Material Culture and Other Things
Post-disciplinary studies in the 21st century

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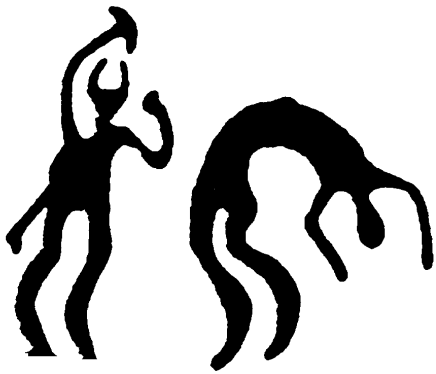

Fredrik Fahlander & Terje Oestigaard

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Introduction

Material Culture and Post-Disciplinary Sciences

Fredrik Fahlander & Terje Oestigaard

In 1978 a conference on *Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Area Analysis* was held at St. John's College, Cambridge (Burnham & Kingsbury 1979). It is a very provoking report in many senses, despite that most of the articles are seldom present in today's reference lists. The conference had an outspoken agenda of being *cross-disciplinary*, aiming to incorporate methods and terminology of history and social anthropology to archaeology, but also to be able to contribute the other way around. The focus lies on the relations between the individual, the group and the society in different periods of prehistory. With 21st century eyes, the enthusiasm of the authors is rather touching in the way they outlined a new 'interdisciplinary archaeology'. This passion was however, not shared by the commentator's from outside archaeology. Eric Hobsbawn represented the historian's point of view (1979). He is quite pessimistic about the attempts of writing history without written sources and consequently he is not very mesmerized by what the archaeologists can offer to history.

> The main weakness of the archaeologists, which seems to me to limit their use for the historian is, if you will excuse the word, a certain amount of 'status-seeking' by stressing the specific and scientific nature of the discipline. /.../ I am afraid I stick, as an historian along with Professor Clark (p. 242), to the old-fashioned view that if there is any sense at all in archaeology, it is as part of history. If it is not a part of history and if it does not elucidate what happened in history and why, when other sources are unavailable, I cannot see the object of the exercise (Hobsbawn 1979:249).

If Hobsbawn is generally patronizing, the representative of social anthropology, Edmund Leach, is more specific in his criticism. He points at a number of instances where archaeological data never would be able to account for historically 'known' processes. He also stresses that the Binfordian approach to burial analysis employed by the archaeologists is questionable. There cannot be any direct links between status between a buried individual and the interments and construction of the grave. The dead are always 'other than' the living. Dress and ornament may as well be a reversal of the ways of the living, and if differences in wealth in burials reveal anything, it is the status of the funeral organizers (Leach 1979:122). He also points out that the concepts of individual and group are employed in a vague and somewhat careless manner (which also is the case of 'culture' and 'society'). In all, Leach finds the papers in the conference report to be rather presumptuous or at best speculative.

The situation of archaeology in the late seventies may not be the best representative for cross-disciplinary attempts; it may seem unfair to bring in a dead cat in the living room. If it can show us anything, it would be the impossibility of evaluating the effect that a present situation will have in the future, as well as the impact on future discipline histories. Nonetheless, we are convinced that archaeology today has a great *possibility* of being progressive and truly multidisciplinary in the coming decades. It is a brave and perhaps utopian argument, especially bearing the history of archaeology in mind, but we will attempt to convince the reader

that we actually are in the beginning of a formative period in our (dissolving) discipline.

To continue, we need a brief look at the previously *formative phases* in archaeological thought and method. Archaeology seems to always have been a part of something else; in the first formative period of the 19th century it was basically anthropology and ethnology, but also politics and philosophy (e.g. Engels, Marx and Freud). The same picture is evident in the era of culture-historical archaeology, in which the world was mapped in time and space in search for origins and diffusion. The archaeology of the first half of the 20th century had hardly any impact on other disciplines, with the exception of perhaps Gordon Childe. Freud continued to be inspired from prehistory in his development of psychology, but not in any new way that can be associated to the contemporary archaeological work. Surely the work of Gustaf Kossinna had political consequences, but the source of *kulturkreislehre* is nonetheless found in the earlier work of geographer Friedrich Ratzel. Economists, such as Milnard Keynes, or influential sociologists, such as Emile Durkheim and Ralph Linton, were never very interested in archaeology. The only examples during this period are found among the German idealists, such as Heidegger and his likes, whom found some inspiration in 'prehistory' (but not in the same degree as did Marx and Freud).

The first major change is found after the Second World War, when some attempts were made to make archaeology something less speculative. In this regard is worth mentioning the Starr Carr excavations and the extensive use of subsidiary sciences. In the post-war period we find a *second* formative phase in archaeology. Archaeologist such as Taylor (1948) formulated the new questions and methods that later would be key-issues in the New Archaeology. The source of inspiration was turned towards anthropology, and to lesser extent, to human geography. This turn to anthropology was certainly progressive in some aspects, but nevertheless enforced the subjective, 'little-brother' relation to anthropology. Suffice to mention the well-known statement of Philip Phillips (1955) that 'American archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing'. The interesting aspect of this period is that we

once again find references to archaeology in other disciplines. The two most influential would be Derrida's (1967) repeated references to archaeological practice and theory and the 'archaeology of knowledge' of Foucault (1963).

This second formative period actually precedes the bold statements of so-called processual or New Archaeology of the 60s and 70s. The French post-structuralists probably never heard of Binford or other Anglo-American archaeologists. Their conception of archaeology is rather to be found in the work of Leroi-Gourhan (1964-5; see Cornell 2000). The main advancement of processual archaeology was that they to some extent 'opened up' archaeology and found inspiration in, for instance, economy (Renfrew 1972), and philosophy (Hempelian logic/American pragmatism). It was however, still anthropology that provided archaeologists with terminology, social typology, structure-functionalism, Parsonian social theory, comparativism etc. Many models, fictions and methods were simply transferred to archaeology via anthropology.

During the eighties and nineties, the commonly attributed change from processual to contextual, or post-processual, archaeology has by some been seen as paradigmatic (e.g. Tilley 1989). In retrospect, it is confusing to note that neither of the two self-proclaimed 'paradigms' of processual and post-processual archaeology actually corresponds very well to what seems to be the 'real' formative periods. The differences are not that significant as they have been assumed and presented. It is only symptomatic that we find the first reference to Foucault in a processual anthology rather than in post-processual texts. The shift from one epistemology and ontology to another was *disciplinary* unproblematic since all the involved actors worked within clearly defined borders which demarcated their discipline. The disputes where mainly of a theoretical and methodological nature; the agents argued not so much about what archaeology was but how to conduct good archaeology without neither naïve beliefs in science nor subjective speculations. Strict American structure-functionalism was replaced by German idealists such as Gadamer and Heidegger, historians like Collingwood and

sociologists like Giddens. One may argue that the post-processual "paradigm" in archaeology was only an adaptation, an adjustment and an appreciation of general knowledge within other disciplines. There were not any specific discipline that had lead to the current state, perhaps except of the linguistic turn, but each discipline developed in close relation to its neighbouring disciplines.

It is interesting that the degree of mutual inter-relatedness and dependency between different disciplines have increased during the last decades. The huge body of theoretical literature belongs not to a particular discipline anymore but is shared knowledge among many actors on the scene of the social sciences. Thus, it seems likely that if there is going to be a "paradigmatic" change within one of the social sciences in the future, it will happen in all disciplines approximately simultaneously. Good ideas, approaches and perspectives are not unique for a particular discipline but common knowledge since everyone studies the same topics: humans and societies. The similarities between the various disciplines go beyond the mere body of literature; it is a way of thinking which unites those who work with human understanding and aiming to understand humans.

Therefore, the archaeological discourse of today is facing an even more challenging quest, however not only within archaeology as a discipline, but in all disciplines. There are few, if any, "true" disciplines any longer, and the more arbitrary the disciplinary boundaries appear to be the more difficult it is to stick to old definitions of what archaeology "is". It is maybe naïve, but it may seem like archaeology is about to enter a *third formative* phase. This change may take many forms and results, but the most promising seem to be an archaeology as the study of the social dimensions of materialities (material culture and other things) in the present as well as in the past. Until recently, apart from particularly the material culture studies at Department of Anthropology, University College London, materialities have never been recognized as important social parameters beyond simple fetishism, pedantry and schemes of culture-specific artefacts. We find that they more or less been rejected by social scientist. They are important to Marx in the first formative period,

but not in the works of e.g. Durkheim (1895:93, 12), Linton (1936) or Parsons (1951:89, 4) There are some forerunners that can be found in the works of Lacan 1966), Sartre (1960) and Foucault (1963; 1997). The last decades, this interest in the material dimension of social life has exploded. We find interesting studies in various disciplines outside archaeology (e.g. Latour 1991; Radley 1990; Riggins 1994; Gottdiener 1995; Soya 1996; Komter 1998; Flusser 1999; Schiffer 1999; Preda 1999; Dant 1999; Graves-Brown 2000). Also in archaeology we find a newborn interest in the potential in the social roles of materialities beyond simple symbolism (e.g. Rathje & Cullen 1992; Tilley 1996; Andrén 1997; Schifffer 1999; Grimm 2000; Dobres 2000; Cornell & Fahlander 2002; Bradley 2002; Olsen 2003; Fahlander 2003).

In this 'joint venture' of material studies is it not difficult to image that one discipline may develop a theoretical stance which other researchers may adopt within their own disciplines, but it is difficult to image that there will be a delay of two-three decades between the discovery and production of ideas to common consumption in other disciplines. Archaeology will not need to go through another "up-to-date" process as it previously did by introduction of established theories into an environment of researches comfortable with their typologies and schemes of classification. The previous theoretical archaeological delays were, unfortunately, not new phenomena in archaeology. Today's old processualists were once radical researchers. When processual archaeology was introduced in the 1960s Leach commented acidly that it sounded like the heydays of Malinowski's naïve functionalism around 1935 (Olsen 1997:63). It was a theoretical delay of almost three decades. When 'postmodern' theories were introduced in the beginning and the late 1980s, these ideas were already two decades old.

In present times, archaeology as a discipline can hardly live its own life in isolation and theoretical backwaters despite theoretical aversion among many curators. Many archaeologists read much, although this knowledge is normally not categorised as "archaeological" since it transcends the disciplinary boundaries. The important aspect regardless of disciplinary labels is that there

will most likely be numerous archaeologists who are updated in various social theories. Bjørnar Olsen complained once that compared to the 1980s when very few read theory, everybody reads theory today, but nothing new happens (Olsen 1998). Following Clarke, "paradigmatic changes" are not possible if rigid, arbitrary and unproblematised borders define what the discipline is; hence the definition that "archaeology is what archaeologists do" (Clarke 1973). Nowadays, neither claims of being archaeologists nor vague or implicit understanding of what "archaeology is, are sufficient criteria for defining archaeology. Archaeology has become somewhat multi-disciplinary, not only because numerous disciplines are involved in archaeological practices, but equally important, the theoretical foundation is based on other social sciences and vice versa.

The dissolution of borders in between the disciplines has consequences for archaeology. There are therefore fundamental differences between approaches within disciplinary and post-disciplinary knowledge. "Disciplinary knowledge is focused upon a precise set of objects of analysis and prescribes definite ways of studying them. Interdisciplinary knowledge constructions offers opportunities for looking at different sides of an event or problem, drawing together the assumptions and methods of different disciplines" (Smith 1998:311). The disciplinary identity crisis of multi-disciplinary research is highlighted and often seen as a problem, and but the consequences and possibilities of post-disciplinary sciences are less elaborated. "Post-disciplinary social science, which looks for the parallels in knowledge constructions across the social sciences, throws such inhibitions out of the window and asks us to be more flexible and innovative in the ways we define objects and the methods we use" (Smith 1998:311). In other words, in post-disciplinary sciences it is not the disciplines that unite researchers but the questions they ask and the topics they study. Disciplinary boundaries are hindrances and obstacles rather than sources for gaining new knowledge. When boundaries between disciplines become more structures of dominance and weapons of exclusion rather than preferable scientific approaches, there are good reasons to challenge the old hegemonies and work

inter-disciplinary and post-disciplinary. Although archaeology is normally presented as a unified discipline, the reality is quite the contrary. There has always been a tendency among those who are employed to emphasise the excavation as the key which defines the discipline, but excavation is merely one method of collecting data among other methods.

On the other hand, ethnographic fieldwork is one special branch that crosses disciplinary borders. The premises of such enterprises have a long history back to the Victorian prehistorians, and this approach became significantly developed during the processual era of 'action archaeology' (Binford 1971:271). Under the somewhat unfortunate term 'ethnoarchaeology', the idea of action archaeology was more or less adapted unchanged by post-processual archaeologists. However, they never succeeded in justify the use of ethnological data in relation to the theoretically advocated culture-relativism. Recently, however, etnoarchaeology has matured by taking one step back and two steps forward. The step back is a return to the original attempt of Binfords MRT: to study *practices* and their material consequences. The steps forward consists of expanding the field to embrace *all* contemporary social practices and the study of their relation to ideologies and materialities.

The study of social practices is thus crucial in many disciplines but it does not define anthropology or ethnology. Methods for collecting data and the ways of processing these data are important, but these practices cannot define the discipline. In other words, there is a difference between the archaeologist's and the philatelist's categorisation, classification and typologies; the former practice is presented as science whereas the latter is perceived as a hobby. What differs between archaeologists who collect old junk and others who collect nice things is not the meticulous interest in storing and presenting the things; archaeologists study humans. An emphasis on only the artefacts is a fetishism; an artefact fetishism which archaeology has suffered severely under with its constantly focus on finding things by excavations.

In anthropology, "ethnographic prejudice virtually takes for granted that one cannot understand another culture unless one has done fieldwork in it. I do not buy this argument at all" (Obeyesekere 2002:xx). Similarly, most archaeological finds that are used in interpretative archaeology are already collected; the museums are stored with artefacts from centuries with excavations. Artefacts once excavated are always a source to new insights depending upon the approaches and questions one address. Participation in excavations is an insufficient criteria legitimizing the discipline. Therefore, "…a work of history or sociology [and archaeology] partly owes its significance to the kinds of questions the historian or sociologist raises. If the historian is not interested in interesting things, he may write a book free of errors of fact, but…his work will be of little interest to us. The social sciences are given force and direction by the questions the scientists address to reality, and the interest of their answers depends largely on whether they asked interesting questions" (Aron 1967:195).

Thus, on the one hand, neither the excavation nor the preservation of artefacts can define the discipline. On the other hand, theory in itself is also insufficient to define archaeology in so far most of the theoretical body is shared with other social sciences. All archaeology is theoretical but all theory is not archaeological (Solli 1996). What the "archaeological" component is, which separates archaeology from other disciplines, is often difficult to pinpoint. All archaeology is inter-disciplinary and there has never been a "pure" archaeology. From the simplest dating methods based on C14 and dendrochronology to pollen samples and preservations of artefact, the spinal core of archaeology has always been everything which is in between all other disciplines. Archaeology has in this sense always been inter-disciplinary although this strength is often perceived as a problem.

It seems that only one aspect unites all kinds of archaeology and archaeologists (excavators, ethnoarchaeologists, surveyors and theorists), and that is the emphasis on materialities. This is not restricted to artefacts *per se* but materiality in a wide sense (material culture and other things), and raises inevitably the questions of the

relation between archaeology, anthropology, and ethno-archaeology and the use of analogies in knowledge production. These topics have always been crucial in the construction of models and fictions in archaeology, and especially evident in ethnoarchaeology.

The outline of the book

The present book focuses on the importance of materialities in archaeological knowledge production and their role in past and contemporary society. In the current state of post-disciplinary sciences we argue that it is important to put even more stress on archaeology as *the* discipline which studies material culture or the structuring agency of materiality in general. Material culture studies are the totality of approaches to all kinds of materiality and the interaction with, and influence on, humans, and vice-versa. In other words, it is the study of the social world with an emphasis on constrains and possibilities created by material factors; material culture is the medium through which human interaction and socialisation takes place. The emphasis on material culture has not been thoroughly elaborated for two reasons. On the one hand, despite the Marxist basis of much anthropological works, it is a paradox that very little attention has been paid to the material constrains and possibilities. Material culture has been, with some notable exceptions such as Department of Anthropology at University College London, a neglected area of research within mainstream anthropology. On the other hand, despite the fact that archaeologists acknowledge that they study material culture, there is a general aversion of defining archaeology as the "study of material culture". The reason for this hesitation is the consequence of transcending the traditional disciplinary borders of archaeology. If archaeology is defined as the "study of material culture", the discipline has to include contemporary material culture which traditional archaeologists claim belong to the realm of anthropology.

Regardless of the terminology, studies of materialities are inter-disciplinary in their very basis. The articles in this book illuminate

the problems and possibilities of material culture as the study object for knowledge production of humans and societies. Approaching the world through material culture studies is an incorporative approach aiming to both transcend and break down disciplinary hindrances. Thus, the aim of this book is to present various approaches to material culture both empirically and theoretically; approaches which combines both present and past dimensions of materiality; agency and structuration of materiality.

The totality of the different articles illuminates parts of the wide range which is covered by the title *Material Culture and Other Things*, and some of the possibilities within an open and incorporative archaeology. Terje Oestigaards opening contribution discusses how and why archaeology has to be defined as "material culture studies" irrespective of various time depths. Through a journey exploring the role of ethnoarchaeology and the relationship between archaeology and anthropology, he argues that not only bridges material culture studies processual and post-processual archaeology, but it incorporates the scientific debate of methodological collectivism and methodological individualism, or the relation between determinism and free will. Hence, by stressing that archaeology is a material culture study, it is possible to study the role materiality plays in the constitution of society both as a constraining mechanism but also as a constructive source and force for social relations, institutions and systems in the past as well as the present.

Cornell's contribution, *Social Identity, the Body and Power,* follows similar lines by addressing issues of social identity and ethnicity in archaeology. He makes some important remarks on these complex topics, pointing at the value of an embodied, but not racist, perspective in such a debate. There is almost a Fanon-like zeal here, asking us not to forget the blood, sweat and tears of human oppression. Cornell opens his inspiring and original argument on discussing the social function of dead bodies. Dead bodies are generally considered sacred, but this inalienability gives the dead a very special role in the social life of the living. Trespassing the rule of the sacred is a recurrent and strong means to impose power and control over subjected social series or groups. Not merely the

presence of the dead body is a strong social message. The absence of the body creates social trauma, and is often accompanied by particular complex rituals or social conflicts, testified by the term "desaparecido", introduced to international jurisprudence by Argentinean law in the aftermath of the horrors of the 1970-s military government. Cornell thus emphasises the Body, both alive and dead, as a major field for social expression and social contest. In the end, he argues, we must always return to the flesh and bone when we discuss social subjection and exploitation.

The intricate and complex relations between material culture (materialities and bodies) and social identity/ethnicity is also the topic of a number other texts of this volume. They differ in their choice of examples but they all seek to find more fruitful ways of dealing with these issues. Interestingly, all of them in one way or another emphasise the importance of materialities.

Gro Kyvik, for instance, argues that material culture shoulders a large responsibility for our personal and collective memory, and that the past is an effective tool for political elites to foster new or legitimate existing ideology. In her article *Prehistoric material culture – Presenting, commemorating, politicising* is the main theme the politicising of prehistory and archaeological monuments to gain political control of the construction of present realities. Through preservation, reconstruction and presentation of archaeological remains selected aspects of the past are commemorated, revitalised and repossessed, or hidden, forgotten and temporarily lost. When regimes undergo rapid and significant changes and traditional power practices are substituted by new practices, crises of legitimacy often occur. Kyvik's paper discusses the developments in the People's Republic of China during the last 50 years, a process that is characterised by rapid but uneven economic growth and a decay of traditional ideological norms and social controls. New political myths are needed to legitimate these developments; changes in archaeological research agenda and in presentation and commemoration of prehistoric material culture are evident whereas diverse prehistoric events are re-evaluated and reinterpreted.

Also Normark's paper, *Discontinuous Maya identities,* criticises the ways in which the concepts of ethnicity and culture are used by both archaeologists and 'indigenous people'. His examples derive from contemporary Mayanist discourse in which he finds an almost cultural-historical view of the past Maya area. In Guatemala, a growing re-vitalizing movement among indigenous people also adopts this view. These people criticize the way how they and their ancestors are described by archaeologists, anthropologists and the tourist industry. This critique basically reflects a negative version of the one non-indigenous Mayanists use. The Maya-movement emphasizes an essential Maya culture and ethnicity, rarely affected by "external" contacts. This standpoint is, however, quite easily refuted. Normark illustrates the differences between now and then by various ways of looking at ancient people's identities in iconography, which clearly are different from those embraced by contemporary peoples.

Normark argues that the modernist constructed concepts of "culture" and "ethnicity" need to be abandoned. Instead, he turns to materialities, emphasizing a non-humanocentric view of the past. An artifact in his view is seen as isolated from the past human agents and as such it has no cultural or ethnical significance. It is rather a polyagent, which is a material or an immaterial "thing" that has the capability to affect a causal milieu. This milieu is the contemporary discourse concerning the antagonism between archaeologists and indigenous movement. The artifacts are our only remains of the past identities the ancient people may have had and as such they only reflect discontinuity rather than continuity.

Jørgen Johannessen also discusses ethnicity in his paper: *Operational Ethnicity - Serial practice and materiality*. Johannessen criticises e.g. Siân Jones' and other archaeologist's definitions of ethnicity because of their lack of operational validity. Essentially, Johannessen argues that the traditional concept of ethnicity is a hollow term similar to the point made in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale: *The Emperor's New Suit*. Everyone think that it must be something to it. However, in the end it is basically an illusion. Instead he finds a promising way of

discussing ethnicity-like issues in archaeology by utilize elements from Jean Paul Sartre's concept of ***serialilty***. By focusing on executed action and materiality it is in Johannessen's opinion possible to develop Cornell and Fahlander's notion of ***structuring positivities*** as a dynamic, flexible term that may serve as a substitute to ethnicity. The concept of structuring positivity is in one sense a prolongation of Sartres' concept of serialiality, which seeks to illustrate regularities in social practice and materialities.

Both Normarks and Johannesens interesting papers question the idea of social continuity and the idea of culture or ethnic group as something static 'thingy' in a Durkheimian sense. This conception is the topic of Fahlanders and Forslunds contributions. Fahlander discusses how, or if, cross-cultural analogies may be justified in archaeological analysis. The issue was intensely debated during the 60s, 70s and early 80s, but went into oblivion in the late 80s; this despite that the main questions never were satisfactory answered. Fahlander argues that the familiarity with the past that some archaeologists experience is merely a mosaic of elements derived from a colonized periphery. The structural similarities between different 'traditional peoples' of today originate from long term homogenisation processes, colonial administration and regional interaction, rather than being something pristine from the past. Fahlanders conclusion is harsh, but inescapable: To stick with a constructed ethnographical record, or the illusion of the homogeneous ethnic group, will only preserve a dull view of prehistory, not to mention its androcentric and Eurocentric implications. Instead of advocating just another plea for 'caution' in the use of analogies and cross-cultural references, Fahlander stresses that we rather ought to expand our horizons and also include inspiration from *any* contemporary social practices as well as pure fictionary elements of popular culture. Furthermore, Fahlander argues that the archaeological record, i.e. the material traces of practice, often contains more information than we generally use. To find new and improved ways of extracting social information from material record is thus regarded as a most prominent task for 21st century archaeology.

Forslund also discusses issues of cultural comparability in his paper *MRT confidential.* As the title suggests, Forslund's concerns are the phenomena of Middle Range Theory (MRT). Forslund argues that although the fundamentals of MRT very well may be used by post-processualists, a continuance of the term by the followers of this approach is impossible due to opinionated aspects. MRT suffers from a bad reputation simply because of its close connection to the founder of processual Archaeology: Lewis Binford. Forslund chooses not to take sides in this debate as he is himself ambiguous towards the term, but his paper offers a valuable contribution that clarifies the debate and unwraps the mystery of MRT.

Despite the great differences in generation, institutional location, geopolitical locale etc, is it interesting to note that all articles of this volume find resort in the study of material culture and other things, rather than the traditional way of employing ideas from anthropology and sociology. It seems that material culture studies as a branch or mode of inquiry that naturally belongs to archaeology (if we use the traditional disciplinary label), but the advantage with the post-disciplinary stance is that it opens up the field to anyone and everyone who may have contributions to the study of humans and societies, both in the past and the present.

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The World as Artefact – Archaeology as Material Culture Studies

Terje Oestigaard

Firstly, ethnoarchaeology gave rise to both the processual and the post-processual paradigm in archaeology (Tilley 1989). In processual archaeology "ethno-archaeology" was intended to be a fresh solution to archaeology's methodological crises. Paradoxically, it was the variation in the ethnographic record which gave rise to the notions of cross cultural laws, which also undermined its own basis, and gave rise to its counterpart – the post-processual archaeology (Hodder 1982a, b, c). Traditionally, "ethnoarchaeology" has, on the one hand, been the sub-discipline which aimed to bridge archaeology and anthropology, and on the other hand, it has been seen as a methodological tool providing analogies and interpretations. The relationship between archaeology and anthropology is nevertheless debated, and the extreme positions are represented by, on the one hand Binford's well known characteristic of "archaeology as anthropology" (Binford 1962), and on the other hand, Clarke's equally well know statement that "archaeology is archaeology is archaeology" (Clarke 1968:13). These two traditions have continued in various forms. Secondly, a central topic in archaeology is the relation between culture and nature(materiality) which includes the debate of methodological collectivism and methodological individualism.

Within post-modernism the dogma of mind's superiority of matter has been forced to its extreme; there is nothing but language. When social scientists have acknowledged nature as a relevant aspect in social constructions, it has most often been approached as a unified entity – as one thing – The Nature. I aim to illuminate the interrelatedness of culture and nature not as opposing categories but as different interacting spheres of humans and materiality. Thus, I will give a historical introduction to ethnoarchaeology and the relation between archaeology and anthropology, and then analyse the paradigms of archaeology from the perspectives of methodological collectivism or individualism, and finally, I will explore the concept of material culture studies as a successor of ethnoarchaeology bridging processual and post-processual archaeology.

Chris Gosden claims that "all archaeology today is postcolonial" (Gosden 2001:241), and he even states that "ethnoarchaeology is immoral, in that we have no justification for using the present of one society simply to interpret the past of another" (Gosden 1999:9). David van Reybrouck (2000) has given a critical and historical discussion of the importance of contextual ethnoarchaeology. Ethnoarchaeology is often associated with the heydays of processualism, but the sub-discipline had a vital role in the early post-processual writing. "Ethnoarchaeology" is a combination of two disciplines: archaeology which is techniques for recovering and recording material remains of culture, and ethnography which is the study of human behaviour and social organization in living societies (Haaland 1988:130). The specific aim has been to understand the processes between the artefacts and the cultural environment they are produced within (Haaland 1977:1). Most of the early contextual archaeologists were involved in ethnoarchaeological research. Among others, Hodder (1982b) studied in Baringo in Kenya, Miller (1985) in India, but also studies of mortuary practices in Britain (Pearson 1982) and a comparison between Swedish and English beer cans (Shanks & Tilley 1992) were conducted. Thus, there was a change in "ethnographic

archaeology" which stressed that "ethnographic analogies" do not only refer to *other cultures*' analogies but encompasses also the scientists' world of reference (Podgorny 2000:19). To sum up; "If British ethnoarchaeology was largely contextual, contextual archaeology was also largely ethnoarchaeological" (Reybrouck 2000:41). As a reaction to processual archaeology, the primary aim of the early post-processual archaeology was to see how symbols were negotiated and manipulated in social contexts – how they were *symbols in action*. Hodder argued that "the main response to the new questions has naturally been to turn to ethnoarchaeology" (Hodder 1982d:14).

As with all other archaeological practices, there are no agreements what "ethnoarchaeology" is or how it is possible to combine archaeology and anthropology. There are numerous definitions of ethnoarchaeology, and Nicholas & Kramer in their *Ethnoarchaeology in Action* refer to twelve different approaches to ethnoarchaeology (Nicholas & Kramer 2001:12). Kleindienst & Watson (1956) called it "action archaeology" and Gould (1974) used the term "living archaeology". One definition of ethnoarchaeology is that it is "neither a theory nor a method, but a research strategy embodying a range of approaches to understanding the relationships of material culture to culture as a whole, both in a living context and as it enters the archaeological record exploiting such understandings in order to inform archaeological concepts and to improve interpretation […it is] the ethnographic study of living cultures from archaeological perspectives (Nicholas & Kramer 2001:2). Despite the importance of ethnoarchaeology in the early days of contextual or post-processual archaeology, its decline in the 1990s was a result of three parallel agendas; a rhetorical, a theoretical and a political one. Rhetorically, "there was no longer a need to draw upon such ethnoarchaeologcial and modern material culture studies" because "those already convinced by the new approach did not need any further examples from the present, while those still sceptical wanted to see how such an alternative perspective might improve an understanding of the past itself" (Reybrouck 2000:44).

Theoretically, post-processual archaeology found its inspiration from hermeneutics and post-structuralism rather than anthropology, emphasising "reading of text" without drawing parallels to contemporary case studies. Politically, post-structuralism claimed the absolute authority of the text – open for multiple readings – but nothing were outside the text (ibid:45). Implied in an ethnoarchaeology practice was a cross-cultural comparison and an inherent belief in generalisation, and this position became increasingly problematic in post-processual discourse; "…this new theoretical course limited the role of ethnoarchaeology: this could only show *that* material culture played an active role, not *which* one; *that* it was socially constructed, not *how* exactly in particular cases" (ibid.).

Paul Bahn advocates a general attitude in his *Bluff your way in archaeology* that "Ethnoarchaeology…[is] an excellent means of getting an exotic adventure holiday in a remote location…After figuring out what you think is going on with the use and discard of objects (you should never stay around long enough to master the language) you return to your desk and use these brief studies to make sweeping generalisations about what people in the past and in totally different environments must have done" (Bahn 1989:52-53). Although this attitude is presented ironic and humoristic, it represents quite fairly the attitude traditional archaeologists has towards ethnoarchaeology and analogies in general. Thus, the hidden prejudices have had consequences for archaeology. The critics of ethnoarchaeology address not necessarily the ethnographic study in itself (although the majority of traditional archaeologists prefer that such studies are conducted by anthropologists rather than being an integrated part of archaeology). The main controversies have been *on which methodological criteria* it is possible to *transfer knowledge* from one context to another. I partly agree in Gosden's statement that ethnoarchaeology is immoral if the present of one society simply is used *only* to interpret the past of another (Gosden 1999:9). Implicit in this practice is a colonial notion that the present indigenous culture is only relevant *in relation to* something else; a prehistoric

society. However, hardly any ethnoarchaeological studies are conducted with this purpose, and most often it is the critics of ethnoarchaeology who demand ethnoarchaeologists to demonstrate the "archaeological" relevance of an ethnographic study: ethnoarchaeologists themselves are most often confident with their emphasis on material culture. Each study has its relevance in its own right, but it may also be a source for inspiration for other studies. In this regard, it is the traditional archaeologists by their exclusive archaeology who maintain a colonial attitude and practice.

In this light, Gosden's comment that "ethnoarchaeology is immoral, in that we have no justification for using the present of one society simply to interpret the past of another" (Gosden 1999:9) cannot be restricted on methodological grounds to ethnoarchaeology alone. Epistemologially, the same problem persists regardless of whether one uses ethnographic data, sociological data and theories (Bourdieu, Giddens, etc), philosphical studies or even urban approaches. Regardless of who favours which position, the problem is the same: The past cannot be reconstructed by a process of sympathetic imagination and without any kinds of controls; interpretations which are based on loose analogies, blurred distinctions between argument and assumption and a rampant use of untested generalizations (Trigger 1995:455).

The four decade long debate of the relation between archaeology and anthropology has not always been constructive. The solution is perhaps to abandon the term "ethnoarchaeology" but not material culture studies, and seek a third way emphasising materiality in a broad sense. Although both analogical reasoning and ethnoarchaeology might be difficult to defend on – or reduce to – methodological criteria, these practices and processes are inevitably connected and necessary to any kind of interpretative archaeology. Answers to the question "what is archaeology?" cannot be found in normative definitions because they are more about legitimacy and power to include or exclude colleagues than scientific arguments regarding the actual practice. I will focus on

what archaeologists actually do (Clarke 1973) and make a synthesis of the field of archaeology and its materialised object of study. "Every academic discipline is grounded in ontological and epistemological axioms that allow knowable *objects* of inquiry, and *how* they are to be known, to be taken for granted as the bedrock of disciplinary reality" (Jenkins 1998:4). As in most post-modern human sciences there are no agreements of the disciplinary bedrock in archaeology, and the totality of archaeological disagreements and diversities is the point of departure which leads to the conclusion that logically *the world as artefact* is the archaeological object for study. *Material culture* is the uniting feature combining and relating all the different practices together.

Definitions of archaeology and archaeological practices

Different definitions of the ultimate goals of archaeology have significant implications for what is considered as archaeological activities (Trigger 1994:371). David Clarke defined archaeology as such: "The aims of archaeology are of course the sum of the aims of archaeologists and prehistorians in general. Consequently, there are as many different aims in archaeology as there are archaeologists" (Clarke 1968:20). He points out that on certain occasions the variety of aims and interpretations is a strength since no single view or interpretation can ever represent the whole "truth". Hence, one should encourage studies of archaeological problems from as many differently approaches as possible. But on other occasions, Clarke argues, the variety of aims and interpretations may also be a grave weakness (Clarke 1968:21). If there is no overall consensus of what archaeology is, the problem then becomes "how do we do archaeology at all" (Hodder 1994:4)? Different archaeologists do different archaeology.

Matthew Johnson discusses four current approaches to archaeology in *Archaeological Theory* (Johnson 1999:177pp). Archaeologists have different emphasises in their practices, and the different aspects and approached can schematically be summarised: Firstly, the *scientific* aspects of archaeology as

emphasised by Binford (1987). Secondly, the *discoursive* approach as stressed by Shanks and Tilley (1992) where they argue that theory is thoroughly subjective. Thirdly, the *consensus* approach advocated by Renfrew and Bahn (1994:473) as a "cognitive processual" synthesis in the 1990s, which is supposed to unite the best of the processual and post-processual thoughts. Finally, the *plurality* of approaches and interpretations as celebrated by Hodder (1991). Common for all these authors and approaches to archaeology is disputes of the criteria for accepting or rejecting hypotheses or interpretations, or with other words; what the disciplinary or scientific aspects of archaeology are within an academic community. The lack of agreement is problematic, but as Hodder notes another place, there is at least some indications of moves forward "despite the enormous gaps and disagreements about fundamentals, and despite the evidence that archaeological theorists are trapped in separate non-communicating discourses" (Hodder 2001:10-11). He emphasises the increased engagement with other disciplines and the entry of archaeology into wider debates as important fields for archaeology in the future (ibid).

The reasons why archaeology is in this current state of discrepancy needs more attention. Rorty argues that "what philosophers have described as the universal desire for truth is better described as the universal desire for justification" (Rorty 2000:2), not in Popper's belief of an objective truth (Popper 1995) because a criteria differing truth and justification is that which is in between the unrecognisable and the recognisable; "We shall never know for sure whether a given belief is true, but we can be sure that nobody is presently able to summon up any residual objections to it, that everybody agrees that it ought to be held" (Rorty 2000:2). Such an approach in archaeology would probably have been labelled as "processual" and designated by post-processual archaeologists to Binford and his companions. The reason is, in the word of Ernest Gellner, "Primitive man has lived twice: once in and for himself, and the second time for us, in our reconstructions" (Gellner 1988:23). Our knowledge reflects the present conditions under which the constructions are made.

Knowledge of the past and the reality of the past are two completely separate entities (Holtorf 1998:94-95). The challenge for archaeologists is to re-construct past constructions.

Material culture and materiality

The role of ethnoarchaeology as *material culture studies* as an integral part of archaeology has hardly been criticised – simply because material culture is parts of the bedrock in the discipline. Nevertheless, "If we were to attempt to create a material culture discipline we would probably find some resistance from both archaeologists and museum workers, who may not wish to cross boundaries and have to ascribe to yet another set of constraints and definitions" (Miller & Tilley 1996:7). The paradox is that while material culture studies lack disciplinary foundation and have the advantage of being un-disciplined (ibid), any definition of "archaeology" includes, and is based on, material culture. Bahn's critical (or ironical) comment of ethnoarchaeology is in stark contrast to his dictionary definition of "archaeology", which is "the study of the past through the systematic recovery and analysis of MATERIAL CULTURE. The primary aims of the discipline are to recover, describe and classify this material, to describe the form and behaviour of past societies, and finally to understand the reasons for this behaviour" (Bahn 1992:28). He gives three main primary aims of archaeology, but if he by this definition also indicates the order or succession in the progress whereby one starts with excavation, classifying the material, etc, this may equal Hawke's ladder of reliability and interpretative process (Hawke 1954). Post-processual archaeology has eloquently demolished such a successive interpretative ladder of progress. Archaeology aims to study the relation between materiality and humans because material culture not merely reflects culture but it also actively constitutes it (Hodder 1982b).

Daniel Miller called for "an independent discipline of material culture" (Miller 1987:112). Material culture study is a discipline concerned with all aspects of the relationship between the material

and the social. It strives to overcome the logistical constraints of any discipline. The aim is to model the complex nature of the interaction between social strategies, artefactual variability, and material culture (Miller 1985:4). Miller & Tilley's definition of material culture studies does not differ much from Nicholas & Kramer's definition of ethnoarchaeology – the aims of these approaches to material culture are the same: " The study of material culture may be most broadly defined as the investigation of the relationship between people and things irrespective of time and space. The perspective adopted may be global or local, concerned with the past or present, or the mediation between the two" (Miller & Tilley 1996:5).

It is important that the most fruitful definition of artefact in this sense is a very wide one. "Artefacts are a means by which we give form to, and come to an understanding of, ourselves, others, or abstractions such as the nation or the modern" (Miller 1994:397). "The concept of the artefact is best defined in the broadest terms. *It is little point in attempting to distinguish systematically between a natural world and an artefactual one* […]" (Miller 1994:398, my emphasis). The main characteristic of materiality is its physicality, and "to study material culture is to consider the implications of the materiality of form for the cultural process" (ibid:400). Defined broadly, *the world is an artefact* and the archaeological object for investigation. Logically, the life-world people live in must be included in archaeological analysis because otherwise one would not grasp the relevant variables for an understanding of how material culture actively constitutes cultures, human perceptions and the world they live in.

The post-processual archaeologists' emphasis on landscape analysis is an approach to incorporate the material world people inhabit and live in. Landscape, environment, nature, space or other words designate the physical surroundings or the world humans live in, but different meanings and schools of thought are associated with the various terms. "Landscape" is a black-box category, but it often refers to the meaning imputed by local people on their physical and cultural surroundings. Painters

introduced the term in the English vocabulary in the late sixteenth century as a technical term. Thus, "landscape" has originally connotations to "scenery" or picturesque images. The cognitive, cultural and representional aspects are in the foreground, and the actors are somehow outside the landscape (Hirsch 1995). Whereas "environment" often implies notions of "constrains", "landscape" refers to notions of "constructions". There are therefore implicit hierarchies implied in the various concepts. "Space" is in archaeology a neutral category, and as such it does not denote any particular meaning. But as Godelier notes, the very concept of "space" is social because space is distributed among communities which exploit territories or appropriate natural resources (Godelier 1988:55). "Nature" is untamed and controlling humans, "environment" is a contested field of relations between man and nature where humans most often are the inferior part, and "landscape" designates the culturally conquered surroundings by man. The point of departure in archaeology is "that…monuments took over the significance of important places in the landscape and brought them under control" (Bradley 2000:17). Humans built monuments and therefore natural places have a significance in people's *minds* (ibid:35). Man conquers Nature.

The opposite approach is the historical materialism in Marxism whereby people are determined and subdued to external forces, modes of production or material conditions, which includes Nature. Engels writes on the subject that "The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure […] From this point of view, the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insights into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange" (Engels 1970). Marx himself writes in 1859 in his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* on the basis of his analysis of society: "In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely

relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. *It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness*" (Marx 1970: 20-21, my emphasis). Marx reckoned the problem with the contradiction between determinism and free will, and he tried to solve this problem by *dialectic materialism*. Dialectic materialism approaches society as containing both progressive and conservative variables. It rejects both a mechanistic materialism (which reduces ideas to matter) and an idealist dialectic (which reduces matter to ideas). In the Marxist theory of history, the ideal and the material are opposites but nevertheless constitute a unity. Marx emphasised that within this unity the material is primary. Due to the contradictions and the conflicts between the opposites there is always a historical process and constant change. Dialectic materialism is therefore a synthesis of dialectic idealism by Hegel and the mechanical materialism presented by Feuerbach (Lenin 1982). This relates to the scientific debate of methodological collectivism or methodological individualism – the difference between determinism and free will.

Methodological collectivism or individualism – an archaeological approach

Methodological collectivism and individualism are two ideal types of historical explanation; the first is holistic and the latter is individualistic. The first principle states that human behaviour can be explained by being deduced from a) macroscopic laws which apply to the social system as a whole, and b) descriptions of the positions or functions of the individual within the whole. The latter principle states that events and processes should be deduced from a) principles governing the behaviour of acting individuals, and b) descriptions of their situations (Watkins 1973:88). Methodological collectivists start with society or the whole from which the individual's behaviour is deduced from; methodological individuals start with the acting individual from which society or

social units are deduced from (Gilje & Grimen 2001). Methodological individualism is the doctrine that all social phenomena are in principle explicable in ways that only involve individuals and their properties, goals, believes and actions. Thus, methodological individualism is a form of reductionism.

Methodological collectivism, on the other hand, assumes that there are supra-individual entities that are prior to individuals in the explanatory order. In Marx's philosophy of history humanity appears as a collective subject, but there are also elements of methodological individualism in Marx' thoughts (Elster 1987:5-7). Marx believed that history was directed towards a goal: the communist society, but the functional explanations of beneficial consequences for agents tended toward methodological individualism (ibid: 8-29).

Materialism defines reality as a form of "matter. "An idealist is one who denies ontological reality to matter; a materialist to mind" (Gorman 1982:20). The main question and controversy is whether Marxism emancipates or enslave human behaviour. Processual archaeology in its extreme version represents a methodological collectivism whereas its counter-reaction, the post-processual archaeology, in its extreme version represents a methodological individualism. "It is argued by the processual school in archaeology that there are systems so basic in nature that culture and individuals are powerless to divert them. This is a trend towards determinism…There is a close link between discarding notions of cultural belief and of the individual" (Hodder 1994:7). All materialist Marxists define subjectivity impersonally and freedom as realisations of objective laws (Gorman 1982:57), and hence the neo-Marxist reaction within post-processual archaeology.

New archaeology adapted parts of neo-evolutionism as developed by Leslie White and Julian Steward. These approaches represented vulgar materialism because human behaviour where more or less shaped by non-human constraints (Trigger 1994:292). It has been a truism in cultural ecology that "culture" is man's means of adaptation to environment but this is

problematic for two reasons. On the one hand, if culture is systems of symbols which man expose upon an external world, then the environment upon which it is exposed must be empty or without significance; meaning is thoroughly culturally constructed. On the other hand, if culture is a means of adaptation, and environment is in a state of flux devoid of form and meaning prior to the ordering through cultural categories, then logically culture is adaptation to nothing at all (Ingold 1992:39). Nature in itself is a world without meaning and culture is framework not for perceiving the world but for the *interpretations* of it (ibid:52-53).

Culture was problematic for these ecologists, and Steward wrote once "what to do about this cultural factor in ecological studies has raised many methodological difficulties?" (Steward 1955:31). One of the first who used the neo-evolutionism in archaeology was Meggers (1960). She rewrote White's law (1949:390-391) that *Culture = Energy x Technology*.

Since archaeologists work with small-scale societies the formula *Culture = Environment x Technology* would, according to Meggers, enable the archaeologists to reconstruct prehistoric societies. Binford's "Archaeology as anthropology" (Binford 1962) is normally seen as the paradigmatic break and the start of processual archaeology, and he saw culture as man's extrasomatic means of adaptation. Determinism, system-thinking, environment and cross-cultural laws were some of the characteristics of processual archaeology. This school of thought might be characterised as materialist and methodological collectivist because "what emerges is an eschatological materialism in which human consciousness plays no significant role" (Trigger 1981:151). Hodder says that by "materialist approaches [I mean] those that infer cultural meanings from the relationship between people and their environment. Within such a framework the ideas in people's minds can be predicted from their economy, technology, social and material production…By idealist I mean any approach which accepts that there is some component of human action which is not predictable from a material base, but

which comes from the human mind or from culture in some sense" (Hodder 1994:19).

This definition of materialism is too narrow because even the slightest hint of some component of human actions not determined by nature is seen as an idealist approach. This rhetorical stance has to be seen in light of the early post-processeulists' need to distinguish themselves from the processualists giving the impression that everyone which were not vulgar materialists were in fact post-processualists and idealists. The extreme methodological individualism is advocated by Jon Elster's somehow paradoxical conclusion in *The Cement of Society* that "There are no societies, only individuals who interact with each other" (Elster 1989:248). Most researchers aim to combine culture and nature, as Godelier says; "human being…do not just live in society, they *produce society in order to live*" (Godelier 1988:1, my emphasis). The contextual approach in the early post-processual archaeology emphasised that "Societies are not purposive, but individual agents are…*Positioned subjects* [who] *manipulate material culture as a resource and as a sign system in order to create and transform relations of power and domination*. Determinism is avoided since it is recognised that in concrete situations contingent situations are found and structures of meaning and domination are gradually restructured" (Hodder 1994:9, my emphasis).

With a methodological individualism as the scientific anchoring, archaeology as a discipline gains new areas of investigation. "If archaeology is anything, it is the study of material culture as a manifestation of structured symbolic practices meaningfully constituted and situated in relation to the social" (Tilley 1989:188). In post-processual archaeology there is an emphasis on the active individual whereby the "agents actively using material culture needs to be considered, that there is a relationship between structure and practice, and that social change is historical and contingent" (Preucel & Hodder 1996:7). Despite the emphasis on structure and agency, free-floating sign systems and the autonomy of human agents have been the basic axioms in post-processual archaeology. The diacritical linguistic

sign consists of a union of two facets or components, the ”signifier” and the ”signified”. Within the conception of a sign there exists no direct relationship with reality because the relationship between the signifier and the signified is entirely arbitrary or a matter of convention. Meaning resides in a system of relationships between signs and not in the signs themselves. Therefore, a sign or symbol considered in isolation would be meaningless, and one has to work contextually (Tilley 1989:186). The problem is that ”meaning is context-bound but context is boundless” (Culler 1982:123). The multiple interpretations in archaeology have shown that it is difficult to demarcate the context.

The problem with archaeology is “the maelstrom of conflicting interpretations”, Hodder argues, because “the past matters but to different people in different ways” (Hodder 1998:124). Thus, when ethnoarchaeology has been criticised on methodological (and logical) grounds, a similar critic of the free floating sign systems whereby any interpretation is a good interpretation, should be equally criticised on methodological (and logical) grounds. The solution to this debate is that strictly methodological criteria in interpretative archaeology is difficult to establish, whether it relates to the use of ethnographic knowledge or signifying meaning by other means. However, since any methodological criteria can be challenged, the “anything goes” (Feyerabend 1993) attitude in post-processeual archaeology is more a consequence than an intention. Shanks & Tilley emphasised what they called call “resistance” between material culture in the transformation to archaeological text (Shanks & Tilley 1989:5). The “material resistance” would not allow any kind of interpretation. What this “material resistance” implied was never thoroughly elaborated, probably because it would implied restrictions on human behaviour, and all such limitation on possible human actions were rejected. The individual agent had free will and manipulated the social environment by a complex symbolic world. But it is this “material resistance” that is the point of departure for a discussion of what “archaeology” is, and the

role of material culture. Schematically it is possible to distinguish between vulgar processualism and post-processualism as two opposing poles. Most archaeologists are, and were, some place in the middle. However, this third way is not sufficient elaborated from a material culture perspective.

Processual archaeology		Post-processual archaeology
Methodological collectivism		Methodological individualism
Materialism		Idealism
Determinism		Free will
Cross-cultural laws	⟷	Arbitrary relation between signifier and signified
Man = animal + culture		Man is constructed through language and material culture
Nature		Society
Objective		Subjective
Science		Discourse

Fig. 1. Archaeology and methodological collectivism and individualism.

The processual archaeology's determinism enabled a "scientific" approach. Since man is predictable according to cross-cultural laws, these universalisms were possible to deduce from middle range theory. Individualism and human's free will in post-processual archaeology resulted in non-predictability and cultural specific studies. The lack of predictability in the study of humans resulted in accusation of non-science or pseudo-science by the processualists. The limits of cultural elaboration are not solved by a method, because the human sciences are "ontological" in the broad sense of a concern with human existence (Obeyesekere 1990:104). Theories in human sciences are ontological in their basis because the human sciences are about human beings and being human (ibid.). The differences between the processualism and post-processualism are ontologically a debate of the human

nature where the former is negative and the latter is positive. The post-processual ontology is freed from determinism and materialism. This ontological success has its epistemological and methodological price (Sørgaard 2001:45). It has been difficult within the post-processual tradition to argue why archaeology is an academic discipline and what the scientific aspects of the discipline are. Archaeology as a social discipline studying humans and being human has benefited from the post-processual ontology. Man's unlimited possibilities are, nevertheless, empirically unjustified because there are both social and material restrictions in this world. Trigger wants to overcome the distinction between methodological collectivism and individualism by advocating "a comprehensive theory to explain human behaviour and material culture must synthesize the understandings of cultural ecology and cognitive anthropology" (Trigger 2000:368). There are some hints in post-processual archaeology that the environment is an important part of material culture (e.g. Hodder 1989), but they are rear. The materiality of artefacts defined broadly limits possible actions, and directs certain types of behaviour in a certain environment.

Archaeology and worldmaking – the world as artefact

In *Physics*, Aristotle was the first to distinguish between natural objects and things such as artefacts that are made by man. Nature is a kind of source and cause of change belonging primarily to, and of itself, and not by virtue of concurrence. Things which are made, on the other hand, are not the source themselves of the making. They have an external source in something else (Aristotle 1970:23). According to Aristotle, "nature is twofold, nature as matter and nature as form, and the latter is an end, and everything else is for the end, the cause as that for which must be the latter" (ibid:41). The intricate relation between nature and artefacts is not obvious. A human being cannot exist without society, but a society cannot exist without individuals. Maurice Godelier, among others, has emphasised the intricate interaction

between man and nature which is unique for *homo sapiens* compared to other animals. "*Human beings have a history because they transform nature*" (Godelier 1988:1). This ability to change their relations with nature by transforming nature itself is special for humans as beings (ibid:2). In this regard, Godelier makes some clarifications regarding modifications of nature. Firstly, there are some spheres which are outside the direct sway of humankind but still ceases to effect it, for instance the climate, the nature of the subsoil etc. Secondly, a part of nature is transformed by human intervention indirectly through for instance stockbreeding, slash and burn agriculture, etc. Thirdly, there is the part of nature which is directly transformed by humans by domestic activities etc. Finally, there is the part of nature which are modified by humans into tools or artefacts. Tools and equipments function as external organs extending the react of the human body. "Tools, weapons, monuments and objects of every sort are the material supports for a mode of social life" (ibid:4). Artefacts or tools can either be used directly or modified from bone, stone, wood, etc. "The boundary between nature and culture, the distinction between the material and the mental, tend to…dissolve once we approach that part of nature which is directly subordinated to humanity – that is, produced or reproduced by it (domestic animals and plants, tools, weapons, clothes). Although external to us this nature is not external to culture, society or history" (Godelier 1988:4-5).

Humans must attain knowledge and in some instances control the outer materiality: "To adapt oneself is to submit to constrains, to take them into account, in order to amplify their positive and attenuate their negative effects…none [other species than humans] is capable of assuming conscious and social control of part of the objective conditions of its existence" (ibid.). Adaptation is a way whereby humans are acting upon nature, transforming it and appropriating its resources (ibid:28). "The social perception of an environment consists not only of more or less exact representations of the constraints upon the functioning of technical and economic systems, but also of value judgements and

phantasmic believes. An environment has always imaginary aspects" (ibid:35). Analysing the most material aspects of social realities – the productive forces available within a society to act upon nature – consists of two interwoven components: the material element (tools including humans themselves) and the mental element (representations of nature, rules of governance etc) (ibid:150). "The symbolic element in the labour process constitutes a social reality every bit as real as material actions upon nature; but its purpose, its raison d'être and its internal organisation constitute a set of mental realities arising from though that interprets the world's hidden order and organises action on the forces controlling it" (Godelier 1988:150). The mental cannot be set up against matter because it involves the brain. An idea is reality although an impalpable one (ibid:151). "Every division of labour receives its *material content* from the existing productive forces, and its *social form* from relations of production" (ibid:229).

With some few exceptions, the negligence of an explicit emphasis of materiality as a separate field defining archaeology's subject has had theoretically negative consequences for archaeology. The time dimension is always incorporated in any kind of materiality. Materiality always exists, but in various forms to various times. Materiality is modified by people, made into artefacts, reused and remade, and given new meanings in an endless chain of re-negotiations. The world we live in is material – the world is an artefact – we conceptualise it, modify it, construct new constructions – to live is to participate into an endless series of material modifications of worlds that are already made. All materiality is old and new at the same time, but different phases of the material modifications or man-made constructions may have a specific origin and date. By including the total sphere of relations of materiality into the analysis, logically, archaeologists studying humans in past and present contexts have to analyse the premises for behaviour and action. Phenomenology aims to approach such problems from an intersubjective perspective. Phenomenology is beyond or before all distinctions between realism and idealism

(Schutz 1971:101). "The phenomenologist…does not have to do with the objects themselves; he is interested in their *meaning*, as it is constituted by the activities of our mind" (Schutz 1971:115). Schutz defines Life-World or the World of everyday life as "the total sphere of experiences of an individual which is circumscribed by the objects, persons, and events encountered in the pursuit of the pragmatic objectives of living. It is a "world" in which a person is "wide-a-awake," and which asserts itself as the "paramount reality" of his life" (Schutz 1970:320).

"The many stuffs – matter, energy, waves, phenomena – that worlds are made of are made along with the worlds. But made from what? Not from nothing, after all, but from other worlds. Worldmaking as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is remaking" (Goodman 1978:6). A world is an artefact (Goodman & Elgin 1988:53). The life-world is a universe of significations to us (Schutz 1971:133). Man is *animal symbolicum* (Cassirer 1945), and as Hacking argues, we 'make up people' in a stronger sense than we 'make up' the world because "we remake the world, but we make up people" (Hacking 1984:124). "If there is but one world, it embraces a multiplicity of contrasting aspects; if there are many worlds, the collection of them all is one. The one world may be taken as many, or the many world taken as one; whether one or many depends on the way of taking" (Goodman 1978:2).

Consciousness is always consciousness about something, and the forms of consciousness are connected to experiences (Schutz 1970:5). The problem is how the manifold of private interpretations of the relative neutral conception of the world makes up a common worldview. The members of a group must share a certain numbers of believes about the world, but they must also share standardised expressions and formulations when applying or explaining these views. This becomes a collective self-interpretation (Schutz 1970:17). Intersubjectivity as a point of departure is un-problematic because "the individual takes the existence of others for granted" (ibid:31). The "world of daily life" means the intersubjective world which existed long before an

individual's birth. It was experienced and interpreted by our predecessors as an organised world (ibid:72). The world of my daily life is in no way my private world only, in so far it is from the very outset an inter-subjective one – it is a common world to all of us (ibid:163)."The world of everyday life is the scene and also the object of our actions and interactions. We have to *dominate* it and we have to *change* it in order to realize the purposes which we pursue within it among our fellow-men. Thus, *we work and operate not only within but upon the world*" (ibid, my emphasis). We are always into the process of worldmaking. This includes the prehistoric people or those who lived in the past periods we study. The concept of the life-world combines the various aspects; the actors on the social scene experience the world they live in as both of nature and culture, not as a private one but as an inter-subjective one.

When humans create their world and world-views, it is process of close and distant horizons possible to interfere with and manipulate in accordance to personal aims and wishes. Schutz distinguish between "world-within-everyday-reach" (Schutz 1971:306), where its counterpart is the "world-outside-everyday-reach" (Kyvik 2002a, 2002b). The world view is the picture people themselves have of the way things in share actually are, their concept of nature, of society, of self (Geertz 1973:127). The "everyday" experience and world is within reach and possible to change by the actor, and this is the most intimidate world as artefact. What the actual world is, as perceived by the actor, will vary but the "world-within-everyday-reach" is the daily world which creates *habitus*. The "world-outside-everyday-reach" and the "experience-distant" is outside the sphere of everyday influence. In material terms, the world "near" is perceived as possible to manipulate and modify whereas the world "distant" is seen as stable and permanent. The materiality of the distant world is more resisting than the "world-within-everyday-reach" which is modified and used in the daily life. Together these spheres define the world as an artefact.

The archaeological object – defining the discipline

Defining archaeology from a material point of view where the world is an artefact includes four different interacting spheres or fields of mutually dependence of each other (fig.2): 1) the past, 2) the present, 3) nature/materiality, and 4) culture. These four spheres define 5) material culture and archaeology as an academic discipline. All archaeology is material culture studies that consist of these five spheres. An emphasis on one or several of these spheres defines archaeological sub-disciplines such as contract/excavation archaeology, environmental archaeology, theoretical archaeology, etc. The emphasis on either of these spheres may have political and strategic aims within research communities, but the bedrock of archaeology as a study of material culture consists nonetheless of the totality of these interacting spheres. The common feature for all sub-disciplines of archaeology is the study of material culture.

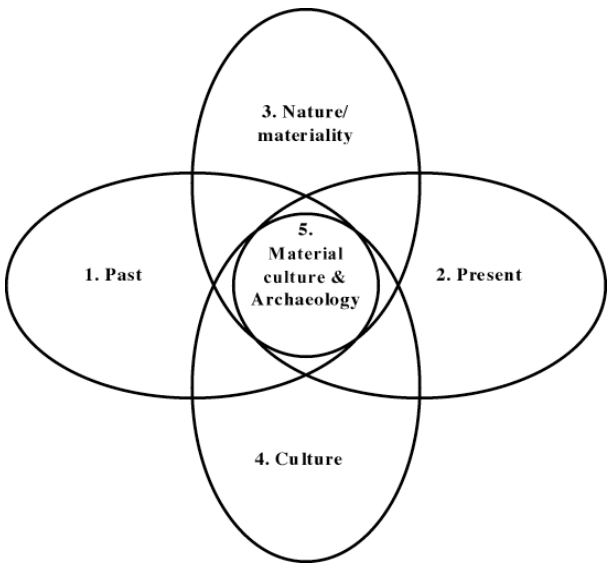

Fig. 2. Different interacting spheres defining archaeology's study object.

Firstly, the past sphere is what most people associate with archaeology. The long time spans and the knowledge production of ancient, forgotten or re-discovered societies and people is one of the main objectives of the discipline. Societies prior to, or without, written sources, belong to one special group of inquiries in archaeology. Material culture as a set of empirical data and evidences is one characteristics of archaeology, which enables interpretations of the past. The past dimension of archaeology has many facets. Excavation and contract archaeology are structured around and define archaeology through the scientific method of excavation and documentation of artefacts, monuments, settlements, etc. Archaeology defined from this perspective is then a method which provide data for analysis of prehistoric societies. Typology, chronology, and ordering of the material objects into series and museum work have a central place in archaeology. This is often the most common work for archaeologists employed in positions defined by cultural heritage laws. But, an emphasis on only the objects themselves is, however, an artefact fetishism and not archaeology as an academic discipline (Miller 1998). Material culture is the basis for constructions and re-constructions of ancient societies and processes, and even though most archaeologists are not re-constructing past societies and processes, this is the aim. The past is a foreign country (Lowenthal 1985), and the aim of archaeology is to analyse the past as it really was for the people that lived in the various time periods; the past as the past for itself as an indigenous society which has disappeared but is re-discovered through excavation.

Secondly, the past dimension of archaeology is problematic because all archaeology is a contemporary scientific practice. There is no direct access to the past even though the artefacts represent real people that did real things. Even though archaeology presents itself as a discipline mainly concerned with the past, all its activities are in the present. Our research horizon is inevitably restricted to our current knowledge, which we use when inferring processes and societies in the past. Moreover, all material culture and artefacts are contemporary even though their

origin might be several thousand years ago. A 2000 year old artefact may have been used for two millennia or only some few days ago. An artefact is old and new at the same time. There are different phases of use, and each of these stages is of archaeological relevance. It is therefore no simple past but a present past, a present future, and a present present (Moore 1995:53). All kinds of materiality have projections and trajectories from the past through the present into the future. The past exists in the present. Archaeology may also try "not so much to reconstruct what once was, but to make sense of the past from a viewpoint of today" (Holtorf 2000:166). This raises the question whether or not it is necessary or possible to get the original meaning of the past (Shanks & Hodder 1995:30). Monuments and objects were important for prehistoric man, but they are also a part of the contemporary landscape which we give meaning to, and hence, of importance to us.

Thirdly, materiality and nature. The negligence of acknowledging archaeology as a discipline studying materiality and material culture is a paradox. Post-processual archaeology's positive ontology focusing on the individuality of man and his free will has lead parts of this tradition into a denial of physical restrictions where the arbitrary relation between signifier and signified has enabled man's conquer of the "outer" world through his culture or use of symbols. Nature or materiality in a broad sense are nevertheless of uttermost importance in archaeology and the analysis of humans for several reasons. The materiality or the physicality of the artefact and monuments is what separates these constructions from purely mental constructions. The process of modification of materiality is a cultural and social process. Modification is a product and result of organised labour and knowledge which create societies and hierarchies. The *resistance* of materiality represent deep and long structures in society which structure human agency. Language has not such a kind of resistance as materiality. Nature, the environment and ecological constraints are structuring and limiting man's rationale choices and possible actions. A dessert, forest or mountain environment

make both possibilities and restriction on human behaviour. The real world is a premise giver when humans are constructing their life-worlds. Landscape analysis is an attempt to approach the exterior surroundings without turning to methodological collectivism and determinism. But landscape is not man's arbitrary relation to the environment, and the symbolic world is intimately connected to the real physical, economical and ecological world.

Fourthly, culture. Childe said "man makes himself" (Childe 1936). Archaeology is as any social and human science concerned with culture. From Tylor's anthropological definition of "culture or Civilization" as "taken in its widest ethnographic sense, [it] is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor 1871[1968]), social studies have aimed to study all facets of humans and human mankind. Archaeology is now exception, rather the contrary, because each field of inquiry other social and human disciplines study can archaeology, at least in theory, study in any ancient culture and with various time depths. The early agenda of processual archaeology as opposed to the traditional culture-historical archaeology was studying the same subjects as anthropology (Binford 1962). Although the majority of archaeologists were concerned with typology and chronology, they proclaimed that their works were pre-requires for social analyses. Cultural analysis and synthesises of past societies based on material culture were then as it is now one of the core objects in archaeology. The development of social theories explaining the relation between material patterns and human beings and their social and cultural practices is therefore another core activity of archaeology.

Finally, these four spheres define archaeology which logically is a broad material culture study. "Material culture studies derive their importance from this continual simultaneity between the artefact as the form of natural materials whose nature we continually experience through practices, and also as the form through which we continually experience the very particular

nature of our social order" (Miller 1987:105). Material culture and archaeology consists of the past, the present, nature/materiality and culture. "Material culture is as important, and as fundamental, to the constitution of the social world as language" (Tilley 1996:4). Material culture is therefore the only uniting feature which logically combines all spheres of archaeology if archaeology is what archaeologists do. Moreover, archaeology as a discipline is inevitable forced to study material culture, and consequently materiality as materiality is the spinal core of research. The focus on materiality and material culture has several consequences. Material culture studies as *studies* are always conducted in the present. Material culture has always a time depth, regardless of whether the things or monuments are covered by layers of sediments, which enables excavations, or ancient monuments in use today, which people confer new meaning to in various contexts. The time depth of materiality is a unique entrance into a little investigated social world: the material world.

The relationship between time and space is especially close (Miller 1987:121). Spatial and temporal positions will potentially signify the amount of time elapsed since it was created. Fashionable objects signify the present – they are always doomed to become unfashionable with the movement of time: that is why it is fashion. Change becomes a means which reinforces the stability of the social system within which it is operating (Miller 1987:124-126). Archaeology *cannot* be restricted to only studies of material culture which is *not in use anymore*, or material culture that is only revealed or re-discovered by excavation. Rather the contrary, past material culture still in use have a spatial history and time depth which relics of broken traditions cannot show, and this fact has major implication for the understanding of the of material culture in society. The problem with a scientific or analogical reasoning does not exists any more because all material culture studies is a hermeneutic knowledge production whereby one inevitably transfer knowledge from one field to another. The past, the present and the future are facets or aspects of materiality, not separate entities which can be seen in isolation.

The complexity of archaeology as a discipline due to the constitution of these four interacting spheres highlights the necessity theoretical stances and meta-theory. Nevertheless, even 10-15 years after the post-processual paradigm's emphasise on the importance of theory, the majority of archaeologists was neither interested nor up-dated on contemporary theory (Champion 1991, Thomas 1995). There are, however, tendencies that epistemological, ontological and philosophical debates within the discipline seem to increase (Kyvik 2001), especially among younger archaeologists. Answers to the questions "why" and "how" we are doing archaeology is of uttermost importance in an archaeological theory of science because otherwise the discipline will be a "non-thinking activity" (Karlsson 1998:14).

"Social and cultural anthropology has the whole of humanity as its field of interest, and tries to understand the connections between the various aspects of our existence…anthropology tries to account for the social and cultural variation in the world" (Eriksen 1995:1). This necessitates conceptualisations and understandings of "the similarities between social systems and human relationships… anthropology is about how different people can be, but it also tries to find out in what sense it can be said that all humans have something in common" (ibid). Archaeology has the same aim as anthropology, but includes past and prehistoric people and societies as well. Thus, archaeology as material culture studies consists of the past, the present, nature/materiality and culture. Material culture studies are the only uniting approach which logically combines all spheres of archaeology if archaeology is what archaeologists do. The most complete archaeology is therefore, per definition, a broad material culture study. Archaeology with an emphasis on excavated material objects becomes hence a sub-discipline of material culture studies in general, and not vice-versa. This approach does not solve the problems of analogical reasoning, but it puts the methodological responsibility on the archaeologists working with excavated material in a prehistoric setting. Archaeologists working with contemporary material culture cannot or should not

legitimate or justify other archaeologists' use of an ethnographic present. Therefore, returning to Gosden's claim that "ethnoarchaeology is immoral, in that we have no justification for using the present of one society simply to interpret the past of another" (Gosden 1999:9), we may now turn the coin regarding matters of morality; it is those who study excavated material remains who may use present ethnographic data only for the purpose of interpreting the past, not those who study contemporary material culture. Consequently, it is the traditional archaeologists who keep on the postcolonial practice (cf. Gosden 2001:241), but a broad range of material culture studies may limit this colonial tradition. Finally, material culture studies as a post-disciplinary science incorporate both methodological collectivism and methodological individualism in their approaches, and as such bridge processual and post-processual archaeologies, not on their own premises but as an acknowledgement of the role materiality plays in the construction and constitution of humans and societies. Materiality matters; it both constrains and creates human behaviour, and since all materiality has various time-dimensions, archaeology as material culture studies is irrespective of the time depth of the artefacts or materiality which are the objects for study.

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Social Identity, the Body, and Power

Per Cornell

to be dead - isn´t this what Sartrean philosophy taught us?
- is to be in the hands of the living
Rosi Braidotti (1991:6)

Dead bodies in action

CASE A. Let us start with a story about a dead body, a mummy, as a point of departure. This is a quotation from Pachacuti, a chronicler writing about the ancient Inka state in 1600 (1995:107, 36v.).

> As I say, the body of Huaina cápac came with great pompa, as if he was alive, and the people made their reverences. After putting it in the grave with his ancestors, they declare general crying for his death /.../ And more I say: that inti Topa Cusihualpa made his mother Rahua Occlo marry with the dead body to legitimate himself and [this was carried out] by the ministers of the temple They marry him out of fear and so Topa Cusihualpa calls himself legitimate son of Huaina capac.[1]

[1] Translation by the author and María Clara Medina. Original, according to Carlos Araníbar: "como digo que el cuerpo de guayna capac entra con gran aparato como si estuuiera bibo y Por la gente al Cuerpo muerto de guayna capac hazia Reue[a] y despues de aber metido en la sepultura de sus passados pregona el llanto general por su muerte /.../ [y mas digo que el] inti topa cusi vallpa haze cassar a su madre raua ocllo con el cuerpo difu[o] p[a] q los ligitimase y por los

This seems indeed strange and confusing. Somebody is getting married to a dead body! What's really going on here? For our purpose, it is not so very important if Pachacuti is historically accurate. The important thing is that this has been written. Similar stories occur in other chronicles, but they are not common. Still, the idea itself, so strange to us, has been vivid to some people, and among them to Pachacuti. The chroniclers telling stories about the old Inka often discuss particular utilisation of dead bodies. Dead bodies of individuals with the typical Cuzco dress were also placed by the Inkas on high mountaintops in different parts of the Andes, probably in order to mark a symbolic command over these mountains. More important still, the mummies of the dead Inka were kept in particular temples, and were taken out each year in connection with certain festivities. It has even been claimed that the dead bodies represented certain corporate groups within the upper classes, claiming rights to particular resources in the name of the deceased (Conrad & Demarest 1984, Patterson 1985, 1986a, 1986b). Before the Spaniards took Cuzco, these mummies were brought away. Finally, however, the Spaniards succeeded to locate the bodies, but after this they disappeared and have never more been identified.

Inalienable resources

The dead body, the corpse, evidently constitutes a very particular value, and the use of these bodies certainly merits much more consideration, particularly as a social phenomenon. We are here dealing with items that could hardly circulate in a generalised exchange system. There were, if we can believe Pachacuti, some possibility to transfer their value, but this must have been a very special case. In general we talk about values that belong to closed groups, values not intended for circulation, in the imagery of particular social groups. Indeed, we may treat this as a case of inalienable resources, discussed quite a lot in recent anthropology

menistros del templo Los cassa de temor y assi topa cuci gualpa les intitula por hijo ligitº de guayna capac /.../."

(cf. Godelier 1999, Weiner 1994, Bloch 1989). Godelier makes an important point of the concept of inalienable resources. He departs from an extended criticism of Mauss and Lévi-Strauss. Mauss did mention the existence of objects that were not to be exchanged in a famous footnote, which Weiner has brought to the general attention of anthropologists. This point was entirely left behind by Lévi-Strauss, who simply made exchange (and only exchange) the basis of his model of human society. Godelier, on the other hand, prefers to focus on the "forgotten" aspect, the inalienable resource.

In an ethnographic case study on the Baruya in New Guinea, he points at the existence of a sacred object, a small basket with secret content, called a kwaimatnie, kept by ritual masters on the behalf of the male population of certain clans. This small basket cannot be exchanged, but it gives particular values to its keeper. It turns out that some of the objects in the basket are considered to be typically female things, and that they are thought to have been stolen from the women in a remote, ancient time. The rest are things said to have been received directly from the gods. By keeping these objects, the males believe they guarantee their dominance over women, but also over clans not having this sacred basket.

While there are many spheres of exchange among the Baruya, and between the Baruya and other groups and individuals, these particular sacred objects cannot be exchanged. The basket is only used in male initiation rituals, to which women are not allowed. Godelier particularly stresses the materialised character of this social phenomenon: the sacred is truly present only in its material form (1999: 137). The particular value of these objects in part resides, according to Godelier, in that they are said to have a non-human origin, that they have been produced by other beings.

Bloch (1989), discussing Madagascar has made a similar case. Among the Merina, most things are open to exchange by value equivalents. But some things are not. What are not included in exchange are certain kinship obligations, and these are materialised in the megalithic tomb of the family group. The tomb is believed to guarantee new generations, to stand for new life.

Bloch argues that this is a kind of fetishism, similar to the belief in much industrial society that capital in itself can produce more capital (cf. Jameson 1998: 136-189).

But back to the inalienable resource. It is about making things sacred, holy, and to place them, as a phenomenon, in a position of non-alienability. The tombs among the Merina are sacred, and in this case a palpable inalienable resource for the extended kingroup; the kwaimatnie is similarly inalienable to the men of certain Baruya clans. Truly, these possessions play a major role as a basis for establishing social power. Weiner summarised this point excellently, departing from her renewed analysis of the Trobriand case:

> Because the ownership of inalienable possessions establishes difference, ownership attracts other kinds of wealth. When a Trobriander keeps a famous kula shell, other players seek him out, bestowing upon him other bounty in an attempt to make him into partner, just as feudal lords through the authority vested in their estates attracted merchants, peasants, and monks. It is not accidental that inalienable possessions represent the oldest economic classification in the world (Weiner 1992: 43).

Most certainly there are different kinds of inalienable resources, and not all of them play a major role in representing and amassing power. But Weiner still has a major point here. Taking certain valuable items or bodies into possession is really a major issue when identities are polarised.

This question is very much palpable when it comes to cultural heritage issues. The museum collections Europe of the 19th century amassed cultural valuables from other parts, in particular from the colonies (Clifford 1988; Greenblatt 1991). When these objects came from "sacred" contexts they were particularly valued in Europe. Plundering the colonies or the ex-colonies of their sacred cultural heritage has been - and to some extent continues to be - big business, under the pretext of making science, or just frankly as an economic enterprise. But when these objects are put out to the world market, sold as antiquities, this is not only a

profitable activity: it also demonstrates victory, the destruction of the sacred. Now, this argument needs some adjustment. In general terms, the sacred inalienable objects are to be kept within a limited social group. But there are also many ceremonies or rituals incorporating the destruction or riddance of sacrificial objects. Küchler discussed an intriguing example from Oceania, in which certain sacred objects were destroyed in ritual or made to disappear through giving them away to "foreign" systems of exchange. Particular malanggan figures from the New Ireland Island were systematically given away to European collectors and museums. Thus, in this and similar cases, our museums are a depository of "not-wanted" goods from other places (Küchler 1997).

> But which objects are "most" inalienable? The social imagery varies and posits different kinds of exchange-ability and non-exchange-ability. What is almost always inalienable is the human body.

The dead body as sacred icon

Let us return to the body as sacred icon. We could take examples from many parts of our world, from Europe, Asia, or elsewhere, but let us choose some examples from South America, from the Republic of Argentina.

The way to approach mummies differs. In Egypt, the mummies themselves are only to a limited extent available to the general public at the museums. In Argentina, on the other hand, they are central objects, of particular interest to most visitors. The recent debate on the ownership of mummies from high altitudes in the province of Salta, in which National Geographic, the Province of Salta, and the Indian Council of South America all claim the primary rights to the dead bodies demonstrates how important these bodies are in the social imagery, not least in Argentina. The complex reburial issue is a hot issue all around the globe, and there is a growing bibliography on the subject (Simpson 1996:228-242)

To understand this current situation, some historical examples from Argentina, pertaining to the use of human bodies will be illustrative. During the hard and bloody civil wars of the 19th century, following the liberation of the former Spanish colony, bodies played a major symbolic role. Different family groups of the élite fought a bitter and harsh battle against each other. Capturing the body, particularly the head, was considered a major victory. The head of Marco Avellaneda, to quote just one example, was placed to rot at the central plaza of Tucuman, to demonstrate the complete victory won by his enemies. So it became important not to expose the dead body to an enemy. When the opponents to the Governor of Buenos Aires, the Unitarians, saw their leader Juan Lavalle die his followers, led by the Gorriti family, took his body and run to Bolivia, travelling many hundreds of miles with the dead body (Cornell & Medina 2000).

Another more recent story is that of an extraordinary icon: the dead body of Eva Peron, created, stolen, disputed and recovered (Medina 2000; Cornell & Medina 2000). It has been said that the dead usually does not rest in peace in Argentina[2]: actually, death is never definitive. It was in Argentina that the figure of disappeared, desaparecido, for the first time was defined as a juridical term. A particularly difficult case is the identity of those that were born in prison and taken away from their parents. In general the parents were eventually killed in prison, and the children adopted by families with no relation to the kin of the parents. Now, these children are torn between, on one hand, their interest in their biological parents and their kin (whose identity until recently was unknown, or even rests unknown to them), and on the other hand, their new adoption parents.

In the light of this type of events, the collection of hundreds and hundreds of Indian skulls in Argentinean museums around 1900 becomes symbolically significant. These skulls came from old pre-Hispanic cemeteries, in part, but were also, as has been

[2] Los muertos argentinos no suelen descansar en paz, 1998. Reuters News Agency Buenos Aires, *CNN,* Sunday 24th of May.

demonstrated by Peralta (1997) and others, collected directly from individuals recently killed during the military campaigns against the Indians of Patagonia. The anthropological collector participated in the military campaign, prepared at collecting bodies of dead Indians. Most certainly the formal argument for the collection was purely "scientific", but in a very direct sense these skulls at the museum demonstrated the complete control by the new nation-state over the Indian enemy.

Identity and the (manipulated) body

It is not necessary, I think, to recur to Merleau-Pontys phenomenology in order to understand the importance of our bodies for social identity. While traditional philosophy of the Cartesian vein stipulated a strong division between mind and matter, recent discussion tends to avoid this particular type of dualism. Laing followed this line of discussion in The Divided Self, in which the embodied person see her or his mind and body as a working unit, while the unemebodied construe a mental split between body and self, which at the extreme point lead to schizophrenia (1965: 66-93). He reports of a patient who had been attacked and hit violently by robbers in a dark alley during the night, and in the description of the same patient the assailants "could only beat me up but they could do me no real harm" (1965: 68). According to Laing, the body is felt as an external object by an "unembodied" individual (1965: 69). Laing points out that there are many people refer to the embodied self as desirable, but that there is also a lot of philosophies positing the unembodied as a desirable condition. He refers particularly to Socrates (1965: 66-68) who is said to have stated that even if the body decayed or was attacked; this produced no anxiety, since the body was not connected to his self. While the body-self split may seem a way to avoid anxiety, it actually may produce a set of problems that may eventually cause a disconnection to the social environment. This disconnection is indeed, in some religions, the ultimate goal of a body-self split. If, however, we consider social life as desirable, the embodied self posits integral body-mind

individuals as subjects. Much poststructuralist discussion departs from the body: the material body is the basic referent of Foucault's philosophy, for example. Similarly, feminism usually departs from basic notions of mind-matter bodies. Braidotti, for example, stresses corporeality, and points at the similarity between post-structuralism and feminism on this point (Braidotti 1991: 76-97 and 209-273; cf. Butler 1993).

> In a new form of "corporeal materialism", the body is seen as an inter-face, a threshold, a field of intersection of material and symbolic forces; it is a construction that transforms and capitalises on energies of a heterogeneous and discontinuous nature. The body is not an essence and therefore not an anatomical destiny: it is one's primary location in the world, one's primary situation in reality. As a consequence, in the radical feminist philosophies of sexual difference, the strategy of repossessing the body aims at elaborating alternative forms of knowledge and representation of the subject. The embodied nature of subjectivity is posited so as to allow for the radical subversion of culture (Braidotti 1991: 219).

Bodies are always marked by their social and physical existence. In Britain, for example, there is a direct relation between body stature and social class (Coole 1996). This is probably a general tendency: in most cases the body tells a lot about the social origin of an individual, whether we like it or not. From Latin America we know that this is a very immediate reality. It is considered "bad" in large segments of the Argentinean middle class to have a body similar to peasants from Bolivia. People having such bodies are often, with disrespect, called "bolitas", a word referring to ball or serotum.

Bodies are also manipulated in different ways. In most cases the manipulation is relatively gentle, but it means that the body seldom corresponds directly to a "pure" natural state. People transform their bodies in many different small ways, and may even expose themselves to body surgery, in order to correspond a little more to some ideal body image, much "a la mode" in certain social groups in our time. And, finally, the body is decorated in

different ways. Not only the European "punk" generation decorated their bodies. At present, body tattoo and piercing is very popular. Finally, but not least important, we dress up in different ways. Our dress says a great deal about what we do and who we can be identified with. In general terms, it is common that the body plays an important part as a metaphor in cosmological systems (Tilley 1999: 37-40). According to C. Hugh-Jones, at the Milk River in Amazonia, the House is conceived both as an androgyn human body (with head, anus etc.), and at the same time in its entirety as a womb (1979: 235-274). S. High-Jones develops this metaphor discussion, linking the Milk River House to the human body in complex patterns (Hugh Jones, S 1993 and 1995).

In archaeology, there has been some discussion on the concept of the body, but generally oriented at the body metaphor in general terms (Yates 1993; Tilley 1999: 37-40), and less at the imagery of the body itself. Yates tended to stress the discursive level, and even referred to the incorporeal body (1993: 61), and actually avoided the mind-matter connection. Another archaeologist, Julian Thomas, however, does stress the body as such, discussing the importance of the human body in burials. In the grave "/…/ the key to understanding the metonymic aspect of the symbolic system is that it only functions as a system by virtue of the presence of the body" (Thomas 1991: 38).

Our body is something very much belonging to us as individuals. Even if our social identity changes, or is manifold, as is often the case, our body remains largely the same. Though it may be exposed to a high degree of manipulation (including, at the extreme point, lobotomy or forced sterilisation), a human body is particularly important to us. Not whatever sort of thing can be done with bodies.

There are extreme cases. In Nazi-Germany, the dead body had complex and varied symbolic uses. The foremost Nazi cultural heritage organisation, the Ahnenerbe, organised within the SS, led by Himmler, had a lot of different activities, including large-scale archaeological excavations, direct work at propaganda etc. Traditional scientific approaches were combined with belief in

"black magic" and astrology. Several internationally acclaimed archaeologists participated actively in the work of the Ahnenerbe, in one way or another, for example Hans Reinerth, Herbert Jahnkuhn and Oswald Menghin. Many of them even made research on conquered territories during the war. One particularly strange project, of relevance for our discussion, was the collection of Jewish-Bolshevik Commissar skulls (Taylor 1993: 514-516).

These Jews were selected directly among all the captured Jews, studied by specialised personnel, and finally death was "induced". The heads were preserved intact in a liquid in tin containers. Both the internal documentation of the project and large parts of the collection were preserved at the end of the war. This skull collection resembles to some extent the collection of Indian skulls by museums in Argentina in 1900 (Peralta 1997). There was both a symbolic value, the trophy of the annihilated enemy, and an alleged scientific value. It seems that the idea of the project originated from the researchers, a fact that should make us reflect on our role in society. Scientists may be particularly well equipped to transmit certain basic values of a society (and in this referred case, perverted values).

This example is, I repeat, extreme, and the fact that we understand it as such is important. The body is, still, sacred, and the treatment of it is surrounded by a big deal of rituals, discussed profusely in the anthropological and archaeological literature. It is this particular character, this special type of inalienability that make the body so interesting for a potential enemy, or to a competitor in general. The dead body seldom enters into generalised exchange. It may, in certain situations, be interchanged, referring to medicine or other scientific purposes, or in relation to particular rituals or collections. Skulls have not only entertained a value among people working at medicine, among anthropologists and archaeologists, but also to many religious groups (a well-known example is Franciscan order), in which skulls have been used for meditation. Hamlet (in the popular image of him) is not the only one meditating with a skull.

Still, all these examples refer to special networks of exchange surrounded by special rules. In general, it is not possible to

participate in the exchange of dead bodies. Thus, an enemy or a competitor must steal the body. When the Spaniards took possession of the mummies of the dead Inkas this was a hard blow to the entire Inka organisation. Our social identity can never be disconnected from our body. The ultimate way to attack or to take possession of an identity is to take the body.

Suffice these examples of necrofilia. Let us now turn to some more general questions, to see if this "embodied" discussion has helped us to understand how to address questions of social identity.

Kinship

It is necessary to make a brief discussion of some anthropological discussion on kinship and ethnicity, in order to be able to continue the general argument. In relation to kinship, it was through the pathbreaking studies of Morgan on the Iroquois in the 1860's that it became generally accepted that the ways we reckon kinship varies considerably. The corresponding terminology became the main pre-occupation of anthropologists for several decades. But there has been quite a harsh debate on the general relevance of kinship in anthropology during the last 30 years. While Murdock (1949) more or less equated social structure with kinship analysis, recent anthropological discussion points at the inadequacy of this approach, and at the importance of other factors (e.g. Schneider 1989). In recent discussion it has been insisted that kinship terminology may still be of relevance (Godelier 1998), but alternative approaches are sketched, in which the structural relations are flexible (Hornborg 1998).

While the patriarchal line has often been stressed in relation to descent at the expense of other lines in traditional discussion, recent debate stresses female genealogy (Rivera 1997), and, in more general terms, variable descent lines contemporaneously at work (Bloch 1987). In general terms, it is often rewarding to analyse domestic units, and their relation to other social activities. Kinship may play a role in such cases, but it cannot be taken a priori for granted. In some cases kinship play a relatively limited

role in the domestic frame, urging us to seek alternative terms, such as co-residential group (cf. Wilk & Ashmore 1988; Wilk & Netting 1984; Cornell 1993: 83-92; cf. for a more sociological approach Saradamoni 1992).

Relations of kin, however, regardless they truly correspond to genetic relations or not, do play a large role in human imagery. In creating identity, these bonds often dominate. In the case of the Inka mummy, questions of descent were of major importance. Many other examples could be mentioned. Bourdieu (e.g. 1994) stresses the importance of family bonds, and often points at the role of family strategy in his analysis of power. In some cases, discussed by anthropologists, kin or clan identity cross ethnic lines and seem to have greater strength than ethnic identity (Schlee 1989). Zuñiga (1999) to some extent makes a similar argument, discussing the way the mestize was understood in early colonial America. While blood was used as a main concept in relation to descent, the social origin of the parents was far more important than the genetic origin in defining the status of the individual. Mestize only became an important category when groups of people came to constitute social groups transferring a "mestize" identity.

Embodied approaches to kinship are common in recent anthropology: how to become a person is in focus, and performative action analysed (cf. Battaglia 1995). In general terms, the embodied approach to kinship is interesting in the way it put the corporeal aspect into focus. In this way the body plays a role in creating social bonds, and bear marks of particular ways to understand sexuality, purity, kinship, and descent, including rituals like circumcision, initiation rite cuts etc. The case of Inca mummy referred above is a lifeless body, which still, through particular marks and clothes, represents a social subject. This body is in the hands of the living, and is made to fulfil certain social functions. In this particular case, kinship bonds were searched for and attained by way of taking possession of the body of a deceased Inca.

Ethnicity as identity

The term ethnicity is has many meanings. In the end of the 19th century, ethnic in general had to do with non-European (or non-industrial) phenomena. Still, this use of the word can be found, for example when certain commercial decorative styles, for sale in Europe, are referred to as "ethnic". The general use of the term today is wider, and a Swede as well as a Sami or a Chiriguano are ethnic. Here, I will, for convenience, adhere to this frequent use of the term. In Spanish Latin-America the term etnía is frequently used in the archaeological and historical literature, often referring to Indian polities, but it is important not to confuse that term with ethnicity.

In traditional archaeology, there was a tendency to understand all differences in the material culture of different groups as permanent ethnicity markers. New Archeology, and particularly Binford (e.g. 1965), working in the tradition of Wissler (1914) and other pioneers of the systematic study of material culture in the United States, helped to point at the inadequacy of these postulates. Hodder (1982b) developed this point further, discussing the specific meaning of different parts of material culture. In relation to the question of ethnicity, the anthropologist Barth's classic definition of ethnicity (1956; 1969a and cf. Barth 2000), and the archaeologist Ian Hodder's discussion on symbolism, communication, and social agency (1982a, 1982b), have been particularly rewarding and helped the debate to find new ways, but we are only just starting to understand the problems related to ethnicity.

Barth largely defined ethnicity in terms of social organisation and social efficiency.

> A categorical ascription is an ethnic ascription when it classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, presumptively determined by his origin and background. To the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorise themselves and others for purposes of interaction, they form ethnic groups in this organisational sense (Barth: 1969: 13-14).

It is of some importance to note that Barth believes the social boundary must be in focus when discussing ethnicity, not what he calls "the cultural stuff that it encloses" (1969a: 15). This means that "culture" in general is not the same as ethnicity. Ethnicity is just a marker of the social border. The history of a border is not simultaneously to be seen as the history of a culture in general (1969a: 38). Discussing the Pathans, living on the Pakistan/Afganistan border, Barth lists three social institutions, representing central value orientations, namely conventions on hospitality, the council and the principle of seclusion, which should be ethnic markers. These markers shall, according to Barth relate to "central institutions" of this particular ethnic group (Barth 1969b: 120).

Turning to Hodder, the definition of ethnicity is vague, though it plays a central role in much of his argument about symbols in action. In his famous example from the Baringo district of Kenya, he spoke about a more marked difference in material culture between different ethnic groups in moments of great tension, or "stress situations" as he termed it (Hodder 1982b). In this case, the difference in material culture is particularly marked along the territorial, physical border between two "tribes". Hodder argues that a set of specific differences in material culture can be explained neither by economic adaptation nor by overall degrees of interaction, and interprets them as markers of ethnic identity (Hodder 1977, 1979, 1982b). What is of particular interest in Hodder's discussion is that he links the appearance of ethnic markers to intra-tribal social organisation, namely the internal differentiation of age-sets, and the dominance of old men among the Baringo.

In difference from Barth, Hodder brings little discussion on the content of the ethnic markers as such. He even includes elements that are of low general visibility. The specific ethnic markers are principally defined in not having another more plausible interpretation. Another difference, in relation to Barth, is that Hodder talks about border in a territorial sense, while Barth (1969a: 15) mainly referred to social borders, and considered the territorial border as a secondary phenomenon. It is of interest to

note that other anthropologists working on ethnicity in Kenya have identified some empirical instances where ethnic identity is particularly weak along the territorial border (Osaga 1995). We shall also bear in mind the old discussion of Wissler (1914), in which he found no direct fitting between tribal territories of North America as known in the literature, and the general patterning of material culture.

Barth's discussion certainly fits a large series of cases, and will continue to help in discussing ethnicity, but there are some problems involved. Traditional ethnic terms may correspond to many different types of phenomena. Ethnicity may be about legitimisation of claims for a particular group, and there are often conflicting constructions (Jones 1997: 140). In some instances, ethnicity is used by the elite to legitimate claims on land and labour, as discussed by Brumfiel (1994a and 1994b) for the Aztec case. There are also many examples on non-elite groups using ethnicity as a weapon against oppressors. Stern (1984) has given an illustrating example in demonstrating the use of the Indian community as a weapon against Spanish dominance in Huamanga (Ayacucho) during several centuries (cf. Schramm 1993; Wachtel 1990, for other types of "resistance", including collective "escape" into geographical areas inhospitable to the Spaniards). McGuire & Saitta (1996) have also addressed the relation between local groups and petty "captains" for the Pueblo context.

Ethnicity may also be a largely imposed category. This seems to be the case with 16th century Uro of Bolivia and Peru, a term developed largely in relation to the terminology of taxation (Cornell 1997, 1998b, Wachtel 1990). Ethnic identity is intricate, and individuals have often limited true choice, or lack sufficient contextual information to "choose" their ethnicity. There is always a set of options, but hardly a question of a "free" choice.

Ethnic ascription follows various lines. Discussing early Spanish America Zuñiga discusses body character, profession, language, skills, residence and the network groups in which the individual operates as some variables used for ethnic identity (Zuñiga 1999: 443). Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1969: 230-242)

discussed ranked ethnic groups in 20th century Mexico, and their relation to social class. In this scheme, the ethnic group resembles the French word Etat (as the tiers etat of the French revolution of 1789), the German Stände or the Swedish Stånd (cf. Raum 1996; Mörner 1988; Buckley 1967). The social difference creates visible differences in bodily appearance: and these differences in body stature, colour of skin etc. help to facilitate the identification of these groups. Some of these traits may also be imposed, through strict marriage regulations, for example.

Certain elements are selected and used in order to facilitate identification of different groups. In many cases, identity forms part of such general patterns, and are related to greater processes. Thus, terms like transculturation (inclusion of new elements in an existing culture) and acculturation (large groups moving), used by Rouse (1986: 11-12, 13) for example, or hybridisation (the "mix" of two cultures), a term proposed by García Canclini (1990), are not sufficient. There are structural relations, general patterns, which cannot be left aside or forgotten. These general processes in part relate to greater events and patterns, the so-called global level, but they cannot be explained only by reference to a specific "world-centre" or global patterning in general. It is not possible to understand contemporary South America only by reference to Europe and the United States; it is not possible to explain all Andean social organisations in the 15th century only by reference to Cusco. Another important point is that ethnic groups often co-habit. Though some scholars wish to deny this fact, there is ample evidence of it. For the Andean area, there are several interesting examples (cf. e.g. Murra 1975). Evans-Pritchard, similarly, attested for multiethnic communities discussing the Azande of Africa. In the study in question, he gives the political unit, the kingdom, and a basic function as integrative force (1971:266). He wrote:

> Hundreds of thousands of people of different ethnic origins all jumbled up - the ethnologist in Africa may sometimes sigh for some neat little Polynesian or Melanesian island community! (1971:67).

Perhaps the problem resides in our pre-conceptions. The anthropologist traditionally tended to have the intention to identify "pure" ethnic groups. It is well possible that the pure ethnic group is rather an exception than a rule.

Inalienability, social identity and genealogy

CASE B. Anthropologists and archaeologists often like to tell stories about forms of eating the dead. Endocannibalism, the custom of eating parts of the body of your deceased kin has been reported extensively from South America. Rydén, for example, reported that the Moré mixed pulverised bone of their deceased relatives in beer on ceremonial occasions (Rydén 1942; cf. Linné 1929: 225ff). But there are also other stories on what people do when they wish to get strong. Lévi-Strauss (1955) likes to talk about a practice reported from Amazonia on people eating their ”good enemies”, or what has been called anthropofagia. Metraux (1967) and Viveiros de Castro (1992: 273-305) have extended the argument on this alleged practice of the Tupinamba, and Godelier (1998: 403-404) calls this a practice of "pure affinity". Ego gets strong, establishes his identity and gets a lot of prestige through eating the good enemy. Molinié (1995) calls this type of practice the interiorisation of difference.

What is argumentation about? Boccara (1999) develops a similar argument discussing the Reche-Mapuche or the Reche-Araucans of pre-Hispanic times and early colonial Chile as an example. Boccara explicitly discusses Reche society as characterised by war as a ”fait social total” in the terminology of Mauss. It was a ”Society for war”, according to Boccara (1999: 104). And in these wars, what was of greatest importance was the ”interiorisation of difference” in the sense of ”eating the enemy”. Boccara further stresses the male character of the war, the warriors were men. According to Boccara, the written sources state that the Indians even considered the great soldiers were ”extremely male” (1999: 100). In this society, the Other was a necessity, Boccara argues, a necessity for ethnogenesis, for the creation of the identity of the ethnic group. What calls our

attention is that if we accept Boccaras argument, by simple logic the ethnogenesis was a product of exclusively male activity. It is interesting to note that Viveiros de Castro has a similar, though somewhat more subtle argument. According to him, among the Tupinamba, men killed people, while women fulfilled a similar (!) function in menstruation and giving birth. "Both women and killers spilled a blood vital for the reproduction of society" (1992: 274).

But there are things that rest to sort out. Even if Boccara is right and there were bands of warriors taking captives and eating them, these men obviously represented themselves in these actions. If their activity corresponds to the term Reche, then Reche is a male corporation. There cannot be a generalised ethnogenesis based on half the population. Further, we know from several studies (e.g. Metraux 1967) that there were many female "shamans" (machi) among the Mapuche, actually there still are. Today most machi are women, they are generally homosexuals, and in some cases transvestites. It is not clear if women always dominated as machi; some authors explain this phenomenon as a late occurrence resulting from the wars of the post-colonial period. The wars of this period were certainly substantially different from earlier periods, but still: if Boccara should be correct, and wars made up the essence of Reche ethnicity, how come that there was no need for female machi during earlier periods? Well, be that as it may. There must be other types of Reche identity, made up by women, and probably a lot of men not making war. Forgetting this aspect is to forget a large part of life. The feminism of difference often insists on establishing the female genealogy (Irigaray 1989; Braidotti 1991; Medina 1998a and 1998b; Rivera 1997); in the case of the Reche-Mapuche this seems to be a particularly urgent issue (for a similar discussion on the Iroqois, cf. Prezzano 1997).

Identity beyond the ethnic

So, then, this question of identities is indeed complex. And what relates to the contemporary situation, there are interesting

patterns seldom discussed by archaeologists. In Argentina there is a sort of official history of the creation of the nation, functioning as a foundation myth, in which the wars against the Indians is a central element. But there are also a lot of other identity-creating phenomena, not immediately resulting from state initiatives. The church does not formally accept the cult to the Deceased Correa (Difunta Correa). But the history of this woman who continued to give milk to her baby through her breast after death is extended over wide areas in the republic of Argentina. Particularly chauffeurs venerate at these local sanctuaries. Along the big highways and roads crossing the country there are small shrines made up largely by tires and flowers. It is a tradition of more than one hundred years. A more recent tradition is shrines to Gilda, a schoolteacher who became a famous cumbia singer, but died in a terrible road accident. Her popularity is rising, and her cult plays an important role in contemporary Argentina, even at a political level.

These examples may help to develop a more refined methodology for addressing pre-Hispanic and early post-conquest social identity. In order to understand the patterning of identity, different particular local histories must be traced, and their varying articulations and transformations when confronted to wider patterns must be analysed in detail. The material culture of NW Argentina from the Period of "Regional Development" (800-1500 A.D.), through the Inka Period (1470-1532) to the Hispano-American Period offers a particularly interesting field for studying transformations in material culture in situations of changing identity. The presence of Inka artefacts, and Inka inspired artefacts, during the Inka period, in different parts of the Andes, is illuminating. Day to day functional artefacts from Cusco occur generally in graves in NW Argentina, attesting for a transformed function or value of these artefacts when entering a new social setting. Some Inka type utility vessels came to be commonplace in NW Argentina, however, and these types dominate during the following Hispano-American period. Some elements of Inka type vessels spread far from the area of Inka presence. Rydén (1937) even reported the use of "Inka" type arybaloid vessels east of the

Andes still during the 20th century. In general terms, the complex and localised ceramic decoration of the regional development period contrasts sharply to what seems to be a more generalised and less decorated ceramics of the Hispano-American Period. The pre-Hispanic Santa María Grave Vessel has been understood as to metaphorically represent dressed human bodies, and there is a clear gender division. Posterior ceramic material does not display gender in the same way, which may be related to major social transformations. Renewed studies of these transformations will certainly help to illuminate some of the problems related to identity, social action, and process.

Multiple identity and the concept of "the other"

Evidently, the discussion above referred to many different types of social identity. In Godelier's discussion on the New Guinea Baruya, identity referred to adult males in certain particular clans. In the discussion on the Inka mummies, we referred to mummies of upper class individuals. In our general discussion, we referred to many other types of identities, such as Bolivian Indian peasants, or contemporaneous European tattoo body identity. Identity seems to be about a lot of different things, but it has often to do, in one way or another, with social power.

Identities have always been, and will always be, fairly complex. To Sartre identity often lives only for short moments. According to him, identity is the "non-justifiable" separation of two individuals having in the immediate future a common destiny (though just for some seconds, waiting for the bus to come). The plurality of the people having the same identity is of little consequence is these particular moments. Identity in this sense means neglecting parts of oneself (Sartre 1960: 400). This Sartrean definition may prove quite useful.

The human body is the basic point of reference. But this body may attain multiple Social Identities. In a general social analysis, social identities overlap. Many anthropologists have stressed this multiplicity of identity. Lowie, for example, discussed the multiple

organisations into which an individual entered among the Crow Indians.

> Thus our Crow comes to be a member of some half-a-dozen well-defined groups. By birth he belongs to a sib, a family and a band. Later, a life-long friendship couples him with Albino-bull; he joins the Fox and subsequently the Lumpwood organisation; and is finally admitted to the religious Tobacco order (1921: 416).

Linton similarly discussed "alternative cultures" within a culture (1936), and many sociologists (e.g. Ziehe 1990; cf. also Spivak 1996b for a different example) have discussed contemporary "subcultures". Postmodern sociology is particularly prone at referring to this multitude of identities, and opposes this to the ideal of "modern rationality" (Bauman 1993). The "globalised" world is supposed to be characterised by fragmentised identity.

Some types of identity groups may have little stability and duration, such as the identity with a particular political party, or a particular youth movement, for example the punks. But other identity groups are fairly stable, and change slowly. Often, questions of Otherness are discussed in relation to this latter type of identity, and terms like kinship or ethnicity used, as discussed above.

Particularly in traditional German philosophy, the Other has often been defined in relation to the One, the identity of self, which not necessarily corresponds to an individual (cf. Medina 1996). The Other is often seen as something scary and dangerous, as discussed by Duby (1995) concerning the European middle age. In the historical meeting with the other, something unknown, our capacity to transcend the differences is put to test. Todorov and Pastor have discussed interestingly the power of understanding partially l'Autre, the Other, referring to the Spanish conquest of Mexico. As they show in their studies on the early European conquerors of America, this process is complex and intricate. Involved in this process are questions of power and politics, destruction and genocide. Hernán Cortés, the conquistador of the Aztec, edited texts that construct an image of his own activities with little correspondence to the actual actions. At the same time,

he was keen at understanding the reality he met among the Aztecs. According to Pastor (1983: 228-229), Cortés had, compared to many of his contemporaries, a high degree of objectivity and analytical clarity in describing the Aztec. As Todorov stresses, the ability to grasp at least partially other traditions, and to incorporate them into your particular system of thought, is a powerful tool (Todorov 1982: 133-135, 256-258; Todorov 1985: 2-5). As Fabian stresses, the Aztec and the Spaniards met at the same time: they did not belong to "different" times (1983: 155). Latour (1987) has extended on this theme in his network analysis. In his analysis, there are centres of calculation, creating networks, "maps" incorporating far-away places, allowing for action at a distance, the exercise of power. Discussing the French discoverer Lapérousse, he concludes:

> who includes and who is included, who localises and who is localised is not a cognitive or a cultural difference: Lapérousse was able to put Sakhalin on a map, but the South Pacific cannibals that stopped his travel put him on their map (Latour 1987: 229).

So, even for Latour the body is a basic referent. Spivak also argues on the individual and her or his right to the body, addressing cases of Sati from India. I do not think I agree all the way with Spivak, but she does put forward a question of great relevance. Interestingly, the vocabulary of Lacan or Sartre is rather different in relation to the term Autre (Other). In this context, the term refers to "the common way to do things", "how people do". Ego is created as a mirror effect in relation to the Other in Lacan.[3]

> The Other is the place were the chain of signifiers is situated which rule everything that may be made present in the subject, it is the field in the living were the subject may appear (Lacan 1973: 185).

[3] My translation. Original: L'Autre est le lieu où se situe la chaîne du signifiant qui commande tout ce qui va pouvoir se présentifier du sujet, c'est le champ de vivant où le sujet a à apparaître.

This way of understanding the Other contrasts, evidently, to the use of the term in Todorov. Both ways are equally valid and useful. But what seems to be of particular interest here is that identity is a social creation, and that identity refers to an external social world. This Other world may be the world in which you were born, but it may also be another Other hitherto unknown to the individual, and the individual may be at least partially transformed through this encounter. Derrida (1967b: 117-228) has touched on this problem, discussing the ethic of Levinas. While Levinas stresses "total" otherness, Derrida stresses the impossibility of the (completely) Other. We live, according to Derrida, in a difference, in a play of differences, the differance. The identities are only passing figures, moving in the play of differences (1967a).

If we accept for the body as a general referent, we may find a way to address this situation. As several feminist theoreticians argue, the world is not just "raw-material", it is "an active material-semiotic actor" (Braidotti 1991: 271). Turning to Sartre, we might argue that the human body might be locked up in the Other, in convention and a given identity. Then, we could perhaps say that by extending the (known) Other we make the opportunities to escape convention better. Then, the (un-known) Other is not an immediate danger as such, but a field of possibilities. But, in order to operate this way, the social border of the (known) Other must be torn down, and redefined according to new parameters, i.e. a new social identity established. By using Other elements of materiality "hidden" in a particular identity (following Sartre's definition of the term) new social totalities ("positive" entities) may be created.

Social subjects and the power of possession

Foucault introduced a structural way to look at power, in which power is the ability to make things happen, and the exercise of power is in focus (cf. Tilley & Miller 1984); but, in this frame, there is no way to possess power. Still, Foucault tended to be

somewhat elastic on this point, and in his book Discipline and Punish he wrote:

> This political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination; but, on the other hand, its constitution as labour power is possible only if it is caught up in a system of subjection (in which need is also a political instrument meticulously prepared, calculated and used); the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body (Foucault 1977: 25-26, cf. original in Foucault 1975).

In this quotation, we see that Foucault discusses questions of economic exploitation, and applies, in part, a Marxist terminology. But still, this is rather an exception, in relation to most of his discussion on power, in which he refers to the need for microstudies of power in structural relations, and generally criticises Marx. JanMohamed (1995) and Spivak (1996a) try to put Marx back into the picture, and demonstrate how Marx fits quite well into Foucault's general discussion, and actually may help to develop microstudies of power.

In order to control people, they must be ordered and classified in one way or another. This type of classification has to do with the creation of social subjects, and their specific identity. The identity of a wage-earning worker is a case in point, in which the social subject in part is defined as a commodity among other commodities, a sort of product that can be allocated and transported like other products. As Marx amply discussed, the entanglement of the capitalist mode of production includes minute analysis of particular elements of the social formation, in particular the character of the commodity. Thus, Marx works both at a micro- and a macro-level; actually, we can say that Marx demonstrated that these concepts are far from satisfactory for social analysis.

The subject of a feudal landlord is another type of social subject created in a network of social relations of power. Many other examples could be quoted, at different levels. Bonfil-Battalla

(1990) has discussed the concept of the Indian as a social category, created by the European conquest. Unifying all Indians in the 16th and 17th centuries was the fact that they had been conquered by the Europeans, and that they must define their identity in relation to their European masters. Thus, being an Indian more or less corresponds to a category like being a slave. Behind or beyond these categories there are varied and complex origins, but by their common historical experience, they are forged together as social subjects. Thus, the creation of social subjects, or "disciplinary" structure, are major elements both to Foucault and Marx. These "social subjects" are, in a sense, productive for given specific historical "rationalities" (i.e. patterns of social organisation, including social exploitation), i.e. they make possible given types of exercise of power.

The major difference between Foucault and Marx resides in the question of power of possession. While there is, at least in theory, no such thing in Foucault, it is major element in Marx' analysis. As JanMohamed (1995: 54-57) argues, there is a problem in Foucault's argument. If power is exercised, it may be so that it is entirely expended while exercised, but if this is so, there will be no structural continuity, which is a necessity in Foucault's model. If we, on the other hand, believe that some part of power remains while power is exercised, this means that power to some extent can be accumulated, or in other words, possessed.

In Marx analysis of capitalism, labour-value help explain how workers are exploited and capital accumulated. But the condition for the workings of this system is that there is a disciplined working-force: thus, Foucault's discussion on this field is highly interesting to a Marxian approach. Conditions of class become particularly important for our analysis (Crompton 1998), and in this analysis, the articulation to varied cultural factors of great relevance (Ortner 1998). Fromm made some efforts to develop such an approach in the term social character, defined as the function that "/.../ internalizes external necessities and thus harness human energy for the task of a given economic and social system" (Fromm 1960: 243). Bourdieu has given interesting empirical illustrations of how class defines questions of taste, for

example (Bourdieu 1979 and 1980), but his methodology is not, according to my opinion, sufficiently strict. In this type of usage, class tends to become too much of a catch all term. Class is defined as just every aspect characterising people belonging to the group in question. This approach makes a strict analysis of the particular correlation of different factors difficult. It cannot be supposed a priori that all factors correlate perfectly, and the variability of correlation is of greatest importance for a more detailed analysis.

But we must, at the same time, identify the points on which value is created and accumulated in different social forms. I believe we can postulate that there are, in each type of social form, fields of accumulation of values, fields of exchange of values, and fields of inalienability. These particular social fields are, in a very direct sense, social creations. Amassing gold in hidden treasures, venerating the land as a basic resource, or accumulating capital, are different ways to treat value in society. Inalienability, or the extremely restricted field of exchange, is a multifaceted feature, which we only begin to understand, and on which we must work much more. There is always a limit to given social rationalities, also in industrial society. Many arch-capitalists, amassing their fortunes by harsh and fierce means, disrespecting cultural traditions, occasionally, when they get old, tend to stop believing in their own abstract capital. They start to invest their money in land or they try to create inalienable institutions. In Sweden the Hallwyll family, who created a gigantic fortune in the latter part of the 19th century, finally invested large parts of their money in a luxurious palace, which eventually, through stipulations in a will, was turned into a museum with strict rules and regulations, based on the idea that nothing should ever be changed (Cassel-Pihl 1979). Keeping the inalienable resource is the way to secure your power and position. It gives you and your name a way to history, to the collective memory, in creating (an imaginary) value not being subject in or to history, a value never fading, a permanent being.

Control of the social subject is a condition for power and controlling the body is the ultimate form of control. Thus,

exposing the body to the will of the competitor or the enemy is a danger. To go back to the mummy, where we started, marrying the mummy opened the way into the inalienable resources of another social group. Within the frame of this specific social rationality, marrying was the only way to get at these powers. Here, questions of gender, class and inalienability work together and illustrate interestingly central fields of social experience.

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Prehistoric Material Culture

Presenting, Commemorating, Politicising

Gro Kyvik

The only past we can know is the one we shape by the questions we ask, and these questions are moulded by the social context we come from. Discourses about the past shape our understanding of the present, and different pre-histories may serve conflicting ideological ends. The past is an effective tool for influential actors to foster new or legitimate and reinforce existing political conditions and power relations. Therefore, perceptions of the past often change when new regimes and power-relations are coming into existence and embark on creating new presents.

Politicising or manipulation of the past to gain political control of the construction of present realities is executed through activating collective processes of "remembering" and "forgetting". In the Freudian model of the mind all memories are potentially intact, and forgetting is never really about loss but merely distortion. Forgetfulness becomes essentially a *failure* of remembering. The predominant view on the relationship between material culture and processes of remembering and forgetting sees objects as supplements or substitutes to memory. Memory is a

reproduction or copy of an original event or experience, and mementoes such as material monuments are mere copies of copies. But perceiving material culture as a supplement or substitute is far too simplistic. Memory can be envisaged without such substitutes, and rather than acting as supplement to our memory, materiality fulfils a basic lack in our experiences. The relationship between remembering and forgetting is not a linear process; it is a struggle or a tension between what is present and what is absent. Material culture shoulders a large responsibility for our personal and collective memory, and materialisation or de-materialisation of events can act to forge memory or facilitate forgetting. Material culture not only recall memories, it also *produces* them (Buchli and Lucas 2001:79-80).

Through preservation, reconstruction and presentation of prehistoric material culture like artefacts, monuments and cultural landscapes, selected aspects of the past are commemorated, revitalised and repossessed, or hidden, forgotten and temporarily lost. A forgotten past is erased as a possible space from which to view the present critically (Dirlik 1996:248), and it is therefore useful in politics: "the major focus [of commemoration] is not the past… but serious matters in the present" (Bodnar 1992:15). Important questions are: To whom does memory and forgetting serve? Who control a society's perceptions of the past and understandings of the present? Where does the cessation of striving for archaeological knowledge end and the suppression of information begin? How are changes in archaeological reasoning connected to changes in political and ideological structures? And what are the consequences of these connections for public presentation and commemoration of archaeological monuments? In this article I strive to enquire into some aspects of these questions and the ideological and political significance of prehistoric material culture. Different illustrative empirical examples, with a main focus on developments in China during the last 50 years, are chosen to demonstrate the theoretical outlines.

Politicised presentation and commemoration of material culture

Archaeological work unfolds in successive stages: Firstly, it is the excitement of discovery followed by excavation and later by academic work of analysis and interpretation. Secondly, it is (hopefully) the creation of a site for presentation and for the public to come and visit, in form of a museum or a reconstruction or arrangement of a monument. In both stages archaeology is vulnerable to pressures emanating from its political and ideological surroundings.

The insight that archaeological research is shaped by the contemporary social context is not new, but despite much post processualist debate on the subject, it has not been applied in a thorough way in research strategies (Härke 1998:19). Interpretations of prehistoric events are often influenced by factors having more to do with the present, and an extreme example is Nazi archaeology and the intimate link between its attitude towards migrations and the contemporary political context. The scholarly foundations for the idea of prehistoric migrations were laid in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. One predominant view on migrationism at the time was the assumption that European civilisation had originated in the north and was spread southward by repeated movements of the "Nordic race".

In the 1930s the Nazis adapted this view for their ideological purposes. The political leaders dictated archaeological attitudes and explanations on prehistoric migrations, and the idea of the adventurous, prehistoric, migrating German came to represent a symbol of German superiority. There was an obvious connection between migrationism and the Nazi political agenda. The cultural superiority of the German race was supposedly demonstrated by the Nordic, Aryan origin of civilisation. The spread of this civilisation by migration of people confirmed two key notions of Nazi ideology: "the genetic basis of culture in the "blood" of peoples and the heroic image of Germany and Germans as *Kulturträger*, "bearers" and distributors of culture" (ibid:22).

The political use of archaeological monuments in South Africa is another example of the intimate relationship between archaeology and the contemporary ideological context. After the democratic election of government in South Africa in 1994, the official list of recognised heritage sites was re-addressed. The state agency for heritage management, the National Monuments Council (NMC), had to change the imbalance in the list of heritage sites declared as National Monuments in terms of the National Monuments Act of 1969. The former list was heavily criticised for neglecting heritage sites representing the prehistory of the indigenous people, and thereby neglecting preservation of historical memory of relevance to the majority of South Africans. Many of the recently declared National Monuments have therefore a markedly different character from those declared during the colonial and apartheid eras. In re-addressing the imbalance of the list there was a tendency to commemorate heritage that are symbols that promote the concept of a new South African identity and nation. The emphasis was put on contemporary rather than ancient sites that often are expressions of the recent political change. There has been a shift in criteria for conservation towards the recognition of sites associated with important events or people, but which have little aesthetic value (Hart and Winter 2001). The practice of heritage management and interpretation, preservation, and presentation of material culture traits, gives us a valuable archaeological record reflecting changes in political ideologies in this century.

Paradigm and power

The close connection between, on the one hand, the development of archaeology as an academic discipline and research-tradition, and on the other hand, simultaneous political and ideological conditions are the outset for discourses about the past and for the politicising of prehistory. This connection can be analysed through "power-paradigm" relations.

The relationship between paradigms and control over intellectual work, or between paradigms and power, is an aspect that are rarely discussed in connection with paradigms and "paradigm crisis" (Dirlik 1996.:244). The concept of paradigm was introduced by Kuhn in his seminal work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962. It first entered the study of the development of natural science and later the development of the social sciences and the humanities. Paradigms refer to scientific achievements that are: "Sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity, [and] sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve" (Kuhn 1962:10).

The relationship between paradigms and scientific communities is, following Kuhn, circular. A Paradigm defines the community, and the community pursues the paradigm. Some examples of scientific practice serve as models for coherent scientific traditions. Research based on shared paradigms is committed to the same scientific rules and standards. Successive paradigms have substantive differences. They tell us different things about the population of the universe and about that population's behaviour. Paradigms are the source of the methods, problem-fields, and standards of solutions accepted by any mature scientific community at any given time. A new paradigm often necessitates a redefinition of the corresponding science (Kuhn 1962:102).

The power of the paradigm is the power that the scientific community holds over the individual scientist. Paradigms are therefore not just models of explanation based on the same scientific rules and standards. They are also expressions of social ideologies within scientific institutions. While Kuhn accounted for the relationship between paradigm and power, he did not account for the relationship between *power and paradigm*: the larger social formation on the one hand, and the community of scientists on the other (Dirlik 1996). Since cultural and ideological institutions cannot be isolated from the broader social context, paradigms also represent ideological and cultural attitudes and social ideas within

the broader context of social relations. Paradigmatic supremacy represents ideological supremacy that expresses power-relations within a context of social relations and ideologies (ibid:244). The kinds of problems scientific communities pursue are subject to extrascientific considerations. And the power relation between politics and science is much more conspicuous for the historian than for the natural scientist.

Educational, cultural and ideological institutions are crucial arenas for the reproduction of power-relations. These institutions are, according to Bourdieu (1977), fields of conflict in which groups seek to gain and maintain positions in social hierarchies. Schools and universities have central roles in transmitting and legitimating power privilege in a symbiotic relation with the state and hence with political conditions. When power-institutions are established as taken-for-granted and become self-regulative, the position of the elite stabilises. In the process of gaining this position the institutions are arenas for social struggles aiming to control understandings of the present, perceptions of the past, and contents of social ideas (ibid:190).

Power and paradigm – a Chinese example

China has witnessed four radical political transitions in the twentieth century: (1) from empire to republic, (2) from republic to the nationalistic regime of Chiang Kai-shek, (3) from Chiang Kai-shek-nationalist to Mao-Zedong-communist regime, and (4) from Maoist communism to the contemporary post-Mao society (Hjellum 1995). Throughout the social struggles following these transitions the relationship between power and paradigm, between the larger social formation and the community of scientists, and between educational institutions and the state, is evident. As shown below, major shifts in Chinese research tradition and agenda succeeds the two latest transitions in political power-relations.

Ill. 1: Mao Zedong (1893-1976) was the leader of the People's Republic of China and first secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from 1943 until his death.

After the transition from Chiang Kai-shek-nationalist to Mao-Zedong-communist regime and the founding of the PRC (People's Republic of China) in 1949, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism became the conceptual framework for the study of Chinese society. Under the leadership of Mao many academic disciplines were condemned as a bourgeois subject and its practitioners as reactionary tools of imperialism. Scientists were victims of major strains on intellectual freedom and several academic departments and institutes where closed down (Stockman 2000). The banning of academic disciplines was part of the attempted revolutionary transformation of Chinese culture. Culture is, according to a

Marxist interpretation, the expression of the dominant class. Consequently, the educational and cultural institutions had to be transformed to prevent them from reproducing the power of the dominant class. The elimination of the cultural hegemony of the ruling classes was required if power was to be transferred to the masses of working people (ibid:12).

At the same time archaeology saw several, and in some respects positive, developments. Numerous discoveries and significant research were carried out, and many achievements were evident compared to the period prior to 1949. Archaeological excavations expanded into every corner of the country, new excavation techniques were adopted, several new archaeological museums and institutes were established, and archaeological literature gained better publication conditions. In addition, a strict antiquity law prohibited export of antiquities and prevented loss of antiquities and ancient remains (Tong 1995:177). The emergence of modern archaeology in western countries can be seen as based on four major developments (Fagan 1994:15-16): 1) the invention of scientific excavation techniques, 2) the use of multidisciplinary approaches to study relationships between people and their environment, 3) the increasing impact of natural science, and 4) the refinement of archaeological theory. Despite the fact that Chinese archaeology underwent many similar developments, Maoist dogmatism caused a theoretical setback in China compared to the theoretical and methodological debates that characterised much of western archaeology at the time (Nelson 1995:4-7).

A new Marxist-Maoist paradigm was defined in archaeology. It is difficult to gain an exact picture of what constituted this paradigm; Chinese archaeologists did not use developments in Marxist archaeology made in foreign countries, and often they did not acknowledged the necessity of discussing theoretical questions or introducing foreign theoretical developments. Therefore, the picture of the paradigm must be drawn basically from examining certain objective pronouncements of some authoritative scholars

(Tong 1995:179-180), and the unilinear evolutionary theory is an important component in these works.

Archaeological research was dominated by dogmatic Marxist theories about the development of human societies, but the use of the unilinear evolutionary theory in China bears only superficial resemblance to the western evolutionist paradigm (ibid). As in western evolutionist accounts of change, human prehistory was comprehended as unfolded in predictable ways along a unilinear sequence from primitive band groups through matrilineal clan to patrilinear clan. Matriarchal tribes would inevitably turn into patriarchal clans and ancient slave states would be followed by feudal society. This pattern was treated as inevitable and self-evident, and required no explanation. What needed explanation was any deviation from the pattern (Nelson 1995:4).

As more and more data accumulated from excavations all over the world, archaeologists realized that they were dealing with very complex problems of culture change over very long periods of time. Western evolutionism developed a great concern for the transitions between stages, and the causes for movement from one stage to the next, as well as discussing both the necessary and incidental characteristics of each level. In China, on the other hand, the differences between the cultural evolutionary levels and the processes of change were theoretically little developed (ibid). This can be explained as a consequence of the political context. The aim of the study of archaeology was to prove a centralist historical development and strengthen the national unity, and new discoveries were explained by the Marxist social developmental theory (Lary 1996:13; Tong 1995:181). During the transition from Maoist communism to the contemporary post-Mao society Chinese archaeology has undergone a new paradigmatic change. The academic disciplines have been liberated and new methods and theoretical approaches have been introduced. One aspect of the latest paradigmatic change is a new regionalist model of interpretation.

Ill. 2.: "The Masses Make History". This picture is one among several created by imprisoned fighters and supporters of the PCP (Communist Party of Peru). Many of the artists were killed in the prison massacres of June 1986 and September 1992.

This model stands in opposition to the centralist model; it empowers the outlying provinces and acknowledges that regional history must provide the basis for regional pride and regional sense of identity. Various parts of China played crucial and mutually interdependent roles in creating the foundation for the Chinese civilization (Falkenhausen 1995:198-200).

Politicised public presentation of material culture in China

The regionalist model of interpretation in China is founded on ideological and political changes, and its consequences are visible in public presentation and commemoration of prehistoric materiality. During the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards incited by Mao destroyed numerous valuable cultural relics and antiquities. This de-materialisation of material culture may be understood as part of an attempt to "reverse history" and diminish

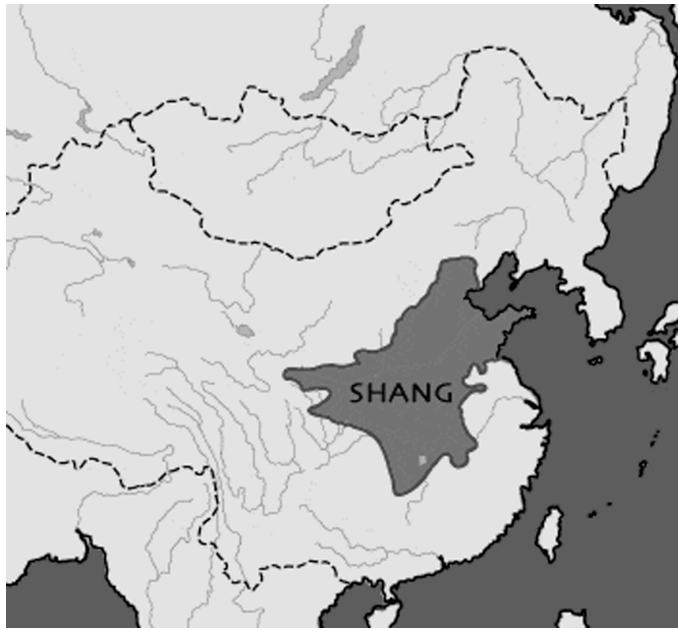
the accomplishments of imperialism and the higher social strata. Archaeologists had to pay special attention to the history of the labouring people who constituted the majority of the population. Emphasising the contribution of this class in history contributed to undermine the elite by ignoring them as the product of the exploiting class (Tong 1995:182). Selected aspects of the past were commemorated whereas other aspects were hidden to promote the communist ideology.

One aspect of Chinas transition to contemporary post-Mao society is a decreasing confidence in the communist ideology. This ideological change effects the perceptions of Chinese prehistory and the manner of display of archaeological monuments to the public. Historical events earlier deemed regressive, are now re-evaluated and reinterpreted. Imperial history is often reinterpreted as a motive force in Chinese modernisation (Tong 1995:182), and Chinas feudal past is revitalised after being undermined by Maoist historical narratives (Anagnost 1994:231).

Present restoration and public representation of archaeological monuments have several objectives. China's past is rediscovered in the context of an emerging market economy. The result is widespread efforts to quickly, and in some cases inaccurately, restore cultural sites for commercial purposes. Tourism represents a significant opportunity for economic growth, and "heritage industry" is a notable part of the tourist opportunity. The display of archaeological sites is being commercialised, and heritage is becoming part of the entertainment industry. Tradition becomes a commodity that is channelled to promote internal tourism and foreign investment (Potter 1997:147; see also Anagnost 1994:231). Simultaneously restoration of monuments can be seen as governed by political attempts to legitimate new power relations and ideological conditions (Lary 1996). Chinese capitalism has abandoned the idea of the national economy as an autonomous unit, and proclaims instead the necessity of internationalisation and globalisation as a condition of development. This has resulted in a new regional consciousness (Dirlik 1996:251-253).

The new regionalist model of interpretation of the past is evident in public presentations of archaeological monuments. In 1983 the tomb of Zhao Mei, the second king of Nanyue, was discovered in what is today the city Guangzhou in Southeast China (Lary 1996). The kingdom of Nanyue was established in 203 B.C. and held power in Lingnan for almost one hundred years. The kingdom is known from the earliest writing of history in China, but details of its history known from historical records were sparse and archaeological discoveries have added a great deal of information on the society. The king's tomb sets the centre of the Nanyue kingdom. The discovery of the tomb was a major happening because for a long time the tomb of the Nanyue king had been searched for. The tomb was intact, and the excavation revealed treasures like a jade burial suit, discs, and a range of bronze objects like cups, beakers and tool. In the innermost chamber of the tomb the king's gold seal were found; a final "proof" that this was the tomb of the second Nanyue king. Soon after the discovery of the tomb, the construction of a museum nearby the tomb where the Great North Gate of Guangzhou once stood started (ibid). Present archaeological works on Nanyue has the research agenda that archaeology can prove important points about the origins of peoples. The focus in Nanyue archaeology on the glories of the indigenous peoples of Lingnan, the earliest precursors of the area, is a consequence of the new regional identity. The effort to make the discoveries in Nanyue available to the public has been object of massive official interest and support. The site is sponsored at the highest level of regional officialdom.

There has been no consideration regarding the cost or the loss of prime land in a city dedicated to commerce. The site has enormous cultural significance because it confirms Lingnans distant and glorious past. Through experience of pride in the kingdom of Nanyue, time is truncated and the past is made to seem very close to the present. 2000 years of history is brought together in a way that makes both ends of this history identify with each other completely (Lary 1996).



Ill. 3. The extension of the Shang dynasty.

The new regional consciousness is also visible in the changed attitude towards the archaeological remains from the Chinese Bronze Age. The legendary "Three Dynasties" of the Bronze Age, the Xia, Shang and Zhou civilizations in ancient North China, are dated from approximately 2200 to 500 BC. They were characterised by a high degree of cultural and geographical homogeneity and continuity, with one dynasty succeeding another. Archaeologists working on the Bronze Age in Southern China no longer hesitate to acknowledge local archaeological remains that do not parallel with the remains from the centres of the "Three Dynasties"; traditionally comprehended as the cradle of Chinese dynastic civilisation. Today, northern dynastic influence is not accounted as decisive to local cultural developments in the south (Falkenhausen 1995).

Towards reflexive presentations in archaeology

As social researchers, archaeologists have a responsibility to critically examine how their research is related to contemporary political agenda and to illuminate other realities, rather than merely reflecting and being ideological means and tools of the present society. There is a fine, un-definable line between striving for knowledge and searching for confirmation of social convictions. Archaeology is very accessible and therefore an ideal academic discipline to foster popular enthusiasm, and the construction of physical sites as visible proof of prehistoric events must be executed according to a reflexive theoretical stance.

Interpreting archaeology is a subjective matter, and the meaning of material things is indeterminate and problematic. Reflexivity can be defined as *thinking about one's own thinking* and is a crucial concept in the theoretical discourse about the researcher's own self-consciousness when facing the archaeological record. The researcher is part of the researched and can even be seen as creating his or her subject. Production of archaeological knowledge must hence be acknowledged as a meaningful creative activity, and reflexivity involves a critical stance to the researcher's own role in the archaeological process (Ehn & Klein 1994). Reflexivity "obliges one to engage in a personal archaeology of intellectual (and other) influences" (Wakeman 1998:165). Being reflexive is a practice whereby one questions one's own prejudices, culture and consciousness. The pre-conditions for reflexivity in archaeology are confrontations with the unknown or "The Other". Accepting the distance and the difference between the past and the present is a necessary pre-condition for being reflexive in archaeology (Kyvik 2002a, 2002b, 2002c).

It is imperative to use modern concepts when we confront the past. As long as we reason by analogy, the present will help us see past complexity and the past will help us to understand ourselves. "We must never forget to watch ourselves knowing the otherness of the past" (Bynum 1995:31), because "at stake is not just our claim to carry out unbiased research and to engage in open-minded, unprejudiced debate but also our claim not to provide

direct support for partisan political positions and our desire to be free in our work from political interference and pressure" (Härke 1998:24).

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Discontinuous Maya identities

Johan Normark

Maya archaeology has an intimate relationship with cultural anthropology. One could say that they are dependent on each others. Archaeologists use anthropological analogies from contemporary groups in the Maya area to explain their data and anthropologists sometime emphasize the originality of some social expressions as either modern, colonial, or Prehispanic. Nowadays we have a third actor which criticize both archaeology and anthropology. This is the Maya movement in Guatemala, led by indigenous scholars, who want to see a more ethical approach to the study of both the past and of contemporary ethnic groups. In this text I will view how ethnicity and culture is viewed in this movement and see how they deal with archaeology.

I shall particularly focus on the movement's and archaeologists' shared belief that material culture reflects continuity in ethnicity and/or culture. Any movement is like a negation of a discourse established by the other dominating party. As such, it is dependent on the former. What the Maya movement really should need is a complete break with "culture" thinking as this is a main theme in Mayanist archaeological thinking.

Therefore I shall explore ethnicity and continuity and see if these concepts are relevant to our understanding of past identities.

First I will describe Maya archaeology as it is practiced by North Americans who dominate this field in terms of published data. The important point here, which I will pursue throughout the text, is that the leaders of the Maya movement, in their critique, creates just as a stereotype view of the "Maya" as the one they criticize by basically trying to take the opposite view held by those researchers.

A short history of Maya research

Even before the lawyer John Lloyd Stephens and the artist Frederick Catherwood travelled around in Mexico and Central America in the 1830s (Stephens 1993), other Westerners had visited ruins in the area but the knowledge of these ruins were sparse indeed. The origins of the ruins had been attributed to Atlantis, India, or Phoenicia. It was with Stephens and Catherwood that Maya research took off and it was realized that the ruins had been constructed by the ancestors of the people that still lived in the area (Coe 1994). Inspired by their travel accounts and naturalistic paintings there soon appeared several expeditions to the Maya lowlands.

The writing system was from the beginning of research one of the prime targets to understand. It was the numbering- and the calendar systems that first became deciphered. Knorosov's breakthrough in the 1950s made researchers understand that the glyphs were part of a phonetic and logographic writing system, not so different from other early writing systems (Coe 1994). It was not until the death of the conservative and charismatic archaeologist Eric Thompson in 1975 that Maya epigraphy exploded into new decipherments. Today, it has become a specialized branch, sometimes connected to the "traditional" archaeological research. Since the 1960s, Maya archaeology has become more or less processual and materialist, focusing on environmental determinism, economy or related topics, rarely

interested in textual remains or images. Epigraphy and iconography have by tradition been the fields for art historians and they have rarely kept a materialist view of their objects of study.

It is for these reasons not much of a surprise that the decipherment of the glyphs only slightly affected the processual paradigm within Maya archaeology. However, in the last two decades there has been more studies on "ideological", "cosmological" or "symbolic" aspects of material culture (Demarest 2000;Freidel *et al.* 1993;Schele & Miller 1992). There are still problems since those who study archaeological remains from a symbolic perspective have very little theorization of what they are studying. The post-processual theories seem not to have come to the attention of most Mayanists. Thus, postcolonial ideas of who interprets what and for whom and why have thus far attracted only a limited few. Old suppositions that have been linked to the "objective" Western science should be criticized. All knowledge is linked to power relations. So it is today and so it has been in the past. It should therefore be emphasized that most of the epigraphic information is in English. Only a portion has been translated into Spanish, and much less is available in any Maya language. There is thus a substantial power relationship here, of who has had the right or rather ability to interpret the archaeological record. It is time to investigate how this has been done.

The archaeological and epigraphic research

There has been an explosion in search for the doings of "great men" and the pattern of "super powers", outlined by Martin & Grube (1995;2000). However, there are several problems with the contemporary focus on rulers, king lists and "ideology" in Maya studies. With a heavy reliance on anthropological and sociological theories which originated in explaining colonial, postcolonial and contemporary (and communicative) societies, archaeologists have always tried to interpret meaning out of mute material.

Iconography and epigraphy deals with expressive media but most of the social context surrounding the texts are gone.

Archaeological interpretations have usually derived from one of many grand-social theories (cultural ecology, structuralism, Marxism, etc), most often from theories that tries to homogenize a society to a normative ideal. In their critique of these different normative ideals, the leaders of the Maya movement are creating other normative ideals which in my view are even more problematic. We need to abandon the culture concept altogether since it permeates both sides of thought. Any criticism of a certain approach is part of that discourse it tries to criticise. This is true for my own text in which I argue that the Maya movement in their critique fall into the same discourse hierarchy that they oppose.

Contemporary categories and abstractions are historically specific constructions and not essential entities (Foucault 1972). Analogies are therefore not always particularly relevant. Many of the "traditional" high-level abstractions such as economy, ideology, religion, power, etc., have in this sense been more or less devalued or lost their meaning due to fuzzy uses of them. The Mayanist literature is bountiful when it comes to the use of seldom reflected and heavily inflated meanings of certain concepts.

Examples of such concepts are culture and evolution. Many Mesoamericanists are still thinking in cultural groups; Maya, Zapotecs, Olmecs, Aztecs, etc., are more or less normative descriptions of idealized cultures constructed by modern researchers. In this view, "cultures are superorganic, existing above and determining the behavior of individuals" (Kowalewski *et al.* 1992:260). Just because ceramics, architecture and art to some extent are similar over a wide area do not indicate that the past people thought of themselves as "Maya" or as being members of a specific social group. I doubt that any researcher believes this, but still, they say that the "Maya" did this and that, implying an ethnic or "cultural" identity. Problems do occur when Mayanists tries to explain something that is out of the assumed "Maya" cultural pattern and does not fit the general picture. We would be

better off if we did not use such concepts. We should go from a perception of ready-made cultures to social formations that are always changing and never static.

The use of evolutionary schemas has also created limitations and stereotypical views of societies. Stanton and Gallareta Negrón have recently opposed this linear transformation in Mayanist studies, where variability in social formations is being neglected. Evolutionary schemas "artificially compress similar yet diverse forms of organization into categories that treat them as the same" (Stanton & Gallareta Negrón 2001:231).

Maya research has a teleological view which has been negative in the creation of a modern Maya identity. The most obvious is the name of the archaeological periods. In the earlier phases of Maya research, "the Maya culture" was seen as Mesoamerica's Classic Greeks and their "florescence" was labelled "Classic" after a pattern in Classic Greek and Roman archaeology. This period was then used to label the preceding period "Preclassic" or Formative and the succeeding period "Postclassic". This view still remains in the field. It is from the Classic period everything else is measured. Art, architecture, and achievements are valued and given less scientific and nineteenth century style criteria such as "marvellous", "greatest king", and "florescence". Thus, there is less appreciation of the Postclassic, Colonial or contemporary Maya. For example, in Michael Coe's fifth edition of "*The Maya*" from 1993 we can read the following evaluation of Postclassic architecture at Tulum: "The principal temple, a *miserable* structure called the Castillo..." (Coe 1993:159, my emphasis). Even more illuminating is this quote from the same book: "The Lacandón appear to be *pathetic* survivors of a larger group…" (Coe 1993:24-26, my emphasis).

Another problem is the use of ethnographic analogies, a tempting, deceiving and dangerous pit which the author himself has fallen in an earlier study (Normark 2000). Both processual and post-processual archaeology have used analogies, but in a very different sense. Hodder has argued that some analogies are more valid than others, but how do we decide which ones to use?

Analogies are especially common in American and Mesoamerican archaeology since they have primarily studied the *Other*, the Indian (Fahlander, this book). For example, the use of shamanism as an explanation of Mesoamerican art has reinforced the ideas of an ahistorical, apolitical and irrational "Other". Materialists have focused on social change and cultural differences in the art but the idealists have seen (religious) ideas as the determinant of art and they have focused on assumed universal and cognitive similarities. The idealists' main influence, Eliade, set shamanism outside of socioeconomic and political history and reality (Klein et al 2002:384-388).

Historical analogies give an aura of static societies, despite the fact that every author claims that is not their intention. How long does a "tradition" actually exists (and do they really exist other than in culture area concepts)? By expanding the area of analogies (both spatially and temporally), researchers can always find an analogy suitable for their objective(s). However, not only did the Spanish colonialism affect the indigenous peoples of the Maya area, so did "Olmecs", "Teotihuacanos", "Toltecs" and "Aztecs".

The archaeological remains at Maya sites have been used to study social structure, political complexity, economic foundation and cosmology which are supposed to have existed in these social formations. However, these given high-level abstractions are not essential, they are fictions which archaeologists use to classify and order the bulk of information they collect during field work. The traditional analytical abstractions indicate different kinds of interaction which cannot be separated from each others since they to a large extent overlap.

Instead of trying to fit archaeological or iconographic data into a fixed anthropological model, I argue that we should start from the material data itself. One solution would be to free archaeological theory from top-down approaches. What join economy, politics, social structure and ideology is not even social practice but human agency. However, the past human agents are not available to us, our data consists of artifacts. Humans and artifacts do share some similar causal capabilities. I call this

polyagency to distinguish it from human agency (Normark 2004a;2004b). *Polyagency* is one of the few things that humans and materiality have in common, no matter the real or fictional entities there might be in a social formation, such as ecology, class, ethnicity, or gender.

I will in this text use the concept Maya or Maya culture in the same way as most researchers have. However, I do not at all agree with such diffuse and culture group labels. I would like to see a more micro-level oriented research in Mayanist studies focusing on *polyagency* and agency (by agency I do not mean the simplified version most Mayanists have used). There are many problems in what a definition of agency should look like as most agency-oriented theories have been criticised for a focus on a modern capitalist western male. This is not the place to discuss agency, but to me there are no such things as "culture" or "ethnicity" in the archaeological record. We can only find material evidence of *polyagency*, what I call *polyagents* (anything that has *polyagency*) (Normark 2004a).

The main problem with a culture concept is apparent in the fact that most of the epigraphic research is being done by American or European researchers. Could these ever get an *emic* view of the past societies? However, neither would an indigenous researcher, the past is just as much the Other for those of the present who claims to be their descendents. It would be odd for me to suggest that I have an emic "Viking" view since I come from the same area and most likely have some distant "blood-ties" with this people. Anyway, in the Maya movement there is a belief in cultural continuity of this sort.

I therefore hope that both Maya archaeologists and members of the Maya movement can abandon the culture concept(s) since it reflects ideas that emerged in the beginning of our discipline and in the contra-enlightenment (Wolf 1999). There are other ways to study the past material remains without using rigid culture concepts. Since the Maya movement want to take part of the growing data and knowledge of those who lived in their area before the arrival of the Spaniards, I hope they can contribute

with a view that is not anchored in the old archaeological discourse that permeates processual and post-processual archaeology. This is not so now.

Guatemalan identities

The last century has brought considerable changes and transformations of the Guatemalan indigenous population's localized identity. It is now becoming a national and international identity of a "Pan-Maya culture". A thirty year long civil war which officially ended in 1996 have to a larger extent than anything else formed these new identities. Indigenous leaders have in this process created a movement which emphasize the Prehispanic cultural heritage. The hieroglyphic writing has gained a central position in this movement since it is believed to give "authentic voices" from the past (Houston 2000:141). In the search and creation of an independent and unaffected "Maya culture", they have turned to archaeological remains, the vigesimal number system, and the calendars. Often they use the results from archaeological and epigraphical research, which is dominated by Americans and Ladinos. Thus, there is a conflict between Maya leaders, the Maya commoners, Ladinos and foreign researchers.

The Maya movement claims that 50-60% of Guatemala's approximate twelve million people are Maya. Guatemala also has Garifuna, Europeans and Asian immigrants, but these only make up one percent of the total population. The rest is Ladinos, which can be defined as those who do not fit into other categories. These dominate the country's politics and economy (Fischer & Brown 1996:9;Warren 1998:8). The total number of Maya speaking people in the world is seven to eight million if we include groups in Mexico, Belize, Honduras and El Salvador (Cojtí Cuxil 1996:21). Twenty Maya languages are spoken in Guatemala and nine in Mexico. Some languages are spoken by over a million people, whereas others are near extinction (England 1996:178).

A discussion of what Maya were and are has partially its origin in the colonial and the post-colonial environment, since it is unavoidable to discuss the relation between the Maya and the Ladino. Ladinos consider themselves to be a biologically distinct group. In reality they are a mixture of Europeans and Maya (Fischer & Brown 1996:9).

All groups have their own stereotyped versions of the contemporary Maya. Ladinos describe them as lazy, evil, drunks and immoral. The Mayas sees themselves as harmonic, altruistic, righteous, and disciplined (LeBaron 1993:269). This last view is something most anthropologists tend to follow. Archaeologists have a slightly different view of the past Maya, due to the content of archaeological data. The late Eric Thompson saw the Classic period Maya as peace loving priests (Wilk 1985). The late Linda Schele emphasized a violent past which has had a great popular attention (Schele & Miller 1992). The dominant stereotype of foreign archaeologists in the Maya movement is that they are looters, despite the fact that most looting is performed by non-archaeological Guatemalans.

The long civil war in Guatemala had profound ethnic and racist currents. The war created a wave of revitalization in several communities and led to the formation of the Maya movement. The long road towards a more righteous treatment of the indigenous population was noticed in 1992 when the K'iche' woman Rigoberta Menchú received the Nobel peace price. An agreement for the indigenous population's rights was signed in 1995. This document states that the contemporary Maya are descendents of an ancient people who speak different but historically related languages. Further, the Maya languages are supposed to be taught in school and their syncretic religion is recognized and the indigenous population should participate in the administration of archaeological sites (Warren 1998:53, 56). Little of this has been put in practice but it will surely affect the way archaeology is being practiced in the area.

Undoubtedly there will be more archaeological researchers that are indigenous themselves in the future. The question is how

the Maya movement, which was formed during the civil war, will affect archaeology and anthropology since they want researchers to adapt to their objects of study. To make things good after centuries of oppression, archaeologists are urged to interpret the result according to contemporary political and social needs. Artifacts that now are in foreign collections are asked to be returned and the activists want the lowland archaeological sites to be declared as sacred sites (Houston 2000:140).

Although I welcome this in general, I believe there will be problems for research if archaeologists are to view their data through a contemporary political agenda. What kind of stereotypical ideas will archaeologists be writing if they cannot write what they feel is the "truth"?

Origins of the Maya movement

The modern ethnification in the Maya region has its origin from the mid 20th century and onwards. Leading Ladinos tried to integrate the Maya population into the national state between 1944 and 1954, in the hope of a better economic development in Guatemala. This development frightened important Ladino groups and the Ladino reformists were overthrown by the military, which was supported by USA (LeBaron 1993:272-273).

In the civil war that eventually broke out, the Evangelists grew in importance in the 1960s and 1970s. Their success depended on social marginalization, lack of property, migration and urbanization. The Evangelist missionaries worked with the indigenous population in their own languages which the Catholics had not done despite that few of the Mayas were bilingual. The Evangelists were positive to the Maya languages and their clothes but they rejected the saint cult that had been central in the syncretic religion (Wilson 1995:169-170).

The civil war in Guatemala strengthened the consciousness of ethnicity among both Ladinos and Maya. This was partly due to the ethnic oppression against the indigenous people in the late 70s and early 80s (Fischer 1996:63). The government tried to

integrate the Maya into the Ladino society as a second class by destroying the indigenous identities but it had the opposite effect (Fischer & Brown 1996:12;Wilson 1995:29).

In the old local Maya villages where "mountain cults" had been predominant, the Bible came to be more important and this initiated an idea of a more universal society (Wilson 1995:179-204). This led to a different view of the society and the search for a new identity. This kind of mass movements of people during the 20th century have led to diasporas (Gosden 1999:183). I would argue that this is not typical for the past century. The Caste war caused tremendous changes in settlement throughout the Yukatán peninsula.

The Evangelists' success also affected the Catholics who began to use the Maya languages in their mission. The Catholics, who held Bible studies at for example Coban in Alta Verapaz, taught that the Kekchi Maya were descendents of the Classic Maya culture. The ancient Maya's social structure was idealized and it was argued that land and property had been own by a collective. Alcoholism did not exist in the past as well. Less pleasant cultural traits such as human sacrifice and war, Central Mexican people or conquistadors were to blame for. The ancient Maya were also believed to have worshipped a Jewish-Christian god. The similarities between the depiction of the World Tree and the Christian cross were thought to be the evidence for this idea (Wilson 1995:269-270).

In short, Bible courses held at various places and the chaos of the civil war led to the formation of an imagined Maya tradition. These courses encouraged the re-creation of older traditions and a political agenda for the Maya movement.

The Maya movement and its critics

The Maya movement seeks to study what is uncontaminated by Spanish influence. They emphasize language revitalization, schools where Maya languages are to be spoken, the study of Maya chronicles, history, hieroglyphs, recreation of old norms

and the rights for indigenous people (Warren 1998:39). The movement emphasize the essence of "Maya culture". Thus, there is a conflict between the movement and post-modern thinkers as they emphasize plurality and relativity (Fischer & Brown 1996:4). It is for such reasons that the movement questions the intentions of foreign researchers. The leaders of the movement also claims that there are cultural specific Mayan ways of knowledge, something others cannot have (Warren 1998:37).

Works written by non-Maya are critically examined. Texts by Sam Colop, Cojtí Cuxil and Raxche' are all polemic in their character and indicates a stubborn resistance to the assimilation policy of the Ladinos. Ladinos present chronicles from the contact period as neutral sources to study and describe the nation's history. Colop therefore attacks the common idea that the Maya thought the Spaniards were gods. It is argued that this is no more than a Spanish fabrication to make the indigenous population look superstitious or retarded. Colop on the other hand describe, in a traditional manner, the Spanish conquest as a genocide. This cruelty has been questioned by others since the English deliberately created the idea of cruel Spaniards during the reformation (Warren 1998:137-155).

Ladino critics claims that the "Maya culture" is ladinoized and that Guatemala is part of a globalisation process where there cannot and does not exist a particular "Maya culture". Some Ladino historians argue that the history or languages of the Mayas should not be studied at all since it may threaten the unity of the nation and thus is dangerous for the Mayas own cause (Warren 1998:137-138). The Maya movement reject such criticism and sees for example the *titulos* (chronicles and legal documents) as sacred Maya texts and use them in the political discourse. Some of them believe that the colonial documents are direct translations of hieroglyphic codices. Thus they believe there is a continuity in content, despite the change in writing system (Houston 2000:129;Tedlock 1996:28-29).

The movement do not call themselves a nationalistic movement since that may recall the conflicts in former Yugoslavia

or Rwanda. The movement is national and sometimes transnational which is a remarkable contrast to the local identity that for a long time dominated in the Maya area. Some Maya activists, such as Cojtí Cuxil, want to see a return to ethnic sovereignty followed by the reestablishment of territories that existed before the conquest. Thus, the Maya movement reclaims their own land, both for economical and for religious concerns (Cojtí Cuxil 1996:31). For these reasons, they have been accused for separatism and ethnic polarization. They are also blamed for being racists since they emphasize the Maya language and are opponents of marriages cross the language barrier.

The movement is also criticized for being an elitist construction by people who seldom speak fluently Maya. They are well educated, economically independent, and seldom do they represent the conditions of what the majority of the Maya population live under (Brown 1996:170;Warren 1998:11, 22). A common critique of the movement is that it idealizes the Maya community and that it focuses on culture and not on poverty or landholding issues. Some Ladinos go as far as claiming that the movement has been constructed only to support a tourist market. The Maya leaders see these arguments as disturbing and argue that these Ladino critics deprive the humanity of the Maya and treat them as objects of consumption (Warren 1998:41-43).

I see the Maya movement as the negation or reaction to a discourse established by Western scholars. Knowledge and power are connected since discourses produce what is reality. Discourses create subjects, it affects the way they view themselves, their own position and what the world is like. This is structured by symbolic schemes (Foucault 1979:194). These discourses are then taken for granted. This seems to be the case with the Maya movement. They use the same categories established by the scholars they oppose. Bhabha (1994:95) argues that an indigenous population's "cultures" are not imposed by a colonial culture, but rather that both they and the colonisers were created within colonialism. Modernity is therefore not only the creation of western values.

However, all "cultures" are hybrids; there are no "pure" cultures. They have all participated in the creation of modernity.

Problems of continuity

The general view of an old and "uncontaminated" culture from the Prehispanic time is of course not accurate if we look into our available data. The contacts between the Ladinos and the Maya has undoubtedly changed the Maya societies (and the Ladinos as well). However, there are cultural elements that have survived better than others. Such elements are used to strengthen the Pan-Maya identity. The most common identity marker in the present, and maybe in the past as well, are the clothes. Female Maya activists points out the design of their clothes and the old traditions of their weaving technique (Otzoy 1996:148). Critics claim that the Maya clothes are a colonial creation, but there are too many iconographic depictions of Prehispanic clothes to let there be no doubt that there is a long continuity from the Prehispanic times. Monumental art from the Classic period sites of Yaxchilán, Palenque, and Naranjo as well as several ceramic paintings and figurines show clothing that have similar modern versions (Looper 2002;Reents-Budet *et al.* 1994;Tate 1992). However, this is continuity in cloth production. Is it a continuity of ethnic markers? What then is ethnicity?

Ethnicity is not biology. The beliefs in the similarities between "race" and "culture" have not had many followers in the past fifty years or so. Sociobiologists have tried to link biology with culture. They argue that material culture, language, and customs are affected by people tied to each other genetically (Gosden 1999:195). I do not believe that this connection is biologically derived. Ethnicity is a social construct, but is it essential to all "cultures"? Ethnic and culture thinking are linked to the rise of nationalism. There were other identity markers in the past (Anderson 1991). According to Warren (1998:70-71) there exist four misconceptions about the Maya ethnicity (among the Maya movement, archaeologists and anthropologists alike). The first is

that "indianness" is the product of *one* historic period (either Prehispanic or colonial). The second is that cultural changes will lead to the loss of a culture. The third is that ethnic identity will disappear with social changes. The fourth is that ethnic identity is created in relation to the dominant culture. Most anthropologists that follow these misconceptions tend to romanticize the contemporary indigenous population. They want to protect them, a concept that has its predecessor in the Indian reservations in USA (Houston 2000).

These misconceptions lay the foundation to two distinguishable traditions within the Mayanist view of cultural and ethnic identity and continuity. The first is in a Barthian tradition and emphasize ethnic dualism. Banks (1996) calls this *instrumentalism*. Barth argued that it is boundaries that define a group and not the cultural content it surrounds. We should thus less care about dress, language, or custom since the markers of ethnicity are arbitrary and can vary and change. The past has just a little effect on cultural markers and these are only an ideological construction of the present (Barth 1969:15). People change or reconfigure their ethnic identities for beneficial reasons. Ethnic identity is thus not static (Cohen 1969). The Maya identity has in this view been shaped in opposition to the Spaniards and the Ladinos. The identity is thus a colonial and postcolonial product (despite earlier contacts between Maya and Teotihuacán).

The other tradition is one of *primordialism* in which ethnicity is a natural human identity (Banks 1996:39). Here the ethnic differences have always existed and the origin of ethnic differences is not of major concern. Ethnic identity comes from kinship (both affinal and consanguine) and a shared custom and language that tie people together (Gosden 1999:190). In the Maya area, primordialists claim that the Maya identity is an indigenous tradition from Prehispanic times until the present. This view derives more from the content of ethnicity. To this tradition we can ascribe most Mayanists and the Maya movement's "Pan-Maya" approach. The Maya movement ascribe "traditional"

symbols new meanings in an attempt to construct a unified and internally defined Maya identity.

The primordialists thus invent traditions (Hobsbawmn 1983) and imagine a community (Anderson 1991). To do this, they sometimes use publications by well known epigraphers and archaeologists. Ethnic markers are tied to historical meanings studied by these researchers, a cultural content that Barth rejects. Identity is created around symbols which over time can describe totally different meanings. The problem is thus to trace the ethnic history without falling into the essentialism that the Maya movement has done. Most researchers would not agree to this, but by using analogies we do in fact claim continuity.

There is some continuity from the past that has been transformed by colonialism and industrialism, but these traditions have always been subject to changes. The traditions and rituals which are associated with imagined traditions from the industrialism have older origin or parallels (Ranger 1993:7-24), something which epigraphy and archaeology sometimes indicate. Societies were thus not static before the arrival of the Europeans. The "Maya" were in contact with "Olmecs", "Zoqueans", "Teotihuacanos", "Toltecs" and "Aztecs".

Since it is now possible to read most of the hieroglyphic writing, it is possible to see contemporary similarities with older social practices. However, the encouragements of studies which emphasize the vitality of the Maya culture and continuity in language, culture and religion from Prehispanic times have led to the emergence of a problem. A huge portion of past and present Maya archaeology and epigraphy make analogies with colonial or modern societies in the Maya area. Popular sources for analogies are Diego de Landa's account (Tozzer 1941), Popol Vuh (Edmonson 1971;Tedlock 1996), the Chilam B'alam books (Liljefors Persson 2000), ethnographic research by for example Vogt (1969;1976), Gossen (1984), Redfield and Villa Rojas (1962) or the Tedlocks (Tedlock 1992;Tedlock & Tedlock 1985). If we ignore these facts, then we undoubtedly see continuity, but it is continuity with little support. The use of the latest research's

results to show a vital and ancient culture is thus problematic. A circle is created where the present confirms the past and the past confirms continuity to the present, since the activists are convinced that very little syncretism has occurred.

Maya identity and archaeology in the past

I believe that both Maya archaeologists and the Maya movement have fallen into the same trap of "culture" thinking. When the Maya movement in their essentialism claims continuity with the Prehispanic people they use a very high level generalization and sees their "culture" as static and immune to external influences. Unfortunately, this is also true for the archaeologists who use analogies to explain what they cannot explain otherwise. The processual archaeology has focused on local adaptations to the environment. The culture has in this tradition been seen as functional. Post-processual archaeologists introduced Barth's ideas and studied differences in identity in the past. However, Mayanists maintain a much older culture area thinking.

The Mayanist "culture" concept is one of essentialism. Central for this is the "Maya culture", which is used in most archaeological and epigraphic publications. What are the evidences of a "Maya culture" in the past? What were the past inhabitants own identity markers? Apart from the primordialism and instrumentalism, there exists a third attitude to ethnicity. This is the one that the analyst makes and has little existence in the real world. Were they the same as we use (Long-Count calendar, ballcourt, etc.)? Thus, would they recognize their modern descendents as of being the same "people", "lineage", "house", "clan" or whatever identity they had?

I argue that the past Maya "culture" or "ethnicity" constructed by archaeologists from material culture has been adopted by the Maya movement and transformed into a primordial ethnicity.

The very concept of Maya is highly problematic. The word is first mentioned in the Spanish chronicles as an alternative name of the Xiu dynasty at Mayapán (Restall 1997). The word has thus a

Yukatek origin, and originally related not to the populations that lived and still lives in the highlands of Guatemala. There was thus no ethnic meaning for the word Maya in glyphs original that are used by the Maya movement in the highlands of Guatemala are of Lowland origin, although Kaminaljuyu had writing in the same language as found in the Lowlands (Fahsen 2001). Thus, the movement eradicates both historic and geographic details and is thus a useful way of creating a Pan-Maya identity and unity.

Important for the imagination of a unity is the Maya language tree created by historic linguists. It is used in the movements' publications to point out that different languages of today have a common past (Warren 1998:13). This unity is used as an argument in trying to create one common Maya language. Instead of choosing an existing language, an artificially written standard based on the combination of different languages is now being created (England 1996:185-187;Warren 1998:59).

The acceptance of the old idea that the Maya languages have a common origin and a similar culture do not completely collide with research on a macro-level. Researchers such as Houston, Stuart and Robertson (2000), claim that all Maya writing during the Classic period were written on an ancient language (Ch'olti'an) which probably was spoken in the Late Formative (400 B.C. – A.D. 250) sites in the Mirador basin in northern Guatemala. This elitist tradition spread to a larger geographic area during the Classic Period. From Palenque in the west, to Copan in the east and to Chichén Itzá in the north it seems as if the elite used the same language in their writings during the Late Classic period. The elite used this dialect which probably functioned like Latin in the Middle Ages. Whether the Late Classic elite spoke this archaic language in their daily lives is another matter. Writing eventually faded away in the central Lowlands during the Terminal Classic and was finally abandoned and replaced by Latin alphabet during the Colonial period (Houston *et al.* 2003).

How the identities between different Maya groups looked like during different time periods are thus difficult to solve. Every individual probably felt an identity with his or her closest relatives in the first place. The presence of so called Emblem Glyphs, titles associated with kingship and dominion over places, and specific place name glyphs indicates that at least the elite identified themselves with their geographic location (Berlin 1958;Palka 1996;Stuart & Houston 1994).

The identity the kings may have shared may not have been the same for the commoners but I would guess that the commoners had an identity not too different from the local identity that still exists in the highlands of Guatemala and thus related to topographical places. It cannot have been a linguistic affiliation since the language seems to have been homogenous throughout the central lowlands. However, that is what is known for the elite and the commoners may have had far greater diversity in dialects than we may know from today.

For instance, water holes are known to form units of social organization in contemporary Chiapas (Vogt 1969). The importance of water in the settlement layout and organization have been noted by several researchers (Lucero 2002;Scarborough 1998).

Bourdieu's concept of habitus has been used to explain how ethnicity is formed from both conscious and unconscious interactions (Gosden 1999:196). However, there were many different identities and on different levels: personal, gender, family, lineage, and site. I doubt that any identity a commoner felt, apart from a greater lineage affiliation, extended beyond the area of day to day interaction. The exception may of course be the ruling elite. This identity was never based on ethnic affiliations.

Art, ceramics, and architecture differed within the Maya area and they should not be straightforwardly used to claim any macro-level identity markers such as ethnicity. The monumental art can probably give us an indication of identity markers in the past. One of the best examples of this is Stela 31 at Tikal. It

depicts king *Siyaj Chan K'awiil* in a "Maya" style whereas his father, which most likely came from central Mexico, was depicted in a "Teotihuacán" inspired style (Harrison 1999;Stuart 1999). With our modern concepts, this looks like the Maya speaking groups saw themselves as different from at least Central Mexican groups. If this can be called an ethnic differentiation is another matter. Teotihuacanos were clearly seen as different, but would this difference be "ethnic", "racial", "religious", "status", or "citizen"?

Another example comes from Copan. The founder of the Copan dynasty was king Yax K'uk Mo' which is believed to have been a foreigner, judging from later monuments. However, the early monuments soon after his death depict him as a "typical" Maya ruler. The later monuments depicting king *Yax K'uk Mo'* assigns him with a *west kaloomte'* title, usually associated with *Spearthrower Owl* (believed to be an important figure from Teotihuacán, maybe a king), *Siyaj K'ak* and some following rulers of Tikal. However, the Motmot marker, carved during his son's reign did not assign him with this title (Golden 2002:403). It was not until the Late Classic Period that the founder came to be portrayed with goggle eyes, to be represented as a person with Teotihuacán associations (Golden 2002.403-404).

Ceramics in particular are used to study political extensions and possible identities in the past. Ball (1993) shows an increasing balkanization of ceramic styles during the Late Classic period. This pattern is believed to relate to the balkanization of political units that occurred at the same time. A relatively homogenous ceramic style diverged into several local styles. This would indicate less contact and isolation from the surroundings. Societies went through a period when older identity markers changed to fit the emerging Postclassic socio-political and economic structure (Joyce 2000).

However, there are problems in relating a particular material category such as ceramics to political, social, or ethnic categories since they imply concepts emerged within a modern discourse. I want to view material culture as free from such categories as possible, since similarities in ceramics or architecture are not

always dependent on cultural affiliation or identity. It may be the same, but the true basis is that producers of material culture mimic what have been done by others in the same social setting, this is Gell's principle of least difference (Gell 1998).

Maya identity and archaeology in the present

Still, the proposed continuity between the archaeological past and the present is a vital one. The use of hieroglyphic inscriptions in the modern political discourse can be exemplified by the neighbouring country of Belize (a country which Guatemalan leaders have claimed to be a province of Guatemala). The city of Caracol in Belize defeated Tikal, which lies in Guatemala, in 562 (probably with the help of Calakmul in Mexico) (Martin & Grube 2000). This information is something which is used by the Belizean tourist industry to show that Belize is not part of Guatemala (personal observation).

Maya who want to learn glyphs are dependent on foreign epigraphers. Some epigraphers, such as Schele and Grube, have transmitted knowledge to Maya groups and they have also criticised archaeology for not doing the same (Schele & Grube 1996:139). Thus they have overlooked the fact that epigrapher's interpretations have had more severe consequences for the contemporary Maya than most archaeological interpretations. Massacres during the civil war was sometimes legitimized by the proposed violent past of the victims' ancient ancestors (Sturm 1996:117-128). Both epigraphers and archaeologists should be aware of the contemporary socio-political effects their research may have. But I do not see any reason to adapt contemporary research to a modern political agenda.

Not all care about the archaeological remains. Ruins in the highlands of Guatemala have been partially destroyed by Evangelists and Lowland sites are looted and artifacts are sold on the illegal market (Warren 1998:57). Villagers have after the peace in Guatemala begun to lay claim on archaeological sites and monuments (Houston 2000:138). The worst looters are heavily

armed groups, some being ex-militaries, who are also involved in the narcotic traffic. On the other hand, the ethnic politics make it more and more difficult to remove artifacts (classified as sacred objects) from their original contexts. Due to the presence of archaeologists in the area, Maya leaders want to have a more ethic approach to their work. Sites should be treated as sacred places and they should be open to Maya, without any entrance fees. Today, Mayas are usually treated as secondary citizens at these places (Cojtí Cuxil 1996:43).

Institutions in Guatemala and Mexico have created large outdoor museums of archaeological sites. Quetzil Castañada shows how the archaeological construction of a peculiar Maya culture such as Chichén Itzá in Mexico is being used in different ways by anthropologists, archaeologists, tourists, local entrepreneurs and Maya intellectuals (Castañeda 1996). Even in Guatemala people have invested great resources in archaeological reconstructions, particularly at Tikal. Belize is another country which has and is developing several archaeological sites to receive hordes of charter tourists.

Leaders of the Maya movement criticize this tourism and the reconstructions. It does not give the Maya groups anything in return and maintains the myth about the differences between modern and ancient Maya. The ancient Maya is described as a great people and is used to glorify Guatemala's history. The Kiché king Tecún Umán has a national day and the Popol Vuh is considered to be Guatemala's national book. Despite this the Ladinos do not want a development of cultural pluralism in Guatemala. They want the country to be unified into one nation (LeBaron 1993:275). The contemporary Maya is therefore not shown in similar positive ways, with the possible exception of tourist areas such as Panajachel and Chichicastenango.

The popular view of the ancient Maya in media is usually based on stereotypical Maya. They are either seen as blood thirsty warriors, superstitious, great astronomers, inventors of a complex writing system, and the most common topic is the collapse. A recent program on the "mega-droughts" with Richardson Gill

claims that millions of people died off. One part of the program is an in-depth look on human sacrifice, and particularly how they had to chop more than once to cut of a child's head. This part do not contribute anything to the program (although it claims to relate to sacrifice of priests and their families because they could not foresee the drought). It is only there to be spectacular.

Similar critique has been launched on a recent program on Yax K'uk Mo'.

Abandoning the culture and ethnic concept(s)

Throughout this text I have argued for an abandonment of rigid and essentialist culture concepts. An approach to the past in a greater variety (Barth 2002) has been proposed in this text.

Gosden (1999:194) argues that since it is too late to stop using the term ethnicity, we should continue to use it, but realise that the concept shapes the way we perceive the world. I partly agree but I suggest that we should have another approach to material culture than from a "cultural" or "ethnic" point of view. Material culture is used to form people's identities, but the past is gone and we can never get a complete understanding of this past. Rather than filling out the vast blanks of the past with guesses, let us focus on the artifacts, the only known and visible points in a void of nothingness.

I will not try to give any alternative answers to what approach that should be used instead, I can only suggest what I feel is a good way of studying the archaeological record without using cultural essentialism and the use of modern identity markers on artifacts and ruins. This is to view the material remains as free as possible of "cultural" markers, without trying to see the agents behind them in the first place. The fact is that all artifacts have been detached from their original users and we cannot get first hand glimpses of those who manufactured, used, and discarded the material remains.

The late Alfred Gell (1998) argued that art (and artifacts) has its own agency, that is, the capability of affecting its surroundings,

either intentionally or non-intentionally. There is thus no need to attribute human agency on top of material culture, it has its *polyagency*. However, this *polyagency* was in the past always in relation to other objects or humans and their *polyagencies*. But an archaeological artifact is detached from this past relationship (the practice or action). It is as such I believe we should start our understanding of the material culture (Normark 2004a). Only after analysing an object's biography in which we can understand the object's different agent-patient relationships can we attribute the different practices that went on. These practices were then not dependent on "cultural identities" such as ethnicity. However, materiality makes people reproduce materiality. Social identities are never solid and they change within discourses.

We will not have to focus on a "culture area" concept of the Maya, since we can work ourselves up from the objects themselves without calling them "Maya" objects. This will, in my view, benefit both the Maya movement and Maya archaeology.

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Operational Ethnicity. Serial practice and materiality

Jørgen Mamen Johannesen

> The same day I experienced among them that I was caught by the same shyness, the same itching clumsiness that I felt back home, as if something was not in order within me, as if I did not correspond to the right ideal, shortly said: as if I was not a Jew, and that was a bit strange among Jews, in a concentration camp, I think.
> (Imre Kertész 2002 [1975]: 95, my translation).

This article first of all concerns Siân Jones's use of *ethnicity*. Second, an interpretative strategy is outlined which to a greater extent define Jones's ethnic reason operationally through Jean Paul Sartres' *serial practice* and *materiality*.

Perhaps the most important issue in archaeological practice and theory concerns the construction of legitimate, collective identities (Jones 1998: 1). After the fragmentation of the national states' identity building, researchers on ethnicity and nationalism have either rejected the world consisting of relatively homogenate national states as either a bygone era or a modernistic fantasy (Jones 1998: 8; c.f. Clifford 1988, 1992; Friedman 1989; Gilroy 1992; Hannerz 1989; Marcus 1989). Instead, a post-modern world is characterized by opposition tendencies with increasing globalization on the one side and fragmented identities on the

other. A multi vocal, unstable and competing configuration is described, consisting of cultural identities from the local to the global in continuing, polyvalent power regimes (Clifford 1992).

Siân Jones claim that *ethnic identity* is characterised by a shifting, situational and subjective identifying of one self and others which is rooted through daily practices and historical experience, and which also is subjected to transformation and discontinuity (Jones 1998: 14). The re-conceptualising of ethnicity as an aspect of social organization resulted in two research areas (Jones 1998: 28). The first research area included studies focusing on relations between material culture and ethnic symbolism (e.g. Hodder 1982; Larick 1986; Haaland 1977; Pratzelis et al 1987; Shennan 1989; Washburn 1989). Second research area concerned explorations over ethnicity in structured political or economic relations (e.g. Blackmore et al 1979; Brumfiel 1994; Kimes et al 1982; McGuire 1982; Odner 1982; Olsen 1985; Perlstein Pollard 1994).

Since the sixties the predominant view within western, social scientific tradition has been the recognition of ethnic groups as self-defining systems and thus each ethnic group is defined on basis on self-identification and identification of others. Such a definition is further included in a theoretical frame, focusing on the construction of ethnic boundaries within social interaction and their organisational characteristics. Ethnicity is essentially seen as recognition of identity towards other groups as a binary opposition between "us" and "them". Siân Jones partly follows this system with a processual and relational method towards ethnicity. The definition of ethnicity is: "*Ethnic groups are culturally ascribed identity groups, which are based on the expression of a real or assumed shared culture and common descent* (usually through the objectification of cultural, linguistic, religious, historical and/or physical characteristics)" (Jones 1998: 84). Further, it is claimed that as a process, ethnicity includes a consciousness concerning differences, which to a varying degree include reproduction and transformation of basic classification differences between groups of people which consider themselves distinct in one way or

another (Eriksen 1992: 3). Jones claim that such a processual approach towards definition and analysis of ethnic groups include several advantages compared to traditional, objective definitions and view on cultures as monolithic units. The definition was meant to ease analyses of processes involved in the construction of ethnicity and the ethnic factor in negotiating between social interaction and social relations which allows a platform for comparative studies of ethnicity while difficulties is circumscribed from the abstraction of ethnic groups as separate, integrated social units (Jones 1998: 85). On the other hand, such processual approaches are criticized (e.g. Blu 1980: 219; Chapman et al 1989: 16-17; Fardon 1987: 175). For example, it is argued that processual definitions on ethnicity, independent of theoretical orientation, essentially are empty and thus applicable on every symbolically differentiated group with a strong feeling of identity such as gender, class and kin-based relations (Blu 1980: 224; Just 1989: 75). On a basic level, structures involved in processual ethnicity equals processes involved in the construction of gender, class and blood as they all are cultural constructed categories based on communication of a real or assumed real difference.

> However, boundaries between these different forms of identity are not clear-cut, and ethnic differences are frequently enmeshed in gender and class divisions in a complex matter. […] Consequently, in any particular analysis it is necessary to consider the intersection of different kinds of identity – ethnic, class, gender and so on – and the way they become institutionalized in different societies (Jones 1998: 85-86, se also Eriksen 1992: 172-179).

Thus, Jones considers the critique and suggests that the taxonomic dilemma is solved through means of each separate, contextual analysis. A theoretical framework influence and conceptualize a later methodology and a stringent, taxonomic theory ease analysis. This key point conveys an operationally clear-cut ethnicity with *serial practice* and *materiality*.

The second critique against formal/processual definitions claims that ethnicity is considered ahistoric and consequently larger social and historical contexts are not explored (e.g. Fardon 1987: 175; Khan 1992: 172-174; Muga 1984: 10-14). By excluding vital characteristics such as language and culture, in relation to the definition of ethnic groups, there is a tendency towards ignoration of differences between them in various social and historical contexts. Processually, ethnicity encompasses a unitary socio cultural phenomenon present in different situations – both modern and pre-modern.

A broad, formal definition of ethnicity is therefore claimed as analytic tools to explore different ethnic situations in different cultural contexts, in opposition to a complex historical definition, which include types of ethnic groups and consequently downplay general sides of ethnicity, especially social and historical contexts (Jones 1998; Eriksen 1992: 3, 17; 1993: 12-13).

Jones further claims that there is an absence of a bridging theory between subjectivists/objectivists in both *primordialistic* and *instrumentalist* explanations on ethnicity (Jones 1998: 87). In *primordial* theories, cultural symbols are focused, while hardly any research is concerned with relations between culture and ethnicity. *Primordialists* claim that the continuing importance of particular aspects in a culture stems from psychological importance within an ethnic identity. In contrast to *primordialist* views, instrumental theories concern a distinction between cultures and ethnicity and focus on organisational aspects of ethnicity and therefore cultural differences are taken for granted, on which ethnicity is based on. Culture is reduced to a continuing set symbols manipulated in the prolongation of altered group interests.

Pierre Bourdieus praxis theory bridges, according to Jones, subjectivism and objectivism, as well as associated oppositions such as determinism vs. freedom, conservative against creative and individual against society through the development of the *habitus* concept.

> The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as a principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules (Bourdieu 1977: 72).

Habitus involves a socialisation process where new experiences are structured according to structures created from earlier experiences and earlier experiences continue an important part of the socialisation process. Consequently, power structures are embodied which results in certain dispositions, that is cognitive and motivating structures which influence practice, often on an unconscious level.

With the practicetheory of Bourdieu, it is claimed that the intersubjective construction of an ethnic identity based on common subliminal dispositions within the *habitus*, which form and is formed by objective practice (Bentley 1987: 173). Ethnic conscience and interests stems from similarities in *habitus* and certain cultural practices and historical experiences are recognized as symbolic, ethnic representations. The application of *habitus* in ethnic theory conveys a method for integrating *primordialistic* and *instrumentalistic* dimensions with ethnicity within a complete theoretical paradigm concerning human agency. Ethnic focus on habitus allows a separation between ethnic borders and the distribution of objective cultural traits (Bentley 1987: 170). On the other hand, Bentley do not explain relations between common subliminal dispositions with *habitus* and communication of cultural differences that leads up to the reproduction of ethnic categories. As follows, the relation between *habitus* and ethnicity is obscure. Qualitative variations are not considered in the form of cultural differences, which signalise ethnic identity. According to Jones, *habitus'* comparative value is also not examined critically since *habitus* is treated as a uniform set dispositions with a high part of

homology across separate, but still integrated social domains (Jones 1998: 93). Bentley consider ethnic identity as a reflection of the *habitus* of the group and that this identity is generated by a subliminal consciousness over the similarity with others with similar *habitus*. Such a theory does not consider that a feeling of ethnic affection and common experience not necessarily is the same. Similarities within *habitus* do not guarantee ethnic feelings as differences in *habitus* does not close out identification (Yelvington 1991). According to Jones does Bentley not consider important research results from organisational aspects of ethnicity and ethnic contrastation – that ethnicity is a conscious difference related to the others. Ethnicity is not primarily constituted by subliminal consciousness of similarities; ethnicity is essentially a consciousness of differences. Social experience and knowledge involved in the creation of a conscious ethnicity and the formulation of ethnic categories based on a fundamental break with the type of experience and knowledge that constitute an important part of *habitus* (Jones 1998: 94).

Habitus function so that subjective organisation principles and associated types of knowledge, such as a classification system related to gender or class, closes toward a correspondence with existence relations. This correspondence results in a level unconscious social experience, *doxa*, which include misperception and naturalisation of real borders within social order (Bourdieu 1977: 164-165). The political functions with such a classification passes unnoticed, as agents are not aware of rivalry or antagonistic plans, thought or perception. *Doxa* is not the sole form of social knowledge. *Doxa* is reformed when a particular mode of living is put into question in practice. The result is the establishment of orthodox or heterodox forms of knowledge that involve a consciousness and acknowledgement of alternative forms of faith. *Orthodox* knowledge seeks to hinder the possibility for alternatives on a conscious level. *Heterodox* knowledge conveys the existence between several forms of knowledge and their evaluation through explicit critic (Bourdieu 1977: 168-169). Bourdieu explore these

concepts in an analysis on class formations, concepts Jones utilize with analogy to ethnic theory (Jones 1998: 95).

Social interaction with other agents with different cultural traditions states a reflexive perception mode. Such an exposure towards cultural practice limits that up until now was mastered in *doxa*, acknowledge and demand a change in discourse level to rationalize and systematise representations from such a cultural practice and general representation of the cultural tradition in itself (Bourdieu 1977: 233). On this discursive level are ethnic categories created, they are produced, reproduced and transformed through systematic communication of cultural differences in relation to cultural practices with the particular "ethnic others". Ethnicity involve the acknowledgement of common meanings and interests led from the *doxa*-experience and knowledge within certain spheres of *habitus*, similarities which not really can be discussed in a discursive form. The creation of an ethnic consciousness and symbol category involves a break with *doxa* as knowledge due to objective representations of cultural differences involved in an ethnic expression (Eriksen 1993: 3). The effect reinforce a set cultural practices and meanings, which earlier was part of *doxa*. Cultural practice and meaning is more holistic and a substantial object in opposition to the "others".

Jones claims in contrast to Bentley that ethnic normativity in pre-existing realities represented by a common *habitus* are highly variable. Closeness depends on cultural transformations conveyed by interaction processes and state of power relations between interacting groups (Jones 1998: 97). As a result of such processes, ethnic minorities may consist of people from different primordial where the substance of their identities stems from within *and* from the outside. The result is a *bricolage* created by historical processes that form them (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 57). Reproduction of forms of cultural differences and difference relations embody over time behaviour as part of the habitus's structuring dispositions (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 60).

Despite Jones's utilization of abstract and theoretical concepts as *habitus* and *doxa*, these concepts are not actively used in her

archaeological/ethnic case study, which can be interpreted as a weakness in the analysis. *Habitus* is mentioned only once under Romanization Reconsidered. "As an important part of the *habitus*, domestic architecture, such as bath houses and villas, may have been involved in the recognition and signification of a broad Roman identity with relation to particular people in some social domains" (Jones 1998: 134). That architectonic features form Roman identity does not surprise and reference to *habitus* in the quote appears *ad hoc*. An essential concept as *doxa* is not mentioned at all in *Romanization Reconsidered*. By focusing on super organic concepts such as ethnicity, a circle argument is evident; theory frames are reproduced in a dichotomy with the material where the material meaning is conveyed from a deterministic premise within the ethnic definition itself. In other words, Siân Jones starts in the wrong end. The ground zero of an operational ethnic concept is in my opinion in factual, small-scale, performed actions. In the following an operational, ethnic concept is discussed, which starts with *materiality* and *performed action*. But first, the *logic of practice* is considered.

The logic of practice

Social action or agency is concepts that embrace a variety different action. Actions may be intended or unintended, conceive more or less predictable results, be conscious, semiconscious or unconscious constituted. The action does not necessarily predict a given result or predict further consequences and the spectre unintended consequence actions may be more or less apparent for different individuals. Many things we perform on a daily schedule are routine actions, actions that seem self-evident so that they do not need reflection, unless something surprising happens. When people interact in a regular daily pattern, we find that they are structured to a certain extent. Daily behaviour rules can be explicitly expressed or be based on silent agreements or contracts. Daily discourse is regulated by a mix of unconscious or (semi) conscious ways of doing things; the discourse is still not randomly

constituted. Different individuals perform many tasks and daily routines in varied ways, which partly is a result of pragmatic considerations and agreements. If something works, it is little reason for changing routine (Fahlander 2003: 30).

According to Slavoj Zizek, the subjects's understanding of self, environment, together with affect and effect of agency is often blurred, obscure and often misunderstood by the agent and others (Zizek 1989: 31). The semi-conscious level of the agency can be faintly recognized, we recognize these actions if someone tell us, but otherwise they are performmed without much consideration. There are several routine actions performed on a regular basis as main part of our activity (Goffmann 1967; Giddens 1984; Tilley 1999: 16; Conein 1998). Social action can be perceived dualistic, a repeating relation between individual motives and influence from "the normal way of doing things". To be able to analyse unintended effects and structural implications, which constitute daily agency, the paradigm must be treated in an analytic manner. A first step is to discuss *materiality* in relation to *agency* in a time/space perspective (Fahlander 2003: 31).

Serial action and serial categories

Sartre developed concepts over the individuals' regular coactions in solitude. It is the concept serie, which is important in the analysis of the collective character of an individual action (Fahlander 2003: 32). According to Sartre, we are neither subordinate our biological forces or our biographies, we have the opportunity to be aware of our existence in the world. Existential conscious individuals can to a certain extent choose alternative courses or at least leave "the normal way of doing things". Despite the passive constitution of the Ego through experience and state of consciousness trapped in fields of practical immobility, the Ego is still exposed to its own products (Sartre 1988: 292; 1991: 46). These products and temporary relative states of "I" (that is to be conscious one self as one or several historical "I"s) clear a basis for the individual to stand on the side of certain discursive rules

(Sartre 1991: 24, c.f. Börjesson 1986: 160). In this perspective, individuals may through semi-conscious actions in fact change their social worlds. The late Sartre developed these ideas towards a more complex form. In *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1991 [1960]) Sartre merge existential philosophy with Marxist theory. He provides a picture of a social totality, structural element, without excluding individual intentions and perspectives. The plurality of sociality is not just described as constituted of atomised and autonomic subjects, but rather as a total process where social plurality is integrated. Sartre claims that larger, social collectives constitute both a polyvalent isolation with millions of facets *and* an integrated member (Sartre 1991: 257). An interesting notion in Sartre's work that illustrates this process is *serial action* (1991: 256-269). Sartre claims that many socially constituted collectives are better seen as *series*, that is a immovable effect of separate activities, rather than social groups or categories. To be part of a group, after Sartres opinion, the subject has to act conscious, like through fraternising and besides adhere a common cause. What is often conceived as social groups or categories does not qualify to this definition. Instead, many social collectives should be recognised as temporary series, constituted by common circumstances and individuals in a situation (1991: 258).

As an illustrating example Sartre depict a group waiting for a bus. These individuals may have different gender, have differing embodied characteristics and belong to differing fraternities. They are not integrated as a group in a strict sense, rather united by a common goal; to drive the bus. Individuals in the queue would probably not see themselves as a group and they do not share a common social milieu or common discriminating features. This particular series is defined by a fleeting homogeneity. Sartre's' example may seem banal and distinctions less meaningful, but the example may be useful in an analysis of social plurality. Marion Young has for example utilized serial perspectives in feministic theory (Fahlander 2003: 33) Feministic theory has had difficulties with definition of the homogenic category women as a subjectivated group (Butler 1990: 324). Women's' individual

situation in different social situations vary and many do not share the same social problems or goals (Braidotti 1991: 158; Moore 1994: 10). Young's solution to the obstacle is to see "women" and "gender" as series rather than social groups or categories. This particular subjective series is not defined by biological gender or femininity, but social order. It is for example not surprising if there are more women in the queue, while the husband use the family car. In this example there is a direct coexistence with a superstructure, gender ideology, with individual *agency* and materiality. *Agency* is a key word; the series are not necessarily defined by the subjects' intentions, but from their actions. The people in the queue have acted according to different agendas in the special placement of themselves in space/time. Sartre's series concept is therefore fitting in a description of social categories as a result of both individual agency and motives regarding social subjective processes and other structural forces. To utilize Sartre's even better, *serial categories* are added. Such categories are defined from set repetitive, serial acts, instead of simple, temporary series as in the bus queue example (Fahlander 2003: 34).

Most individuals participate in set serial collectives through daily activities. After the bus queue some individuals establish other types of series at work etc. every serial memberships the person involves in does not necessarily mean a constituting of social identity. A profession may mean a lot for some, while others base their identities on other premises. On the other hand, very few define themselves as "public transported". From this follows that in a performed action-perspective, individual, temporary serial situations may be discussed instead of subject roles or status roles, and serial categories instead of social categories. This way, Sartre's concept seems effective in a discussion of agency and social processes as well as in a description of individual actions from a structural view (Fahlander 2003: 34). The premise above forms the core of *serial epistemology* and provides a further basis for analysis with archaeological materiality.

Materiality and serial action

A main point Sartre stated was that agency is not only a social phenomenon. Agency is constituted, enhanced or prohibited, by the material condition of the action. A social relation is rarely an activity between social subjects alone; materiality is always involved in one-way or the other (gosden 1994: 77; Latour 1998). Series with individual actions does not only reflect upon intentions and time/space, actions are also created in relation to a *material world*. In the bus queue example, the bus or the presence of a public transportation system is the central focus where this particular series takes place. The bus is not just a material symbol, but also a cog in the complex machinery that provides the city's typical life (Lynch 1960). The material constitution of the bus, its properties as speed, number of seats etc, is not unimportant. The series depend on such factors (Fahlander 2001: 61, 2003: 35). That artefacts and materiality are involved in social processes is well known and provide am increasing research field, including archaeology (Latour 1991, 1992; Riggins 1994; Gottdiener 1995; Andrén1997; Komter 1998; Schiffer 1999; Preda 1999; Graves-Brown 2000; Cornell and Fahlander 2002; Fahlander 2003).

Attempts to embody things, artefacts and environmental aspects as social *actants* in a social process vary from the symbolic to raw-data. The social potential of things and artefacts is not determined whether they are active or not, as *actants* they operate on different levels. Materialities may simply be good to think with according to Levi-Strauss (1966), or act as metaphors or vessels for the thought (Tilley 1999). Materialities may have an almost determined effect on subjects. One can be held back or be triggered by objects, conscious or unconscious. They may be produced or fitted with specific intentions and still influence future actions on an unforeseen way. The material, built environment is as much a generator for social behaviour as vice versa. One example is houses and buildings. They seem to live and actively perform in society, just as people (Donley-Reid 1990: 349; Parker Pearson and Richards 1994; Bourdieu 1977: 90; Cornell and Fahlander 2002: 123). Houses and buildings are focuses for

repeating actions, which is caused by their immovability and resistance against change. As social subjects, houses are not homogenic, but tend towards differing biographies. Buildings may be raised for one purpose, and reused for other.

Most are involved in more or less complex serial patterns through their daily, weekly or yearly routines. Such temporary jumps in and out of different serial collectives share may similarities with Hägerstrands' time/space geography (1970; 1985). Social individuals follow repeated time/space roads in their daily lives. For some in the bus queue it is a one way travel, while others may find themselves in the same queue at the same time next day, and so on, maybe because of transport to their work. Hägerstrand and other time-geographers point out the regularity of the movement (in solitude or in series) when they perform their daily practices.

Serial paths include forms of environmental and social limits, such as need for regular sleep and food, the type available transportation and social restrictions such as laws or norms. These limitations are not generally valid for all individuals and have temporary implications. A city park can for instance be a popular spot during daytime, while maybe not secure for women during night (Fahlander 2003: 37).

Sartre's serial concept point out the collective character with social life. In fact it seems that structuring practice often is regulated and is routinely performed and often is structured in time/space paths in relation to the material world. Individuals may in many situations act and think as individuals, while they still reproduce patterns following general, social and material conditions. Serial perspectives does not necessarily stem from what the agent think of the material that surrender him/her. Individuals notice materiality in different ways, some things they find ugly, other thing practical, some things we like and in daily routine, we do not think in particular over most of them. Sartre mentions concerning serial practice that there are serial feeling and serial thoughts. "Series is a mode of being for individuals both in relation to one another and in relation to their common being

and this mode of being transform all their structures" (Sartre 1991: 266). Key words to Sartre's perspective is the slowly evolving stability within social practice with materialities functioning as nodes in a structuring process. There are also interesting connections between individual action and more general aspects of social structuring. Sartres's serial concept is a theory concerning social action or *performed action*. To establish analytically operational concepts tools must be developed for a discussion over social action generally and in particular. Here, the concepts series, serial ways and serial categories are expanded with the introduction of the concepts *structuring practice* and *structuring positivities*.

Structuring practice and structuring positivities

Following the discussion on the state of actions, individual or collective actions, actions seem for a large part to be regular and routinely performed. Temporary regulations, intentions and individuals action experiences may vary, but social action tend towards time/space patterns in relation to a material world. This does not mean that social actions are uniform without exceptions and particularities. According to Fahlander, different social actions are connected in different ways, such as culture, discourse or "the normal way of doing things". These concepts are integrated and available in various degrees by social subjects, their actions generally follow a fleeting serial pattern in space, which us temporarily concentrated around nodes in the material world. Giddens's notion of the duality of structures does not cover how structuring processes function on a particular level (Giddens 1993: 6-7). For instance has Arthus Stinchombe noted that some agents seem more rational in some situations, than others (1986: 5). Likewise, Mouzelis (1989) note that agents interact with other agents, which are differently structured with another power position. Margaret Archer (1982) notes that there are social situations where the structure is of greater impact and likewise that there are areas of less structural impact.

The plurality in structuring theory is according to Fahlander an advantage (2003: 40). There cannot be one general theory that specifies relations between every social factors and materialities. A focus on the micro-level of practice does not necessarily mean that more general, structuring elements are lost sight of. Garfinkel (1967), Hägerstrand (1970: 9), Goffmann (1971: 11; 1974) and Collins (1981) have all claimed that many important aspects are to be found outside time/space of social situations and that these relations often are hidden or bypassed silently by agents involved as they are taken for granted. Social action is therefore not just a question about individual intentions and motives, but always related to a larger reference frame. If the predicament is correct, that social practice is constituted by both general and local structuring elements then individual action is a bit about both. Relations between the general and the particular provide the opportunity from detailed studies of particular actions towards general aspects of social life. Therefore, performed activities of a particular situation are to be seen as medium between the particular and the general. Social practices are in different ways a result of the properties of a particular situation. However, these cannot be seen as unique as they also include traditions, institutionalised power relations and other aspects from the outer world.

That subjects involved in a situation or occasion may have different opinions of what happened, why it happened, how and future implications is not important in this setting. By focus on performed action rather than subjective experiences of an action, analyses are not restricted towards a special social or regional frame of reference. Generally, the study of social action is normally related to certain practice-references such as society, regions, nations, culture, or, most important here: *ethnic groups*. Reason is that such units are supposed to encompass a general homogeneity in relation to norms, laws and cosmology where the symbolic universe of all social actions find inspiration and therefore meaning. Such narrow borders rarely frame structuring effects. Giddens claims for instance that: "All societies are both

social systems, and at the same time, constituted by the intersection of multiple social systems" (Giddens 1984: 164). The notion of crossing society character and structural elements indicate that ideologies and political structures are not framed by simple, social formations, but can also be divided and connected with other formations in regional and global networks (cf. Wallerstein 1974-89; Ekholm 1981; Friedman 1994). To analyse social practice as multi-vocal and heterogenic regarding social and space barriers, the concepts *structuring practice* and *structuring positivity* are applied operationally. Especially the concept *structuring positivity* may be substituted for ethnicity as a more dynamic and flexible concept with material and operational connotations. Structuring practices are regular and serially constituted actions. They are not only particular, regular and repeated activities of an institutionalised or ritualised type. There are structuring aspects involved with most of social practice, even if the degree of involvement varies. In contrast to concepts such as tradition, rituals and culture, such practices are often not visible for individuals that perform and observe them. This is not the same as discursive practice; structuring practice is not necessarily related to a particular discourse. Structuring practices are continued routine we perform with a form of regularity, day to day, weekly, monthly or yearly. Such practices may be related towards daily subsistence such as eat or sleep regularly. Structuring practice may also be of a more cultural type, related to games, aesthetic values, rituals or activity (Fahlander 2003: 42).

Structuring practices is narrowed to social actions in that they can be observed, even if others misconceive them. There are exceptions, singular actions inhabit a potential for structuring if they are observable results or materially manifested. Structuring practices are, as serial practice, basically performed in relation to materiality. This key point implicates an opportunity for an abduction of action through its standing remains in the material world (Fahlander 2003: 42).

To illustrate aspect around the abduction of an action, and then track the action in time through materiality, a modern

singular action may be fitting. The funeral of Prime Minister Olof Palme consist of a singular action which seems to unintended have generated a structuring practice. Before the official funeral, Swedish citizens seldom used white coffins. When a white coffin was used, it was usually women that were buried in such a coffin. After Prime Minister Palmes' broadcasted funeral where such a white coffin was used, that particular type has increased in popularity for both genders (Göteborgsposten 2002). A corresponding change in inhumation practice with the Romans could easily, using Jones's concepts, be interpreted as ethnic change.

Structuring positivities on the other hand refer to general action-patterns of actions spanning longer periods and larger space. *Structuring positivities* concern clutters of resistant structuring practices. From an archaeological point of view, structuring practices are normally tracked via fragmented elements traceable in mute artefacts. The concept *structuring positivities* is to be understood different from Giddens's concept on *structuring positivity* and Lévi-Strauss's structures in that they do not include any essential substance. They are not super-organic structure, but rather produced, reproduced and changed by serial and structural actions of individuals. As Giddens's structures, *structuring positivities* are more or less clear to the individuals who (re) produce them, but they may also be obscure for others. The second part of the expression, *positivity*, points out their general, unchangeable and resistant role. *Structuring positivities* are not things in a Durkehimian sense; a *structuring* positivity is not defined, it does not define anything special (Cornell and Fahlander 2002: 66; Fahlander 2003: 43). Despite their virtual character, structuring positivities can be highly homogenizing factors. They are not bound from within, they do not define the typical way a social collective is performed, rather they transcend probably social, temporary and space limits. Such *positivities* are not working in solitude; there are often inconsequent structuring practices present that withstand the usual way of doing things within a social frame.

Some *structuring positivities* are very persistent, but when they change or cease, it normally has a great importance for mind and practice. Such an example may be the patriarchal order. The subjection of women in the present has several implications for both genders, for instance that there would be more women in the bus queue. To that, similar social situations and agencies defined as feminine and natural according to general *structuring positivities* in a patriarchy and a heterosexual norm.

The concepts structuring practice and *structuring positivity* does not insist that the subject necessarily is perceived outside the centre as structural determinism or defined by a super organic, invisible hand shaping social action. The serial perspective with performed action launch an analysis of reproduction of a dominant discourse and categories, perceived as *structuring positivities* as a replacement for *ethnicity*. Fredrik Barth states that if an ethnic group is tracked through time, a cultural history is *not* followed (Barth 1969: 38). Culture historical materiality is thus not commensurable with ethnicity. However, after my opinion, it is possible to track *performed action* through *materiality* and then, maybe – a *structuring positivity* in each contextual analysis.

In the introductive quote of Imre Kertész, the main character evolves when his state in *habitus* represented by *doxa* is transformed towards *ortho-* or *hetero-doxi* when he considers his situation. His state does not correspond to the "right ideal". Consequently, he is disqualified in regard to Siân Jones's definition of ethnicity. Following an ethnic reason he should have felt different from guards and SS-soldiers, not "his own", the other Jews. Ethnicity is an extremely complex matter, and I think the main characters' situation may be analysed with better accuracy with *serial practice* and *materiality*. Daily routines and the very materiality of the KZ-Lager further depict a *structuring positivity*, idea historically probably better known as the modernity project, which the novel criticises. Consequently, Holocaust is the most grotesque example of modernity. Thus, what seemingly concerns ethnicity is rather a question of something else.

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Archaeology and anthropology – brothers in arms?

On analogies in 21st century archaeology

Fredrik Fahlander

How can I reconcile what I see with what I Know?
Dana Scully of the X-files

The relationship between the disciplines of anthropology and archaeology has been repeatedly debated over the years. Some scholars express a somewhat patronising attitude, like the well-known statement of Philip Phillips (1955) that 'archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing', and thus reduce archaeology to a semi-scientific subdiscipline in the general field of humanist studies. Indeed, it is safe to say that the flow of ideas has mostly been one-directional. Archaeologists have frequently, and somewhat uncritically, adopted traditional anthropological models such as 'band-tribe-chiefdom-state', 'lineage based societies', 'big man systems', etc. and frequently employ contemporary low-scale societies as a way to 'put flesh back to the bones'. Archaeologists, it seems, lack faith in the material record as sufficient for social analysis. A somewhat strange attitude as the past *is* in much respect 'unknown' to us and not necessarily similar to practices of the contemporary worlds. It seems more sensible to base our

models and fictions upon the material evidence rather than on contemporary cross-cultural data. We may, however, find that the traditional 'big brother' – 'little brother' relationship between anthropology and archaeology might be turned upside down. For instance, the post-colonial critique has questioned the ethical and scientific status of anthropology and the study of the 'primitive other' (e.g. Bhabha 1994; Haraway 1989). Strands of post-structuralism have also questioned the supremacy and validity of living informants and written accounts (Moore 1994; Ricoeur 1986). Here is archaeology better off as we may as well concern prehistory as 'free' from literary sources and living informants. Instead, archaeology has a potential to explore the possibilities of a 'microarchaeology' of singular time-space frames, investigating the possibilities of a 'sociology of things' (Fahlander 2001; Cornell & Fahlander 2002; Fahlander 2003). Recently we find a growing interest for the materialities in social studies (e.g. Latour 1991; 1992; Riggins 1994; Gottdiener 1995; Komter 1998; Schiffer 1999; Preda 1999; Graves-Brown 2000). These arguments calls for a reconsideration of the future relations between anthropology and archaeology. In this text, I will attempt to evaluate the status of the two disciplines in general, and discuss the question of cross-cultural analogies in particular.

In archaeology, the use of comparisons of material culture and social practices of small-scale groups is a well-established practice. At a basic level, archaeologists more or less automatically categorise certain prehistoric stone artefacts as tools based on such information. The use of analogies is perhaps an unavoidable part of archaeological method as analogies (or metaphors) always are involved in any interpretation of material culture. However, inference by analogy is not restricted to deductive comparisons of artefacts and their usage; analogies are also deployed on more complex levels. For instance, comparisons and inference are frequently made between prehistoric and contemporary groups regarding questions of subsistence, social organisation, social identities, ideology, or cosmology.

The epistemological and source critical aspects of cross-cultural comparisons were very much on the agenda in the 1960s to the early 1980s, but the debate more or less vanished the later decade. It is therefore somewhat surprisingly to find two recently published books that concern these issues: Chris Gosden's (1999) *Anthropology and archaeology. A changing relationship*, and the BAR volume, *Vergleichen als archäologische Methode: Analogien in der Archäologien,* edited by Alexander Gramsch (2000a). The books differ in many respects. Gosden, arguing from an Anglo-Saxon perspective, suggesting a closer relation between the two disciplines, whilst many authors in the BAR volume express more of a heterogeneous view on how anthropological data can, or ought to, be employed in archaeology. It is not very surprising to find the most explicit discussion about analogies in a German anthology. While the debate has more or less vanished from Anglo-American archaeology, it has continued to be discussed in the German-speaking context (Holtorf 2000; Reybrouk 2000).

Gramsh (2000b:4) suggests that the lack of a cultural anthropology in Germany might have resulted in a greater interest in justifying the relevance of ethnoarchaeology to archaeology. German archaeology has a slightly different tradition regarding that question; suffice to mention the controversial theories of Gustav Kossinna whom refused to compare German prehistoric culture with any of the 'lower races' (Kossinna 1911). In addition, the Austrian Oswald Menghin had a very curious way of looking on other cultures. He proposed a simple view in which a culture either filled the criteria or not. Menghin was not concerned whether or not a 'traditional' culture was mixed with Western or European influences. In his view, a specific culture is either a culture or not a culture at all (Menghin 1934). To the extent of my knowledge, there are no similar statements in the Anglo-American debate.

American archaeology, in difference from German and general European archaeology, has primarily studied the prehistory of the *Other:* the Indian. The fact that most American universities put archaeology and anthropology in the same

department is perhaps an effect of these special conditions. Despite the disparate theoretical heritage and disciplinary circumstances are the differences not that significant. The Anglo-Saxon perspective is generally more liberal, seeking to avoid the differences and controversies. Gosden's book is one of many examples of that tradition (despite his Australian descent). His primary argument for a closer relation between archaeology and anthropology is their 'overlapping subject matter', their common history and similar relations to colonialism (1999:9). He aims to provide a bridge between the two disciplines by '…seeking conjunction between cultural anthropology and archaeology, around issues of agency and practice in relation to material world' (1999:119).[1]

Gosden argues that anthropology needs the temporal information from history and archaeology to better understand the present situation. That is perhaps true in a general sense, but to employ archaeological data to put a temporal depth to present day studies, those data cannot be too influenced by social models based on contemporary data. This is a paradox that Gosden and others do not fully recognise. If archaeologists employ and filter their data through models (fictions) constructed on present or historical data, then prehistory will be very familiar and the practice more or less self-fulfilling. A central issue is hence how information or data are supposed to complement each discipline, that is, in which ways archaeology can employ anthropological theory and data.

The problem(?) of analogies in archaeology

One area where the fissions are explicitly present is the question regarding analogies and the use of social models in both disciplines. The debate regarding analogical inference has very much been an archaeological issue, although it certainly is central to anthropology as well. This particular issue also

[1] Still, despite his attempt to treat both disciplines equally are the anthropological references in Gosden's book twice as many as the archaeological.

transgresses the traditional division between processualism and postprocessualism, there are no major differences other than terminology and rhetoric's. In a general sense Middle-range theory and ethnoarchaeology is pretty much the same practice. In the BAR volume, Reybrouck argues that the differences are a mere question of *causality* (2000:48); a shift from emphasising imperative factors and adaptation, to less determinist perspectives focusing on how humans relate to their world and how they bestow it with meanings. In culture-historical archaeology, Inference by cross-cultural analogies appears to have been much of a common-sense methodology in the early history of archaeology and anthropology. The Swedish archaeologist Sven Nilsson is one of the mid-century scholars who compared prehistoric material culture (stone axes etc.) to contemporary South-American cultures to explain features in the northern Scandinavian archaeological record (Nilsson 1866:27f).

> ...It should also be clear, that the only method to appropriate *secure* and *total* knowledge about all these tools, about the way they been shafted and used, as about the tasks which they utilise etc., is to investigate if such stone tools still are in use by contemporary, wild peoples, and to examine how they work them. If we find precisely similar tools of these peoples, both of form and matter, then we can safely infer a similar utilisation; we will further not be mistaken, if we on same grounds assume a similar life-style and knowledge of these contemporary wild peoples and those whom for several millennia ago seized to exist in our Northern Scandinavia (Nilsson 1866:27-8, my translation).

The increasing knowledge about other 'primitive' cultures derived from travellers' accounts made it tempting to compare prehistoric artefacts with the tools used by the colonised peoples. Processual archaeologists, such as Derek Freeman has criticised the Victorian type of 'primitivism', as expressed by e.g. Lubbock (1865:336f)

and Sven Nilsson (1866:27f). Freeman argues that contemporary Bushmen or Aborigines are not 'social fossils', which can be compared with their supposed prehistoric counterparts (Freeman 1968:263). Also Binford opposed to the common use of ethnographic parallels to simply 'interpret' archaeological data and argues that increased ethnological knowledge does not by itself tell us more about prehistory (Binford 1967; 1968:268).

Binford more or less rejects analogies, he argues that ethnographical data only should be used for model building. However, Binford regard 'tested' and approved ethnographically based models as 'facts', beyond the analogical state. As an alternative to simple analogies, Binford advocated a Middle-Range theory (MRT). MRT was an ambitious enterprise, which have been somewhat unfairly criticised (cf. Cornell & Fahlander 2001; Forslund, this volume). Binford's aim was to establish links between day-to-day practice and how the archaeological record was formed. An interesting approach, although he stretched the generality of such links a bit too far. The post-processual, or 'contextual', archaeologists of the 80s continued the discussion by focusing on the identification of 'improper' analogies, searching for 'proper' uses of analogies. For instance, Hodder stresses the importance of context and suggest that questions of relevance, generality and goodness of fit may strengthen analogies (Hodder 1982:22). Alison Wylie (1982; 1985; 1988) and Richard Gould (1980) hold similar positions, proposing a multiple comparative approach, although Wylie points out that the difference between simple and relevance based analogies is in fact marginal (Wylie 1988:144). The main difference between ethnoarchaeology and MRT is more of a shift in perspective - from *how* things were done to *why* they were performed. This is a major step away from simple observations of cause and effect(s) to complex areas of ideology, cosmology or ontology. Hodder and other postprocessual archaeologists suggest that some analogies are more valid or probable than others. But what are the premises for such distinctions? Are comparisons of ideology between past and present societalities equal to piecemeal analogies of artefacts? A

more important question is to determine what kind of social practices which are suitable for comparison. Are there any significance about closeness in time and space or level of technology?

Same, same, but different: Different kinds of analogies?

Hodder notes that almost every archaeologist would assume that a circle of post-holes (i.e. regular patterns of coloured soil) indicates a building, unconscious of the original ethnographic reference to houses of modern Africans or American Indians (Hodder 1982:11). As Hodder, among others, further points out, these basic 'piecemeal-analogies', or general analogies, are not always as dubious as one might think; there are additional methods to strengthen the assumptions (Hodder 1982:11; Orme 1981:21f; Charlton 1981:133). For instance, stone artefacts can be analysed of microwear traces to determine usage (Semenov 1964), and imitative experiments can be conducted in order to control the practicability of the assumed application (Ascher 1961). The problems appear when we move from such low-level type of analogies, to cross-cultural comparisons involving questions of economy, social and cultural organisation, mythical believes or ideologies. In *An ethnography of the Neolithic* (1996), Tilley presents a critical stance towards inference by analogies: "The past thirty years of research and debate in archaeology have more than amply demonstrated that there are no cross-cultural generalizations going beyond either the mundane or the trivial." (Tilley 1996:1). Tilley argues that we should think in differences rather than of similarities, and that we should do it through the archaeological evidence (Tilley 1996:1f). Nonetheless, as Gosden ironically notes, Tilley's Scandinavian Neolithic still have a 'Melanesian touch to it' (Gosden 1999:8). This particular case illustrates the 'problem' of analogies: Perhaps the greatest hazard in dealing with analogies lies in the fact that we constantly have to employ them in one way or another?

In the early 60s Robert Ascher stressed *'the new analogy'*, which simply means that analogies only should be made between peoples who 'use similar environment in a similar way' (Ascher 1961:319). In his article, Ascher tries to find certain restrictions and seeks to identify parameters to control the use of analogies. He emphasises the importance of additional parallels to avoid the 'Bongo-bongo phenomena'; i.e., the probability that you will encounter at least one group in the ethnographical record that behave in a certain way. He also made a distinction of a special category of *'historical analogies'*. Ascher regards the historical analogy as more reliable, assuming a continuously unbroken tradition in certain areas from 'prehistory' to the present. Richard Gould (1980:32) echoes this distinction in the 80s under the labels *continuos* and *discontinuous* analogies, and some contributors in the BAR volume seems to subscribe to such distinctions (e.g. Robrahn-Gonzaléz 2000).

But can we really assume an unbroken chain of traditions as Asher and Gould argue? For how long periods of time are such proposed historical or continuous analogies meaningful? Jaan Vansina (1965) has argued that oral traditions in general are valid for at least 200 years, in some special cases even down to 1000 years. Of course, some social practices might continue invariably for a long period of time, but their purpose and meaning more likely to have being transformed, misunderstood, or changed (cf. Derrida 1974). This kind of reasoning is perhaps an effect of the lack of temporality in anthropological work that Gosden points at. Nonetheless, the historical approach is essentially patronising, viewing indigenous cultures as 'cold' and stagnant without social progress or flexibility. From a historical point of view, cultural continuity over a longer period of time-space would in itself be an anomaly (Leach 1989:45). There are no, and have probably never existed any, 'cold' or 'traditional' societies out of time, which unchanged and unaffected are ticking along like clockworks.

Similar questions also arise regarding the distinction of the *relational analogy*. Hodder distinguishes *formal* analogies from *relational* as two opposites on a continuum of variation. The first category concerns analogies between two objects that share a

number of properties. The relational analogy, '…seeks to determine some natural or cultural link between the different aspects in the analogy' (Hodder 1982:16). But can we really determine what is relational and what is not? Of course, such questions always depend on social context. In this case, it is easier to understand the structure-functional point of view. If one is willing to accept the postulates of cultural systems divided in subsystems and the typology of social formations such as the band-tribe-chiefdom-state scheme, then relational analogies might be meaningful. But from a less formalist, post-processual perspective, such 'relational' aspects have little relevance.

For instance, are the social practices of the Inuits' less relevant to European Palaeolithic than the ones of African Bushmen? Is the climate or milieu most important, or is it group size, political organisation, or level of technology? It is hard to see that there can be any general aspects of social behaviour that have supremacy over others, such distinctions have to be specific for each unique case. Despite the critique, the idea of the relational or 'proper' type of analogy is persistent in postprocessual archaeology.

The third strand in the debate concerns the question of whether or not multiple, that is, additionally coinciding, analogies strengthen interpretations. This might seem like a sensible approach, but it is nevertheless meaningless from an epistemological point of view. In the BAR volume, Bernbeck advocates, in line with Hodder and others, the use of additional analogies (Bernbeck 2000:143). Her arguments lack logic as Bernbeck strongly opposes to the use of analogies when interpreting gender and gender roles, which we actually can find a mass of coinciding references from the ethnographical record. This unequal state of affairs between the sexes is perhaps more a result of the power of contemporary patriarchal ideology during the last two or three millennia, rather than being a 'natural' order (Fahlander 2001). Nonetheless is it an illustrating example that shows how little multiple references strengthen interpretations of other social formations.

> *Analogy*: the relationship between two things which are similar in many, though not in all, respects.
>
> *Analogical Logic:* the assumption that if two things are similar in one or two respects, they will be similar in other respects.
>
> (New Webster's dictionary 1992)

It is important to recognise that cross-cultural comparisons are not equivalent to the formal logic of analogies. An analogy is based on the assumption that if two things are similar in one or two respects, they will probably be similar in other respects. An analogy between two such seemingly similar things have no epistemological value by it self, it is based on probability theory and the number of properties that are common for both objects. In a strict logical sense may the significance of the analogy be calculated in order to approximate the probability of similarity between the unknown properties of one of the objects. Analogical inference in this sense is not that different from traditional induction. Far more complex are comparisons of social practices and institutions. In those areas are probabilities impossible to calculate. Cross-cultural comparisons of social practices are both inductive and deductive as they also involve a choice between ranges of different comparative 'objects'. They are different from other archaeological methods, such as typology, which can be correlated with e.g. carbon dating. Indeed, it seems that analogies concerning human behaviour have little conclusive value besides the rhetorical argument.

The revisionist critique

A central feature in this discussion is the arguments of the so-called revisionist or critical anthropologists. It is commonly known that there are numerous pit-falls in interpreting ethnographic/

anthropologic 'data' (e.g. Aunger 1995 + discussion; Leach 1989; Gould 1980:36; Friedman 1994). I will not extend that particular debate here, but I would like to point to some matters of importance for the question of cross-cultural comparisons.

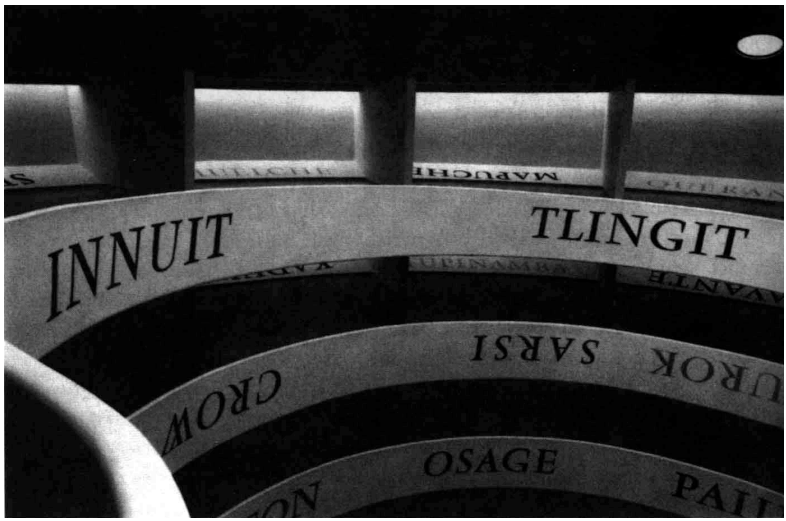

Fig. 1. Lothar Baumgarten, American Invention, (detail) Guggenheim, New York.

The first is the question of how the ethnographic record has been compiled and organised by ethnographers and anthropologists. Gosden discusses these problems to some extent and delivers several examples (1999:41, 103-8). One concerns the circumstances in which Malinowski worked at the Trobriand Islands 1916. It was not a pristine social formation he studied. He started out in a government compound, which included a prison, hospital, twelve white residents, a large pearl industry and a large plantation of coconut trees. Malinowski also 'overlooked' the fact that there had been Christian missionaries and traders present for

at least twenty years before his arrival (cf. Leach 1989). In anthropology the colonial influence and contaminating effect on politics, social practices and cultural boundaries all over the world are nowadays quite well recognised (e.g. Gellner 1995; Stahl 1993:247-9; Billington 1991:68-73; Vansina 1989:244). Leach, when discussing the impact of outside influence, states that "traditional culture is simply not available for inspection and has never been" (1989:39). He stresses that 'outside influence' has been neglected in the history of anthropology and hence created a distorted picture of 'traditional' cultures.

The case of Malinowski might be argued to be a very special and unique example, highlighted by his posthumous published diaries. There are nonetheless similar objections to most of the prominent anthropologists of the 20th century. For instance, Radcliffe-Brown gathered most of his genealogical data regarding his study of 130 aboriginal 'tribes' from a remote hospital for venereal diseases (Layton 1997:69). It is hardly any surprise that his material showed structural regularities as the material already was catalogued in such manner by the colonial administration. Gosden also discusses the circumstances of the Bushmen in Africa, who have for centuries been forced into the army and have moved out and in of pastoral, agriculture and foraging ways of life (1999:102f). Another frequently used analogy is the Big-man system of Papa guinea. According to Gosden, that particular social organisation is a result of the breakdown of the shell-money system caused by colonial inference (cf. Friedman 1994). The result of the colonial bias is a quite ordered ethnographical record, which probably have little relevance to archaeological interpretations. Levi-Strauss noted that about thirty separate aboriginal groups were gathered together in a camp during the 1930s by the Australian authorities where they were mixed with other groups and exposed to missionaries and militaries. The camp including separate sleeping-houses for boys and girls, a school, a hospital and a prison etc. (Lévi-Strauss 1963:67-114).

Besides the referred examples of the modern bias it is also important to stress the impact of other earlier contamination by

e.g. medieval Muslim societies, the Chinese Empire, the Bantu system in Africa and many others (Friedman 1994; Fahlander 2001). In addition, there is certainly quite intense interaction in prehistory as well. It is harder to establish, but the spread of raw materials and artefacts does indicate that different areas were in direct or indirect contact with each other, however not necessarily in the form of population movements (cf. Clark 1994; Kristiansen 1998).

Hybridisation of culture

In *Cultural studies,* globalisation is a common theme, suggesting that all cultures are mosaics or hybrids (e.g. Bhabha 1994). The globalisation of popular culture, expansion of multinational companies, the formations of unions like the EU, the massive adaptation to market economy and of course the pan-national Internet are mentioned as important factors in such a process. Nonetheless, this prospect is perhaps less likely to involve all kinds of social practices, strategies, and behaviour. Instead of hybridisation it may be more relevant to speak about a homogenisation of certain powerful structurating practices of the long term. It is not the world-wide spread of Coca-Cola as a beverage that is important in this process, but the implicit ideology behind it that matters. The process is perhaps more about producing and reproducing clusters of *structurating practices* and *structurating positivities* (Fahlander 2003:40-47). It seems obvious, that social practices in many small-scale, 'traditional' societies have been to different extent transformed/influenced by 'outside' interference as well as local aspects. Such changes/transformations are always tied to ideological and cosmological transformations (i.e. changes in structurating positivities). A number of social practices may seem unchanged but their social significance may very well have been altered or fragmented (cf. Kristiansen 1998).

Fig. 2. "...we visited an ancient burial ground to collect Polynesian skulls. We were, however, accompanied by a Polynesian 'spy', whom we tricked to follow me while Liv filled a sack with skulls for anthropological research" (Heyerdahl 1974:117).

Following that argument, there is little value in comparing, say, burial patterns of 'separate groups' (i.e. cultures) as in the well-known case of Binford's analysis of mortuary practices (1971). By compiling ethnographic data of forty non-state societies, Binford concluded that there are strong relations between the social identity (i.e. sex and status) of the deceased and the complexity of the 'cultural unit'. He also showed that social identity is likely to be displayed in corresponding discrepancies in burial practices.

> Variations among cultural units in frequencies of various forms of mortuary treatment vary in response to (a) the frequency of the character symbolised by the mortuary form in the relevant population and (b) the number and distribution of different characteristics symbolised in mortuary treatment as a function of the complexity and degree of differentiation characteristic of the relevant society (Binford 1971:25).

Binford implies that these patterns are universally human, and suggests that we might expect to find the same pattern in past societies. However, what Binford actually achieved in his study was to establish that in *our time* sex and status are prominent categories in many low-tech marginalised societies. When looking at past societies, is that information initially meaningless; we cannot assume a continuous tradition of such properties. We might, however, regard Binford's results as a hypothesis and investigate whether archaeological data from a specific time and place support it. We should not, however, be surprised if the data do not fit (cf. Fahlander 2003:87ff).

It might be argued that such awkward analogical inference belongs to a past phase of archaeological practice, but there are more recent examples. Reybrouck provides a number of examples in the BAR volume. For instance, in *A phenomenology of landscape* (1994), Tilley transfers a symbolic cosmology and shamanism of contemporary hunter-gatherers to the Mesolithic and Neolithic inhabitants of prehistoric Britain. Tilley devotes a whole chapter of his book to ethnographical descriptions as a conceptual background (1994, ch. 2). The transference of the cosmology and social practices of contemporary hunter-gatherers to prehistoric Britain are assertions, which in no way strengthens Tilley's interpretations. Symptomatically, anthropological studies suggest that the shaman activity of African hunter-gatherer increased during the earliest period of contact with the Western colonialists.
One conclusion that can be drawn from the revisionist critique is that there are no genuine anthropological objects to employ as analogies. What we find in the anthropological record is probably a result of several hundred years of marginalisation/expansion

processes and modernist ideas of how small-scale social groups normally behave. The popular view of pre- and protohistoric 'social systems as isolated uniform, ethnic groups, 'doing their thing' in their local environment is indeed a hollow one. Gosden, and I presume, most anthropologists of today, are fully aware that no 'cultures' exist as isolated islands, but how to deal with this situation and its implications to anthropology and archaeology is to Gosden an 'ongoing question' (Gosden 1999:181). It is hard to identify any 'solution' to this problem, but one promising way is to study structurating practices as repetitive actions that not necessarily need to be 'understood' in any temporal, social or geographical frame. Such a programme, a microarchaeology, is outlined in a number of texts (e.g. Cornell & Fahlander 2002a, 2002b, Fahlander 2003).

From such a perspective will anthropology have serious difficulties to obtain a status as an independent discipline in relation to other social sciences such as sociology. This, of course, has implications to archaeology as well. The revisionist argument has radical consequences to both anthropology and archaeology. Kinship ties, marriage regulations, incest taboos, or the concept of the nuclear family are perhaps not relevant to prehistoric social formations. Such structurating practices may be quite recent social phenomena.

Beyond analogies? - Metaphors, metonyms and difference.

Texts concerning analogies in archaeology seldom concern any new developments or insights, but we find a controversial attempt by Cornelius Holtorf in the BAR volume. Holtorf subscribes to the relativist position arguing that neither past, nor present societies are understandable: "It is obvious that after studying the same evidence, different conclusions could have been reached equally well" (Holtorf 2000:167). Such a perspective offers a comfortable escape from dealing with the real problem. However, I do not agree on this matter. In some respect is the past heterogeneous and multivocal of which we can never fully

understand or reconstruct, but some aspects are more solid than others. As Pearce, among others, has noted, the temporal and spatial positions of artefacts and other traces of human impact exclude some interpretations and support others (Pearce 1994:130). Archaeology is not simply about speculation and construction, although some aspects are more difficult to grasp than others. As Cornelius Castoriadis puts it, we can say something about certain aspects of *Other* cultures, past or present, but some areas are more problematic. For instance, Castoriadis refutes the possibility of understanding the 'affective vector'; we can learn a great deal about, for instance, the mystery cults of the Romans, but we can never understand how a Roman individual *felt* while entering the Eleusinian mystery cult (Castoriadis 1995:107).

Holtorf suggests that the metaphor and metonymy, advocated by Tilley (1998), are better alternatives to think through than simple analogies of practice. It is perhaps a better choice to use metaphors, but it is hardly an alternative. Metaphors and metonymies are as general and mundane as any analogy. There can hardly be anything substantial to metaphors than the simple fact that humans tend to think through them. Some strands of psychoanalysis make claims about 'general' states and drives, but a closer reading of Freud or Lacan shows that the illusion of homogeneity in human mentality is more of a theoretical construction than what can be identified in actual practice (Fahlander 2001:85ff). The concepts of metaphor or metonymy are interesting and may prove usable; but they are not substitutes to analogies. Metaphors are more consistent with the shift of focus from analogies of practices (processual) to analogies of the social and psychological dimensions (postprocessual).

Models and fictions in anthropology & archaeology

Over the years, archaeology has built up much of its 'knowledge' of prehistory with the aid of cross-cultural analogies. The close bond to anthropology has created a varied but yet consistent

notion of typical small-scale social socialities. The obvious problem is that some types of social practices and socialities are bound to have existed, but which are no longer represented in the present (cf. Freeman 1968:266). Some of these extinct formations are, however, likely to be found in the archaeological record. These may have very little in common with contemporary social practices and structurating properties. For instance, have various scholars refuted the universal status of issues such as the concepts of the self, sex, and nature (e.g. Foucault 1989; Laqueur 1990; Merchant 1980; McGrane 1989; Fahlander 2003). What we are dealing with in both anthropology and prehistory are variations of social practices, which have to be attended to in their own sociohistorical context. The central question is thus not an epistemological one about whether or not employ analogies, but rather one of in which manner we use our imagination, creativity and how to value our sources of information (cf. Tilley 1996:337f).

I do not suggest that cross-cultural parallels are entirely without relevance. On the contrary, a wide range of ethnographical and social experience is likely to expand our horizons and provide a better platform for interpreting material remains. It is however not enough, as we must expect to encounter 'unknown' social practices and social forms with no correspondence to what we already 'know'. It is surely problematic, if not impossible, to depart from what we 'know', but it is nonetheless important to try. It is similar to the ontological insecurity that the trained scientist special agent Dana Scully of the X-files experiences in her frequent contacts with the unknown. Her struggle to make sense of what she is trained to believe is repeatedly questioned of what she experience in the field. In a monologue she complains: "How can I reconcile what I see with what I know?"

The similarities between different traditional peoples of today is perhaps more a result of several thousands of years of homogenisation processes and regional interaction than being the remaining properties of a common, natural, origin. From that perspective, the ethnographical record has no supremacy over e.g.

Western social practices. It dissolves the disciplinary borders between anthropology and sociology. In fact, it actually dissolves the border between social science and popular fiction. I have argued elsewhere (Fahlander 2001) that science fiction is an alternative as good as any, especially as it often deals with 'unknown' social forms. To stick to the constructed ethnographical record, or the illusion of the ethnic group leaning on ethnoarchaeological studies, will only preserve a dull view of prehistory, not to mention its androcentric and Western patronising implications. Gosden considers ethnoarchaeology as 'immoral' (1999:9). The question is whether or not anthropology in the traditional sense is just as patronising.

The 'archaeological evidence' does not speak for itself, neither through metaphors nor analogies. It is only through a discussion about how social practices relate to materialities that archaeology can maintain a position within the social sciences. The archaeological record often contains more information than we generally use. To find new and improved ways of extracting social information from such materialities is perhaps the most prominent task for 21st century archaeology. After all, the uncertainty of prehistory is what makes our discipline exciting and meaningful.

However, to achieve such goals, archaeology must become an independent discipline and be able to contribute with information that is not retrievable elsewhere. This is unfortunately not the situation today; archaeological knowledge is rarely addressed in social theory other than in crude evolutionary and/or generalising manners. However, if successful, archaeology may enhance sociology, anthropology and even philosophy by providing the social sciences with 'independent' interpretations of past social practices, interpretations built on material culture, rather than from direct analogies with contemporary data. Anthropology may, as Gosden claims, need archaeology; but archaeology does not necessarily need anthropology. Archaeology needs creative fictions, more complex models and social theories of practice that include the material world. In retrospect, it rather seems like the close bond between anthropology and archaeology was a

somewhat incestuous relation, rather than being a fruitful collaboration between two brothers in arms.

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MRT Confidential

Pontus Forslund

Middle Range Theory is one of the most discussed phenomena in the archaeological theoretical debate. A phenomenon that often has to stand in the shadow of its symbol status in the theoretical debate. It is one off the dearest tools of processual archaeology and at the same time perhaps the dearest target of postprocessual critique. This article seeks to discuss MRT, how it is defined and how it is used in the debate between processualists and postprocessualists.

Archaeology was radically changed in the 1960's. A group of young archaeologists found the current archaeological climate far too limited and sought change. With Lewis Binford in command a new archaeology was created. The old school (called cultural archaeology throughout) was criticized for being too inexact. The new archaeology wanted answers about the prehistoric times and their theories were preferably statistically proven through tables and diagrams. Backed by the C14 dating method this new archaeological school ruled from the late sixties to the early eighties.

"New Archaeology" was also to be called processual archaeology because it sought to divide theory in two parts where one had a general part on one hand which contained processes in social system and on the other hand one spoke of formation processes (Sjögren 1999, 128) where MRT was an important part. The applicability of MRT within the processual archaeology and its ability to create "answers" through systematic analogies made it embraceable to processual archaeologists. MRT was meant to be the Rosetta stone of the processual archaeology.

The rejected definition

The form of Middle Range Theory that became the most prominent and mostly discussed in archaeology is the one that was introduced by Lewis Binford. The term Middle Range Theory seems to have risen from two places independent from each other. On one hand we've got the mentioned Binford version and on the other hand we find Mark Raab and Albert Goodyear. They found the term MRT in another discipline: Sociology. The sociologist Robert K. Merton had since the 1940's spoken of a Middle Range Theory (Merton 1957, 328) that was meant to provide a logical link between relative low-level empiristic generalisations and comparatively high-level theories (Raab & Goodyear 1984, 257). The purpose was to neutralize the high level of abstraction in the big theories which can be seen as a scientific strategy instead of an actual theory building (Sjögren 1999, 128). In despite of critique against Merton, Raab and Goodyear claim that his MRT has been a fundamental influence on social theory (Raab & Goodyear 1984, 258).

Raab and Goodyear formulated their own thoughts on MRT in archaeology in 1973 in an article entitled *On the value of Middle Range Theory in archaeological research strategies.* This article was sent to American Antiquity but got rejected and was never published although Michael Schiffer refers to it as wide-spread (Schiffer 1988, 462). Their idea of MRT is illustrated nicely by their scheme (figure 1).

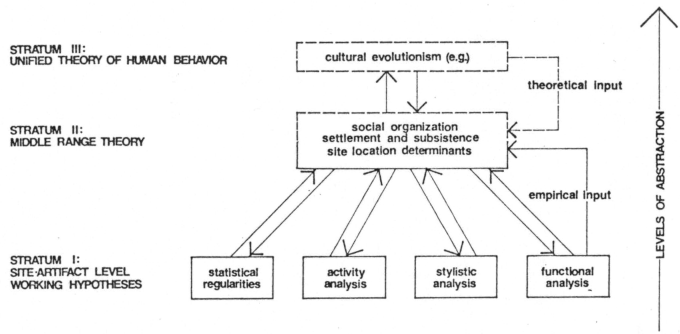

Figure 1. Raab and Goodyear's idea of MRT (Raab and Goodyear 1973:6).

Raab and Goodyear want to introduce MRT in archaeology in true Merton spirit in order to neutralize the high level of abstraction in the high-level theories and make them relevant to the empiristic low-level studies. Their self proclaimed main point of their paper is that they think …

> …that we are more likely to make our most productive gains by constructing and testing theories that operate in the middle range of social science inquiry. What this means is the selection or construction of theories that are readily operationalized into their empirical consequences /…/ This suggests that the task before us is to develop hypotheses or special theories that can be empirically investigated using limited but significant conceptual ranges (Raab & Goodyear 1973, 7-8).

Their ideas on MRT were eventually published in American Antiquity in 1984. The article provides the reader with a good resume of Merton's ideas but also discusses problems with Binford's version of MRT to which I intend to return.

Creation of Binford's monster

Lewis Binford admits confusion about the introduction of MRT as a term in the archaeological literature. According to Binford himself he gave a seminar in 1972-3 by the University in New Mexico that was locally known among the students as the "Middle Range Theory seminar". It was during this period he developed his well known Nunamiut material that was also very important for his MRT. Binford's purpose was to get the students to accept the challenge with theory building. It was obvious for Binford that the strategies that were appropriate for the development and testing of archaeological theory weren't applicable on the development and testing of general theory. This elucidatory contrast got the concept of "archaeological theory" to seem far too ambiguous which lead to that he adopted the term "Middle Range Theory" or "Middle Range Research".

In the spring of 1974 three of Binford's students that had participated in the MRT seminar handed in an article to *The Society of American Archaeology*. The title of this article was *Middle Range Theory in Archaeology* in which they discussed the need for drawing more attention to linking arguments that could give meaning to the archaeological record (Binford 1983b, 18-19).

It is said that Binford took Raab and Goodyear's term of MRT and created a meaning of his own (Sjögren 1999, 128). Binford firmly resents this and states that MRT must have originated from two different places within archaeology. He has no conscious ties to the sociologist Merton and states that his version of MRT has nothing to do with different levels of abstraction but more about tactics on theory generating and examinations where one uses different kinds of data. In *For Theory Building in Archaeology* he formulates his purpose with MRT for the first in printing. In this publication from 1977 Binford finds that the challenge of the time was in theory building and at that time there was neither prosperity nor success to speak of in this field although many had acknowledged the challenge and accepted it. He thought that there was an urgent need for theory building on at least two levels

where on of these was MRT. It does require that one accepts that observations made on the archaeological record are contemporary facts and that these facts are static. He means that:

> …clearly basic problems for the archaeologist include (a) how we get from contemporary facts to statements about the past, and (b) how we convert the observationally static facts of the archaeological record to statements about dynamics (Binford 1977, 6).

He asks himself rhetorically:

> What meaning mat we justifiably give to contemporary static facts regarding past dynamics? What conditions of dynamics, not available for observation, produce the forms and structures observable as static patterning in the archaeological record? (ibid.)

These questions of Binford are hard but suit his line of argument. To approach these problems he saw the need for developing ideas and theories, in this case MRT, regarding the formation processes in the archaeological record. Binford draws parallels with theories from geology, which he means was centered around assumed uniform factors i.e. that the same dynamic processes in the past are still operative. Without a development of a theory-building that sees to the relationship between the static and dynamic, Binford couldn't see any real progress forthcoming.
So, this was the challenge Binford assumed when he decided to develop a MRT. He considered:

> … it middle range because I believe that we seek to make statements about the past in order to evaluate ideas we may hold about the conditions that brought about change and modification in the organization of dynamics occurring in past living systems.

When looking at the processes responsible for change and organization, Binford means that one should seek the development of general theory. Binford puts great emphasis on that development of both general and MR theory should proceed hand in hand. The scientific method can only be applicable in such a relationship and without a mutual development, the development of MRT may prove to be just needless. The general theory is needed as criteria of relevance. Advances in MRT separated from the general theory could, in Binford's view, be a complete waste of time (Binford 1977, 7).

In this publication of his, a series of articles follows that discus various themes of examples used for theory building. Binford develops his idea with MRT together with J.B. Bertram in a chapter on bone frequencies. Binford thinks that the anatomy of animals is such a well known subject. It should therefore be possible that one can study the frequency of different animal bones how they were used, transported or abandoned by prehistoric people as a direct measure of their economic and logistical sophistication and appropriate variable behaviour in different settings and milieus (Binford 1977, 7). A very interesting chapter where he also discusses "N-transforms" that were introduced by Michael Schiffer. We will examine these more up close later on.

In his book *Bones: Ancient Man and Modern Myths* (1981) Binford discusses his idea of MRT further. He also uses the term "middle-range research" that should be seen as MRT in its practical execution.

Binford means that the theories that explain the archaeological material have to be intellectually independent of our prior conceptions of prehistory or our prior theories concerning the processes responsible for past actions, changing patterns or stability. He also means that MRT has to be intellectually independent from general theory. Even though he already claimed that their development should proceed hand in hand. He continues:

> Middle Range Theory must be tested primarily with documented living systems. Middle Range Theory treats the relationship between statics and dynamics, between behavior and material derivatives. General Theory may be tested using archaeological phenomena meaningfully operationalized through middle-range research (Binford 1981, 29).

He closes the chapter by claiming:

> The conclusion should be clear: Middle-range research, with particular emphasis on theory building, is crucial to the further development of archaeology. We cannot 'know' the past without it, and we cannot evaluate our ideas about the past and why it was the way it appears to have been without means of monitoring the conditions or variables believed to be important. Both of these tasks are dependent upon the development of middle-range research (Binford 1981, 30).

In the 1983 publication *Pursuit of the Past* Binford writes that his meaning was to study the relation between the static and dynamic in a modern environment. If one understood this relation in detail it would provide a kind of Rosetta stone: a way to "translate" the static, material stone tools found at an archaeological site to the expressive life of a people that once left the tools behind (Binford 1983x, 24).

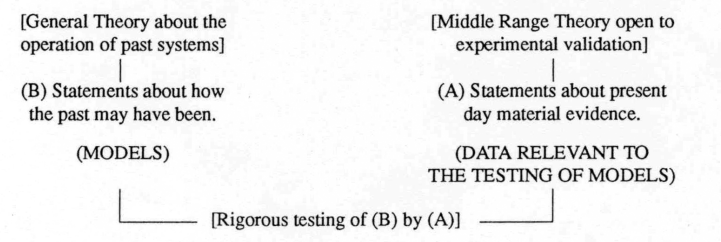

Figure 2. Binford's idea of MR research (Barrett 1990, 33).

MRT alive and kicking

The question that the archaeologist is asking to herself/himself is: "How do we get the present objects; the artefacts to tell us about the past?" The processual archaeologists criticized the cultural archaeologists for too clearly lacking theoretical reflection against the archaeological record. There was surely an awareness of theoretical and methodological approaches but these were just as surely implicit and unspoken. When Binford propagated a development in archaeological theory and launched his own ideas this was a way of making theory visible and make it clear and explicit.

When the present archaeologist makes assumptions about the past this is called an analogy. An analogy is how we use the information derived from one context; the present, to explain data found in another context; the past (Johnson 1999, 48). This means that one assumes that things in the past are like the present. How easy and simple this may sound, an analogy is not something ugly but doubtless the method that has brought the most archaeological knowledge into this world. Analogies are used by all archaeologists independently of theoretical camp. The more links that are found, the more one could argue that the two situations are analogous and thereby scientific valid. An obvious assumption that definitely could do with critical examination.

MRT as it was to be used in archaeology looked to put various analogies in systems. This principally took place in ethnoarchaeology where Binford himself was one of the major players but also in other so-called sub-disciplines as zooarchaeology, archaeobothany and experimental archaeology.

MRT as propagated by Raab and Goodyear had little influence on practical archaeology and the MRT discussed is the one formulated by Binford.

Binford in action

Lewis Binford's will to test his theories and produce MR information took him to Alaska to study the Nunamiut Eskimos.

The Nunamiut was a people who pursued deer hunting in an environment similar to the one in southern France during the Mousterian period. Binford, long intrigued by the Mousterian collections, thought that by studying the Nunamiuts he could see what kind of hunter-gatherer activities that caused an archaeological record. This resulted after a couple of articles and seminars in the book "Nunamiut Archaeology" (1978) He writes in the introduction:

> My interest is in the past but my observations are on the present. To pursue my interest I must accomplish two separate kinds of acts: (a) I must project my contemporary observations accurately into the past and (b) I must assign meaning to my observations (Binford 1978, 1).

His work in Alaska dealt with the faunal remains that were the result of Nunamiut activities. Binford meant that many of the animal species found in the archaeological record are permanent and the processes of exploitation and use that were operative in the past are still operative today. The study of faunal factors had, according to Binford, another advantage when looking at 'utility'. 'Meat Utility Index' (MUI) or 'Food Utility Index' (FUI) are referring to the anatomical parts on an animal that are thought of as useful and used for foods. Binford wanted to study the modern representatives of these animal species and their butchery in a similar environment to gain a greater understanding about faunal bone findings in archaeological contexts (Binford 1978, 12).

The book "Nunamiut archaeology" provides the reader with an exhaustive picture of these Eskimos economy of hunting, food and butchery. The book is full of charts and tables, the text is often heavy and hard to understand and Binford is expressing his views far too complicated. The discussion about the 'residential sites' contra 'kill sites' is one of the profits with his studies. Here he is pointing out the nature of the bone findings whether the place of excavation was a place for habitance or solely functioned as a butchering station before transport (Binford 1987, 482-485). This

discussion of his was very influential and are recognized in the presumed hunting stations at Star Carr and Ringkloster (Rowley-Conwy 1998, 87-98).

Critique against MRT

The critique against Binford's MRT came from different directions. There were voices raised among processualists that questioned its validity and whether it served its purpose. When postprocessualism was introduced in the 1980's MRT was attacked as a part of the general critique against "New Archaeology".

Raab and Goodyear get their chance

Although Mark Raab and Al Goodyear may have been and perhaps were first by using the term MRT in archaeology their idea hasn't really been appreciated in the theoretical debate and is rather mentioned as a matter of curiosity. One can't escape thinking what would have happened if American Antiquity hadn't refused their 1973 article. Had Binford chosen another term for his research?

Despite archaeologists professional status in speculations we shall never know this. As mentioned above Raab and Goodyear did get published in American Antiquity on the matter of MRT, first in 1984 when MRT thanks to Binford already was a well-established institution. From the article "Middle Range Theory in Archaeology: A critical review of origins and applications" we shall examine the critique that Raab and Goodyear directed against the archaeological use of MRT.

Faithful to Merton's original idea of MRT they see no advantages but dangers with calling for instance "principles of site formation processes" (Raab & Goodyear 1984, 258:262). They find that this is restricting the term MRT to methodological issues. In their opinion, archaeologists need both an expanded and a more organized view on theory building. They write: "A narrow

focus on methodology will do little to encourage such development if archaeologists become convinced that 'middle-range theory,' as presently construed, constitutes an adequate approach to theory-building in its own right. This problem is particularly acute if principles of site formation processes are held to be synonymous with 'middle-range theory' (Raab & Goodyear 1984, 262)."

They find that the appearance of MRT in archaeology has been made obscure by the problems of theory in general where they notice confusion over the concepts of comprehensiveness and generality in the development of theories (ibid.).

Despite their critique they claim that one shouldn't raise unnecessary pessimism against the possibilities of MRT. They actually think of Binford's Nunamiut research as a good example of alternative models on the behaviour of hunter-gatherer societies (Raab & Goodyear 1984, 263) even though they feel that his perception of MRT is too narrow.

Raab and Goodyear want to emphasize that MRT ought to develop in studies on social phenomena although it is characterized with complexity and a high level of abstraction.

Schiffer's opinion on MRT

Michael Schiffer has, despite that many notice similarities between his research and Binford's MRT never been an adherent of neither Binford nor Raab and Goodyear's versions of MRT. MRT is simply a term that he doesn't use and why should he when he has his own view and his own terms to develop and defend? He has however discussed MRT and has used the term in American Antiquity in 1988 an article entitled "The Structure of Archaeological Theory".

Here he accounts for the problems and possibilities with both Binford's and Raab and Goodyear's idea of MRT (see figure x). He questions Binford's misuse of sociological terms but asserts in the same breath that a literate transference of Merton's MRT to archaeology is impossible (Schiffer 1988, 462). Even if a single

hierarchy of logically related principles can be contemplated in sociology, Schiffer means that the principles in archaeology are too diverse that they couldn't be forced into a single hierarchy. He uses wood-rotting fungi as an example as it is relevant for interpreting certain radiocarbon dates. This is not subsumed by social high-level theories of change but by theories from biology.

He claims that archaeology, unlike sociology is the most interdisciplinary discipline as it is incorporating varied theories from almost every natural and social science.

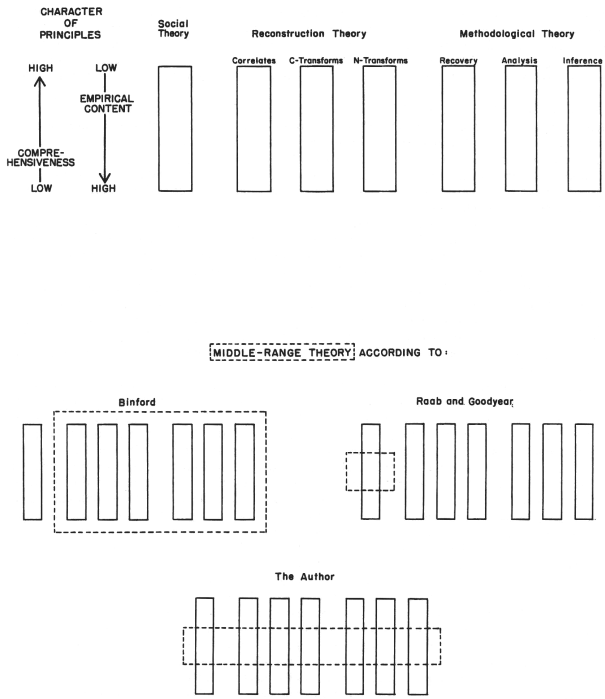

Figure 3. Schiffer's idea of MRT (Schiffer 1988, 456).

Schiffer points out that Raab and Goodyear (in their 1984 article discussed above) admits that social high-level theories can not be subsumed into all archaeological principles. Their solution to this dilemma is to claim that only principles capable of explaining cultural behaviour are real theory and everything else i.e. Binford's MRT as methodology, an assertion that Schiffer finds remarkable. He also reacts against that Raab and Goodyear are accusing Binford of having a narrow conception of MRT when they themselves are propagating a restrictive and unacceptable view of theory that they achieve by confusing the function and structure of theory. Schiffer often states, like here, that any theory can function as a method depending on context.

Schiffer rather wants to advance his own version of Merton's MRT where he assumes that each hierarchy of archaeological principles contains high-, middle-, and low-level theories (see figure x). In conformity with the formulation of Merton, principles within each hierarchy can be related logically. He writes:

" A level of theory (high, middle or low), then, denotes a particular degree of abstraction within one hierarchy of related principles or an analogous degree of abstraction that crosscuts different hierarchies. Thus, we may regard evolutionary theory as high level and the theory of pedestrian tactic survey as middle or low without implying that the former subsumes the latter. Because the study of archaeological theory is still in its infancy, the level of to which a given theory belongs and its relations to other theories may not be easy to determine (Schiffer 1988, 463)."

Grayson has heard it all before

There were also critics of MRT that found the whole phenomenon by no means new but had the opinion that MR research had been an ongoing strategy long since. One of these was Donald K. Grayson who puts down his thoughts in this matter in the publication "American Archaeology: Past and Future" (1986) in a chapter called "Eoliths, Archaeological Ambiguity and the Generation of 'Middle-Range' Research". It is principally and almost solely the research of Binford and the notion that this is unrepresented before that is the subject of his

criticism. Grayson sees that this research emphasizes the study of preserved systems where both processes and the result of these processes can be observed and where you seek to isolate classified types whose recognition in the archaeological record can inform us of what kind of process that formed this record.

Grayson means however that MR research and in particular research that is directed towards the diagnostic signatures within formation processes are indeed a part of "traditional archaeology". His view is that this kind of archaeological work is routinely produced by situations in which archaeologists admits confusing ambiguity in the examples that is presented to them by archaeological data (Grayson 1986, 77).

To illustrate his arguments Grayson uses a situation where he finds interpretive ambiguity built in from the beginning. This situation deals with the archaeological quest for the earliest inhabitants of Europe after it had been determined in 1859 that humans had lived together with now Pleistocene mammals. His aim with this presentation is primarily to point out how distinguished ambiguity led prehistorians to conduct actualistic research in a MR environment. The goal, he stresses, is not to present a thorough history and analysis of the debate on eoliths (Pleistocene stones) and related phenomenon (Grayson 1986, 78). That is a pity because his text is just as, if not more, interesting about the latter to this writer.

Postprocessual critique against MRT

The aim of postprocessual archaeologists was to lead archaeology as a discipline away from positivism in order to use hermeneutic and contextual approaches. Their fundamental disagreement with processualists made it impossible for them to accept MRT. Hodder reads the past without the letters MRT

Ian Hodder was himself one of the most radical processual archaeologists in the 1970's. In the mid 1980's he performed a volte-face and started to propagate for a different archaeology with a greater emphasis on social context. He became a

prominent figure in what was to be called postprocessual archaeology. In a chapter in his book "Reading the Past" (1986) he is dealing with an ethnohistorical example that he uses as a basis of his critique against both MRT and ethnoarchaeology. Hodder conquers that MRT is suitable in its relation to physical processes (for instance C14) but he finds it hard to see how there can ever be universal laws of cultural processes that are independent of cultural high-level theories. Hodder finds that MRT, although he doesn't approve of the term, could be functional as research is needed on material culture, deposition processes et cetera. What Hodder resents however is the measuring device termed MRT and advocated by Binford can exist independent of cultural context. He argues against a 'materialist', 'archaeological' ethnoarchaeology and feels that the emphasis has moved from the 'outside' to the 'inside' of events. In order to understand material culture in its context of meaning one must keep a long and continuous participation in the cultures studied (Hodder 1986, 103).

He claims that one's aim can still be the same, asking archaeological questions of ethnographic data. These questions may concern material culture and/or the processes and structures of change even though he stresses that the methods must be considerably different. Hodder finds that a problem emerges from this situation. He questions the difference between a participatory ethnoarchaeology on the one hand and ethnography and social anthropology on the other. Further scepsis is expressed when he wonders whether social anthrolopologists who are trained in techniques of interview, data collecting, sampling, learning languages and trained to relate to wider literature, should be better and more competent in this field. Hodder questions the existence of ethnoarchaeology and wonder why is shouldn't be replaced or integrated with anthropology of material culture and social change.

Hodder thinks that ethnography can be somewhat helpful to archaeology although he feels that ethnography has a greater need for archaeology than the other way around. He holds it likely that

the archaeological past has a great relevance to the ethnographic present and in this way ethnoarchaeology might revive but with a completely different meaning. When the ethnographers realize that they need history in order to explain the present they have to turn to archaeology to obtain a past in the areas where long-term written historical sources aren't available. Hodder finds that ethnoarchaeology then will evolve to a synonymous to ethnohistory both by definition and in practice. Ethnoarchaeology should then be, according to Hodder's line of argument, be more linked to anthropological and historical theory and method, thus the debate about ethnoarchaeology is just an example of the general debate about archaeology.

Hodder aims to develop his discussion with an ethnographic example where he turns to his studies in Baringo, Kenya. A tribe, named Ilchamus, is the only tribe in this area who decorated their calabashes. Hodder raises the motivated the question: Why?

Hodder claims that if he were to use general theory or law-like generalizations he would reach three different inferences. First it could mean with a comparison with the neighbouring tribes that the decorations relates to a greater social complexity that governs a need of displaying a better organization. Second, one could also assume that the decoration relates to a greater social competition and stress that imply a need for marking access of resources. Third, one could argue that as the social group increases and a wider interaction between people occurs, style together with material symbolism increase as well.

Hodder means that in order to find out which one of these theories that is the most feasible one doesn't even need to turn to the Ilchamus tribe, as one can just look to ethnographical data. This, in Hodder's view, is totally wrong, as one doesn't consider the active roles of the individuals, their history, meaning or culture. The social complexity of the Ilchamus has been set aside and Hodder calls this bad science as it involves what he terms 'intellectual colonialism' where the tribe in question is imposed with our Western concepts and values thus trying to explain their culture with our terms.

Instead Hodder tried to immerse the contextual information and asked himself what these calabashes did and meant. For the next couple of pages he describes his studies on the cultural and social reasons for decorated calabashes, all very convincing and detailed. Hodder uses this example in order to point out the importance of social and conceptual context in the production of material culture to get a more complex picture instead of taking the easy road by just using cross-cultural laws.

This means to Hodder that MRT falls because he finds himself proving that there can be no universal cultural relations between the static and the dynamic because the historically contextual structuring intervene. He continues:

> Thus the notion that Middle Range Theory is distinctive because it involves independent theory which can be used to test other theories is false. The cultural processes which form the archaeological record are not independent of our general understanding of culture and society. It can also be claimed that Middle Range Theory is distinctive because it falls between general, global theory and data: for example, discussion of the symbolic and cognitive dimensions of site formation processes might be termed middle range (Hodder 1986, 116).

He finds that MRT might be MR when applied to data but as he thinks that all theory has both a general and applied form and feels that the term is redundant.

Reconstructors afoot, Shanks and Tilley

Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley's book "Reconstructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice is just like Ian Hodder's "Reading the Past", a major publication for postprocessual archaeology. The core in this 1987 publication, as well as the core in the archaeological debate at the time, concerned whether archaeology was a part of natural or social science. Shanks and Tilley repudiate the positivistic view on knowledge and claim that

positivism within archaeology is dead. Positivism, to them, is an archaeology that says "no" in capital letters (Johnson 1999, 46). They consider it a tragedy that most archaeologists feel engaged to continue with this kind of completely dishonest tradition of research in one form or another. They continue "…if positivism was actually taken to its logical extreme we would have to deny the possibility of any knowledge of the past beyond pure subjectivism (Shanks and Tilley 1992, 44)."

Their sarcastically styled criticism also has a go at MRT, which they indeed think of as being a part of the reprehensive positivism. They criticise Lewis Binford and think that he is contradicting himself when he in the already mentioned "For Theory Building in Archaeology" (1977) both on the introduction of MRT and the theme "New Archaeology" writes that in the absence of usable theory, there is no 'new archaeology', only an anti-traditional archaeology at best. They also put forward their critique against Binford's solution of the problem when he builds his own theory. Shanks and Tilley mean that these MRT's are being built from the bottom up. They arrive at empirical facts, which are subsequently employed to invalidate the work of others. It is pointed out that MRT has its followers and to Shanks and Tilley it seems that MRT is developing rapidly towards the status of a new panacea for archaeological diseases. As followers of MRT they mention Gordon Willey and Jeremy Sabloff and, rather incorrectly, Raab and Goodyear who indeed are followers of MRT however not in the Binfordian sense already discussed. Shanks and Tilley like many others find it unclear what really is 'middle' with MRT.

MRT is to Shanks and Tilley not much more than MR empirism (Shanks & Tilley 1992, 44) and its design is strictly positivistic. In their exposition of their fundamental opposition against positivist knowledge they claim that MRT is nothing else than a form controlled subjectivity (Shanks and Tilley 1992, 40). This makes that they dismiss MRT as practically abundant. According to them, the concept of MRT is just a new fancy icing on the old empiricist cake (Shanks & Tilley 1992, 44) a view that

Norwegian archaeologist Bjørnar Olsen seems to conquer with (Olsen 1997, 99). When the postprocessual critique had sunk in, a number of articles were published as answers to this critique as well as articles that dealt with the future of MRT. This chapter will discuss three such articles.

MRT bridging the gap between processualism and postprocessualism

Hartmut Tschauner is at the department of anthropology at Harvard University, USA where he took his doctors degree in anthropological archaeology in 2001. He has also lectured at the Catholic University in Lima, Peru. In 1996 he had an article published in "Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory" with the title "Middle Range Theory, Behavioral Archaeology, and Postempiricist Philosophy of Science in Archaeology". In this article of his, he examines MRT within processual and postprocessual archaeology. Tschauner means that postprocessual research is actually based on MR principles that they really find utterly reprehensible. Tschauner claims that MRT works as a bridge over the epistemological gap between processual and postprocessual approaches (Tschauner 1996, 1).

The article consists of an analysis of three case studies as examples of postprocessual practice and its relationship to MRT. The examples used are Braithwaite's study of ritual and prestige in prehistoric Wessex, Hodder's interpretation of the European Neolithic and Hill's contrastive archaeology in southern Britain.
Tschauner's first example is Braithwaite's study of ritual and prestige in prehistoric Wessex, published in 1984. In Wessex, individual burials and henge monuments are fairly contemporary, however their main periods of construction do not overlap. Braithwaite suggests that the henge monuments were communal-ritual sites erected and used by very large groups of people from the surrounding areas. The Beaker complex is representing an individualist cult/ritual and an attempt to establish an alternative discourse with a totally different system of prestige first expressed in terms taken from the traditional discourse that is associated

with henge rituals. There was a gradual shift from the system of prestige defined by genealogy to one based on material symbols. Tschauner asks himself how Braithwaite can draw these farfetched conclusions. He finds that her entire edifice is in fact built on generalizations that have the form of both general and statistical "laws" (Tschauner 1996, 10).

The "laws" and operational definitions of hers contain, in Tschauner's view, etic observational categories. He continues: "Accordingly, Braithwaite argues for the acceptability or relevance of a particular generalization to a particular case by linking the theoretical concepts of a 'law' to the archaeological evidence as perceived within the framework of her approach. Many of her 'interpretations' thus take the form covering-law explanations Tschauner 1996, 11)."

Tschauner finds that apart from these "laws", Braithwaite's arguments also take the form of simple logical deductions and others are based on covert generalizing assumptions. Tschauner gives an example from the early Beaker complex where some male burials have certain exclusive grave goods in relation to what is found in both female and male graves. Because of this, men, to some extent had more prestige or status than women (Tschauner 1996, 11). Tschauner means that the underlying generalization evidently is the association between the number or value of grave goods and the amount of prestige that a person had during his or her lifetime (Tschauner 1996, 12). In Tschauner's view, Braithwaite's form of arguments is essentially identified to processualist, MRT-based procedures and is in glaring contrast to postprocessual rhetoric.

She bases her generalizations on, according to Tschauner, typical ethnographic analysis and it is analogical reasoning that form the very backbone of her reconstruction. He concludes: "What distinguishes her work from most of processual archaeology is her interest in ideological, superstructural phenomenon, only covertly involved in some processual explanations (Tschauner 1996, 12). Ian Hodder is the subject of Tschauner's next example. Hodder prefers an empirical

contextual approach to develop archaeological methods. A contextual analysis that primarily seeks to interpret the evidence in its internal relation instead of using outside knowledge to externally derived concepts of rationality (Hodder 1990, 20-21). Tschauner points out that Hodder's critique of MRT forms the essence of this approach. The source for his critique against Hodder is "The Domestication of Europe" (1990) where Hodder attempts a long-term contextual analysis of the European Neolithic. As Hodder himself calls "The Domestication of Europe" one of few substantive postprocessual interpretations of the past, Tschauner uses this book for examination of the contextual method that Hodder represents. In this book Hodder suggests that the domestication of animals and plants was a part of a much greater domestication process of the wild and became plausible within existing yet changing cultural principles.

Tschauner finds the definition of the contextual method, as the main thesis of the book, quite abstract (Tschauner 1996, 12). He thinks that "The Domestication of Europe" is displaying an abundance of formation process reasoning and some of its basic interpretive concepts are immediately dependent on formation theory. Tschauner sees that both non-cultural and cultural formation processes are discussed in this book: For instance, when adult burials have been found in storage pits next to Polish longhouses that don't suit the association of the "domus" with women and children as postulated on the basis of evidence from other Neolithic sites, Hodder answers with a, for Tschauner, classic n-transform when he states that: "Bone does not survive well in many decalcified loess situations (Hodder 1990, 107)."

The problem, the way Tschauner sees it, is that the reconstructions of prehistoric behaviour that form the foundation of Hodder's interpretations are taken from already published sources that don't discuss the underlying formation processes. This is the case with "The Domestication of Europe", which Tschauner calls a synthetical work, where the lion's share of the evidence comes from already published sources. Tschauner means that "…the information he obtains from his sources includes

numerous highly charged and theory-laden concepts and processes, such as agricultural patterns; more selective and organized, procurement patterns; more intensive, organized, and specialized production; archaeological cultures as defined by stylistic complexes; and settlement hierarchies (Tschauner 1996, 13-14).

Tschauner claims that these theory-laden, published reconstructions are, with few exceptions, summarized as quasifacts, which Hodder's interpretative, models rest on. It is evident that the work and results of research is functioning, according to Tschauner, as unproblematic, confirmed background knowledge and intellectual, logical tools that make these results plat precisely the role of MRT in the processualist research program. If one views upon the way Hodder uses mostly processualist published material, then it would seem that MRT has done rather well in it aim to make observations of the past, Tschauner says (Tschauner 1996, 14).

Tschauner finishes the chapter on contextual archaeology by concluding that Hodder is biting his own foot and claims that some of Hodder's discussions are merely circumlocations of Binford's MR definition (Tschauner 1996, 18).

Hills contrastive reanalysis of South British prehistory is the third and last postprocessual example that Hartmut Tschauner examines. Hill claims that a 'pit ritual tradition' is evident in the area. He finds that certain alleged 'refuse pits' which contains some bones, broken pottery and other smaller finds actually display deposited offerings and feasting refuse. Tschauner finds that Hill's reconstructional inferences don't differ from the mainstream ones and are actually based 'standard' formation theory. The pits that Hill are studying are assuredly different from other excavated pits and were probably ignored by previous archaeologists. The implicit justification in this interpretation is its coherence, as Tschauner puts it: Hill has discovered structures and patterns in the so called 'rubbish' that seem to make sense, both in relation to each other and to the whole context of the time period assisted by anthropological models of rites of passage, ritual

feasting et cetera. Tschauner finds this procedure not very different at all from processualist research practice. He continues:

> In fact, the development of pattern-recognition methods and the explanation of patterns by constructing coherent interpretations consistent with models either derived from actualistic research or borrowed from anthropology is a hallmark of processual archaeology. Most importantly for the present discussion, it is fully MRT-based (Tschauner 1996, 19).

Tschauner leaves the case studies in favour of discussing the postprocessualist relation to MRT in general. He means that even if the postprocessualists attack MRT as the core in the positivistic, processual method the role of MRT in the processual research program is ambiguous and has shifted over time. Tschauner feels that on the one hand, MRT is built on generalizing assumptions about human behaviour and on the paradigm by which these very assumptions are justified. MR research is meant to produce unproblematic confirmed background knowledge. It has to be established enough that is has a paradigmatic status and allows the archaeologist to observe the past directly (Tschauner 1996, 20).
On the other hand, Tschauner finds that MRT quite obviously play the part of an observation theory and the existence of MRT is therefore a recognition of the theory-ladenness of data thus making MRT a constitutional element of a postempiricist model of observation in the processualism research program (Tschauner 1996, 20-21). He continues:

> The knowledge, beliefs, and theories we already hold play a fundamental role in what we perceive. This is because in order to derive information from perception, we have to identify what we perceive, and identification requires a relevant body of information. /…/ Theories play the role of previous knowledge and beliefs in scientific observation (Tschauner 1996, 21).

Hartmut Tschauner had a processualist standpoint when he commenced this article of his but as he compared the processual and postprocessual methodologies he found much agreement. He claims that if he had written it from a postprocessual perspective it would not have made any significant difference to the analysis as a whole merely a shift of terminology and emphasis (Tschauner 1996. 25).

This is Tschauner's fundamental idea: The similarity between the processual and the postprocessual. He questions over and over again how the postprocessualists can categorically ignore MRT when they are at the same time dependent on generalizing principles (Tschauner 1996, 22). He finds it remarkable how MRT can be doomed by the postprocessualists as the hard core of a positivistic archaeological method when it is in fact bridging the gap between the two fractions (Tschauner 1996, 25).

MRT as hermeneutics

Peter Kosso is a professor of philosophy at Northern Arizona University. His main interests are epistemology, the philosophy of science archaeology and history. In 1991 his article "Method in Archaeology: Middle-Range Theory as Hermeneutics" was published in American Antiquity in which he means that the MRT approach of Binford and the contextual archaeology of Ian Hodder are in fact clearly similar. He writes in his introduction:

> These positions are usually presented in opposition to each other, but here they are shown to present very much the same methodological picture of archaeology (Kosso 1991, 621).

In Kosso's view, MRT's are just ordinary theories. They are tested and justified like any other theory by comparison of evidence, in this case observations. A kind of circularity appears. Theories in general are confirmed and understood through an appeal to observations and observations in general are understood and verified by the support of theories. This is, according to

Kosso, the exact structure of the hermeneutic circle. As MRT is participating on both sides of this dialogue between theory and observation, Kosso's line of argument means that MRT's are hermeneutic tools.

He does not say that the studies that Binford advocates as important for archaeology are the same as those stressed by Hodder and other contextualist archaeologists. With Kosso pointing out the similarity of the methodological structure of middle range theorizing and the hermeneutics of contextual archaeology is not a way to force processualism into a study of the mental component of the archaeological record. Kosso explains that:

> The point is rather that the different concerns and different objects of study are in a similar epistemic predicament that calls for a shared method (Kosso 1991, 625).

Kosso points out the need for some assumptions to be made in order to break into the circular association between theory and observation. As he puts it:

> There will neither meaningful evidence nor theoretical understanding without initial hypotheses and preliminary middle-range theories (Kosso 1991, 626).

All of these assumptions are revisable which is exactly the kind of epistemic responsibility we, or at least Kosso, demand of science as they are revisable against the standards of coherence with other theories. Kosso means that in general:

> … the acceptability of middle-range theories and the evidential and theoretical claims they support they governed by a requirement of consistency and coherence and a constraint of independence in the accounting for evidential claims (ibid).

No claims should however be acceptable if they were to lead to contradiction. What Kosso finds interesting is that independence seems also to be the answer to objection of circularity directed against the contextual hermeneutic approach. The "assumptions of subjective meanings (as spoken of by Hodder (Hodder 1986, 79)) that is influencing our observations of the archaeological record are themselves accountable, in Kosso's view, to other evidence that is influenced by various independent hypotheses of subjective meaning. He continues:

> This contextual method need not be problematically circular or left to unsubstantiated speculation as long as one insists on a coherence among independently arrived at claims about the past (ibid).

Kosso doesn't find it coincidental that the key to objectivity is the same for MRT as for the hermeneutic approach. It is simply the result of their common structure and the fact that they are fundamentally the same method. Kosso finds both Binford and Hodder right and he writes:

> It is not that archaeology is a rigid and segregated system of theories and observations in which brute facts are used to test theories. It is rather that the methods of natural science, and those advocated by Binford for archaeology, are more like the contextual, hermeneutic back-and-forth model than Hodder's original opposition seemed to recognize (Kosso 1991, 627).

So the argument for this kind of similarity is displayed in the nature of claims about the past and of evidence. It is not the content of these claims that is shared but the method of justification and the standard of objectivity according to Kosso.
P eter Kosso has also authored a book entitled "Knowing the Past: Philosophical issues of History and Archaeology" where he in chapter three is discussing MRT in a similar way although more embroided, perhaps to suit the book as a whole.

Trigger happy to expand MRT

Bruce Trigger is a Canadian archaeologist, active at McGill University in Montreal. He has had his archaeological research published since the 1960's and his "History of Archaeological Thought" (1989) is a thorough exposition of the history of archaeology and its different directions and aspects. It is on the reading list on numerous archaeological courses in universities throughout the world. In the early stages of his career he was somewhat pulled to pieces by Lewis Binford who during his unorthodox lectures in Los Angeles in the 1960's dismissed Trigger's "Beyond History: The Methods of Prehistory" as a stupid publication. Binford summarized his critique by claiming that Bruce Trigger should make himself a career as a shoe salesman (Schiffer 1995, 3).

When the gunsmoke had subsided between processualist and postprocessualists in the early 1990's both sides pitched their camps and the harsh rhetoric that had characterized the debate diminished. In 1995 Antiquity published an article with the title "Expanding middle-range theory" written by Trigger. He writes in the introduction:

> The obscure and ugly language of theoretical archaeology conceals as well as reveals fundamentals that no real practice of archaeology can actually escape (Trigger 1995, 449).

He bases his article on the conviction that a judicious combination of processual and postprocessual approaches can significantly enhance the analytical power of archaeology. He means that postprocessual archaeology expanded archaeology as a whole and acknowledged cultural differences and saw a wider range of theoretical approaches. Despite vicious attacks on postprocessualism it has, in Trigger's view, changed archaeology in important and irreversible ways (Trigger 1995, 449).

Trigger means that MRT, as defined by Binford, has been very successful when it comes to inferring technological processes substinence patterns and many aspects of social and economic

behaviour. MRT studies, in Trigger's words, assume that these sorts of human behaviour are guided by universally persuasive calculations of self-interest, such as minimizing risk, energy conservation and ensuring more secure control of resources, rather than by concepts that are specific only to individual cultures or to historically related ones (Trigger 1995, 450). Trigger has the view however, that archaeologists must be careful in their use of generalizations as all human behaviour is cultural and cognitive.

It is generally assumed, according to Trigger, that practical reason and consequently MRT only can be applied to aspects of human behaviour that are governed by scarcity factors and therefore to more practical aspects of human behaviour. Trigger claims that this is clearly not the case. He calls attention to his own then ongoing comparative study of seven early civilizations that evolved in different parts of the world. This study of his has shown unexpected regularities in terms of general structures in religious beliefs in societies at comparable levels of development. Trigger claims that in each of these societies the cosmos was a function for energy flows. In these systems of thought, the elite was conceptualized as an element between the commoners and the cosmic order that governed all human life (Trigger 1995,451). Trigger also mentions that kings and chiefs throughout the world in all ages have been related to the sun as a symbol of supreme power. The leader is often in many cultures described as strangers to the society he, or she (Trigger actually only puts down "he" but this writer prefers to avoid unnecessary critique from the gender archaeologists) is ruling. Many of these regularities occur with such high statistical frequency as the ones that relate to subsistence behaviour. They do, however, according to Trigger, offer the archaeologist a valuable understanding for beliefs in the past. He writes:

> What is less obvious is how middle-range correlations can be established between such beliefs and material culture that allow these beliefs to be inferred from the archaeological

> record /.../ The study of these correlations requires a different kind of middle-range theory and different bridging arguments. This middle-range theory takes the form of demonstrations that certain kinds of beliefs and symbolism correlate significantly with specific types of societies (Trigger 1995, 452).

Trigger finds that the strongest of the bridging arguments often are written sources, ethnographic data and oral traditions. This is an approach that relates archaeology to other disciplines that are able to provide data regarding the practices and beliefs of individual societies or historically known societies. Trigger means that this allows the archaeologist to control the variations between the different cultures. He claims that it is quite possible to use a contextual approach at the same time, to examine whether cultural forms are direct or distorted expressions of social, political and economic reality. A reasoning acquired from Ian Hodder's "The Archaeology of contextual meanings" (1987) (Trigger 1995, 452). Trigger means that: " Much of the middle-range theory that is relevant to prehistoric archaeology is closely related to older culture-historical concerns with traditions, diffusion, and migrations. Interpretations are not based on cross-cultural uniformities but on demonstrating continuities through time in a single cultural tradition or a series of historically related cultures" (Trigger 1995, 453).

They often take form of a direct historical approach that seeks to establish parallels between culturally specific beliefs and their material expressions during the early historical period. Then one uses material culture to trace these religious beliefs back to prehistoric times. The execution is, according to Trigger himself, by no means easy nor uncomplicated. He points Alexander von Gernet's and Peter Timmins' research which demonstrates that the intensity of certain beliefs are being manifested in the material culture can vary considerably in the long view. He writes: "… hence continuity in beliefs is not necessarily matched by continuity in their expression in the archaeological record" (Trigger 1995, 454).

Bruce Trigger also recognizes certain limitations with MRT as he realizes that it is not always obvious which type of MRT that is applicable. For long most archaeologists assumed, according to Trigger, that in hunter-gatherer societies the females stayed near what one might call a home base tending children, collecting vegetable foods and maybe capturing small animals while men were hunting big game quite far from their home base. It was believed that this generalization was supported by all available ethnographic knowledge. The view on gender roles in hunter-gatherer societies was much governed by generalizations of this kind as they were thought of as universally applicable. This view was obviously heavily criticized by feminist archaeologists and Trigger points out their attempt to stress cultural rather than natural status of human behaviour as they called the older and more biologically grounded interpretations as uncorroborated products of patriarchal bias (Trigger 1995, 455).

This discussion suggests, according to Trigger, that "… where the status of universal generalizations remains doubtful, the most prudent tactic may be to restrict reconstructions to what can be recovered using culturally specific middle-range theories. These theories are much more limited in their range of applicability and, in respect of gender, much less powerful than those based on universal generalizations (Trigger 1995, 456)."

In his conclusion Trigger writes that despite archaeological interpretations always are influenced by their social environment the constraint of evidence and the refinement of methodology help to limit the effects of this bias. He claims that the archaeological evidence is in fact constrained which reflects the cultural and natural factors that influenced the human behaviour that produced it, offers grounds for believing that over time archaeology can achieve a more complex understanding of the past.

This, he means, does not mean however that the archaeologist ever will be free of a certain bias nor be able to separate objective interpretations from biased. Trigger believes that new evidence or

new techniques could however prove established theories and beliefs false (Trigger 1995, 456).

Trigger finds that the expanded range of MRT and bridging argument as suggested by himself provides a foundation for a fuller and more diversified understanding of prehistoric times, which welcomes both cultural specifics and cross-cultural regularities. Whether this potential is fully realized depends on, as Trigger puts it, upon the amount of archaeological and non-archaeological evidence that is available and the willingness of archaeologists to make full use of it. In a train of though similar to the one of Philip Kohl (1993) Trigger finds that the head weakness of numerous postprocessualist interpretations is the much assumed illusion that it is possible to reconstruct the past by a process of sympathetic interpretation without the kinds of control that MRT in its broadest application can provide (Trigger 1995, 455).

Trigger concludes his article by saying: "If archaeologists are to progress in understanding the past, they must be willing to make use of all possible data sources and to expand and develop middle-range theory to provide methodological rigour to a broader range of techniques for attributing human behaviour and ideas to archaeological data (Trigger 1995, 456)."

Discussing MRT

Dissension is prevalent in the question of Middle Range Theory.
The dissension is almost completely founded in one disagreement.
One big disagreement.
Is archaeology a natural or social science?
Is one a processual or a postprocessual archaeologist?
Who cares?

Yes, who did really care? It is no secret that the impact of processualism was actually limited to the Anglo-American sphere of archaeology (Jensen and Karlsson 1999, 13). A fact that also made the arrival of postprocessualism restricted to that very sphere. Rowley-Conwy mean that neither the new nor the

postprocessual archaeology had the same impact in central and eastern Europe as in Great Britain (Rowley-Conwy 2001, 18) and Bjørnar Olsen holds it likely that it was only in smaller and special groups of the world's archaeologists that felt real changes by the arrival of these directions. In both Europe and the rest of the world, cultural historical archaeology is still prevailing even though in somewhat modified forms (Olsen 1997, 30-31).

Scandinavia proved to be susceptible to the theoretical currents of the West and is pointed out as the area where processual archaeology had the most influence. It is particularly the milieus around Carl-Axel Moberg and Bjørn Myhre in Gothenburg and Bergen respectively that are pointed out (Tosi 1981, 16). Olsen also claims that it is in Denmark where we find some of the most accomplished processual analysis represented by Kristian Kristiansen, Jørgen Jensen and Klaus Randsborg among others. Olsen finds that it is mainly the ecological and system theoretical aspects of the new archaeology that got a hold in Scandinavia where the research of Stig Welinder make a good example (Olsen 1997, 53-55).

MRT, however does not seem to have got such a good foothold in Scandinavia and Northern Europe. MRT's fields of application are nevertheless represented in Scandinavian archaeology but there is no explicit support that says that such studies are governed by MRT. The Swedish articles and texts that discuss MRT do so mainly in general or descriptive terms (Sjögren 1999).

One of MRT's fields of application, ethnoarchaeology, has however a prominent Swedish representative and he is also the only one, that this writer has found, who has written anything on MRT in practice. Göran Burenhult, one of Sweden's more influential archaeologists has conducted ethnoarchaeological research since long and has also authored a short article entitled "Ethnoarchaeology as a method of establishing Mid-Range Theory. A new era in European Archaeology or exotic nonsense?" (1987). Burenhult means that ethnoarchaeological studies in Europe has been thought of as slightly doubtful. It has

been said that it isn't possible to transfer experiences from for instance the aborigines of Australia to European hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic. Prejudiced, direct comparisons or parallels that necessarily risk being completely wrong have, according to Burenhult, scared off archaeologists from further attempts. He continues:

> Yet, the ethnographic analogy is probably the only way European archaeologists can bridge the gap between the silent archaeological find material and the living society of the past. Ethnoarchaeology is simply a way of understanding how the things we excavate may have worked in the past (Burenhult 1987, 322).

Göran Burenhult's interest in ethnoarchaeology culminates in the book "Speglingar av det förflutna" that is in many ways a fascinating publication. Beautifully illustrated and written with an apparent enthusiasm it is, however somewhat uncompromising in its argumentation. In the beginning of the book one is met by a montage of two images in the shape of a face where the one half is a picture of a prehistoric cranium from Gotland, Sweden and the other half is a picture of a young woman from a present tribe in New Guinea. The caption tells us that despite the five thousand year difference between these individuals their lives are 'exactly' the same. He even calls the girl from New Guinea 'the Stone Age girl from the South Sea' and means that she is a 'mirror image of the Stone Age'. Through her we are meant to understand our own people of the Stone Age better according to Burenhult (Burenhult 1986, 6). This rhetoric double nelson of colonialistic character is nothing this writer wants to concern himself with. Burenhult has been rightfully criticized for the lack of theoretical reflection in his approach (Jensen viva voce 021028).

So, what is MRT then? An unambiguous image of this phenomenon seems to be impossible to picture. Robert Bettinger finds that for being such a widely accepted and discussed approach the idea of MRT is surprisingly problematic (Bettinger 1991,64).

One thing is rather certain. MRT is not synonymous with Binfordian research. This we notice when we search for the origin of MRT in archaeology. Raab and Goodyear's adaptation of Robert Merton's term is relatively easy to understand but did not have the same impact as Merton's original idea in sociology. Even though Merton thought that Raab and Goodyear had understood his theory correct (Goodyear email 030116) the lack of success for their thesis could simply depend on that they were rejected by American Antiquity.

The works of Lewis Binford are sound but difficult to understand and unnecessary complicated formulated (David and Kramer 2001, 122). His idea of MRT is no exception (Cornell and Fahlander 2002, 5). This could be the reason why it is easy to look upon his research and his results as applied MRT. This nevertheless gives a far too narrow image of MRT even if it is Binford one associates with MRT.

When MRT arose, as a vital part of the processual archaeology what was assumed needed was obtained. A key-code or a Rosetta stone as Binford himself wants to call it. This was a reaction to the cultural archaeological approach that was accused of being too untheoretical and inexact. This revolution that was launched in the 1960's could be seen as a phenomenon typical for its time where rebellious tendencies and insubordination were trends. If this is in accordance of the truth or not is of marginal significance. The importance was the aim to change the view on archaeology.

To join the New Archaeology was to conquer with the opinion that archaeology was a natural science and that knowledge could be obtained by statistics, tables and charts complemented by all sorts of technical devices and well-meaning theories. It was thought that the underlying theories had to be explicit and could not remain unspoken and implicit like they had been during the cultural archaeology. The new theories that they wanted to create might have been slightly self-evident, obvious and under-developed just like MRT has been accused of being. What was definitely of an importance if not directly crucial for the processual archaeology was the impact of radiocarbon dating in

the 1960's. This method threw over earlier interpretations of specific prehistoric cultures time spectra, which lead to that the critics of cultural archaeology got their arguments supported. Peter Rowley-Conwy argues that the theoretical program of processual archaeology was developed as new theories were needed that could be adapted to the new methods sprung from radiocarbon dating (Rowley-Conwy 2001, 19-22).

Binford's version of MRT got, when it was introduced, different kinds of response from other processual archaeologists. We have seen how Grayson (1986) means that MRT is nothing new and that this approach has been used in archaeological studies since the 1800's. In this matter, he is surely right but one can, needless to say, question the theoretical awareness in these older studies that undoubtedly was quite implicit.

Another prominent processual archaeologist who once been a student of Binford's, Michael Schiffer, has also found Binford's concept of MRT questionable. WE have already looked at parts of his critique and his own ideas on MRT but he has also written a review of Binford's "For Theory Building in Archaeology" published in American Antiquity (1980). Schiffer who obviously had a copy of Raab and Goodyear's rejected article as well, recognizes the term MRT in archaeology from this very article. He points out that despite Binford's definition of MRT in the beginning of the book it is only one chapter that is discussing the subject. He feels that the term is too vague, unorganized and separated from the rest of the book and means that Binford actually fails with his introduction (Schiffer 1980, 377).

Despite that Schiffer and Binford are close to each other both theoretically and ideologically they don't agree at all and the debate between the two is quite instructive and entertaining. Binford is going from using Schiffer's terms (Binford 1977, 8) to in certain matters disagree with his former student completely (Binford 1983b, 234). Schiffer means that his own terms are more exact and that Binford's carelessness in his terms is misguiding (Schiffer 1985, 192).

Binford views upon the confusion with MRT with repugnance. On several occasions has he pointed out that one of the goals with ethnoarchaeological studies is to contribute to the development of methods for the justification of inferences and that this research has been called MR research. He reacts against that for instance Raab & Goodyear and Schiffer are place MRT on an equality with formation processes which also is the meaning the term has got within archaeology (Sjögren 1999, 128) and finds the entire matter misleading. Binford claims that he has consistently suggested that MR research should be directed towards the isolation of variables of organisation that are characteristic for historical systems (Binford 1987, 449). The classic Binfordese is palpable and is as always demanding on the reader.

It is not just critique that is characterizing the debate on MRT even if one can assume that MRT often is silently defended. To some extent is the theoretical discussion round MRT separated from its practical use and they who are using MRT are concerned with its practice than discussing its philosophical aspects (Rowley-Conwy email 030115).

A great many, especially American archaeologists embraced processual archaeology and two of these; Gordon Willey and Jeremy Sabloff express their support of Binford's research and his version of MRT in their book "A History of American Archaeology" (1980). They share the same position on numerous different archaeological phenomena and agree with Binford when he recommends that the interest of MR and general theory should not be separated (Willey and Sabloff 1980, 254). One should maybe consider that Sabloff and Binford are close colleagues as well as close friends (Sabloff, P 1998, xi) even if Sabloff in retrospect feels that MRT was a confusing term (Sabloff, J 1998, 88). With the postprocessualist impact in the mid 1980's with Ian Hodder's conversion and Shanks and Tilley's "Re-constructing Archaeology" (initially published in 1987) the critique against MRT came from a totally different direction. When Binford and his MRT were criticized by other processualists they objected to, as we have seen, specific details. This new growing school

advocated a hermeneutic approach towards science and raised massive objections to the entire positivistic nature within processualism. Archaeology as a discipline was rather seen as a part of social than natural science. This fundamental difference of opinion made MRT an obvious target for the postprocessual criticism and the objectivity that MRT had in its capacity of independent measuring device was thought of providing also got its share of critique. To incapacitate MRT was logical and strategically correct as it was the active processualism's perhaps dearest tool to produce archaeological knowledge. It was their Rosetta stone and flagship. An attack on MRT was to thrust the lance deep into the processual midriff. One could and should see the critique against MRT as an indirect and masked attack on the main figure of processualist archaeology, Lewis Binford.

Binford has made himself famous not only for his revolutionary archaeological work but also for his somewhat blunt way of delivering his opinion and mainly the harsh rhetoric he uses to dismiss the colleagues that he doesn't concur with. Binford's harsh manors and status probably made the postprocessualist critics more eager to direct their attacks towards him. To criticize the functionality of MRT and dismiss it as invalid was an easy way to undermine the research of Binford and invalidate his studies. In the same fashion that Binford once criticized the cultural archaeologists he was now himself being the target of criticism by the postprocessual that wanted change just like Binford once had wanted.

Because of MRT's processual status, its close connection to Binford and its somewhat rudimentary character, MRT was a dear and easy target for the postprocessualists (Hodder email 021128; Johnson email 030113; Rowley-Conwy 030115). It was simply a matter of a pure dismissal. We have also looked on articles written by authors who respond to this criticism. Hartmut Tschauner means that the postprocessualists are using the methods and theories that are in the highest degree like MRT. The philosopher Kosso claims in his discussion that MRT in fact are hermeneutic tools. Their line of arguments are convincing and

well-directed and even if they don't affect archaeology in the same way as Hodder or Binford they are still making a rather good and interesting point that more people should take the time to explore. Tschauner discussion about the postprocessualist way of using MRT principles has impressed Ian Hodder who also finds his argument convincing (Hodder 1999, 27).

The arguments that Tschauner puts forward may be the ones one would have expected from Binford but he has kept surprisingly quiet when it comes to the refutation of the postprocessual critique against MRT. He has however reviewed Hodder's "Reading the Past" in American Antiquity (1988) and isn't very gracious in his critique even if he isn't explicitly defending MRT. Binford opens the review by writing:

> This is a little book with a little message being blown through a large horn with a loud noise (Binford 1988, 875).

He is criticizing Hodder for singing two tunes at the same time and means that "Reading the Past" is full of contradictions, misinterpretations and distortions. Hodder has, according to Binford, completely misunderstood the challenges that an archaeologist is faced with. Binford claims that the book contains much less than what meets the eye. The way Binford sees it, Hodder is involved in a power play and is seeking dominance for his value-laden ideas. The whole review is characterized by a sarcastic and pungent rhetoric and it feels as if Binford doesn't really want to lower himself to Hodder's level and acknowledge his work by reviewing it. He concludes the review by writing: "This is a book about politics negotiated by Hodder, not about archaeology (Binford 1988, 876)."

Peter Kosso who writes about MRT as hermeneutic tools is as mentioned not really an archaeologist but a philosopher that deal with questions about epistemology and the philosophy of science. He is correct that the circular relation between observations and theories is problematic but there is nothing to do but to accept this. One has to break into this circle to obtain a starting point

and if MRT really is on both sides of this circle maybe this ought to be taken advantage of? The level of abstraction may be too high in this discussion and might but be all that relevant in the archaeological fieldwork but should nevertheless be kept in the back of one's head.

Naturally MRT has hermeneutic qualities that Hodder and his contextualists haven't acknowledged as Kosso points out, but they would never use such a Binfordian term. Tschauner also claims that postprocessualists are using similar principles although in a somewhat camouflaged fashion. This, because of pure political reasons.

Today Lewis Binford is getting on and has since 1991 been 'University Distinguished Professor' of anthropology at the Southern Methodist University in Texas, USA. In 2001 he published his latest book "Constructing Frames of Reference", impressive both in extent and content. This book is based on 340 historically known hunter-gatherer societies and contains in the usual processual style a lot of graphs and tables.

MRT is given sparse space maybe to avoid already delivered critique. He is mentioning MRT as the foundation of his studies though (Binford 2001, 114). In a note he claims that despite his efforts to bring clarity in the confused situation in the archaeological literature about the nature and meaning of MR research there are still many misconceptions of the term (Binford 2001, 479). Perhaps this is another reason for the sparse usage of MRT.

What can be said about the future of MRT?

A renaissance doesn't seem to be approaching. This because of the charge that this term implies. The term Middle Range Theory is so infected that it perhaps should be left to its own devices. The principles that MRT is built on and their applicability in archaeological studies will certainly live on but with a different terminology. As we have seen Tschauner pointing out there is not

much difference in postprocessual studies compared with a MRT approach and Kosso questions the positivistic status of MRT.

Bruce Trigger's attempt to expand MRT is well-meaning and interesting but the core in his discussion is to make archaeology more open to other disciplines is losing focus when he is using the term MRT. Instead of interest in his discussion his article is more noticed for his new view on MRT. If this is an honest attempt to expand MRT or if he is using MRT as an easy way to sell his ideas is hard to tell. Nevertheless he has got a point when he states that archaeology must avoid isolation from other sciences and one should be careful making generalizations as an archaeologist.

One could keep the same line argument regarding Christopher Carr and Jill Neitzels "Style, Society and Person" (1995). A sound work and a heavy publication that seeks to revise, explain and increase the understanding of the term 'Style'. Carr tries to build an unified MRT about style and means that the definition of style has made a construction of a MRT about material style in this purpose impossible. Carr mentions six strategies necessary for the construction of a MRT about material style that he develops and finally actually constructs a MRT for his purpose (Carr and Neitzel 1995, 143; Carr 1995, 171).

Carr's discussion, argument and creative theoretical abilities are also well-meaning but his use of MRT takes the focus off his actual meaning with the text. David and Kramer points out, that this try of his to develop an unified MRT about artefact design in this massive publication has been more quoted than read (David and Kramer 2001, 224).

The British representative of processual archaeology, Colin Renfrew who through the years has been defending Binford and shared his view on archaeology is nowadays showing a scepsis towards MRT. In the third edition of Bahn and Renfrew's "Archaeology: Theories Methods and Practice" Binford's MRT is discussed as a means of bridging the gap between the archaeological remains and the societies that the remains represent. At present they feel that it is too difficult to justify the division of archaeological theory into high-, middle-, and low

levels. Renfrew and Bahn choose not to use the term MRT (Renfrew and Bahn 2000, 182). Probably to avoid the critique that this infected term risk bringing.

The question is if the debate about Middle Range Theory is particularly constructive. This article that doesn't really take any sides, hopes to bring at least some clarity in the confusion. Michael Schiffer described the situation well in our correspondence:

> /…/ all the debates about middle range theory end up being little more than rhetorical exercises that clutter up the literature! (Michael Schiffer email 021210)

Conclusion

Middle Range Theory is one of the most discussed phenomena in the archaeological theoretical debate. Despite this, a slight confusion seems to be evident about the meaning of the term. I have in this article tried to search for the term's origin, development, practice and status in the archaeological theoretical debate.

The version of MRT that has been the most influential in archaeology is the one formulated by Lewis R. Binford in 1977. A definition that is completely unconnected with the original MRT, defined by sociologist Robert Merton in 1947. Binford's ability to formulate himself arduous has made that the term MRT has been made equivalent to Binford's own studies and the study of formation processes. This, despite his efforts to explain his true intentions about MRT.

The postprocessual criticism that was directed against MRT was founded in the opposition against the positivistic approach that the processual archaeology propagated and in the arguing for a hermeneutic approach. MRT, that was thought of as a tool of positivism became a dear target for this new school's critique. Partly because of its processual status and rudimentary character and partly because an attack was a camouflaged attack on Lewis

Binford. I have also discussed articles that claim that there are in fact fundamental similarities between processualism and postprocessualism that the authors have chosen to illustrate using MRT. These articles keep a convincing line of argument but have as yet not been vary influential in the theoretical debate.

The term Middle Range Theory is considered too infected by prejudice and preconceived understandings that one should actually avoid it in order not to risk that focus is taken from one's real argument and attract unnecessary critique.

MRT will live on but probably in other shapes because the infection it suffers from is far too persistent. A renaissance is not imminent and will almost certainly take more than one archaeological shift in generations.

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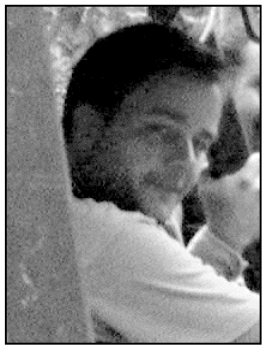

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