked on mass graves and those of have not, to the job in hand. What are the emotional stimuli when working on this type of excavation? Much will be drawn from personal experience during a brief but intense period of work in the Balkans and discussion with fellow field archaeologists, many who have worked on such sites in the region since the mid 1990's.

12.20 The Performance of Exhumation: Creating Bodies and Evidence in Archaeology and Forensic Science
Zoe Crossland, Department of Anthropology, Columbia University

The portrayal of human bodies as objectified evidence is fundamental to the discourse of forensic archaeology, used to underwrite truth claims that archaeologists make when testifying in court in the context of criminal proceedings,

ABSTRACT

or in the prosecution of those responsible for human rights abuses. This presentation explores the effects of this understanding of the dead body, focusing in particular on the ways in which the materiality of the corpse is constituted through the performative acts of excavation and analysis. In particular, I am concerned with the ways in which the idiom of empiricism popularly drawn upon in forensic archaeology has an effect of marking out the body as dead and separating it from the living. In this way exhumation may be seen to act as a materializing practice which brings the dead into being as not-living, creating specific ways of relating to the dead and narrowing their potential agency and efficacy as people. The conflict that often surrounds the work of recent exhumation therefore reveals hidden beliefs about the body, and makes visible the ways in which archaeological practice is implicated in the very constitution of the dead. Through the unearthing of the dead body we can begin to see the ways in which we understand its potentiality, its force and its reality.

12.40 - 1.00 Discussion

Pub-Theory Discussion

6pm - 7pm Pub theory discussion group, 'The Ram', (Devonshire House, Streatham Campus)

SATURDAY NIGHT

The Pub-Theory Discussion Group, Institute of Archaeology, UCL
Tobias Richter, Andrew Shapland & Andrew Gardner

Archaeology does not just take place in the field, laboratory, library or museum, but also in more informal settings characterised by face-to-face discussions between archaeologists. One such place, at least in the context of British archaeology, is the pub. The image of excavators meeting in a pub to talk about the finds and events of the day has been particularly popularized by TV series such as Time Team, but most students of archaeology will have been in a situation where they have gained some insight or background knowledge during a discussion in the pub. At the same time, archaeologists have begun to recognize the importance of archaeological discourses which takes place in such informal settings.

In this session we would like to use this link between archaeological theory, archaeology talk, pubs and the relaxing atmosphere of liquid consumption, to create an informal, fluid and non-hierarchical setting to discuss archaeological theory. Conventional contexts in which archaeological theory is debated at conferences, such as the lecture theatre, are characterized by formality and pre-established structures, which create boundaries and structures through the separation between audience and speaker. This is a theatrical set-up in which an actor uses the media of speech and visual presentation. By situating this session in a different location - the pub - we aim to break down this division between author and recipient by emphasizing the multivocality, reciprocity and fluidity of conversations and discussions. Through this process we want to give all attendees the chance to speak what they have always thought, wanted to say, but never did, in order to gain further insights into the theoretical basis of the discipline.

The Institute of Archaeology's pub-theory discussion group has been meeting since April 2006 on a regular basis in pubs around the campus of University College London. Specific texts dealing with archaeological theory are selected at each meeting and read by all members of the group for the next meeting to serve as the basis for discussion. For X-Tag we would like to utilize the same format of discussions based on specific texts, in order to provide a springboard for further debate. Using a message board hosted on the UCL website four recent texts dealing with archaeological theory can be nominated and will be selected by vote of conference attendees. Nominated texts should deal with a current aspect of archaeological theory, applicable across geographical and chronological contexts, and should inspire further discussion. There will therefore be no call for papers and no prior set theme for this session. The meeting will take place in a pre-selected pub. To create a definitive output the discussions will be recorded on video.

SATURDAY PM

Note the following events:

2pm - 4pm Public debate in Royal Albert Memorial Museum
What is the future of public archaeology?
(with panelists Mick Aston, Helen Geake, Yvonne Marshall, Mike Pitts, Barbara Bender & Julian Richards)
Booked ticket holders only - ask at registration

6pm - 7pm Pub theory discussion group, 'The Ram' (Devonshire House, Streatham Campus)
run by Tobias Richter, Andrew Shapland & Andrew Gardner (UCL)
Details Opposite

Session 1 – Newman B

SESSION ABSTRACT

Scaling and networks in archaeology

Carl Knappett & Jill Hilditch (Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter)

This session seeks to explore new ways for examining the interactions between different scales in the prehistoric record. Processes occurring at distinct spatial scales, for example the household (micro), the community (meso) and the region (macro), evidently affect one another; yet, each spatial scale is usually expected to have a quite separate organisational logic. One upshot of this is that different methodologies are employed for each level, methodologies that do not necessarily intersect as readily as they might. This hinders the full study of scalar interactions. What is needed, we suggest, is a set of concepts and methods that facilitate the study of these articulations across the micro, meso and macro scales. While for this session we are particularly interested in the potential of network ideas, we also invite papers that pursue other conceptual avenues. We are also keen to include a range of archaeological evidence through which scalar processes can be tracked, and from a cross-section of prehistoric periods and regions.

2.00 Introduction to the session
Carl Knappett & Jill Hilditch (Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter)

2.10 Theoretical preconditions for a big-picture archaeology
John Robb (Dept of Archaeology, University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

There has been much attention to theorising the micro-scale of past human worlds, often as a necessary corrective to reductionist big-picture archaeologies. But in consequence, the large-scale itself has generally been dismissed rather than theorised. This paper discusses the necessary theoretical preconditions for an archaeology which can deal with regional and long-term developments without violating how we understand the past on other scales. It is argued that a panoramic archaeology is necessary to explain certain aspects of the past, and is possible through the development of some new concepts.

2.30 Complexity as a multi-scalar concept
Sheila Kohring (Dept of Archaeology, University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

Recent interests in material engagements (i.e. DeMarrais, Gosden and Renfrew 2004) have opened dialogue regarding how social relationships are created and materialized through the contextual patterns of interaction between people and their material culture. Embedded in this dialogue, is the presumption that there is a connection between different scalar analytical perspectives. A fundamental issue here is that complexity is seen as inherent in any encounter and is exacerbated with exponential growth when sets of encounters and practices are interlinked.

In this paper, I suggest the use of complexity as a concept to explore scale-dependent meanings materialized within the production of local and Bell-Beaker pottery styles in South-western Iberia. Recent interpretations contend Bell-Beakers represent a shared elite ideology and are used to discuss supra-regional exchange systems, while regional ceramics represent territorial political entities (i.e. Hurtado 1999). These interpretations have validity at a particular scale of social interaction, but fail to account for the varied contexts and styles of vessels being used in these communities on a daily basis. This paper redresses this over-emphasis on large-scale socio-political complexity and considers how to build an appropriate consideration of complex social relational networks articulating between different scales of social integration.

DeMarrais, E., Gosden, C. and Renfrew, C. (eds.). 2004. Rethinking materiality: The engagement of mind with the material world. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological research.
Hurtado, Victor. 1999. Los Inicios de la complejizacion social y el campaniforme en Extremadura. SPAL 8: 47-83.

2.50 Network structure and process in Upper Mesopotamia-ca. 3000-2000 BC
T.J. Wilkinson (and the MASS group) Dept of Archaeology, Durham

ABSTRACT

Early Bronze Age sites in Upper Mesopotamia are associated with a remarkable pattern of route networks that are incised into the landscape and are visible on certain satellite images. However, such systems are only the visible manifestation of a much wider range of networks of human interaction. Agent-based models indicate that household level kin-networks enable households to cope with external stresses, and that these ecological/ economic networks feed into and perhaps relate to the networks that can be distinguished on the ground. In addition nomadic pastoral networks must have covered immense amounts of terrain and their interaction spheres can also be delineated by the use of landscape archaeology. This paper will explore the implications of and linkages between these hierarchical sets of human networks.

3.10 Stuck in the middle with who? – Scalar approaches to the Bronze Age Cyclades
Jill Hilditch (Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter)

ABSTRACT

In the Aegean Bronze Age, traditional approaches to ceramic artefacts, such as pottery 'typologies', are often used to interpret sites, and even whole islands. Yet for the Middle Bronze Age Cyclades in particular, these approaches have proven inadequate, seeking solely to define what is Cycladic; they are effectively 'stuck in the middle' of a range of scales that can be used to understand and reconstruct the prehistoric Cyclades. My research has three main scales of inquiry, agency and the individual decisions of Bronze Age potters on one island, Thera (micro), the interactions between communities within the Cyclades and how they relate to one another (meso) and ultimately, a regional study of how these communities interact within wider Aegean networks such as the Helladic, Minoan and Anatolian 'worlds' (macro).

This paper will discuss briefly how a combination of established techniques (ceramic petrography, chaîne opératoire), new data (Bronze Age Akrotiri on Thera) and new approaches (network theory) can be combined to look across different scales and therefore allow a more thorough understanding of the internal dynamics of the Cyclades.

3.30 - 3.45 Discussion

3.45 - 4.05 Coffee

4.05 Can we live without complexity? Defining different scales of analysis in Bronze Age Crete
Maria Relaki (University of Sheffield)

ABSTRACT

Recognising different scales of analysis is a structuring principle of archaeological explanation. The nature of archaeological inquiry, relying primarily on the identification of material residue, promotes the almost exclusive use of spatial criteria for the definition of analytic scales. Despite their essentially spatial character, however, analytic scales are expected to operate as social categories, that is, to have explanatory potential in the discussion of social interactions and transformations. As it would be expected, the main distinguishing element between different analytic scales is size. However, because of the social role that these spatial categories are called to fulfil, differences in size come to represent different levels of social complexity.

There are some problems with conceptualizing analytic scales in this way. Spatial associations are essential in the study of archaeology, however, the supremacy of spatial criteria has meant that the temporal element – essential in order to understand how different scales become operative and interact – has been entirely ignored. Although spatial categories can be socially meaningful, the link between spatial and social categories is not self-evident. Differentiations in size may be necessary in determining different scales of analysis, but if these scales are to have a social significance, then size alone is not a sufficient distinguishing criterion. The only social parameter included in traditional definitions of analytic scales is social complexity, a concept which, albeit extensively used, is poorly defined.

This paper argues that there are ways of defining more valid analytic scales. Reinstating the temporal dimension in this definition will demonstrate that analytic scales are not static phenomena, but become visible and operative according to different social and historical contexts, and that social complexity neither describes nor explains the interactions across different scales of analysis. Using the concepts of Social Arenas, to describe the contexts and resources of social interaction, and Networks of Relevance, to examine the ways in which interactions between different scales become possible, I will illustrate my argument with examples from the Bronze Age Mesara in Central Crete.

4.25 Scaling temporality in Aegean prehistory
Ellen Adams (Dept of Classics, Trinity College Dublin)

ABSTRACT

The choice of specific temporal scales reflects and directs research aims and objectives to at least the same degree as spatial scales. The main drive, at least in Aegean prehistory, is to construct as fine a temporal framework as possible in order to establish the sequence of socio-political events and therefore cause and effect. In contrast, many research topics (such as cultural identity) traditionally allow or demand a broader brush. Braudel and the Annales School constructed three main time scales (longue durée, conjunctures and événements), but have been criticized for failing to explore fully the relationships between them. While my paper will examine this problem, equal weight will be given to the additional complexity involved with temporal scales concerning the fluid relationship between past, present and future. It will be argued, with examples drawn from Minoan Crete, that studies of prehistoric constructions of temporality must be approached from as wide a variety of scales as possible, rather than a single (spatial) focus on the landscape, the community, the household or the artifact. Certain themes will also be explored, such as the role of writing in the representation of time or the construction of temporality.

4.45 Social identities: a network of communication spheres?
Juha-Matti Vuorinen (University of Turku, Finland; visiting student in University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

In my paper I am exploring the possibility to use the concept of social identity as a network that connects different communication spheres and also different spatial scales. My case study is from SW Finland during the Late Iron Age and Early Medieval period. I discuss the social identities on different levels: 1) the household level with its deep traditions, family and kinship relations; 2) local level: farm and/or village?; 3) the northern Baltic Sea region (and beyond?): the identities of traders and crafters, and also the network of religious identities (this was the time of active Christianization in the region).

5.05 The small world of the Vikings: dynamics in a pre-modern network
Søren M. Sindbæk (Aarhus University)

ABSTRACT

The innovations in the study of complex networks in recent years have inadvertently pin-pointed critical problems in the received archaeological models of exchange. In these models ('down-the-line', 'central place' and others), exchange has been assumed to develop from a randomly,'democratically' connected basis, and to have grown quickly into a static, a-historical equilibrium. In contrast, complex network-theory suggests that details in the development and arrangement of connections, which sustained far-reaching contacts in early complex societies, were decisive for the robustness of systems, for the possibility of control, and thus for the historical course of cultural interaction in pre-modern precursors of global interaction.

My work focuses on the North Sea region in the Viking Age. It aims to chart the structure and development of connections by way of computer-based affiliation analysis, and to compare these with more general evidence on the social forms of exchange. By doing so, it will expose the mechanisms through which global-scale interactions pervaded the life of individuals in a pre-modern past, often misportrayed as locally organized. Links are identified in terms of non-local items in the archaeological record, or information in written records: itineraries, accounts, etc. Though records are fragmentary, I argue that key features of topology can be outlined even in a limited sample of assemblages. In addition, qualitative information sometimes provides surprisingly definite evidence on the overall architecture of a network. My initial work suggests a working hypothesis on the historical relation between network structure and events: Whereas Early Medieval exchange is easily shown to generate 'small-worlds', and to possess a scale-free topology - dominated by a few hubs - it lacks a third feature typically found in mature, robust networks: its connections rarely reached across hierarchical levels. This made networks vulnerable to general collapse - indeed a common occurrence in Early Medieval exchange.

5.25 Scaling networks: interdisciplinary perspectives
Tim Evans, Ray Rivers & Carl Knappett (Department of Physics, Imperial College London / Dept of Archaeology, Exeter)

ABSTRACT

In this paper we address some of the issues inherent in understanding large-scale 'sociophysical' systems. We draw upon graph theory, social network analysis and statistical physics in an attempt to construct new ways of thinking about regional network dynamics; while our focus is on macro-scale patterns, our perspective does pay close attention to other scales, in particular the meso-scale of individual sites (the 'nodes' in our networks). Our research is driven by archaeological questions, using the Aegean Bronze Age as a case study, but readily extended to other periods and regions. In order to demonstrate our perspective, we present our 'ariadne' model, a means of exploring the nature of regional interactions.

5.45 - 6.00 Discussion

Session 2 – Newman C (Short session)

Against Remembrance: Space and the Politics of Forgetting
Benjamin Morris, Dacia Viejo-Rose, Uta Staiger (University of Cambridge)

Without a doubt, much work in heritage and in the public presentation of archaeological sites, monuments, and artefacts operates on what may be termed the 'conservation fetish': the assumption that the remains of the material record should be preserved for future generations. But with storerooms in museums, universities, and county archaeological units alike already bulging at the seams with the overwhelming volume of material flowing in from excavations (usually state-sponsored rescue work), and with no end in site, how can we begin to make sense of our incapacity to record and preserve and display it all? Put another way, what must we wilfully 'forget' in order to publicly 'remember' the rest, and how do our contemporary notions of space inform such decisions? Is it possible any longer to

SESSION ABSTRACT

discuss the fragments and shards of memory without retaining an awareness of their eventual, inevitable demise-or does that which we have 'forgotten' in this context become that which we have liberated?

For this panel we propose an array of papers grappling with the above issues of space, materiality, surplus, abundance, and the politics/ethics of remembering and forgetting. We envision a discussion which will raise justifications of and challenges to the prevailing discourse of preservation, reading the discourse as a discourse whose assumptions may be exposed and reworked. Papers may be either theoretically oriented or grounded in policy or case studies (either in archaeology or heritage, i.e. archaeo-politics), but ideally papers will exhibit a fluid, sinuous movement between these two poles.

2.00 To display or to forget: a false dichotomy?
Dr. Anna Simandiraki, University of Bath

ABSTRACT

Minoan Archaeology (Crete, 3rd-2nd millennia B.C.) is a substantial generator of archaeological material, most of which ends up in long-term storage in various museums and storerooms around the island of Crete and, to a limited extent, abroad. This theoretical paper will take Minoan Archaeology as a case study. It will address the dynamics of remembering and forgetting of artefacts and ideas through material and bodily manipulation. How do we explain and adapt our incapacity to process and represent all Minoan materiality? Is publication/exposure 'liberation', 'fossilisation' or both? Is forgetting inevitable?

More specifically, the paper will suggest that 'contingencies' of remembering and forgetting are not simply matters of storage capacity, funds and display decisions. Rather, they are connected to micropolitical issues such as personal power and access; to public narratives such as nationalism and fanaticism; to the personal experience of the past; and to the position of archaeologists in material, spatial and temporal palimpsests.

Finally, suggestions will be made as to how the 'seen' and 'unseen' material can be used to (re)construct different realities and representations of Minoan Archaeology, enfranchise more of its stakeholders and thereby 'liberate' artifacts and (artif)actors from the current 'fossilisation' of their own archaeological reality.

2.20 "Dead or Alive? The Memory of the 'Roman Occupation' and Modern Interventions in the Ancient Places of Performance in Modern Greece"
Dr. Zeynep Akture, Izmir Institute of Technology (Turkey)

Abstract unavailable

2.40 Preservation of Croatian Church Ruins: the politics of a second 'forgetting'?
Britt Baillie, University of Cambridge (UK)

Abstract unavailable

3.00 Nostalgic Futurism, Conflicting Temporalities and the Politics of Preservation
Dr Ian Russell, Trinity College Dublin (Ireland)

ABSTRACT

Following the recent publication by Gavin Lucas on the archaeology of time, this paper seeks to situate archaeological conceptions of temporality and materiality within broader epistemic conflict. Confronting archaeological temporal traditionalism through the thought of Stephen Toulmin and Jean Baudrillard, the paper will address the construction of integrated, logical temporal systems through Western scientific and philosophical process. Following the work of Fred Davis, the concept 'nostalgic futurism' was introduced by David Lowenthal. Stated simply, it is a romance of the way people in the past thought about the future. This concept will be explored and inverted in order in order to illustrate how archaeologists think people in the future will (or indeed should) think about the past.

This archaeological materialisation of Western logical temporalism in nationalised heritage systems forms the basis of 'power claim' to territory based on nation state ideologies often supported by the apologetics of 'cultural heritage'. Case studies of archaeological sites which have become the proverbial 'fields of battle' over epistemic authority over temporality, 'verticality' and materiality will be explored to contextualise issues in the current debate. The questions that will be posed is whether conflicts occur not only over differing conceptions of territoriality or ethnicity but also over differing conceptions of temporality and would the world be a safer place if we 'forgot' about the past.

3.20 - 4.00 Discussion

Session 3 – Newman D

'The spade cannot lie' - Fresh perspectives on medieval material culture
Tehmina Goskar (University of Southampton)

SESSION ABSTRACT

On what basis can people who work in historical archaeologies, particularly the medieval past, converse with each other effectively and meaningfully? How can the standing of material culture in the broader sphere of medieval studies be improved? This session aims to start a wide-ranging debate about the ways in which we can improve how we interrogate medieval material culture from across Europe and the Mediterranean, and how we can apply useful theoretical frameworks to our interdisciplinary work. The papers will in this session will raise several key issues that challenge established paradigms about the Middle Ages and demonstrate how interdisciplinary approaches can improve our understanding and interpretation of this period.

The session will end with a discussion of whether it would be worthwhile to create a Medieval Material Culture Communication Network of academics, professionals and postgraduates who work in archaeology, museums, history, conservation, art history, materials technology and other fields, so we can continue to share our expertise and knowledge.

2.00 Introduction
Chair: Dr Leonie Hicks (Centre for Antiquity and the Middle Ages, University of Southampton)

2.20 Interdisciplinary connections: Digging a little deeper –medieval archaeology and its relationship with art history
Prof. Barbara Beall-Fofana, Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA

ABSTRACT

The majority of well-known Art History Survey texts begin with the study of prehistoric art and include an ever-increasing amount of material culture inclusive of the medieval period that has been discovered through archaeology. Many of the texts address the challenge of interpretation prior to written records. However, there is little or no discussion of the archaeological process, how it contributes to our understanding of objects and what opportunities and constraints it presents in the interrogation of medieval material culture. My paper will examine several much-studied objects and architecture advocating the necessity for inclusion of archaeologists' voices in art history for a more complex and comprehensive understanding of material culture and the methods used for study.

2.40 Is there a place for ethnoarchaeology in the study of Saxon ceramics?
Ben Jervis, Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton

ABSTRACT

Nearly a decade ago the publication of the edited volume 'Not So Much a Pot, More a Way of Life' (Blinkhorn and Cumberpatch 1997) called for new and theoretical approaches to the study of medieval ceramics; however, the majority of the literature produced since then has been in the form of dry, empirical reports rather than innovative theoretical works. This paper is intended to pose the question of the validity of an ethnographic approach to the subject. Although ethnoarchaeology and the study of early medieval Britain may at first seem like uneasy bed fellows it is hoped that facts and hypotheses derived from ethnographic work can be shown to at least be able to inform our thinking on Saxon ceramics. Ethnographic examples are taken from South East Asia, South Western USA and Africa which are used to argue that ethnoarchaeology can help us to answer so far unanswered questions about ceramic production and use as well as question established 'facts' and assumptions.

3.00 Taking liberties with the Middle Ages: the Museum of London's Medieval London gallery
Meriel Jeater (Department of Early London History, Museum of London)

ABSTRACT

In November 2005 the Museum of London opened its new 'Medieval London gallery' - a new interpretation of the period that updated the story told by the previous 1970s medieval gallery. Archaeological evidence and historical work from the past 30 years has been incorporated to tell a fresh story. The traditional medieval key dates of 1066 and 1485 are ignored. The gallery concentrates on other events that had more significance for medieval Londoners, such as the re-founding of London by King Alfred in 886 and the Black Death of 1348.

In the Medieval London gallery we use objects to tell stories, concentrating on what they can tell us about medieval London and its inhabitants. Archaeology is used to provide dates and information but the archaeological process is not the focus of the gallery. We use documentary evidence to bring in stories about individuals, which would not be possible with the objects alone. We are trying to reach new audiences that the old gallery did not consider - children and families. Audience research has told us much more about visitor knowledge and has allowed us to adapt the gallery to their needs but questions have also been raised - how much should visitors' expectations influence the interpretation of the past?

3.20 - 3.40 Discussion

3.40 - 4.10 Coffee

4.10 Life after death. A socio-ethnographic reinterpretation of early medieval male burial sites in northern Italian areas
Dr Paolo de Vingo, SAAST Department, University of Turin

ABSTRACT

In Italy, as in other continental European territories, the burial objects of early medieval male interments also included combat weapons. Generally, this feature is associated with the military, linking it to a «typically Germanic» ethnic characteristic, to the «pagan» religion of the deceased and, finally, to the strategic occupation of territory. This assumption is based therefore on the ethnic identification of burial sites with weapons: hence, it is stated that burials of warriors in French territory involve men that, ethnically, can be identified as Franks, as Longobards in the Italian territory, as Anglo-Saxons in the English territory, and so on.

These underlying assumptions must be completely reconsidered and reviewed. For example, male weapon burial evidence is almost non-existent for the Ostrogoths in Italy, the Burgundians in Sapaudia, and the Visigoths in southern France and Spain. Only in Frankish areas do 5th century male interments contain weapons. So, this practice cannot be ascribed to a culturally homogeneous and undifferentiated Germanic or «Barbarian» custom but rather to a burial trend that emerged in precise geographic contexts, with border areas, displaying funerary trends that involved all ethnic groups.

4.30 Mute but suggestive: How medieval historians can deal with material culture

Tehmina Goskar (Centre for Antiquity and the Middle Ages, University of Southampton)

ABSTRACT

"I thought he looked a bit queasy when an artefact was mentioned," said an archaeologist of an historian during a research seminar. The stereotype of historians as object-averse must be questioned and challenged. Why are medieval historians ready to bestow more authenticity on the text than the object? What are the origins of the logocentric attitude of the historian and how can this attitude be challenged in an academic climate where interdisciplinarity is meant to be the essence of humanities research? In this paper I will explore aspects of the conflict between historians and archaeologists, giving some examples from my own research (based on written and 'physcial' sources) on southern Italy. My approach to the material object is to read it like an historical document, in tandem with scrutinising the documented object as if it were manifest. I will discuss ways in which comparative methods have helped me confront the marginal position material culture research occupies in the field of history, and how I intend to disseminate my research across disciplines beyond traditional publication.

4.50 - 6.00 Discussion: Do we need a Medieval Material Culture Communication Network?

Introduced by: Tehmina Goskar

Chaired by Leonie Hicks

ABSTRACT

The five papers will be followed by an open, 45 minute debate about some of the topics raised as a way of establishing the aims of a Medieval Material Culture Communication Network. The idea of behind this network would be enable a variety of professionals engaged with work on medieval material culture to talk to each other, share expertise and advice, offer services, devise new collaborative projects, encourage links between those in academia and those in professional services such as archaeological units, conservation centres and museums, and provide a support network for students and young professionals. This network would not seek to duplicate the activities of established societies and groupings, for example the IFA Finds Group, the Society for Medieval Archaeology or ICMAH (ICOM International Committee for Museums of Archaeology and History), but rather to enable individuals who work on similar material across the world, to better communicate with each other.

All participants (speakers and audience) will be invited to leave their contact details and suggestions at the end of the session. These details will be used initially to create an electronic mailing list where we can continue discussion about a way forward. Anyone who is interested in this network but cannot attend the session should email Tehmina Goskar on tehm@soton.ac.uk.

Session 4 - Newman E – 2 - 6 pm: continuation of Déjà Vu , full day session

Session 5 - Newman F

SESSION ABSTRACT

Beyond the Fringe: theorizing liminality in the historic city

Organiser: Dr Oliver Creighton (Exeter)

The words 'liminal' and 'liminality' are used with increasing frequency in archaeological discourse: but is there meaning behind these buzzwords? This session explores the concept of liminilty with reference to historic-period towns and cities. The concept is well understood in studies of prehistoric landscapes, but remains to be fully applied to urban areas or 'townscapes'. In the context of towns and cities, liminal spaces were blurry areas between urban areas and the countryside beyond. The hypothesised liminal zone lay - or was perceived to lie - beyond areas that were in some way 'core'; they are often considered marginal and peripheral places, being defined by an essentially passive relationship with the centre. These liminal areas of townscapes might embrace features that physically defined the urban fringe - including walls and religious institutions; moreover, they might be characterised by specific social or ethnic groups.

Any sophisticated understanding of these matters requires engagement with a series of theoretical questions and issues. Liminality can be understood in many ways: physical, social and cultural, among others, while perceptions of liminality are likely to differ within and beyond communities. Must liminal communities be defined in relation to a perceived 'core'? Were liminal identities mutable rather than static, and to what extent might the concept be an expression of resistance? Did liminality in life translate into liminality in death? This session invites contributions to these questions and others, and speakers are particularly welcome from disciplinary backgrounds other than archaeology.

2.00 Lives on the edge: anchorites in the medieval English city

Dr Eddie Jones (University of Exeter)

ABSTRACT

The life of the anchorite or enclosed solitary may be the Middle Ages' liminal or liminoid) life par excellence: suspended between life and death, this world and the next, they are frequently found in dwellings whose location materialises their marginality – typically against the wall of a parish church. But there are other urban sites associated with anchorites. Most strikingly, their cells may be found at city gates and even built into the fabric of the walls themselves. This particularly literal manifestation of anchoritic liminality may be contrasted with the figure of the hermit, whose loosely-structured, itinerant existence was characterised by passage, the crossing of thresholds, and the consequent blurring of city limits.

2.20 Moral Topographies of the Medieval City

Keith Lilley (Queen's University, Belfast)

ABSTRACT

This paper considers the imaginative geographies of the medieval city by using textual and visual sources of the period from 900 to 1300. The paper explores how the 'city' was understood as a bounded and hierarchical space, its social order being mapped on and through its spatial form. This ordering was a moralized one, where urban spaces marked out social differences and reinforced ideas of 'otherness'. The paper focuses on evidence for this from later-medieval Bristol principally, but also draws out to cover examples from across the Latin west. Such 'moral topographies', it is argued, are to be found in medieval conceptualizations of the city, as well as its lived spaces, and were rooted in a Christian cosmology where the city's moral topography was a mirrored in the celestial 'city' and its socio-spatial ordering and hierarchy was part of the 'great chain of being'. This shared micro-macrocosmic ordering symbolically linked the earthly urban world below to the heavenly world above, the latter thus reinforcing those perceived and lived boundaries and hierarchies that were present in the medieval city.

2.40 Liminality in death: examples from early medieval Southampton and Winchester, c.750-1100AD

Dr Annia Cherryson (University of Sheffield)

ABSTRACT

The vast majority of the urban dead of the later Saxon period were interred in community burial grounds, usually with an associated church. Yet there is evidence from a number of urban centres for the burial of small numbers of individuals away from consecrated ground, either within execution cemeteries or as isolated burials. Many of these burials lie in peripheral areas, for example town boundaries or on marginal land, such as the marshy ground by rivers. This paper will examine the evidence for burial away from consecrated ground in the early medieval urban centres of Southampton and Winchester. It will then consider the factors which may have led to these individuals being interred outside community burial grounds. Finally, the evidence for the exclusion of individuals from churchyards is considered in the context of the Anglo-Saxon Church's growing control over burial.

3.00 With or Without You? Friars and urbanisation in Britain in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries

Deirdre O'Sullivan (University of Leicester)

ABSTRACT

In a major paper published in 1971 the Annales historian Jacques Le Goff argued that the mendicant movement was crucial to the expansion of urbanism in later medieval Europe. Developing Le Goff's ideas, the American historian Lester K. Little proposed that the friars offered a new way of thinking about profits and money, which was to prove a vital factor in the expansion of the medieval market economy.

Britain offers an interesting testing ground for these ideas. Archaeologists here have latched onto a central link between friars and towns, but discussion has been dominated by a small number of towns that possess many friaries, and indeed many archaeologists; Oxford, an extreme case of both, is sometimes even used as a model. Physical location within or without city walls or other perimeter boundaries has been raised as a tangible index of the centrality of friaries to the urban project within towns.

This paper offers a location analysis of friaries within British towns. It will be shown that individual urban biographies are far more significant in the location of friaries than any principle of enclosure. The tiny size of the majority of medieval towns also indicates that a formal analysis is unlikely to be of much significance. So how central were friaries to the growth of towns in medieval Britain? Urban hierarchies can be constructed which take account of a 'friar factor' , but it would appear that the Annales argument, although constructed around such a framework, is bolted onto an understanding of 'mentalities' that can not be satisfactorily addressed materially.

3.20 - 3.40 Discussion

3.40 - 4.10 Coffee

4.10 All Along the Watchtower: City Walls and the Urban Edge
Dr Oliver Creighton (University of Exeter)

ABSTRACT

While city walls might be thought of as unambiguous markers of the urban limits, this paper will explore the more subtle ways in which town defences formed part of a 'zone of transition' between the urban and rural spheres. The true urban limits often lay well in advance of the town gates, while Jewries, zones of prostitution, hospitals and hermitages have relationships with city walls that mark out their status as 'liminal zones'. Furthermore, defences served to divide as well as to unite communities (and in many cases continue to do so), potentially creating or exacerbating fragmented identities in a manner quite at odds with the enduring image of the walled city as a cohesive entity. Examples of the present-day management and perception of city walls will be used to further explore their dissonant heritage.

4.30 Medieval Places: re-thinking rural and urban life
Dr Jonathan Finch (University of York)

ABSTRACT

Much of the archaeological discourse relating to the constructs of late medieval urbanism and rurality has adopted a perspective that associates the urban with the centre and the rural with the periphery. However, this cultural geography may not have been familiar to the inhabitants of either medieval sphere. Each is transgressed by lifecycle, by trade, by familial relationships, by pilgrimage, to name but a few. This paper will explore alternative geographies that reflect the rich layering of regionality in rural areas and concepts of spiritual devotion as definitions of urbanism. Such approaches suggest that we need a more nuanced sense of place and should seek to understand how the medieval landscape was inhabited.

4.50 Title To be confirmed
Simon Foote (University of Exeter)

Abstract unavailable

5.10 The Space Between: A contextual study of liminality and architecture at James Fort
BR Fortenberry (University of Bristol)

ABSTRACT

Using the archaeology and history of James Fort as a departure point, this paper seeks to address whether colonial projects foster liminal spaces. While in theory the English colonial efforts in the Chesapeake were intended to be bastions of traditional English culture, pragmatic and mortal conditions dictated that a reworking of these paradigms was necessary not only for the success of the colony but also for the simple matter of survival. While the construction of this argument for liminality may seem simple enough, substantiating it through the archaeological and historic record proves to be a difficult task. Nevertheless, two recently excavated buildings at the site of James Fort, coupled with specific personal narratives of life at the colony exhibit possible tangible evidence that a reworking of cultural realities took place during the initial settlement stages. I will argue that this reworking resulted in a liminal space at Jamestown. However, as Turner argued for the ritual process, so too was Jamestown not a stagnant liminal space and, with time the colonists were reintegrated into the larger colonial system. The conclusion of the paper reflects on further application of this theory to other colonial contexts as well as some of its shortfalls.

5.30 - 6.00 Discussion

Session 6 – Laver LT3

Environmental Imperatives Reconsidered: Theorizing Culture Change in the Face of Climatic Change
Felix Riede (University of Cambridge)

SESSION ABSTRACT

In an article titled "Environmental Imperatives Reconsidered" Jones et al. (1999) showed how culture change in North America was precipitated by the Medieval Cold Period. They, like many other scholars (e.g., Henrich 2004; Shennan 2000, 2001), suggest that the demographic fluctuations caused by environmental changes impact quite directly on the course of cultural evolution. It seems clear that environmental change – both cyclical as well as catastrophic – cannot be sidelined in our reconstruction of past culture change, but the interaction between people and the environment can be approached from different perspectives, for instance through formal modelling or through a landscape learning perspective (Rockman & Steele 2003).

This session aims to bring together archaeologists working in different periods and different areas of the world in order to exchange ideas about how to conceptualize the human environment relationship. An increasing amount of high-resolution data on 'regular' climate change has become available, but unique natural catastrophes of the past have also enjoyed a higher profile in the recent literature (e.g., Grattan & Torrence 2002). Is it possible to theorize social responses to climate change and catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions or tsunamis? The baseline of the session is the strict need to avoid simplistic notions of environmental determinism, whilst the aim is to arrive at a more robust understanding of whether – and if so, how – environmental change influenced past material culture change.

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SHENNAN, S.J. 2000. Population, Culture History, and the Dynamics of Culture Change. Current Anthropology 41: 811-35.
— 2001. Demography and Cultural Innovation: a Model and its Implications for the Emergence of Modern Human Culture. Cambridge Archaeological Journal 11: 5-16.

2.00 Introduction – Reconsidering Environmental Imperatives
Felix Riede, University of Cambridge

ABSTRACT

Superficially, the statement that 'culture is the human niche' (Hardesty 1972) is rather trivial, but recent work in ecology and evolutionary theory stresses the evolved properties of this niche. In an approach called 'niche construction' (Odling-Smee, Laland & Feldman 2003), organism are seen as powerful agents shaping the world around them. Rather than organism adapting to an external environment, they shape the environment to suit them. In this view, the notion of an 'external' environment needs to be redefined because many aspects of the immediate environment would, in fact, be ancestrally modified. Socially learned behaviour and the built environment play a key role in the adaptation of Homo sapiens, and, over the course of hominid evolution, adaptations were increasingly framed with regards to this artificial environment. However, adaptations, whether biological or behavioural, were never perfect and human bio-social history has often been influenced by changes in the environment on a scale beyond that which can be humanly controlled. The aim of this session is to examine a number of case studies of how humans respond variably to environmental change. Environmental determinism is deeply flawed, but ignoring the impact of environmental change on human evolution and history would inevitably lead to partial explanations and make us dangerously blind to the potential impact of climatic changes on the future course of history.

References
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2.25 Quaternary volcanism and the emergence of Homo sapiens sapiens in eastern Africa
Laura Basell, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

The relationship between the Toba super-eruption, OIS 4 and the speciation of Homo sapiens sapiens recently formed the topic of an exchange between Ambrose and Gathorne-Hardy and Harcourt Smith (Ambrose 2003; Garthorne-Hardy and Harcourt-Smith 2003; Oppenheimer 2002; Rampino and Self 1992; Zielinski et al. 1996). The outcome of this was that whilst Toba was certainly a significant event in the Quaternary, it is highly improbable that any direct link can be made between Toba and any major speciation event relating to the evolution of Homo sapiens sapiens. Toba was an extreme event, in terms of its magnitude, and probably its impact, (although assessing the impact of such eruptions is complex). However, it is not the only volcanism that occurred during the time in which Homo sapiens sapiens is thought to have evolved. From about 1 million years ago, but particularly after 100 000 years ago, the East African Rift experienced a unique phase in its evolution resulting in the collapse of many of the axial volcanoes. This paper will discuss the possible impact of these events, and in what ways (if any) these events can be considered in relation to hominins living in eastern Africa at this time.

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2.50 Environmental change and adaptive variation in Neandertals
Kathy MacDonald, University of Leiden

ABSTRACT

The increasing amplitude and wavelength of environmental fluctuation during the Middle Pleistocene, as shown in the oxygen isotope record, could have had an important role in the evolution of other aspects of biology and behaviour

ABSTRACT

as well as distinctive Neandertal anatomical features. In his 'variability selection' hypothesis, Potts (1998) suggested that large-scale, long-term environmental fluctuations could select for complex structures or behaviours that allow flexible responses to novel environments. Studies of primates and birds provide an alternative source of evidence regarding the variety of ways in which organisms cope with environmental variability. Behavioural flexibility would be useful in coping with novel environmental conditions, either within occupied regions or in moving into new areas. In this paper I will explore the potential of this perspective for explaining the evolution of Neandertal and modern human characteristics. In what different ways can organisms withstand environmental change? How does the type of environmental variation influence this? What are the characteristics of environmental variation in the course of Neandertal and modern human evolution, and could these explain differences in their responses to change and colonization abilities?

Reference
POTTS, R. 1998. Variability selection in hominid evolution. Evolutionary Anthropology 7: 81-96.

3.15 Cultural conservatism and flexibility as a response to the non-equilibrium ecosystem

Liliana Janik, University of Cambridge

ABSTRACT

Climatic changes can be understood as two possible scenarios, one as stadial alterations within an equilibrium model, and the second as being in constant flux where the process is non-equilibrium (metastable process) as part of everyday occurrences. Further, the same metastable process can be artificially introduced into natural environments with clearance by fire or deforestation by fisher-gatherer-hunters and farmer communities. I have argued before that the cultural conceptualisation of the second process has taken place by embracing diversity and choice within prehistoric cultures, where part of this choice was the use of domesticated plants and animals. In this presentation I would like to expand further into the understanding of cultures as being conservative and non-conservative in their choices of food consumed, and in-turn that influences the material culture we discover today. To illustrate this, I shall present examples from north-eastern Europe between the Late Mesolithic and Early Bronze Age.

3.40 - 4.10 Coffee

4.10 The environment as all that is external, and implications to the explanatory power of evolutionary ecology in the archaeology of the prehistoric Aleut world

Garrett Knudsen, University of Cambridge

ABSTRACT

Past relationships between prehistoric hunter-gatherer societies and their environments were perhaps most intimate with regards to the foods that were eaten, and it has been noted that ethnicity and identity are often embedded in patterns of subsistence and economy. This was certainly true on the Aleutian Islands and the western Alaska Peninsula, where Aleut groups have long been considered an extreme example of human maritime cultural adaptation. Here a subsistence economy concentrated on the extraction resources derived from the sea reaches nearly 10,000 years into antiquity.

However, recent archaeological investigation of the Nelson Lagoon drainage, on the eastern frontier of the Aleut world, has documented the rise and fall of massive villages focused on the intensive exploitation of salmon for year-round storage between AD 200 and AD 900, reflecting a novel riverine adaptation and a departure from the predominant pattern of prehistoric Aleut economy. As suggested elsewhere, hunter-gatherers can shift subsistence strategies in response to demographic pressure where economic alternatives are in place and when environmental transitions are gradual enough to provide people with enough time to transform value systems, as well as economic practices. This observation calls for an expanded definition of the "environment" in which humans act to include uniquely human elements external of the individual, such as social dynamics, demographics, politics, and ideology, in order to render evolutionary ecological approaches more useful. Old and new definitions of environment are used to model the 700 year episode of intensive salmon fishing on the rivers of Nelson Lagoon in light of regional prehistory and paleoecological data.

4.35 "Love in a cold climate" or relationship on thin ice? A perspective on past human - environment interactions in the Southern French Alps

Suzi Richer & Kevin Walsh, University of York

ABSTRACT

If by material culture we mean the manifestations of peoples' interaction with space and place, then research in high altitude environments provides us with an amazing opportunity to reassess our notions of the relationships between cycles of climatic change and human activity in this so called marginal zone. This paper will address the climatic, environmental and archaeological data available for the Southern French Alps. Our evidence shows no clear link between either climate deterioration and settlement abandonment; or, between climate amelioration and increased human impact on the vegetation. Whilst the data disproves any climatically determinist interpretations, climate may still have been one of many influencing factors in the utilisation of the high altitudes. However, the fact that there is no clear cut correlation between climate and cultural choices illustrates that the relationship between people in mountainous zones and heir environments is far more subtle affair.

5.00 Rethinking 'Cultural Heritage' in What some Call an Age of Risk Society. Landscape Archaeology and Efforts to Go Against the Grain of Public Beliefs - Expert Knowledge Divides in the EU Political Economy

Stephanie Koerner, University of Manchester & Brian Wynne, University of Lancaster

ABSTRACT

One of the remarkable features of public responses in many European Union member states to concerns with the ways in which issues of trust are reduced to matters of expertise in much of the policy making and enforcement processes dealing with 'assessment and management of risks' of nuclear, chemical, and biological technology hazards has been attention to the 'historical landscape' as 'cultural heritage'. In this contributions we: (1) explore in light of examples of such responses some of the ways in which themes of this session relate to this development, and (2) consider what these responses suggest about 'landscape archaeology's potential bearing upon efforts to go against the grain of some of the most problematic tasks that are being assigned to the physical and to the human sciences and humanities in the political economy of the EU's expanding environmental policy culture.

5.25 - 6.00 Discussion

Session 7 – Laver LT6

What has function to do with theory?

Patty Anderson (CNRS), Annelou van Gijn (Leiden), Linda Hurcombe (Exeter)

SESSION ABSTRACT

Function is not often associated with theoretical archaeology - this session seeks to change that. Archaeology has in recent years been a self-critical and reflective discipline: TAG is one of the biggest regular conferences. The concepts of 'refuse' and 'deposition' have been transformed into socially meaningful acts and Bourdieu's ideas of a theory of practice are an influential way of looking at archaeological evidence. Furthermore, there is the novel concept of affordance. Yet 'function' has never received a critical review: it is equated with 'utility' in a manner which relegates functional evidence to the pragmatic and renders it virtually a-social, and in the eyes of some, a-theoretical. In this context it is time to re-assess the concept of 'function' and stop it being seen as synonymous with utility. Most certainly past acts were part of a material culture repertoire and cultural choices. What people do is therefore crucial archaeological evidence for their world view: social relations are not just stated but enacted. This session will propose a re-exploration of function, role and affordance to stress the social contexts of actions. The session theorises the cultural significance of function and the contribution of functional evidence to broad scale questions. Both artefacts and contexts are covered. The evidence base includes wear analysis, experimental and ethnographic data.

2.00 Introduction

Patty Anderson (CNRS), Annelou van Gijn (Leiden), Linda Hurcombe (Exeter)

2.20 Why function is not a utilitarian concept

Linda Hurcombe, Exeter

ABSTRACT

What people do is a large part of who they are. Actions can be read by others in the contemporary society who see, hear, touch, taste or smell the acts of creating and using an enveloping material culture which engages all the senses. Sometimes those acts can also be read lifetimes later by tangible remains or transmitted via memories. Most certainly past acts were part of a material culture repertoire and cultural choices. Contemporary and past objects will be used as examples of how the concepts of affordance, role and function give no clear binary divide on pragmatic vs. social needs but indicate a complex interweaving leaving no act as a-social. When there is a functional puzzle there may be a gap in our knowledge of what a tool did but there is a yawning chasm in our understanding of what people did and the social and symbolic entanglement of actions and objects. Issues of materiality, longevity of use and tool-person-material relationships will be explored and exemplified by a case study on Neolithic serrated flakes.

2.40 Tool use and social identity

Annelou van Gijn, Leiden

ABSTRACT

Prehistoric flint objects not only played an important role in subsistence and craft activities, they also reflected the social and cultural identity of their makers, and, through their role in daily life, structured and reinforced the behaviour and relationships of past social agents. Use wear and residue analysis of flint implements from Neolithic and Bronze Age context in the present day Netherlands reveal the actual choices made by prehistoric agents. Such studies are crucial to reconstruct the biography of the implements. The patterns that emerge not only indicate different 'ways of doing things', suggesting different social identities, but also shed light on the significance attributed to flint objects in the past, and hence ideological features of past society. Some examples from the Dutch Late Neolithic and Bronze Age context will be given to illustrate the significance of function for addressing questions regarding social identity and ideology.

3.00 Ceci n'est pas une hache: Neolithic depositions in the Northern Netherlands

Karsten Wentink, Leiden

As early as the 19th century discoveries of large axes puzzled those confronted with them. The fact that most were found in waterlogged places in particular formed the basis of speculation as to the nature of these objects. In the present paper the character and significance of TRB flint axe depositions are explored. With the aid of metrical, spatial/

ABSTRACT

contextual, and functional (using high-power microscopy) analysis, data patterns are explored that can shed light on the actions performed by people in the past. These empirical methods provide us with data. Functional analysis for example revealed that the deposited axes showed traces of a very distinctive use-life that did not involve any practical activities. The axes had moreover been covered in red ochre before they were deposited. Such patterns however can only be explained and interpreted with the aid of theory. Using sociological theory and ethnographic evidence an interpretation is presented, based on the empirically observed patterns. It will be demonstrated that theory and function go hand in hand. Empirical research, such as functional analysis, provides us with data; theory however provides us with the means to interpret that data. Only the combination of the two can lead to a better understanding of these past people's world-view, identity and cosmology.

3.20 - 3.40 Discussion

3.40 - 4.10 Break

4.10 Deconstructing the function(s) of querns

Sue Watts, Exeter

ABSTRACT

By breaking down the commonly held perception that querns are simple, practical tools whose function is often equated with utility, this paper demonstrates the complexity of function as a concept. It aims to suggest that querns are artefacts with complex object biographies, multiple meanings and values. They are widely used generic tools for processing a variety of materials, and their importance for grinding staple food stuffs in particular should not be underestimated. The task of grinding such products is a vital, socially meaningful act embodying pragmatic, emotional and symbolic values associated with the quern itself, the physical act of milling, the product being ground, and the purpose for which it is being processed. These values are reflected in the structured deposition of querns, that is their purposeful placement, within the archaeological record, during the prehistoric period. The function(s) of querns, the modes of action by which they fulfil their purpose, can thus be seen to operate on several co-existing, inter-related levels within the social and cultural contexts in which they were used.

4.30 Sacred theory: a load of old (carved stone) balls

Andrew T. Young, Exeter

ABSTRACT

Not surprisingly perhaps, given the scarcity of organic materials surviving from later prehistory in the British Isles, stone tools have attracted considerable attention from theorists looking for evidence to support a broad range of contestable issues. Certain classes of stone tools are ascribed with high-status or a 'ritual' role on the basis of underpinning assumptions made about labour investment and to the detriment of functional perspectives. This paper examines the role function studies might play in providing new ways of looking at past objects and proposes a holistic approach which extends beyond conventional boundaries. Neolithic carved stone balls are a uniquely British phenomenon with a complex morphology and have been selectively used by theorists to support the idea that Neolithic society was one of developing social divisions. We discuss the way a post-modern occularcentric view and sense of aesthetics has been used to denigrate functional perspectives with regards to ground stone tools in general, and specifically to this class of object. Evidence obtained from experimental research undermines the argument that carved stone balls must have been high status and attempts to retrieve them from the intellectual waste-land that prehistoric 'ritual' has become.

4.50 How understanding the function of locales, features and artefacts leads to a better understanding of agents and social groups

Andrew Hutt, Reading, and Berkshire Archaeological Trust

ABSTRACT

Interpreting life in prehistoric societies involves several layers of evidence and interpretation. The archaeological record provides details of sites, features, artefacts and the time when they were deposited. This information provides the basis for identifying significant locales and the activities which led to the creation and use of features and artefacts found at those locales and their deposition into the archaeological record. Understanding the function of locales, features and artefacts gives insights into the ways in which individuals and social groups lived and worked together. This also helps explain the value and symbolic significance that individuals and social groups could have placed on locales, features and artefacts, and on the activities used to create and use them. This paper explains these theoretical relationships through a study of living in the early Neolithic in Southern England. It highlights the extent to which an analysis of function is dependent on careful excavation and artefact analysis techniques and contributions which can be drawn from ethnographic studies and experimental archaeology.

5.10 What's the Use? Conceptual and material practices of Pits in the Scottish Neolithic

Phil Richardson and Cara Jones (CFA Archaeology LTD).

ABSTRACT

Pits appear in a variety of contexts within Scottish Neolithic. They appear next to houses, within burial monuments, in clusters and as solitary features. They can be a single short-term action or represent much more long-term cumulative events. The functions of pits are often unclear. However, archaeologists are often tempted to interpret the function or use of pits as repositories for material culture. The end result (a fill of dirt, ecofacts and/or artefacts) is often cited as the reason behind a pit's existence. There is a danger whereby certain pits are attributed to 'domestic' activity whilst others represent, 'ritual'. This creates a false dichotomy whereby two inter-linked activities are abstracted from one another. Function as conventionally understood suggests a particular expedient use for pits. Affordance suggests that pits are of that use; since pits are usually ascribed normative functionalistic interpretations revolving around utility or ritual, a pit, is seen as having been there to be filled, and what fills it represents its use. Both concepts are deeply embedded within the fabric of studies that consider pits; implicit and understood by all. Commercial archaeology provides important data to critique and assess such concepts due to the quantity of sites excavated and the wide geographical and contextual spread. With this in mind, we discuss the function of pits within a social context by considering performative practice, including digging pits, filling pits, places for pits and thinking about pits, through a series of case studies that present widely converging evidence of pit architecture and practice.

5.30 - 6.00 Discussion

TIMETABLE & ABSTRACTS

Theoretical Archaeology Group

SUNDAY 17th December

TIMETABLE

Sunday 17th December - Morning Sessions (9 - 1)

1. Overcoming the Modern Invention of Material Culture
2. Myth, Magic & Metallurgy
3. The Historic Landscape: the richest historical record we possess?
4. Memory Work: Archaeologies of Material Practices
5. Beyond the core: reflections on regionality in prehistory
6. In the absence of theory, or just less obsessed? African archaeology's contributions to wider theoretical debates
7. Reconsidering Social Archaeology

Sunday 17th December - Afternoon Sessions (2 - 6)

1. Overcoming the Modern Invention of Material Culture
2. Mortality: Interdisciplinary Approaches in the Archaeology of Death, Burial & Commemoration
3. The Archaeology of Disability
4. Teaching Theory
5. Finding Faith In The Past – The Archaeology Of Religious Experience
6. Eat, drink and be merry: approaching consumption in the Neolithic Near East

SUNDAY AM

Session 1 – Newman B (all day)

Overcoming the Modern Invention of Material Culture
Prof. Julian Thomas (Manchester) and Prof. Vitor Oliveira Jorge (Porto)
Discussant: Prof. Tim Ingold (Aberdeen)

SESSION ABSTRACT

The idea of culture, as something distinct to, and opposed from nature, is an intellectual construct that prevents us to understand human experience: not only ours, but other's. Yet, our thought is impregnated with that dichotomy and its ramifications. For instance, the distinction between spiritual and material aspects of life, which lead to the common expression "material culture". Another concept whose discussion is needed is technology, because it operates as a sort of abstract bridge between two other invented margins - influencing themselves mutually through action - the mental and the practical. We need to dissolve these boundaries in order to acquire a more effective knowledge. A knowledge which gives account of common experience, instead of being separated from it. This is a pre-condition of an interesting archaeology. An archaeology released from traditionally invented divisions between past and present, or artifacts and bodies. An archaeology turned into the study of "the formation of the environment of our living-in." (T. Ingold).

This session - open to archaeologists, anthropologists, architects, artists and other colleagues interested - intend to departure from the idea that in reality nothing is motionless. People and things constantly make each other in an environment where multiple beings and qualities exist together, and interact. This comprehension is fundamental for the understanding of sociality, and the ways by which power and status are continuously negotiated in everyday life.

9:00 Introduction by the coordinators

9:10 The trouble with material culture
Julian Thomas

ABSTRACT

'Culture', as a separate sphere of products of the human mind (as opposed to the nurture and cultivation of worldly things) is a creation of the eighteenth century. The notion implies that cultural instructions are generated mentally, and transmitted from one consciousness to another, and that they inform and provide the templates for actions performed in the material world. 'Material culture' is consequentially the domain of those things that have been created by the stamping of cultural forms onto inert matter. Archaeology, in seeking to understand the doings of past people through the material traces that they have left behind, has generally accepted this unsatisfactory characterisation of the physical world. But what would archaeology look like if it jettisoned the concept of material culture altogether?

9:30 The Power of Things
Joshua Pollard

ABSTRACT

Traditionally, archaeology has defined power as a quality that exists within the domain of human practice: an expression of human agency upon both other people and a passive world of things and substances. But if we recognise the hybrid qualities of people, things, animals, places and substances – their inseparability and the manner in which they are mutually constitutive – then power is no longer contained within the will of the human mind. The consequences for a 'social archaeology' are considerable.

9:50 Habitus unbound. Challenges posed by paradigms for the normativity of material culture and the shifting place of 'necessity'
Stephanie Koerner

ABSTRACT

The 'problem of intentionality' has been a pivotal focus of controversy over philosophy's (or theory's) tasks at least since when Plato and Aristotle distinguished their views on this matter around what they saw as the issues posed by the question: If the world cannot be said with certainty to be reliably arranged in advance for (intended for) the benefits of 'pursuit of a good life' on the past of human beings, it possible to claim that its intelligibility (truth about it) is at their disposal?

Striking contrasts between conceptions of 'intentionality' of influential Scholastics of the Middle Ages and of several iconic figures of modern philosophy have come into relief since Brentano remarked that "Every mental phenomena is characterised by what the scholastics of the Middle ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call...reference to a content, direction toward an object, or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomena includes something as object within itself, although they do not do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on.... This intentional inexistence is characteristic exclusively of mental phenomena. No physical phenomena exhibits any thing like it. We can therefore define mental phenomena by saying that they are phenomena which contain an object intrinsically within themselves" (Brentano (1995: 88f [1884]).

Intentionality have been a theme on which major 20th analytic, continental (phenomenological) and sociological

philosophical traditions have diverged, with major implications for some of the most problematical notions of 'material culture'. Especially pertinent to several themes of the session have been notions grounded in assumptions of a supposed categorical divide between manifestations of intentionality of 'modern' and those of all so called others.

Departing from works of Brentano and Thomas, I will: (a) outline some of the forms these assumptions have taken in archaeology; (b) show that a crucial problem with several influential conceptions of 'material culture' are the explanatory roles that they assign (largely implicitly) to a supposed categorical difference between modern relations to material culture (which are said to be motivated voluntarily by intentions), and relations of 'others' to material culture (which are said to be determined by some form of necessity); (c) suggest some of the implications of the problem for risks attached to arguments for eliminating considerations of intentionality altogether. In concluding I will offer some observations on how these risks relate to current disputes in archaeology over dichotomies of nature and culture, people and things.

10:10 An Artefact as Agent?: Images, Imaginations and the Perception of the Past
Ian Russell

ABSTRACT

Objects from the 'past' are present all around us, everyday of our lives. It is through interaction with these objects that we glean an interpretation of 'things which came before'. But we must ask - can artefacts act? Can they speak? A new field of study has been put forth by scholars at previous academic meetings discussing the theory of object agency; however, at the same time, it is admitted that that archaeological artefacts are inanimate and mute. Julian Thomas described the urge to interpret an object's existence in our present timeframe as evidence of previous human or sentient agency as the 'archaeological imagination'. In psychological terms, the externalisation of individual and social expectations for 'past' and 'meaning' onto inanimate objects (artefacts) creates images of the past. However, we can argue that the interpretation of an object and the creation of images of the past are all aspects of the broader psychological function of perception. These modern perceptions are what are used to bridge the existential crisis of sentient beings – fulfilling the desire for a notion of purpose and continuity with a greater lineage of agency. However, to what extent our own methods of structuring and constructing perceptions and rendering meanings through methods of science and humanistic interpretation simply reifying systems of supposedly synonymous modern dichotomies and dualities and modern paradigms. This paper is designed to engage with how the concept of 'object agency' obscures the phenomenon of the construction of images of the past through the viewing, interpretation and rendering of artefacts and objects in the common world we all inhabit. It will explore, through a few contemporary case studies, the possible ways of characterising and engaging the world and being through archaeology which can move beyond modernity.

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee

11:00 Understanding common human experience through creative exploration
Cordula Hansen

ABSTRACT

This paper, based on current research into the interpretation of archaeological artefacts through art practice, aims to develop the idea that visual creative exploration can convey an understanding of these objects that passes beyond their pure functionality and material existence.

Building on the notions of material culture as a mode of non-verbal communication (Tilley, 1989) and the artefact as reflecting human experience (Shanks, 2005), I argue that visual artistic practice exemplifies the at times unpredictable nature of human motivation. It also communicates a type of knowledge that is not usually expressed in the intellectual, periodic structure of language and written text.

By utilising artists' fluency in visual processes, we are enabled to gain a more holistic view of the human experience of the past.

11:20 Destabilizing Meaning in Anthropomorphic Forms From Northwest Argentina
Benjamin Alberti

ABSTRACT

"There are ways of stabilizing meanings in some forms rather than others, and stabilizing meanings is a very material practice" (Donna Haraway)
A recent advert for modern furniture by Cassina asks, "Why do we fall in love with objects if they cannot requite our feelings"? Archaeological objects do requite our feelings – through the work we do to them and the manner of our engagement with them. The nature of this cathexis, mixed up as it is in a specific visual aesthetic, can be understood as decidedly modern. The careful separation of pots from people, and then the isolation of meaning and form, ceremonial practice from mundane function, and then their final display in print, the digital world, or museums are all complicit in this process. The pots I address here – a series of anthropomorphic forms from the Candelaria and San Francisco cultures of Northwest Argentina – have suffered from this anatomizing disassociation of their parts. I attempt to reassemble these parts into contingent forms, arguing that notions of hybridity and transformation are constitutive of their materiality. These assemblages worked materially to stabilize such notions, but do not necessarily represent stable categories themselves. Ultimately, these objects must still requite my feelings, but can they do so in motion, disturbing ontologies of nature/culture?

11:40 Testimony of the spade: towards an embodied and reflexive theory of material culture
Matt Edgeworth

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses upon the technology of trowels, spades and mattocks that connect us with material evidence during the process of excavation.

In particular, I look at ways in which archaeological tools become a part of the body in practice – how, as instruments of action and perception, they serve as extensions of the arms and hands in uncovering the material cultures of others. I show how such implements, so familiar to us that we rarely constitute them as objects in themselves, are incorporated into bodily stance and posture in the everyday events of archaeological fieldwork.

In such practical circumstances, entrenched theoretical oppositions of nature/culture, subjects/objects, persons/things, etc, no longer apply. In order to escape the shackles of dualistic philosophies, then, I argue that we need to draw from our practical experience and develop a truly embodied and reflexive theory of material culture. Such a theory must encompass not only the material cultures of others, but also – crucially - the equipment and gear of archaeology itself.

12:00 Mutable materials and the production of persons: reconfiguring understandings of materiality in the Me solithic of the northern Irish Sea basin
Hannah Cobb

ABSTRACT

This paper is about the Mesolithic, and as such it is about stone tool technology. But it is not about the cold, hard, static, seemingly timeless materials that we encounter in the field. Nor is it about the clinical, "objectified" images of stone tools that we are so used to seeing in pages of excavation reports. Instead this paper will explore the multidimensional nature of materials in the Mesolithic and in doing so will question the value of the perception of tools as immutable. Moreover it will suggest that such a perspective may in fact hold back our understanding of prehistoric hunter gatherers. I will argue that it is only in rejecting narratives of materials, be they stone, bone or wood, as bounded and immutable that we can then reject the bounded narratives of identity that dominate in Mesolithic studies. Instead, by examining recent work from the Mesolithic of the northern Irish Sea basin and exploring the processes through which tools were brought into being, this paper will illustrate that we may also explore the processes by which prehistoric identities were made, negotiated and reformulated.

12:20 Are stones alive?
Chantal Conneller

ABSTRACT

The dichotomy between form and material has been particularly acute in the Upper Palaeolithic where tool forms have often been viewed as the product of the mental templates of their modern human manufacturers. This paper instead explores the ways in which people and things are variously related in technological networks. Rather than proceeding from the perspectives of the people involved in these networks however , I will examine the perspective of stones and the ways they are configured in technical networks. Rather than form preceding material, I will argue that material is form. Finally I will explore the question: 'are stones alive?', drawing upon examples of the use of fossils at various Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic sites.

12:40 Discussant: Tim Ingold

1.00 - 2.00 Lunch

2:00 Foreign objects in an egocentric landscape: understanding objects and interaction during the Neolithic of northern England
Hannah Lynch

ABSTRACT

A study of exchange during the Neolithic of the central Pennines rapidly developed from the simple understanding of distribution patterns and routeways to an attempt to appreciate the pivotal role played by these items in defining the social structure and landscape across the region. Material goods were not merely valued for their physical attributes; they were prized for their ability to negotiate and maintain personal status, and their potential for generating, preserving and altering social relationships both on the micro and macro scale. Objects could also be used to 'fix' an individual in the landscape, telling them where they had been, where they are now and where they are going. Indeed, objects were so powerful that they may have had dictated the ways in which people used their surrounding landscapes, with areas protected by taboos and protocols in order to protect the power of the object. The movement of objects during the Neolithic is not about the transference of commodities; objects served as a microcosm of the web of relationships and activities involved in their creation and use, with their inbuilt fluidity of value and meaning making them crucial for the understanding of society during the Neolithic.

2:20 We have never been material
Andrew Cochrane

ABSTRACT

Following Bruno Latour, I propose that objects are not merely the passive receptacles and representations of social relations, set within dualist paradigms. Building on this position, this paper uses as a case-study the varied objects that accompany the images and structures in some Irish passage tombs (such as Fourknocks I and the Mound of the Hostages, Co. Meath). By bringing together both the content and context of the passage tombs discussed, I will attempt to further understand some of the intimate ways in which the sites were seen, considered, and engaged with. Although specific amalgamations of materials regularly occur, there appear to be no universal imperatives that

govern precise combinations or placements. This might suggest that although general principles were at play, particular assemblages were mostly created, contrasted and juxtaposed in more fluid, improvised and performative ways. Such expressions, interactions and interpretations with particular elements may have facilitated further processes of movement, understanding, transformation and intention. After Christopher Witmore, myself elsewhere and others, I consider how these notions are amplified when one removes a 'dialectical' perspective that perpetuates modern dichotomies of animate:inanimate, human:object, and reality:social construction. The possible effects of these passage tomb mixtures or performances will be discussed from a visual cultural perspective that seeks to both illuminate the environmental aspects of the evidence, and ask how it acts or acted. In doing so, I consider that there has never truly been a material world distinct from people.

2:40 The conceptual animal: technologies of body representation and human/animal relations in the Neolithic of Lower Bavaria

Daniela Hofmann

ABSTRACT

The opposition between humans and animals as conceptually different beings is often supposed to originate in the Neolithic, when people moved from dwelling alongside animals in a shared world to mastery over domesticates. This is part of a wider narrative also involving, for example, the construction of monuments and houses and the progressive self-separation of humans from nature, aided by new technologies.

In contrast, this paper argues that animal and human identities remained strongly intertwined, and relations cannot easily be cast in the simplistic framework of increasing dominance. While routine interactions with animals are no doubt crucial for the creation of Neolithic identities, the stress here lies on the representation of human and animal bodies as fused, composite or separate entities. Human/animal hybrid figurines and the mixing of cremated human and animal bone reveal a continuous blurring of identities and bodies in the Bavarian LBK (Linearbandkeramik) context with which this study begins. The new technologies of cremation and pottery making are hence not used as ways of expressing control over nature, but as new possibilities for enacting beliefs about bodies and identities.

In subsequent Middle and Late Neolithic phases, the relations between animals, people and their clay depictions are reworked several times, eventually leading to the parallel treatment of clay, human and animal corpses in defining the boundaries of social space in the Münchshöfen culture. Animals, alongside key items of material culture, thus remain implicated in the self-definition of past communities, but these relationships are complex and dynamic and should not be subsumed in oversimplified narratives.

3:00 "The Driest Stuff that Blows"? 'More-than-Social' Archaeologies of Life, Affect and Materiality

Dan Hicks

ABSTRACT

This paper uses the perspective of historical archaeology to explore the implications of the critique of the modern idea of 'material culture' described by the session abstract for our conceptions and use of another, increasingly familiar, compound - 'social archaeology'. Using a discussion of three contrasting archaeological studies of modern graveyards - from New England, Orkney, and Bristol - as a point of departure, it is argued that historical archaeologists' engagements with three themes - 'life', 'affect' and 'materiality' - hold the potential not only to contribute to a move beyond conventional distinctions between the 'material' and the 'cultural', but also to problematise the reduction of archaeological material to the'social'.

It is suggested that historical archaeology can contribute to the issues discussed in the present session in at least two ways. Firstly, it can warn against models that overdetermine the power of the modern idea of 'material culture', which are often based on the unhelpful idea of a 'great divide' between past and present (or prehistory and modernity). Secondly, by weaving together engagements with material things and with living communities, it can remind us that archaeologists routinely encounter materials in which there are signs of life that are 'more-than-social'.

3:20 – 3:50 Coffee

3:50 The Good, the Bad and the Ambiguous: Boundary issues of the Western mindset in the interpretation of Minoan iconography

Erin McGowan

ABSTRACT

The interpretation of 'material culture' is largely performed within the construct of Western linear reasoning, which seeks to uncover the functions, meanings, utilities of this 'culture'. Yet the very concept of 'material culture' is given grounds to exist because of the parameters defined by the Western mindset. Definitive boundaries between categories of 'things' are characteristic of this form of reasoning, thus archaeological artifacts are segregated from modern items by way of this arbitrarily assigned title. In linguistic studies, it has been shown that Western languages, and English particularly, favour concepts that direct learning along linear trajectories, seeking out binary oppositions. From this emerge cognitive processes that are intolerant of ambiguity. Like 'material culture', the very concept of 'ambiguity' relies on the structure of Western language and thought in order for it to exist, in that there is one neatly defined term for those things which are not neat and are indefinable within this linguistic and cognitive construct. This is how 'ambiguous' Minoan seal iconography is traditionally viewed – as a problem to be overcome, with embedded meanings to be sought out. Indefinable icons are often analysed with the intention of reducing or removing ambiguity. However, I intend to once again blur the boundaries between correct and incorrect interpretation by adopting a cognitive process which does not rely heavily on linear reasoning. In doing this, I intend to remove the negative stigma that is associated with ambiguity as being 'incorrect' or 'unknown', and instead embrace Minoan iconographic ambiguity in the same way that a blank letter in Scrabble can be multi-purpose and useful in variety of contexts.

4:10 Artifacts and their alterity

Christopher M. Watts

ABSTRACT

As the standard bearers of 'prehistory', artifacts occupy a position of privilege within the modernist archaeological project. Established in contradistinction to the authoritative nature of the text in history, artifacts are held within this project to be an objective and detached source of knowledge about ancient lifeways. Indeed, the - m modernist sensibility importunes us to regard such artifacts as 'otherworldly'—to focus on their alterity. So insidious is the divide between archaeologist and artifact that we tend to see things as the preserve of a privatized domain of knowledge long since vanished. In this paper, I argue there is a need to divest ourselves of such a view, and to see artifactual objects as participants in the formation of a continuum of consciousness. Objects, like active human subjects, possess inner lives which they impart through a phenomenological placement within networks of action, both past and present. This theme is explored in connection with various strands of thought, including tenets of Actor-Network theory and Peircean semiotics, which are woven together in an attempt to further the idea that people and things are together suspended in interdependent webs of action. The merits of such an approach are then briefly illustrated using highlights of a recent study involving precontact Aboriginal pottery production in southern Ontario, Canada.

4:30 I'm your Venus: the citation of gender through shaving practices

Penelope Bickle

ABSTRACT

Hair removal is a normative practice for the vast majority of women in Britain today, with some studies citing as many as 92 % of women removing body hair. However, very little attention has been paid not only to the reasons for hair removal but to the technologies that are used as well. Performance theory and Judith Butler's ideas around performativity can help us to understand how material culture closely associated with altering the body can be implicated in its construction. This paper will draw on the research asking women why they remove hair to question how the use of the 'tools' of shaving effect the gendered experience of body. The range of razors available, their design, colour and how often they need to be replaced influence the different experiences of hair removal and therefore emphasise the female body's continued need for maintenance. Furthermore, the practices surrounding their use question the division between 'the human body' and 'material culture' as separate categories of study.

The contexts in which razors are experienced, such as in the performance of cleaning, reinforce a women's experience of her body through external views. At such intimate moments as this the woman becomes viewer of her own body and the razor becomes her 'way of viewing'. Viewing does not rely entirely on sight; we can become an observer through the other senses as well. It is through the razor the skin becomes viewed as something that is outside, rather than integral to, the body and thus becomes a surface onto which judgements can be placed. Thus this paper will argue that while gender identities may at first appear to be given at birth in contemporary British society, the female gendered body actually requires continued maintenance and that shaving has become part of the essentialised performance of the female body.

4:50 The evanescence of the "material" and of the "cultural": : the impossibility of fixing a face

Vítor Oliveira Jorge

ABSTRACT

Is our body - the physical body of each one of us - predominantly material (biological), or spiritual (cultural)? Those kind of questions obviously make no sense. The world is infinitely complex. Look, for instance, at the faces of people. Their expression, and in particular their eyes - for a long time considered the "manifestation of the soul" - continuously changes at the most minimal levels. The face, and the cult of its "beauty" in particular, is part of a modern fetishism, which tries to "materialize" everything, including the most subtle aspects of human life and experience. That fetishism (expressed for instance in pornography) is also the ground where archaeology develops. Until very recently, archaeology has been a fetishism of objects (be they small artefacts or huge landscapes) into which we project our phantasms, our nostalgia of "returning into the objectuality of things". Now, many archaeologists - together with people from other disciplines, such as architecture, anthropology, performance arts and studies, land-art, installations, etc. – are making new attempts in order to understand how we human beings relate to other beings and to the environment in which we are submerged. Faces are indeed a good way of dealing with the strangeness of the reality of our daily life, in which "things" appear to us as separated from their contexts of action. The same experience of "otherness" occur in archaeology. But it was our own "scientific enquiry", in its process of objectification, of "creating objects of observation" separated from subjects that observe in a neutral way, which is responsible for the conditions of the production of that very "otherness".

5:10 Fragment, form and flow: relationships in fractal worlds

Chris Fowler

ABSTRACT

This paper will concentrate on patterns in the transformations that are enacted on bodies, architecture, objects and landscapes. It will consider three examples of ways that the relationships between bodies, things, places and landscapes are articulated - by relating parts and wholes (fragments), metaphorically comparing the forms of things (form), and focussing on the transmission of substances between entities (flow). Each of these ways of relating can be described as 'fractal' in that the same patterns apply to all the entities, at whatever scale, caught up in an holistic field of relationships. I will suggest that these fractal ways of thinking do not oppose person and world, form and substance, animate and inanimate, culture and nature or mind and matter, but emphasise the ongoing mutual generation of worlds

and entities within them. I will argue that attention to these ways of tracing relations offers us a useful perspective on the way many communities understand their place in the world, and direct their social relations with respect to all the entities they share the world with. At the same time this perspective provides opportunities to attend to distinct strategies which interest groups pursue in negotiating their place in the world.

5:30 Discussant: Tim Ingold

Session 2 – Newman C

SESSION ABSTRACT

Myth, Magic and Metallurgy

Lee Bray

Extractive metallurgy, the processes of mining and smelting metals, has traditionally been studied from technical, economic and functional perspectives. These are etic approaches predicated on modern, Western conceptions of these activities. As such they serve valuable heuristic purposes, enabling archaeological interpretations to be to be undertaken in terms of familiar categorisations of the world and human interaction with it. However, modern rational perceptions of the mineral world as a passive, exploitable source of commodities is probably different from, or more restricted than those of miners and smelters in the past. Instead, wider or alternative paradigms are likely to have developed that drew upon existing beliefs and ideologies, imbuing mineralogical phenomena and metallurgical processes with cosmological, mythic and magical significance. Such meaning is likely to have been the result of a dialectic interplay between other cultural perceptions of the wider world on one hand and the materiality of the raw materials and products involved in metallurgical processes combined with the sociality and phenomenological experience of working with them on the other.

The aim of this session is to move beyond conventional analytical approaches to extractive metallurgy by exploring such emic perspectives and the ways in which they articulated with other aspects of the worldviews of past societies. Papers may address any facet of this broad theme but should focus on exploring the cultural significance of the processes of mining, smelting and related activities and of metals as raw materials and ores as opposed to artefact manufacture and its products.

9.00 Is Slag Rubbish?

Lee Bray, Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the conceptual status of the large volumes of fragmentary technological debris that are produced by smelting. This material, comprising a mixture of slag, furnace wall fragments, charcoal and stone, forms deposits that are often the most obvious evidence of past metallurgical activity. Conventionally, these are regarded as waste material, a by-product of smelting that was simply discarded by smelters in the past in much the same way it is in modern industrial operations. As a result, these deposits have received relatively little attention, other than as sources of individual samples of technological debris which provide information regarding the technical processes of smelting. However, if we accept that smelting in the past, the people who undertook it, the materials it consumed and the metals it produced probably acquired conceptual significance beyond the purely functional, then why not its by-products too? Slag, for example, is a distinctive material that requires explanation and thus, like ores and metals, has the potential to gain special meaning within the cosmologies of those familiar with it.

This paper examines the nature of some evidence from Roman-period smelting waste heaps in the Exmoor region of South-West Britain from this perspective. As a consequence, the potential significance of some of the artefactual evidence from smelting heaps of the same date is explored. Ultimately, it is argued that we must move away from current perceptions of these deposits as purely waste, and see them in the way they were potentially considered in the past; as accumulations of material associated with a powerfully symbolic process that were suitable arenas for the material expression of ideology and belief.

9.15 From Bonfire to Blast Furnace: the shape of fire

Gill Juleff, Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

From sitting around the campfire through the earliest development of metallurgical furnaces and hearths to the blast furnaces of the Industrial era, our models for effective pyrotechnology are dominated by the perception that fires are circular. The majority of structures that we design and build for metallurgical processes, or reconstruct from the archaeological record, are circular in plan. Is this the inevitable outcome of sound empirical science or an instinctive response to primeval conditioning? Are good fires those that can be encircled and controlled – the cooking hearth, bonfire pottery kiln or the first crucible smelting hearths? What of fires that take different shapes, like the ribbons of a forest fire or the lines of a burning structure or tree? This paper asks firstly whether there is any profit in pursuing this line of discussion.

Whether we regard metallurgical development as exclusively pragmatic or contoured by human myth and magic, from our perspective today, we perceive an evolutionary progression that is essentially linear – from bonfire to blast furnace. Ironically, in practical application the circular fire/furnace model as a means of smelting metal looses efficiency as it grows in diameter, requiring a disproportionate increase in air supply to maintain optimum conditions. This paper then examines a number of exotic ferrous technologies from Asia, notably those of Sri Lanka and Japan, that appear as outliers of the model of linear development. These highly efficient, non-circular furnaces have elongated, axial combustion zones and are associated with the production of high quality steels. It is postulated that these technologies represent a major branch of a more organic model of the evolution of metallurgy in which the divergence of the circular and non-circular fire-shapes perhaps also reflects the divergence in western and eastern scientific thought. Thus, the circular fire-shape paradigm that dominates our metallurgical mythology is perhaps only applicable to a part of the record we are trying to understand.

9.30 Magic, Materiality and Envaluation

Timothy Taylor, Dept of Archaeology, University of Bradford

ABSTRACT

A materiality approach stresses the 'allowances' of things, specific objects and materials. In a conventional view, the making of metal has been seen as either 'industrial' or 'magico-ritual' or some combination of the two. By appreciating the ontologically unique trajectory by which metal in the Old World received value and became recognized as a named class of thing (the envaluation hypothesis), it is possible to see how the economic vs magical debate can be dissolved. A new understanding of the intrinsic power of metals as cognitive exemplars is proposed.

9.45 Minerals, Metals, Meaning

David Killick, Dept of Anthropology, University of Arizona

ABSTRACT

We cannot assume that early producers and users of metals perceived, used or valued metals in the same way that citizens of industrial nations do today. Taylor has proposed the term "envaluation" for the protracted process by which metals emerged as a distinct category of material with particular socially ascribed values. In this paper I suggest that the earliest human engagements with metals are best viewed as a very late manifestation of the long history (>70,000 years) of envaluation of brightly coloured and/or reflective minerals. I provide a short review of the early use of coloured minerals (many of which are compounds of metals). I then examine the earliest metallurgy in both the Old and the New World, and the first use of pyrotechnologies to produce brightly colored synthetic materials (e.g. faience). Why were coloured minerals in a resticted range of bright hues so highly valued around the world for so long? I suggest that we can infer something about the meanings of colours from their contexts of use, and update a suggestion - made more than fifty years ago by Aldous Huxley - about the effects of altered conciousness upon the perception of colour.

10.00 Re-discovering the sense-world of prehistoric copper smelting – the importance of learning by doing in experimental archaeology

Julia Wiecken, Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

The traditional view of the processes involved in the mining and smelting of copper has until recently been dominated by functional and purely technological aspects. In particular, scale and specialisation have been emphasised, along with the role that metallurgy has played in the emergence of 'civilisation'.

Experiments and trials – ranging from experiential reconstructions to the scientific testing of hypothesis relating to the smelting of copper have been carried out before, and experimental archaeology lends itself uniquely to the testing of technical and archaeological questions at a 1:1 scale. In addition, one of the most useful 'side effects' of experimental as well as experiential archaeology is the occurrence of the problems that are inevitable while materialising an idea. These 'problems' can help formulate further questions, and identify previously overlooked issues in the chaine operatoire. However, the most important contribution experimental archaeology can make today is to socialise the chaine operatoire. We can identify the choices people made in the past, and these can throw light on a multitude of social aspects if analysed on a case by case basis. Experimental archaeology can also be used to go beyond the perception of smelting as a scientific process. Prehistoric copper smelters could not know the science of the chemical reaction that occurred inside the furnace during smelting, but they would see the colour of the flames change, and it is these sensual aspects of the technological process that experimental archaeology can explore, even if the subjective experience of the prehistoric copper smelter is lost. In this way an experimental methodology can be used to bridge the gap between the 'isms', with the scientific collection of data leading to informed interpretation of engagement between people and the natural world in the past.

10.15 - 10.30 Discussion

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee

11.00 "It came from the Ground"

Lucy Ryder, Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

The extraction, processing, and use of metals have attracted the construction of numerous folkloric beliefs, stories, and traditions. The whole process from the act of going underground to retrieve raw materials, to the processing and use of metal objects is tied up in a complex relationship of myth and superstition which affected day to day lives. Further, the metals themselves signify a number of folkloric beliefs and are bound with narratives and myths of their own. The aim of this paper is to firstly look at the retrieval of metals form underground, and what that act signifies, and secondly how metal, in particular iron, become engrained with a history and belief structure of their own.

11.15 The Origin of Metallurgy in Central Italy: a Social Perspective

Andrea Dolfini, Dept of Archaeology, Cambridge University

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines a theoretical approach, applied to ongoing research, on how copper metallurgy was first introduced and incorporated into prehistoric society in central Italy. Traditionally, metal is assumed to have been intrinsically valuable in prehistory because it had both economic and technological value. According to this view, metallurgy was a technological and productive achievement in its own right and, once discovered, it was bound to spread as quickly as possible and to be unquestionably adopted by every society coming into contact with it. More recently, however, this simplistic scenario has been seriously questioned from both archaeological and anthropological perspectives. The intricate and even contradictory pattern of the early diffusion of copper metallurgy in Europe shows that the adoption of this technological innovation has not been a steady process. Moreover, value given to copper in a number of past and present societies differs considerably from those ascribe to it. Thus it must be assumed that metals were given a culturally-specific meaning through continuous processes of social negotiation. Valuation is the key process for introducing metal into society, as without being given value – not necessarily economic, but social value in a broader sense – a technological product cannot become a cultural product and be adopted.

This research explores whether metal acquired a techno-functional meaning through usage in a set of activities such as clearing woods or raiding, or was loaded with economic value through exchange, or acquired social value and meaning in time, through the culturally constructed biographies of artefacts. Preliminary data will be presented on how meanings were assigned to metal in exploitation and production systems, such as mining and smelting, and consumption arenas, such as burial. It is worth noting that metal artefacts are found in meaningful relationships with the human body in many Copper Age cemeteries in central Italy. It can be suggested that the complex and long-lasting reconstruction of the body in the grave provided the deceased with a powerful instrument of categorisation. In turn, identities presented as fixed and unquestionable in death, were used to load metals with social meanings and values.

11.30 From Delphi to Sunnmøre - a discussion of master smiths, magicians, caves and graves

Randi Barndon, Department of Archaeology, University of Bergen

ABSTRACT

Iron seems to be an important element in Norse (Saga) literature which is related to 'the other world' or otherness or even 'the underworld'. Commonly smiths and dwarfs were in contact with 'the other side. The Eddic poem, Völuspá, gives a synopsis of the entire mythology from creation until its destruction and reaches its highlights when approaching Ragnarok and when Fenris plans to kill Odin (Steinsland & Meulengracht-Sørensen 1999:114). In stanza 40 an old giant gives birth to the offspring of the wolf Fenris in a place called Járnviði, i.e. the iron-woods. But there is more to this verse than meets the eye. The old one who gives birth is not a biological creature, old women cannot give birth, thus the giant has to be a metaphor and the earth itself may be the giant woman, built of soil as a smelting furnace.

In Norse mythology, as well as myths from other parts of the world such as those of Africa or Greece (Barndon 2005b) dwarfs functioned in and through technologies. Lotte Motz suggests that "We must view them [dwarfs] as the mythical representatives of a profession, paralleling the craftsmen or smiths of early society, who were, indeed, endowed with ritual importance" (Motz 1993:84). Is it possible that Norse myths contain parallels to African iron smelting symbolism in which the smelting furnace is seen as a woman giving birth, as demonstrated in Fipa and Pangwa ethno-archaeology? Secondly, is there a link in the conceptualisation of iron technology, although no material manifestations (i.e. female attributes) have been recorded on smelting sites or on prehistoric smelting furnaces in Northern Europe?

In this paper I will look for traces of the identity of iron smelter and smith in other contexts than the obvious production sites. During prehistoric times more that 170 rock shelters and caves were inhabited or used for shelter and other purposes along the coastal area and fjords of Norway (prehistory in a Scandinavian setting includes the Viking period, which lasted until 1050 AD).

11.45 Iron, invention, and cosmology: Greek reflections on the technological past

Sandra Blakely, Dept of Classics, Emory University

ABSTRACT

The voice of the metallurgical specialist is accessible only indirectly from the ancient Greek record. His mentality, social status and attitudes toward the divine are filtered through various cultural genres produced by neither miners nor smiths. The emic perception of his craft has been, however, the object of some speculation. These propose that the daimones who invent metal represent the mythological elaboration of the ceramicist's apotropaia. These are grotesque, ithyphallic forms known from representations on votive pinakes, curse tablets or personifications of kiln disasters named in a pseudo-Homeric hymn. This focus on the furnace collapses two distinct pyrotechnologies into one, and overlooks the wealth of semantic power specific to metals, and distinct for bronze and iron. Iron is a suspicious material in Hesiod's myth of the ages of man, as opposed to the more heroic bronze; this has been often cited as a Greek example of a universal suspicion of iron. Numerous more fragmentarily preserved traditions, however, point to a more nuanced semantic range for iron in the Greek world, the positive contribution of culture heroes who could serve as well as the object of insults, jokes and invective. These categories operate far beyond the edges of the workshop or mining camp, placing the invention of metal into the semantic webs of philosophy, cosmology, natural science, and national identity. These reflect back on the miner, the smith and the substances they produce, triangulating between cultural genres, contemporary needs, and the realities of metallurgical production. One example of this triangulation is the appearance of the Idaian Daktyloi in the fragments of the presocratic Pherekydes. The Idaian Daktyloi were semi-divine creatures widely associated with the invention of the substance iron, but never with its finished products; they were powerful magicians, and were associated with mysteries of Zeus on Crete and Samothrace. Scholarly analyses of the daimones' magic have focused on telluric iron and the mystery imagined to characterize the earliest masters of the craft. The Daktyloi's ritual relevance was thus a survival and transformation of the rites of smiths and miners. Thinkers within the Pythagorean tradition, however, found more use for celestial metal, which informs their observations on the popular magical spells known as Ephesian Letters and the mysteries of Cretan Zeus. Evidence for these ideas reaches from the sixth century BCE well into the Hellenistic and Roman periods; both the sophistication of the cosmology, and the longevity of the tradition, challenge the traditional interpretation of Greek myths of magical smiths as cultural memories of the earliest stages of technological development. They reflect the usefulness of metals as 'good to think' – and encourage a more integrative interpretative approach to the fragmentary record from antiquity.

12.00 Axe and Dagger Carvings at Stonehenge: An Act of Conspicuous Consumption on a Monumental Scale?

Andrew T. Young, Dept of Archaeology, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

Since their (re)discovery in 1953, the enigmatic axe and dagger carvings noted on sarsen stone 53 at Stonehenge have captured the imagination of a generation of archaeologists and spurred considerable academic debate. Conventionally they are interpreted as 'symbols of power' associated with the builders of the monument and/or the eminent people interred in the circumorbital barrow-cemeteries. However, almost without exception the rock-art of later prehistory in the British Isles is non-representational and abstract, characterised by the spiral, cup-and-ring, chevron, lozenge and zigzag designs we are familiar with from megalithic sites thoughout the archipelago. From an occularcentric perspective the carvings at Stonehenge are therefore unique. A tangential yet evidence-based alternate hypothesis is put forward in this paper: that the axe and dagger carvings represent the matrices of open stone-moulds which may have been used to cast bronze implements. Morphologically, chronologically and materially they share common attributes with the one-piece open stone-moulds associated with bronze-casting. This paper puts forward the case for their reinterpretation and suggests they are evidence for an act or acts of conspicuous consumption on a grand scale.

12.15 - 1.00 Discussion

Session 3 – Newman D

Characterising the Historic Landscape: the richest historical record we possess?

Stephen Rippon, University of Exeter

The systematic characterisation of historic landscape character is being undertaken across England, Scotland and Wales both to inform planning decisions and countryside management, and as a research tool. This session will explore some of the theoretical and practical issues surrounding the uses of characterisation.

9.00 Introduction (Stephen Rippon)

9.20 The English Pays: Approaches to Mapping and Understanding Landscapes and Places

Jeremy Lake, Characterisation Team, English Heritage

ABSTRACT

New approaches towards the understanding and management of landscape character, now brigaded under the heading of characterisation, have developed into multi-disciplinary tools for describing and mapping the whole rural environment for a wide range of uses. Landscape archaeologists, historical geographers and historians have a vitally important role in this respect, and over the last decade English Heritage has commissioned work - through the Roberts and Wrathmell Settlement Atlas and its Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) programme - focused on the mapping of field and settlement patterns that take us beyond individual elements to a higher vantage point. Recent work has also examined broad and large-scale patterns of survival of the historic building stock, and demonstrated how these are reflected as definable areas or zones in relationship to their wider landscape context. The methodologies explored in this paper will bring to the fore the importance of working at a high spatial level in order to frame and test observations at a finer scale, explore new - as yet tentative or unclear - avenues of research, and bridge the gap between academic study and the management of change.

9.40 Questioning aspects of Cornwall's past with HLC

Peter Herring, Cornwall County Council

ABSTRACT

HLC Types mapping, embedded in the GIS and increasingly multi-period, and directly associated Types texts (outlining, inter alia, principal historic processes, main components and research opportunities), are used by the Cornwall Historic Environment Serivice as a reflexive framework for all archaeological recording, analysis and interpretation, and historical research in the county. The framework either provides already, or can be interrogated to provide predictive, models, and the archaeological and historical results can in turn be assimilated into the framework, adjustments made to mapping or text where appropriate or necessary. The characterisation is thus constantly being refined.

Landscape surveys in Anciently and Recently Enclosed Land have enhanced our understanding of these key HLC types, enabling us to subdivide them as appropriate and then to critically review the historical meanings of those subdivisions. HLC also enables more effective targeting of evaluation and mitigation work, leading to better designed and less costly

archaeological work. It has been especially useful in guiding topsoil strips, watching briefs and geophysical evaluation work.

10.00 HLC: a landscape archaeology for research, management and planning.
Sam Turner, Department of Archaeology, University of Newcastle

ABSTRACT

Historic Landscape Characterisation seeks to present and analyse the 'historic character' of landscapes. However, HLC is also a forward-looking approach that can use its distinctively 'archaeological' perspective - taking 'landscapes' as perceptions rooted in material culture - to inform planning for the future. The paper argues that using HLC, archaeologists are particularly well-placed to facilitate communication between landscape scholars from different disciplines (e.g. cultural geography, landscape history, landscape architecture) and other people concerned with landscapes.

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee

11.00 Conservation not reconstruction: Historic Land-use Assessment (HLA), or characterising the historic landscape in Scotland
Piers Dixon, RCAHMS

ABSTRACT

The HLA project in Scotland - a partnership between Historic Scotland and RCAHMS – was designed to create a digital map of the origins of the present landscape that would enable the historic landscape to be managed for the first time in Scotland. This was a significant new departure since before the mid-1990s the only historic element in the landscape other than archaeological sites that was considered were designed landscapes, whereas this approach considered the whole landscape: urban and rural. The genesis of the project was conservation not reconstruction. In essence the map identifies any land use that has left a mark on the landscape, be it current or relict. The approach is unashamedly archaeological and evidence based. The features must be evident on present and past maps or air photographs and as far as possible the interpretation is confirmed by fieldwork. There is no attempt to infer things that cannot be verified, but analogy is used as a method of interpretation, for example, the burgage layout of medieval urban cores. The map is already being used by the new National Parks and by some local authorities for planning control or structure plans.

11.20 'What more were the pastures of Leicestershire to me?': foxhunting, HLC and the archaeological search for European identity
Dr Jonathan Finch, Dept of Archaeology, University of York

ABSTRACT

Historic Landscape Characterisation has been the most significant methodology within recent initiatives to understand and manage the historic landscape in the UK. The data has formed the foundation for national interpretative schemes, which have directed wider European conventions to promote inclusive concepts of landscape history. Archaeology has positioned itself within these strategies as the discipline best equipped to interpret landscape changes due to its long-term perspective of the past.

This paper will examine a particular episode of landscape transformation, associated with enclosure and the popularisation of foxhunting during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the 'shires'. It will argue that HLC programmes are ill equipped to recognise cultural processes that have shaped the landscape through the short and medium term. As a result, we risk losing key regional landscapes associated with these cultural practices: landscapes and practices that have created enduring local identities. Prioritising the long duree tends to depoliticise the landscape in favour of a more inclusive vision of a shared prehistory. The paper will conclude by examining the tension between European conventions on maintaining landscape diversity and domestic political agendas, which seek to redefine concepts of place and community within the modern landscape.

11.40 What is 'Historic Landscape Character? A case study from eastern England
Tom Williamson, Department of History, University of East Anglia

ABSTRACT

This paper will examine some of the ways in which the landscapes and settlement patterns of eastern England have been 'characterised' by recent official exercises. I will suggest that many of the mapped distributions are the result of relatively recent, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century developments – interesting enough, but hardly an indication of unchanging 'traditional' patterns. Moreover, this rather raises the question of how old features of the landscape need to be before they are 'characteristic': the pine forests of Breckland, approaching their centenary, are a good example. Secondly, I will argue that – in terms of settlement mapping – the main sources of evidence employed (the OS 1" First Edition maps) are simply too late, being post-enclosure, to show the really significant patterns of variation in the rural landscape. Thirdly I will question the use of 'characterisation' as a planning tool, on the grounds that it envisages the landscape in plan, whereas we experience it on the ground. The distinctive character of any landscape is thus, for example, more a function of the composition of field boundaries than of the shapes of the fields which these surround. I will conclude by suggesting that 'characterisation' exercises have been technology-led, poorly thought out, and insufficiently peer-reviewed.

12.00 - 1.00 Concluding discussion
Discussant: David Austin, Dept of Archaeology, University of Lampeter

Session 4 – Newman E

Memory Work: Archaeologies of Material Practices

Barbara J. Mills (University of Arizona), William H. Walker (New Mexico State University) & Joshua Pollard (University of Bristol)

SESSION ABSTRACT

This session draws on anthropological theories relating to consumption and material culture, especially those that address how objects are used in the construction of social memory. It aims to explore how the practices of memory work (memorializing, forgetting, cosmology construction) organize and change social relationships expressed in archaeological evidence. The focus will be on depositional practices that remove objects from circulation through their placement in various forms of deposit. These deposits were produced through practices that involved the commemoration of places, events, and people. They are ways of understanding different regimes of value, social identities, and the social scales of ceremonial practices.

Practice thinking is a critical facet of all topics and terms associated with the materiality of human activity. Based upon this, the session will be structured around a series of definitions about space, identity, and memory. Memory is a dimension of practice that references actors/objects in time. Identity is a dimension of practice that orients actors to one another; and spatiality is a dimension of practice that relates, references, or orients actors (sources of power/animacy) in space. Such a perspective allows a confrontation of foundational assumptions about artefacts, deposits, and people. It highlights problems such as the essentialism naturalized by the dichotomous thinking that is so pervasive in social science and western intellectualism more generally. This practice approach builds on the resurgence of material culture studies particularly those emphasizing materiality. Papers will address how the dimensions of materiality are expressed in artefacts and archaeological strata. Depositional practices that are variously called 'structured deposition', 'ritual stratigraphy', or 'purposeful deposits' are critically examined in an effort to forge conceptual links between practice, memory, and archaeological evidence.

9.00 Remembering while Forgetting: Depositional Practices and Social Memory at Chaco Canyon, New Mexico
Barbara J. Mills (University of Arizona)

ABSTRACT

A central paradox to the study of social memory is that memories are constructed as part of a range of practices that also involve forgetting including the burial of individuals and animals, the dedication and commemoration of ceremonial spaces, the periodic renewal of structures, the deconsecration of ritual spaces, and the ritual retirement of objects. A case study from Chaco Canyon in the U.S. Southwest is used to illustrate the different ways in which forgetting is part of memory work. The objects and other substances that were deposited, where they were deposited, and the social networks involved in their deposition are used to better understand how social memories were constructed and made into social histories. The depositional practices in rooms and ceremonial structures of different sizes and with different spatial proxemics are contrasted to see how social groups inscribed their memories within architectural spaces as part of the performance of commemorative rituals for different audiences. These contrasts illustrate how material culture is used in memory work, the importance of recognizing different regimes of value, and the ways in which the materiality of social life is central to the study of identity and history in past societies.

9.20 Negotiating the power of animals
Joshua Pollard (University of Bristol)

ABSTRACT

Formal deposits of animal bone, occasionally entire animal carcases, are a recurrent feature of Neolithic sites in NW Europe. Their presence within the ditches of enclosures and long mounds is often linked to feasting events, but while such activities may have provided the context for the generation of such remains, the mode of their deposition (in varying combinations, states of articulation and associations) requires careful consideration. The ontological status of these beings and their position within human projects needs to be taken into account. Domesticated animals embodied networks of relationships: via herd composition; their deployment within exchange; and their connections to places and custodians (human and spiritual). Killing, consuming and depositing animals could reinforce these relationships (and so perpetuate memory) and negate others (contributing to an active forgetting).

Deposition was also a practice that served to negotiate the complex and deeply embedded nature of relationships between animals, people, things and places. If we regard animals as part of a Neolithic world envisaged as being invested with varying agencies, potencies and life-forces, then we can see deposition as a practice that served to control, channel and pay respect to these various agental forces. But the result could have been uneasy tensions between human 'control' and the power of animals, as expressed in various depositional scenarios.

9.40 Concealed images: stone carving practices in prehistoric Britain and Ireland
Blaze O'Connor (University College Dublin)

ABSTRACT

This paper deals with a range of stone carving practices, including rock art, megalithic art, funerary carvings and other related traditions that date to the Neolithic and Bronze Age of the British Isles. Within these traditions a tension between practices of concealment and display is evident. Whilst particular types of carved panels were clearly conceived with a sense of display in mind, others were placed in hidden contexts and seem to have operated

ABSTRACT

independently of visibility; indeed this seems to have been an integral part of their value. The latter are found concealed within megalithic monuments, deliberately displaced in burials, and buried in settlement contexts. This incorporating practice can be thought of as a form of votive deposition. During the Neolithic there is evidence that different styles and aesthetic characteristics were deemed appropriate for carvings in hidden versus displayed contexts in passage tombs. Later, quarried fragments of rock art panels were reused and concealed in a range of Late Neolithic to Bronze Age funerary contexts. These stones bear the physical traces and material presence of the accrued histories from which they were detached. At the same time, new and increasingly idiosyncratic carving styles were applied to quarried slabs for deposition within burials, and small 'votive cup stones' were secreted in a range of features, from house floors and structural foundations to cairns. Yet both of these practices also appear to reference the aesthetic of earlier carving traditions using a kind of formal 'shorthand', thus indicating elements of continuity or citation, as well as transformation. These shifting practices of concealment and display can be understood in terms of the active role of the material world in the shaping of social relationships and identities, but also in terms of social memory. Hidden objects emphasise the performative nature of commemoration, and themselves come to be condensed into memories, where their associations and meanings are distilled and concentrated. Recent anthropological work has suggested that, whilst objects that remain in circulation are able to act as an aide memoire, absent objects are deposited with a view towards the future.

10.00 Struggling with the memory of things

Rosemary A. Joyce (University of California, Berkeley)

ABSTRACT

Archaeological excavations in a number of neighbouring sites in the lower Ulua River Valley have encountered structured deposits so dramatic that the intentionalities involved cannot be ignored. Understanding of the way the practices that produced these deposits were organized and reproduced, at times over a span of centuries, has suffered from limits on interpretive imagination imposed by dominant modes of analysis. In these, repeated material patterns are explained as the enactment of set scripts given by a cultural order or social evolutionary stage. The integration of approaches grounded in theories of practice produces especially dramatic changes of perspective in regard to these complex structured deposits. Rather than simply being encoded in a ritual system, the repetition of episodes of burning incense and deposition of ceramic incense-burning vessels at one of these sites, Mantecales, is viewed as the product of complex memory work in which humans and non-humans were mutually active. The understandings of this complex deposit are then used to illuminate other deposits, burials, caches, and architectural fills, as equally part of memory work with greater significance as evidence of the historicizing of practice in place.

10.20 Caves as collectors and connectors: Bronze Age cosmology in action

Erik van Rossenberg (University of Leiden)

ABSTRACT

Bronze Age cave use was a relatively short-lived phenomenon in the Lazio region (Central Italy) with a peak during the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1700-1400 BC). In this period particularly caves with internal sources of water were selected as places for ritual depositional practices. This criterion in the selection of caves coincided with a wider cosmological concern with watery natural places throughout the cultural landscape, such as lakes and sources of rivers, which were also selected as places for ritual practices. Nonetheless, the particular characteristics of caves seem to have set them apart from the other categories of place. First, in terms of structural properties caves were containers and 'collected' a wide range of classes of objects in their interiors, both locally produced objects and 'exotic' objects with connotations of a world beyond the local community. Secondly, caves were distributed unevenly in spatial terms and served as meeting places 'connecting' local communities over long distances. Thirdly, caves have provided most of the burial evidence, albeit predominantly in the form of disarticulated human remains. It will be argued that the latter should be regarded as another aspect of the 'collective' and 'connective' characteristics of caves. Practically, caves were situated at the margins of the Middle Bronze Age lifeworld, constituting places where both objects and human remains ended their biographies. Conceptually, they connected the world of the living with the world of the dead, ancestors and/or the supernatural. The overall abandonment of caves as places for ritual depositional practices at the end of the Middle Bronze Age raises the question how places that had been so significant could have become forgotten on such a large scale. This paper will focus on the memory work involved in ritual cave use, in order to understand its disappearance.

10.40 -11.00 Discussion

11.00 - 11.20 Coffee

11.20 "Were They Mad?": Memory, Invisibility and Ritual Deposition at La Venta Complex A

Susan D. Gillespie (University of Florida)

ABSTRACT

The site of La Venta on the Gulf coast of Mexico gained fame in the 1940s-1950s when excavations revealed staggering amounts of ritually buried objects. Within the confines of a small ceremonial precinct labeled Complex A archaeologists discovered numerous crafted objects of jade and basalt, hundreds of imported serpentine chunks stacked in deep pits and three large serpentine mosaic pavements. All of these materials were buried in patterned locations under tons of specially prepared non-local clays that had been carefully selected for their colors. The objects were apparently covered over with clay soon after their deposition; thus, they were interpreted as offerings to deities. Later commentators remarked on the "incredible waste" of wealth devoted to a cult of secret offerings. The immediate burial of rare and costly objects became "one of the riddles of the Olmec religion". In 1956 the principle Complex A excavators, Philip Drucker and Robert Heizer, summed up attitudes towards La Venta by stating: "As baffling as any single fact about the Olmec is the passion they had for burying their most treasured structures and possessions ... Were they mad?"

Approaching the structured deposits at Complex A from a practice perspective, emphasizing the role of social memory in identity-formation, may provide a rational explanation for this riddle. Rendering objects invisible does not mean they were forgotten or 'wasted', or were meaningful only to spirit beings. The performative acts of acquisition, preparation, and ritual deposition of imported materials in a sacred locale would have been critical to the negotiation of status and identities at La Venta. The repetition of such commemorative practices over generations, invoking and transforming social memories, would have served to establish material links between past and present, relating actors to one another, including ancestors. Such practices also established spatial networks of people and places, indexed by the imported stone and clay that had been removed from the earth to be redeposited in novel juxtapositions within this singular landscape.

11.40 'Blessed are the forgetful': social tensions between remembering and forgetting at the Neolithic enclosure of Flagstones, Dorset

Oliver Harris (Cardiff University)

ABSTRACT

Materiality is inevitable implicated in memory work. Yet as anthropologists like Susan Küchler and Mike Rowlands have demonstrated forgetting is also a vital part both of being-in-the-world and social practice. In this paper I will explore the relationship between remembering and forgetting at the Neolithic enclosure of Flagstones, Dorset. During the Neolithic of Southern Britain tensions abounded, I suggest, around memory and the treatment of differing materialities including bone and stone. At Flagstones these were dramatically played out through the deposition of articulated bodies and stone blocks, which in themselves may have been conceived of as people. Indeed the contrast between the two is a product of our cosmology and not theirs. The deposition of whole bodies and stones within particular spaces, I will argue, worked as technologies of forgetting, and contrasted with processes that kept these materialities in circulation, and thereby remembered. Thus what might previously have been seen as another example of 'structured deposition' can now be understood as a set of practices caught up in complex social materialities that blur the boundaries between people and things, and challenge our dichotomous thinking. The paper will conclude that this technology of forgetting may not have been entirely successful, however, as the emotional and mnemonic impact of the burials may have withstood the social pressure to forget.

12.00 Founders' Cults and the Archaeologies of Wa-kan-da

Timothy R. Pauketat (University of Illinois)

ABSTRACT

Depositional practices enchained the dispersed agentic forces of people, things, substances, and spirits to create the lived realities of pre-Columbian eastern North Americans. In fact, later native history was a product of a particularly radical episode of such agentic enchainment, a Cahokian founders' cult that altered lived experience throughout the Midwest and South. Evidence from southern Wisconsin and greater Cahokia points out how earth and sky were entangled with human affairs. As a result, effigy mound construction ceased in the north even as structured deposition surrounding ancestral temples, aided in part by aboriginal archaeology, flourished in the south, re-locating the powers of wa-kan-da at Cahokia.

12.20 Objects of desire: Stone artefacts, antiquarianism and 'aura' in archaeological heritage management in Australia

Rodney Harrison (University of Western Australia)

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the management of stone artefacts and archaeological sites in New South Wales, Australia. Drawing on Walter Benjamin's work on 'aura', it attempts to understand recent Indigenous, non-Indigenous 'specialist' and non-Indigenous 'non-specialist' discourses on stone artefacts which have arisen in this field. I contend that the issues raised by Benjamin with regard to the authenticity of art in the age of mechanical reproduction have re-emerged with great vigour in Indigenous heritage discourses in Australia. Such issues surrounding the authenticity and 'aura' of archaeological objects demonstrate competing discourses on the relationship between objects and memory in archaeological heritage management in Australia, and a (?post-) modern re-emergence of antiquarian discourses relating to stone artefacts amongst Indigenous Australians. Implications of this 'new Antiquarianism' for archaeology and the role of stone artefact analysis in contemporary settler societies are examined.

12.40 - 1.00 Discussion

Session 5 – Newman F

Beyond the core: reflections on regionality in prehistory

Andy Jones, Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council

SESSION ABSTRACT

This session will explore the idea of establishing regionally based archaeologies across the British Isles that are not necessarily defined by modern political boundaries or upon comparison with a minority of areas that have been classed as 'typical'.

Since the nineteenth century, much of the thrust of British archaeology has been concerned with constructing theoretical edifices by making associations between readily identifiable strands of evidence such as ceramic forms or monument classes. This is epitomised in the prehistoric period by the creation of regions such as 'Wessex' and 'Orkney', which were intensively studied and came to be conceived of as 'core'. The 'meta narratives' produced for these areas have been held to be 'typical' while other zones with apparently different narratives have tended to be thought of as 'peripheral' and their diversity overlooked.

Assumptions about the applicability of these models have begun to be challenged, especially by archaeologists in Ireland and Scotland. However, even here the appropriateness of regions based on modern polities is questionable and may not reflect diversity within those areas. In some respects the situation in England is worse, for despite more than two decades of intensive and often large-scale developer-funded archaeological investigation, new regional narratives are still largely lacking. Participants are invited to test the assumptions of the 'meta narratives' of British prehistory by discussing how similarities and differences between regions could be investigated through the study of areas such as human agency, context or landscape.

Themes for discussion might include consideration of how an archaeologically coherent region might be defined, how 'universal' artefact forms and monument types have been interpreted in different areas, or how different patterns of contact, for example with the Continent or other regions, have affected the construction of identity.

9.00 Introduction
Andy Jones, Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council

9.20 Moving on in landscape studies: goodbye Wessex, hello German Bight?
David Field, English Heritage

ABSTRACT

British archaeology is often remarkably parochial, partly perhaps a consequence of empire and siege mentality; even now, perceptions of the Channel as a moat are widespread. Smaller 'boxes' such as counties and parishes – units encouraged by the establishment of archaeological societies, early OS maps and site numbering systems - are equally jealously guarded. The idea of Wessex cut across this – an ill-defined but largely chalkland region based upon a large number of preserved archaeological monuments and the artefacts found in them. It also defined cultures – Windmill Hill, Deverel-Rimbury - and a series of type-sites that provided a national yardstick. Recently, however, developer-funded excavation has revealed many important sites elsewhere, suggesting much greater regional variety than the Wessex models account for. The search for alternative regions, however, is quite loose; vague definitions based on historical or political boundaries such as 'East Anglia' or 'south-east England' remain quite inappropriate for the study of prehistory.

Using examples from southern England, this contribution considers the use of landforms, particularly drainage patterns, for defining areas of study. It draws upon a range of evidence, artefacts and monuments to provide signposts to past land-use and suggest that interesting results can be produced by investigating prehistoric topography using geographical and environmental signatures of the Holocene.

9.40 Love thy neighbour?
Jodie Lewis, University of Worcester

ABSTRACT

Sandwiched between the important prehistoric landscapes of Wessex, the Cotswolds and the Somerset Levels are the Mendip Hills. Proximity to these rich, intensively investigated neighbouring areas has meant that Mendip has suffered, being viewed as geographically and archaeologically peripheral. The Neolithic and Bronze Age sites and monuments in the hills have been interpreted through comparison with the adjoining regions rather than in their own right. Yet this is a very different landscape with distinctive natural features such as caves, swallets and gorges and a wealth of mineral resources. There is evidence for a range of idiosyncratic regional practices, including particular styles of monument construction and unusual depositional activity. The landscape unity and archaeological homogeneity of Mendip suggests a certain "otherness" may have been perceived in the later prehistoric period, and that this sense of difference from the neighbouring regions could have been deliberately manipulated. People and things may have travelled outside the area but the local practises were not, apparently, loved by the neighbours.

10.00 'Typical' objects? The Bryher mirror challenging regional identities
Imogen Wood, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

The Isles of Scilly are in a unique situation, being regionally assigned as part of Cornwall; but displaying material culture that represents far wider contacts throughout prehistory. The discovery of a decorated bronze mirror from an Iron Age cist grave on the Island of Bryher epitomises the problematic practice of material culture comparisons for minority areas. It has challenged the typically endogenous 'meta narratives' of southern England previously seen as the centre of mirror innovation.

The mirror's association with a sword and other 'classically' male 'warrior' items also questions current concepts of gender, status and identity. The Bryher mirror is the earliest known example of 'Celtic' art on a mirror in southern Britain; whilst retaining the La Tène decorative principles, it demonstrates a distinctive suite of unique components. This invites discussion on the emergence, or construction of regional identities in relation to cultural contacts. Its meaning and context to both the agency of the deceased, and our concepts of past peoples through their artefactual remains, has great relevance in uncovering new narratives that enable a holistic view of the past.

10.20 Up in the hills: regional perspectives from the Cheviots
Dave McOmish, English Heritage

ABSTRACT

The archaeology of the Cheviots has until recently had a steadfastly low profile. This, however, is changing. The work of the Northumberland National Park Authority alongside English Heritage and the Northumberland Archaeological Group is raising awareness of the region and communicating its significance to a wider audience. Work on a range of sites high in the Cheviot Hills is transforming our understanding of prehistoric communities in this landscape. In particular, results from excavation and survey at Wether Hill have allowed us to characterise the development of the Cheviots landscape in the first millennium BC and raise questions about the nature of any wider regional archaeological scheme.

10.20 - 10.35 Discussion

10.35 - 11.05 Coffee

11.05 Something different at the Land's End
Graeme Kirkham, Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council

ABSTRACT

The west Penwith peninsula – the area west of the 'neck' which divides the Land's End peninsula from the remainder of mainland Cornwall – forms the core area of distribution patterns for a number of distinctive monument types, ranging in date from the earlier Neolithic to the Roman period. These include chambered tombs, Scillonian entrance graves, complex cairns, fogous and courtyard house settlements. The paper examines this range and asks why such a concentration of novel monument forms may have occurred in this particular location, further considering whether these distinctive coincident distributions contribute to making this relatively small area into a 'region'.

11.25 Pattern, perception and preconception: recognising regionality in Scottish prehistory
Strat Haliday, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

ABSTRACT

This paper will explore distributions of various types of prehistoric monuments at both national and local level in Scotland. It will attempt to distinguish between monument groupings that represent 'real' patterns on distribution maps, and those that simply reflect patterns in the way we think. Is our perception of regionality in Scotland inherent in the data or does it belong to the regions we define? The paper will range from the Neolithic to the Iron Age and examine some of the shifting patterns expressed in the distributions of the major types of monuments that survive in the Scottish landscape.

11.45 Once upon a time in the west: regionality in the Neolithic of the Irish Sea zone
Vicki Cummings, University of Central Lancashire

ABSTRACT

Early Neolithic chambered tombs are found in large numbers on both sides of the Irish Sea. It is widely known that architectural similarities are shared across this area, with portal dolmens, passage graves and Clyde and court cairns (the old Clyde-Carlingford culture) found on either side of the Irish Sea. However, for the past few decades studies of these monuments have tended to be in relation to modern political boundaries.

As part of a broader research project investigating the beginnings of the Neolithic in the Irish Sea I have visited all of the chambered tombs in this area, looking not only at their architectural form but also their landscape setting. I have noted similarities and differences in both form and setting in, and between, different regions. In this paper I want to present some of my findings, focussing in particular on the western side of the Irish Sea. I want to explore what a study of landscape and architecture may be able to tell us about regionality, in particular in relation to construction of identity or identities. I will explore key issues such as scales of contact and networks of knowledge.

12.05 The Caithness project
Andrew Heald, National Museum of Scotland

Abstract unavailable

12.25 Borders and belonging: exploring the prehistory of the Anglo-Welsh Borderland
David Mullin, University of Reading

ABSTRACT

The archaeological signature of the prehistoric period along what is now the Anglo-Welsh border is distinctive. There are no recorded causewayed enclosures and few long barrows or chambered tombs. Early ceremonial and religious monuments are not absent from the region, but are far from common. In the later Bronze Age patterns of what material was deposited, and how, seem to have differed from those of neighbouring areas. Hilltop enclosures began to be constructed in the Late Bronze Age and by the Iron Age a chain of large hillforts dominated the region.

When seen from the point of view of central southern England, therefore, elements such as the relative lack of monuments, a focus on deposition and the repeated use of certain parts of the landscape set the Borders apart from areas to the east and south which have been more comprehensively studied. This paper will explore some of the possibilities why this may have been the case in an attempt to understand the choices made by communities in the region regarding the uptake of material culture and architectural forms and the ways in which these were deployed. Wider issues of core and periphery, marginality and identity will also be discussed.

12.45 - 1.00 Final discussion / questions

Session 6 – Laver LT3

SESSION ABSTRACT

In the absence of theory, or just less obsessed? African archaeology's contributions to wider theoretical debates

Dr Paul Lane, British Institute in Eastern Africa, Nairobi

On a global scale, African archaeology, with the notable exception of long-standing debates on hominid evolution and the emergence of modern humans, is rarely regarded as a source of fresh theoretical insights. While it would be wrong to characterise African archaeology as theoretically 'uninformed', it is probably the case that only a few projects are explicitly oriented toward addressing issues of theory and interpretation. This may be simply because so many parts of the continent are poorly known archaeologically, and as a result researchers have their work cut out just establishing the basic culture history and chrono-stratigraphic sequences of their study areas. But this session will argue that African archaeology is a valuable and important source of theoretical insights which have broad relevance to the discipline. Moreover, far from being devoid of theory, the archaeological knowledge currently being produced is instead more embedded and applied in its nature than much that passes as theory in Anglo-American contexts. Indeed, the sheer amount of archaeological data still to be uncovered from the continent offers the enviable opportunity of developing projects which are, from the very outset, theoretically informed. To illustrate these arguments, this session offers a series of novel perspectives on the theory of analogy; the nature of political power, authority and social memory; phenomenological approaches to the understanding of landscape; the constitution of indigenous archaeology; notions of modernity; and the development of applied archaeology.

9.00 Out of Africa always something new: The potential of analogy in post-processual archaeologies
Dr Kathy Fewster (University of Wales Lampeter)

ABSTRACT

It is argued that far from being the "poor relation" African archaeology is currently at the forefront of the debate on theory building in ethnoarchaeology. In southern African archaeology, critique of the abuse of methodology by advocates of the Central Cattle Pattern model has been sustained since the 1980s. This has promoted a lively debate on the role of ethnoarchaeology in post-processual archaeology. It is precisely the region of southern Africa which is currently forging those theoretical developments in the role of ethnoarchaeology in post-processual archaeology that are largely lacking in Britain.

9.30 Modernity and African historical archaeology
Sarah Croucher (University of Manchester)

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses upon the archaeology of the 19th century A.D in East Africa. At this time residents in this area were being drawn into global connections resulting in daily practices, social relations and agricultural production being increasingly shaped by linkages to major world processes such as colonialism. As such, it could be argued that these East Africans were becoming increasingly modern – especially as their lives became entwined and affected by modern mass-produced material culture. Instead however, I will argue that we can use this archaeological case study to interrogate the meaning of modernity for such communities. I will focus on the way in which certain aspects of material culture served to link disparate groups together, and to allow them to have effects on each other, but in very different ways. This theoretical approach questions how useful categories such as modernity are to historical archaeologists, and as such has wider implications beyond this immediate African context.

10.00 Theorising applied archaeology in African contexts
Paul Lane (British Institute in Eastern Africa, Nairobi)

ABSTRACT

Archaeologists who work in sub-Saharan Africa (as in other parts of the developing world) are often called upon to justify their research and demonstrate the relevance of their results to broader societal goals and aspirations. Different contexts have evoked different responses to such demands. In the first few decades of post-colonialism, many archaeologists tended to emphasise the role archaeology could play in nation building and in 'recovering' Africa's multiple, pre-colonial histories. As the continent's different nation states have matured, the strength of such arguments has diminished and, as a consequence, alternative uses of the archaeological past have had to be sought. Currently, these include the suggestion that archaeological data on subsistence strategies and settlement patterns and distributions, combined with palaeoenvironmental records, have the potential to challenge many of the environmental narratives that drive international donor policies and interventions that affect African livelihoods. This paper outlines the basis of such debates, and using examples of recent studies conducted in eastern Africa will examine the wider implications that the search for 'relevance' has had on the role of theory in African archaeology.

10.30 - 10.45 Discussion

10.45 - 11.15 Coffee

11.15 Power and boundaries: wider reflections prompted by a West Africanist experience
Anne Haour (Newcastle University)

ABSTRACT

This paper will consider recent theoretical advances in the study of how past 'states' and 'empires' actually worked on the ground. I draw my core data from the West African Sahel, but argue that a comparative approach is the best way to further our understanding, and therefore make reference also to early medieval Europe. The exercise of power and authority are central questions in the study of past societies, particularly those societies we call complex. Discussion on the nature of 'states', for example, is a well-trodden ground. However, these sorts of debate can really only make sense if we go right back to the foundations: to the question of the nature of power and the means by which authority is exercised. African archaeology and history are well placed to contribute to these issues: indeed, they have seen a recent and sustained theoretical critique of notions of power and rulership, moving away from the idea that coercive authority and bounded territorial frontiers present the only workable schemes.

11.45 Aksum after Aksum: landscapes of power and social memory in medieval Ethiopia
Niall Finneran (SOAS)

ABSTRACT

The concept of social memory is particularly useful in an African archaeological context; taking us away from difficult labels such as ethnicity, or the traditional problematic 'culture area'. This contribution investigates how the rulers of medieval Christian kingdom of Ethiopia recalled their Aksumite social, cultural and ideological antecedents and sought to create an idealised 'Ethiopian Christian' identity, an identity which even today has immense political and social significance. The medieval social memory of Aksum became a powerful centralising force in an 'empire' which was rapidly becoming 'multicultural', seeking political dominance in the highlands, and shifting southwards away from its northern Aksumite, Semitic roots. These attempts to renegotiate Ethiopian identity—particularly prevalent during the 12th-14th centuries—saw a reconfiguration of the way in which sacred and symbolic space was perceived and interpreted; it drew together the major ideological and political power bases of society (monastery and royalty), combining the Christian mission process with military control as an agent for domination, and impacted upon material culture. Taking into account recent theoretical developments in the wider world of medieval archaeology, this contribution outlines ways in which we might begin to shift the 'traditional' study of medieval Ethiopia away from its predominant art-historical orientation.

12.15 "Passing on the message": Standing stones and the performance of memory in highland Madagascar
Zoe Crossland (Columbia University)

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the intersection of European ways of remembering, brought by missionaries to Madagascar, with local forms of commemoration in the town of Betafo, in highland Madagascar. The standing stones of Betafo were put in place towards the end of the 19th century by local families, who erected them to commemorate powerful men in the service of the king. Representing the bodies of the dead, they draw on a long tradition in highland Madagascar of using stone to mark and commemorate. Unusually however, they are also inscribed with messages and other motifs. The inscriptions reveal the disparity between this form of commemoration and European understandings of stone as marker, while also illustrating how new forms of memorializing were incorporated creatively into pre-existing traditions.

12.45 - 1.00 Discussion

Reconsidering Social Archaeology

Bleda S. Düring, University College London

SESSION ABSTRACT

Archaeological perspectives on ancient societies are infused with the 'Gesellschaft – Gemeinschaft' opposition developed in the late 19th century. Studies typically deal with either total communities, and how these might have been (re)constructed, or with how the individual relates to the larger societal whole, and here one can think of the debates on the emergence of social inequality, social evolutionist studies, and Marxist archaeologies on the one hand, and the more recent focus on identities, agency, and embodied practices, on the other. While these studies may reflect the dominant models in sociology, others ways of conceptualizing societies are available. What is lost in the perspectives mentioned is an understanding of the manner in which ancient societies were constituted through social interaction within various nested social collectivities. A perspective focusing on these aspects of social life can be linked to recent studies in sociology and can help us to reach a richer understanding of past societies. This session calls for papers in which ancient societies are approached from a more holistic perspective, and in which the interrelations between their component social institutions, such as households, neighbourhoods, and local communities, are taken into account.

9.00 Introduction - Reconsidering Social Archaeology
Bleda S. Düring (University College London)

ABSTRACT

The site of Çatalhöyük is amongst the largest of the Near Eastern Neolithic, with a population estimated to have run into the thousands. These circumstances raise the question how society was organised and why the local community became that large. Çatalhöyük is also one of the most systematically excavated and published sites of the Near Eastern Neolithic, and this provides us with a considerable potential to answer questions relating to social structure at the site. However, to date, discussions of society at Çatalhöyük have been restricted to two sets of questions. First, whether or not there was social inequality at the site, and how the community was managed. Second, whether or not there was a differentiation of buildings into houses or shrines, and by consequence, whether there existed a group of ritual specialists at the site. Although these questions are of some importance, they have failed to provide us with a real understanding of Çatalhöyük society. It is argued that for this purpose it is necessary to reconstruct social life at various levels of inclusion. Using both contextual and architectural evidence this paper explores social life at Çatalhöyük at various levels ranging from the household to the local community.

9.20 Border Crossings, Social Archaeology and Border Theory
David Mullin (University of Reading)

ABSTRACT

In recent debates in archaeology and anthropology, cultural expression is no longer seen as reflecting the presence of monolithic, homogenous social groups, but rather a means of "buying into" sets of social relationships. "Culture" does not passively reflect social relationships and organisation, but there is a recursive relationship between the two: decisions about which sets of practices are adopted or rejected may not only establish identity based on difference, but may also have been used to produce consensus and community, establishing boundaries and borders around and between different social groups. These symbolic borders could be conceived of as discursive practise implicit in the creation and negotiation of meanings, norms and values.

The ways in which people and institutions construct, police and cross borders, both imaginary and real, has formed a focus of research across the arts and social sciences but has been neglected by archaeologist. This paper will attempt to explore the ways in which border theory can be deployed to formulate a social archaeology which integrates the experience of the individual, how this relates to wider social groupings and the ways in which communities define themselves and interact.

9.40 Cemeteries as Central Places, A Nested Approach to Burial as a Locale for Community Formation
Erik van Rossenberg (Leiden University)

ABSTRACT

We have come a long way from regarding burial evidence as a mere reflection of social structure. Nonetheless, in the study of late prehistoric Central Italy it is still normal practice to assume that burying communities equal cohabiting communities. This paper shows that the spatial distributions of cemeteries and settlements in the Final Bronze Age of Central Italy (c. 1200-1000 BC) do not conform to the current model of a one-to-one relationship in terms of spatial proximity. Rather, cemeteries can be regarded as central places, serving as a burial place for a number of settlements. Another assumption is that in the Final Bronze Age everyone was buried individually, which marked the end of selective and collective burial. Hence differentiation between burials in terms of quality and numbers of grave goods is taken as direct evidence for social inequality in terms of wealth, social roles and rank. This paper shows that burial was still selective and that the range and position of grave goods in so-called individual burials allude to several social collectivities. These reconsiderations highlight that Final Bronze Age cemeteries in Central Italy provided a locale for community formation through nesting and articulation of several social collectivities.

10.00 Society and Archaeology in Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Jordan
Jack Green (British Museum)

ABSTRACT

Societal studies of the second and first Millennia BC Levant and wider Near East developed primarily from use of ancient textual sources. Western European social theory applied to these sources include Marxist models of the two-tier society and Asiatic Mode of Production; Weberian models include the 'Patrimonial Household Model'. These models are integrated within wider archaeological discourses relating to power, wealth, and prestige. Concepts of social stratification and inequality are tempered with primordial assumptions that Middle-Eastern societies maintain egalitarian tribal ideologies and kinship structures over deep time. There are problems in applying these models archaeologically, especially within transitional periods, in regions external to 'historical' centres, and during periods of social flux.

As a case study, this paper focuses on the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age cemetery at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, Jordan. In addition to studying diverse social identities in death, and aspects of funerary rituals, an attempt is made to examine changes in social relations over time and how they might be reflected and created in the mortuary sphere. This study re-examines whether reconstructions of 'living' society can be (or ever should be) attempted using mortuary evidence, and how such evidence may be balanced and integrated with that from non-funerary spheres.

10.20 - 10.45 Discussion

10.45 - 11.15 Coffee

11.15 Reconstructing the Society of Neolithic Çatalhöyük
Bleda Düring (University College London)

ABSTRACT

The site of Çatalhöyük is amongst the largest of the Near Eastern Neolithic, with a population estimated to have run into the thousands. These circumstances raise the question how society was organised and why the local community became that large. Çatalhöyük is also one of the most systematically excavated and published sites of the Near Eastern Neolithic, and this provides us with a considerable potential to answer questions relating to social structure at the site. However, to date, discussions of society at Çatalhöyük have been restricted to two sets of questions. First, whether or not there was social inequality at the site, and how the community was managed. Second, whether or not there was a differentiation of buildings into houses or shrines, and by consequence, whether there existed a group of ritual specialists at the site. Although these questions are of some importance, they have failed to provide us with a real understanding of Çatalhöyük society. It is argued that for this purpose it is necessary to reconstruct social life at various levels of inclusion. Using both contextual and architectural evidence this paper explores social life at Çatalhöyük at various levels ranging from the household to the local community.

11.35 Understanding Household Variability at Tell Kurdu, A Sixth Millennium Settlement in Southern Turkey
Rana Özbal (Bosphorus University)

ABSTRACT

This paper embraces the study of households when trying to understand the social organization of Late Neolithic/ Early Chalcolithic societies in the Near East. These societies have traditionally been viewed as whole entities and efforts to understand their social organization have focused mainly on issues of social complexity. Attempts to categorize them within evolutionary frameworks of "tribes" and "chiefdoms" have proven difficult because most Near Eastern societies of the fifth and sixth millennia BC refuse simple categorical placement across predetermined rungs on the traditional ladder of cultural evolution. Although researchers have long expressed dissatisfaction with such models, few alternatives have been proposed.

Instead of using top-down conceptualizations intended for whole "cultures," this paper re-approaches some of these old yet fundamental questions on the social organization of early complex societies by bringing the analysis down to the level of households. Excavations at Tell Kurdu, a sixth millennium settlement located in the Amuq Valley of southern Turkey have yielded several distinct household compounds which allow for the investigation of intra-site variability. The combined results of several lines of data including microartifacts and the chemical analyses of floor residues are used to propose an alternative conceptualization of social organization and complexity for this community.

11.55 Social Patterns within the Neolithic Lakeside Settlement Arbon Bleiche 3, Switzerland, New Insights and Approaches
Thomas Doppler & Britta Pollmann (University of Basel)

ABSTRACT

The settlement Arbon Bleiche 3 is located at lake Constance, canton Thurgau, Switzerland. From 1993 to 1995, about half of the original settlement surface was excavated. Over the last ten years the findings of these excavations have been the subject of intensive analysis. All of which has been published by now (Leuzinger 2000; de Capitani et al. 2002; Jacomet et al. 2004). Due to the waterlogged archaeological sediments, the organic remains are very well preserved. Dendrochronological analysis has allowed reconstruction of the houses and the settlement history in the excavated area. Besides the excellent preservation, the extraordinary value of this settlement is its short, single-phased occupation (3384-3370 BC). Intensive interdisciplinary analyses of the layer formation processes have shown that hardly any horizontal mixture took place. Therefore this site is particularly suited for the mapping of artefacts, the detection of distribution patterns and the understanding of social behaviour within the settlement and among individual houses. In this contribution we will single out the potential of archaeobiological analyses for research about social archaeology and we will present some new approaches that can be derived from such analyses.

12.15 - 1.00 discussion

SUNDAY PM

Session 1 – Newman B - continued from morning

Overcoming the Modern Invention of Material Culture
Prof. Julian Thomas (Manchester) and Prof. Vitor Oliveira Jorge (Porto)
Discussant: Prof. Tim Ingold (Aberdeen)

Session 2 – Newman C

Mortality - Interdisciplinary Approaches in the Archaeology of Death, Burial & Commemoration

Estella Weiss-Krejci & Howard Williams

SESSION ABSTRACT

Mortuary archaeology has developed sustained theoretical interactions with a range of disciplines, drawing upon research in forensic sciences, physical anthropology, philosophy, psychology, history, art-history, sociology, social anthropology and ethnography. Archaeologists have also conducted their own ethnoarchaeology and experimental archaeology to assist and expand interpretations of past mortuary practices. Yet few studies have explicitly addressed how archaeological theories and perspectives on death, burial and commemoration can inform ongoing debates in related disciplines as well as debates that cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries. In particular, the session seeks to address to what extent archaeological approaches to funerary remains can contribute to, and can be integrated into, inter-disciplinary studies of dying, death and the dead in the past and the present? To this end, the session invites contributions to present new perspectives on interdisciplinary research in the archaeology of death, burial and commemoration.

2.00 Introduction: mortuary archaeology & mortuary culture
Chair: Howard Williams (University of Exeter, UK)

2.10 Writing about death, mourning and emotion: archaeology and creative writing
Trevor Kirk (Honorary Research Fellow, University of Wales, Lampeter)

ABSTRACT

In recent years archaeologists have experimented with different forms of writing in an attempt to give faces and voices to people in the past. As Sarah Tarlow has argued "no entire separation of (non-fictional) history from (fictional) story is possible. Academic histories are usually at one end of the continuum of more or less 'created' narratives; historical romances and films are at the other. No account of the past is free from creative and imaginative input" (Tarlow 1999, 179). This paper advocates dialogue between archaeologists writing about death and mourning and non-archaeological creative writers who are inspired by their own engagements with the materiality of funerary archaeology (monuments, graveyards, memorials, material culture). Metaphor and emotion - themes that are current in archaeologies of death and mourning - form common ground for possible future interdisciplinary work.

2.30 How do we make sense of mortuary evidence?
Koji Mizoguchi (Kyushu University, Japan)

ABSTRACT

When we assume that mortuary evidence "reflects" something, regardless that being social organisation, the conception of the dead, or whatever, what do we exactly mean by the word/concept "reflection"? More than twenty years have past since the inception of the post-processual movement that questioned the straightforward, unmediated connection between social practices and institutions/structural modalities, we have not quite managed to sufficiently theorise as to how to make sense of the relationship between mortuary practices and other fields of social reproduction.

By recognising, somewhat controversially, the importance of retaining the sense of mortuary practices "reflecting" something, for the sake of preventing the study of archaeological mortuary evidence from going back to a culture-cultural descriptive practice, the paper attempts to explicitly theorise the relationship between mortuary practices and other fields of social reproduction.

2.50 Disposal and Participation: a generational approach to early Anglo-Saxon cemetery organisation
Duncan Sayer (University of Reading, UK)

ABSTRACT

Alexander Murry, David Herlihy and Jack Goody have all contributed substantial historical and historical-anthropological studies to our understanding of family relationships within the Germanic world. This, to some degree, compliments the Anglo-Saxon historian's interpretations and translations of law codes and wills. However, since the 1980's the study of family and kinship relations in theoretical archaeology has been minimal preferring instead to ignore this "anthropological" study area. Certainly within Anglo-Saxon archaeology much is assumed about familial relationships, however, applying the lessons that archaeology has learnt from inter-disciplinary research into burial and commemoration we can reassess the nature of early Anglo-Saxon household units from a study of cemetery structure and organisation. Using recently published cemeteries as examples I will look closely at the chronological development of spatial relations between graves. I will apply a generational approach to consider who in a cemetery might have lived at the same time and thus attended and contributed to a given funerary rite. This analysis of funerary evidence can tell us how a living community legitimized the continuation of core family relations using structured commemoration within a larger extended household, and can provide evidence of how these communities changed over the period of the furnished burial rite.

3.10 Conflicting attitudes: ideal and praxis of the re-opening of graves in early medieval continental cemeteries
Edeltraud Aspoeck (University of Reading, UK)

ABSTRACT

In this paper I am going to address how a combination of written and archaeological evidence, due to different 'authors' and 'aims', can be used to draw a complex picture regarding the attitude of early medieval people towards the graves of their dead.

Early medieval written sources condemn the re-opening of graves, the grave and the human remains should be left in peace and are not meant to be disturbed. However, the frequency with which this problem is mentioned produces a rather ambivalent picture. This is further emphasized by the archaeological evidence. Early medieval cemeteries in Continental Europe contain a high number of re-opened and 'plundered' graves. A scrutinized analysis of the archaeological evidence in an Austrian Lombard-period cemetery sheds further light on the actual praxis of re-opening graves, and the results point towards the burying communities themselves re-opening their graves a certain time after burial.

3.30 - 3.40 Discussion

3.40 - 4.00 Coffee

4.00 Forgotten monuments: cross slab grave covers and the study of commemorative sculpture, funerary practice, and social identity in medieval England
Aleksandra McClain (University of York, UK)

ABSTRACT

'Cross slab' grave monuments are the most common surviving form of pre-Reformation commemorative sculpture in the British Isles, in many regions far surpassing medieval brasses and effigies in terms of frequency, range of distribution, and dates of use. Nevertheless, they have frequently been neglected by archaeologists, art historians, and historians alike when discussing death and burial in the Middle Ages. Cross slabs are a vital source of information about the production and consumption of stone sculpture, religious belief, the social role of commemoration, and monumental display, especially below the levels of the highest and most wealthy nobility. This paper proposes an analysis of the spatial and chronological distributions of cross slabs in eleventh to sixteenth-century England, in conjunction with a discussion of their style, iconography, and inscriptions, in order to shed light on the patrons and motivations behind these monuments. They have great potential to contribute a material basis to interdisciplinary analyses of mortuary and commemorative practice, and when considered within theoretical frameworks that emphasize the active, recursive nature of material culture, they can inform wider questions about their role in communicating particular personal, familial, and social identities.

4.20 "Dead bodies animate the study of politics": mortuary culture in German speaking Europe during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation
Estella Weiss-Krejci (University of Vienna, Austria)

ABSTRACT

According to Verdery (1999) dead bodies help us to see political transformation as something more than a technical process; they make us understand politics as a process which includes meanings, feelings, the sacred and ideas of morality. This paper deals with dead bodies of aristocrats and wealthy burghers in 16th and 17th century German speaking Europe. I will investigate why and how political and social conditions (attacks by the Turks, the Plague) and ideological crisis (Reformation and Counter-Reformation) caused a dramatic change in mortuary behaviour. I will focus on: 1) separate burial of intestines and the heart, a custom which was promoted by the Catholic reformers and appears not only among ecclesiastical princes, bishops and royalty but also among important war leaders; 2) the transformation of the function of church epitaphs from commemorative to funerary monuments (a question which relates to debates among German art historians about the use and meaning of church epitaphs); 3) the appearance of separate burial structures which hold the bodies of individuals who played a special role in Catholic rehabilitation; 4) the growing number of depictions of funerary processions and proliferation of written texts accompanying the funerary rite.

4.40 The dead, the ancestors and the Italians: an ethno-archaeological study on the attitudes and aspirations of archaeologists
Ulla Rajala (University of Cambridge, UK and University of Oulu, Finland)

ABSTRACT

In this talk I will present some of the results stemming from a series of interviews with 20 central Italian archaeologists making research on funerary archaeology or excavating tombs or cemeteries. The aim of the interviews was to study the ways theory, practice and cultural attitudes affect the ways archaeologists perceive the scope of their study and their relationship with the people they are studying. I will try to formulate archaeological mentalities involved in the study of funerary archaeology in central Italy. I will also discuss how these ideas are reflected in my own field work at Cisterna Grande (Crustumerium, Rome, Italy) with a multinational team.

5.00 When interpretation goes beyond the facts: the relationship between public perceptions and bioarchaeological interpretations

Heather Gill-Robinson (North Dakota State University, USA)

ABSTRACT

Biological anthropologists and archaeologists use a range of analyses to place an individual or population in an accurate cultural and chronological context. Although much of that work takes place within an academic sphere, the excavation and interpretation of human remains is frequently reported in local media and of substantial interest to the local community. In some exceptional cases the remains may receive national or international attention. In many cases, the media or local folklore provide possible interpretations without knowing the true archaeological and cultural data, sometimes with a complete disregard for the facts. This paper will explore the impact of public perceptions on the bioarchaeological interpretation of human remains, including the influence of media, community tradition and folklore. Case studies will include a discussion of the Windeby Child, an Iron Age bog body from northern Germany.

5.20 General Discussion

Discussant: Tony Walter (University of Bath, UK)

Session 3 – Newman D

The Archaeology of Disability

Tim Phillips, University of Reading

SESSION ABSTRACT

The 1995 TAG at Reading saw a session entitled 'Disability and Archaeology'. This included papers on disability in the archaeological record and comments about working as a disabled archaeologist. In the subsequent publication of this session (Archaeological Review From Cambridge, 15.2, ed. Nyree Finlay), Tom Shakespeare summed up the contributions by commenting that it would be interesting to review progress in another ten years time. It is now 11 years since the Reading TAG and much has happened since then. Not only is there a greater knowledge of disability in the past, current legislation relating to disability, employment and Higher Education has made this a topical subject. The theoretical background to this legislation involves the Social Model of Disability which shifts the emphasis from something being 'wrong' with the individual to the problems posed by the physical and attitudinal 'barriers' in society – a radical change in how disability is perceived. This session will have a double theme. First there will be papers updating the approaches to disability in the archaeological record, its occurrence and the possible attitudes towards it in the past. The second half of the session will include papers discussing the attitude towards, and responses to, disability in contemporary archaeological practice in both Britain and North America and how we are responding to this shift in attitude in employment, Higher Education and archaeological fieldwork training.

2.00 The Prehistory of Disability and 'Deformity'

Nick Thorpe, University of Winchester

ABSTRACT

In seeking the roots of the social construction of the 'disabled', few have ventured back beyond the 19th century. Disability scholars have generally taken the view that in the more distant past life was "nasty, brutish and short". Yet there is evidence of the disabled in prehistory, which may indicate how they were viewed and treated by others in society. We certainly do know of examples of children identified as having Down's syndrome and dwarfism in prehistory, who were well cared for, along with several individuals who lived for some years after they became disabled through injury and old age. Tim Taylor regards the disabled burials of the Early Upper Palaeolithic in Europe as shaman, and a surprisingly large number of Iron Age bog bodies were disabled in various ways. There is also a long history of possible self-deformation, such as cranial deformation. One of the most well known features of Palaeolithic cave art is negative hand prints on walls, in which the hands appear to be deformed or mutilated, with the ends of fingers missing. The discovery at Obłazowa Cave, southern Poland, of severed fingers dating to before 30,000 BC, suggests that extreme body art may well have been a Palaeolithic practice.

2.20 Disability in the Anglo-Saxon Archaeological Record

Sally Crawford, University of Birmingham

Abstract unavailable

2.40 Books vs Bones: disability in the interplay between documentary sources and the archaeological record

Irina Metzler, University of Bristol

ABSTRACT

The paper will focus on a comparison of documentary sources and the archaeological record to inform us about perceived disability in medieval Europe. The starting point is to be clear about the distinction between the medical and the social models of disability. Using the social model allows one to observe and research change over time in attitudes to, and therefore the treatment of, impaired people. Not all impairments were consistently disabling in all cultures. In the first instance, Palaopathology informs us about impairments, but not necessarily about whether such impairments were regarded as disabling. Hence the importance of the documentary evidence to place palaeopathological observations into a cultural context. Examples will be given of burials where impairing pathologies were found, yet the bare bones tell us little about the lived experience of the individual.

Conversely, archaeological evidence, especially palaeopathology, can help to inform and elucidate gaps in the documentary sources. Examples here will pertain mainly to the notion among documentary historians that English medieval hospitals provided no medical care, whereas the archaeological record clearly indicates this was not the case. In summary, books and bones complement one another. Disability in historic societies should not (and can not) be studied by one discipline alone.

3.00 - 3.30 Discussion

3.30 - 4.00 Coffee

4.00 From Disability to Inclusion: the Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology Project

Tim Phillips, University of Reading

ABSTRACT

Disability is a topic that is very much in the headlines at present, mainly as a consequence of recent legislation. This requires employers and educational institutions to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that, 'disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to persons who are not disabled'. Archaeology as a profession is facing a huge challenge in response to this legislation. The onus would seem to lie with the Universities teaching Archaeology as a degree subject to provide the initiative. This challenges the stereotype of archaeology as a field discipline that may exclude disabled participants.

The Inclusive, Accessible, Archaeology project was set up with the aims of increasing the awareness of disability issues in Archaeology and to improve the integration of disability in fieldwork teaching. The legislation may have been the starting point, but the project has been tackling the issue of disability and ideas of inclusion in archaeology from a practical perspective by asking the basic question – how can archaeological fieldwork teaching be made inclusive? It requires a change of emphasis from 'disability' to ability. Rather than excluding or categorising individuals, students can actively evaluate their own skills.

4.20 The Shoreditch Park Excavations, London

Faye Simpson, Museum of London

ABSTRACT

The summer of 2006 saw the Museum of London return to Shoreditch Park to continue the work of the 2005 community excavation but this time with a different slant. We were invited as part of the Youth Festival, sponsored by Shoreditch Trust, and worked together with local police, community officers, and used it as training for the Heritage Lottery Fund volunteer learning program based at London Archaeological Archives. This archaeology project focused on youth offenders, probation and local youths excluded from school. This paper will explore the theories behind such projects, the methods employed, and the subsequent benefit to the local community. It was more than just offering the public an opportunity to learn about their heritage; it was about focusing on teaching transferable skills, training young people, and the building of their self esteem.

4.40 Putting an End to Disabling Strategies: Identifying and Eliminating Barriers to Access in North American Archaeological Practice

Meredith A. Fraser, American University, Washington, DC

ABSTRACT

In 1999, Morag Cross made a call for archaeologists to consider dis/ability in the context of archaeological praxis. Almost a decade later, the majority of North American archaeologists have yet to respond to Cross' suggestion; however, not all North American archaeologists are silent on the subject. More specifically, in order to bring a North American perspective to discussions of (dis)ability and its' intersections with archaeological practice, I will draw on my doctoral research that centers on the experiences of both Canadian and American archaeologists who live with experiences of dis/ability. In so doing, I will identify some of the primary economic, social and physical barriers to access that these archaeologists encounter in the context of archaeological practice. I will then discuss strategies that relevant stakeholders could mobilize in response to these barriers, with the goal of reducing (and ultimately eliminating) access issues, to create a more accessible and available discipline.

5.00 Archaeology for all: does it stop at the classroom?

Rose Drew, University of York

ABSTRACT

The UK universities are actively courting a more diverse range of students than ever before. In archaeology they will participate in all aspects of an archaeological education including fieldwork training. If they have disabilities, reasonable adjustments will be made so that they can participate fully. They then leave University with a good qualification and head off into the job market. But what happens to them at this stage? The job market is already so fierce that non-disabled workers have to scramble for employment, which makes work even harder to find for those with disabilities. However, individual abilities are not being recognised, or utilised properly on archaeological sites, which all workers find disheartening.

This paper will describe the experiences of one such individual as a student, then as a prospective employee in the US job market and now a prospective employer. The conclusions do not appear encouraging with restrictive words in adverts for technical jobs and the bottom-line US way of doing business. Is this what will happen in the UK as well,

despite recent anti-discrimination legislation? In response to this, the paper will also explore possible ways of 'beating the system'.

5.20 - 6.00 Discussion

Session 4 – Newman E

SESSION ABSTRACT

Integrating Research and Teaching in Archaeology in Higher Education
Anthony Sinclair, University of Liverpool

One of the characteristics of university life is that students are taught in an atmosphere of active research and scholarship. In higher education, and especially in the social sciences, knowledge is not sure and unchanging, but constantly proximate, subject to new findings and new questions of enquiry. Effective teaching is not just a case of simple fact transmission, it sets out, and frames, questions and debates and brings new knowledge to bear on these areas of enquiry. The Higher Education community, therefore, is a community of 'learners'; some may certainly be more experienced than others, but all participate in the scholarly development of their disciplines with the most advanced scholars just as able to benefit from the insights of the less experienced.

Despite this ideal, research studies of the relationship between research and teaching in higher education consistently fail to show a link between departments and individuals who offer high quality teaching and those departments with reputations for high quality research. As a result, one of the recent major initiatives of the Higher Education Academy has been to reconsider and support the development of links between teaching and research. In this approach, the linking of teaching and research is not just about enabling undergraduate students to engage in their own discipline's conversations, but to also enable them to be actively engaged in first hand research.

Archaeology is a rare discipline within the social sciences. It is taught in a small number of universities and departments most within universities that would call themselves research-led universities, whilst all archaeology departments would consider themselves to be successful research departments. We also usually take students with little real knowledge of the discipline and have to instil basic knowledge as well as specialist critical thinking skills.

The papers in this session will present case studies of the involvement of students in research and teaching, new developments in supporting undergraduate research skills, and outlines of the resources available to the archaeological community to bring active research within the reach of undergraduate students. The latter part of the session will provide the opportunity for small group discussion with the aim of collecting both personal experiences of the interplay between teaching and research, as well as suggestions for future potential teaching developments.

2.00 The Research-Teaching Nexus in Archaeology
Alan M. Greaves, National Teaching Fellow, University of Liverpool

ABSTRACT

Much has been made of the value of degrees taught by research active staff and awarded by universities and departments with international research profiles, yet this connection and how it is articulated has gone largely unchallenged and unexamined. Research disciplines vary enormously, and so will what constitutes good practice in research-led teaching. Examining the research-teaching nexus is especially important in Archaeology because it is predominantly taught at research-led universities. For this to happen there needs to be: reflection by the community of practice on what the research culture of the discipline is; a critical examination of how (or if) this is currently being communicated to students; and the development of better ways of making the implicit research culture of Archaeology explicit to students so as to allow them to orient themselves within it. This paper will develop two examples as points for discussion: the role of fieldwork in research-led teaching and the pedagogy of classical archaeology.

2.20 Linking Practice, Fieldwork, Theory and Research in the Teaching of European Prehistory
Tim Darvill, School of Conservation Sciences, University of Bournemouth

ABSTRACT

The discipline of archaeology has changed a great deal over the last 20 years and this carries greater implications for teaching and researching prehistory. Here attention is directed towards two interconnected issues. First, the expansion of archaeological work in the commercial sector and the concomitant increase in the quality, quantity and nature of relevant materials for teaching and research. And, second, the role of fieldwork in providing opportunities to learn and understand archaeological practices relevant to using published resources from elsewhere, comprehending something of the archaeological record relating to prehistory, and applying archaeological theory to the investigation of topical research questions. Bournemouth University's fieldschool held at Billown in the Isle of Man between 1995 and 2004 is used by way of illustration.

2.40 Questions of Time: interweaving scales of development in archaeological research and teaching
Anthony Sinclair, Subject Centre for History, Classics and Archaeology, University of Liverpool

ABSTRACT

Whilst it is commonplace for academics to teach their students about their research in the course of their classroom-based teaching, much learning of research takes place more informally through participation in research projects, often field-based. These research projects allow students to see at first hand the problems of developing research ideas in the context of a changing data set, and in association with those who will have to pull the data together. This is one great advantage of participation in research projects. A second aspect often overlooked in linking teaching and research, however, is that projects have a time scale that differs from that of the standard undergraduate and masters level teaching frameworks. This paper will explore the good and problematic aspects of the participation and presentation of research in a student-centred curriculum.

3.00 Digital Archives and the process of linking research and teaching in archaeology
Tim Evans, Archaeology Data Service, University of York

ABSTRACT

The Archaeology Data Service has over the last 10 years built up a large collection of digital archives. These range from the archives of commercial work through to archives created by national agencies and those generated through research projects funded by the specific research councils. This paper will explore the nature of these archives and their potential for integration into aspects of archaeological research and the teaching of research skills.

3.20 - 3.30 Discussion
3.30 - 4.00 Coffee

4.00 - 5.00 A small-group workshop sessions exploring aspects of the evolving nexus linking teaching and research.

Session 5 – Newman F

SESSION ABSTRACT

Finding Faith In The Past
Rod Millard (Cardiff University)

The past decade has seen a radical change in the way we view the archaeological study of religion, to the point where "Archaeology Of Religion" is almost viewed as a discipline in its own right. However, archaeological approaches to religion remain very often rooted in the study of specific material remains or vague concepts such as "ritual", and have a tendency to regard specific religions as distinct cultures.

By contrast, related disciplines such as theology or the anthropology and sociology of religions have moved away from the act of ritual by the community to concentrate on the experience of worship for the individual, and to seek common features of worship and religious experience in otherwise different societies. The aim of this session is to suggest areas in which archaeology can follow suit and address these issues of religious experience, often in cases where there is no insider perspective available as there would be for scholars in related disciplines.

The papers within this session may address various religious traditions in a wide range of historical and prehistoric contexts. The purpose, however, is to discuss how interdisciplinary approaches may add to our understanding of the role that elements including (but by no means limited to) ritual, art and architecture would have affected religious experience in past cultures.

2.00 The opiate of the archaeologist
Subhadra Das (UCL)

ABSTRACT

It would appear that the future of archaeological approaches to the study of religion is bright one, but, as with most things, it is important to consider the past. The goal of this paper is to highlight the underlying Judeo-Christian worldview that dominates past and current archaeological interpretations of prehistoric sites. It will show how subverting this primarily western viewpoint can lead to alternative interpretations, as well as arguing that a more expansive take on our understanding of religion will lead to a more comprehensive, and in some ways more individualistic, picture of faith and the practice of faith in the past.

2.30 Sacrifice as Infanticide: Religion's Cloak of Acceptability
Caroline Barclay (Lampeter)

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the subject area of infanticide and child sacrifice, looking at both within the context of archaeological studies. The main focus of the paper is upon sacrifice an another form of infanticide, and upon how it is presented as being more acceptable because of the religious aspects. It does this by discussing how archaeologists treat the two subjects in their literature, and by analysing their reactions towards both. The paper argues that, although sacrifice is essentially infanticide, although carried out in a more ritualistic environment, people are more willing to accept both the fact of its existence, and the reasons behind it, because it is categorised as a religious activity.

3.00 "A Morbid Taste For Bones": The veneration of mundane objects as relics
Roderick Millard (Cardiff University)

ABSTRACT

In discussing art and spirituality, Paul Tillich observed that objects do not have to have a religious form to be the focus of religious devotion. Indeed, throughout many different cultures in many different periods mundane objects have become the focus of spiritual devotion either because of their association with a particular figure or event, or as a result of miraculous properties attributed to them by worshippers. Drawing on examples from around the world, this paper examines how we as archaeologists approach these mundane objects, and whether there is any way in which archaeology can shed light on the devotion that is, or was, given to them, often at the expense of vast commitments of time, effort, and wealth to make pilgrimage to the site of a supposed relic or to preserve and transport the relic to a place of worship.

3.30 Coffee

4.00 Conversion, Christianity, and the late-Roman Transition in Wales
Andy Seaman (Cardiff University)

ABSTRACT

The Roman to post-Roman transition in Wales is predominantly interpreted within simplistic socio-political-economic frameworks. Within such grand and generalised narratives there has been little room for considerations of social complexity and human agency. Religion too is treated simplistically, or has sometimes been overlooked all together within archaeological narratives of the late-Roman transition in Wales. I would like to propose that religious conversion and Christian faith should be considered as embedded within the lives, and history of the late-Roman communities of Wales. In this paper I will attempt to place religious conversion and Christian faith within the forefront of my archaeological narrative; Christianity and the Christian Church were instrumental in the creation of a new post-Roman world order.

It is currently widely accepted that the roots of post-Roman (and modern) Welsh Christianity lay rather vaguely within the late-Roman period, and that over the proceeding 200 years the faith rose to dominance within Early Medieval Welsh society. I would like to dismiss this simplistic interpretation, and suggest that the roots of Welsh Christianity were far more complex, and lay within a context of social, political, and religious flux at the very end of the fourth- and early fifth-centuries. Within this context knowledgeable agents sought to construct a new 'Christian' world order out of the turmoil of their late-Roman past; a world order distinct yet in many respects similar to their polytheistic Roman past.

4.30 Doodles And Dogma: The Role Of Art in Religious Experience in Byzantine & Medieval Cyprus
Katie Starkey (Lampeter)

ABSTRACT

Throughout the middle ages, in illiterate societies, religious art played a much more important role in worship and religious experience than it does in the modern day, and it is often religious art which is preserved in an archaeological context, long after texts and even buildings have been destroyed. It is therefore through religious art that we have our clearest impression of lay worshippers in a community, and to religious art that we must turn if we are to gain any insight into the experience of worship in past civilisations. Taking Byzantine and medieval Cyprus as a case study, this paper seeks to examine how art was used in worship and how it may have affected the perceptions and beliefs of worshippers at the time.

5.00 Constructing a Vision of Salvation: Chantries and the social dimension of religious experience in the medieval parish church
Simon Roffey (Winchester)

ABSTRACT

Since the early 1990s the archaeological study of the late medieval church has began to apply a broader range of approaches to the study of late medieval religion and belief. Influenced largely by the application of social theory in principally prehistoric contexts, archaeologists have began to focus on what the construction, organisation and embellishment of churches can tell us about social structure and the nature of religious experience enacted within their spaces. Coupled with this, recent works of some historians and art-historians have shown that the pre-Reformation parish church was an arena in which a religious drama was consciously unfolding and that it was a drama in which all drew from, and all contributed to. It was an intrinsic, vital, and hugely popular aspect of medieval life. However, despite the insights that documentary and architectural study can provide with regard to the popularity of religion prior to the Reformation, archaeological examination of parish church fabric can illustrate aspects of religious practice which may not be evident from the restrictive bias of many historical sources. This paper, based on recent research in the south and west of England will demonstrate how the application of view-shed analysis, a technique largely applied to prehistoric landscape contexts, combined with structural analysis of surviving fabric can be used to reconstruct the spatial and visual arrangements of the pre-Reformation parish church. In particular, it will suggest that the construction of parish church topography, despite the presence of screens and the foundation of 'private' chantry chapels was actually influenced and guided by the participation, not exclusion, of all members of the parish community. Overall, such investigations will provide an insight into how aspects of medieval piety actually 'worked' in practice and the corporate nature of chantry foundation at parish level

5.20 Face to faith: Menhirs, Muslims and Christians in the East Balkans
Bisserka Gaydarska and John Chapman (UK/Durham)

ABSTRACT

One of the most striking, but least studied, monument classes in the archaeology of Europe is the megalithic menhirs of the East Balkans (Eastern Bulgaria, Turkish and Greek Thrace) – groups of undressed standing stones ranging from 5 to over 2,000 on a single site and with heights of up to 3 metres. If there are any Eastern European parallels for Carnac, these sites provide them!

ABSTRACT

At the beginning of the research, there was no clear evidence for the date range of these menhirs but two opposed interpretations shaped our initial research design. In the first view, the menhirs were landscape monuments dating to the Iron Age and related to other Iron Age megaliths (dolmens and cromlechs). In this view, there was no obvious faith-based social practice associated with the menhirs. By contrast, in the second view, the menhirs were Ottoman grave markers denoting Muslim burial rites across the landscape and dated to the AD 13th century or later - i.e., following the Ottoman conquest of Bulgaria. With the accumulation of research findings, close Viking analogies for boat-shaped stone settings linking pairs of gravestones suggested an AD 1st millennium date. This left us with a major class of field monument that could not be dated with any convincing arguments to one of three possible millennia.

Further research on the distribution of the menhirs and their associations in ancient and modern cemeteries produced an even greater puzzle – the menhirs were linked to the two major faiths concurrently developing in Bulgaria since the Medieval period – Orthodox Christian graves as well as both Sunni and Shia forms of Muslim burial – all marked by dressed, inscribed and/or carved gravestones. They are also found independently of either faith group, on sites with nothing but undressed standing stones. AMS dates from excavated graves on one megalithic site indicate that Muslim burials between paired menhirs took place between AD 1770 – 1825, while burial between pairs of undressed stones continued into the AD 1960s, if indeed not later, in some Muslim communities.

Modes of cultural transmission between 'mortal enemies' remain under-studied in historical archaeology. In this paper, we shall investigate the principal interpretative issue relating to the undressed standing stones – how was it that the most visible and significant mortuary practices of two such publicly opposed faith groups revolved around the same kinds of 'inter-faith' menhirs?

5.40 - 6.00 Discussion

Session 6 – LT6

Eat, drink and be merry: approaching consumption in the Neolithic Near East
Olivier Nieuwenhuyse (Leiden), Karina Croucher (Liverpool), Rachel Conroy (Sheffield)

SESSION ABSTRACT

The Neolithic was an innovative period, characterised by significant changes in patterns of consumption and the preparation of food and drink. The archaeology of, specifically, the Near Eastern Neolithic, where incipient domestication first occurred (8000-5500 cal. BC), is now a burgeoning field of research. Fieldwork over the past decades has resulted in often spectacular finds, including monumental architecture, complex rituals and elaborate material culture styles. However, archaeological investigations of consumption in this region have generally been limited to the identification of species of wild and domesticated plants and animals, perhaps extending to a discussion of evidence of butchery marks, or to functional-technological studies of particular pottery groups. However, preparing, cooking and eating food and drink are foremost social acts: they are complex, context-specific expressions of cultural values, systems of belief and personal relationships. They are mechanisms through which such concepts can be reinforced, negotiated and reproduced. In this session we would like to explore approaches to these issues in our interpretations of archaeological material. Whilst the main focus of this session is on Near Eastern prehistory, we welcome comparative papers from other regions.

2.00 Eat, drink and be merry - feasting and the consumption of Late Neolithic ceramics
Olivier Nieuwenhuyse, Leiden University

ABSTRACT

As we all know too well, prehistoric pottery was not made just to facilitate our typo-chronological reconstructions. Ceramic vessels were made to be used: for storing and preparing food and, in particular, to eat and drink from, to entertain guests, and so forth. Plastics may have all but replaced ceramics in our own time, but we all are aware of the importance of eating and drinking together as a means of creating social relationships. A consumption perspective on ceramic style can shed light on social dimensions of prehistoric societies and on the way people gave form to social relationships.

In this contribution I wish to do so by taking a fresh look at some of the most elaborately decorated pottery known from the ancient Near East, that of the so-called Halaf culture (ca. 5900-5300 cal. BC). This appears to have been a time when new categories of food and drink became available and the ceramics suggest changes in the ways these were prepared. I shall argue that much ceramic change and innovation that we observe as archaeologists can ultimately be linked to the role of feasting in Late Neolithic societies. Ceramic style offers a window to explore tensions arising from social competition in a presumably still "egalitarian" social structure and changes in the way small-scale regional groups identified themselves vis-a-vis the outside world.

2.20 Pottery and social change in the late Neolithic of Anatolia
Jonathan Last, English Heritage and Catriona Gibson, Wessex Archaeology

ABSTRACT

Around 6000 cal BC a series of changes are evident at all levels of society on the Konya Plain in south-central Turkey, notably at the site of Çatalhöyük. This transformation encompasses settlement patterns, architecture, ritual, economy and material culture. In this paper we wish to suggest that one way to understand the changes is in terms of new modes of consumption, marked by a distinctive ceramic assemblage. The new uses and meanings of pottery, we suggest, are crucial to understanding the end of the Neolithic and the new world of the 6th millennium BC.

2.40 Feasting in the Arabian Neolithic

Rob Carter, University of Durham

ABSTRACT

During the 6th-5th millennia BCE, Mesopotamian Ubaid pottery appeared along the Arabian/Persian Gulf littoral, reaching a maximum distribution of over 1,100km from its point of origin. Recent research indicates that the ceramics should be regarded as exotic items of trade within the Neolithic context; and that the pots were distributed within the Neolithic system according to its own networks of patronage and exchange. Functional analysis of the pottery, and of locally produced plaster imitations and coarse wares, strongly implicates the ceramics in communal consumption. It is proposed that the Ubaid pottery was used and perhaps also exchanged and redistributed at feasting events. This interpretation provides insights into the political dynamics of the Neolithic communities of eastern Arabia, and also the social context of prehistoric maritime exchange in the region.

3.00 From pig to sheep: was there a « meat revolution » in prehistoric Mesopotamia?

Catherine Breniquet, Université de Bordeaux 3

ABSTRACT

Recent excavations at Hallan Cemi have shown the importance of pig in the process of neolithization in Anatolia, and have highlighted the role of feasts as social events. Evidence from other parts of the Near East is unequally distributed. The evidence from southern Mesopotamia is particularly scanty: the earliest human occupation is documented only at Tell el-Oueili. The data from this site show that pig constituted the major domesticated animal during the earliest phases of the Ubaid culture and subsequently lost its importance to sheep during the early stages of urbanization. The aim of this communication is to shed light on these environmental data from an alternative perspective and to link them with the emergence of complex societies involving feasts as social events, connected with power and exploitation of labour.

3.20 'Cup and rings' and consumption in the Irish/British Neolithic

Thomas A. Dowson, Basse Copette, France

ABSTRACT

Far too often the study of prehistoric arts is set apart from the archaeologies to which they are related. This is largely a product of the way in which art and artists in Western society are still perceived today; the idea of an artist working alone being driven by some form of inexplicable inspiration. One response to this outdated way of thinking was to locate the 'prehistoric art' in its 'archaeological or cultural context'. Invariably this approach did little to challenge the Eurocentric ways of thinking about 'art', and prehistoric arts become little more than the historical antecedants of great Western art. In this paper I explore the so-called cup and ring motifs of the Irish and British Neolithic/Early Bronze Age as a fundamental artefact of that archaeology. I argue that cup and ring motifs were an integral part of the ritual landscape of consumption at these times on these islands; and briefly outline how this was so. There are, I believe, lessons that can be learned from this study and applied to Near Eastern Neolithic 'art'.

3.40 - 4.00 Discussion

4.00 - 4.30 Coffee

4.30 Cooking, dining and social life, from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic in the Near East

Karen Wright, UCL

ABSTRACT

Cooking and dining are social activities that construct social identities and relationships. The Neolithic of the Near East witnessed sharp changes in the technologies and sociality of food preparation and consumption, by comparison to late Palaeolithic hunter-gatherers. An overview of cook and food consumption practices in the Near East from the Palaeolithic onwards illustrates just how revolutionary the social habitus of food preparation was in early agricultural societies. Discussions of the origins of agriculture have often emphasized the development of food production. This paper suggests that the most crucial shifts actually centred on changes in food consumption, which themselves may have driven forward the domestication of plants and animals. Case studies from the Palaeoloithic and Neolithic are discussed to illustrate this point.

4.50 Consuming Ceramics in the Early Bronze Age: the prior life of tomb pottery at Jerablus Tahtani

Rachel Conroy, Sheffield Museum and Stuart Campbell, University of Manchester

ABSTRACT

From 1992-2000 excavation was undertaken at the site of Jerablus Tahtani, northern Syria, by the University of Edinburgh, under the direction of Professor Edgar Peltenburg. This exploration revealed one of the largest Early Bronze Age tombs known in Syria, as well as a large number of smaller interments. As with many contemporary sites along the Euphrates, the material culture deposited within these tombs included a very large number of pottery vessels. Abundant evidence suggests that many of the vessels were associated with acts of consumption focussed around funerary and post-funerary rites.

ABSTRACT

In this paper we draw particularly on the results of a programme of macroscopic use wear recording of the tomb assemblages conducted by Stuart Campbell (1994-2004) and Rachel Conroy (2004). This data has enabled us to ask insightful questions of the ceramics, such as the use life of the vessels prior to their deposition, the decisions that underpinned the selection of particular vessels for inclusion in the tombs, and how their roles in funerary contexts contrasted with their roles in more domestic contexts.

5.10 Same Stew, Different Day: Creating All-Consuming Identities in later prehistoric greater Mesopotamia

Philip Karsgaard, Edinburgh University

Abstract unavailable

5.30 Consuming Passions: Food, Identity and the Body at Domuztepe's Death Pit.

Karina Croucher, University of Liverpool & Stuart Campbell, University of Manchester

ABSTRACT

Food: Something we need to survive, but also socially driven – as we all know, concepts of different types of food, ideas of good and bad foods, taboos, and associated rituals vary vastly from society to society. In this paper we investigate notions of consumption surrounding Domuztepe's Death Pit (c.5,500 BC, Southeast Anatolia). Paying close attention to analysis of human and animal bone, we discuss the social implications of consumption at the Death Pit, including the categorisation of different types of animals, as well as potential human consumption. Relationships between people and certain types of material culture in the Death Pit will also be discussed. We will present a synthesis of ethnographic and comparative material on consumption of the deceased, as well as discussing the social implications of its possible practice at Domuztepe.

5.50 - 6.00 Discussion