

Historical Archaeology

Back from the Edge



Edited by Pedro Paulo A. Funari, Martin Hall and Siân Jones

ROUTLEDGE

ONE
WORLD
ARCHAEOLOGY

31

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HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Historical Archaeology is unique in defining its subject matter within an international context which is not confined to the age of European colonialism. The contributors advocate the study of *all* past societies with documentary evidence, and challenge the entrenched oppositions between prehistory and history, pre-literate and literate societies.

Focusing on methodological and theoretical issues, as well as a wealth of case studies ranging from Roman Britain and classical Greece, to colonial Africa, Brazil and the USA, the chapters in this book 'answer back from the edge'. They argue that recent work focusing on the mechanisms of European colonialism and the emergence of a capitalist world system tends to produce a one-sided history excluding the diverse traditions and practices that once shaped people's lives. To counteract this tendency they suggest that the pre-colonial antecedents of modern capitalism and European colonialism should be explored, and that oral and ethnographic evidence should be used in conjunction with written and material sources.

A number of common themes run through the volume, including the relationships between material culture, power and identity, between the 'local' and the 'global', and between the past and the present. However, universalizing definitions of concepts such as colonialism or power and identity have been avoided in favour of research into the local manifestation of these phenomena in diverse social and historical contexts.

Historical Archaeology will be of interest to students and scholars of archaeology, history and anthropology, as well as professionals in the spheres of heritage and cultural resource management.

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HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Back from the edge

Edited by

Pedro Paulo A. Funari, Martin Hall
and Siân Jones



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Preface

This book is derived from a theme entitled ‘Changing Perspectives on Historical Archaeology’ at the World Archaeological Congress 3 in New Delhi, India (4–11 December 1994) (for further discussion on the conference see Golson (1995), Sawday (1995) and Quinn, this volume, Chapter 5). The overall theme was organized by Pedro Paulo Funari and Siân Jones and consisted of four sub-themes: ‘Exploring epistemological problems: questions of definition of the subject’ (organized by Pedro Paulo Funari); ‘The plurality of material culture: race, ethnicity, tribe, class and gender’ (organized by Siân Jones); ‘Archaeology and the representation of modern identities: national, colonial, imperial’ (organized by Tim Champion); and ‘Feminist historical archaeology’ (organized by Suzanne Spencer-Wood).

Over forty scholars from all over the world contributed, addressing a wide variety of periods and regions ranging from Classical Greece, to early medieval Ireland, to nineteenth-century Australia. The subject matter addressed signalled a clear departure from the orthodox conceptualization of ‘historical archaeology’ in North America, as a discipline concerned with European colonial societies. Such a view was challenged at the World Archaeological Congress in New Delhi, and one of the aims of this volume is to discuss the epistemological implications of an international historical archaeology, the boundaries and purposes of which are very much subject to debate.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Indian organizers and the international secretariat of WAC 3 for all their hard work in making the conference possible. We would particularly like to thank Vanessa Balloqui, Makkhan Lal and Peter Ucko for help with the organization of this theme. We also wish to express our gratitude to all those who participated in the conference theme, but who are not now represented in the book, either due to publication commitments elsewhere or because the subject matter of their papers lay outside the framework of this book. Finally, we would like to thank the contributors of this book for their hard work and patience.

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- Sawday, J. 1995. Site of debate. *The Times Higher Educational Supplement*. 13 January, 16–17.

*Pedro Paulo A. Funari, Martin Hall and Siân Jones
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1 *Introduction: archaeology in history*

PEDRO PAULO A.FUNARI,
SIÂN JONES AND MARTIN HALL

Ranging in geographical and temporal extent from Roman Britain and Classical Greece to colonial Africa, Brazil and the United States, the principal defining characteristic of the chapters in this book is that they are all concerned with societies for which we have some form of surviving written record. As such, this volume falls within what is broadly conceived as ‘historical archaeology’, an area of archaeological endeavour to which many have attempted to attribute subdisciplinary status. There has, however, been considerable confusion over the definition of historical archaeology and much tortured debate about which specific perspectives and subject matter should characterize it. Furthermore, over the last decade there has emerged a prominent movement which advocates the conceptualization of historical archaeology as the study of the age of European colonialism, or the capitalist era, essentially excluding the study of periods prior to 1492 (DeCorse 1996:19). How does this collection fit in with such an approach to historical archaeology? Indeed, should the study of societies with written records be a discrete area of research with its own theory and method? What makes it distinctive from prehistory? These are some of the epistemological questions that are inevitably raised by any attempt to develop a world-wide historical archaeology, and which are the starting point for this introduction.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN HISTORY: PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION AND SUBJECT MATTER

What is now often defined as historical archaeology, in the sense of the study of the material remains of societies with written records, has a long pedigree within the discipline of archaeology. A concern with the origins and history of European ‘civilization’ resulted in a strong tradition of archaeological research focusing on the ‘Holy Land’, the Greek and Roman worlds, medieval Europe and the rise of Christendom. Yet it is not with such periods or regions that the concept of

historical archaeology is primarily associated. Rather it is in the ‘New World’, particularly North America, that the term originates and where a distinct field of study bearing that name emerged some thirty years ago, defined in terms of written history:

Historical archaeology studies the cultural remains of literate societies that were capable of recording their own history. In this respect it contrasts directly with prehistoric archaeology, which treats all of the cultural history before the advent of writing—millions of years in duration.

(Deetz 1977:5)

The result, in theory, should be a flexible distinction between two areas of study, one being the pre-literate pre-colonial past in the hands of prehistorians, and the other focusing on literate societies from the Babylonians onwards, the domain of historical archaeologists. But in practice, the term historical archaeology was almost exclusively applied to the ‘New World’ (e.g. Deetz 1977), and as a result constituted a fixed, hard dichotomy, a complete disjunction between periods of human history. In contrast, archaeologists working in Europe, China and parts of Africa have not drawn such clear-cut boundaries, and the study of historical periods has been labelled according to ‘civilizations’, or historic periods, such as classical and medieval archaeologies in Europe, or Islamic archaeology in several countries in the Middle East and Africa. Indeed, archaeologists trained in Europe have often preferred to look at the distinction between prehistory and history as one of gradation: ‘prehistory, from the neolithic colonization of Europe onward, is classified according to the degree (as we ascend the scale) in which our knowledge of it stands indebted to historical materials’ (Hawkes 1951:1). Thus, in Europe, whilst the development of literacy and the emergence of written history has still been seen in evolutionary terms moving from illiterate to literate societies, simple to complex (Rowlands 1995:29), there has been little inclination to separate history from prehistory in any strict sense, as for instance in North America, Australia and South Africa (see Funari, Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion).

Historical archaeology is still broadly conceived as the study of societies with written records, but over the last two or three decades its distinguishing characteristics have been subject to much debate in a desire to escape the supplementary, ‘handmaiden of history’ role, as well as to raise the professional standing of the field and its proponents. Emphasis has shifted away from the use of archaeological evidence to merely fill in the gaps in historical knowledge, and in its place historical archaeologists have advocated the study of past lifeways and social processes (Deagan 1996:25–8; Little 1996:45). Most recently, following on from this concern with the analysis of past social and cultural processes, historical archaeologists have focused on European expansion and colonialism, the mechanisms of domination and resistance involved, and the economic and political forms which were generated, in particular the spread of

capitalism (e.g. Leone and Potter 1988: 19; Johnson 1996; Orser 1996a, 1996b, 1996c). Such studies are universalizing in orientation and attempt to distinguish historical archaeology as the study of a coherent world system of one kind or another, characterized by similar forms of economic and political organization across the globe. As Orser indicates:

The theoretical basis of this perspective is the idea that the world became a different place when colonizing Europeans began to travel across the globe, meeting and interacting with diverse peoples as they went. The hybrid cultures that were subsequently created in the Americas, Asia, Africa, the South Seas, and even in Europe are the outcomes of these dramatic cultural exchanges.

(Orser 1996b:11)

Such work represents the most comprehensive attempt to develop a worldwide historical archaeology to date. Nevertheless, attempts to define historical archaeology in these terms still dichotomize human history and bring all the problems that such a way of carving up the past inevitably raises.

DISLOCATION AND CONTINUITY: HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

A focus on people with history highlights Europeans' history in relation to that of other peoples, creating an archaeology of the Age of Discovery, colonization, and the development of the modern world system.

(Little 1996:42)

A focus on *written* history, as Little (1996:42) points out, has always highlighted the history of European societies ('our' type of society) in opposition to that of others ('their' type of society). The distinction between societies with writing and those without has played an important role in the humanities, tying in with dichotomies such as myth:history, barbarism:civilization, primitive:advanced (see Johnson, Chapter 2, for a slightly different perspective on the dualities which are inherent in historical archaeology). These dichotomies have framed our understanding of social evolution and the history of humanity since at least the eighteenth century, and such is their power that they continued to dominate the ahistorical, functionalist and structuralist traditions of the early to mid-twentieth century. Within a historical or evolutionary framework these binary oppositions have led to the search for 'a single breaking point, a Great Divide, though whether this jump occurred in Western Europe in the sixteenth century, or Greece in the fifth century BC, or in Mesopotamia in the fourth millennium, is never very clear' (Goody 1977:3).

The imposition of such binary categorizations on a historical framework is intricately bound up in the construction of power and identity, and attempts to distinguish historical archaeology as a distinct field of study exemplify this process. On the one hand, it is no coincidence that in Europe, where most modern nation-states trace their histories back over long periods, often well into prehistory (see contributions to Graves-Brown *et al.* 1996), there has been little inclination to construct a sharp boundary between prehistory and history. Such a disjunction would only sever modern European societies from the (pre)histories which they wish to claim for themselves. Furthermore, the Old World emphasis on writing and the succession of 'high' civilizations (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, Greece, Rome, medieval Europe, renaissance Europe, modern Europe) betrays a teleological approach to the past, with history appearing to naturally converge on Europe. On the other hand, it is not by chance that the dominant groups in countries such as the United States have drawn a distinction between historical archaeology, which addresses aspects of their own history (even if some of these, such as slavery, are not so palatable), and pre-colonial prehistory, which is perceived by many as 'dead' and unrelated to the present. That historical archaeology is perceived as pertaining to the history of immigrant Americans is evident from the following statement by one of the leading proponents in the field:

America today, as the cultural heir of the Anglo-American tradition that began in North America in 1607, is studied by folklorists, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists. Historical archaeology can add to our understanding of the *American experience*.

(Deetz 1977:4–5, our emphasis; see also Orser and Pagan 1995:6)

However, for minority and indigenous groups in the United States and in many other countries in Africa, the Americas and Oceania, such an approach serves to cut them off from their pre-colonial histories and ignores frames of meaning which are important for their own cultural self-expression (Ucko 1994; Andah 1995; Schmidt and Patterson 1995:13–14). So, for instance, Pikirayi (Chapter 4, p. 72) notes that in Zimbabwe the entire conceptual framework within which historical archaeology is practised is limited to historical concerns that are predominantly derived from European and Arabic sources and their spheres of interest, rather than indigenous histories.

Recent approaches, focusing on social processes such as colonialism and the spread of a capitalist world economy, serve to incorporate non-European societies as active agents within history. As one of the key figures in the development of such a perspective across the human sciences states, 'The global processes set in motion by European expansion constitute *their* [i.e. non-European] history as well' (Wolf 1982:385). Nevertheless, ground-breaking though such studies have been, they still result in a one-sided picture, a history that is not *equally* shared in by European and non-European societies (Little 1996:52; Asad 1987:604). As Asad points out:

The story of world capitalism is the history of the dominant world order within which diverse societies exist. But there are also histories (some written, some yet to be written) of the diverse traditions and practices that once shaped people's lives and that cannot be reduced to ways of generating surplus or of conquering and ruling others.

(Asad 1987:604)

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

The use of ethnocentric dichotomies, such as non-literate:literate, myth: history, primitive:advanced, in the structuring of historical analysis hinders the production of the alternative histories that Asad demands. As Goody (1977:3–4, 9) has shown with relation to literacy, the use of such dichotomies has reduced diverse technologies of communication, and their effects on social organization and modes of thought, to gross de-contextualized categories, typologies which are accepted as a substitute for explanation. Whilst historical archaeology is rarely specifically concerned with the invention or spread of literacy, broad definitions of the field implicitly rely on a distinction between non-literate and literate societies. Here it is worth remembering that written documentation and its use in society takes diverse forms and that literacy was limited, and to some extent still is, to certain sections of society, (historically, these often consisted of elites or specialist groups) (see Goody 1977). Few historical archaeologists would disagree with these points, and yet the literature continues to be dominated by definitions intent on identifying an absolute boundary between history and prehistory. The result, as Schmidt and Patterson (1995:13–14) point out, is that innovative approaches combining historical, archaeological, ethnographic and 'mythical' oral information are often ignored or dismissed as methodologically unsound. As Parker-Pearson *et al.* (Chapter 15) convincingly demonstrate, the critical use of oral history, traveller's tales and archaeology in conjunction with one another can substantially increase our understanding of the history of a particular region, in this case southern Madagascar, where reliance on one of these sources alone would be detrimental (see also Pikirayi, Chapter 4; Funari, Chapter 18; Rowlands, Chapter 19).

Furthermore, studies transcending the pre-colonial/colonial boundary are undermined by implicit expectations regarding appropriate subject matter and methodological and theoretical distinctions between prehistoric and historical archaeology (see Lightfoot 1995; Colley and Bickford 1996). As Colley and Bickford point out with relation to Aboriginal sites in Australia, expectations relating to subject matter mean that many indigenous 'historic period sites' go unrecognized:

Even today, Aboriginal people sometimes use 'traditional' places (e.g. rock shelters, waterholes, campsites) without leaving any 'European' materials behind. To label these Aboriginal sites 'prehistoric' because

they contain no obvious exotic materials is to render post-contact Aboriginal places, and the people who used them, invisible.
(Colley and Bickford 1996:8)

Such is the rigidity of the boundary that, in countries such as the United States and Australia, even demonstrably contemporary, geographically associated 'indigenous' and 'colonial' 'historic period sites' can be artificially isolated, the former often being studied by prehistorians (and thus implicitly regarded as part of prehistory), and the latter by historical archaeologists using different techniques, different temporal and geographical scales of analysis and different explanatory frameworks (Lightfoot 1995:208–9). Typically, indigenous sites have been treated as part of the long term, and analysed with relation to ecological and neo-evolutionary models, whereas 'European' sites are situated in terms of recent historical events and individual agency and analysed in terms of socio-political relationships.

It might be argued that recent work in historical archaeology, focusing on the history of European colonialism, or capitalism and its industrial expressions, escapes at least some of the analytical problems associated with a typological distinction between literate and non-literate societies. Certainly, such work has produced a strong theoretical framework for the analysis of various societies following European conquest, looking in particular at the operation of global processes, such as colonialism, commodification, ideology and power, in specific local contexts (see below). Important case studies have been carried out demonstrating the power of such an approach, in particular in its ability to facilitate cross-cultural comparison and to address the lives of both colonizers and colonized (e.g. Orser 1996a). Nevertheless, the co-option of such a focus in the definition of historical archaeology still raises problems, not least of which, as Little (1996:51) points out,

is a Western/European-centred viewpoint that may serve to omit from 'historical archaeology' cross-culturally relevant work incorporating written documentation such as that on Old World precapitalist states...political manoeuvring between Native American groups...medieval Europe...or African cultures documented through oral history.

As Johnson (1992:46) stresses, the 'rise of capitalism' is often seen in isolation from its medieval antecedents, and this criticism could be extended further, as there are antecedents and continuities not only in relation to the medieval period, but also with respect to other non-capitalist, non-European traditions the world over. Several concepts associated with the spread of capitalism, such as colonialism, domination and resistance, and the commodification of the material world, represent particular instances of social processes which can be observed in earlier historic periods. Colonialism, military expansion and imperialism are terms applicable to the Incas in South America and to the

city-states of Mesopotamia, social and historical contexts which share at least some features with modern European expansion. Domination and resistance, although manifested in different ways in different historical and geographical contexts, characterize all societies where surplus labour is produced and appropriated (Saitta 1992:889, 1994:203). Furthermore, it can also be argued that processes of commodification have occurred in several historical contexts. Even if it were accepted that the advent of modern capitalism marked a qualitative break with all forms of civilization that had gone before it as, prior to its emergence, political domination was more important than economic domination (Anderson 1990:55), this should not set European colonialism apart in any absolute sense. The singularization of the European colonial experience as being totally different from past expansions and dominations undermines the useful comparison of diverse processes of colonial exploitation (Webster 1997; and see contributions to Webster and Cooper 1996). By the same token, the 'capitalist' civilization exported by Europeans has never been able to reduce all social relations, everywhere in the world, to economic relations. As Funari (Chapter 3) shows, processes of commodification can be observed in the Roman world, just as non-capitalist relations are evident in the modern world. Consequently, the assertion of a radical dichotomy between the archaeology of capitalism and that of pre-capitalism carves up history along artificial lines, and produces a simplistic understanding of both pre-modern and modern societies as relatively homogeneous entities (Chase and Chase 1996:810; see also Johnson, Chapter 2).

The prioritization of capitalism as a focus of study situates its emergence, spread and eventual domination as an inevitable process, lying beyond the consciousness or control of social actors, particularly subordinate groups (Johnson 1992:46). The supposed 'inexorability' of capitalism and its power to rule the minds of people, creating a disciplinary society (Burke 1995:149), is a concept which can lead to the underestimation of resistance and heterogeneity, 'flattening out' past societies by portraying them in terms of a unifying culture. Instrumental rationality (*Zweckrationalität*) should not be interpreted as the sole and unopposable way of reasoning in capitalism (Löwy 1992:119; see also Bourdieu 1977:177).

'BACK FROM THE EDGE': TOWARDS A WORLD-WIDE HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

In contrast to the dominant North American definition of historical archaeology, the contributors in this collection 'answer back' from the edge. They suggest, explicitly or implicitly, that archaeology has a central place within all forms of documentary history, that the archaeology of post-1492 America is only one of many possible historical archaeologies, including classical and medieval archaeology, and that there is much to be gained from a reunification of these fields within the wider discipline of archaeology. Within this framework, a broad

and flexible definition of historical archaeology must be adopted, one which returns to an emphasis on the presence of written documents rather than European colonialism and the rise of capitalism, but advocates an interdisciplinary approach to the past combining various sources of evidence (cf. Davies 1988:21; Small 1995:15; Kepacs 1997:193).

As we have discussed above, such an approach has its dangers, as does an emphasis on European expansion, for both can lead to the centring of world history on Europe, and a denial of non-western histories. However, such a Eurocentric perspective can be countered by stressing a malleable approach to historical archaeology, which does not situate literate societies in opposition to non-literate ones, but which recognizes degrees and forms of literacy and facilitates the analysis of the diverse ways in which written documents may operate as a mode of communication in society. As Funari (Chapter 3) argues, such an approach can incorporate societies ranging from ancient Babylonia to dynastic China, from the Roman Empire to sixteenth-century Africa and nineteenth-century Brazil. It also encourages wide-ranging cross-cultural comparisons, and studies which transcend conventional boundaries between 'history' and 'prehistory', in an attempt to explore similarities and differences in social processes which are typical of societies with written records, such as colonialism and imperialism, domination and resistance, power and identity and relations between the 'local' and the 'global'. These may take the form of direct comparisons, such as Small's use of burial monuments in the United States as a source of analogy and comparison with classical Greek burial monuments (see Chapter 7), whilst others draw on theories devised in the study of one period as a means of interpreting other historical contexts, such as Hingley's use of post-colonial theory in the analysis of Roman Britain (see Chapter 8).

Such arguments soften and blur the dichotomies between history and prehistory, literate and non-literate societies, but why maintain historical archaeology as a discrete field of study at all? Why do we need to implicate written history? Why not merely engage in a comparative archaeology, which utilizes all the sources of evidence available for a given period and area? Contributors to this volume offer a variety of perspectives, but the overall trend is in favour of a nested approach; an approach that, at a general level, stresses the common ground underlying the archaeological study of all human societies in terms of inter-disciplinary theories of material culture, but also recognizes the methodological distinctiveness of studying societies with written sources, and again, at a finer level, the need to examine the diverse, historically specific roles which writing can play in communication and representation.

The importance of a common theoretical framework for the analysis of material culture bridging the study of societies with written records and those without needs to be underlined (and see Austin 1990:30–5; Lightfoot 1995). That is not to suggest that a single unified theory must be selected among the eclectic range of perspectives which characterize archaeology today. Rather it is to suggest that theories of material culture should not be bifurcated around

the prehistory:history distinction. There is no justification for arguing that some theories of material culture are more suited to prehistoric material than historic site material, and there is a need for consistent frameworks to be applied to both sets of material whether archaeologists are working within processual (e.g. Small, Chapter 7), Annales (e.g. see contributions to Kepacs 1997), post-processual (e.g. Austin 1990:34–5; see also Hall, Chapter 12; Lydon, Chapter 16), or any other of the diverse frameworks which exist. For as Austin puts it, ‘theory is central not just to archaeology alone but to historical study as a whole, because theory is about the nature of human behaviour [and material culture] in its contexts of space and time’ (Austin 1990:32).

At the same time, within the nested approach suggested above, there are a number of things which distinguish the study of societies with written documents from those without written documents. First, despite diversity in the role of writing in processes of communication and representation in different societies, the fact of documentation itself is an agent of transformation often associated with centralization and the appearance of early states or empires. In this respect, it can be argued that ‘a society which documents itself is of its very nature a different form of society from one which does not’ (Austin 1990:30), and archaeologists engaging in the study of such societies must be alert to such differences. Second, documentary history plays a specific role in constructing the past for societies with written records. It is often argued that written accounts are created and used by the elite to organize their own understanding of social life and their own forms of remembrance, as in the case of the construction of Brazilian history in terms of the forging of a racial democracy (see Quartim de Moraes, Chapter 11; Funari, Chapter 18; Rowlands, Chapter 19). As Dyson (1995:36) emphasizes, the dominance of written records resulted ‘until recently, in the creation of a text that neglects not only the urban poor, but also rural life in general’. Whilst the new ‘culture history’ has extended the scope of the study of written documents into the ‘everyday, the unspoken, and the material’ (Johnson, Chapter 2), it is still generally acknowledged that archaeology has the power to subvert the master narratives which so often dominate written records, to ‘find the spaces between words and things’ (Hall, Chapter 12). But in order to do so, to bring ordinary people back into scholarly discourse, archaeologists must take written discourses and their relation to material culture into account (Ober 1995:111). Verbal and artefactual discourses intersect with one another in diverse ways in past societies, and the development of techniques for addressing their inter-relationships remains a fundamental methodological question binding together the field of historical archaeology (Couse 1990:57; Little 1996:50).

In this volume, as elsewhere (see Little 1996:50), a variety of approaches towards the combined analysis of written and material evidence are advocated. There are those who use the two sources of evidence to complement one another, to fill in where one or the other lacks detail (e.g. Pikarayi, Chapter 4; Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa, Chapter 6; Klingelhofer, Chapter 10). Then there are those

who look for contradictions between material and written evidence (e.g. Small, Chapter 7; Hingley, Chapter 8; Hall, Chapter 12; Lydon, Chapter 16). In still other cases, one source of evidence, usually the documentary, is used as a means to construct sets of expectations which are then explored with relation to other sources of evidence (e.g. Brown, Chapter 9; Parker Pearson *et al.*, Chapter 15). This methodological diversity is due, in part, to the development of tailored approaches for the analysis of particular aspects of past societies, for instance, as in the case of Hall's (Chapter 12) study of discourse and power in colonial Cape Town, and Jones's (Chapter 14) exploration of qualitative differences in literary and material manifestations of ethnicity where she explores the relationship between discourse and practice. In other cases, however, it is due to more fundamental differences of opinion as to the relationship between material and written evidence in general, as in the case of Small's (Chapter 7) approach, where he emphasizes that material and written evidence constitute independent sets of data, produced by *different* social processes, and Johnson's (Chapter 2) argument that they are a product of the *same* social processes.

Such methodological diversity, and the debate surrounding it, should be seen as a strength and embraced by a world historical archaeology which incorporates a wide variety of geographical and historical contexts, as well as a diverse set of archaeological and historical traditions. In general there is a trend away from a rigid distinction between written and material evidence, with calls to subject material evidence to textual analysis (Hall, Chapter 12), and to undertake an archaeology of documents:

If material culture is text, text is also material culture. How, physically, were documents generated? What, for example, do different scripts tell us about the bodily discipline of writing? What of the physical production of printed books? How does the conceptual ordering of a feudal text like the Domesday Book or Boldon Book correspond (or fail to correspond) to the material ordering of the planned feudal landscapes found across much of Europe?

(Johnson, Chapter 2, pp. 31–32)

Such an emphasis on materiality, and material culture as text, overcomes the distinction between written and material sources, and the tendency to try to prioritize one over another, as both can be treated as material texts, discursive constructions (see also Lydon, Chapter 16). Furthermore, the use of oral history broadens the concept of 'historical sources' and undermines the primacy attributed to written texts (see Pikiyai, Chapter 4; Parker Pearson *et al.*, Chapter 15).

Such methodological debates about the treatment of archaeological and historical sources and their inter-relationships with one another are essential, but they are also inevitably part of the 'policing' of the boundaries of scholarship and the maintenance of a western, scientific conception of history. For this reason, a number of the contributors call for a historical contextualization of historical

research (e.g. Funari, Chapter 3; Hingley, Chapter 8; Rowlands, Chapter 19), and criticize the prioritization of written and symbolic representations over practical forms of knowledge (e.g. Funari, Chapter 3; Jones, Chapter 14). At a more fundamental level, Quinn (Chapter 5) shows how western academic forms of historical representation (of which historical archaeology is a part) are a product of a modern professionalized discourse of precedence and succession, which is essentially founded on a differentiation between past and present. Such a mode of historical consciousness, he argues, is incommensurable with populist discourses which frequently involve the resurgence of the past in the present, thus breaking the temporal order established within western academic historical representations (as in the case of popular appropriations of the swastika within Aryanist myths and Hindu representations of the history of the Ayodhya site). This kind of contextualization of historical archaeology, along with other western modes of historical analysis, is an important part of any world-wide approach to this field of study, which will inevitably come up against modes of representing and experiencing the past that contrast strongly with those originating within western academic traditions.

POWER AND IDENTITY: COMMON THEMES—DIVERSE CONTEXTS

Aside from these basic methodological and epistemological concerns, the chapters in this book are characterized by a number of themes which are explored in relation to diverse social and historical contexts. The most conspicuous of these themes are those of power and identity which emerge as the central focus of analysis. Indeed, the second and third sections of the book focus on '*archaeologies of domination and resistance*' and '*issues of identity, nationalism and ethnicity*' respectively. Nevertheless, despite the fact that some chapters concentrate predominantly on domination and resistance, and others on various kinds of identity, one of the most important aspects of this book is the contribution many chapters make to exploring the integral relationship between power and identity. Other themes within this overarching area of concern include the specific role of material culture in the expression of power and identity, cross-cultural perspectives on colonialism, the tension between the 'global' and the 'local' and the dialectic between past and present.

Power relationships, expressed in terms of concepts such as domination and resistance, inequality, the colonizers and the colonized and so on, have been a central focus of archaeological research in general over the last decade (see, among others, Miller *et al.* 1995; McGuire and Paynter 1991; Bond and Gilliam 1994). To some extent, this concern is a product of first Marxist and then post-structuralist influences on archaeology (see Austin 1990:35). However, it is not surprising that historical archaeologists have been particularly pre-occupied with the analysis of power relationships, engaged as they are with the study of societies in which writing constitutes an agent of transformation, often associated with

the centralization of power and the formation of states and empires. It has been argued, here and elsewhere, that in such contexts archaeology is in a good position to study the dynamic interaction between elites and non-elites. There has been a trend in historiography away from a history of elites and institutions to a careful examination of the material conditions and culture of the lower classes (Iggers 1984:195) and historical archaeology is in a good position to maintain a dialogue with historians in this matter. However, historical archaeologists cannot be complacent about their role as the champions of ‘ordinary’ people (Laurence 1995:313), for as Hall points out:

more often than not, the collections with which we work were left by slave owners, masters, bourgeois householders and farmers. The underclasses, often so difficult to find in the documentary record, are equally elusive in their material traces as well.

(Hall, Chapter 12, p. 193)

If historical archaeology is to ironicize the master narratives of power and identity which are so often represented in literary sources, then we have to develop alternative ways of looking for the archaeology of marginalized and dominated groups, and new approaches to the interpretation of multiple appropriations or ‘readings’ of the same material in different social contexts in the past.

Material culture, power and identity

Two of the contributors, Brown (Chapter 9) and Monks (Chapter 13), focus specifically on the use of material culture as an indicator of status or class by archaeologists. Both stress the complexity of the relationship between the nature of archaeological remains and the status of the people who used them, emphasizing the need to consider depositional processes and differential survival rates as well as social factors such as gender and ethnic background which might influence people’s economic practices and modes of consumption. Nevertheless, they see material culture as directly and passively reflecting the status of the people who used it. Likewise, in her analysis of slavery in Brazilian society, Quartim de Moraes (Chapter 11) uses seventeenth—and nineteenth-century paintings by European painters as a direct source of information about the actual nature of slave life.

In contrast, several contributors emphasize the active role which the material world plays in discourses of power and identity; material culture, they suggest, both constitutes people’s identity and position in the world and is drawn on by those people in the active negotiation of their identity and relationship to others. For instance, Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa (Chapter 6) argue that representations of the body in proto-historical Iberian societies formed part of a discourse through which gender was actively constructed, and that such representations were used by women in the negotiation of their

status in Iberian society. Hingley (Chapter 8), Hall (Chapter 12) and Lydon (Chapter 16) show that there is a continuous interplay between the discourses of power and identity produced by dominated groups and attempts to resist or appropriate those discourses by marginalized and subaltern groups. Consequently, rather than take material culture to be a straightforward reflection of status or identity, they argue that we need to look at how discourses of power and identity intersect with one another in order to elucidate the meaning of specific styles and forms of material culture in different social contexts. Overall, there is an emphasis on meaning and the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of relations of power and constructions of identity (see also Small, Chapter 7; Jones, Chapter 14; Parker Pearson *et al.*, Chapter 15).

In contrast with the North American tradition of historical archaeology, material culture is not perceived primarily in terms of capitalist economics and commodification. On the contrary, most of the chapters in this book, whether explicitly (e.g. Funari, Chapter 3; Monks, Chapter 13) or implicitly (e.g. Hall, Chapter 12; Lydon, Chapter 16), warn against assuming homogeneous economic systems and the analysis of material culture purely in terms of a commodity culture. Certainly commodification has been a prominent characteristic of the modern period, but clearly continuity, tradition and non-capitalist modes of reasoning must also be considered. As Lydon's (Chapter 16) analysis of the commodification of Chinese ceramics following the development of ceramic print transfers shows, the desire for such items of material culture among white Australians was as much about the construction of an exotic but sanitized 'other' as it was about market-oriented economics and capitalist rationality. Capitalism here provided the context in which new 'mass-produced' representations of identity could be constructed and consumed, bought and sold, but nevertheless a capitalist-driven instrumental rationality *did not* constitute the primary motivation behind human agency in this sphere.

Colonialism: cross-cultural perspectives

Aside from the development of frameworks for the analysis of power and identity from material culture, many of the chapters elaborate on the forging of power relationships and processes of identity construction in specific colonial contexts. For instance, drawing on post-colonial theory, Hingley (Chapter 8) explores the way in which the roundhouse may have been used both as a source of resistance to Roman power and identity, and as a means by which local elites imposed a lower status on others in early Roman Britain. In a more empirically-oriented account, Klingelhofer (Chapter 10) focuses on English settlement plantations of the 'proto-colonial' period in Ireland, outlining English attempts to impose new principles of order on the landscape and the possibilities for future research into relations between the Irish, the first (Catholic) English colonists and the later English colonists. Both studies provide evidence indicating that monolithic cultural categories such as 'Roman' and 'Native', 'English' and 'Irish', are not

an appropriate means of characterizing the complex and dynamic role of material culture in these contexts of colonialism. It seems that the meanings attributed to the round-house in Roman Britain, or specific forms of settlement and landscape use in proto-colonial Ireland, were not fixed, but rather open to multiple and diverse interpretations by different groups in different social and historical contexts.

Turning to a quite different social context, Hall (Chapter 12) provides various readings of written sources and material culture, relating to food, marriage and architecture, in order to elucidate discourses of power, and the spaces through which subaltern modes of resistance can be glimpsed, in colonial Cape Town and its surrounding region. Lydon (Chapter 16) focuses on white Australian attempts to control and police Chinese identity and culture alongside Chinese modes of resistance through the perpetuation of traditional practices and the creation of social networks and modes of interaction. In both cases, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Cape Town and turn-of-the-century Sydney, the power of the dominant group is palpable, revealed in the relentless subjection of marginal and subaltern identities to a kind of critical surveillance, which is rarely turned on the dominant group's sense of 'self' (see Chapman *et al.* 1989:18). But, like Hall, Lydon illustrates the cultural spaces in which modes of resistance are mobilized, and the constant interplay between groups as they repeatedly appropriate specific aspects of material culture in the attempt to control the representation of identity to themselves and others. Parallels can also be drawn between Lydon's chapter on Chinese immigrants in Australia and that of Spencer-Wood (Chapter 17) which focuses on the maintenance of distinctive Jewish practices and the creation of social support networks in the United States, as well as the transformation of traditional Jewish culture and identity within American society. These and many other chapters in the book demonstrate the similarities and differences which characterize various contexts of colonialism and testify to the importance of a comparative framework which is at the same time attuned to the specificities of particular historical situations.

The 'local' and the 'global'

Many chapters address the issue of relations between the local and the global, and the hybrid cultures and identities which have been created in the context of rapidly expanding (and contracting) political and economic systems. 'Think globally, dig locally' (Orser 1996a:183–204) is a slogan rightly emphasizing that even apparently isolated sites are related to a larger world, and the chapters in this book are replete with examples which endorse this. From an early medieval Jewish sink in Spain (Funari, Chapter 3), to Dutch paintings of seventeenth-century Brazil (Quartim de Moraes, Chapter 11), to the influence of Spanish colonial policies on the planting of English settlements in Ireland (Klingelhofer, Chapter 10), the interconnectedness of societies and the influence of widespread historical processes stand out as central issues in any world-wide historical archaeology.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to maintain a critical perspective on the nature of the inter-relationships between different societies and on any apparent tendencies towards cultural homogenization. The concept of ‘globalization’ has been increasingly prominent in recent social theory, a reaction in part to the rapid transmission of material culture, people and ideas throughout the world, which characterizes the late twentieth century, or the postmodern period as it is often known. In this context it might be tempting to merely highlight examples of globalization in early periods as a means of qualifying the distinctiveness of the modern and postmodern periods. What is needed, however, is a more critical perspective on the nature of the inter-relationships between groups and processes of acculturation or homogenization in the present and the past (cf. Friedman 1995). To do so, we need to dissect the specific cultural labels such as ‘Romanization’ and ‘Europeanization’ which are often attributed to processes of globalization. These are recent terms which must be used with caution, for instance, ‘Europeanism’ was first attested in English in 1828 (*The Oxford Universal Dictionary, sub voce*), and there was no ‘Romanization’ for the Romans themselves (Funari 1996:83–6). Furthermore, concepts relating to acculturation have traditionally situated culture and identity within normative and evolutionary frameworks (and see Hingley, Chapter 8). Here, identity is considered to be a passive reflection of cultural difference, which is ameliorated through culture contact as subordinate groups adopt the supposedly superior culture of the dominant. In contrast, many of the studies in this book show that local identities are built in opposition to distant and not-so-distant ‘others’, and that processes of long-term change, of conquest and incorporation, are always accompanied by the construction of new discourses of difference and ‘otherness’, for instance as with the expansion of the Roman world (see Hingley, Chapter 8), or European colonialism and the establishment of slavery in South America (Quartim de Moraes, Chapter 11; Funari, Chapter 18; Rowlands, Chapter 19). Thus, historical archaeology must address both large-scale or global trends and the specificities of local contexts as people reacted to their global realities in an active and reflexive manner. Rowlands’s analysis of the runaway slaves at Palmares in Brazil and their active engagement with the broader colonial context provides a clear demonstration of the importance of such an approach:

Whatever the details of its pluralism, Palmares seems to have inverted its slave identity and established a relationship with colonial society earning creditable testaments from visitors about the sophistication of its facilities and its overall importance in the regional politics of the captaincy of Pernambuco. There is little doubt that this took place in the context of a colonial politics and probably saw an alliance between mercantile interests and the inhabitants of Palmares set against those of the Portuguese nobility and plantation slave owners who triumphed in the end.

(Rowlands, Chapter 19, p. 342)

The present in the past, the past in the present

The dialectic between past and present has been an important focus of both social theory (e.g. Shanks and Tilley [1987] 1992; Bourdieu 1990:1–21) and studies of identity (e.g. Chapman *et al.* 1989:1–9; Jones 1997:135–44) for the past decade or so. Likewise, in this book the interplay between past and present figures at various points, sometimes as a specific focus of analysis, at other times as an unsettling aside suggesting that our representations of the past are structured by much broader social and political interests in the present. For instance, Klingelhofer (Chapter 10) notes in passing the effect of twentieth-century Irish politics on the study of English proto-colonial settlements south of the border, where they have been neglected, and north of the border where they have been a focus of greater interest (see Woodman 1995 for further discussion). Hingley (Chapter 8) provides an in-depth analysis of the way in which the study of Romanization during the first half of the twentieth century was influenced by contemporary British perceptions of empire, particularly in the context of India, and how Roman imperialism as interpreted by historians and archaeologists was in turn used as a model for British imperial policy.

In terms of identity, Rowlands (Chapter 19) provides a detailed discussion of the contemporary politics of identity in Brazil which provides the context for any historical archaeology of slavery. Like Funari (Chapter 18), he notes that historical archaeology is regarded as an important source of evidence about the history of slave resistance in the absence of written accounts by slaves themselves, and argues that ‘there is no better justification for the importance of an archaeology of slavery than to show its role in producing a past, which demonstrates how things might have been otherwise’ (Rowlands, Chapter 19, p. 342).

An altogether more abstract approach to the question of the relationship between past and present can be found in Quinn’s (Chapter 5) analysis of the differences between scientism and traditionalism in terms of the production of historical knowledge. In showing that orthodox, western, scientific history depends on a decisive break between past and present, whereas traditionalist and popularist representations involve a resurgence of the past in the present, he relativizes and questions the entire epistemology of orthodox history underlying studies, such as those discussed here, of the relationship between past and present as ultimately discrete realms.

FRAGMENTATION

Finally, one of the overriding impressions made by the chapters in this book is that of a fragmentation, both of the frameworks in which historical archaeologists work and of the stories we tell. There is a move away from the definition of world systems and universalizing categories (cf. Johnson 1997:220). Recent debates within the field have attempted to define historical archaeology in terms

of a coherent, universalizing system, such as European colonialism or capitalism (for further discussion see above; Funari, Chapter 3; Johnson, Chapter 2). However, this inevitably sets up all-or-nothing dichotomies, like literacy illiteracy, history:prehistory, capitalism:feudalism, pre-colonial:colonial (and now post-colonial), which fall apart in the face of detailed studies on either side of such divides. Most people in past literate societies were illiterate, capitalism and feudalism were, and are still, enmeshed (see Funari, Chapter 3), pre-colonial peoples often continued to live in relative isolation following European contact and colonization (see Pikarayi, Chapter 4), and colonial/imperial systems can be identified prior to 1492 (see Hingley, Chapter 8). Studies focusing on the mixed features of various historical contexts with relation to specific regions and sites present a challenge to any attempt to define all-encompassing, coherent world systems. Furthermore, any attempt to impose a single coherent definition of historical archaeology belies the diversity of theory and method evident both in this book and elsewhere (for general discussions see Funari, Chapter 3; Johnson, Chapter 2), and which is always likely to characterize the practice of historical archaeology in a world context. Such fragmentation should not be seen as a negative influence, for it has contributed to a deconstruction of master narratives concerning colonialism, slavery, the evolution of feudalism into capitalism, and so on, which have dominated and constrained historical archaeology. As Johnson argues:

we should recognize that by definition our work serves to *ironicize master narratives*. One of the key themes that does hold historical archaeology together is that we walk in a uniquely dangerous space of the human past, a space between often very powerful 'master narratives' of cultural and social identity and much smaller, stranger, potentially subversive narratives of archaeological material. Archaeology does not have a monopoly on the study of the voices of ordinary people, but it does have the ability to render familiar things strange, and reveal timeless things as transient.

(Johnson, Chapter 2, p. 34)

In the face of such fragmentation, we have suggested an alternative way of conceiving of historical archaeology and the contribution which archaeology makes to the study of historical periods. Overall, the chapters provide a critique of the tendency in current historical archaeology to 'flatten out' past societies by representing them in terms of unifying cultures. They deal with issues, like ethnicity, gender, exploitation, social conflict and identity, in different periods and areas, overcoming orthodox boundaries between classical, biblical, medieval and historical archaeologies and producing innovative results. Historical archaeology has much to gain from adopting a contextual and pluralist approach and we hope this book will contribute to building such a world-wide discipline.

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ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

An ambivalent relationship

2 *Rethinking historical archaeology*

MATTHEW H. JOHNSON

One of the fashionable ideas in archaeology at the moment is that of a so-called ‘world historical archaeology’. The call to construct an archaeology uniting all geographical areas where documentary and material evidence can be combined has been voiced in several forums. We see it most notably in the meetings of the World Archaeological Congress and in the *One World Archaeology* publications, as well as in the writings of some archaeologists on the East Coast of the United States (Falk 1991:viii; Orser 1996).

In this chapter I want to support such a call by critically examining some of its implications. In particular, I want to address some of the theoretical and methodological issues that arise. Asserting the need for a world historical archaeology in an age when our research is supposed to be ‘international’ in scope is a little like calling for ‘motherhood and apple pie’. Few would deny such a need; however, the proclamation of a new global perspective remains simply that—a proclamation and no more—until careful and self-critical consideration has been given to what such an archaeology might consist of, what issues it should address itself to, how it might relate to broader theoretical trends within archaeology as a discipline, its context in wider academic practice and so on. In short, we need to theorize the context and concerns of a world historical archaeology.

Many historical archaeologists in Europe have consistently failed to address the problem of what such an archaeology might actually look like in practice. In the past, rather than moving forward to address such issues, debates in much of the literature and at various conferences have raged repetitively over the rather tired issues of archaeology versus history, document versus artefact and so on (Deetz 1988; Leone and Potter 1988; and see Figure 2.1). These issues have gone round and round without a great deal of productive insight. I suggest that, just as Shanks and Tilley want to move beyond their set of disabling dualisms in terms of archaeological theory as a whole (Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 1987b), we need to move beyond these and question the underlying categories and classifications, what Foucault might call the discursive formations, that set them up in the first place.

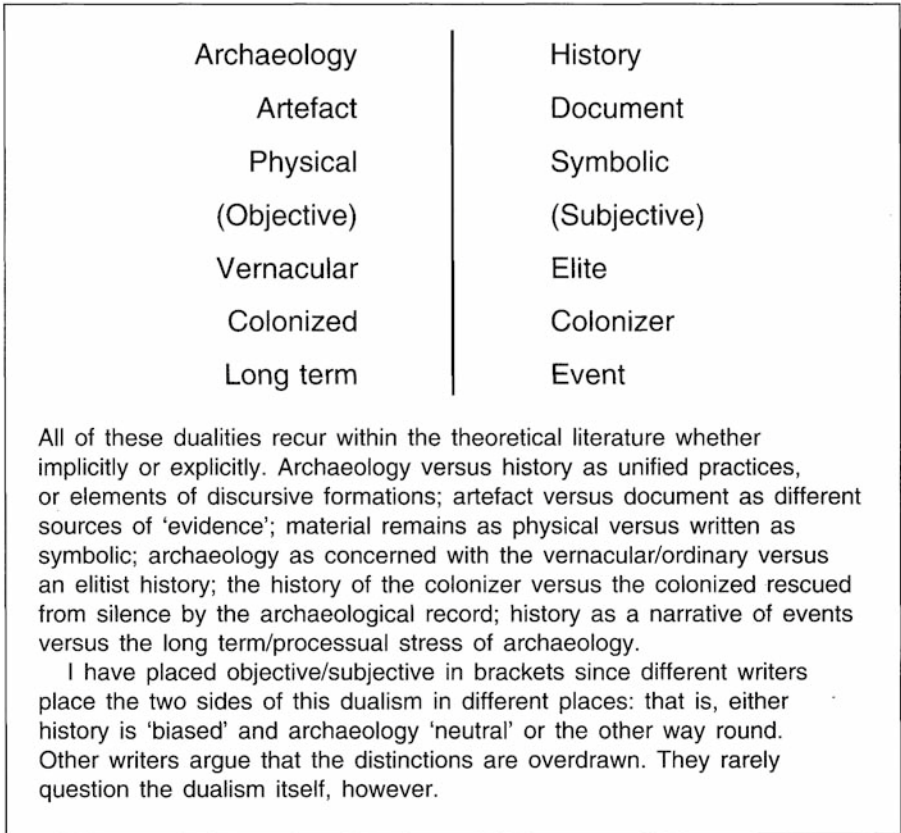


Figure 2.1 Dualities in historical archaeology

The problem with attempting to question such categories is that, however tired these dualities are, they still form the basis for a consistent definition of world historical archaeology. For example, any *methodological* definition of historical archaeology as opposed to prehistoric archaeology immediately rests on the availability of something conceived of as a distinct class of material and labelled 'documents'. Other, substantive definitions have centred on the feudal/capitalist transition (Leone and Potter 1988:19), the 'archaeology of European colonial expansion' or other such themes. Without prejudging the discussion below, I suggest that such substantive definitions centred on concrete themes that are felt to unite the historical archaeology of all periods and places also tend to imply that there is one set of dualities we should be addressing.

The issues involved in a world historical archaeology are much more complex than such schemata might indicate. In particular, I suggest that the concerns of historical archaeology are as much ones of fragmentation as they

are of unification around a single definition or set of issues. Any attempt to write such an archaeology must negotiate a narrow and winding path through a whole series of tensions that cannot be characterized solely in terms of a single definition either of method or theme. In particular, it must grasp the issues of fragmentation of both theory and practice raised in this chapter without succumbing to the temptation to enter into the cul-de-sac of the narrow, avowedly atheoretical particularism that has characterized so much work in historical archaeology.

THE FRAGMENTATION OF THEORY

Any theory of historical archaeology must ground itself within the wider context of archaeological theory, as well as that of theory in the human sciences generally. Such a grounding, however, is neither obvious nor secure. Writings on archaeological theory have rarely if ever been more profuse than they are at present; but they have rarely been so fragmented in nature.

In the first place, traditional archaeology was never the unified discipline with a common set of aims and methods that some within the New Archaeology sought to portray. This was particularly true for European archaeology, and for much of Old World archaeology in general. In these areas, the theory and methodology of 'culture history' as described by historians of American archaeology was only partly followed, and there was more diversity in interpretive method, even if that diversity of method remained implicit and untheorized.

Second, the new agenda brought by the New Archaeology was not as all-embracing in its impact as a first impression might suggest. It is now commonplace to observe that Old World archaeological traditions were less affected than their American counterparts by positivism, or at least that version of positivism espoused by some in the 1960s and early 1970s (Hodder 1991). Such observations are particularly true of different traditions of historical archaeology. It is well known that in Britain, for example, there were several very diverse strands to historical archaeology before the 1960s. These included the architectural history of castles and churches rooted in Victorian traditions (Brooks 1989), the interdisciplinary emphasis of the 'English landscape tradition' of Hoskins and his students (Phythian-Adams 1992), and the work of Myres, Leeds and others on the archaeology of the early Anglo-Saxon settlements; each tradition built its work on rather different assumptions and methodologies.

Early examples of New Archaeology in action in historic periods in the Old World were piecemeal, rare and often negatively received by many elements within the scholarly community. Consequently, there has never, historically, been any kind of unified research agenda, or cluster of methodologies, in much of Old World historical archaeology in the same way as, for example, Flannery's edited volume *The Early Mesoamerican Village* (1976)

encapsulated such an agenda for the New Archaeology. As late as 1987, a 'research agenda' published by the Society for Medieval Archaeology read more like a shopping-list of disparate items than a coherent programme of research, whatever one thought of its theoretical flavour (Society for Medieval Archaeology 1987).

If New Archaeology left much traditional archaeology intact, even quite untouched, the same is true of so-called 'post-processual' archaeology. The popularity of post-processual approaches in some quarters does not mean that many intellectual circles have not been left profoundly unaffected, particularly in the United States and again in many areas of Old World historical archaeology.

The end result of this theoretical toing and froing within archaeology has been the creation of a series of communities, each hermetically sealed from the next and regarding their own credo as having been intellectually victorious. Many traditional scholars view as dangerously new and radical approaches that have been common currency in other areas of the discipline for decades. Many post-processual advocates dismiss other research traditions and communities out of hand as a bunch of intellectual dinosaurs. A good example of this inability to see the relevance of other schools of thought is the recent debate over the nature and interpretation of ethnicity. There are several different approaches that are being applied across the world to ethnicity in historical archaeology. Traditional archaeologists, especially in central and eastern Europe, continue with what they regard as a tried and tested set of methods for assigning ethnic identities to groups of archaeological material (see, for example, case studies in Austin and Alcock (1997:113–77). Second, there is a large body of 'migration theory' of various kinds. Third, there has been the treatment of ethnicity as a variable, to be set alongside other variables such as status and wealth within a model of a changing cultural system in a broadly processual manner. Fourth, there is a stress, adopted from the anthropological literature, on ethnic identity as shifting and fluid, as mobilized tactically in tandem with other social and political interests and dependent on multiple meanings or 'readings' (Jones 1997). I do not want to argue here for one view or another; what is striking about recent debates, however, is how each community of scholars can continue working within their own tradition with little or no reference to each other's work.

It is worth noting in passing that this state of affairs brings questions of rhetoric and presentation to the fore. It is almost impossible to present the theoretical background to an academic argument without confusing some and irritating or boring others. If I make a statement like 'material culture is subjectively constituted—like a text' to, say, a mixed group of graduates and staff at a provincial British university, responses from the audience will range from 'I don't understand the jargon' and 'this is dangerously radical and hard-hitting' through 'this sort of approach is simply unscientific and not worth my time' to 'this is obvious—we all know this and have heard it a hundred times before—why not skip this unnecessary ground and cut to the chase?'

Such disciplinary fragmentation can be a 'good thing'. A wide diversity of approaches can bring a new array of insights to an old problem, and there are times when one simply has to get on with one's preferred approach regardless. A school of thought that pauses to bring everyone on board before moving on will by definition move at the pace of the slowest and most conservative, if indeed it moves at all. What is worrying is the degree to which other scholarly communities are simply not acknowledged, and the degree to which academic power may be wielded by one or another group to the exclusion of others from funding or career opportunities, frequently in generational terms.

THE FRAGMENTATION OF DISCIPLINARITY

If our own discipline has fragmented and widened in its concerns, so has our relationship with other disciplines. I want to focus on the discipline of history in particular, though similar points could be made about academic practice across the humanities and social sciences as a whole. Many historical archaeologists have spoken in the past of a 'tyranny of history', and have equated archaeological subservience to questions posed by the historical record with a restriction to the most traditional and narrow forms of enquiry (Austin 1997). Closely linked to this objection was a perception of historical narrative as being inextricably linked to elite perspectives and to the 'political' domain, as opposed to social and economic history, and the history of the masses. Such a view of 'history-as-oppressor' was always an oversimplification of the issues, and has become more so over the last decade. In many historical fields of enquiry, particularly Renaissance and early modern studies, the questions and perspectives raised by historians have enabled and widened research perspectives rather than constricted them.

Historical scholars like Hunt (1989), Laqueur (1990), Schama (1995), Wrightson (1996), Foucault and many others have all made use of 'archaeological' evidence in the form of material culture and landscape; all talk about meaning, text, discourse in a way readily intelligible to an archaeologist versed in recent thinking; all have moved beyond restrictive and positivistic views of historical discourse. Other fields have moved in similar directions. The 'New Historicism' in English literature has focused attention on the historical context of the production of texts, and raised parallels between literary and material forms in the Renaissance (for example Helgerson 1986; Evett 1991). Similar comments could be made about recent work in art and architectural history (Howard 1990), and post-colonial and feminist history (Chaytor 1995; Purkiss 1995). (It is worth noting in passing, however, that just as archaeology has fragmented rather than moved forward as a body, so has the discipline of history; many historians, especially of the early medieval period, seem entirely unaware of the developments within their own discipline reviewed above.) As a result of these developments within historical practice, a theorized and ambitious

historical archaeology has as many potential friends as opponents within the discipline of history. The discipline of history cannot be characterized any longer as a 'tyranny', or as a series of shackles holding archaeology back.

There is a negative side to this equation for historical archaeologists, however. Many justifications of historical archaeology are framed around its perceived ability to tell us things about the past that historians either cannot (because of the limitations of their sources), or will not (because of their conservative or positivistic attitudes) address; most classically, as manifested in Glassie's (1975) advocacy of the artefact as document of folk culture. Such an argument becomes less and less convincing as the 'New Cultural History' expands its horizons more and more into the everyday, the unspoken and the material. It follows, therefore, that if historical archaeology is to justify its existence it must set out its position in a clearer and more sophisticated way than a simple claim to occupy the rapidly diminishing spaces beyond the reach of historical discourse.

THE FRAGMENTATION OF MASTER NARRATIVES

If both archaeology and neighbouring disciplines have fragmented, so have the stories that these disciplines have traditionally told. Many of these stories have been implicit, but very real for all that: the rise of the nation-state, of modern ethnic identities, the 'flowering of the Middle Ages' and so on.

One master narrative in particular has dominated historical archaeology in the later periods, i.e. after AD 1500: that of the feudal/capitalist transition and the colonial encounters this transition generated. This narrative has taken several forms. The first version is that propounded by Classic (1975) and Deetz (1977), though here the transition between what are called 'medieval' and 'Georgian' worlds is not explicitly linked to a class analysis. Such an analysis has been placed within a more explicit social dimension, specifically a materialist analysis of the 'Georgian Order' as constitutive of an ideology of mercantile capitalism, by Mark Leone and his students (Leone 1984; Leone and Potter 1988). I have examined many aspects of this school of thought elsewhere (Johnson 1996 and forthcoming). It is worth noting that up until now, implicitly or explicitly, this has been the principal underlying theme in the creation of a world historical archaeology.

The 'Georgian Order' thesis is still a fruitful way of examining change between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries; but there are other ways of conceptualizing this period that draw together archaeological material in new and exciting ways. In particular, it is difficult to see how many feminist perspectives could be easily appropriated to this model. While the changes that the Georgian Order brought were undoubtedly engaged with the individual and household, and therefore must have direct implications for the study of gender, recent scholarship has stressed diversity of experience and much continuity in construction of gender (Erickson 1993). In parallel,

postcolonial thinking has stressed the diversity of responses to the colonial experience. The 'Georgian Order' thesis runs the risk of 'flattening out' the depth and diversity of indigenous responses to the incoming colonial order, whether Georgian, or otherwise.

A concern that appears particularly sharply to European archaeologists is that such approaches run the risk of 'flattening out' the culture of the European as well as that of the colonized. It is striking how both the elements that comprise the Georgian Order and its 'medieval' antecedents, far from being a stable set, were in a state of profound flux 'back home'. The Puritans, after all, were only on board the *Mayflower* in the first place because the country they were leaving was in a state of profound cultural crisis; the contradictions underlying that crisis were carried in part between their own ears. Their minds certainly did not harbour a pristine vernacular, or medieval culture. So if an archaeology of the colonial encounter is to be part of a world historical archaeology, let us give historical and cultural depth to all parties in that encounter.

THE FRAGMENTATION OF METHOD

If recent work has tended to move away from telling one unified story within historical archaeology, so the trend is to move away from one set of methods. The central defining characteristic of historical archaeology in terms of method is the availability of documents. For some, documents are the frame upon which to hang archaeology's illustrative material; for others, attempts to reconcile documentary and archaeological evidence within such an inductive framework are part of a 'matching game' to be regarded with suspicion (cf. Barnes 1984). More recently, there have been attempts to codify the recursive nature of the relationship between archaeological and documentary material, much as developments within 'middle-range theory' have tried to set up independent sets of data that can then be confronted one with another (Leone and Potter 1988). It is argued that Binford advocates the use of classes of material from disparate sources to check one against another, and to use any 'lack of fit' between these different classes as a means of generating new questions and driving knowledge forward. Documentary information, it is suggested, can provide one such source: Leone and Potter write that 'there are architectural pattern books, catalogues, and many other documents that describe material culture in a systematic way' (Leone and Potter 1988:18).

These are all interesting and profitable combinations of archaeological and documentary information that have increased our knowledge of the past; but whether such exercises can really be characterized as 'middle-range theory' is open to question. My basic reservation about such a methodology is that it tends to treat the document and its meanings as transparent and unproblematic. Just as some accounts of the Georgian Order have tended to 'flatten out' more nuanced and particular portrayals of human societies within particular contexts, so the application of middle-range theory to the

use of documents tends to ‘flatten out’ the nuances of the generation of documents, the ideas and social practices they are part of, and their interpretation by both historians and archaeologists. Documents have complex genealogies of their own; they do more than simply record events or things in a more or less biased manner. They do indeed record things in a systematic way, but the interesting question is: which system? Often, the processes that generate the archaeological record (the increasing quantity of imported pottery) are the same processes that produce the documentary record (increasingly complex systems of colonial trade and the information and power networks that go with these); so two apparently independent sets of data may actually be produced by the same set of processes.

Let me try to clarify what I mean by reference to one particular class of document, probate inventories. It is easy enough to set up two ‘observable’ indices and look for the fit, or lack of fit, between them: in this case, for example, between the average number of rooms seen in surviving seventeenth-century houses and the number recorded in inventories. The lack of fit might advance our knowledge in a series of ways—for example, alerting us to an archaeologically invisible subdivision of houses, or by suggesting that certain sizes of house are no longer standing. However, this would be only part of the story. It could be argued that both house and inventory are part of the same underlying process. The desire to create more rooms in a house, to increase privacy, to create discrete spaces for different functions related one to another organically, to organize the house in more ‘rational’ ways, might be part of the same will that at a different level insists on the creation of ordered inventories, of lists of objects perceived as discrete commodities, tabulated by room and valued item by item. A full archaeological account of this process might embrace both house and inventory and look at a much deeper level for the processes that generate both.

Now the processes that generate both are likely to differ from context to context. The document produced by an early medieval monk sitting in a freezing monastery in eighth-century Northumbria is likely to be different from a set of eighteenth-century building accounts in Annapolis, which in turn will be different from the diary of a South African colonist. Each may systematically describe a set of material forms, but homologies in systems may obscure any straightforward confrontation of data and theory in the manner prescribed by middle-range theory. So just as there is no one set of processes that is the theme of historical archaeology, so there can be no one method.

In conclusion, then, we have reached something of an impasse in this chapter. Most agree on the need for a world historical archaeology, but the present state of thinking within historical archaeology might suggest that we are moving in the opposite direction, fragmenting into an examination of particular contexts in particular ways with no common theory or method. Enough of us have laboured to bring a wider perspective to our particular specialisms for long enough to know that an unbridled fragmentation of this kind, if not adequately theorized, runs a real risk of degenerating into a new atheoretical particularism

just as the crumbling bastions of the old order have been stormed; defeat is about to be snatched from the jaws of victory. This should be avoided at all costs.

It is some comfort to note that this impasse in theory, that is between the perceived necessity of addressing global concerns and the perceived need to reinscribe the particular, is a central feature of thinking within the social sciences as a whole. Globalization theory, for example, is grappling with the paradox of the growing integration of different local contexts around the world at the same time as the deliberate creation of subcultures. Feminist and post-colonial theory also deals with this tension, with much debate over the possible dangers of the creation of a new essentialism ('women', the 'colonial oppressed'). The fact that others share many of the same conceptual problems, however, sharpens rather than blunts the need for a self-critical appraisal of the way forward.

ONE WAY FORWARD

The thrust of my argument, of course, militates against any proposal of *the* way forward; instead, I offer some tentative suggestions towards *one* way ahead for historical archaeology. Central to these suggestions is the proposition that historical archaeology is in fact characterized not by common territory in terms of a unified method and theory, but rather by the fact that all historical archaeologists work, whether they like it or not, within a series of tensions. In other words, I ask historical archaeologists not to look *inwards* to construct a narrow definition of their practice that may be rigidly bounded off from other areas of academic and 'popular' discourse, but *outwards*, to consider the cultural context of the discipline of world historical archaeology.

These wider tensions include themes already mentioned: between global networks of capitalism and local contexts, between the presence of the large, all-embracing structures of modernity and the sharper focus on agency and the individual that our material offers, tensions within the narratives that archaeologists write and other academics and the public read, across the use of different classes of material, between master narrative and irony. I suggest, however, that we view these tensions as challenging, as productive of new insights into the past, rather than as 'problems' or limitations.

I propose first that we should redefine the *scope* of our materials. I argued above that the expanding scope of historical discourse left less and less discursive space for archaeologists to 'tell us about things the documents don't mention'. Instead, we could make the opposite move: to construct an archaeology of documents. If material culture is text, text is also material culture. How, physically, were documents generated? What, for example, do different scripts tell us about the bodily discipline of writing? What of the physical production of printed books? How does the conceptual ordering of a feudal text like the Domesday Book or Boldon Book correspond (or fail to

correspond) to the material ordering of the planned feudal landscapes found across much of Europe?

Such an archaeology of documents has the potential to range over a series of areas often still dominated by traditional scholarship usually placed within subdisciplines of history. These include, for example, historical cartography, place-name studies, palaeography, 'diplomatic' and printed books, as well as fields often unjustly dismissed as narrow and antiquarian such as heraldry, the history of iconography, the history of technology, sigillography (the study of seals; Harvey and McGuinness 1996) and so on.

Such scholarship, however, can often provide the historical archaeologist seeking to put together a contextual account of material practices in a given area with invaluable material. I have argued that we should see a wide range of documentary, cartographical and material disciplines as embarked on a project of 'ordering the world' in early modern England; just as enclosure carved the landscape up physically, so these techniques carved it up mentally (Johnson 1996:97–118). Such an argument could only be made against a backdrop of countless particular and narrowly-focused studies of such materials available in the secondary literature. Just as David Clarke (1972) used a much earlier account of Glastonbury as a vehicle for putting forward new and innovative ideas, so we can use such materials to carry a new set of concerns.

Expansion of scope in this way, coupled with the fragmentation discussed above, might lead to a discrete historical archaeology losing its identity. It is difficult to see on this definition what is qualitatively different about 'archaeological' and 'historical' research in a given period, or area, if both are theoretically informed and deal with a wide range of classes of material (in other words, if they are contextual). It would, after all, narrow or even abolish the a priori distinction between text and artefact, a distinction that will perforce remain important at least in terms of funding and academic and professional organization. Again, however, I suggest this is an opportunity rather than a problem. Instead of a unitary world historical archaeology as opposed to other disciplines or subdisciplines such as history, historical archaeology re-emerges as a wide-ranging set of practices within an interdisciplinary theory of material culture whose very diversity makes it intellectually vibrant. Lack of a discrete academic space may raise problems with the neat classifications applied by funding bodies and systems of academic tribalism; but these problems must be met head-on in a positive fashion rather than shunned.

Following on from this, my second suggestion is that we labour to *end the opposition between theory and practice*, or more accurately between what is seen as particular, 'descriptive' scholarship and wider interpretive work. Such an opposition was always artificially constructed; it is a truism to remark that we are all theorists whether we like it or not. In any case, I know of no shortage of 'atheoretical' studies of archaeological material that are nevertheless ignorant of much of the relevant data, and conversely no shortage of studies that are both theoretically informed and that work closely and impressively with archaeological and historical detail.

The perpetuation of the split between data and theory in historical archaeology has been due to several factors. One of these is the relentless conservatism of some historical archaeologists, particularly in Europe. Such a split allows these practitioners to continue their pretence that somehow their work is atheoretical, that it stands apart from transient theoretical posturings. A second, more interesting consideration is that the approach of much early processual archaeology—the attempt to isolate a limited number of broadly defined ‘variables’ and examine the way they correlated in the long term—tended to look particularly unsubtle when applied to complex societies whose histories were well known. Isolation of variables in this manner implied that developing a broad contextual knowledge was irrelevant to the scientific method. To clarify, an argument linking externally defined variables such as ‘exchange’, ‘subsistence’ and ‘social complexity’ might offer a convincing account of change within palaeolithic or neolithic societies, seen by many as simple and possessing a narrow range of material forms. Such a style of argument looks less convincing when it is applied to histories that we know to be complex and nuanced. In particular, it tends to leave out large chunks of historiographic material deemed as irrelevant to the analysis of key variables. Explanations generated by such a method therefore appear insensitive to the evidence when judged by someone not persuaded by the processual credo.

Bringing theory and practice together is something of a piety, but it carries heavy implications, in particular a high scholarly burden. As historical archaeologists, we place huge demands upon ourselves. Many of us espouse the need to be ‘contextual’, to write studies that derive interpretive strength from looking in some empirical detail at different classes of evidence usually kept distinct. We also advocate the need for a detailed knowledge of the history of the peoples we study, both in terms of the secondary historical literature in our areas, and in terms of a need to understand how historians work and the complex background to the documents they use, how their documents were generated. At the same time, we claim that we need to be ‘international’ if not ‘global’ in scope, and that we need to have a knowledge of wider currents in the field of social and cultural theory.

Archaeologists in general are having a difficult time keeping up with the increasing flow of literature and the new forms of ‘scientific’ and other data. In many areas these increased demands have led to a loss of knowledge of relevant, but narrowly focused studies published in regional journals, and more fundamentally still to a loss of knowledge of basic artefact sequences. One such basic artefact sequence is the historic landscape and architecture around us. I am particularly conscious of this living and working in an area where the historic landscape is over 2,000 years old and where the density of ‘sites’ is such that I can never visit every surviving medieval church or house in the country. Yet a sympathetic and detailed knowledge of that landscape is a necessary part of a contextual historical archaeology of the area. I suggest, therefore, that historical archaeology should enter a phase of shifting its focus away from particular research projects and towards gathering a more synthetic knowledge of our

material. In the process, we may retrieve the best elements of the more inductive style of a previous generation of traditional scholars.

Finally, we should recognize that by definition our work serves to *ironicize master narratives*. One of the key themes that does hold historical archaeology together is that we walk in a uniquely dangerous space of the human past, a space between often very powerful ‘master narratives’ of cultural and social identity and much smaller, stranger, potentially subversive narratives of archaeological material. Archaeology does not have a monopoly on the study of the voices of ordinary people, but it does have the ability to render familiar things strange and reveal timeless things as transient. Many of the issues that arise from a recognition that history is written in the ironic mode (White 1987) are particularly acute in archaeology.

It is difficult, even impossible, to speak of things in historical archaeology without being implicitly and heavily ironic. Whatever one’s apolitical protestations, when one comments on the diversity of English landscape forms and the rapidity of transformation in the countryside, it is impossible not to comment implicitly on the last Conservative Prime Minister, John Major’s view:

Fifty years from now Britain will still be the country of long shadows on county grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and pools fillers and—as George Orwell said—‘old maids cycling to holy communion through the morning mist’ and—if we get our way—Shakespeare still read even in school. Britain will survive unamendable in all essentials.

(John Major, speech to Conservative Group for Europe, 22 April 1993)

When one deconstructs typologies of medieval castles, one is also deconstructing ideas of the Middle Ages, and with that ideas concerning the constitution of the present. Scholars working in contexts whose history is perhaps sharper and keener, particularly in colonial and post-colonial contexts from South Africa (Schrire 1995) to Ireland (Orser 1996:89–105), feel such ironies much more keenly and painfully. It is difficult to argue that working with megalithic tombs or bronze daggers offers quite the same exploration of a web of ironies.

CONCLUSION

My conclusion is inevitably disappointing: rethinking historical archaeology is not going to come up with any grand new global synthesis because no new synthesis is to be had. I do not seek to devalue the importance of looking at global systems of world capitalism, or deny that such large phenomena are an integral part of the study of the historical origins of modernity. I do argue, however, that part of the fascination and challenge of historical archaeology lies

in its *particularity*—a series of concerns that lead us away from world systems and categories and towards a sense of the power of material culture in different local contexts. Such contexts are situated within a series of ironies from which we cannot escape, and give our work a sense of richness, of depth and of history that places historical archaeology at the forefront of the social sciences.

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3 *Historical archaeology from a world perspective*

PEDRO PAULO A.FUNARI

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, AN AMERICAN DISCIPLINE

There has been a longstanding lack of communication between American and European traditions of archaeology, the former being linked to philology and history and the latter being an offspring of anthropology. Trigger was keen to emphasize that European and North American archaeologists live in rather different academic contexts:

Extraordinary as it may seem to those who have been trained in the Western European and Soviet tradition of archaeological research, history, both as a discipline and as a methodology, has always been viewed as largely irrelevant to prehistoric archaeology in the United States.

(Trigger 1989:19)

Earlier, Walker, trained in Great Britain in European prehistoric archaeology, published a paper on methods and principles in historical archaeology in the first issue of *Historical Archaeology* and also chose to highlight the split between the two traditions of archaeology:

The major difference between the Old and the New World approaches to archaeology seems to the writer to be that while the latter is more concerned with classification and abstract concepts, the former is more concerned with 'historical' interpretation of prehistoric material. It is perhaps partly for this reason that 'historic' patterns in prehistory do not seem to be nearly as advanced here as those in Europe, and why in Britain and in modern Near and Middle Eastern excavations archaeology has come to mean much more than merely excavation.

(Walker 1967:25)

Reading these comments, I am reminded of Evelyn Waugh's wry comment that 'we are all American at puberty; we die French', as if Europeans were naturally

more ‘advanced’ and less ‘merely’ practical than the Americans. However, it was not by chance that historical archaeology began in the United States and that the use of the term is still very much confined to the American, rather than the European tradition, where different and more specific terms are used, such as medieval, post-medieval and so forth (note the use of *historic* by Walker in the title of his paper; cf. Austin n.d.: 3). In the United States, prehistoric and historical (Euro-American, colonial or postcolonial) sites were easily distinguished from one another, as were Native and American settlements, non-literate and literate societies, pre-capitalist and capitalist economies. These clear-cut binary oppositions are linked to the realization by the Americans that just as there is a study of the material culture of Native Americans by prehistorians who looked for *their* way of life, there should be a historical preservation of *our* (i.e. Euro-American) heritage (Orser and Pagan 1995:6). Native American villages were viewed as separate and distinct entities from European and Euro-American settlements demanding different teams of specialist researchers (Lightfoot 1995:202). From its inception, then, historical archaeology did not fit within the traditional anthropological framework of American archaeology, but on the contrary it inevitably established links with history and other related disciplines. Ivor Noël Hume (1969:9, 13) in his pioneer book on the subject, went so far as to directly relate classics and history to the new discipline, as did Robert Schuyler, almost simultaneously, when justifying the very existence of historical archaeology:

[First] the past is worth studying as soon as it becomes in danger of being lost; second, the past of Roman Britain and Colonial America are being destroyed at much the same rate; third, the relics of Colonial America are to the United States what Roman remains are to Britain.... I am not suggesting that anthropologists cannot be good historical archaeologists, only that initially they do not know the documentary sources essential to the study of historical artifacts.

(Schuyler 1970:84)

From the start then, historic sites archaeology was an interdisciplinary endeavour (Larrabe 1969:71). Coalescing history and archaeology (McKay 1976:95), and encompassing ethnohistory and ethnography (Kutsche *et al.* 1976:13), it attempted to transform anthropology departments into material culture departments (Deetz 1977a:12). It did not take long before the scope of historical archaeology was broadened to include the study not only of elite heritage, but also of ordinary people’s material culture, notably that of slaves (Ascher and Fairbanks 1971:3). At the beginning of the 1990s, Barbara Little and Paul Shackel (1992:4) argued that history was a vital element in historical archaeology interpretation and this marked a clear break with the overall anti-historical trend in prehistoric archaeology in the United States, a trend which is still pervasive (Randall McGuire, pers. comm.; cf. Rogers 1997:159). This reinforces

the divide between an anthropological prehistoric archaeology on the one hand and a more ambiguous historical archaeology whose very definition stresses the study of the post-prehistoric period (Orser and Pagan 1995:14), and which is considered to be a *historical* discipline (Potter n.d.: 5). This traditional clear-cut division between the prehistoric and historic periods, so often reinstated by North American prehistorians and historical archaeologists alike, is, however, striking to scholars elsewhere.

THE EUROPEAN OUTLOOK

Archaeology in Europe sprang from antiquarianism and art history (Carandini 1979:34–48), on the one hand, and from *Philologie* and *Altertumswissenschaft*, on the other (Champion 1990:89). In many instances settlements were occupied continuously from at least the late Iron Age up to the present day, with readily distinguishable, but at the same time superimposed, Roman, medieval and modern structures. If *our* ancestors in the United States were the pilgrims, French children used to sing about their Gallic forefathers!—*Les Gaullois, nos fières aieux....* Perhaps the best word to describe the European perception of the past is concretion, as change is viewed as part of a continuous process of adding new elements. The same French child of supposed Gallic descent would not be shocked by the fact that Charlemagne spoke Old *German* and was crowned *Roman* emperor! Continuity is thus a password for the European *Weltanschauung* (Stierle 1979:106), and it is symptomatic that Braudel's (1969) concept of the *longue durée* ('long term') gained overwhelming acceptance in the Old World (cf. Schulin 1987, for a German overview on the subject) and beyond (cf. Miceli 1995).

From the start, archaeology in Europe has been a philological discipline in two interrelated ways. First and foremost, the study of prehistoric, proto-historic or later sites in Europe depends on a knowledge of the languages used in ancient written documents to describe them: Greek, Latin and then modern vernacular tongues. So, the much quoted words of Mortimer Wheeler (1956:17), that the archaeologist is digging up people, not things, are followed by a Shakespearean quote: 'Of our scraps and pieces we may say, with Mark Antony in the marketplace, "You are not wood, you are not stones, but men", (from *Julius Caesar*, Act III, 149).' There is, however, no explicit reference to Shakespeare nor an elaboration on Mark Antony as a historical character! In the same notable book, Wheeler (1956:236) made a pledge for a humanistic approach to the discipline, for the archaeologist must not be a 'mere *homunculus*', a contemptuous mannequin. Again, there is no translation, as it is assumed that the derogatory Latin term should be known: classics was expected to be a common background all over the western world (Rowse 1948:162). Archaeology has been philological in another sense too, in its methods, as it tries to *read* artefacts, artworks and layers. The social world is *polysemous* (Shanks and Hodder 1995:8) and

archaeologists must *read* texts, material and written alike (Austin and Thomas 1990:45). All terms with clear philological overtones.

History itself sprung from philology and any historian *eo ipso* must be able to read written documents, be they in Latin or in Old English. The same applies to the archaeologist, as history is a unified discipline and documentary and archaeological evidence must be assessed in tandem (Webster 1986:156). Throughout Europe, then, archaeology's closest intellectual ties are with history (Hodder 1991:10; cf. Olivier and Coudart 1995), despite the fact that in recent decades archaeology has developed as an independent field involving the study of material culture (cf. Klejn 1995:40). History itself is increasingly anthropological in character, and anthropology is becoming more historical, in that both disciplines focus on ordinary people's culture (Gourevitch 1991:135), a traditional feature of archaeology and its study of common pottery and stone tools. History, archaeology and anthropology increasingly reflect the narrative character of science (Ulin 1994; Shanks and McGuire 1996:82) as well as its subjective and poetic features: *ein Mischwesen aus Wissenschaft und Kunst*, 'science and art at the same time' (Strasburger 1966:55; cf. Maier 1984).

The emphasis on the study of languages led European archaeology to be characterized by historic periods alongside geographical specializations, resulting, for instance, in classical, prehistoric, biblical, Egyptian, medieval or industrial archaeologies, even though certain individuals from early on, such as Childe and Wheeler, have not limited their interests to one period and area alone, and a minority continue to cross the border between different specializations (e.g. Shanks 1993; Funari 1993). The archaeology of medieval and post-medieval periods developed recently and Carandini has probably offered the best European definition of these disciplines:

We have prehistoric, classical, medieval and post-medieval archaeologies. They are defined, as we can see, by the main periods of our history: from community village, through the ancient city to the pre-capitalist town. Following this historic reasoning, industrial *archaeology* cannot be defined except as the archaeology of capitalist societies.

(Carandini 1979:322–3; italics in the original)

Each time period, characterized by different modes of production, should thus be dealt with by a different branch of archaeology (prehistoric, classical, medieval, post-medieval and industrial; e.g. Kobylinski 1996; Musim 1996; Represa 1996). However, if this was the succession of historical periods in Europe, the scheme would not necessarily apply to the whole world. So, the leading Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci (1979:86), emphasized that 'ancient', 'medieval' and even 'modern' periods would not apply the world over, and followed Marx (1964) in suggesting that Asia did not witness true capitalism until a very late stage:

In China, the absolute monarchy was established in 221 BC and continued up to 1912, even though there were different dynasties, foreign invasions and so on. This is the interesting point: every new ruler finds the ruling framework already in place, seizing it as he takes over the central power.

(Gramsci 1979:115; cf. a more recent discussion in Larsen 1989)

Gramsci was also following in the steps of John Stuart Mill (1985:136), who considered that ‘the greater part of the world has, properly speaking, no history, because despotism of custom is complete. This is the case over the whole East.’ Privileges prevailed even in Europe for the whole modern period, up to the late eighteenth century (Cobban 1961). The Marxist French historian, Albert Soboul (1965:5), considered that in France the 1789 ‘Revolution signals the inception of the bourgeois and capitalist society, destroying the seigniorial regime and the feudal ranks’ (cf. Lefebvre 1970:6–61). In general terms, modern bourgeois capitalist societies were inextricably tied to two main classes, capitalists and waged workers (Spinella 1978:11), again a fairly recent development in world history, and the word ‘capitalism’ itself enters the English vocabulary as late as the 1860s (Hobsbawm 1985:13; cf. Williams 1988:51).

It is in this context that we should consider the traditional labelling of archaeologies in Europe. So, medieval archaeology, which made its first appearance in the nineteenth century (Yanine 1983; La Rocca 1993:40–1), only really took off in the last decades of this century and post-medieval sites became a focus of research at an even later date (cf. Riu 1989, on the Catalonian case). The first analytical study of eighteenth-century archaeological material from Rome was carried out by classical archaeologists in the 1980s (Manacorda 1984:10). Medieval archaeology is now well established from Portugal (cf. Fontes 1992) to Russia (Tchernov, pers. comm.; cf. Tchernov 1996), and industrial archaeology developed rapidly as ‘the social history of the working class’ (Cerdà 1991:420), reaching most European countries (cf. Nunes 1994), but post-medieval and pre-industrial archaeology lagged behind, with the exception of Renaissance pottery studies (Lester and Lester 1976; Bandini *et al.* 1995; Battaglia *et al.* 1995). A recent conference at the British Museum on ‘The Age of Transition—The Archaeology of English Culture 1400–1600’ brought scholars interested in the subject together and the organizers were keen to emphasize the productive nature of this area:

The years between 1400 and 1600 represent a period of transition in both the material life and mentality of most Europeans. *Regrettably*, with traditional demarcation lines rigidly separating the historical study of medieval and post-medieval society, this epoch is rarely treated as a whole, with the result that only aspects of cultural change have received attention, frequently in isolation from each other. This

conference will challenge that divide, and will evaluate the contribution of archaeology to the question of continuity and change.
(British Museum Conference Announcement 1996:2, 6)

Thus, even if disciplinary boundaries continue to hold, there is a growing demand for the synthetic study of society, incorporating archaeology, history, anthropology, classical philology (Kristiansen 1995:143) and other disciplines. The trend is towards historicizing both scientific interpretive frameworks and the 'invention' of evidence, as understood by Shanks and Hodder (1995:11), in order to 'find' new evidence and the 'creative power' for understanding it, as is proposed by the French social scientist Pierre Bourdieu (and see Caro Baroja 1983:19):

There is a need for a double historicization: first, a historical contextualization of historical research, i.e. of its concepts and classificatory schemes...second, a historical contextualization of the analysed 'evidence'.

(Bourdieu 1996:79)

European post-processual or contextual archaeology, as developed in the last fifteen years or so, is thus an interdisciplinary endeavour (Miller and Tilley 1966:5–6) and the boundaries break down not only between disciplines, but between the different archaeologies. The simultaneous study of Classical Athenian and United States cemeteries is a good example of the growing interest in overcoming old divisions and producing innovative results (Small 1995 and see Chapter 7, this volume). A symposium on 'Americanist approaches to late prehistoric and early medieval European archaeology', at the 62nd SAA Annual Meeting, in Nashville, Tennessee, 1997, also reflects the increasing interest in overcoming the divide between North American and European traditions (SAA 1997:23).

ARE THERE PERIPHERAL OUTLOOKS?

North American and European outlooks are hegemonic world-wide and it is fair to say that the rest of the world tries to emulate the scholarly developments in these two scientific cores. Asia and Africa are naturally closer to European archaeology (cf. Ucko 1995), because of the continuity of their history, from late prehistoric times up to the present day, and also because of the influence of the former imperial European powers. Mazel (1989:28) argues that 'the end must be historical and all else used as a means to this end'. For Latin America, the picture is less clear-cut, as the overwhelming prestige of American science is counterbalanced by European inroads (see Prous 1994; Funari 1995; Politis 1995). Latin America is, nevertheless, the only other part of the world, aside from North America, where the term 'historical archaeology' is commonly used

by archaeologists to refer to the post-prehistoric period (from the fifteenth century onwards), as pre-European and colonial settlements are easy to distinguish from one another (cf. Fahmel 1997). However, the clear-cut binary oppositions prevailing in the United States were not present in Latin America, for the Catholic Conquistador was no puritan pilgrim and the Indians were not foreigners in their own land, but slaves, or dependent workers. Even though generalizations are always misleading, the contrast between North American Protestant and Ibero-American Catholic outlooks and social practices should not be underestimated (and see Quartim de Moraes, Chapter 11 and Rowlands, Chapter 18). In the Spanish and Portuguese colonies the mixed population led to the continued use of ‘prehistoric’ tools for a long time after the arrival of the Europeans, not only in the hinterlands but at the heart of the colonial world itself, in towns and landed properties (cf. Senatore 1995:101–4). The only regional school of archaeological theory in Latin America, the so-called Latin American Social Archaeology, considers archaeology to be a historical discipline (Fonseca 1990), but does not oppose prehistoric and historic periods, and, as a consequence, prehistoric and historical archaeologies are treated together (cf. Vargas 1990:7–18). Most archaeologists studying historical sites and subjects work as prehistorians as well (e.g. Kern 1994a on prehistory and 1994b on historical archaeology; Fahmel 1993, *inter alios*; for an overview see Funari 1994).

THE REVOLUTIONARY ROLE OF CAPITALISM AND A POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

From this fragmented picture, is it possible to claim a universal character for historical archaeology? The most comprehensive and articulate argument for a global historical archaeology has been formulated by Orser (1996), who argues for a definition of the discipline as the study of the modern world, characterized by a single economy that is colonial, international and expanding. It is argued that there are four key concepts defining this new reality—global colonialism, Eurocentrism, capitalism and modernity—all interrelated developments impossible to disentangle from one another. In the Marxist tradition, world history is considered as being divided into two main epochs, capitalism and pre-capitalism:

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities, generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

(Marx 1973:74)

Following this outlook, the two periods should consequently be studied by different specialists, historical archaeologists on the one hand and a variety of scholars on the other (prehistorians, classical archaeologists, medieval archaeologists, Mayanists, Egyptologists and so forth). This division is explained by the fact that capitalism is one system, but pre-capitalism is particularistic, communal society being different from ancient slavery and from medieval serfdom. Carandini (1979) adopted a similar definition, although he preferred a later division, equating capitalism with the industrial revolution (see below). Only capitalism, then, is coherent and therefore can be understood on a world-wide scale on the basis of a single logic. Historical archaeology is thus considered to be a multidisciplinary field linked to anthropology and history, which deals with the post-prehistoric past and seeks to understand the global nature of modern life (Orser and Pagan 1995:14). Accepting that the practices of modern peoples can have long traditions that extend backward in time beyond the proposed beginning of the new era in AD 1415, it is nevertheless assumed within historical archaeology that *most* historical artefacts were *commodities*, objects created specifically for exchange (Orser and Pagan 1995:18, 83; cf. a Marxist support for this periodization in Aguirre 1986:77, among others).

From the beginning of the fifteenth century (cf. Chouraqui 1975:35), then, it would be possible to say that capitalism was fast changing the face of the world and already at the early stages of colonization even remote settlements at the very fringes of empires used imported artefacts from very distant continents (Orser and Pagan 1995:89; cf. Tchernov 1996:84). Although the link between capitalism and historical archaeology had been established in the United States almost from the inception of the discipline, and has been developed by different authors (e.g. Deetz 1977b; Leone and Potter 1988:4), Orser was the first to offer a complete framework for understanding the modern world, in terms of the direct and indirect influence of capitalism (*contra* Thurman 1996; cf. Deagan 1997; Johnson 1997). Africans in the Americas, enslaved Native Americans, large-scale tribal disturbances in Africa, the presence of European fortresses in Asia, Africa and the Americas, all this was the result of capitalism and could not be explained without it. Pottery from different parts of the world was found in distant places: as never before this was one world, a world forged by capitalism and its agents, the Europeans (Orser 1996:77). A single example would be enough to exemplify this standpoint: the so-called 'Colono' ware pottery. Noël Hume (1962) defined as 'Colono-Indian' pottery an unglazed low-fired earthenware in tide-water Virginia (United States), used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but subsequently scholars have proposed that the pottery was also made by African slaves and Indians (Lees and Kimery-Lees 1979:11), and this suggests that it was the material result of both peoples' struggles against colonialism and Eurocentrism (Orser 1996:121). Colono-ware, even though non-European in typology, could not be African, nor Native American alone, it was the material product of a new world (Orser 1991:116). It is argued then

that this approach can cope with the specificities of the archaeology of the modern world. However, the complexity of modern historical societies provides us challenging evidence of non-capitalist features.

NON-CAPITALIST FEATURES OF THE MODERN WORLD: LATIN AMERICA, A CASE IN POINT

In a now classic paper on American feudalism, Romano proposed that:

The two feudalisms (European and American) existed, but differed. American feudalism [had] four elements: (a) an economy without (or with an insufficient) monetary base; (b) an economy without (or with insufficient) freedom of access to or withdrawal from the (labor) market; (c) the same in the case of the commodity market; (d) an economy not supported by a large and dependable interior market.

(Romano 1984:131–2)

In Europe itself, during the first centuries of the modern era, in the so-called mercantilist period, there continued to be several feudal hindrances to freedom of movement, as people and commodities were restricted by local and national barriers (cf. Florenzano 1996:23). For instance, the King of Spain forbade the export of Spanish textiles from 1552 to 1559, in order to stop the increase in their prices. Later still, in 1685, 90 per cent of the consumer price of wood going from Dresden to Hamburg by boat along the River Elbe was due to feudal taxes and customs, and the trip itself lasted four times longer than it would have, were it not for the local lords whose customs offices delayed the movement of people and commodities (Deyon 1989:28, 50). Rent-collecting lordship continued to exert extra-economic means of control on the peasants, further supplemented by complementary means of social, rather than strictly economic, influence on society in general (Toch 1986:165). Even the accumulation of capital in the hands of merchants tended to be invested in land, reinforcing non-capitalist rural relations (Bernardo 1995:450–1). Medieval institutions continued to prevail in the modern world (McIlwain 1941) and both ordinary people and elites preserved a non-capitalist, pre-modern *Weltanschauung* (Mauro 1970:352) and, thus, non-capitalist modes of economic behaviour.

The economy of pre-modern times, from the fifteenth to the mid-eighteenth century, should be considered as essentially *pre-capitalist*, both in Europe and in the colonial world, in the opinion of several scholars (Cardoso and Brignoli 1983:73). In Eastern Europe there was an increased restriction on freedom of movement from the mid-fifteenth century, reinforcing serfdom, whose abolition would be delayed for some centuries. Fiefs continued to prevail in many European regions in the seventeenth century, as in southern Italy (cf. Lepre 1981). In the Americas, the colonial slave mode of production

by definition could not be capitalist (Gorender 1978; Cardoso 1982; cf. Beozzo 1978:287). Relations of production in Latin America were not capitalist (Chaves 1996:132) and served, on the one hand, to increase the primitive accumulation of capital in some countries, but, on the other, reinvigorated feudal, or at least non-capitalist, domination in the Iberian Peninsula (Wittman 1969:81). Even the capture of slaves in Africa should be interpreted as a continuation of late medieval practices: when, by 1433, Henry the Navigator authorized the seizure of slaves in the regions surrounding Cape Bojador, it was soon followed by a demand for one-fifth of the revenue earned in the slave trade, and slave commerce was thus embedded in the Portuguese fiscal system (Miskimin 1975:162).

In Mexico, as elsewhere in Hispanic America, economy and society were affected by an important indigenous presence from the inception of colonial rule up until the present day (Odália 1974:58), the consequences of which will be mentioned briefly later. Colonial Brazil owned not only its very name to medieval mythology, as the Isle of Brazil was located in medieval maps to the west of Ireland from AD 1325, but also some important features: town councils; the cult of the Virgin; the social structure (manorial property, nobility, the Order of Christ, *morgadio*, or eldest son birthrights; *encomiendas*); church institutions, music, dances and games; administrative and commercial rules; technology; scholasticism; popular Christian devotion (Weckmann 1992, 1993:18).

Pre-capitalist relations continued for centuries to come (Gadelha 1989:155; Chilcote 1991:30). Raimundo Faoro (1976:20–5), even though he did not accept the feudal characterization of Brazil, proposed that a non-capitalist patrimonial system prevailed and Francisco Iglésias (1974:260) argued that ‘the administration of Portuguese Brazil involved a transplantation of institutions which had begun and developed over the centuries in Europe’. The landlord was a *paterfamilias*, head of a patriarchal extended family (Eisenberg 1983:124), and it is thus no surprise to find out that in a sixteenth-century document Pereira Coutinho described his property as ‘my own fief’ (Weckmann 1993:98; cf. Schwartz 1988:218). The seigniorial ethos was not concerned with profit, nor was it guided by entrepreneurial rationality, but aimed at satisfying subjective needs relating to honour and prestige (Ferlini 1991:36): ‘sometimes, only one generation is enough to transform a merchant into a sugar cane landlord’ (Mattoso 1983:17). Franchise, the granting of privileges (Alden 1970:35; Batista 1995) and personal subordination (Vianna 1987:130; Andrade 1996:161) are all European feudal terms which remain in everyday use in Brazil to describe social relations, to the astonishment of foreign observers (Diffie 1970:3; Ferlini 1986:150–60; Samara 1991:10–11; cf. the ‘surprise’ noted by Da Matta 1983:184). For centuries ordinary people were considered as vassals (Velho 1996). Some argue that African slavery in the Americas was the result of this non-capitalist outlook, for it was the inability of colonists to conceive of Europeans as chattel slaves which forced them to enslave non-Europeans (Eltis 1993:1422).

The Catholic roots of colonization stem from its characterization as a crusade (Lacombe 1985:52) and priests and colonists alike were prone to mysticism, with special attention to monstrous creatures and the Devil (Araújo 1977:145; Nogueira 1984:87–98; Carrato 1989:122; cf. Morrone and Fortino 1996:76), as well as the devotion to saints (Campos 1987:21; Mott 1994:44–59; Gaeta 1995:17). Indians were understood within the classic and medieval traditions (Lestringant 1994). This Catholic background goes a long way towards explaining the differences between the non-egalitarian ideology in Brazil and elsewhere in Hispanic America, on the one hand and the United States bourgeois rationality on the other (cf. Azevedo 1995, 1996). The emphasis on continuity from the Middle Ages is overwhelming, not only in the works of authors such as Gilberto Freyre, who proposed the so-called lusotropicological approach (cf. Bastide 1972:228–38; cf. Briggs 1997), but even Marxist and materialist authors admit the importance of non-capitalist features in post-colonial and to some extent contemporary Brazilian society (Alencastro 1992). Richard Graham (1990) proposes that patronage was pervasive in the nineteenth century (cf. Graham 1970:222; Neves 1991; Toledo 1996) and the patriarchal structure is still dominant today, with strong seigniorial overtones, if we accept the analyses of several scholars, most of them Marxist in outlook (e.g. Ianni 1978, 1980; Da Matta 1991; Chauí 1992; Fernandes 1995).

Most of these features are found in Hispanic America (cf. Roniger 1987:75–6), compounded by the persistence of Native American economic, social and cultural features. The social and cultural creolization of ordinary Hispanic Americans, through the imponderabilia of daily interactions with their Native American neighbours, although often ignored by most archaeologists, is of primary importance (Snow 1997:162). So archaeological studies established that some areas continue to use a pre-colonial pattern of animal consumption, while others preferred Old World taxa; in both instances, however, continuing Native American or Iberian modes of subsistence and associated traditions existed (de France 1996:44–5). The mixing of Native American and European material culture is pervasive and ubiquitous (e.g. Araujo 1996). Thousands of tons of documents in Spanish and Latin are still to be studied (Lee and Markman 1977:57), as are Mayan glyphs, and thus the prehistoric/historical distinction is still more blurred than elsewhere (cf. Chase and Chase 1996:810). In this context, would not the definition of a world historical archaeology as the study of capitalism be a *non sequitur*?

TOWARDS A WORLD PERSPECTIVE

In 1955, an archaeologist working in Tarragona, in eastern Spain, found a marble bearing a trilingual inscription in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, a *menorah*, or candelabrum, in the centre, and the tree of life, two peacocks and a *shofar*, the sacred horn (Cantera and Millás 1956:350–4; López 1986:54;

see Figure 3.1). The inscription in Hebrew reads 'Peace to Israel, and to us, and to our children', in Latin *Pax Fides*, or 'Peace Faith'; the Greek letters are unclear. Although undated, it was probably of early medieval date (seventh century AD).

In the cathedral of Seville, there is a key, which, according to the local tradition, was offered to King Fernando III when he came into Seville for the first time on 23 November 1248, soon after the conquest of the town by Castilian troops. An inscription in Spanish reads 'God will open [and] the King will come in', and another one in Hebrew reads 'the king of kings will open, the king of the whole land will come in' (Cantera and Millás 1956:385–7; Figure 3.2).

At the Palma de Mallorca cathedral there are two *rimmonim* or pomegranates, which have been stored there since at least 1634, used originally to store the *Torah*. One of the Hebrew inscriptions states that they were 'in the Synagogue of the Jewish, at Camarata' (and they therefore may be derived from a Sicilian temple). The artefacts were used before 12 January 1493, when the Jews were expelled from Sicily, and the style of the *rimmonim* is influenced by Arabic, Eastern and Byzantine traits (Figure 3.3).

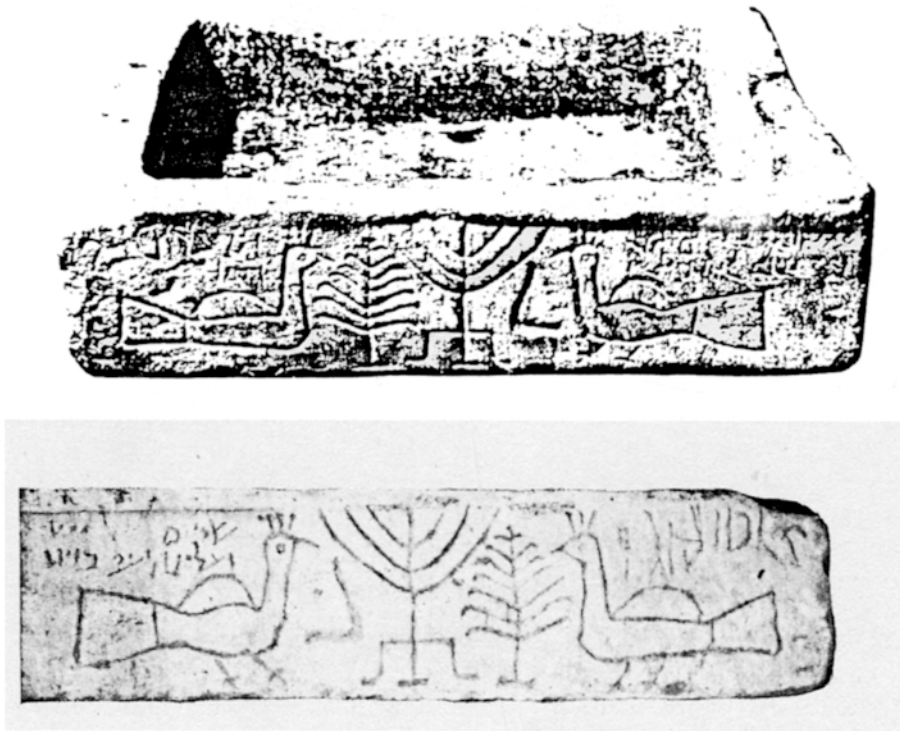


Figure 3.1 Drawing and photograph of the white marble sink from Tarragona, Spain (75×14×44 cm) (Cantera and Millás 1956:351, plate xxviii; López 1986:54).

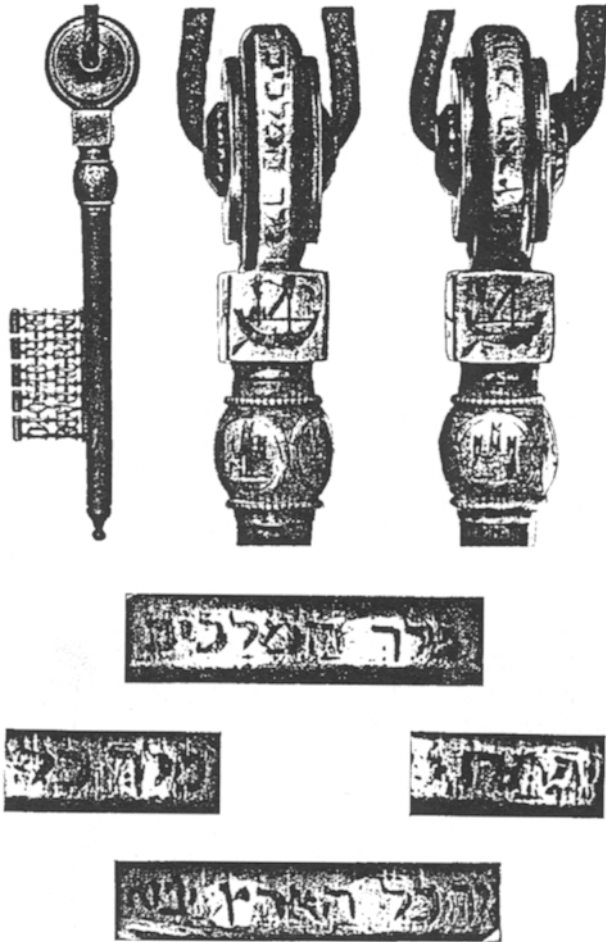


Figure 3.2 Key stored in the Cathedral of Seville, Spain, (20×5.3×4cm); photographs from the original publication by Cantera and Millás (1956:386, plate xxxi).

These artefacts testify to continuity and change at the same time, having in common the fact that they were used in three different multicultural contexts. The sink was part of a late ancient *oikoumene*, and the synagogue which it came from was part of the Roman and Byzantine Mediterranean; the key was offered to a Spanish-Christian king by a Jewish community which had lived with Muslims for some centuries; and the pomegranates were part of a late medieval Mediterranean world, which comprised Catholics, Orthodox Greeks, Jews and Muslims.

There were thus, long before the discovery of the Americas by the Europeans, different multicultural worlds, starting with the Mediterranean

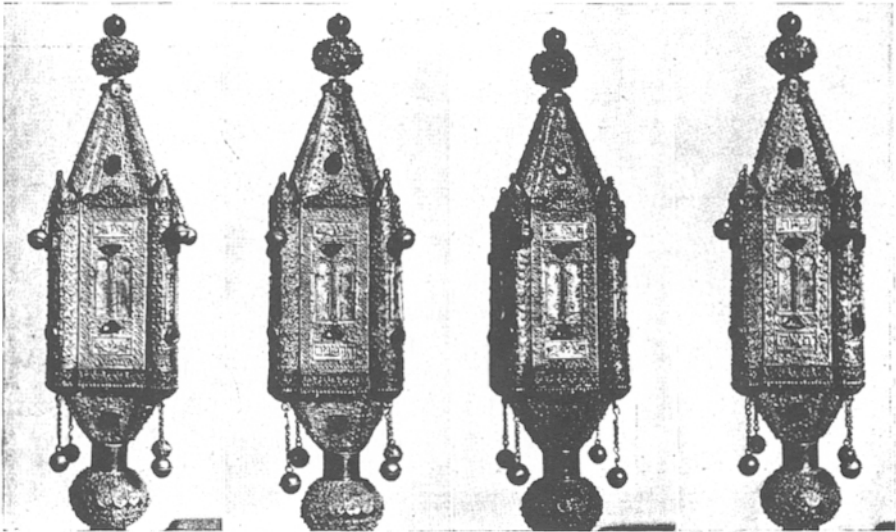


Figure 3.3 *Rimmonim* or pomegranates from Palma de Mallorca, Spain (31×10cm); photographs from the original publication by Cantera and Millás (1956:389–90, plates xxxii–xxxiii).

oikoumene (Figure 3.4), whose extent and trading links were far-reaching during the pre-modern period (Wheeler 1955). ‘Granted that the Roman Empire was a preindustrial society—it nonetheless exhibits signs of complexity, order, and system in its institutions, to an extent which makes labels like “primitive” inappropriate unless they are carefully qualified’ (D’Arms 1981:13). Roman society was not a ‘market society’, a society in which producers were dependent on the market for access to the means of life, labour and self-reproduction, and subject to market imperatives (cf. Wood 1994:25). However, there was a wide-reaching Roman economy: throughout Roman history cost and profit have been carefully taken into account (Nicolet 1988:275). The importance of the market-place in the Roman world has been clearly demonstrated through studies focusing on local markets, or *nundinae* (Gabba 1988:144–9), and archaeologists in particular have noted the diversity of artefact transportation (e.g. Remesal 1982), and the constraints placed on settlement patterns by the demands of circulation and exchange (Corbier 1991:629). Estates calculated their ‘profit’ and ‘loss’ and the accounting system was designed and used in the context of rational economic management (Rathbone 1993:387; cf. Kehoe 1990:483). However, if there was a free market (de Salvo 1992:69), Roman wage-workers were not

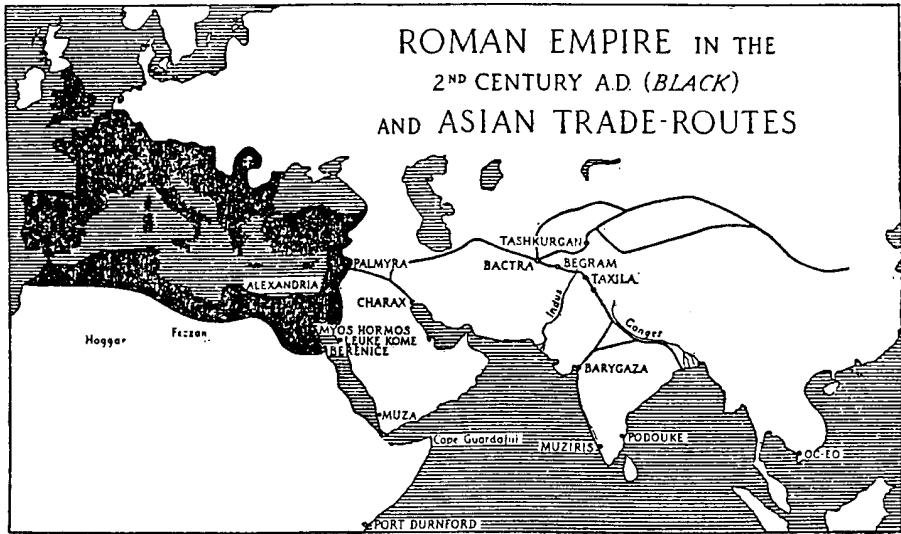


Figure 3.4 The largest ancient *oikoumene*: the Roman Empire; the Roman Empire in the second century AD and Asian trade routes (Wheeler 1955:14).

necessarily free people (Bürge 1990:135). The supply of different consumption products was not completely governed by market forces and the role of the Roman state was decisive (Funari 1996:85).

After the political breakdown of this *oikoumene*, the Mediterranean continued to act as a locus for cultural exchange and communication, and if the unity of the ancient world continued after the Germanic invasions (*pace* Pirenne 1939), the northwards shift of Europe's focus from the Carolingians onwards (White 1962:76–8) did not shatter the Mediterranean cultural *koine*, which enabled the production of the three Jewish artefacts, mentioned earlier, in the medieval period (Lombard 1955:71). However, less than a century after the expulsion of Jews from southern Europe, they continued their practices in America, interacting now with Native Americans and sub-Saharan Africans (Andrade 1962:59). The world system was much larger than the old Mediterranean *oikoumene* and there were new raw materials and products and new concepts in action (cf. Koselleck 1985:87). The so-called scientific revolution of the modern era, significantly also known as the scientific *Renaissance*, because of its classical roots (Boas 1962), was linked to trading, as Florentine measures in exchange with those of other towns illustrate (Baxandall 1988:52). Leonardo da Vinci himself, in Chapter 29 of his *Trattato della Pittura*, denies the old scholastic belief that only abstract sciences are worthwhile and supports 'experience' as a valid activity:

To me it seems that those sciences are vain and full of error which are not born of experience, mother of all certainty, first-hand

experience which in its origins, or means, or end has passed through one of the five senses...true sciences are those which, impelled by hope, have been penetrated by the senses so that the tongues of argument are silenced. They are not nourished on the dreams of investigators, but proceed in orderly sequence from the first true and established principles through successive stages to the end; as is shown by the elements of mathematics, that is to say number and measure, called arithmetic and geometry, which with complete truth treat of quantities both discontinuous and continuous. In them one does not argue if twice three make more or less than six, or that the angles of a triangle are less than the sum of two right angles: all argument is reduced to eternal silence, and those who are devoted to them can enjoy them with a peace which the lying sciences of the mind can never attain.

(cited in Clark 1973:84–5; cf. Barone 1996)

But experience itself was part of classical, as opposed to scholastic, thought (Kristeller 1943) and, of course, ‘the Renaissance was essentially an age of transition, containing much that was still medieval, much that was recognizably modern, and, also, much that, because of the mixture of medieval and modern elements, was peculiar to itself (Ferguson 1971:16). Tolstoi describes this situation of continuity and change with these notable words:

Immediately the law of Copernicus was discovered and demonstrated the mere recognition of the fact that it was not the sun but the earth that moves destroyed the whole cosmography of the ancients. It might have been possible by refuting that law to retain the old conception of the movements of the heavenly bodies; but without refuting it it would seem impossible to continue studying the Ptolemaic worlds. Yet long after the discovery of the law of Copernicus the Ptolemaic worlds continued to be a subject of study.

(Tolstoi 1957:1442)

The modern period, then, could not be considered as feudal and precapitalist, but neither was it a rational, capitalist monolith (Mello e Souza 1996a). Continuity and change, local and global, tradition and innovation were features of the enlarged, one world, but this world was also characterized by local identities and specificities (Phillips and Phillips 1992). The St Francis of Assisi Church building in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil, designed by a local craftsman, Aleijadinho (Figure 3.5), is related to eclectic High European architecture, especially to Borromini (Zevi 1995:32), but also to popular and even to African influences (Pifano 1996), and its study by historical archaeologists must be both interdisciplinary and critical (Fernandez 1997; cf. Mello e Souza 1996b). The same would apply to the study of eighteenth-century votive offerings (Castro 1996), of rural vernacular architecture in southern Brazil and northern Italy



Figure 3.5 St Francis of Assisi Church building, Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil; eighteenth century (Pifano 1996:131–4).

(Posenato 1987), or German material culture in southern Brazil (Tamanini 1995). Would it be possible, however, to understand Hispanic American towns without studying Greek and Roman town planning (Figures 3.6 to 3.11; Contin and Larcamón 1996; cf. Castillo 1996:67)? The same applies to a wide variety of subjects, such as cloisters in Europe and the Americas (e.g. Del Negro 1997; Brian Durrans, pers. comm.), and from this perspective such subjects are of interest to classical archaeologists, as well as post-medieval archaeologists or American historical archaeologists.

There was thus not only an adoption of European traits, but also an adoption of African, Asian and American traits in Europe, and elsewhere, so that what was happening was a process of ‘transculturation’ (Ianni 1996; cf. Barreto 1951:68). This brings us to a possible *world* definition of historical



Figure 3.6 The Greek city: Miletus (Contin and Larcamón 1996:92).

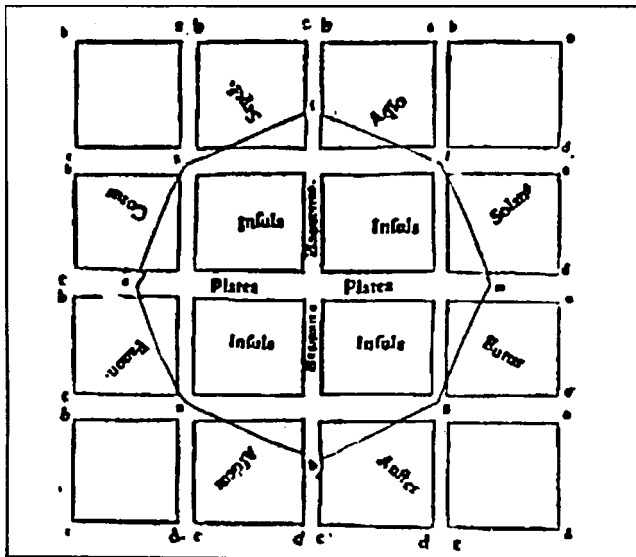


Figure 3.7 The Roman city: drawing from Vitruvius, 1536 (Contin and Larcamón 1996:92).

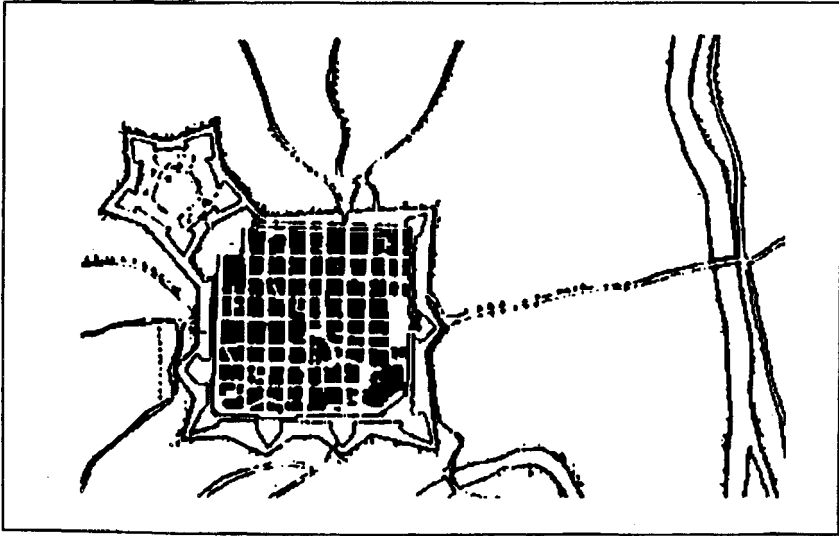


Figure 3.8 The Renaissance city: Turin in the 1500s (Contin and Larcamón 1996:93).

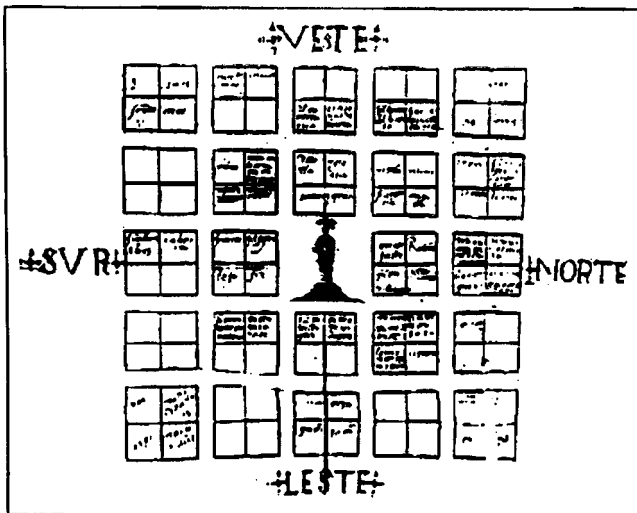


Figure 3.9 A Hispanic colonial town: 1500s (Contin and Larcamón 1996:94).

archaeology. The original American definition, inextricably linking historical archaeology and the study of capitalism, could pose a problem, for capitalism emerged in different places in different moments and only became dominant worldwide in recent times. Even if all archaeologists were to agree that

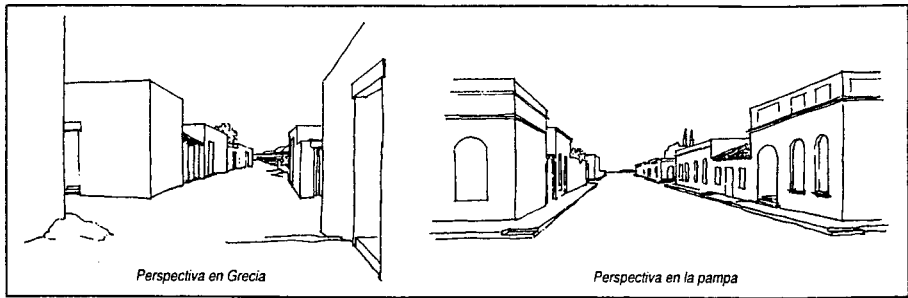


Figure 3.10 Town perspective in Greece and in the Argentine Pampa (Contin and Larcamón 1996:94).

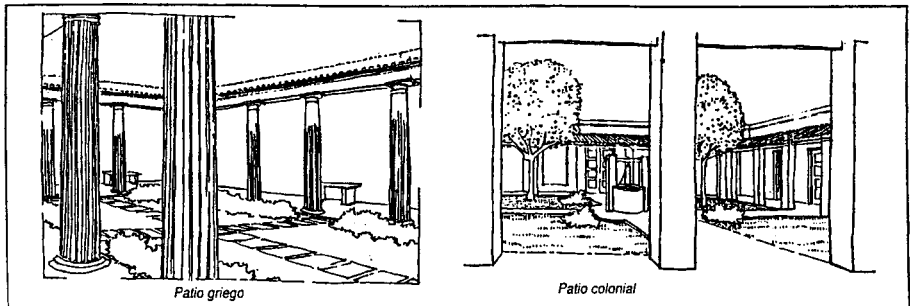


Figure 3.11 Greek and Hispanic colonial courtyard (Contin and Larcamón 1996:95).

historical archaeology is the study of the capitalist period, and this is by no means certain, probably most Americans would favour a fifteenth-century starting point, while in Europe it is reasonable to suppose that many practitioners would prefer to equate capitalism with industrial revolution, continuing to distinguish other archaeologies devoted to specific historical periods. Elsewhere, the picture is even less clear, as probably neither Indian nor Chinese archaeologists would accept the American or the European outlooks. The Catholic Saint Paul's Cathedral in Macao, China, even though similar to other church buildings the world over, shows certain local features and could never be considered as proof that China was integrated in the world capitalist system (Shulin and Lin 1997:15). Classical archaeology, on the other hand, referring as it does to Greek and Roman material culture, is meaningless in China, just as the label medieval archaeology is misleading if applied to China, as 'feudal' society (770–221 BC) was followed by a unified Han Dynasty China (Jian 1986), according to Chinese historians and archaeologists. The western scheme of ancient empires followed by medieval feudal fragmentation does not apply to China, as a 'feudal' society preceded

an empire. If we consider capitalism, usually associated in the West with modern Protestantism, we also find that in China some scholars argue that a market mentality prevailed there much earlier than in Europe, after the introduction of Buddhism, and it does not depend on any European influence (Oxford 1992:291). The prevailing European labels thus do not fit China's history and their use world-wide seems untenable.

At this point, it would seem that there is little room for a world definition, as entrenched traditions are unlikely to bow to any all-encompassing compromises. Americans will not agree to include medieval archaeology under the fold of historical archaeology, as there are no castles in the United States, nor will Europeans dissolve the specific identities of medieval, post-medieval and industrial archaeologies. Asians will not accept the use of either American or European labels. And yet, if there is no real medieval castle in the United States, there are plenty of ersatz medievalizing and classicizing material items. On the other hand, the lure of the word 'capitalism' is so strong everywhere, in Europe, Africa and Asia, and so many countries are anxious to be accepted as 'capitalist', that an archaeology of capitalism can be attractive. In this context, and as contemporary science promotes pluralism (Baker 1990:59; Haber 1996:384), the mushrooming of different, sometimes contradictory, approaches in archaeology is only too natural (Dommasnis 1990:30; Cohen 1991:19; Preucel 1991:14). A world approach to archaeology reveals how subjective archaeological labels and definitions have always been (Ucko 1994: xii), but if we recognize this subjectivity (Vann 1988) then we can discuss the different approaches and propose useful lines of communication and interconnection. Instead of supposing that regional archaeological traditions would or should accept specific definitions, communication enables people to continue to act within their own scientific traditions and to profit from dialogue (cf. Petrilli 1993:360).

A world perspective would not confine historical archaeology to the study of European expansion (DeCorse 1996:19), nor to an all-encompassing capitalist system (Little 1994:17), and would be concerned with the material culture of literate societies. Special attention would be paid to the relationship between artefacts and written documents in different societies, using texts and archaeological remains as complementary evidence (Kosso 1995:194), as archaeological and documentary sources pose similar and related problems of interpretation (Young 1988:11), and as apparent discrepancies between textual and archaeological sources must always be addressed by all scholars concerned with literate societies (Alcock 1994:257). Incorporating history as a critical element in a dialectical account of change (McGuire and Saitta 1996:201; Saitta 1997:8) does not preclude an overarching multidisciplinary approach (Miller and Tilley 1996). Historical archaeology is particularly fitted to the study of class divisions and exploitation (Saitta 1992:889; 1994), providing direct access to the everyday lives of all members of society, not only elites, but also peasants, merchants, slaves and poor people (Saitta 1995:385), and enabling insights into ordinary people's ethos (Deetz 1991:6;

Hall 1991:78), thus overcoming the one-sidedness of written evidence (Paynter and McGuire 1991; Johnson 1992:54). Subjects almost invisible in written documents are made accessible through the study of material remains (Brown and Cooper 1990:19), and a world historical archaeology should be in a good position to study the dynamic interactions between elites and non-elites, between vernacular and high style (Paynter 1988:409; Pendery 1992:58). Without abandoning the specificities of different intellectual fields and endeavours, dialogue would enable archaeologists to interact and to be in touch with approaches and outlooks which otherwise would continue to be ignored. This would be a positive development for the advancement of knowledge itself, because an understanding of the complexity of society (McGuire 1996), its features and changes, can only be gained from a pluralist and interdisciplinary world perspective.

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4 *Research trends in the historical archaeology of Zimbabwe*

INNOCENT PIKIRAYI

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores some of the definitions of, and theoretical approaches to, historical archaeology in southern Africa, through a detailed discussion of the Zimbabwe Plateau. Issues such as state formation and indigenoucolonial interaction are raised alongside methodological questions concerning the use of historical, oral historical and archaeological sources. It will be shown that even in cases where written documents seem to provide a ‘complete’ picture regarding the historical past, such as the British/European interaction with the Ndebele just over a century ago, archaeology remains a powerful tool for understanding the past.

The Zimbabwe Plateau lies between the Zambezi River to the north, the Limpopo River to the south, the Eastern Highlands to the east and the Kalahari desert margins to the west (Figure 4.1).¹ Much of this plateau was the land of Shona speakers from the early second millennium AD, before the arrival of the Ndebele who eventually settled in the south west. The plateau margins were inhabited mostly by non-Shona speakers, including the Valley Tonga (in the Middle and Lower Zambezi to the north and north east), the Sena (Lower Zambezi), the Hlengwe (in the Middle Save Valley to the south east), the Venda (Middle Limpopo—Shashi basin to the south) and the Sotho—Tswana (in the Shashi—Tati basin in the south west and in the west) (see Figure 4.2 and Beach 1994a).

The Zimbabwe Plateau has not functioned as a unified social, economic or political unit in historic times (Beach 1980, 1994a). With the rise in succession of the states centred at Mapungubwe and Great Zimbabwe in the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, the plateau societies became oriented towards the east and south east, with local communities trading with those on the southern Mozambican coast. Following the decline of Great Zimbabwe in the fifteenth century AD, state systems shifted northwards and south westwards, and the plateau societies became oriented towards the Middle and Lower Zambezi Valley,

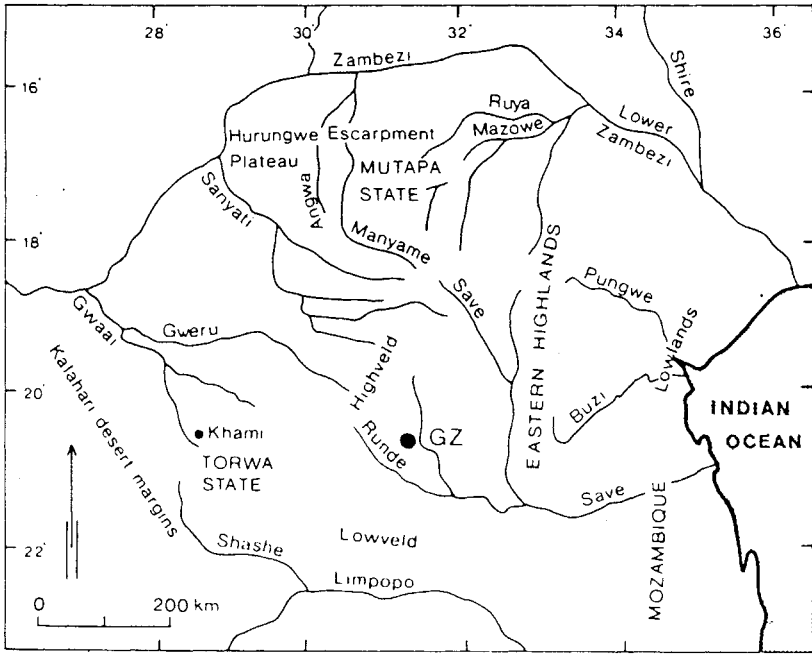


Figure 4.1 The Zimbabwe Plateau and adjacent margins showing the major physiographic divisions (after Pikirayi 1993).

where trade was conducted with the Swahili, the Portuguese, the Tonga and the Sena. Following the seventeenth-century migrations from the northern parts of the plateau southwards, the rise of *mfecane*² states in, and migrations from, Zululand in the early nineteenth century, the corresponding expansion of the British and Dutch frontiers of settlement from the Cape, and increasing trade with Delagoa Bay in southern Mozambique, the Zimbabwe Plateau societies became oriented towards the south. Links were established through trade in ivory, guns, cloth, beads and human resources in the form of labour to work in the mines.

Although some Zimbabwean Plateau societies have had contacts with the outside world since the late first millennium AD—as attested through trade goods—these links were initially indirect and had little impact on local social, political and economic institutions. Early Muslim observers did not write much about the interior. It was only from the beginning of the sixteenth century that people from both the European and Asian worlds came into direct contact with interior communities through trade. Since then there have been written accounts referring to the northern and eastern plateau interior and the Lower Zambezi Valley. While the history of the northern and eastern parts of the plateau has benefited from the availability of Portuguese sources, the rest of the plateau remained virtually unrecorded by external observers.

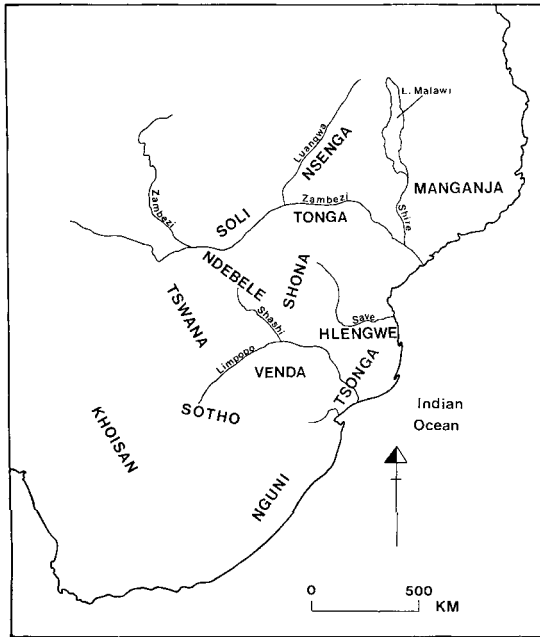


Figure 4.2 The major population groups on the Zimbabwe Plateau and the adjacent plateau margins up to the late nineteenth century (modified from Beach 1994a).

Most of the plateau's history has been reconstructed using oral traditions. In the absence of written sources, oral traditions may be regarded as an alternative source in reconstructing past events. However, they are generally regarded as unreliable until the eighteenth century. Written accounts only started referring to the south and south west from the nineteenth century, as a result of the arrival of missionaries, hunters and mining prospectors, the settlement of the Dutch in the Transvaal areas north of the Zoutpansberg, the movement of the Sotho—Tswana communities into areas east of the Kalahari, and the establishment of the Ndebele state in south-western Zimbabwe.

The uneven coverage of the plateau and plateau margins by past observers, and the constraints imposed on the oral sources by time depth and gradual loss of memory, have implications for the potential of history and archaeology as academic disciplines in understanding the societies under consideration. It will be demonstrated in this chapter that, even in situations where written sources appear to provide a complete coverage of the past, archaeology will greatly amplify such data by giving a different perspective of that past. Little historical archaeological research has been carried out so far in the area under consideration, mainly because the focus is on such recent parts of

Zimbabwean history that archaeology is often not regarded as the most appropriate mode of research. However, there are untapped archaeological resources relating to historical entities, such as the Mutapa, Torwa and Ndebele states, whose material cultures belong to the recent past and which are directly connected with current events. African—Portuguese interaction in northern Zimbabwe during the early sixteenth century was closely associated with the introduction and consequences of merchant capital. In order to understand the events leading to the colonization of the Zimbabwe Plateau by the British, we need to appreciate the rise and fall of complex state systems especially in the south west. In all these areas, the potential contributions of historical archaeology are immense.

DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Most definitions of historical archaeology exhibit serious limitations when applied in a southern African context. Noël Hume (1969:12) defines historical archaeology as ‘the study of material remains from both the remote and recent past in relationship to documentary history and the stratigraphy of the ground in which they are found’. This definition places strong emphasis on documentary history. Schuyler (1970:88, 1978:28) defines ‘Historic Sites Archaeology’ as ‘the study of the material manifestation of the expansion of European culture into the non-European world starting in the fifteenth century and ending with industrialisation or the present depending on local conditions’. This definition has been criticized by Posnansky and DeCorse (1986:1) as representing a one-sided view of contact, and for not taking into account impact on indigenous populations. South (1977:25) defines historical archaeology as ‘archaeology carried out on sites of the historic period’, while Deetz (1985:27) limits it to the cultural remains of literate societies.

The problem encountered with definitions such as these is that most African societies were non-literate, although many were referred to in written sources during the historical period. For example, the earliest written sources to describe the Zimbabwe Plateau were produced by Arabs and Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Portuguese were initially based on the Mozambican coast and their early reports about the interior were derived from second-hand information. Arabic sources are of limited use with regard to the interior, and it was only in 1560–61 that first-hand accounts about the interior appeared.

The inadequacy of written sources in providing full insight into the societies under study has led some scholars to include oral traditions in their definitions of historical archaeology (e.g. Schmidt 1977, 1983). Schmidt’s definition covers all the farming communities of eastern and southern Africa during the last two millennia; however, this approach is too extreme, for it is inappropriate to argue for a 2,000-year continuity of culture on the basis of twentieth-century oral traditions relating to events in the fifteenth century.

Taking these different positions into account, historical archaeology is best defined inclusively—as the study of sites which can be interpreted with the aid of historical evidence such as written sources, oral traditions and historically datable imported artefacts. This definition embraces the interests of a diverse group of scholars from archaeology, anthropology, history, geography and folklore. It allows for the study of topical issues such as antecedents to European expansion and colonization, the ships of ‘discovery’, ‘landings’, slavery and the slave trade, and plantation archaeology.

In southern Africa ‘landings’ (points of contact in Africa) have been documented on the Namib coast (John Kinahan 1991; Jill Kinahan 1992), by the Dutch at the Cape and the Portuguese at Sofala (Theal 1898–1903), wrecks along the southern coast (Theal 1898–1903; Posnansky and DeCorse 1986) and the eastern African coast. Archaeological evidence for slavery may be studied as part of the sixteenth- to nineteenth-century *prazo* system³ in the Lower Zambezi valley. The East African islands of Zanzibar and Pemba are potential research areas for the archaeological study of the plantations which grew out of slave labour and the slave trade during the nineteenth century. As such, historical archaeology can contribute immensely to a variety of problems and disciplines, and has the potential for a comparison of human behaviour as revealed in the archaeological record with written evidence. It can also be used to test the veracity of written sources.

On the theoretical level, historical archaeology has acquired a complex dimension. Since the early days of its development (cf. South 1977, 1978a, 1978b), the theoretical leanings of the discipline have expanded from mere descriptions and concern with chronologies to include aspects of cultural history and problems of culture process and cognition (Deagan 1982). Theory has mostly been developed in North America, and has been strongly affected by developments in both anthropological and archaeological theory in the 1960s and 1970s. In Europe, particularly Britain, the discipline has strong historical leanings, a result of the wide body of documents or written sources relating to the medieval or post-medieval period. In most cases documents are used as an aid to pre-excavation research or interpretation of archaeological sites.

In southern Africa approaches seem to have been limited to providing a more accurate and balanced picture of the past as obtained from oral traditions and written sources, mostly by historians using archaeological data (Beach 1983, 1988). Archaeology in this sense is essentially a source of history and, despite research which can be regarded as being of historical archaeological character, there has been no discipline called historical archaeology as such.

Some theoretical positions have led to attempts to understand the world views of past societies. Huffman (1984) has attempted to understand the use and meaning of space within Great Zimbabwe and Khami tradition sites using Venda and Shona ethnography and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Portuguese accounts. There are severe limitations in these approaches, which cannot strictly

be regarded as historical archaeology, as they attempt to understand the prehistoric past using the present. Another approach is that adopted by M.Hall (1992) in his study of the urban archaeology of Cape Town. Using a combination of pictorial, cartographic and written sources and archaeological evidence, Hall has shown that archaeology has many valid roles beyond the site and the laboratory: 'the concept of "excavation" can be widened to include in its net a wide range of evidence for the way people thought in the past: probate records, auction lists, architecture, town plans, landscapes and images of all of these' (Hall 1992:4).

One major problem historical archaeologists face in interpreting their evidence is the dominance of the historical record (see Champion 1997). In Zimbabwe, the programme of historical archaeology is set by history and the historical vision of the past. Not only are the materially based studies of archaeology regularly subordinated to those of the literary record, but the entire conceptual framework of questions and evidence is limited by historical concerns. There is no doubt that history as an academic discipline has gained a stronghold at the University of Zimbabwe, and in colleges and high schools, at the expense of archaeology. In asserting the value of its evidence against the written word, historical archaeology is at a disadvantage.

If historical archaeology in Zimbabwe is to play a more significant role in understanding the past, how should it relate to the firmly established historical tradition? One scholar has suggested that we should contest the notion of the primacy of the written word and assert the potential of the material record to offer insights of equal value, and of a sort not available through history (Austin 1997). In other words, even in situations where the written word seems to be complete, archaeology can be used to amplify or modify the perspectives offered by historical data. Information on power and social organization can be derived from archaeology and the past can be interpreted as a pattern of meaningful action on the basis of both artefacts and documents.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN ZIMBABWE

The use of written sources to interpret archaeologically attested phenomena on the Zimbabwe Plateau started with those such as Bent (1896) who attempted to relate some archaeological sites, especially stone structures and earthworks, to information from existing Portuguese literature. Bent's scope was restricted to stone buildings, probably of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and a few sites of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition. R.N.Hall (1905, 1909) also consulted Portuguese documents, but he too was preoccupied with the origin of sites of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition. Systematic use of Portuguese written sources in archaeology was started by Randall-MacIver (1906) who also cited other works and used oral traditions. Theal's *Records of South Eastern Africa* had just been published and Randall-MacIver had access to them, using data on loopholed

stone structures, African—Portuguese trading centres and stone buildings in the Mutapa state.

Tracey (1940) used Veloso and Almada's accounts of Antonio Fernandes's journeys into the Mutapa state at the beginning of the sixteenth century to gather information pertaining to trade and politics, locating regional names, capital sites, river systems, rulers and gold producing areas. He also used sixteenth-century cartographic data to locate places on some of the maps known to geographers, and demonstrated in a later work (Tracey 1968) that some of the place names mentioned in Portuguese sources are identified by the same names today. No follow up has yet been made, but Rea (1968) critically examined Portuguese sources to trace convincingly the route followed by Goncalo da Silveira to the Mutapa capital in 1560.

In the late 1950s and the 1960s some archaeological sites in northern Zimbabwe were located physically with the aid of both oral traditions and written sources. Abraham (1961) identified the trading market of Rimuka near the Mupfure River, a site which Garlake (1967) later excavated, by employing the 'complementary source method', based on the questionable assumption that oral traditions confirmed what was in written Portuguese sources. Garlake, using more Portuguese sources than any of his predecessors, including translations from manuscripts not used before, located a number of sites linked with African—Portuguese trade. He identified a trading settlement located in the upper Mazowe valley and excavated the trading site of Dambarare (Garlake 1967, 1968, 1969), and also located and excavated the site of Luanze in the same way (Garlake 1967). Garlake's excavations were intended to clarify the ceramic typology of the Great Zimbabwe—Khami Traditions, and hence the chronology of African societies. In his book on Great Zimbabwe, Garlake (1973) devoted a chapter to extracts from Portuguese sources on some archaeological sites in northern Zimbabwe. Roger Summers (1969, 1971) also used Portuguese documentation and other written sources in his study of ancient mines, stone structures and Portuguese trading centres.

Current research in Zimbabwean historical archaeology falls into three geographic areas. The National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) has included in its five-year development' plan research on the Torwa/Changamire and the Ndebele states in the central and south-western areas of the country. Both projects relate to the last 500 years of the Zimbabwean past and are therefore firmly rooted in the historical period. In northern Zimbabwe archaeological research by the history department of the University of Zimbabwe is focused on the Mutapa state, with which the Portuguese traders came into contact at the beginning of the sixteenth century (Pikirayi 1993; Sinclair *et al.* 1993). Work in the central and the southwestern areas will only be referred to briefly as research is in its early stages. More attention will be given to northern Zimbabwe, as the area has been the focus of archaeological research since the mid-1980s.

ARCHAEOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND THE WRITTEN SOURCES: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES CONNECTED WITH THE TORWA/CHANGAMIRE STATES

The distribution of the Khami phase sites of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition is well known (Sinclair 1987). The dating of these sites roughly coincides with the historical period on the Zimbabwe Plateau, although the area in which these sites are found received less coverage in the Portuguese documents. Oral traditions are useful, especially after AD 1700 when the Portuguese were expelled by Changamire Dombu, founder of the militarily transformed Rozvi state, generally assumed to be the successor to Torwa.

The environments in which these sites are found are ideal for cattle ranching and the growing of drought resistant millets. This provides an ideal opportunity for testing the relationship between human settlement and environment. Historically known as Butua (Buhwa or Guruuhuswa, or 'tall grass'), this area was dominated successively by three state systems—Torwa, Changamire and Ndebele. They all practised pastoralism.

The Khami phase sites have not received as much detailed treatment as the preceding Great Zimbabwe phase, certainly not within the context of historical archaeology (see Randall-MacIver 1906; Caton-Thompson 1931; Robinson 1959). Research by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe is focusing on the site of Khami, near Bulawayo, Danangombe (Dhlohlo) and Naletale, 60–80 km from the Midlands town of Gweru. Detailed survey work is also being carried out in the area of Naletale—Danangombe and Zinjanja cluster of settlements. Oral historical data suggests a link between these sites and the Venda settlements to the south of the Limpopo. The Singo sub-state in the Venda country is attributed to the Rozvi (Beach 1980:257). Oral traditions speak of the Rozvi movement to the south as a major migration and Beach (1980:260) dates this to the late eighteenth century. Most of the people involved were of the Rozvi Changamire dynasty. They settled in the Njelele valley in the Zoutpansberg mountains and some Zimbabwe culture sites such as the Dzata, Thulamela, Makahane, and so on were probably built by them. It is this Rozvi element linking the Venda country and the south-western areas of the Zimbabwe Plateau that has opened a new line of enquiry into the question of the identity of the people responsible for the Great Zimbabwe—Khami culture dating from the early second millennium AD (see for example Huffman 1984, 1996). As indicated above, the approach taken is not strictly that of historical archaeology in character, but the use of oral traditions, written records and ethnography in order to interpret archaeological data is a useful way of examining the past. Whatever archaeological approach one uses, historical archaeology has tremendous potential in shedding more light on the archaeology of the Torwa (Khami) and the Changamire (Rozvi) states.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF NDEBELE-BRITISH INTERACTION: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE NDEBELE STATE AND THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

In the past, an archaeology of the Ndebele state has been regarded as a luxury. The reason for this is clear: the Ndebele state only emerged in the 1830s and many regard this as too recent to warrant archaeological research. Nevertheless, there has been some earlier work (Summers and Pagden 1970; see Figure 4.3), and recently the NMMZ has realized the importance of archaeology in linking the pre-colonial past with the present, including in its development plan the Old Bulawayo Project. Old Bulawayo was the first capital built by Lobengula, the second ruler of the Ndebele. Apart from its importance for Zimbabwe's history, the site is also significant because early European missionaries and travellers visited it, writing reports that led to the annexation of Zimbabwe by the British South Africa Company.

There is a wealth of documentary evidence pertaining to Old Bulawayo, including a number of paintings. This, coupled with archaeological investigations, can be used to establish the exact layout of the site and to define the royal and the commoner areas (Figure 4.4). It is also possible to reconstruct daily activities that occurred on the site. Current archaeological

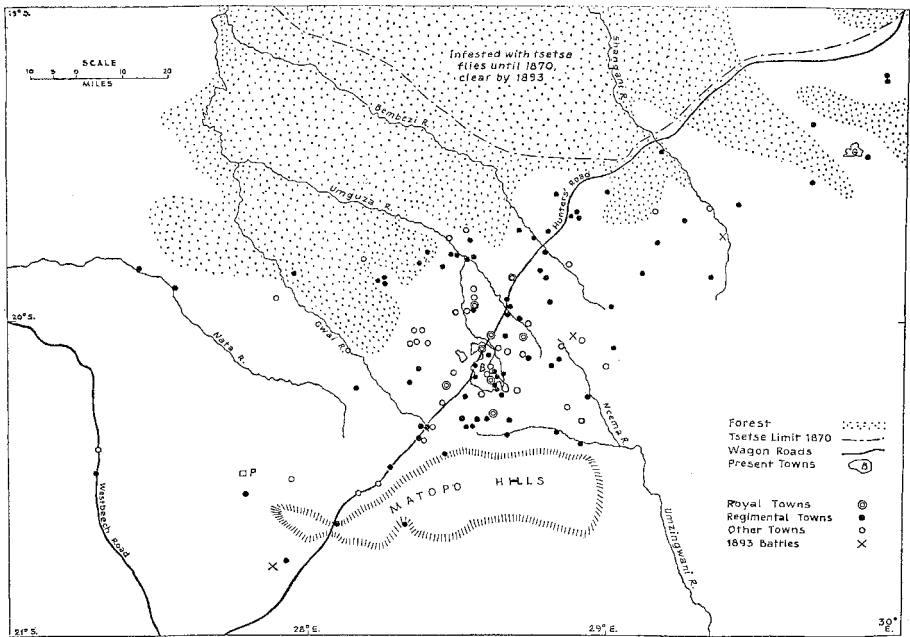


Figure 4.3 South-western Zimbabwe showing the positions of Ndebele royal towns, regimental towns, battle sites and wagon routes (from Summers and Pagden 1970).

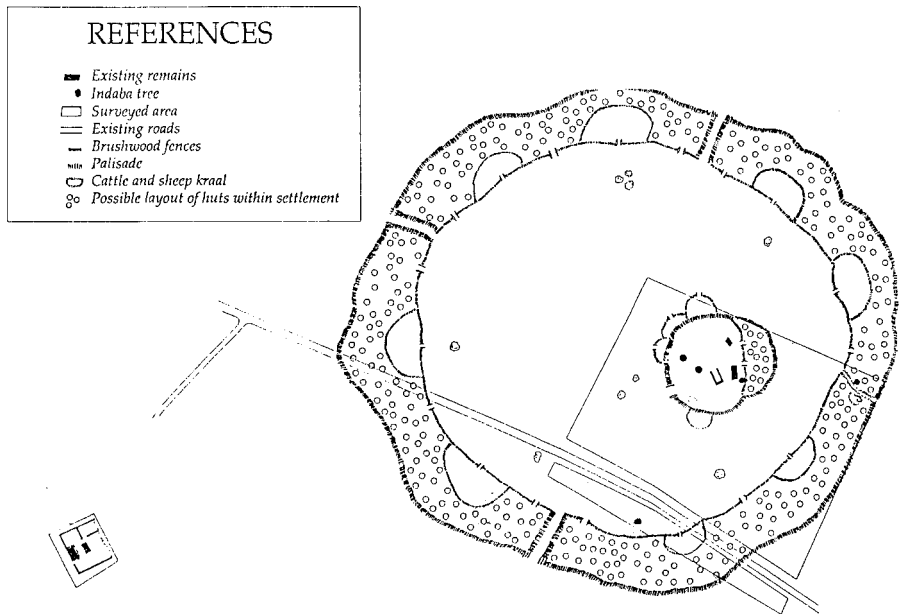


Figure 4.4 The Ndebele capital of Old Bulawayo (courtesy of the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe).

work includes assembling all the documents, ethnographic and oral data pertaining to Old Bulawayo and the Ndebele state in general. Existing visible archaeological structures are being mapped as a prelude to the excavation of the site. These excavations will be aimed at correlating results with previous knowledge regarding the capital layout. The ultimate aim will be the recovery of data which will assist in understanding the Ndebele and some of the ethnic groups who were part of their state.

This research connected with the Ndebele state is likely to be extended to other sites used by Lobengula and his predecessor, Mzilikazi. Of importance are battle places such as the Shangani River (3 December 1893) and Mbembesi (23–26 November 1893), where the Ndebele fought the British (see Figure 4.3). In addition, there is the need to locate hilltop sites which the Shona and other non-Shona groups are alleged to have utilized in response to Ndebele raids, especially during the formative stages of the Ndebele state on the Zimbabwe Plateau. Such research, when complete, should give us new data on *mfecane* sites and greatly amplify knowledge of what have been referred to in the archaeological literature as ‘refuge sites’. Detailed survey work is also necessary to map out the archaeological character of the four ‘provinces’ forming the core area of the Ndebele state, namely Amhlope (north of the Matopos), Amakanda (chieftaincies to the east of the Malungwane range), Amnyama (upper

Mzingwane Valley, between the Malungwane and the Matopos mountain ranges) and Igapa (west of the other areas). The social, political, economic and religious organization of the Ndebele is well documented (Cobbing 1983) and so are their relations with the Shona (Bhebe 1973). This data should be used to complement the spatial data.

MERCHANT CAPITAL, TRADE AND STATES IN NORTHERN ZIMBABWE: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE MUTAPA STATE

The Mutapa state (*c.* AD 1450–1900) has largely been documented from written and oral sources (see for example Beach 1980, 1994b; Mudenge 1988). Like the Ndebele and other states mentioned above, the Mutapa state has been considered too recent a phenomenon to warrant archaeological research, and history has been seen as the most appropriate discipline to understand it. Its archaeology has therefore been limited, and archaeological research carried out in northern Zimbabwe since 1900 can hardly be described as historical in character (despite the fact that it related to aspects of the Mutapa state such as ‘forts’, ‘*feiras*’,⁴ ‘great stone edifices’ and ‘ancient mines’). During the 1950s some fieldwork was carried out in northern and north-eastern Zimbabwe by teams from the Universities of Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Witwatersrand. This research focused on documentary and oral aspects of Zimbabwean history relating to the Mutapa state. Extensive surveys were made with the aid of written sources in an effort to locate Portuguese trading centres. Abraham (1961) used ethno-historical data as a research aid to acquire information on archaeological sites. Axelson (1956, 1964), Abraham (1961) and Mather (*n.d.*) carried out some research in the Mount Darwin area and located a number of roughly built, loopholed stone structures. Using Portuguese documents they noted the importance of the area in relation to the Mutapa state and early Portuguese penetrations onto the Zimbabwe Plateau.

Recent research in northern Zimbabwe (Pikirayi 1993) has shown that historical archaeology can shed light on the following issues:

- 1 The introduction of merchant capitalism in the area, as evidenced by imported artefacts, dated from at least the sixteenth century.
- 2 The identification of local material culture, such as pottery, found in association with imports. Such associations are crucial in relating local pottery to known ethnic/cultural groups such as the Karanga, mentioned in Portuguese written sources.
- 3 Providing a new understanding of the development of sites associated with the Great Zimbabwe Tradition. Previous research on sites of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition in the area made little to no reference to the Mutapa state despite a probable connection between the two.

- 4 Understanding the decline of central political authority through identification and study of sites with the characteristics of fortified settlements. This aspect is hardly referred to in written sources.

I now develop each of these points in turn, showing the contributions made by historical archaeology in the understanding of the historical Mutapa state, and identifying current and future trends in research.

Research in northern Zimbabwe has shown the nature of contact between the Zimbabwe Plateau interior and international trading networks. It has also revealed the nature of settlements associated with this contact, for example the sixteenth/seventeenth-century site of Baranda in the Mount Darwin area (Pikirayi 1993:75–84; see Figure 4.5). It is therefore possible to study northern Zimbabwe within the context of international developments such as the spread of mercantilism from Europe and its effects on indigenous societies. Hall (1987) has commented that the period from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries can be regarded as ‘the three centuries of turmoil in southern Africa’. One of the goals of historical archaeology in the region is to establish the extent to which merchant capital contributed towards this history. Such studies are now perceived within the much broader framework of centre and periphery (see Champion 1995), or domination and resistance (Miller *et al.* 1989). Ongoing research will be aimed at locating more of such sites in the Middle Ruya—Mazowe basin, and at trying to understand northern Zimbabwe within a broader world context.

Previous research in northern Zimbabwe had failed to clarify the nature of the local populations as revealed by their pottery, found on sites associated with Afro-Portuguese trade such as Luanze, Dambarare, Rimuka and Ongoe (see Garlake 1967, 1969). Recent research at Baranda reveals that some trading items, such as blue-on-white porcelain, Asian stoneware and earthenware and glass beads, all dating from at least the sixteenth century, were associated with local pottery attributed to the Great Zimbabwe Tradition. This discovery has offered a new insight into the relationship between the historical Mutapa state and the Great Zimbabwe Tradition as an archaeological entity. Written sources are an added advantage in this case, as they provide details of the ruling dynasties and their capital areas. It is clear, therefore, that sites such as Baranda represented a new type of centre in northern Zimbabwe when building in stone ceased at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Baranda is located in an area referred to by the Portuguese as rich in gold, and is probably their trading site of Massapa. The discovery of graphite burnished pottery akin to the Great Zimbabwe Tradition in an area traditionally referred to as Mukaranga, coupled with the written sources which clearly mention ‘Mocaranga’, points to the ancestral Karanga as the makers of this pottery. These people were responsible for the introduction of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition in northern Zimbabwe.

Detailed surface collections, geo-chemical surveys and excavations have been carried out at the site of Baranda to understand the nature of some of the centres

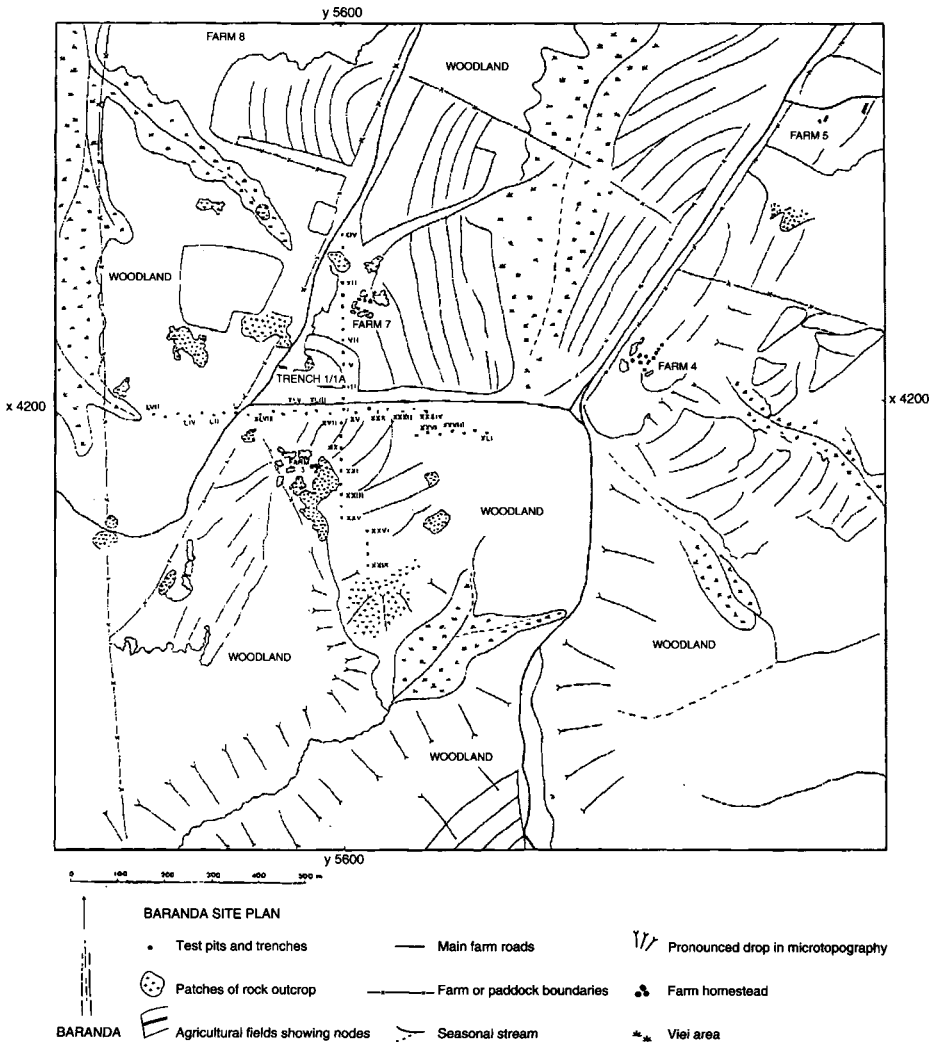


Figure 4.5 The site of Baranda in northern Zimbabwe. Its location coincides with the sixteenth/seventeenth-century trading centre of Massapa (from Pikirayi 1993). The occurrence on this site of local graphite burnished pottery of the Great Zimbabwe culture strongly suggests the existence of a Mutapa capital prior to and during the early periods of the arrival of the Portuguese.

associated with the Mutapa state on the Zimbabwe Plateau since the sixteenth century. Baranda was a centre operating beyond the family unit, with extensive commercial functions. Archaeological evidence clearly shows the dual identity of the site. First, it is part of the African—Portuguese network, as shown by the imported material. Second, it is part of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition. Portuguese

sources suggest that some capitals of the Mutapa state were not far away from Mount Fura, 6 km to the south of the site. They also point to the existence of a trading *feira*, known as Massapa, near the mountain and close to the banks of the Mukaradzi River. It is probable that one of the capitals of the Mutapa state was located at Baranda in the first half of the sixteenth century, when Portuguese and Muslims lived near the ruling Mutapa. When the capital moved the traders probably stayed and their settlement assumed the name Massapa (Beach, pers. comm.). Current and future research near Baranda focuses on detailed investigations of two Great Zimbabwe Tradition stone enclosures, one about 3 km to the west and the other about 8 km to the south. This research aims at establishing the relationship of these sites to Baranda, which would provide details on the nature of transition from stone buildings to simpler houses of timber and *dhaka* (adobe), which did not involve the use of large quantities of stone.

Finally, historical archaeology has resulted in a new understanding of the decline of the Mutapa state as a complex society. Fortifications are a feature of complex societies and their appearance is usually indicative of declining socio-political complexity. This is synonymous with the emergence of smaller political units competing for control. This seems to have happened in northern Zimbabwe during the late sixteenth and the entire seventeenth centuries, when a new settlement pattern, characterized by roughly built loopholed stone structures, appears. Recent surveys show that these sites appeared in the Middle Ruya—Mazowe basin, which coincides with the historical Mukaranga.

Although fortifications are referred to in Portuguese sources, the accounts are mainly confined to the Lower Zambezi Valley, where people built wooden stockades as fortifications against Portuguese attacks. What the documents do not mention is the effect of the Portuguese penetration and settlement in that area and the adjacent hinterlands during the seventeenth century, when stone-walled sites appear on some hilltops and mountains. These settlements are perhaps indicative of the demise of the Great Zimbabwe Tradition on the Zimbabwe Plateau, a scenario which coincides with the movement of the Mutapa state to the Lower Zambezi Valley area of Chidima. By about 1750 the Mutapa state was no longer located on the plateau. It would appear that these settlements were the creation of Lower Zambezi Valley peoples like the Budya and other Tonga groups, who had moved into the adjacent plateau area in response to the turmoil generated by the *prazo* system, the southern expansion of the Marave state and the Zimba menace.

CONCLUSIONS

The peoples of the Zimbabwe Plateau first came into contact with European traders at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Although the northern parts of the plateau had long been trading with the coastal Swahili prior to this contact, the region was firmly placed in the realm of European mercantilist capital with

the arrival of the Portuguese at Sofala on the Mozambican coast around AD 1500. A wealth of documentary information exists, some of which can be used to interpret archaeological evidence dating to this period. Subsequent population movements and shifts in various parts of the Zimbabwe Plateau, some of which were connected to the Portuguese presence in northern Zimbabwe, are recalled in Shona oral traditions, a few of which can be used to understand the archaeological remains connected to the later Shona.

After the sixteenth century, the Zimbabwe Plateau and adjacent valley and desert margins to the north, south and west witnessed tremendous change in terms of the demise of states of the Great Zimbabwe—Khami culture system. The demise of the Changamire—Rozvi state connected with complex, elite centres such as Naletale and Danangombe is perhaps linked to the arrival of mostly non-Shona groups from the south of the Limpopo, such as the Ndebele, Ngoni and the Sotho-Tswana. Other groups passed through the Zimbabwe plateau proper on their way northwards, or settled permanently in the peripheral areas. The Ndebele are largely documented by early missionaries, hunters, concession seekers and even through irregular contacts with the Dutch from the northern Transvaal. Archaeologically they can be identified through some of their capitals such as Bulawayo, other lesser towns and numerous villages. Research into the archaeology connected with the Ndebele in Zimbabwe is still in its infancy.

All these events present tremendous potential for the discipline of historical archaeology in Zimbabwe, a field with a very broad, but largely untapped, scope. The historical period has largely been left to the historians, but it appears that a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of even the more recent past is required. Archaeology can amplify data even in situations where historical documentation appears to provide a complete account of the past. The Ndebele and Mutapa states are clear examples of where inter-disciplinary research can be especially fruitful, but there are other areas in Zimbabwe which can be studied by employing the same methods.

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NOTES

- 1 The western boundary is poorly defined geographically, but the present Zimbabwe—Botswana border may be taken as a tentative limit. Geographers have found it convenient to understand the physiography of the plateau by dividing it into highveld, middleveld and lowveld, while agronomists have employed agro-ecological zones

in order to determine land use and potential. However, these categories have little historical validity. The granite country and valleys east of the central watershed, in addition to the Hurungwe Plateau, the Dande area of the Zambezi Valley, the Nyanga area in the Eastern Highlands, the south-west and the south-central parts down to the Shashi Limpopo basin and further westwards into Botswana as far as the Kalahari Desert margins were the preferred environments of the majority of people for the last two millennia (Beach 1994a).

- 2 The term '*mfecane*' refers to the great disturbances (widespread raiding, destruction and conquest) of southern Africa which affected parts of the Zimbabwe Plateau and the adjacent south-central and eastern African regions following the movement of the Nguni speakers from Zululand during the 1820s to the 1830s. Some Nguni groups such as the Ndebele, Ngoni and Gaza wanted to set up their own states in these regions. The disturbances were believed to have resulted in the decline or collapse of the Great Zimbabwe/Torwa/Changamire state systems (1250–1830) on the Zimbabwe Plateau, but it is now known that the Nguni interlude was brief, and their impact on the demise of states was limited to the south west, home to the Rozvi of the Changamire state (which came under the control of the Ndebele from the 1840s onwards), and the south east, which eventually came under the Gaza Nguni.
- 3 The term '*prazo*' refers to the system of land holding in the lower Zambezi. Dating from the early seventeenth century and modified on numerous occasions subsequently up until the nineteenth century, the land along the River Zambezi was divided into estates and leased for three generations, the estate passing through the female line (see Newitt 1973).
- 4 During the late sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century, a number of trading posts came into existence in north-eastern, northern and eastern Zimbabwe. These were frequented by the Portuguese, the Swahali and the local people. Some of these places include Makaha, Massapa, Dambarare and Matafuna (in the north and north east), Chitomborwizi, Rimuka and Angwa (in the west), Masekesa and Chipangura (in the east). Apart from what appears in Portuguese written sources very little is known about these places. Written sources report low walls made of timber palisades surrounding some residential houses plastered with *dhaka* (adobe) and thatched with grass. These *feiras* were situated near gold mining areas. Some of the *feiras* were administered by the Portuguese government of the Rivers of Sena, a region bounded between Sofala and the lower Zambezi (commonly referred to as Cuama), but some were privately owned. Bhila (1983) notes that in some cases the Portuguese adopted an ancient stone structure for the purposes of trade.

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5 *The séance of 27 August 1889 and the problem of historical consciousness*

MALCOLM QUINN

what in God's name is this business? What about the bizarre relation I am keeping with current society, and, through the intermediary of my technical activities, with death?

(de Certeau 1988:47)

This chapter suggests that a consideration of the relationship between tradition and historiography can assist in the study of archaeology itself as a historical 'site', and also suggests that there are ways to incorporate the notion of tradition within historical practice without thereby acceding to foundational claims, assertions of precedence or, at the other extreme, instituting a bland 'postmodern' relativism.

On 20 November 1995, the first Beatles single for twenty-five years, 'Free As A Bird', was released for radio airplay. The single had in fact been recorded by John Lennon as a rough demo in 1977, and was 'completed' by the three surviving members of the group in 1994 for inclusion on an album of unreleased material dating from 1958–64. Among fifty-nine other unretouched tracks on the album is this piece of fabricated history, a hybrid of the living and the dead which flouts all the precepts of the archivist and the historian, representing instead a kind of technological séance. The single was described by the critic Griel Marcus as 'creepy', but also as belonging to a burgeoning 'tradition': 'Hank Williams Junior recorded a track with his dead father and Nathalie Cole recently did the same. It's a grotesque idea' (Griel Marcus cited in Sullivan and Donegan 1995:3).

All three examples cited by Marcus can be seen to illustrate a particular problem in the relationship between history and tradition, in so far as they confound the ambition of modern history to separate itself completely from the past which it seeks to examine. Rather, the 'tradition' established by these aural reconstructions internalizes the past and builds it into the structure of a literally 'recorded' history. Instead of using death as the limit through which a 'now' can be separated from a 'then' and by which a discipline called history can be established, a 'dead' voice is here mingled with 'live' ones within a technological

structure which nonetheless preserves orthodox historical notions of sequence, succession, cataloguing, recording and the construction of an oeuvre and an archive. In other words, a 'simultaneous' relationship of the past to the present, a relationship in which they are in some sense co-present, is here being included within a normative 'successive' one, the sort of linear history of distinct events and epochs we are more accustomed to.

These technological séances also isolate a particularly archaeological issue, that of 'unintentional' history, history which is not consciously left or recorded as such but which is subsequently reconstructed within a discourse on, or in the cause of, history (see Hodder 1986:92). In the case of the Lennon demo, the history is that of a disbanded pop group called The Beatles, now extended beyond its natural lifespan and its place in the history of popular music. 'Free As A Bird' is the end result of a process in which material has been wrenched out of context, appropriated, manipulated and used to shore up a fabricated historical continuity which has popular appeal, and through which a high degree of technological sophistication and mass-media broadcast is employed, paradoxically, to affirm ideas of 'popular tradition' or folk culture.

There are two elements of this kind of aural 'archaeology' which are relevant to the following discussion of archaeology as an academic discipline. The first element is that of the séance, a word which is itself employed in two senses within this text. The first of these senses is that which fixes the spatial and temporal location of an academic session within a conference: the paper I gave in New Delhi was explicitly linked to another paper delivered by a Polish librarian named Michael Zmigrodski at the eleventh séance of the tenth International Congress of Anthropology and Prehistoric Archaeology, which assembled at the Collège de France in Paris on the 27 August 1889 (*Congrès International* [1889] 1969:53).¹ I am also using the word séance to denote a form of communication in which the living and the dead are said to be temporally or spatially co-present.

The other aspect of The Beatles' 'archaeology' which I wish to highlight is that of the technological operation, a process in which history is produced from material which was initially historically 'other'. The concept of the 'historical operation' was coined by Michel de Certeau, who in *The Writing of History* has described how history establishes itself as a professionalized discourse of precedence and succession through an encounter with the past as 'other':

Modern Western history essentially begins with differentiation between the *present* and the *past*. In this way it is unlike tradition ...though it never succeeds in being entirely dissociated from this archaeology, maintaining with it a relation of indebtedness and rejection.

(de Certeau 1988:2)

For this reason, argues de Certeau, the periodicity we associate with historical time is actually a side-effect of the technology of the 'historical operation', which proceeds by a series of ruptures in which the past must be hygienically separated

from the present in order to be represented within it as history: 'breakage is therefore the postulate of interpretation' (de Certeau 1988:4).

In this way the past is devalued as something which determines actions in the present, and becomes instead something acted upon by the historian, who is her/himself defined by de Certeau as the vicarious agent of institutions of social and political power (in this, and other respects, his analysis refers to Foucault's (1969) *L'Archéologie du savoir*). History is likened by de Certeau (1988:9) to 'politics in laboratory conditions', which can operate 'in the vicinity of political problems—but not in the place where political power is exercised' (*ibid.*: 8). This latter condition, it might be suggested, was the source of the stalemate which occurred at New Delhi in 1994: caught between a highly politicized discourse of religious tradition, one which asserted that past wrongdoings demanded present restitution, and the institutional values underwriting academic archaeology, which, on the contrary, asserted that the past must be contained, contextualized and described within a controlled technological operation, that operation itself becomes threatened or invalidated. In archaeology, that operation is specifically defined as the transformation of excavated material into contextualized evidence, as Mandal has pointed out in his study of the events which occurred in Ayodhya in 1992:

Since, we are concerned with archaeological evidence, it is absolutely necessary that the finds should conform with the basic norms of archaeological method. To begin with, the situation and the location of the discovery are examined. It is indisputable that the discovery was made in abnormal and extremely tense conditions. The area was crowded with a frenzied mob adamant on breaking every single brick of the structure. The objective was certainly not an archaeological investigation. Yet it has been claimed that an archaeological discovery—and that of incontrovertible evidence—was made during this mob frenzy.

(Mandal 1993:50)

But the relevant issue here is not simply that of archaeological method versus mob frenzy: it is what Shereen Ratnagar, in her introduction to Mandal's text, terms the 'hijack' of archaeological method by archaeologists and historians themselves (Ratnagar 1993:3), a process through which a modernist academic/scientific technology, which has been developed and refined to produce the stratified divisions, temporal sequences and periodicity described by de Certeau, is appropriated in order to legitimate a contradictory notion of continuity and tradition:

What is at issue is the attempt to give historicity to what began as a belief. Whereas anyone has a right to his or her beliefs, the same cannot be held for a claim to historicity. Such a claim has to be examined in terms of the evidence and it has to be discussed by professionals.

(Thapar 1993: xiii)

Romila Thapar here locates academic archaeology itself as a 'site' or social space within which only certain people have the rights to discourse; tradition, on the other hand, is defined as a popular or demotic speech which should be excluded from the archaeological domain. This distinction is absolutely necessary to the proper functioning of the historical operation, in order to establish the temporal and socio-spatial breaks and boundaries which constitute history as something produced from the material remains of the past. When the demotic speech and expanded space of tradition appear within the site of academic archaeology, a crisis results. It was the results of such a minor crisis at an archaeology conference in 1889 which was the subject of the paper I delivered in New Delhi. The events at the plenary session of WAC3 in 1994, in which emotional, subjective and populist sentiments were freely and sometimes aggressively aired, placed the polite remonstrations of 1889 within a 'tradition', an epistemological fault-line which can be discerned in the historical architecture of the discipline of archaeology itself.

Comparisons between an archaeological conference in 1994 and one held in 1889 might seem to invite notions of self-reflexivity, but it was precisely the symmetrical and discursively conservative aspects of the self-reflexive operation that I wished to avoid. The cultivation of a 'reflexive' attitude towards the past often begins in self-critique and ends in self-affirmation. It can be employed as a strategy through which archaeologists, anthropologists or authors re-assert their professional and institutional status as archaeologists, anthropologists and authors. Historiography, similarly, can situate the historian within the traditions of historical writing, and establish a concordance not simply between past and present, but between a past and a present conceived in historical terms.

I was interested in a form of reflexivity which would be asymmetrical: rather than confirming normative discursive practices within archaeology, it would draw attention to the 'fault-line' between professionalism and populism to which I have already referred. I compared my own position as a non-archaeologist at the conference with that of Zmigrodski, who, although a member of the archaeological commission of the Academy of Sciences at Sucha in Poland (then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire), was a librarian by profession whose published texts, exhibition displays and conference speeches used material culture excavated by others to construct pseudoarchaeological propaganda on behalf of the swastika, which he claimed was evidence of the existence of a prehistoric Aryan race. At first glance, Zmigrodski's theories are simply another example of late nineteenth-century anti-Semitism coupled with fantasies of aristocratic lineage. What interested me, however, was the juxtaposition of this subjectivist and populist discourse with that of archaeological science, which was in the process of confirming itself as the dominant *modus operandi* for transforming material culture finds into archaeological evidence.

Zmigrodski's speech at the séance of 27 August 1889 was characterized by rhetorically excessive and highly subjective statements such as 'our race is a

family of the highest nobility, and has for its armorial shield the swastika', and 'in a very ancient epoch, our ancestors professed ideas more noble and elevated than those of other races' (Zmigrodski 1891:18). His swastikaphilia had been influenced by the discovery of swastika-bearing objects by Heinrich Schliemann at Hissarlik/Troy in 1871, and also by the theories of Schliemann's cartographer and assistant Emile Burnouf, who in a letter to Schliemann in 1872 had noted that 'the swastika should therefore be regarded as a sign of the Aryan race. It should also be noted that the Jews have completely rejected it' (Burnouf in Meyer 1953:201). Schliemann's own discussion of the swastika in *Troy and its Remains* (1875) had been influenced by Burnouf's views, but in the archaeologist's more self-consciously scholarly work of 1880, *Ilios*, Burnouf's theory is presented as only one among many. In citing the swastika as evidence in his address of 1889, Zmigrodski was employing a thesis from which even the archaeological autodidact Schliemann (who also attended the congress) had already somewhat distanced himself.

The proceedings of the tenth International Congress unfortunately do not disclose the reception accorded to Zmigrodski's paper and his accompanying exhibition, beyond noting that 'several members of the congress had reservations about the communication of Mr Zmigrodski' (*Congrès International* [1889] 1969:489) and that one had felt strongly enough to request that the proceedings should mention that he had wished to intervene and that lack of time had prevented this from happening. What Zmigrodski's interlocutors wished to say we shall never know; but Rudolf Virchow, the honorary vice-President of the Congress, had, in a sense, already prepared an answer. In his preface to Schliemann's *Ilios*, Virchow had suggested that the swastika signs discovered on excavated objects were 'widely diffused marks' which 'furnish little support for the determination of time' (Virchow in Schliemann 1880: xii). For Virchow, who was politically liberal, scientifically rigorous and a sceptic on the Aryan issue, the swastika was inadmissible not only as evidence of the Aryan race, but as archaeological evidence *per se*. Virchow's contribution to the Exposition of 1889, in contrast to Zmigrodski's drawings, was a chart showing the colour of the eyes, hair and skin of 2 million German schoolchildren taken in the year 1875: a purely quantitative survey, showing the relative percentage of blonds, brunettes, of brown eyes to blue eyes, of brown hair to blond hair and of grey eyes to light eyes (Wilson 1892:645).

Virchow and Zmigrodski occupied positions of equal status within their respective organizations: Virchow as honorary vice-President of the Congress of Anthropology and Prehistoric Archaeology, Zmigrodski as the vice-President of the Society of Popular Traditions (*Congrès International* 1891). But a vice-presidential address which passed muster at the first international congress of what would nowadays be termed 'popular culture' was evidently received with some misgivings at the tenth congress of the more established discipline of anthropology and prehistoric archaeology. In fact, in the published form of his address, Zmigrodski appeared to imply that folklorists could succeed in

accounting for artefacts whose dating and provenance were archaeologically unproven (Zmigrodski 1891:16).

But this was not simply an inter-disciplinary procedural dispute. The spectre of the popular manifested itself at the tenth Congress of Anthropology and Prehistoric Archaeology not just in the form of an *arriviste* discipline which set out to study ‘popular traditions’, but in the subjective representations of Zmigrodski’s address, which blurred the boundaries between his own claim on Aryan subjectivity and the reconstruction of ‘Aryan man’ as the previous user of excavated objects. Aryan man was a theoretical anthropomorphism constructed by hybridizing Indo-European language theories and the study of material culture, and ‘he’ therefore could not be archaeologically, empirically or scientifically present at the Congress of 1889. In 1888, the philologist Max Müller had railed against the ‘theft’ of philological methods and discoveries by supporters of the Aryan thesis: ‘we cannot reconstruct what never existed, and we cannot, therefore, build up a uniform Proto-Aryan speech’ (Müller 1888:82). In 1993, Shereen Ratnagar also cited Aryanism as an example of the mis-appropriation of methodology in her discussion of the Ayodhya dispute:

the somewhat ridiculous statement is made by historians that they doubt the Aryan immigration theory because archaeology has not been able to prove it: serious, academic archaeology has never made claims to either prove or disprove such a theory, which belongs in the field of historical linguistics.

(Ratnagar 1993:4)

For the last hundred years or more, Aryanism has continued to appropriate various intra-disciplinary techniques and approaches for its own transdisciplinary ends, whose most extreme expression was during the Nazi period in Germany, where the resources of the state were directed towards producing the imaginary projection of the Aryan body. Thirty years before the foundation of the Nazi Party in 1919, Michael Zmigrodski was attempting such an imaginary reconstruction in Paris, in the process making disciplinary incursions which, although less severe than those imposed by the Nazi Party on German archaeological science (see Arnold 1990), nonetheless represented a reversal of the technology of the historical operation separating past and present, the living and the dead. Zmigrodski, because of his own claim to be an Aryan (‘our race is of the highest nobility’) and his use of the swastika as his emblem, played the part of the Aryan body at the séance of August 1889 and also gave discourse on that body, a discourse which was necessarily subjective, erratic and unscientific, a form of table-rapping or spiritualism, the present speaking in the voice of an ancestral past which could not be located within historical or archaeological time. In orthodox archaeology, the dead do not speak, they are spoken for: their practices may then be theorized and put into discourse (see Ratanagar 1993:4–15). Speaking *as* the dead

rather than on behalf of the dead is archaeological anathema, and disturbs the smooth functioning of the historical operation:

In the realm of history, an endless labour of differentiation (among events, periods, data or series, and so on) forms the condition of all relating of elements which have been distinguished—and hence of their comprehension. But this labour is based on the difference between a present and a past. Everywhere it presupposes the act advancing an innovation by distinguishing itself from a tradition in order to consider this tradition as an object of knowledge.... The decisive break in any given science (exclusion is always necessary for the rigour to be instituted) assumes in history the form of an originary *limit* which founds reality as ‘past’.... The dead souls resurge within the work whose postulate was their disappearance and the possibility of analyzing them as an object of investigation.

(de Certeau 1988:36)

In an Aryanist discourse, the problem of ‘resurgence’ is compounded by the utter impossibility of establishing the requisite historical distance, the proofs of disappearance, for ‘dead souls’ who have never existed in the first place. History and archaeology can establish that the once living are now the dead, they can offer them ‘scriptural tombs’. But as Ratnagar (1993) points out, the Aryan is a non-archaeological issue: a theoretically constructed ‘undead’ subject cannot be included within a theory on the material remains of the dead, any more than an artificially resurrected and mythologized John Lennon can be included within the scheme of academic history.

Zmigrodski’s procedural error was his identification of himself and the assembled archaeologists as the ‘people’ under investigation by contemporary versions of themselves, thus aligning the members of the congress with the Aryans who, he claimed, had scratched the swastika on spindle-whorls at Troy. His speech declared the presence of an ‘I’ and a ‘we’ whereas orthodox historical writing must refer only to a dissociated ‘they’ who are no longer present. The community, the ‘we’ of the discipline of history itself, is indirectly constituted by the collective right to pronounce judgement on a deceased ‘them’. Conflicts can therefore arise between mutually exclusive ways at arriving at a consensus or community of discourse: the reservations held by several members of the congress of 1889, and duly noted in the minutes, were a way of policing the boundaries of the academic ‘reservation’, the discursive space. Zmigrodski’s racist discourse also attempted to enforce its own boundary, one erected between Aryan and Semite, using the swastika as the sign which defined Aryan space and Aryan time, simply by virtue of its presence on a variety of de-contextualized objects. He compared the swastika to a fly trapped in amber, its morphological constancy, he argued, expressing the purity of a race of the ‘highest nobility’ from prehistory to the nineteenth century (Zmigrodski 1891:16).

It was the displacement which occurred between the academic séance as a whole and one man's séance with the undead which determined my own strategy for using Zmigrodski as 'material' at two archaeological conferences in 1994 (the first being the Scottish Archaeological Forum conference 'Nationalism and Archaeology' in May 1994). My historical investigation paradoxically required the re-invention of tradition, for the purpose of drawing attention to the incommensurability between traditional and historical determinations of time, and in order to find a way of writing a history of the 'undead' Aryan subject. I therefore designated the three papers as a 'series of lectures', the first given by Zmigrodski, the other two by myself. This was not a literary conceit, or the kind of situationist stunt which would have been engineered by reading his paper all over again in two new 'archaeological contexts'. Instead, the idea of a 'series' is intended to express the simultaneous use of two seemingly contradictory temporalities: the 'death' or break with the past constructed by history and the repetition of and continuity with the past favoured by tradition.

The concept of a series also implies a technology of manufacture or a mode of assembly, both as the 'invention of tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and as the historical operation, which de Certeau divides into the three distinct elements of place, procedure and text:

On a necessarily limited scale, envisaging history as an operation would be equivalent to understanding it as the relation between a *place* (a recruitment, a milieu, a profession or business, etc.), analytical *procedures* (a discipline), and the construction of a *text* (a literature).
(de Certeau 1988:57)

De Certeau's idea of foregrounding the means of historical production is further complicated if we examine, as I have done in this chapter, those occasions on which the smooth functioning of this operation is displaced or disturbed: when the popular erupts within the place of the academic, when procedural rules are transgressed, and when the text, the published minutes of the academic conference, can only establish objectivity and historical distance by faithfully recording a speech which is perfectly useless as the published result of a piece of historical work, whether that speech consists of racist subjectivism in 1889 or hot-headed fundamentalism in 1994.

The use of the 'series' also became a way to engage with the spectre of populism within academia by focusing on the issue of interventionist practices, rather than on any supposed 'rights' which should be accorded to particular theories. Beginning the series in 1889 became a way of re-displacing Zmigrodski's 'original' displacement for my own purposes, rather than replacing his racist and nonsensical theories within a liberal theory of the popular in which everyone is allowed to 'have a say'. What archaeological cranks and devotees of the lost ark do have to say about the past is not often inherently interesting: but what is worth examining are the lacunae between scientism and traditionalism, and the

contours of the gap which separates them. This gap is occupied by those meanings constituted by and through situated practice, at the point where theory becomes a set of practices, employed in a particular situation for particular ends. Both positivist science and romantic subjectivism tend to ignore the aspects of concrete practice involved in the construction of their own theory, preferring to look instead for 'a reality before and behind the cultural world to which that world can be reduced' rather than examining 'the tacit meanings guiding discourse' (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987:9).

There is a specifically archaeological dimension to this question, since archaeology is, to a greater degree than other forms of historical operation, a situated practice, a constant negotiation between abstract theories and the actual conditions 'on-site'. 'Fringe' archaeology is often characterized by wild theories which are arrived at without reference to practice, or which amplify the effects of the ill-considered practices of others: Zmigrodski's refantasmization of Schliemann's hasty conclusions about the swastika is just one example of this. If we extend the notion of a (situated, concrete) archaeological practice to include not only the transformation of material into evidence, but the formation of theories themselves, the consolidation of disciplinary boundaries and the institution of discourses, then the construction of linear temporal sequences can become increasingly modified and supplemented by a consideration of the socio-spatial conditions through which such sequences are constructed. In 1889, archaeology was emerging as a distinct discipline by means of an operation in which amateurism and antiquarianism were being consigned to a previous epoch, and was itself becoming the 'prehistory' of archaeological science. 'Rogue' theories such as Aryanism, which preyed opportunistically on scientific method, only to turn its procedures inside out, had the advantage of appealing to reserves of popular prejudice which discrete disciplines could not muster. At Ayodhya in 1994, the worst threats to archaeology came from the history of archaeology itself, in the form of a subjective, emotionally saturated discourse on the past tinged with nationalist prejudices and unprofessional and autodidactic exaggerations, a discourse believed to have been long since buried and forgotten. The very rigour and exclusiveness of orthodox archaeological method meant that it had little hold over the popular imagination, and it certainly had no way of dealing with populist sedition within its own domain.

What should also not be forgotten, however, are the potential dangers of modifying the claim to historicity with ideas of embodied knowledge and human 'situatedness' within traditions or social spaces. Levi, in a discussion of Gadamer's hermeneutic approach to history, sees in the apparently liberal idea of historical empathy proposed by Gadamer a potentially more sinister process in which the foreignness, the 'otherness' of the past is appropriated and incorporated into 'the familiar and the destined-to-be', the project of the West (Levi 1991:45). Levi cites as an example of this kind of reading the idea that the name of the 'Old Testament' appropriates and situates Judaism

within a Christian tradition before it can be seen as historically or culturally 'other' than that tradition. He also refers to the work of Lacoue-Labarthe, for whom the culmination of this work of appropriation in the name of tradition is Auschwitz, where 'it is no more or less than the essence of the West that is revealed' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1989:484). Whilst criticizing Lacoue-Labarthe's approach as appealing to the very discourse it seeks to deconstruct, Levi notes that after Auschwitz, the field of the historian consists of a schizoid and fractured scene in which all that can be done is to 'attempt to understand the competing discourses, the conflicting attempts to account for, or appropriate, history' (Levi 1991:48). In this scenario, the subject is no longer the subject of history, a Heideggerian 'Being-in-the-World' poised between past and future and possessed of a historical 'project', but becomes instead a function of various discourses which may or may not grant the rights to forms of subjectivity and historicity.

This postmodern rejection of tradition as being fatally implicated in the 'grand narratives' of western supremacy may fail to take full account of the ethical dimension of an encounter with tradition referred to in Gadamer's essay 'The problem of historical consciousness' (Gadamer [1963] 1987). Gadamer quotes Aristotelian ethics in support of an argument which stresses the difference between 'general knowledge' and a 'concrete situation' ([1963] 1987:116). Theory in this sense can be the guide for human action, but must not be seen to override the ethics of practice, and the practices of the human sciences, according to Gadamer, are no exception. He compares a concrete ethics of practice with some aspects of technical 'know-how', both of which replace abstract by situated forms of knowledge. This idea of a historical technology and historical 'skills' refers us again to de Certeau's 'operations'.

Historical knowledge, in Gadamer's scheme, cannot be defined according to purely scientific criteria, since 'it is itself a process which has all the characteristics of an historical event' (Gadamer [1963] 1987:125). In other words, historical understanding has itself a historical dimension, a past and a future. Gadamer's emphasis on the concrete ultimately advocates a type of historical work which is proportionate to its object of investigation, and in which the past is not the 'other' of a scientific history which seeks to negate it, to consign it, precisely, 'to history' but which instead can maintain contact with the genuine otherness of the past through a type of understanding in which the past is preserved within the present of historical study. This type of work, he argues, 'makes an inadmissible other into a genuine other and thus assimilable in its otherness' ([1963] 1987:139).

During my stay in New Delhi, I was confronted with the problem of what kind of past is and is not assimilable when I asked some Polish archaeologists about Michael Zmigrodski. 'That's history', they replied. One could interpret this remark spatially and assume that they were referring me to a different discourse, or one could, looking along the temporal axis, see a rejection of the troubling spectre of tradition. Either way, this forgotten Polish antiquarian cannot be remembered within archaeological science, since the 'undead' Aryans of whom

he fantasized cannot be encountered or negated within a historical operation designed to deal only with the dead.

As an alternative to this position, I constructed a historical scheme which would incorporate the 'original' séance within a new one, a *détournement* in which a new tradition is invented for an entirely different, in fact contrary, purpose. Zmigrodski had his fantasy ancestors, and for a while he became mine, the historical archetype of the archaeological *parvenu*. This bourgeois 'invader' or archaeological arriviste becomes the historically concrete and situated manifestation of the 'Aryan invasion theory' which had projected late nineteenth-century middle-class consciousness back into prehistoric time, and which Hitler was later to use in his attempt to found a petit-bourgeois aristocracy under the sign of the swastika. This chapter is not only an attempt to find ways of thinking about 'false' historical constructions outside the parameters of historical orthodoxy; it also suggests that such fantastical constructions are the inadmissible other of historical orthodoxy itself.

NOTE

- 1 The paper I delivered at WAC 3 in New Delhi on 6 December 1994 was concerned with the historical archaeology of the discipline of archaeology itself. This date was also the second anniversary of the destruction of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya by an angry crowd, who believed that the sixteenth-century building concealed the remains of an older temple dedicated to the god Rama. My paper took on a fresh relevance in the unusual conditions established by the ban enforced on discussion of the 'Ayodhya issue' at the Congress (for an account of the way in which this ban was effected see Sawday 1995:16).

I had arrived in New Delhi with a prepared text which dealt with one particular nineteenth-century attempt to appropriate the discourse of academic archaeology in the name of the invented tradition of occidental Aryanism. I discovered that in 1994 the same siren voices of populism and political partisanship, coupled with 'unprofessional' use of material remains, were haunting the corridors and conferences of WAC 3.

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ARCHAEOLOGIES OF
DOMINATION AND
RESISTANCE

6 *Gender, symbolism and power in Iberian societies*

MARGARITA DÍAZ-ANDREU AND
T.RINIDAD TORTOSA

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the interplay between gender as an active and negotiable identity and the artistic representation of gendered human bodies. In works of art, and in particular in works of art which have been commissioned, as was the case with those which are the focus of this chapter, the potential role of material culture in controlling, maintaining and transforming social relations increases dramatically. This is because of the conscious nature of the signification involved, making the art laden with intentionality. In this chapter we consider the role of art in the structuring and negotiation of gender relations in Iberian society. We focus on a specific set of works of art particularly relevant to the study of the representation and negotiation of gender: representations of the human body.

In the case of commissioned art, three active agents can be identified: the person (or institution) who orders the work of art, the artist and the audience. If these agents live within the same community (and this is probably by and large the case in Iberian societies) then all of them will share a common code of representation which allows them to decode the signifier of the work of art (Bourdieu 1984:2). This code is not, however, immutable, fixed, but consists of a set of rules that people take as a basis for negotiation. Artistic codes can be contested in a number of ways. Here, we deal with a particular challenge to the artistic code: that which challenges the relationship between the signifier and the signified rather than any pure artistic rules.¹ As Olmos (1991:555) has pointed out, 'the image was not banal in the Iberian world, but was always charged with intention and meaning'. The understanding of meaning is, however, not straightforward, as it was related to a code whose power lay in its potential ambiguity.

The anthropomorphic image in Iron Age Iberian 'culture' which forms the basis of our study was projected onto various materials: stone, bronze and ceramics. It represented various aspects of social life and, at the same time, elements of the mythico-religious dimensions—different domains which were

interconnected through a common code. Particular attention will be paid to the religious connotations of the representations, how the codification of the relationship between the divine and the mortal changed through time, and the relevance of these changes for understanding the negotiation of gender.

We are concerned with the relationship between gender and status. The interaction between both is clear in Iberian art, as only a small proportion of the population could afford to commission it, a proportion which increased, however, between the Ancient, Middle and Late Iberian periods. The interaction between gender and status is particularly significant in the case of the representation of women. We argue that women of high status were allowed to break with some of the representational rules and portray themselves as goddesses. This type of depiction was not granted to (or, perhaps, was not chosen by) women from lower social strata. Different groups of women had distinct strategies to produce representations of themselves.

It would be naïve, however, to believe in a straightforward relationship between metaphor and actual order. The iconography through which women are represented and the extent of female representations in any society does not necessarily correspond to the political or social power of women within society. Warner's (1985) analysis of female representations in the ancient (particularly Greek) and modern worlds clearly shows a non-correspondence between the actual social position and roles of women and their representation. However, she admits these female representations have potential for the affirmation of women and for the transformation of their status as it is perceived by men (Warner 1985: xx). Such processes are particularly prominent in the case of works of art which have been commissioned by women who are then able to negotiate their position within society by requesting certain iconographies and not others. This may have been the case in Iberian society, where women may have made use of religious codes of representation in order to portray themselves in a strong, powerful fashion. The meaning of these images would have been understood within Iberian society, and their political, social and religious connotations would have been assimilated at least partially, if not in their entirety (Bourdieu [1968] 1993:-218–29). Here lies the functional aspect of visual representation. However, as Bourdieu (1977) has amply demonstrated, material culture is polysemous. The signified can embody different, sometimes overlapping, concepts at the same time. This ambiguity of meaning was exploited by Iberian women (particularly those of higher status) in the negotiation of their own representation and power relations. Art representing women, therefore, might have been involved in the transformation of the social conceptualization of gender, rather than merely representing gender relations. Art would have had an active role in the social construction of gender in Iberian society.

A final note before entering into the study of the Iberian artistic representations. The interpretations proposed in this chapter are heavily based on those of other experts who are referred to throughout the text. We are

conscious that they (and, therefore, we) have largely based their opinions on the information provided by written sources. This chapter demonstrates that written sources are not only useful in the interpretation of material evidence, including art, but that material evidence is extremely valuable in establishing the reliability of written texts. The written sources were produced by non-Iberian men of high status, and therefore only represent the viewpoint of a small section of society. In this case then, the texts are biased in terms of gender, status and ethnicity. Archaeology can, therefore, be used to enrich the rather impoverished information which is provided by the written sources. Archaeology still remains the main source of information—if not the only one—for the great majority of the population, and in particular for women, who were not usually a central concern for the male literate elite who produced the texts.

IBERIANS, ART AND GENDER

The Iberian ‘culture’ (Figure 6.1) incorporates a series of peoples organized in chiefdoms and states, which from the sixth century BC through to Roman rule were to be found on the Mediterranean coast from the south of France down to the Guadalquivir valley, in regions in the interior of the Ebro valley and in part of the Southern Meseta. Although classical sources talk of various pre-Roman peoples (Oretanians, Contestanians, Edetanians, Ilercaonians, etc.), contradictions in these sources make it difficult to define the territory of each (Abad Casal 1992). Archaeologically, however, there are a series of characteristics which define this Iberian ‘culture’. The archaeological sites include settlements exhibiting a degree of urbanization, with structures which are not exclusively domestic, and with living quarters of a rectangular form with systematized interior spaces; cemeteries with cremation rites and a standardized set of deposited objects and, to a lesser extent, sanctuaries. Material culture is characterized, among other things, by wheel-made pottery of orange clay and painted decorations of a wine colour with ‘figures or geometric designs, by sculptures with human and animal images, bronze or terracotta statuettes which were votive offerings, and some silver and gold objects.

Three phases can be distinguished in the Iberian ‘culture’, the Ancient, the Middle and Late Iberian Periods. In this study we concentrate principally on two areas: the Upper Guadalquivir basin and the south east, although we also briefly look at data from the interior and Valencia. The diachronic model which Ruiz Rodríguez and Molinos (1989; see also Ruiz Rodríguez 1997) have developed for the Upper Guadalquivir basin takes as its starting point the end of the eighth century BC. Tartessos and the Phoenician colonies (Aubert 1993) instigated an expanding commercial relationship with the people inhabiting the Guadalquivir basin, and this led to the appearance of an orientalizing aristocracy which reached its peak during the Ancient Iberian period (c. 550–450 BC). Although this process began earlier, the rise to power of wider aristocratic sectors

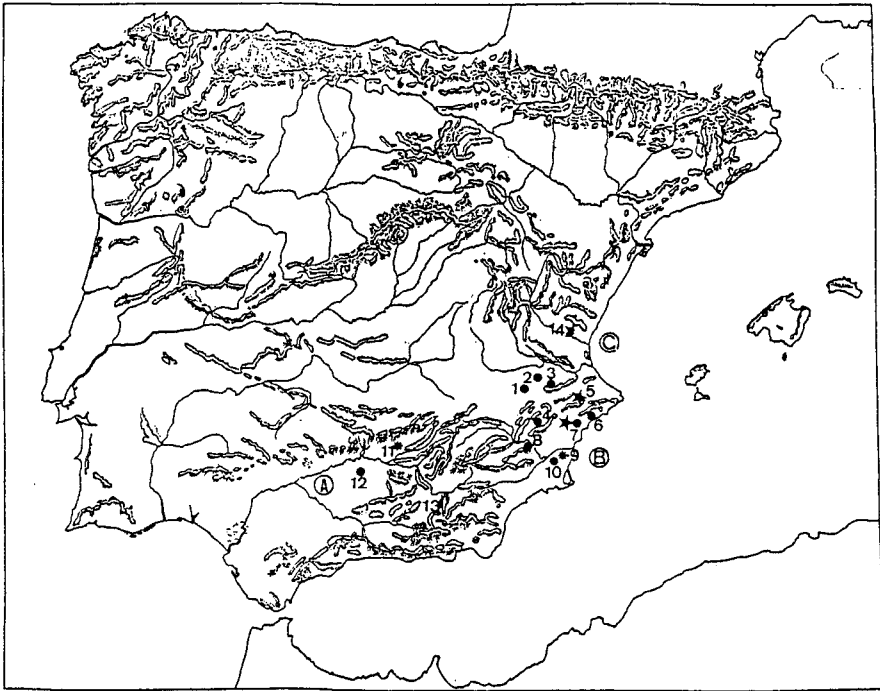


Figure 6.1 Map of sites cited in the text. 1, Pozo Moro; 2, Los Villares; 3, Cerro de Los Santos; 4, Coimbra del Barranco Ancho; 5, La Serreta; 6, La Albufereta; 7, La Alcudia; 8, El Cigarralejo; 9, Santuario de la Luz; 10, El Cabecico del Tesoro; 11, Despeñaperros; 12, Porcuna; 13, Baza; 14, Lliria; A Valle del río Guadalquivir; B Sureste; C País Valenciano; • Sculpture; ★ painted pottery; * shrine

towards the middle of the fifth century BC resulted in a profound transformation and the abandonment of the orientaling model. In geographical terms this aristocratic power was expressed through the appearance of the *oppidum*, which became the 'basic political and economic unit of the Iberian socio-economic model' (Ruiz Rodríguez *et al.* 1987:243). Changes in the geo-political balance of power within the Mediterranean as a consequence of the conflict between Carthage and Rome from the fourth century BC, had a negative effect on Iberian commerce, a key source of aristocratic control, leading, from the last third of the fourth century BC, to the disappearance of imported Greek pottery. By the time the Romans arrived during the second century BC, the *oppida*, which had been the bastion of the aristocracy, had already been abandoned, and as a result the previous socio-economic model began to decline.

In the south east, the appearance of a strongly hierarchical society, with an associated aristocracy, between the end of the fifth and the end of the fourth century BC has been identified through the study of settlement patterns and the cemetery

of El Cigarralejo (Santos Velasco 1989a, 1989b, 1994a, 1994b). The social pyramid was made up of a *princeps* (leader) at the apex, below whom there was a group of warriors represented in the cemeteries by a richer set of deposits, including weapons and imported ceramics. Throughout Iberia, therefore, from the fifth century BC the aristocratic group has to be seen as a key social and political element in Iberian society, which was also to undergo significant changes over the following centuries. These transformations were reflected within Iberian iconography by the substitution of contexts and materials. This produced, for example, the abandonment and then deterioration and, on occasion, the deliberate destruction of statues (Chapa Brunet 1993).

Human representations, and in particular the study of the male/female dichotomy, have not been forgotten in studies of Iberian 'culture' (Olmos 1991; de Griñó Frontera 1992; Santos Velasco 1994a). Yet, as Olmos (1991:553–5) has noted, these representations have often been approached from the perspective of the present, whilst, as we propose, they can in fact only be understood in the context of the generative schema of Iberian society. Iberian art, and its signifying code in particular, was, as Bourdieu ([1968] 1993:223) would say, a historically constituted system founded on social reality. A social reality in which gender, as we shall see, played a major role.

Ancient Iberian period (c. 550–450 BC)

Two key monuments have been discovered dating to the Ancient Iberian period, Pozo Moro and Porcuna (Figure 6.2). The iconography of the first clearly has oriental roots reflected by the presence of, among other subjects, *hierogamia* (sacred marriage) and infernal scatologies, and it is so different from the majority of Iberian representations that for reasons of space we are not able to consider it here. Suffice to say that the date which its excavator proposes, about 500 BC (Almagro Gorbea 1983:184), does not fit well within the framework of Iberian iconography, leading some researchers to suggest that it is of greater antiquity (Blázquez and Gonzalez Navarrete 1985:68).

Porcuna is, therefore, the oldest monument which displays typical Iberian iconography, dating to between 500–450 BC (Negueruela 1990) (Figure 6.2). The excavations undertaken at the site from 1975 led to the discovery of an inhumation burial site, dating to the seventh and the first half of the sixth century BC, and a trench covered by large stone slabs among which were found fragments of sculptures dating to the first half of the fifth century BC, which form the basis of our analysis (Negueruela 1990:302). Three hypotheses, none of which are mutually exclusive, have been proposed to explain their presence. First, the statues could have formed part of an undiscovered cemetery of more recent construction than the one documented. Second, they could have formed part of a public building or, third, a sanctuary (Negueruela 1990:310). Despite the fact that the images depicted in the sculptures are Iberian, their iconography can be placed within the Greek world, dealing with subjects related to the funerary sphere (Negueruela 1990:316–17). This does not mean that the Greek images were simply transposed.



Figure 6.2 Porcuna (after Negueruela 1990).

The code transmitted was Greek, but it was filtered through an Iberian lens, and was meaningful within the far western Mediterranean context.

The set of sculptures at Porcuna includes human and animal figures. Among the former, male figures were more frequent. This was to be, as we will see, a constant feature throughout the three periods in the Iberian world. They are found in scenes which depict hand-to-hand combat between warriors, on one occasion a fight between a man and a lion, and on another a fight between a man and a sphinx. There are three female sculptures, a woman with a child, a woman with a serpent and a woman sitting down (Negueruela 1990:238–42). The first is represented standing up and inclined slightly forward in order to hold the child's wrist. She is wearing two tunics and a mantle that covers her head and reaches down to the floor. The woman with the serpent, who is also wearing a tunic and a mantle, and inclined slightly forward, is advancing her right leg thereby giving a sense of movement. The serpent is on her left shoulder. It seems that this symbol was later furiously destroyed. It has been suggested that the role of this figure is that of a protector (Negueruela 1990:240) and it could possibly be interpreted as a goddess, although it has also been considered a priestess² (González Navarrete 1987:111–12). All that is preserved of the

woman sitting down are her feet with shoes on, below a tunic which is resting on a base of the statue.

Using a binary mode of analysis, the first dichotomy which is apparent at Porcuna is the clear dual representation, man/woman. This was to be the case throughout the Iberian period. There are no ambiguous figures which indicate the existence of additional gender categories. Ambiguities are, however, to be found when an attempt is made to concretely identify the figures and determine their specific roles. In general, roles can be more clearly distinguished for the male figures than for the female ones. The latter remain more diffuse:

Schema 1

male representation	female representation
war/hunting	maternity/no apparent functionality

A number of attributes are associated with schema 1 at Porcuna, although not all are found together on the same figurine:

Schema 2

man	woman
horse	serpent
helmet	mantle
short dress	long dress
war/hunting	maternity
elements of war/hunting:	elements of maternity: child
helmet, greave, shield, sword,	
horse, mythical animal	

These representations are, therefore, not arbitrary, given that at the very least they aim to imbue the male category with a specific role, that of the hero (Negueruela 1990:255–7; Chapa Brunet 1993:191; Ruiz Rodríguez and Molinos 1993:214). Female representations are so rare and fragmentary that we cannot classify them clearly. Nevertheless, it seems that they are above all seen as deities, although this is less clear in the case of the woman with the child. In the other two cases their divine status could be inferred, on the one hand by the presence of the serpent, which confers a *chthonic* character (i.e. related to the earth, or sub-soil) and, on the other, by the seated position of the figure. The position of female figurines has been interpreted by some specialists (for example Olmos 1991:561; de Griñó Frontera 1992:196) in accordance with the following schema, which as we shall see, is subject to variation:

Schema 3

woman sitting down ³	woman standing
goddess	mortal woman

To sum up, in the group of sculptures at Porcuna, the representation of gender tends to follow schema 4, although the role of men is more clearly defined than that of women:

Schema 4

man	woman
hero	goddess

The Porcuna schema is repeated in representations dating to the same period in other geographical areas. For example, in La Alcudia, located in the south east, a series of sculptures were found which had been re-used to pave a street (Ramos Fernández 1982:120). The famous sculpture of the Dama de Elche (Lady of Elche) (García y Bellido 1943, 1947) was also found nearby, but because of the circumstances of its discovery, we can not assume the same context. Two of them are female—one of which is the Dama de Elche bust. Despite the fragmentary state of these remains, schema 1 and perhaps 4⁴ seem to have been applied, given that the male figures are represented as warriors and possess shields and greaves. One of the female sculptures represents a seated woman with a poppy in her hand, a plant which was associated with religious rituals in the Mediterranean world (González Warner 1984:42–4). In the case of the male statue in the cemetery of Los Villares (Blánquez Pérez 1990, 1992a and 1992b) the Porcuna representation of masculinity is also confirmed.

Hence, we can see that in the Ancient Iberian period the basic elements of Iberian anthropomorphic imagery were already formed. One of the main characteristics of this imagery was the dual representation of the human figure based on the differentiation of gender identities. Male roles were better defined than those of women, and this remained a constant characteristic throughout the Iberian period. In the Ancient period sculpture was scenic, it was designed to play a central role in the burial space, and its acquisition was restricted to a narrow segment of the society, the elite. Nevertheless, these representations reflected a complex society, a society in which the artistic code distinguishing these figures and the myths and events narrated would have been understood at different levels by diverse audiences. It was a sculpture produced for the purposes of the elite, but whose message was also aimed at the rest of society.

Middle Iberian period (c. 450–300 BC)

In the cemeteries of this period sculptures and a memorial stone (a *cippus*) with human representations have been found. The majority of sculptures represent seated women as in the case of the Cabecico del Tesoro (Nieto 1943–44), Baza (Presedo 1982) and La Alcudia of Elche (Ramos Fernández 1975). In addition, on one of the faces of the *cippus* found in the cemetery of Coimbra del Barranco Ancho there is a relief with another seated woman (Muñoz Amilibia 1987).

The sculpture of the so-called Dama de Baza (Lady of Baza, Figure 6.3), dated c. 450–350 BC presents an interesting case study for the analysis of gender, because it shows us that the schemata we have developed are not univocal, but admit ambiguities and the use of strategies of social representation, of which different individuals in society can take advantage. The sculpture consists of an



Figure 6.3 La Dama de Baza (drawn by Julia Sánchez).

urn representing a woman and which, as osteological analysis has shown, contained the ashes of a woman (Reverte 1986). Furthermore, this tomb contained one of the richest sets of objects deposited in the cemetery. The assemblage was composed of ceramic vessels and metallic objects: two characteristic Iberian swords (*falcatas*), the handle of a shield, fragments of horse bits, remains of *soliferrea* (spears), and perhaps the tip of a dagger (Presedo 1982:202). This tomb, therefore, represented a break with the norm (schema 1) not because of the form of representation (schema 2), but because of the objects with which the sculpture was associated. Hence:

Schema 5 (La Dama de Baza tomb)

man	woman
weapons	weapons

It can be suggested then that women within the elite demonstrated their higher social status through the appropriation of elements normally considered as male. Olmos (1986, 1991:184) and Pereira Sieso (1987:265) go even further and argue that the Dama de Baza could have involved the representation of privileged women in terms of the sacred. This would indicate that women at the apex of the social hierarchy were able to break with the norm (schema 3).

However, the schema established earlier remained valid in the majority of cases. This is indicated by the representations on the *cippus* at the burial site of Coimbra del Barranco Ancho (Figure 6.4). This monument demonstrates

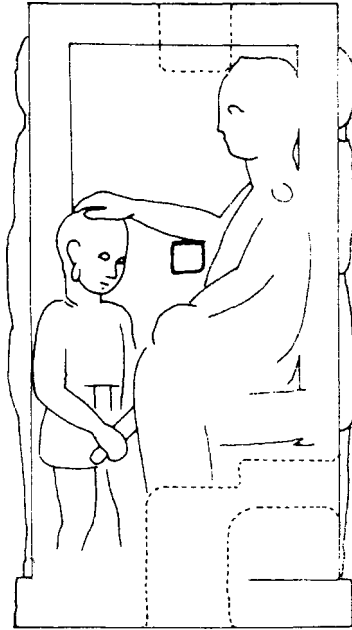


Figure 6.4 Coimbra del Barranco Ancho (after Muñoz Amilibia 1987).

continuity with the previous period with respect to schema 1 and schema 4 described previously, although there were some changes in the association between man/warrior. Warrior attributes were maintained (shield, helmet, horse), but while in the Ancient period men were represented in combat, in this period the male image was less bellicose and seemed to emphasize status through the introduction of new elements like a staff and by the representation of riches such as earrings and bracelets.

The analysis of the funerary deposits found in the cemeteries makes it possible to contrast iconographic and material representation. We centre our attention on El Cigarralejo, at present one of the best studied burial sites (Cuadrado 1987; Santos Velasco 1989a). Although not all the osteological analysis has been carried out yet, both the site's excavator (Cuadrado 1987:595–6) and Santos Velasco (1989a:80) distinguish tombs which belong to men and those which belong to women, concluding that the following significant characteristics are apparent:

Schema 6 (El Cigarralejo)

man

richer deposits

objects associated with war:

lance, *falcata*, shield

woman

poorer deposits

objects associated with weaving: loom

weights, bone plaques, glass beads

As Santos Velasco (1989a:86) observes, there was a clear selection of objects in these deposits. In the male tombs it is usual to find elements associated with the image of the warrior—spear, sword (*falcata*) and shield—rather than other objects such as agricultural implements and chisels, associated with manual labour, which were common within settlements. Objects such as horse bits, rests of carts, an embossed bronze cauldron, a glass jug, a niello (*nielado*) buckle of a belt and a crest of a silver helmet were only found in a few tombs regarded by Santos Velasco (1989a:86) as being of the highest social status. However, there were no outstanding female tombs where elements associated with weaving and spinning, such as loom weights and bone plaques, were to be found. Extrapolating from the attitude towards these occupations in the Greek world, Cabrera and de Frontera Griñó (1987) have suggested that among the female population women of a high social status were involved with weaving and sewing. The importance of these activities in the Iberian world is documented in written sources, which indicate that ‘each year, the Iberian women exhibited the cloths they had woven in public. Men elected through voting stood in judgement and honoured the women who had worked the most’ (Nicol. Dam. frag. 102. *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, III, 456). These sources also inform us that in combat the men wore clothes, distinguishing themselves in this way from the Celts: ‘the Celts [were] undressed and the Iberians [wore] purple coloured linen tunics, according to the custom of the country, which gave their appearance an impressive and strange aspect’ (Pol. III, 113–14). Two elements of gender differentiation commented on by the sources are worth emphasizing. On the one hand, the women made the cloth, but the men judged its quality. On the other, they were used by men for war, a specifically male task. This does not mean, however, that the cloths were only worn by men, as is shown by the rich dresses worn by the women represented by the sculptures. This gender division is also apparent in a relief of La Albufereta, in which two figures, a man and a woman, carry a lance and a spindle respectively (de Griñó Frontera 1992:200) (Figure 6.5).

However, as Santos Velasco (1989a: 80) has noted for El Cigarralejo, the elements to be found in schema 6 are not exclusive. Instead, there is a tendency for some of the elements to overlap with one another. That is to say, the male/female dichotomy is not clear-cut. The same tendency is evident in the burial site of Los Villares, where, for example, osteological analysis has shown that the rich tomb 22B belonged to a woman (Blánquez Pérez 1990:564–5). At Baza (Presedo 1982) tombs with weapons also contain loom weights (for example, tomb number 9), and, as was previously indicated, in the case of the tomb of La Dama de Baza, weapons were sometimes found in female tombs. In the case of El Cigarralejo, the two richest tombs in the burial site (numbers 200 and 277), despite being attributed to men because of the large quantity of weapons and objects associated with horses, also contain a large quantity of loom-weights. We could conclude that the greater status of some woman allowed them to overcome at a formal level (schema 5) the



Figure 6.5 La Albufereta (drawn by Santiago González).

conventional dichotomy represented in schema 6. However, the transgression of the norm in male tombs through the presence of objects such as loom-weights has to be interpreted in a very different manner, because it did not lower the status of the man buried there, indicating that it was not the transgression of the norm *per se* which was important, but the gender from which the norm was transgressed.

Late Iberian period (c. 300 BC–0)

The Late Iberian period saw a large degree of continuity in the iconographic tradition with respect to the imaginary universe of the previous period. Yet there were several differences. On the one hand, the number of representations grew, and their social base seems to have broadened. Growth in the number of representations was a reflection of the expanding size of the apex of the social pyramid (Ruiz Rodríguez and Molinos Molinos 1989; Santos Velasco 1989a), rather than a significant popularization of the image. On the other hand, the contexts in which the images are found changed.

Thus, we no longer find human figures in burial sites, but in sanctuaries and, in the case of Valencia and the south east, in settlements and the temples associated with them, where some of the pottery vessels were decorated. The great majority of sculptures and votive statuettes in sanctuaries can be dated to this period.

There is information on the existence of various sanctuaries with human figures. The principal sites include: Despeñaperros (Calvo and Cabré 1917, 1918, 1919; Nicolini 1969; Prados Torreira 1987, 1992), El Santuario de la Luz (de Mergelina 1924–25), and El Cerro de los Santos (Ruiz Bremón 1989). All of them are characterized by the presence of votive offerings, human and animal figures. The materials from which these votive offerings were produced varied. At Despeñaperros they were made of bronze (Figure 6.6), whereas they were largely made of stone at the other two sites, although there were some metal figures at El Cerro de los Santos. Overall these figures exhibit different characteristics from those found in the burial sites. They are smaller, and in some cases the iconography is new, though the basic schema 1 still applies. These changes in representation indicate a different functionality and context. They were no longer used as a vehicle for political power, at least not to the same extent as sculptures were so used in the previous period. Rather, the nature of the representation was transformed and was reduced to a more direct dialogue between the individual and divine beings.

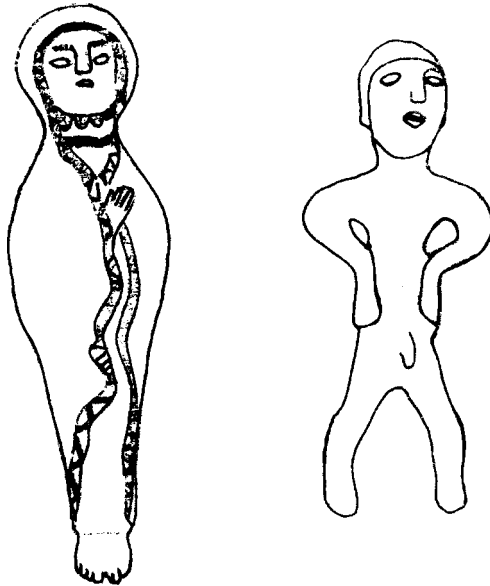


Figure 6.6 Despeñaperros (after Prados 1992).

There are two sites at Despeñaperros, Collado de los Jardines and El Castellar, which have been dated to around the late fourth century BC and the third century BC. The general characteristics of the votive statuettes found at Despeñaperros are their manufacture in bronze, their height, which varies between 4 and 12 cm, and the iconography, which involves the representation of whole male and female figures (Figure 6.6), along with the representation of parts of the body such as legs, arms and even dentures, and the figures of domestic and wild animals. The basic schema 1 is maintained and, whilst there are some exceptions, it can be represented in the following manner:

Schema 7 (Despeñaperros)

man	woman
naked and dressed	dressed and naked
weapons (dagger, <i>falcatas</i> , lances, shields)	necklaces
ready to attack	hands on the waist or offering
uncovered head	head dress

Male nudes are far more abundant, although they are represented wearing a number of elements which indicate their social status, such as belts, weapons (daggers and shields), and belts and necklaces in the case of naked women. The naked votive offerings have been interpreted by Olmos (1991:559; 1992:26) in two distinct though not contradictory forms:

Schema 8

naked man	naked woman
hero	sacred

and at the same time:

Schema 9

naked man	naked woman
fertility demand	fertility demand

Thus, Olmos suggests that ‘the act of being naked can even convert the man into a hero, at the same time as it makes the woman sacred’ (Olmos 1992:26), although these associations, he argues, are still connected with demands for fecundity (*ibid.*). It is important to emphasize that within the Despeñaperros sanctuary there are no representations of seated women (which, as we proposed in schema 3, were directly related with the representation of goddesses), and this seems to be in accordance more with the status of those represented than with the function of the site. The sanctuary of El Cerro de los Santos, where we can infer that those represented were of higher status because the sculptures are made of stone and are much bigger, provides a different picture. In these obviously more expensive representations, and contrary to the cheaper ones at Despeñaperros, the distinction between women and goddesses becomes significantly ambiguous.

At El Cerro de los Santos sanctuary a group of sculptures made in stone along with several votive statuettes in bronze have been documented. The sculptures vary in size from 118cm to 25cm. Several researchers (Ruiz Bremón 1989:188) have suggested that the cylindrical vases, which a number of the statues carry, relate to the performance of salutary water rituals. The basic schema 1 is again repeated, and, as is normally the case in other sites, the male representations are more common than female ones (Ruiz Bremón 1989:86–7). There are several differences with respect to Despeñaperros. There are no naked figures and the warrior attributes of the men are not clearly expressed, in that their weapons are kept under their cloaks. Such variety demonstrates that religious rituals were not totally uniform within Iberian society. There were different ways of reaching out to the sacred world, as well as various ways for the individual to represent him/herself to the rest of the society.

Female sculptures can be found both standing up and sitting down, a feature which is only found at El Cerro de los Santos and not at the other sanctuaries. According to Ruano (cited in Santos Velasco 1994a: 17) this indicates that ‘Iberian social structure could accommodate the comparison between the enthroned female figure of the deity and the seigniorial dignity of certain women.’ The use of the duality man—hero/woman—deity which may have existed since Porcuna in the Ancient Iberian period disappeared in these sculptures, but the same iconography was, as in La Dama de Baza tomb in the previous period, still used. That is to say, the image was manipulated in order that the individual could use it in another context, in a way which would not originally have been acceptable. Olmos (1991:561) states that this rupture could symbolize the ‘representation of seated women imitating goddesses’, but also that this argument could be inverted and it could be suggested that it is ‘the representation of the seated goddess that imitates the hierarchical Iberian social structure with ladies and servants clearly delineated’. Again, as in the case of La Dama de Baza, the norm has been transgressed in the case of women of a high social standing.

The representation of gender at El Cerro de Los Santos can be broken down according to the following schema:

Schema 10 (El Cerro de los Santos)

man	woman
standing/on horseback	standing/sitting down
weapons (covered by the cloak)	necklaces
uncovered head/helmet	head dress/mantle

In the Late Iberian period human representations were also to be found on the ceramic vases discovered in settlements in the Valencia region between the third and first centuries BC. Two sites have been of particular importance in the characterization of the pictorial styles involved in these representations: Sant Miquel de Lliria (Ballester Tormo *et al.* 1954)—where ceramics have also been found in a temple associated with the settlement (Bonet 1992:230)—and La Alcudia de Elche (Ramos Folqués 1955). The representations at both sites reveal

new elements with respect to previous periods, changes which can be attributed in the first place to the function of the ceramic vessels, which are associated with domestic and religious contexts. One of the differences is the almost total absence of women sitting down, although some of the standing women now represent a deity, Tanit (or a similar syncretic deity). Their difference with respect to mortal women was marked by a communicative attitude, expressed by their full-face representation (Figure 6.7). One representation of a seated woman—the only known on pottery—has been discovered at the site of La Serreta, and it has been interpreted by de Griñó Frontera (1992:197) as a woman being carried in procession, a feature which, she argues, confirms the divine status of this woman. Another figure of a woman with a shield and lance found on a ceramic vessel at Oliva—the only known female figure with such attributes on pottery—has also been interpreted as a deity (Olmos *et al.* 1992:139). Moreover, in contrast with other forms of representation, male figures do not always outnumber female ones. At La Alcudia women predominate. These exceptions to the established schema seem to indicate that the lower cost of the material led to an increase in production with the result that control over artistic form became more difficult and representational norms were transgressed more frequently. Nevertheless, in general terms schema 1, at least in part, continued to prevail, although its particular manifestation varied at each site.

At Sant Miquel de Lliria male representations were more numerous, and in addition to being represented as warriors or hunters, men were also depicted as



Figure 6.7 La Alcudia (drawn by Santiago González).

dancers. In this new context, the dichotomy between men and women was also clearly marked by dress, with men wearing a short skirt or shorts and women wearing a long bell-shaped tunic (Figure 6.8). Women were also represented playing a double flute and with their face in profile, a feature usually associated with the character of being human. The differentiation between genders at Lliria can be reduced to the following dichotomies:

Schema 11 (Lliria)

man	woman
war/hunting/dance	dance/music
lance, shield	double flute
short skirt/shorts	bell-shaped tunic
helmet	pointed head-dress
horse	-

The representations at La Alcudia are very different from those which we have looked at so far. For the first time, an abundance of female figures can be observed, and there are also pronounced differences in the subjects addressed in comparison to Lliria, particularly in the case of female representations. Female figures are no longer represented as human, but, in the majority of cases, as divine beings, with the face depicted in full, and with rouge and wings. Male figures continue to be represented as warriors or hunters. The dichotomy between men and women can be expressed in the following manner:

Schema 12 (La Alcudia)

man	woman
war/hunting	fertility/the sacred
associated elements	associated elements
lance, horse	rouge, wings
horse	serpent?
face in profile	full face and face in profile

The opposition between the horse and the snake which can be observed at other sites is not clear in this case, because although a serpent is depicted on one



Figure 6.8 Danza de Lliria (drawn by Julia Sánchez after Ballester *et al.* 1954).

ceramic vessel representing a female deity, another representation depicts a serpent between two male faces. The case of La Alcuía is, therefore, especially significant because there is considerable variation between representations in sculpture dating to the Ancient and Middle Iberian periods discussed earlier, and those on ceramics dating to the Late Iberian period. On the one hand, such differences suggest that there was a clear link between the material and the representation itself, and that this is a result of the function of the object. The differences between La Alcuía and Sant Miquel de Lliria, on the other hand, illustrate the varied forms selected by each society in the representation of a shared ideological universe.

DISCUSSION

This overview of Iberian images clearly reveals the importance of gender and of gender negotiation within the Iberian world. The duality man/woman was one of the major discriminating factors in the art reflecting the basic schema of Iberian society.⁵ However, even if this representational dichotomy was the norm, the interpretation of these images is by no means straightforward, as not only can we see significant temporal changes and continuities throughout the centuries of Iberian art, but also frequent instances in which the basic schemes of representation are transgressed.

Continuities can be seen in the basic representational code, whereas changes occurred in the function, context, scale and material attributes of the images, as well as the number of people with the power and/or right to be represented. These changes may have been dialectically related to transformations in the socio-political structure, which conditioned who was represented and how. Ambiguity within the Iberian iconographic code made such changes in representation possible. Only a few norms were applied to the totality of the images, while others were transformed depending on circumstance. Within the images, the interplay between gender oppositions was complex and ambiguous. Was, for example, the image of the hero used to signify the importance of the man being buried, or was there a more direct identification between the man and the hero? Likewise, a seated woman could represent a deity, but this iconography was also significantly borrowed by women from within the social elite to represent themselves. Female representations, particularly those from the Ancient and Middle periods, suggest that women from the elite were able to use their status in order to have their image represented in a manner which defied the artistic code and made the boundary between the divine and the mortal an ambiguous one. In this way, such women may have sought to alter the perception of their status within society, and probably, by extension, to change their actual social position.

It is difficult to assess to what extent such female images affected women's status as a whole within Iberian society. As argued in the introduction, allegory does not necessarily have a counterpart in the social order, and the contrary has

traditionally been assumed in studies of Iberian (Olmos 1991; de Griñó Frontera 1992; Santos Velasco 1994a) and Celtic art (Green 1991). The relationship between the representation of women and their actual social status, however, tells us more about possibilities than actual associations. Thus, the worship of goddesses in a particular society does not necessarily mean, as Green (1991:3–4) suggests, that women maintained a higher social status.⁶ In this respect, analysis of domestic contexts could be useful in order to explore the relationship between artistic representation and the social order, and in particular to compare La Alcudia and Lliria.

A further point which needs to be dealt with is whether the increase in the range and number of female representations signified a change in women's status in Iberian society. While male representations were relatively homogeneous, centring on the image of the man as a warrior and hunter, those of women varied more. Does this tell us something about the place of women in Iberian society? In strongly hierarchical societies where the social pyramid is very narrow at the top, as in the case of the Ancient Iberian period, the male elite could exercise strong control in the domain of visual representation. This source of power had weakened somewhat by the Middle Iberian period, when the number of representations increased and the size of each individual object declined. But it was in the Late Iberian period, as the social pyramid widened, that representations of the female figure began to be more abundant and to reflect a shift from the sacred to the mortal. These changes—from the sacred to mortal, from scarcity to abundance—seem to have been possible in the first instance because the association between femininity and divine status gave a particular set of women a higher social standing. But how did other women of lower status benefit from it, if they benefited at all? What did they gain from the shift in the context of female representation from the divine to the mortal? As discussed in this chapter, the use of the image at burial sites was abandoned (sculptures are not found in cemeteries of the Late Iberian period), and the theatrical space was transformed through the replacement of the image as a open-air stage by a concentration, in the case of the votive statuettes, on a physically enclosed, private dialogue between the individual and the deity, and a collective dialogue in the case of the ceramics. But what did all this mean for women's social status? We have as yet no answer to the questions posed in this paragraph, as once again other archaeological contexts have to be considered and at present the data is still too scarce to make such an analysis possible. Future research will, we hope, enable further exploration of these questions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Ricardo Olmos, and Matthew Johnson and Bob Layton for their comments on this chapter. We are, nevertheless, responsible for all of the opinions expressed within it.

NOTES

- 1 Changes to the artistic rules may be brought about in the material used (for example, the use of marble instead of wood in Classical Greece), in modes of representations (for example, the introduction of perspective in the Renaissance) and so on. Such changes are often used as a way of making a work of art different and therefore special and, if successful, admired, and they can be partly explained by the social and political context in which art, artists and sponsors are imbued. Artists frequently want to find their own social space within the profession. The sponsors, who are usually less concerned with internal debates between artists, want to benefit from the admiration that a work of art provokes.
- 2 Although such a distinction is not necessarily appropriate. As Bob Layton asked us, 'Is it necessarily meaningful to distinguish between goddess and priestess? Maybe one could become the other during ritual?' (Layton, pers. comm.).
- 3 There is only one controversial example, the seated sculpture from Cabecico del Tesoro, that has been interpreted by Ruiz Bremón (1991) as a man.
- 4 See Ruano (1987:520–1) for a summary of the debate on the divine or mortal character of the Dama de Elche.
- 5 There is only one very specific case in which gender does not constitute one of the main discriminating factors in the context of visual representation: the depiction of horses in a divine context, where their gender is not differentiated or incorporates aspects of both genders (Blázquez 1977:246–51).
- 6 A critical comparison between women's status in Catholic countries during the modern period, where the Virgin Mary is worshipped, and in Protestant countries, where she is not, might be illuminating in this respect. Marina Warner (1976) seems to deny any relationship between the representation of women and their status within society, but a comparative analysis might achieve more sophisticated results.

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7 *The tyranny of the text:
lost social strategies in current historical
period archaeology in the classical
Mediterranean*

DAVID B. SMALL

INTRODUCTION

Theoretical issues concerning the conjunction of texts and archaeological material in social reconstructions have been the focus of attention in recent research in American historical archaeology and in Mesoamerican archaeology (e.g. Carmack and Weeks 1981; Beaudry 1988; Leone and Potter 1988; Little 1992; Marcus 1992). The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the issue of the use of texts and archaeology in social reconstruction to the field of classical archaeology, a field which has had little attention in the theoretical literature of historical archaeology in general (but see Small 1995). My argument is that the current relationship between archaeological and textual evidence in classical archaeology limits understanding of the classical past, and has, in a specific case, resulted in the neglect of evidence for important social strategies. Classical archaeology needs an approach to social modelling which holds both the textual and archaeological record as independent sources of evidence. Such an approach both highlights avenues for productive research into the classical past and illustrates how issues brought forth in the use of texts and the archaeological record in classical archaeology can add to the investigation of this question in the wider archaeological community.

TEXTS AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN CLASSICAL STUDIES

The most common assumption held by classical archaeologists is that archaeological material can assist textual records by filling in many details of daily life, showing how the ancients lived, usually in reference to domestic spheres, but sometimes extending to issues of religion and economy. Therefore, use of the archaeological record is, in general, theoretically unsophisticated. What theory has emerged in classical archaeology has been primarily the product of ancient historians, rather than archaeologists

(Osborne 1985, 1987; Morris 1986, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1992; Garnsey 1988; Gallant 1989, 1991), some of whom now label themselves social historians/archaeologists (e.g. Morris 1993). These archaeologists view historical texts as supplying social models of ancient society, and the archaeological record as supplying contexts within which they can observe the dynamics of these text-produced models (Morris 1987, 1992, 1994).

At issue here is the question of evidential independence, something that the current theoretical approach in classical archaeology denies. While approaches to the combination of texts and archaeology should not always depend upon this question (Kosso 1995), the benefits which can be gained from approaching these two lines of evidence independently have been demonstrated in American historical archaeology (Leone and Potter 1988). My point in this chapter is that this approach needs to be applied to classical studies. The current theoretical approach, which views the archaeological record as a subordinate dynamic context for viewing textually-adduced reconstructions, can miss important underlying structures and clues to the social strategies of past societies, which are contained within different community contexts. But let us review recent approaches emphasizing the importance of 'evidential independence' before we apply it to a particular, classical case study.

THE ISSUE

The issue of the independence of texts and the archaeological record in the reconstruction of past societies was first seriously addressed in Mayan archaeology (Carmack and Weeks 1981). However, in this chapter I concentrate on a more recent approach in American historical archaeology advocated by Leone and Potter (1988). Recognizing that the 'archaeological and documentary records that we use were usually produced in different contexts' (Leone and Potter 1988:14), they argue that it is important to view both the archaeological record and the documentary record as independent sources. In an approach that owes much to Binford's concept of middle-range theory, they argue that:

The way to act on this independence between the two kinds of data and set up analytical by-play is to create descriptive grids, often based on insights from the documentary record. One creates the framework, derives from it expectations of the archaeological record, and then uses the deviations from the expectations...as the basis for a new set of questions about the archaeological record and about the documentary record as well. In such analysis, organizational behavior, which can also be learned from the documentary record, is the concept used to ascribe meaning to the ambiguities discovered through careful description and comparison.

(Leone and Potter 1988:15)

Leone has successfully applied this approach in his study of the integration of eighteenth-century gardens and early colonial life in Maryland. Here he used works by eighteenth- and twentieth-century scholars on gardens to set up his descriptive grids, and form expectations from these analyses for the archaeology of the William Paca garden in Annapolis. An important expectation taken from eighteenth-century gardening books (which was violated in this particular garden) centred around planning. The books would have one believe that all good gardens of that period were meant to represent wildernesses, but at least two-thirds of the Paca garden was formally laid out. To address this obvious ambiguity, Leone read further on the use of gardens in the eighteenth century (his source of information concerning organizational behaviour), and discovered that 'eighteenth-century gardens were complex symbols, used for entertaining and for establishing and maintaining social position' (1988:16). With this behavioural information he was able to argue that the ambiguity in the Paca garden was actually an active tool, a representation of the 'mastery of nature through geometry', through which William Paca negotiated his position within the community at the time of the American revolution.

Trying to treat textual and archaeological material in a fashion analogous to that of Leone and Potter opens up the classical past to many more interpretations than are currently on offer. But classical archaeology, while a historical field, is not the same as American archaeology. For Leone and Potter's approach to be successfully adopted certain modifications will be required.

A SOCIAL HISTORIAN/ARCHAEOLOGIST'S RECONSTRUCTION

The best way to illustrate how the approach that I am suggesting will lead to the production of a different kind of social history is to briefly consider a recent approach to the social reconstruction of ancient Greece, defined by its proponents as social history/archaeology. The work of Morris (1987, forthcoming a, forthcoming b) has been particularly influential in outlining a social dynamic in ancient Greece, stretching from the Early Geometric period (c. 1100 BCE) to the late Classical (fourth century BCE).¹ This model centres around a bipolar class opposition and can be summarized as follows. In the period from 1100 to 750 BCE communities were divided into upper and lower status groups (Morris does not apparently envision classes at this period), which can be seen in the use of burial rituals to distinguish the upper status group from the lower; by the late eighth century BC there developed a new conception of citizenship which saw the development of two distinct ideologies, one around the elite class and the other forming around a rising 'middling' class of Greeks. The opposition between these two groups formed the basis of either civil unrest or stasis within different Greek city-states for

several centuries. Near the turn of the late sixth century BCE the ‘middling’ class apparently gained the upper hand.

Morris, like other historians, formulates his model of Greek social structure from an analysis of texts. His reconstruction of the period from 750 BCE onwards is derived from an analysis of poets, historians, playwrights and speech writers. The contexts in which these sources were performed and produced are thus aristocratic ones—the court and theatre. I would like to focus here on the sixth to fourth centuries, where a predominance of texts from Thucydides (a historian), Aristophanes (a playwright), Demosthenes (a speech writer), and Pindar and Bacchylides (poets) describe the use of symbols in the theatre, public assembly, court, athletic contest and private party. These texts show that the use of ostentatious materials in these Athenian contexts was made problematic for the elite class, by giving such items non-democratic values that did not correlate with prevailing egalitarian and communal ideals. It is here that Morris argues that the fifth century in Athens framed a shift from an emphasis on the individual elite to one on the group, or in this case, the *polis*. Accordingly, he interprets the apparent restraint exhibited in material items of wealth as the result of a social structure in which ‘the mass of citizens defined the evaluation of material culture’ (Morris 1992:148).

Morris (1992:1) relies heavily on mortuary material to provide an insight into the social dynamic on which his models are based, even arguing that ‘they [burials] can be used to augment the written record, giving us for the first time a dynamic account of social structure and how it changed in antiquity’. In this chapter I will follow this latter suggestion and also focus on mortuary data, but in doing so I will demonstrate that simply using the archaeological record to provide some sort of dynamic context for textually-generated models of ancient Greek culture seriously limits our understanding of the nature of Greek social structure.

THE MORTUARY RECORD

Kerameikos and Syndagma Square

Morris’s archaeological support comes from an analysis of two major cemeteries in ancient Athens: the Kerameikos (Figure 7.1; see Knigge 1988 for a bibliography of the extensive body of literature relating to this site) and the Syndagma Square (Charitonides 1958) burial plots. The Kerameikos cemetery was in use for a long period of time, from at least 1100 to 200 BCE, with later Roman re-use, and the Syndagma Square cemetery, part of a larger burial ground, was in use from at least 750 to 300 BCE. Monumental fashion in these cemeteries changed over time. In the sixth century, tombs were adorned with large *kouroi* (male statues) or *stelai* with sphinxes (Figure 7.2), or just topped with earthen mounds. But there was a change around 530 to 500 BCE. As early as 530 BCE the monuments became less ostentatious, moving from elaborate *stelai* to ones which

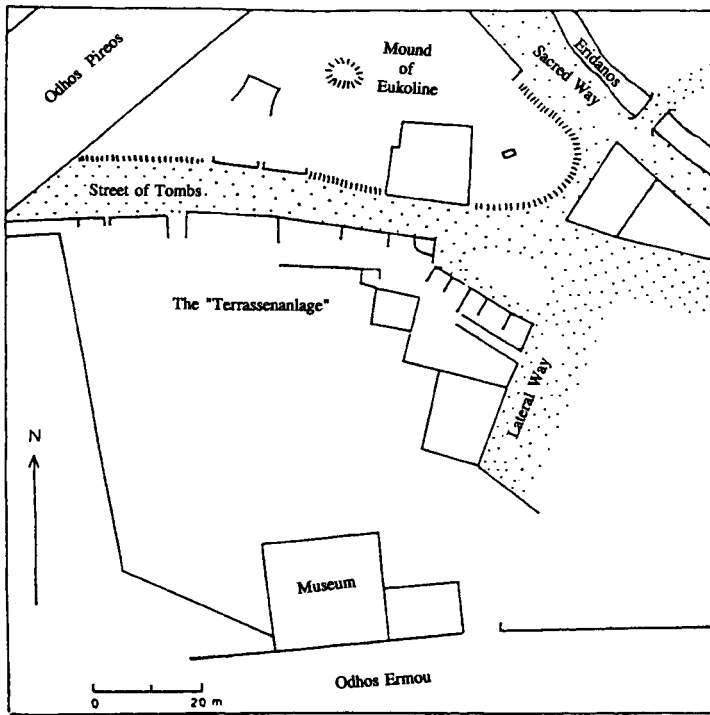


Figure 7.1 Plan of the Kerameikos cemetery in the late fourth century (after Garland 1982:127).

were shorter and topped with only palmettes. About 500 BCE the frequency of production of monuments also drops. With relatively minor exceptions, this plain style of tomb decoration remained in effect until *c.* 425 BCE when there was a resurgence in elaboration and output. From this period until 317 BCE the appearance of *periboloi* signalled a new concentration on the elaboration of graves (Figure 7.3). Perhaps fashioned after state funeral monuments, private *periboloi* consisted of plots that were marked by an enclosure wall. Individual burials within the *periboloi* were marked by *stelai*, *naiskoi* (columnar-framed reliefs), or elaborately carved stone *lekythoi* and *loutrophoroi* (both are types of religious vase). After the sumptuary legislation of 317 BCE, which limited the size of tomb monuments, there was an abrupt change in the form of grave markers, with either a *trapeza* (low table) or a *kioniskos* (short, plain column) (both much less elaborate than their earlier counterparts) now marking the grave.

Morris (1987, 1992) has used these notable changes in the monuments at Kerameikos as support for his argument that people turned away from the use of material culture to claim special status in these periods. But, as I will argue, such a correlation evades the necessity of an in-depth archaeological analysis of the context of the cemetery itself. Such an in-depth analysis actually challenges

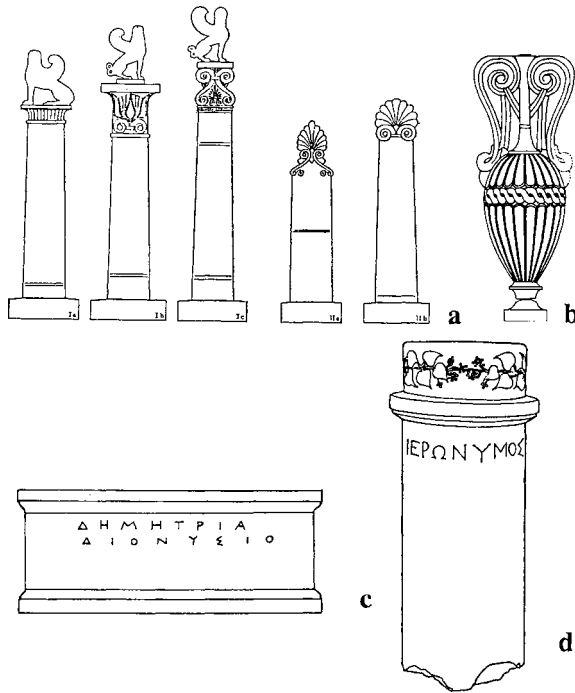


Figure 7.2 Athenian funerary monuments: (a) archaic and classical *stelai* (after Kurtz and Boardman 1971:85); (b) *lekythos* as tomb decoration; (c) *trapeza* (after Garland 1982:136); (d) *kioniskos* (after Kurtz and Boardman 1971:167).

many of the assumed correlations held by social historians, and points to a more sensitive reconstruction of Athenian community structure.

Nisky Hill cemetery

Unlike Leone's sources, fifth-century Athens does not supply enough independent textual data to allow us to determine possible social strategies within the cemetery context. Yet, because cemeteries continue to constitute active community contexts today, it is possible to use ethnoarchaeological research to postulate what strategies cemeteries, in general, might support. Therefore, to look at the internal structure of a cemetery like the Kerameikos, and observe how it correlates with different social strategies, I will turn to a current study of monumental change and the strategic use of burial contexts in a similar cemetery in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Like the Kerameikos, the Nisky Hill cemetery uses standing monuments to mark its graves, and has witnessed a change in monumental fashion from an elaborate early phase to the plain style which prevails today. With over 13,000 burials, the Nisky Hill cemetery encompasses approximately 10 hectares, located along the north side of the Lehigh River in Bethlehem, PA. The cemetery was established by

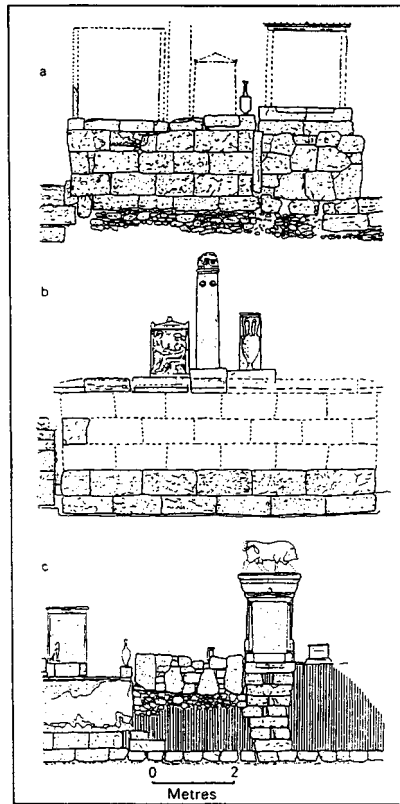


Figure 7.3 *Periboloi* from fourth-century Athens: (a) tomb of Makareus; (b) tomb of Dionysios of Lollytos; (c) tomb of Koroibos (after Morris 1992:130).

the Moravian church in 1849, with its first burial recorded in 1864, and is still in active use. Since the data set is so large, I will focus on only one section within the cemetery, section E. This section contains a wide variety of standing monuments, from simple ground flush headstones to large stones marking family plots. It contains 754 burials, with 653 standing monumental stones (100 burials are multiple, represented by a single stone). The earliest burial dates to 1871 and the latest to 1990. Although the bulk of present burial activity has moved to the newer eastern sections of the cemetery, section E is not closed, there still being room within plots for future interments.

During the past thirty years, the style of tomb decoration has changed from larger stones to smaller ones (Figure 7.4). In 1968 the Board of Trustees of Nisky Hill cemetery ruled that families had to mark new graves with either the ‘regulation marker’ (which was installed *c.* 7 cm above ground) or a flush marker, unless they were duplicating existing headstones within the same plot. Thus, change in monument elaboration over time in this section parallels similar changes

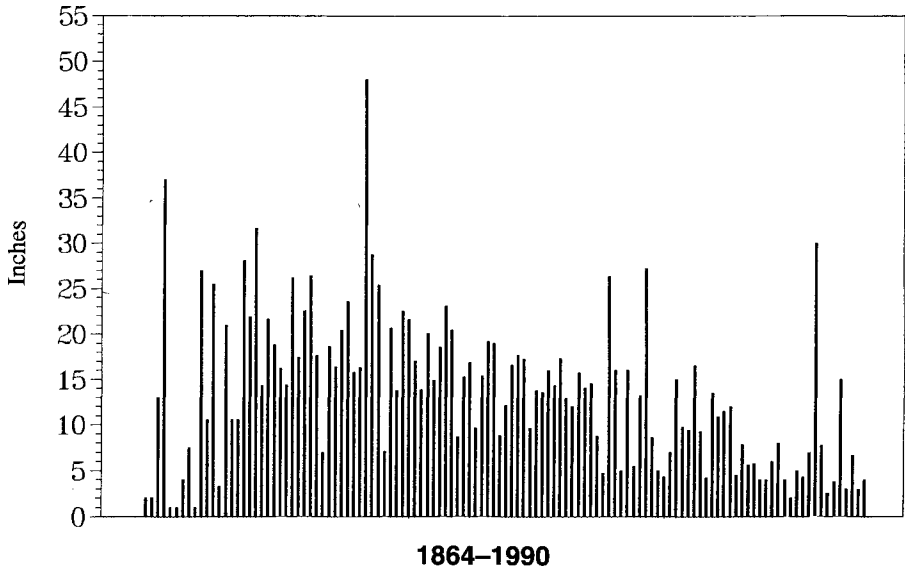


Figure 7.4 Average change in monument height over time in section E, Nisky Hill. Years with no monuments erected are not represented.

in ancient Athens, with smaller and less ostentatious cemetery markers becoming the norm within the last twenty to thirty years.

But does this mean that people have stopped using the cemetery to claim special status, as Morris argues for Athens? On the contrary, what an analysis of the cemetery demonstrates is that, because it is a standing monument cemetery, Nisky Hill supplies a dynamic context for status negotiation that begins with the erection of the stones, but continues in various forms after their erection. In section E, there are four principal means by which people can make status claims following the shift to non-elaborate head-stones: (1) the presentation of a visual distinction between elaborate family stones and most of the other stones within the cemetery; (2) burial by association with existing elaborate family stones; (3) the erection of older-style stones, rather than the newly-regulated types; and (4) cleaning.

CURRENT VISUAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL STONES

I have classified fifteen types of monument in section E which, for the purposes of the following discussion, I have divided into two large type families, based upon their most discriminating variable, height. Family stones mark the first group, for which we have twenty-one examples. A family stone is a marker which advertizes the family name (Figure 7.5), since it most often bears the name alone and it is seldom a grave marker. These stones are much larger than markers for individuals. Their dates range from 1888 to 1938.

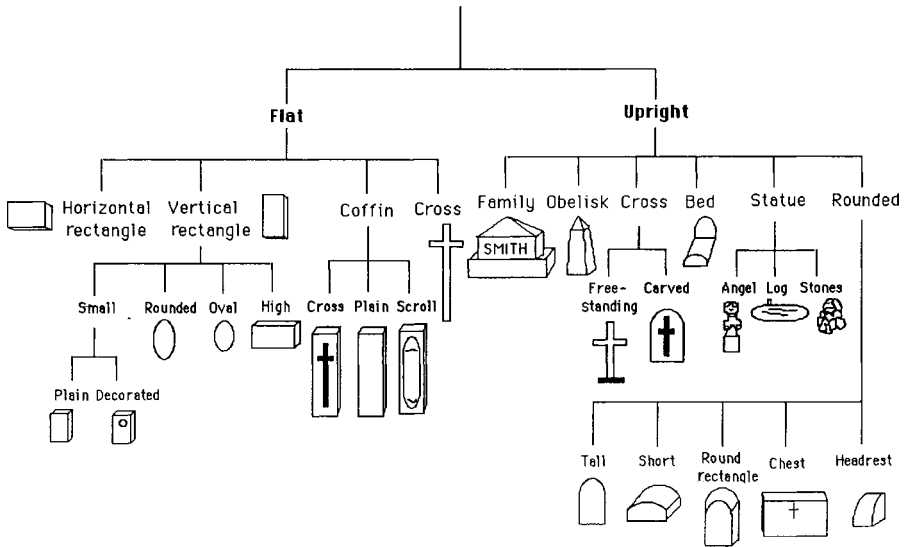


Figure 7.5 Typology of Nisky Hill monuments (devised by Donna Esposito).

Smaller individual markers comprise my second general type. These consist of both rectangular ground flush stones ranging in height from 0.3–0.6 m, with the name of the deceased on the top surface, and more vertical monuments with the deceased's name on the top or front. In terms of size the difference between these two types is noticeable, with the average individual marker around 0.38m and the family stones around 1.32m.

Although the last burial in section E was in 1990, the section continues to offer a context for status negotiation. As one walks along the footpaths, one is part of a context that continues to symbolically reinforce the importance of the twenty-one family graves over and above the individuals that they hold, or the other families in this section of the cemetery. The fact that fashions have changed and that newer stones are much less ostentatious than the older ones, adds an important distinguishing variable—date of erection. The scale of symbolic importance dramatically tips towards those who have larger family stones. The difference between these two general types marks the distinction between those who are already established in the cemetery and new families or individuals, who are now not allowed to erect ostentatious monuments, even though they might well be able to afford to do so.

DISTINCTION BY ASSOCIATION WITH FAMILY STONES

In the context of ongoing funeral activity, association with these family stones can be used to negotiate an elevated status for those buried subsequently, after the erection of many of these monuments. Those people participating in a burial service taking place in a plot containing an elaborate family stone can associate

themselves with the dominance of the family marker rather than the subordinate character of the smaller stones, even when the new burial is marked by a modern small stone. There have been six burials within family stone plots since 1968, five in plot 12+13 (Graham) and one in plot 140 (Cole).

DISTINCTION BY ERECTION OF NON-REGULATION STONES

Families may choose to duplicate pre-1968 elaborate stones, rather than opting for the new cemetery regulations, if there is an elaborate marker within the family plot that dates from before 1968. Therefore, some families can use post-1968 burials to make connections with the older, more elaborate stones rather than the more recent ones. In thirty-four instances where family members have had this option, i.e. there was a pre-1968 elaborate stone marker on the plot, they chose to set a more elaborate stone in fifteen cases.

DISTINCTION BY CLEANING

This mode of distinction is somewhat different, because it is based upon later treatment of the monuments. A constant problem with the monuments has been discoloration and decay as a result of acid pollution from the Bethlehem Steel Mills. However, when stones are cleaned they stand out against uncleaned stone, and draw the passer-by's attention. Cleaning highlights selected individuals and families in the same manner as height, but it also differs in that it is an operation which takes place after interment. Cleaning, therefore, can be used by relatives to distinguish their monuments from those which have been dulled by air pollution. There are thirty-three stones that have been cleaned in section E. Most contracts for cleaning in Nisky Hill specify that the stones are to be cleaned on a regular basis, ranging from once a year to every five years. The earliest cleaning contract was signed in 1931 and the last in 1992. In some cases the monuments were not cleaned by later family members until, as in the case of the three families in plot 100, eighty-one years after the stones were erected. In this case, section E therefore continued as a context of potential status negotiation for at least three generations after the setting of the markers.

In summary, section E at Nisky Hill demonstrates the active character of a standing monument cemetery, with at least four possible distinctions that groups and individuals can use to make elevated status claims: distinction established by the presence of large family stones, distinction established by erection and association with large monuments, distinction established by erecting non-regulation markers, and distinction established by cleaning stones.

A contextual operation

An important observation gained from this study of the Nisky Hill cemetery is

that even though such a cemetery sees a movement towards more restrained monuments, the context of the cemetery continues to allow for the negotiation of position, even by those who are now prevented from erecting ostentatious stones. The effect of the sumptuary ruling of 1968 was not a denial of negotiation to those who would erect fancy stones, but a crystallization of a new distinction in modes of negotiation, i.e., between those who have already erected ostentatious markers and those who would have done so, but are now prevented.

An Athenian comparison

Because the Kerameikos was a standing monument cemetery, like Nisky Hill, as a social context it also offered opportunities for continued status negotiation, even after a dynamic shift to smaller stones. A good example comes from the fourth century. By legislation, after 317 BCE almost all burials in the Kerameikos were limited to *kioniskoi* and *trapezai*, whose visual profile was not as high as earlier monuments. In many ways then the Kerameikos cemetery at this period would have resembled Nisky Hill. First, with new burials limited to less obvious monuments, the older monuments would, due to their height and elaboration, have attributed a dominant position to families who had buried their dead with elaborate markers prior to 317 BCE. Second, the position of monuments was very important in the Kerameikos. Most of the elaborate *periboloi* were positioned at the edge of an elevated terrace, close to, or at the very lip of, the road that led into the city gate. Because that space was essentially occupied by 317 BCE, later markers were relegated to areas that were not as visible from the entrance road, such as the upper southern terrace. Again, the cemetery context, like that of Nisky Hill, meant that families who were able to erect monuments before the legislation achieved a significant advantage, in terms of display and status negotiation. The opposition here is between those who have been able to use this context for status display and newcomers, who were essentially denied access.

Like the study of Nisky Hill, the Kerameikos cemetery also demonstrates that people could actively use elaborate monuments for public statements, even after their erection was prohibited. There are two lines of evidence. The first is the continued burial in existing elaborate *periboloi* after 317 BCE. This operation would have tended to reinforce the distinction that had already been marked by size and position. Six *periboloi* were positioned on the edge of the street leading to the city gate, and all but one were probably elaborately decorated. These six saw continued use after 317 BCE. The second point of similarity is post-burial monument decoration, which seems to parallel the modern use of stone cleaning in Nisky Hill. Although we have no direct archaeological evidence of post-317 BCE attention to the earlier tombs, analysis of the Athenian custom of tomb visitation and commemoration of the dead indicates that these tombs must have received periodic decoration and visitation after 317 BCE. For several years after the act of burial, *stelai* were often anointed with oil and decorated with a variety of objects ranging from the unusual lyre and discus to the more common

taenia or ribbon. The Greeks also held frequent celebrations for their dead within cemeteries and used them to the fullest extent.

To summarize, the Kerameikos incorporates the same fundamental features as seen in section E from Nisky Hill: continued use of the cemetery for negotiation of position between groups in the community, and a shift to a distinction between already established positions and those denied the ability to establish comparable positions—a shift engendered by changes in monument elaboration. Topographical and cultural differences have shaped the ways in which families might take advantage of the opportunities provided. In both American and Athenian contexts families continued to use distinguished plots for burial after the change to less ostentatious tombstones. Yet, an important difference between the two cemeteries is that families in Bethlehem had the opportunity to duplicate existing elaborate markers, while the Athenian legislation of 317 BCE specifically prohibited this option. Position is not such an important distinguishing variable in section E at Nisky Hill, because all monuments can be readily seen from the footpaths. But it was important in the Kerameikos, where tombs on the upper southern terrace were not easily seen from road level as one approached the city gate. Cultural differences also created further distinctions. People in Bethlehem do not have as extensive a tradition of tomb decoration as the ancient Athenians. For families with relatives in section E stone cleaning presents a more useful method to distinguish monuments after erection.

THE CONTEXT OF THE CEMETERY AND SOCIAL HISTORIANS/ARCHAEOLOGISTS' MODELS

As noted above, the current analytical trend involving the combined use of texts and archaeological evidence has resulted in the interpretation of material changes from ostentatious to less elaborate tombs in the Kerameikos cemetery around the turn of the sixth century in terms of a text-based model focusing on the dynamics of a commons-imposed self-effacement in display among the elite. However, analysis of the operational features of this type of cemetery as a community context suggests an alternative interpretation.

There is little remaining *in situ* of the Kerameikos in the period from c. 530–480 BCE. Much of the monumental stone was re-used in the construction of the Themistoklean wall (c. 478–477 BCE). But despite this, one may with some measure of confidence assume that before the removal of these stones the Kerameikos was a cemetery that was punctuated with many elaborate monuments from the late Archaic period that stood out in contrast to the newer, smaller classical *stelai*. In a real sense, the structure of this context must have been very much the same as that observed for the late fourth century BCE. Despite current assumptions, changes in monumental display, therefore, do not indicate there was a decline in the use of material culture to claim special status, but that the cemetery was now a context in which those who were not already

established in the use of the cemetery for status negotiation were denied that opportunity. The cemetery was thus a tool within a larger social strategy in which established families (through their previous adoption of symbols) could deny others the use of this context for the negotiation of social status. The cemetery was a context where people could claim special status, but now the fulcrum in the display contest had shifted from one based on ability to one based on former use of the cemetery.

DISCUSSION

Current approaches to the combined use of archaeological and textual evidence in classical archaeology can miss important social strategies contained within different contexts, due to the assumption that archaeological contexts can be used to observe and confirm the social strategies recorded in ethnohistoric texts. As the case of Athenian cemeteries has shown, this is not necessarily the case. Furthermore, linking archaeology to texts in the current classical archaeological manner severely impoverishes our understanding of the larger picture of ancient society. What the contextual analysis of this Athenian cemetery reveals is an important ambiguity between the archaeological and textual record. Following Leone and Potter, the next question which should be asked is why expectations that come from an analysis of texts (which emanated from athletic contests, private elite gatherings, the theatre and the law courts) are not met in the cemetery context. What the comparison of this textually generated social structure and the mortuary archaeological record really shows is not a dynamic of commons-generated restraint in display placed upon the elite, but a strategic shift in the opportunities available to groups in their use of cemeteries in Athens for social negotiation. Thus, a key aspect of the structure of Athenian society is that some contexts were only weakly correlated with others.

The social historians' approach to understanding Athenian societies is far too narrowly focused. To create a more complete model of Athenian community structure and operation, research must proceed with several in-depth analyses of different community contexts. The relationship between these contexts cannot be assumed to be as direct as currently held. The analysis of this cemetery underscores an important disjunction that must lie at the heart of any reconstruction of ancient Athenian society. While one may be able to determine a commons-generated restraint in display in some community contexts, there was also another strategy in play within the cemetery: a denial of opportunity for status negotiation to families yet to use the cemetery. It can hardly be argued that the agents of change in all these contexts were the commons. What must be considered is a model of mixed social strategies, with a wide variety of social agents, who used different contexts in different ways.

CONCLUSION

Classical archaeology, as historical archaeology in general, needs to re-examine its assumptions concerning the correlation of textual and archaeological records. Currently, those practitioners referring to themselves as ‘social historians/ archaeologists’ claim that their models can only be generated by texts, and that the archaeological record does not offer independent evidence for understanding ancient social structure. Yet, in doing so, they impoverish the future study of the Mediterranean past, and in the particular case of the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens they have missed evidence of continued social negotiation between competing groups.

Greece, however, is not colonial North America and can never provide as detailed a textual record. For example, documentation as rich as Leone’s eighteenth-century garden texts is rare, if present at all. Work here, however, has demonstrated that, rather than texts, ethnoarchaeology can provide some important basic insights into the operational features of specific contexts like a standing monument cemetery. For past cultures with similar textual records (e.g. the Maya), this avenue may be the only one open for the effective investigation of the past through archaeological and textual evidence.

NOTE

- 1 BCE (Before the Common Era) is here used in place of BC (Before Christ) as a theologically neutral term for denoting this period. Such terminology is in keeping with a significant body of recent literature, particularly that arising from the field of Jewish studies.

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8 *The imperial context of Romano-British studies and proposals for a new understanding of social change*

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colonial discourse is neither a monolithic system nor a finite set of texts; it may more accurately be described as the name for a series of colonizing discourses, each adapted to a specific historical situation, yet having in common certain elements with the others. This series is marked by internal repetition, but not by all-encompassing totality; it is a series that continues, in some forms, through what we call the postcolonial world of today.

(Spurr 1993:1–2)

In this chapter I provide an account of the context of the theory of ‘Romanization’ as it developed in Britain during the twentieth century. I also develop a critique of the dominant explanation for changes in Romano-British society and material culture through time and review the potential for developing an alternative perspective based on a more complex interpretation of human behaviour.

THE IMPERIAL CONTEXT OF THE THEORY OF ROMANIZATION

The dominant perspective in Romano-British studies visualizes change through time—‘Romanization’—as directional and progressive. It is the process by which native social groups in Roman Britain became progressively more ‘Roman’. The assumption that natives wished to become Roman, or more Roman, is argued to be the motivation behind the gradual transformation of material culture in the province from native to Romano-British throughout the three and a half centuries of Roman rule (from AD 43 to AD 410).

When studying the Roman Empire, it is necessary, however, to consider the social context of our knowledge (Lawrence 1994; Hingley 1995, 1996). As Bernal has succinctly stated:

Classics has incorporated social and cultural patterns in society as a whole and has reflected them back, to provide powerful support for the notion of Europe possessing a categorical superiority over all other continents, which in turn justifies imperialism or neocolonialism as *missions civilisatrices*.

(Bernal 1994:119)

Following from the work of Said and others on imperialist discourse in English and French literature, and Spurr's suggestions concerning the study of non-fictional writing, we require a critical review of the literature produced by those who have created the modern disciplines of classical studies and, in particular, Romano-British archaeology (Said 1978, 1993; Ashcroft *et al.* 1989; Spurr 1993; Tiffin and Lawson 1994).

Despite its decline and fall, Rome has remained a powerful image. For the kings and emperors of medieval Europe the Roman Empire was symbolic of lost power, unity and peace (Yates 1975). In the British context, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the parallel between the empires of Britain and Rome was reinvented and redefined. Classical studies were a vital element in public school education (Cross 1968:35; Betts 1971; Bowler 1989:44) and classical ideals comprised one important element in the complex network of Victorian and Edwardian thought (Harris 1993). During the nineteenth century, Hellenistic concepts were often used to help define a range of political concepts, social activities and building styles (Turner 1981, 1989). A rival image also existed, identifying the rise and fall of Rome as a recurring reference point for British virtue, the British Empire and future British decline (Hynes 1968:24–7; Harris 1993:247–8). This Roman image was important not only to the Old Etonians who dominated parliament but also to imperial administrators and school teachers (Betts 1971:158; Harris 1993:247–8) and it became increasingly significant during the early years of the twentieth century (Turner 1989:75).

At this time, a particular concern over the future of the British Empire and the moral content of the British attitude towards their supposed 'civilizing mission' resulted in the drawing of a close association by some members of the British intellectual and administrative elite between the empires of Britain and Rome. In addition, in the words of Francis Haverfield, it was felt that, 'had Rome failed to civilize, had the civilized life found no period in which to grow firm and tenacious, civilization would have perished utterly. The culture of the old world would not have lived on, to form the ground-work of the best culture of to-day' (Haverfield [1905] 1915:11).

A number of the imperial administrators, politicians and educationalists of the final decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of this century—including Winston Churchill, Lord Cromer, Lord Bryce, C.P. Lucas, E.E.Mills, J.C.Stobart and R.S.S.Baden-Powell—drew a particular parallel between the imperial experiences of Britain and Rome. Some of these authors argued that the moral purpose of the British was to bring progress and liberty to peoples in the colonies of its empire, and several also considered that Rome had

fulfilled a similar moral purpose in regard to its own empire (Hingley 1995, 1996).

Some of these Edwardians came to draw upon Rome as a means of helping to identify and define Britain's imperial purpose (Hingley 1995). A number of authors, in comparing the empires of western nations with the Roman Empire, observed that the Romans excelled in comparison to the British in what, according to Raymond Betts, might be termed in modern parlance 'race relations' (Betts 1971). Native people were felt to have been incorporated effectively into the Roman state and to have become fully Roman in manners and thought. Francis Haverfield's *The Romanization of Roman Britain* is particularly significant in this respect. First published as a lecture to the British Academy in 1905 and later expanded and republished as a book which went through several reprints, Haverfield's argument was that the process of Romanization was gradual but progressive, and that it incorporated the whole spectrum; by adopting Roman pottery even the poor were identifying themselves with Rome.¹ It was also argued that Romanization was a positive force for good; in Haverfield's terms 'the men of the Empire wrought for the betterment and the happiness of the world' (Haverfield [1905] 1915:10).

Haverfield's 1911 lecture to the Roman Society goes beyond his works on Romanization to suggest that the lesson of Rome's success in civilizing barbarians was one which the British should take seriously in a consideration of how to improve the management of the natives within their own empire (Haverfield 1911:xviii). The drawing of this moral at the time of Britain's imperial grandeur evidently provided some justification for the academic study of the process of incorporation of native societies into the Roman Empire (Haverfield 1911; Hingley 1995, 1996).

Other works about Roman Britain that have been published during the seventy years since the publication of *The Romanization of Roman Britain* have adopted a similar perspective to the process of social change. For instance Rivet states that 'though the people of Britain at the time of its absorption into the Roman Empire were not naked savages, neither were they in any way the equals of their conquerors.... Man was the suppliant, not yet the master, of nature' (Rivet 1970:33). Welch has written that:

With Roman order had come at first a kind of liberation, an increase in individual freedom and security of person.... [W]ith this imposed order, with this novel safety of person and property, had come a stable agriculture, a lucrative commerce, an unimagined ease of movement and social mobility, educational opportunity resulting in widespread literacy.... [A] welcome heritage of literature, art, and architecture, a sense of pride in being part of the broad stream of civilization.

(Welch 1965:260–1)

In many accounts terms such as 'progress', 'civilization' and 'advancement' are used to describe the impact of Rome on native societies (Hingley 1995:17).

Over the last fifteen years the work of a new generation of scholars, who have been educated during and since the decline of Britain's own empire, has produced new approaches to Roman Britain. Romanization is usually no longer seen as a form of moral and social progress, but more in the light of development, or acculturation, by which native society readily adopted 'Roman' culture (Slofstra 1983; Millett 1990a, 1990b; Jones 1991; Wolf 1992; Freeman 1993; Hanson 1994). In these recent studies it is argued that native society adopted new ideas and made use of them in changing circumstances.

In many of these accounts, however, the role of native society in the process of social change would still appear rather passive. In particular, Freeman has argued that Millett's recent account of Romanization (1990a) contains the same basic logic as Haverfield's (Freeman 1993). According to Millett (1990b:35), the elite of the western provinces adopted Roman material symbols to reinforce their social position by identifying themselves with Rome.² These new ideas and objects then passed down the social hierarchy through a process of emulation. 'Progressive emulation of this symbolism further down the social hierarchy was self-generating, encouraging others within society to aspire to things Roman, thereby spreading the culture' (Millett 1990b:38). Through this process a range of types of Roman material culture—from towns and country houses to coinage, pottery and brooches—spread through society, together with new beliefs, language and attitudes (Millett 1990a).

In both Millett's and Haverfield's accounts of Romanization all groups—or all important groups—are argued to have positively acted to become Roman and this is how new ideas and materials spread (see Hingley 1995; and 1997 for a fuller discussion). In Haverfield's study this is a result of a natural wish on the part of the natives to become Roman. In Millett's account the whole motivation is derived from the desire to express prestige by drawing upon meaningful new ideas and objects.

Evidently many Roman specialists are aware that not all within the province were involved to the same degree in this process. Slaves and the very poor are not usually considered in any detail in accounts of Roman Britain and the un-Roman natives of northern Britain, Wales and south-western England are separated off from discussion as marginal economic and social failures.

The idea that every individual within the south of the province—whatever his or her rank, power, status, age or gender—aspired to be Roman and adopted the same way of expressing this Roman identity appears to be unrealistic in the context of recent writings about change in colonial situations. It is possible that the Roman administration actively encouraged the tribal elite to adopt Roman education (Garnsey 1978), as the British were later to do with native elites within their own empire. Some ideas might have percolated down from the tribal elite to members of the tribe. However, for the non-elite we are burdened in Roman studies with concepts of progress which many contemporary post-colonial writers consider spurious (for instance Fabian 1983; McClintock 1993;

Said 1993; Thomas 1994). In the context of Romano-British studies these ideas are partly derived from the context of academic study and the framework of Britain's own imperial history, which makes it difficult for the British to look at the Roman imperial presence in anything but a positive light. Many in other disciplines now consider this type of view ridiculous in relation to our own empire, but we do not appear to have conducted the required radical re-think in Romano-British studies, which have yet to escape a distinctly progressive and pro-imperial perspective (Hingley 1991, 1995). There is little sign in recent published works of progress towards a more critical approach to Romano-British studies (Hingley 1995, 1996).

It is significant to anyone who wishes to take a different look at the evidence that this progressive and pro-Roman way of understanding our Roman past has, to an extent, created the information that we have available for study (Hingley 1989:3–5; 1991; Jones 1997). As Jones (1997) has shown, the ways that we have collected our data are predicated upon certain beliefs and assumptions which have distorted the information and make it very difficult to reinterpret it in different ways. The methods by which artefacts are collected and analysed are based on assumptions that similar styles are of the same date while dissimilar styles differ in date. This approach stresses homogeneity and ignores variability (Jones 1997:106–8; see also Rippengal 1995).

In addition, excavation has been concentrated on the administrative buildings of the province, the works of the army and the homes of the rich (Hingley 1991: Figure 1). Perhaps the poor and the relatively powerless might have subtly resisted Rome, but how can we challenge the progressive model of Romanization outlined by Haverfield, Millett and others if we only rarely excavate their homes (Hingley 1991, 1997)? Such a research strategy will be particularly problematic if acts of resistance to Rome drew on material symbols that did not originate in the context of the development of Roman control over the new province; these acts may sometimes have drawn on concepts of identity which related to the past.

To summarize, the dominant explanation for change—Romanization—is a product of ideas that derived from moral concepts of progress in the world of Britain's own empire. Although attempting to adopt a post-colonial perspective on change, recent scholars have viewed native society as constraining or modifying 'Roman' material culture. Concepts were adopted or adapted to fit native needs. This suggests that in the process of change the wide range of individuals who made up Romano-British society all acted in the same way. The progressive perspective in effect attributes a pro-Roman sentiment to all in Roman Britain, although some had less purchasing power or ability to achieve their ambitions. Current discussions of the process termed Romanization remain predicated on the assumption of linear progress from simple to complex. This is based on the idea of gradual, cumulative and directional change from 'native' to 'Roman' modes of existence. Rome and Rome's influence are assumed to have been both more advanced and more

progressive, and consequently the more advanced and progressive natives adopted more of it. Recent works on contemporary communities indicate that this type of view is derived from the assumption that there is only one correct way to behave, that there is a linear progress from primitive society to the modern world (Fabian 1983), and that in the procession of differing societies through time Rome was close to the ultimate ideal. In my opinion these views are based on an incorrect premise and it is time that they were effectively challenged and replaced. A more critical reading of the archaeological evidence can be taken to suggest that we require rather more subtle interpretations for our evidence and it is to these approaches that the remainder of this chapter will turn.

PROPOSALS FOR A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Where does this leave the study of Romano-British material culture and the process of culture change in the province? If we assume that the nature of study has been partly determined by its context within the society in which it developed, the potential of critical analysis becomes apparent (Hingley 1995, 1996). This is not to say that we should redesign our interpretative models for the Roman Empire to fit so called 'post-colonial'³ critiques of the nature and influence of any particular Western Empire; there is and was no single and consistent colonial culture (Spurr 1993; Thomas 1994). Works of 'postcolonial' analysis may nevertheless enable us to view and consider the perspectives which created recent study and to suggest new lines of research.

De-centring approaches

Recent works illustrate the variety of differing views of the colonial or imperial situation on the part of both native peoples and members of the colonizing powers. They have also illustrated the primacy granted in colonial discourse to the views of the dominant imperial powers (for instance, Fanon 1963; Said 1978, 1993; Fabian 1983; Ashcroft *et al.* 1989; Spivak 1993; Tiffin and Lawson 1994). The agenda of much recent writing is to establish alternative images of the colonial situation; images which differ from those produced by the dominant societies.

The dominant approaches to Romano-British archaeology have created a reification of the concept 'Roman'. They suggest that the idea of Romanization had some actual concrete and material existence in relation to the conquest and control of Roman Britain. These approaches also suggest that there is such a phenomenon as 'Roman' material culture (Freeman 1993). In fact many material items which are taken to indicate 'Romanization' are not items derived from Rome but from other areas of the empire. This is true, for example, in the case of pottery produced in Roman Gaul (including samian) and fine wares from Roman Britain. In addition, elements that are

titled 'Roman' can be seen to differ in nature, context and meaning across the empire, as in the case of the villa and public buildings such as the forum or amphitheatre.

These approaches also attribute a distinct practical value to these new (so-called 'Roman') items of material culture which denigrates native culture. For instance, Freeman's suggestion (1993:444) that new wheelmade pottery types were adopted by natives because of their technological superiority to native wares ignores the fact that many so-called 'Roman' pot types were derived at least partly from native prototypes. Furthermore, wheelmade pots were not necessarily seen as Roman by native individuals. Such approaches also ignore the active role of native society in defining the function, value and role of its own possessions (see Rubertone 1994:37 for a comparable situation). New concepts and objects may, in certain situations, have been more convenient, more powerful, or more accessible, but individuals within society negotiate and resist certain representations of superiority/inferiority and set up counter-arguments (see Jones 1997). Thus, within a limited set of ideas and experiences, they partly define their own concepts of superiority, as they relate to items such as the form and function of a particular pot, or the image of a particular building type. Perhaps it is not useful to suggest that a specific pot type is preferable in a particular cultural situation without a more detailed analysis of the reasons for the apparent preference.

A de-centred study of the Roman Empire should consider the differing ways in which ideas and concepts, both old and new, were utilized within *civitates*, provinces and across the empire. We should not assume that one standard 'Roman' image developed. There was no unified Roman material culture package (Freeman 1993) and the concept 'Roman' is not a secure category upon which to base analysis of change.

Complexity of response and opposition

Certain recent works of sociological, anthropological and archaeological theory suggest that the process of change in many societies is far more complex than existing models for Romanization would suggest. For instance, we should actively consider opposition to new methods of control (see chapters in McGuire and Paynter 1991 and Layton 1994). Scholars who study the Roman Empire usually argue that once new provinces had been conquered and pacified, opposition to Roman control was rare and usually small-scale. This certainly is, on the whole, the impression that classical literary sources leave in our minds. Apart from certain revolts, usually early in their history (Dyson 1975), provinces are considered to have usually settled down into peaceful pro-Roman territories. The difficulty in believing this view is that the Roman literary sources are written from a particular viewpoint (or range of associated views) and that we do not on the whole have the opinions of those subjected to Roman imperialism. Pre-Roman society in Britain, as over most of the rest of the Western Empire, was not

literate. Those within Roman Britain who were able to produce written texts that survive to the present day, by commissioning inscriptions or writing on tablets, are also likely to be people who benefited directly from the empire.

Paynter and McGuire (1991) have argued, in a review of studies of colonial contact in America, that not all forms of opposition need to be overt. These authors have outlined a programme of research involving the analysis of domination and resistance that appears particularly attractive. The basis of my argument is that, as with the relationship of native American Indians and imported African slaves to westerners, resistance in Roman Britain, even though it is not expressed in literature, may sometimes have been created or reflected through the media of behaviour and material culture.

Where is the evidence to indicate that there was active resistance to the process of change through the creation of material culture? I have already argued that the ways in which we have collected our information have militated against the collection of evidence for resistance or opposition. However, there is another problem. Our very definitions of wealth and poverty are based on the deterministic, progressive approach to Romanization, which is in turn based on assumptions about our own society. As I have attempted to show in *Rural Settlement in Roman Britain* (Hingley 1989), not all wealthy households chose the villa to symbolize control of surplus wealth. There may be other less overt, less archaeologically obvious or more traditional ways in which power was manifest, such as control of cattle, feasting or ritual (Hingley 1989; see also Rippengal 1995). Many of these options have not been examined by archaeologists studying Roman Britain.

We need to think about other concepts that we use freely. Although local folk memory can be long-lived, the concept of what was 'Roman' and what was 'native' will have varied throughout society at the time of the conquest; concepts of folk identity will not have been homogeneous or standardized. In addition, such ideas will have changed dramatically over much of the province between AD 43 and AD 410. It is not necessary that resistance to attempts by the elite to extend control always involved the use of native (i.e. pre-Roman) material symbols (Hingley 1997). In fact both of the concepts—'Roman' and 'native'—require a broad critical evaluation (Hingley 1997; Jones 1997).

Most individuals within society are able to dominate someone else and all individuals are also dominated by someone. Therefore, the native tribal elite will not only be adopting new concepts in order to symbolize their relations with those who they dominate or wish to dominate; they may be reacting in opposition to others by whom they are dominated. Likewise, even the poor may wish to demonstrate their power over others by adopting new ideas and materials. We should not replace a simple model, by which material culture spread throughout society through emulation, with one in which the creation and adoption of material culture by the non-elite was simply the result of opposition to the pro-Roman rulers. We may actually expect the situation to be far more complex, with emulation and opposition working in a complex and variable manner.

A realistic archaeology of Roman Britain might, therefore, accept the theory that individuals and communities actively manipulated a wide range of symbols and ideas to create or maintain control of power relations; but at the same time counter it with a second theory, that dominated individuals and communities reacted to attempts to dominate them through acts of opposition which may often have had material correlates. There are now a number of studies coming to publication that address aspects of social control and resistance; these accounts provide more complex interpretations of social change that are in line with the suggestions made in this chapter. Jane Webster's (1995a) study of religion and epigraphy in northern Roman Britain provides one example and Robert Rippengal has produced a detailed analysis of the use of social space, ceramics and animals on two sites in southern Britain (Rippengal 1995). The present author's analysis of social control and Romano-British urbanism provides one further relevant case study (Hingley 1997).

A CASE STUDY: THE ROUNDHOUSE

The persistence of the building of circular houses in Roman Britain provides a case study of the concerns that have been raised in this chapter. The typical pre-Roman house type in Britain is circular and usually timber and thatch in construction (Cunliffe 1991:268, 293–4). The roundhouse constitutes a long-lived and strong cultural tradition in the British Iron Age. Although some rectangular houses were constructed during the Iron Age, the roundhouse appears to have been much more common. During the Roman period rectangular houses start to be constructed over much of Britain (Hingley 1989:35–54), although circular plan houses were still common at least during the first century of Roman rule (Hingley 1989:31). The idea of the rectangular house may have been introduced to much of Britain by the Roman army (which almost invariably built in straight lines) and by settlers from other areas of the empire.

It is simple to explain, using the conventional model for Romanization discussed above, the process by which roundhouses are replaced by rectangular examples during the course of the Roman occupation. The elite saw the value of using a rectangular house and adopted the form as a symbol of their power and authority, thereby associating themselves with the dominant power of Rome. In this argument, the idea of the rectangular house then spread across most of the province through emulation, until nearly all lived in rectangular houses. As a result of this framework, roundhouses have only been excavated on occasions, as they have been seen as out of date and irrelevant to the writing of an account of the history and archaeology of Roman Britain.

However, despite the scarcity of excavation, it is evident that in some areas of the southern part of Britain roundhouses continued to be constructed into the fourth century AD and not all the sites on which roundhouses were constructed were low in status (Hingley 1989). It cannot therefore be assumed

that the poorest groups in society always retained the traditional form of domestic dwelling. In the area of the modern county of Northamptonshire substantial examples of stone built roundhouses exist which may represent the homes of families with some access to wealth. It is possible that in this area some relatively wealthy families continued to build in the traditional architectural form well into the Roman period, but using new materials and building techniques (Hingley 1989; Keevill and Booth 1997). Furthermore, it should be noted that the circular building form remained dominant in areas of northern and western Britain, the military areas of the province where the natives appear to have been less influenced by the Roman administration.

What does the continuing construction of circular buildings across much of the Roman province into the later Roman period signify? Did the households which built these houses deliberately draw upon a long tradition of native domestic architecture in order to identify their place in the world? If so, was this statement a subtle rejection of Roman values as well as of Roman building forms (e.g. Rippengal's study of Bancroft, Buckinghamshire 1995)? Or, as Keevill and Booth (1997) have suggested, were wealthy villa owners in some areas (e.g. Oxfordshire) building roundhouses in order to make a statement about their power over others? In this latter case, the elite may actually have been using native material forms to symbolize the dependent and inferior status of their own kin, or estate workers, who were compelled to live in the roundhouses. If this suggestion is correct, rather than representing resistance, roundhouses may have provided a graphic example of relations of power.

The situation is likely to have been complex and variable, and it is unlikely that roundhouses all represent the same set of past circumstances and beliefs (Keevil and Booth 1997). Members of the elite may often have adopted the rectangular building form, but circular houses were not only inhabited by the poor and the powerless. The limited number of excavations that have been carried out on Roman period roundhouses indicate that some were elaborate and complex structures and this may suggest that the retention of traditional symbols may, to some extent, have remained a matter of choice on the part of builders/occupiers. The simplistic approaches to Romanization which have been criticized in this chapter are to some extent self-fulfilling, since they preclude the investigation of alternative explanations. Instead, we require more imaginative accounts of Roman Britain.

Whether roundhouses may sometimes represent native opposition to the process of social change is not clear and further research is required. It is evident from this example, however, that Roman concepts did not spread evenly throughout society and that some native concepts remained.

CONCLUSIONS

We require less deterministic models for change in Romano-British material culture and society. Above all, we should make every attempt not to force our

own presuppositions onto the study of others. Here, I have outlined the sort of interpretations of uniform and progressive assimilation that have dominated Roman archaeology. These accounts are oversimplistic and fail to portray the complexity of the archaeological evidence which is now becoming available.

Evidently, different individuals had varying choices available to them in responding to the imperial situation. Conquest offered new opportunities to some of the elite for domination and social control, but may have provided a threat to the liberty and security of some agricultural producers. Conversely, some of the elite may at times have felt threatened by changes in society, and the Roman army certainly provided a way out of agricultural drudgery for some native males. We cannot expect the total native population to have reacted in the same ways to the Roman conquest of Britain. The processes of change will have involved the complex and continuous interaction of varying influences. We need to consider change and continuity against a background of differences in power, wealth, age, gender, identity and geography.

We also need to rid ourselves of the assumption that 'Roman' material culture was technologically superior to that which was in use before the conquest. I have suggested that, in certain situations, new concepts and objects may have been more convenient, more powerful, or more accessible, but individuals within society have an ability to resist certain representations of superiority by establishing counter-measures; change will not have been simple and directional.

A more subtle understanding of what old and new ideas meant to the whole range of people within society is needed. It would appear that the required alternative voices are at last beginning to develop in Romano-British studies (e.g. Rippengal 1995; Webster 1995a, 1995b; Jones 1997), but these studies perhaps remain fairly peripheral to mainstream Roman research.

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NOTES

- 1 Haverfield addresses the plight of the poor in Romano-British society, although the archaeological evidence available in Edwardian times was very scarce. He states, for instance, that 'The rustic poor of a country seldom affect the trend of its history' (Haverfield [1905] 1915:22). He argues, however, that even the poor appear to

- have adopted the trappings of Roman culture. Whilst native settlements in North Wales and on Cranborne Chase may remain primarily non-Roman in appearance, these people swiftly adopted Roman pottery and other items of personal decoration (Haverfield [1905] 1915:45–7). In addition, ‘when he adopted, and adopted permanently, the use of things Roman, we may say of him, firstly, that he had become civilized enough to realise their value, and further, that he had ceased to bear any national hatred against them’ (Haverfield [1905] 1915:20).
- 2 With respect to the elite, this model for change appears to provide a very useful explanation in the context of contemporary theories about the political structure of the Roman Empire. The provincial administration took over the pre-existing native ‘tribal’ organization wherever possible to form the building blocks of the new province, and utilized the native elite to run these new civitates, to collect taxes and to run the tribal council (Garnsey 1978; Garnsey and Saller 1987). Whether the model is so useful for non-elite groups within society requires further study (see Hingley 1995, 1996).
 - 3 The use of the concept ‘post-colonial’ can be criticized because these approaches have been developed in a world which is not genuinely post-colonial (e.g. McClintock 1993). Whilst accepting this point, I would argue that Roman archaeology has not been subject to a broad critical evaluation and that post-colonial writing provides an appropriate context for this review.

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9 *Class and rubbish*

DUNCAN H. BROWN

Archaeologists find rubbish. The animal bones and broken vessels recovered from the backyard pits of medieval towns represent the useless detritus of human consumption. The craft of archaeology is not simply to retrieve that discarded past, but also to revive it, so that evidence is given meaning, context is understood and rubbish is re-invested with its lost value. There are different aims in the interpretation of archaeological evidence, for example to understand technological development, or to reveal patterns of settlement, communication or distribution. This chapter is concerned with the characterization of social status, or class. The context is the medieval English port of Southampton.

CLASS

Medieval archaeologists frequently base their interpretations of the social status of a particular site, and its inhabitants, on the evidence of the finds they recover. The presence in domestic waste deposits of fine pottery, particularly 'exotic' imported wares, rare animal species and 'luxury' items such as glass are taken to denote wealth or high status. There is no doubt that European medieval society was deeply stratified, and the identification of different social groups through the evidence of archaeologically retrieved finds can be made to be relatively straightforward. Can twentieth-century commentators, however, properly understand the meaning of the class structure of medieval society? A somewhat complacent attitude to this question has led to a degraded definition of the term 'class' as applied to fine exponents of the arts or entertainment. George Best, for instance, might have been described as 'having class' as a footballer. It is therefore difficult and uncomfortable to envisage how strictly hierarchical medieval society may have been; or even to acknowledge the extent of social stratification in the present. Furthermore, there is a class structure within the discipline of archaeology, where academics may be viewed as superior to fieldworkers. There is also a hierarchy of

organizations. These are the reflections of a curator of archaeological collections, a specialist in medieval pottery, who works for a local authority. Such factors must colour any interpretation of archaeological evidence. However, for the purposes of this discussion, the term 'class' is used in a social sense, where different social groups are identified on the basis of influence, ownership, wealth and occupation. These attributes carried great meaning in the Middle Ages and what is more, the social class of a particular household may be understood from archaeological evidence.

However, there is also a hierarchy of values attributed to that evidence. Archaeologists invest certain types of finds with more significance than others. They concentrate on those things which survive best in the ground, and therefore occur most frequently in the archaeological record, for it is those which are likely to be most rewarding to study. A hierarchy is imposed which accords with the requirements of analysis and interpretation rather than the needs of the people who used and discarded the things we have found. Archaeologists recognize finds as being diagnostic or non-diagnostic in terms of chronology, technology, environment and, of course, status. They classify.

It is the intention of this chapter to reconsider current concepts of what were 'luxury' or 'exotic' items. It seems, however, appropriate to begin with the archaeological character of medieval rubbish.

MEDIEVAL RUBBISH IN SOUTHAMPTON

All too often the finds that are excavated from domestic rubbish deposits in Southampton represent only a fraction of the actual range of products consumed. There are two main reasons for this. First, some types of material decay in the ground, principally organic substances such as leather and wood. Second, some materials are collected for recycling, particularly metals and glass. A typical site assemblage will largely comprise finds that do not fall into those two categories.

Table 9.1 shows a comparison of the evidence for consumption from documentary and archaeological sources. The goods listed in the customs accounts, known as port books, for 1435–6 (Foster 1963) are quantified according to the number of ships recorded as carrying these commodities. A wide variety of articles and substances appear and these have been grouped together. The category 'foodstuffs' includes cheese, fish, grain, spices, sugar and also drinks such as beer, cider and wine; bed-covers, clothing, furnishings, raw cloth, rope and thread are grouped together as 'textiles'; 'metal' includes arms, armour, cutlery, nails, pins, razors and vessels; alum, soap and woad are categorized as 'dyestuffs'; among the 'stone' are coal, gravestones, grindstones, paving-stones and slate. Set against these quantities are the types of finds present in assemblages from a sample of six excavations in Southampton. These are shown as percentages of the total number of recovered fragments. Here, foodstuffs are characterized as food waste, mainly animal or fish bones, but

Table 9.1 A comparison of the merchandise brought into Southampton in the trading year 1435–6 with the finds recovered from a random sample of six Southampton excavations

<i>Commodity/find type</i>	<i>% of ships in port book 1435–6</i>	<i>% in excavated assemblages</i>
Foodstuffs/ waste	44	40
Textiles	21	–
Metal	12	3
Wood	6	–
Leather/hides	5	–
Dyestuffs	4	–
Stone	3	10
Miscellaneous	2	1
Mineral waste	1	16
Ceramics	0.5	26
Glass	0.5	1

Note:

Total number of ships in sample is 65 and total number of finds 23,371.

also seeds and fruit-stones that are recovered from soil samples. Most of the stone consists of building rubble and roofing slates. Slag and hammerscale are the main components of the mineral waste category.

A comparison of the two sets of figures highlights the disparity between that which archaeologists recover and that which was actually consumed. It is acknowledged that the port books only record goods traded by sea and often redistributed over land. However, the items listed were brought into the town in quantities that reflect relative levels of demand. Food and drink are therefore the most common imports. The quantities of excavated finds reflect, by contrast, levels of survival of both burial and recovery processes. Comparison of these figures shows that food waste is as significant in the archaeological record as foodstuffs are in the documents. There are few other points of similarity. Ceramics are the second most common type of excavated find, yet these represent less than 1 per cent of traded goods. This may reflect the fact that pottery was mainly produced locally and brought into the town by road, but the same is surely true of textiles and foodstuffs as well, which occur far more frequently in the port book records. It is clear that those finds which are most commonly excavated are not necessarily those that were most commonly consumed. A specific example will illustrate this point further.

Excavations at Cuckoo Lane, Southampton in 1963 revealed a stone-lined cesspit with waterlogged fills dated to the late thirteenth century (Platt and Coleman-Smith 1975). The anaerobic conditions preserved many types of find which are rare in the archaeological record. Unfortunately, these have not all been quantified according to current techniques, but Table 9.2 lists the types of materials, all represented by artefacts, which are discussed or illustrated in the publication. Seventy-one wooden objects have been either

Table 9.2 Quantities of published items from Pit 14 at Cuckoo Lane, SOU 163

<i>Material type</i>	<i>Published examples</i>
Wood	71
Pottery/tile	49
Leather	27
Metal	22
Textile	14
Stone	6
Glass	5
Bone	3
Rope/string	4
Basketry	2

illustrated or described, together with forty-six pottery vessels, twenty-seven leather objects, fourteen fragments of textile and so on. This record is more consistent with the evidence provided by the port book records than the archaeology as shown in Table 9.1. Artefacts made from organic substances such as wood, leather or textile are much more common than is suggested by a typical finds assemblage. One might conclude that this group gives a more accurate picture of what a medieval rubbish deposit really comprised. This is perhaps no great revelation, but it is important when one considers the basis for archaeological interpretation. All too often conclusions are made on the basis of finds which represent a mere fraction of the total array of goods and materials consumed within the medieval household.

Such deposits are all too rare, hence this imbalance in the archaeological record. Evidence of the medieval way of life can be found in the form of surviving buildings and documents as well as what is in the ground. This chapter concentrates on one of the most common artefact-types found on excavations: pottery. The high survival rate of this material has led archaeologists to rely on it heavily as evidence for prevailing technological, commercial, social and cultural conditions. The following discussion uses documentary as well as archaeological evidence to examine the true worth of pottery for the people who used it. This gives rise to reflection on the value of pottery to the archaeologist.

MEDIEVAL SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton was the most important south-coast port in medieval England. This is reflected in the large quantities of pottery imported from mainland Europe that are regularly found on excavations. Information from ten sites is used for the discussion of the significance of imported pottery in the medieval town. Figure 9.1 shows an outline plan of medieval Southampton, enclosed by its fourteenth-century town wall, and locates the ten sites upon which this discussion

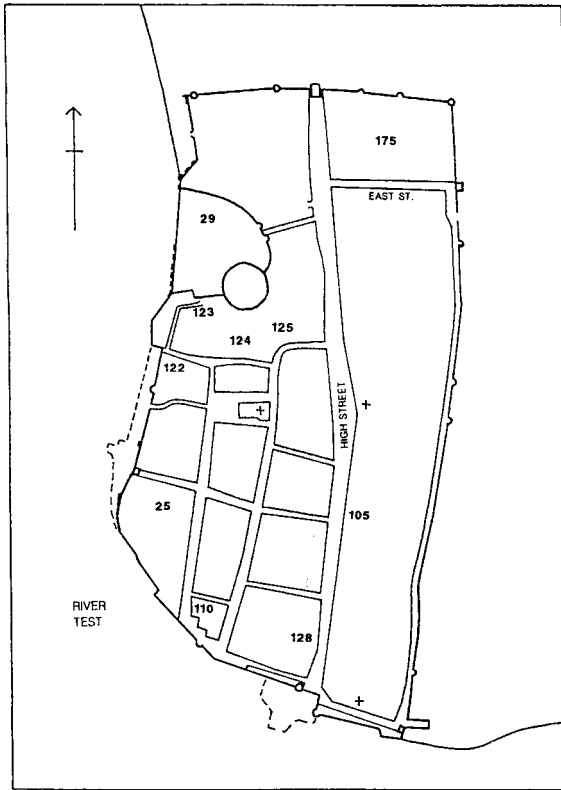


Figure 9.1 Plan of medieval Southampton showing the town walls. The numbers relate to the Southampton site codes and locate the sites mentioned in the text. Key: 25=Westgate Street; 29=Maddison Street; 105=61-4 High Street; 110=West Hall; 122=St Michael's House; 123=Upper Bugle Street II; 124=Upper Bugle Street III; 125=Upper Bugle Street IIIe; 128=Quilter's Vault; 175=York Buildings.

is principally based. The walled town can be divided into four social quarters, using High Street as the main dividing line.

The south-western quarter, west of High Street and south of the castle, was occupied by the merchants and burgesses who profited most from Southampton's status as a port. These people were the wealthiest and most influential townfolk, and this is shown by the numbers of stone cellars that still survive and that once lay beneath their substantial town houses. As indicated in Figure 9.1, most of the excavations discussed here were situated within the south-western quarter. Excavations at the tenements of Bull Hall (SOU 25), West Hall (SOU 110), St Michael's House (SOU 122), Upper Bugle Street (SOU 124, 125) and Quilter's Vault (SOU 128) all recovered large quantities of local and imported pottery.

North of the merchant's quarter lay Southampton Castle. This was a royal property, managed by a Crown Bailiff primarily as a warehouse for the goods (principally wine) imported on behalf of the king. The importance of this function is illustrated by the thirteenth-century conversion of the original hall into another substantial cellar. The excavation at Maddison Street (SOU 29) uncovered part of the interior of the castle bailey. This produced a mixed assemblage, much of which may be associated with refuse dumped by the townsfolk rather than the occupants of the castle itself (Oxley 1986:67). Upper Bugle Street II (SOU 123) encompassed the south-western corner of the curtain wall, including two castle garderobes and part of a tenement outside the castle ditch. A section of castle ditch was also excavated at Upper Bugle Street III (SOU 124). The most substantial group of pottery that can with certainty be associated with the occupants of the castle came from a garderobe at SOU 123. This material dates to the first half of the thirteenth century, and includes the complete profiles of several locally-produced vessels. Imported types are not well represented.

The north-eastern part of medieval Southampton has been identified as the artisans' quarter, occupied by the poorest inhabitants of the town. Few excavations have been carried out here, but a large area was investigated in the 1980s, to the north of East Street at York Buildings (SOU 175). A large quantity of features and finds was revealed.

Much of the south-eastern quarter of the town was covered by the thirteenth-century Franciscan Friary. The results of extensive excavations here have not yet been processed. The excavation at 61 High Street (SOU 105) revealed a tenement to the north of the friary. Evidence for a pottery kiln was found here, suggesting a link with the artisans' quarter. A substantial dwelling was built here in the fifteenth century, indicating the later presence of wealthy townsfolk in this area.

If imported pottery is an indicator of wealth and status, one might expect its distribution throughout the town to reflect the social zoning outlined above. The south-western quarter should therefore produce the highest quantities of Continental wares, along with other 'high status' finds. At the castle, which was a warehouse rather than a residence, imported pottery might be less well represented. In the artisan's quarter such material should be practically absent.

DISTRIBUTION OF POTTERY TYPES

Three ceramic periods have been identified for the period from *c.* 1070 to 1520. Examples of all the pottery types described below may be seen in a range of specialist publications including Platt and Coleman-Smith (1975), Hurst *et al.* (1986) and Brown (forthcoming). The Anglo-Norman period dates from *c.* 1070–1250. At this time local pottery took the form of handmade cooking pots and glazed jugs or tripod pitchers. Imported wares, largely pitchers and highly-glazed jugs, came mainly from Normandy.

In the High Medieval period, *c.* 1250–1350, imported pottery also came from one principal source. The most common local products, now wheelthrown, were cooking pots and jugs, some of the latter being highly decorated. These occur in roughly equal proportions. An increased range of vessel types, including bowls, dripping pans, curfews and money-boxes, also characterizes the local ceramic output of this period. Continental wares came almost exclusively from the Saintonge region of south-west France. These were mainly very fine jugs, but large pitchers and other forms, such as ceramic mortars, were also imported.

The Late Medieval period, *c.* 1350–1520, begins with a phase of transition. Gradually, the local types of the preceding period went out of production and were replaced, probably in the fifteenth century, by a range of highly fired products of more utilitarian aspect. Cooking pots, jugs, pitchers and large bowls are the most common forms. These are plain vessels, with minimal glazes, quite different from the highly decorated forms made earlier. Also in contrast to the Early and High Medieval periods, a wide variety of sources for imported pottery is represented. Wares from Normandy, the Saintonge, the Low Countries, the Rhineland, the Iberian peninsula and Italy are all represented. There is also an increased range of vessel types. These fall into two groups. There are vessels brought in as containers, mainly olive jars from Spain (reminiscent of the Roman amphora tradition), and cylindrical *albarelli* or drug-jars which held commodities such as cosmetics, spices and ointments. The second group consists of vessels imported for their own worth, either as cooking pots, jugs, mugs, bowls or dishes. The jugs, bowls and dishes represent tablewares, and include highly decorated types such as Beauvais Sgraffito ware, Iberian and Italian maiolicas. These emphasize further the plainness of contemporary local products. Rhenish stoneware mugs, although undecorated, had the advantage over local earthenwares in being impervious and thus presumably more desirable.

Table 9.3 shows the relative quantities, by site, of imported wares for each of the three ceramic periods. On this evidence it may be possible to interpret the social status of the inhabitants of each site, for each period. However, there are certain limitations here, including the extent of each excavation, and its position within each tenement. The number and date-range of the archaeological deposits will also vary. At SOU 25, for example, excavations in the backyard areas of the large town house known as Bull Hall revealed many thirteenth-century rubbish pits and a stone-lined garderobe. In contrast, at SOU 110, the site of the equally substantial West Hall, a relatively small area of an early backyard and later courtyard was excavated. This revealed a large twelfth-century rubbish pit sealed by later floor surfaces. The site at York Buildings produced the largest assemblage overall. This reflects the area that the excavation covered and the number of features revealed. However, taking these factors into consideration, it is possible to make certain observations.

In the Anglo-Norman period imported pottery is present on sites in the south-western quarter, within the castle and to the east of High Street (SOU 105) in

Table 9.3 Quantities of pottery for each ceramic period, by grammes, for the sites mentioned in the text, and the percentage of each ceramic period total represented by Continental imports

<i>Site code</i>	<i>Total EMed</i>	<i>% imports</i>	<i>Total Hmed</i>	<i>% imports</i>	<i>Total LMed</i>	<i>% imports</i>	<i>Site total</i>
SOU 25	11,621	14	55,512	31	3,380	51	72,307
SOU 29	5,746	11	17,009	1	21,646	24	51,329
SOU 105	8,413	8	48,472	7	14,575	55	74,219
SOU 110	14,813	12	6,627	38	6,520	82	28,991
SOU 122	3,435	22	35,261	24	21,633	76	63,841
SOU 123	25,784	5	27,672	4	9,070	27	66,422
SOU 124	15,072	4	13,530	10	33,993	55	69,381
SOU 125	31,982	3	30,456	10	9,983	37	77,444
SOU 128	—	—	—	—	87,904	55	94,636
SOU 175	50,544	4	57,789	4	83,496	16	224,687
Totals	167,410	5	292,328	21	292,200	55	—

roughly equal proportions. At SOU 175, in the north-eastern quarter, imported wares are generally less common. Although they occur there in equal amounts to the Upper Bugle Street sites (SOU 123, 124 and 125), this assemblage represents a greater number of deposits and pottery. This may be seen to confirm the lesser social status of the inhabitants of the north-eastern quarter of the town.

It is interesting to note that Anglo-Norman imported wares are common in the castle (SOU 29), for this is certainly not the case for the High Medieval period. There is a noticeable increase in the relative quantities of imported wares in the High Medieval period for nearly all the sites in the southwestern quarter, but a decline at sites SOU 29 and SOU 123 (associated with the castle). The same is true at SOU 105 when the kiln was operating, demonstrating perhaps a decline in social fortune. At SOU 175, the relative percentage of imported wares remains the same, which suggests the same, relatively low, social conditions that were suggested for the Anglo-Norman period.

In the Late Medieval period there is an overall increase in the proportion of imported wares, with the sites at the castle, SOU 29, and in the northeastern quarter, SOU 175, once again the most poorly represented, and well below the overall average proportion of imported wares, shown in the bottom line of Table 9.3 as 55 per cent.

In order to put these observations into perspective, it is necessary to examine the value placed upon the imported pottery in each of the three periods.

THE VALUE OF IMPORTED POTTERY

Table 9.4 shows the relative proportions of different vessel types represented in the English and Continental pottery of each ceramic period. In the Anglo-

Table 9.4 Percentages that particular vessel types comprise of total weight, in grammes, of local and imported wares of each ceramic period

<i>Vessel type</i>	<i>EMed local</i>	<i>EMed import</i>	<i>HMed local</i>	<i>HMed import</i>	<i>LMed local</i>	<i>LMed import</i>
Cooking pot	90	22	46	< 1	23	18
Jar	—	—	—	—	—	24
Bowl	< 1	—	< 1	—	37	8
Dish	—	—	—	—	—	5
Jug	10	78	48	82	24	18
Mug	—	—	—	—	—	19
Other	—	—	6	17	16	8

Norman period, imported vessels took the same form as those produced locally. It is also clear that cooking pots were the principal local product. This suggests that Continental, mainly northern French, jugs may have been imported because of shortcomings in local sources of supply. The emphasis on northern France reflects the fact that most of Southampton's trade was with Normandy.

In the High Medieval period cooking pots and jugs were made locally in equal proportions and it is evident that both were regularly available. Indeed, there was little need to bring in pottery from the Continent, but imported wares of this period are nevertheless well represented. As has been stated, these came mainly from the south-west of France. Southampton merchants concentrated their activities on the wines of that area, and this is reflected in the high quantities of Saintonge pottery found here. Jugs are the principal form, and as such are unlikely to have competed seriously with the far more common local types. It is noteworthy that very little Saintonge pottery was distributed to centres outside Southampton. Even Winchester, only nine miles from Southampton and one of the wealthiest towns in medieval England, produces comparatively tiny amounts of high medieval imported pottery. It is therefore likely that Saintonge pottery was brought into Southampton simply as a by-product of the lucrative wine trade, and it may almost be regarded as another local ware, of high quality perhaps, but with little 'exotic' value.

The increase in overall quantity shown for the Late Medieval period in Table 9.3 is reflected in an increase in the variety of vessel types. Many of these are forms which were not produced locally. Jars were imported for the products they contained, mainly olive oil, wine and spices, and it is unsurprising to find no comparable local product. However, the other types were brought in because no locally made alternatives were available. At this period there clearly was a significant market for imported pottery, and this is shown by the relative proportions of late medieval Continental pottery shown in Table 9.3. Furthermore, there is good evidence for the re-distribution of these wares into Southampton's hinterland.

This evidence shows how Continental pottery might be valued in relation to local products, for its importation reflects patterns of ceramic demand. In the Anglo-Norman period local pottery was relatively crude in comparison to imported types. One reason for this is perhaps that in Anglo-Norman Southampton, a Saxon town undergoing a process of 'Normanization', pottery vessels were not utilized to the same extent as they were in France, or were to be in Southampton during the High Medieval period. The narrow range of local vessel types supports this, as does the expansion of the potter's repertoire in the thirteenth century. The High Medieval period represents perhaps the zenith of the local pottery-making industry. A wide range of products, in a great variety of styles, were being produced. Furthermore, they were all being bought and utilized by local consumers of every social class. This is in marked contrast to the preceding period and suggests a change in the part pottery played in the domestic environment. In the Late Medieval period, ceramics were still being consumed at a high rate. There is an increase in the types of vessel being utilized, although there is a much clearer division here between the functions of local and imported forms.

Documentary evidence for the fifteenth century allows a further insight into the actual value of imported pottery. The Southampton Port Books are customs accounts, recording the goods brought in on merchant ships and the amount of duty payable on them. The surviving accounts for the years 1427–30 (Studer 1913), 1435–6 (Foster 1963), 1439–40 (Cobb 1961), 1448–9 (Lewis 1993), 1469–71 (Quinn 1937), 1477–81 (Quinn 1938) and 1509–10 (James 1990) have been transcribed and published. These accounts often give the actual value of different commodities. Pottery is listed relatively frequently and references to 'jars of oil' and 'painted pots' are simple to interpret. It is therefore possible to compare the value of different types of pottery with vessels made of other materials. Storage vessels will have been valued on their contents, as with seventeen pots of dates brought in on 27 March 1428 and valued at 6/8d. However, as has been shown, pottery was traded as a commodity in its own right, and a few examples will serve to indicate its value.

In October 1448, five dozen *pots de Malyk*, or pots of Malaga, a reference to high-quality Spanish tin-glazed or lustrewares, were landed and valued at five shillings. This gives each pot a value of one penny. From the same vessel came five dozen *oll' de Janua*. This refers to Italian maiolica vessels, which were valued at 7/6d, or just over a penny-halfpenny each. These references are to pottery of the highest quality, types which archaeologists would term 'exotic' or 'luxury' goods. Yet their actual value, admittedly before being marked up and sold on, is extremely low. Compare those prices with that of the three dozen *glasse bottel'* unloaded in September 1449 and costed at 13/3d, almost fourpence-halfpenny each. Six cups of *crystal* were landed in May 1481 and valued at ten shillings, 1/6d each. Metal vessels are more frequent imports. These are often difficult to value as amounts are usually given by weight. In October 1448, for example, one barrel containing 100 lbs (45 kg) of *vasorum stann'* (tin vessels) was valued

at 26/8d. Metal cooking vessels were a common import. In April 1440 one dozen *ketels* were valued at sixteen shillings, or 1/4d each. A single ship-load neatly summarizes these comparisons. In July 1481 Thomas Yoksale of Portsmouth landed a cargo that included 400 drinking pots (almost certainly Rhenish stoneware mugs) at ten shillings, one case of glass at £1/6/8d and 100 (metal) frying pans at £2/10s.

It can be seen from this evidence that in comparison to glass and metal vessels, pottery was extremely cheap. This surely gives an indication of the value placed on ceramics in the Late Medieval period. Metal and glass must have been regarded as the most expensive luxuries by the wealthy inhabitants of Southampton, and should therefore be seen as more reliable indicators of social status. Both of these materials are recyclable, and are less stable than pottery, which means that they are rarely recovered in significant quantities from archaeological excavations. However, it is noteworthy that those deposits which have produced quantities of late medieval vessel glass are also those which contained large amounts of imported pottery.

The simplest example to use here is the group from Quilter's Vault, SOU 128. This excavation revealed a stone cellar which had been back-filled probably in the early sixteenth century. An enormous quantity of pottery, the total amount shown in Table 9.3, was included in these fills. As shown in Table 9.3, over half the pottery recovered is of Continental origin. There is also a significant amount of vessel glass, with dozens of vessels represented. It is likely that this deposit was created by the occupants of the associated dwelling and the cellar was probably closed in advance of building alterations. A wealthy household is surely indicated and therefore perhaps high social status. However, what leads one to this conclusion is not just the quality of the finds, but also their quantity. A smaller group with the same mix of imported and local wares need not indicate consumption to the same degree.

It is apparent that pottery, whether imported or locally made, had a relatively low actual value, undermining suggestions that Continental wares should be regarded as luxury goods. Social status must therefore be judged not simply on the presence of certain types, but the quantities in which they occur. At York Buildings (SOU 175), situated in the poorest quarter of Southampton, fine Continental pottery was recovered from domestic rubbish deposits, but in much smaller quantities than at other sites. However, Table 9.3 shows that the proportion of imported wares of the Late Medieval period from this site is greater than that for the High Medieval period at higher status sites such as SOU 125. It seems that imported pottery was available to all social classes in Southampton, but it is apparent that the requirements of each social class were different. The wealthier townsfolk demonstrated their prosperity not simply through the possession of exotic goods, but also their visible consumption on a grand scale. Furthermore, pottery, a most domestic substance, seems an unlikely medium for social posturing. The wealthiest people lived in large, stone-built houses, dressed in fine clothes and jewellery

and, at table, used glass and plate. These were the ways to impress one's peers, or those whom one aspired to view as such. They would have wanted the finest pottery, certainly, but would have thought nothing of consuming large quantities of it, even at a single sitting. One further piece of evidence indicates a high level of consumption. The will inventory of John Davey of Southampton, made in 1516, itemizes '*a hundred of Flaunders Crusis*' in the buttery and valued at two shillings and eight pence (Roberts and Parker 1992:12). 'Flaunders Crusis' is a reference to Rhenish stoneware beer-mugs. These were acquired by the hundred, suggesting both their low value and a high rate of use. This level of consumption cannot have been part of the lifestyle of the town's poorer inhabitants, and although they may have had fine pottery, they had less of it, and probably used it less frequently.

CONCLUSION

The nature of the finds that archaeologists recover can be misleading. An excavated finds assemblage will usually represent only a fraction of the objects used in daily life. Social status can be recognized archaeologically by quantity, and not simply by that which we choose to identify as 'quality'. This conclusion does not serve to alter any interpretations of the social structure of medieval Southampton. Pottery was consumed at a higher rate in the southwestern quarter of the town than within the castle (SOU 29, SOU 123), or at York Buildings (SOU 175), and Continental wares generally form a higher proportion of the assemblages from merchant dwellings such as Bull Hall (SOU 25).

It is important to recognize that the comparison of data from a number of excavations informs this discussion. A consistent level of analysis focusing on several assemblages must be the starting point for any such study. Thereafter, different forms of evidence, archaeological and documentary, can be brought in to further illuminate the course of interpretation. It is to be hoped that similar studies on inland sites will enable the characterization of social status by the same means. It is known that the inhabitants of thirteenth-century Winchester consumed far less of the fine Saintonge pottery that was common in contemporary Southampton. This cannot mean that they were socially inferior or less wealthy. It suggests simply that Saintonge wares are not a good indicator of class. One must therefore conclude that this is true of most types of pottery and of typological studies of medieval ceramic assemblages. In establishing social status, archaeologists must consider the quantity of material consumption, not simply the quality of possession. This should not discourage the use of ceramics as a tool for archaeological interpretation. Its universality, in medieval society and on archaeological excavations, renders it the most reliable medium for comparative studies. As the quantity and quality of the evidence increases, so the questions asked of the archaeological record must be refined.

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10 *Proto-colonial archaeology: the case of Elizabethan Ireland*

ERIC KLINGELHOFER

This chapter examines the role of archaeology in the study of the Elizabethan colonization of southern Ireland. Initial foreign settlement by early modern European states, or by their authorized commercial organizations, are usefully characterized as the ‘proto-colonial phase’ of the epoch of modern colonial imperialism. For European overseas activities, the proto-colonial period may be generalized as *c.* 1450–1650. The ‘planting’ of English colonists in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is recognized as an important step in English colonialism and a turning point in Irish history, but twentieth-century politics and policies have discouraged its study (Dunlop 1888; Quinn 1966a). Recently, however, such publications as *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland* have recognized the significance of the proto-colonial or ‘plantation’ period, and archeological research on the Munster colony in the Irish Republic has followed the initiative of work undertaken on the Ulster colony in Northern Ireland (Lacy 1991; Mallory and McNeill 1991; Power 1991).

EARLIER TUDOR COLONIZATION

Henry VIII may be said to have inaugurated modern Irish history, when on 18 June 1541 he was proclaimed King—instead of Lord—of Ireland. Thus, Ireland became a kingdom from the top down, and the Tudors found themselves committed to ‘nation-building’ both at home and abroad. England was then barely a Renaissance society, but the social and political dynamics of the Irish people were essentially of an early medieval character. The clan was the primary secular institution, and real power lay with the many local lords who rarely ruled more than the land they could see from the tops of ubiquitous small ‘tower-house’ castles. In the late twelfth century, lords and knights of Norman origin had left England for power and position in Ireland, but for the last two centuries their ties to England had weakened as intermarriage with the Irish clan nobility affected their cultural affiliation.

Henry moved to redress this dangerous trend by a policy of Anglicization, the slow and ultimately incomplete process of replacing Irish political culture and institutions with English ones. He created earls out of Irish clan chiefs and, by the policy of 'surrender and regrant', tried to convert traditional Irish landholding into English tenure by royal charter.

At Henry's death in 1547, however, the lack of firm royal control in Ireland required further action. The initial step in the proto-colonial process was a military one. As Lord Protector in Edward VI's minority reign, the Duke of Somerset expanded the defence of The Pale, the English-controlled Dublin region, by a chain of military outposts similar to the English enclave around Calais on the French coast (Canny 1976:33–4). The Tudor dynasty moved to secure these two remnants of England's medieval empire. Calais was lost to France before plans for Renaissance artillery fortification and new colonial settlement there were realized. Ireland thus became England's only permanent overseas possession (excepting the Channel Isles) until the 1607 foundation of Jamestown, Virginia. By 1548, Somerset had constructed two forts, 'Protector' and 'Governor', to control the low watershed between the Shannon valley and The Pale. The two garrisons were allotted wide tracts of land around the forts. Edward's sister and successor, Mary, initiated a second phase, planting English settlers in the areas that would be formalized in 1557 as Queen's County (Leix) and King's County (Offaly). Mary was much influenced by her husband, Philip of Spain, and his colonial policies are thought by the historian David Quinn to have served as a model for the English government when it founded the towns of Maryborough and Philipstown at the forts (Quinn 1958; see Figure 10.1). Royal garrisons ensured prosperity for the settlements, which received economic and political privileges in a change of status to market towns in 1567, and to boroughs in 1569 (Dunlop 1891).

Despite its precedence, Mary's planting of English settlers in Leix and Offaly and the extension of normal county government to those districts has not received due attention from archaeologists and historians. A contemporary map depicting the original 'forte of Maribrough' (Fort Protector) is preserved in Trinity College Library (TCD MS 1209/10). It shows a rectangular 'castell' at one corner of a walled enclosure with labelled measurements of 100 yards by 120 yards (91 by 109.2 m); a round tower was labelled 'Blockhouse' at the opposite corner (see Figure 10.2). Inside the fort stood a single structure that probably served as both administrative centre and garrison quarters. It appears to have been a two-storey building with several chimneys and casement windows. Outside the fort, built against a stream, was 'The Brewhouse', another essential facility for English soldiers and settlers. A slightly later map shows both the fort and the layout of adjacent Maryborough, but nearly all these features have been obliterated by the growth of the modern town of Portlaoise (Kerrigan 1995:31–2). The reverse is true at Philipstown. No drawing survives for the abandoned earthworks of Fort Governor, but one can readily make out several features. A re-used medieval tower-house is centrally located in a 100-metre square

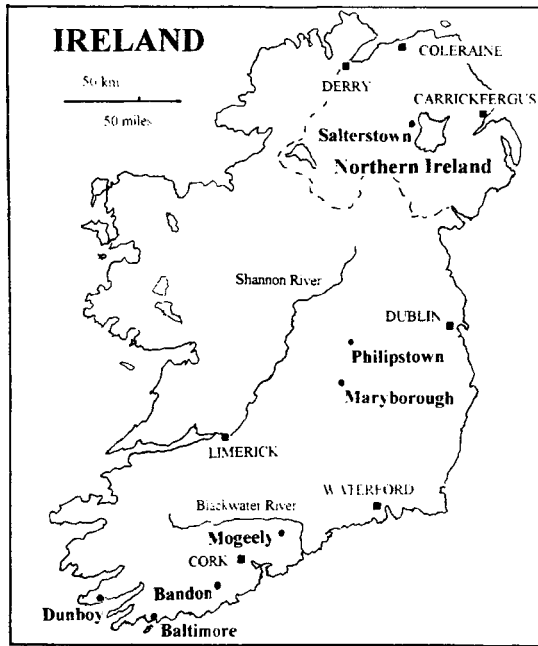


Figure 10.1 Map showing proto-colonial sites in Ireland (E.Klingelhofer).

enclosure formed by a surviving ditch and a partially standing circuit wall with a projecting entrance gateway (see Figure 10.3). The site of the first post-medieval English colonial settlement, Fort Governor, is fortunately under no immediate threat.

ELIZABETHAN COLONIZATION

Other, private attempts at Irish colonization took place soon after Mary's brief reign, but the difficulty in raising capital and colonists, and the political uncertainties of Elizabeth's early years on the throne, prevented any long-term success. Yet the increasing strength of Elizabeth's government provided a new opportunity for expansion into Ireland. In open rebellion from 1579 to his death in 1583, the Earl of Desmond, the greatest lord and largest landowner in the province of Munster, led his generation's resistance to Henry VIII's goal of a Renaissance monarchy in Dublin. Desmond transformed a feudal squabble into a national and religious cause, but ultimately ensured his destruction and that of his family by bringing the Jesuits and the Spanish into Ireland, a threat to the very existence of the House of Tudor. The traitor's lands were confiscated by Elizabeth, who granted them to favoured Englishmen on the basis of seignories of 12,000 acres. In 1586, surveying parties began to record the escheated lands for the new grantees, and the colony was born.

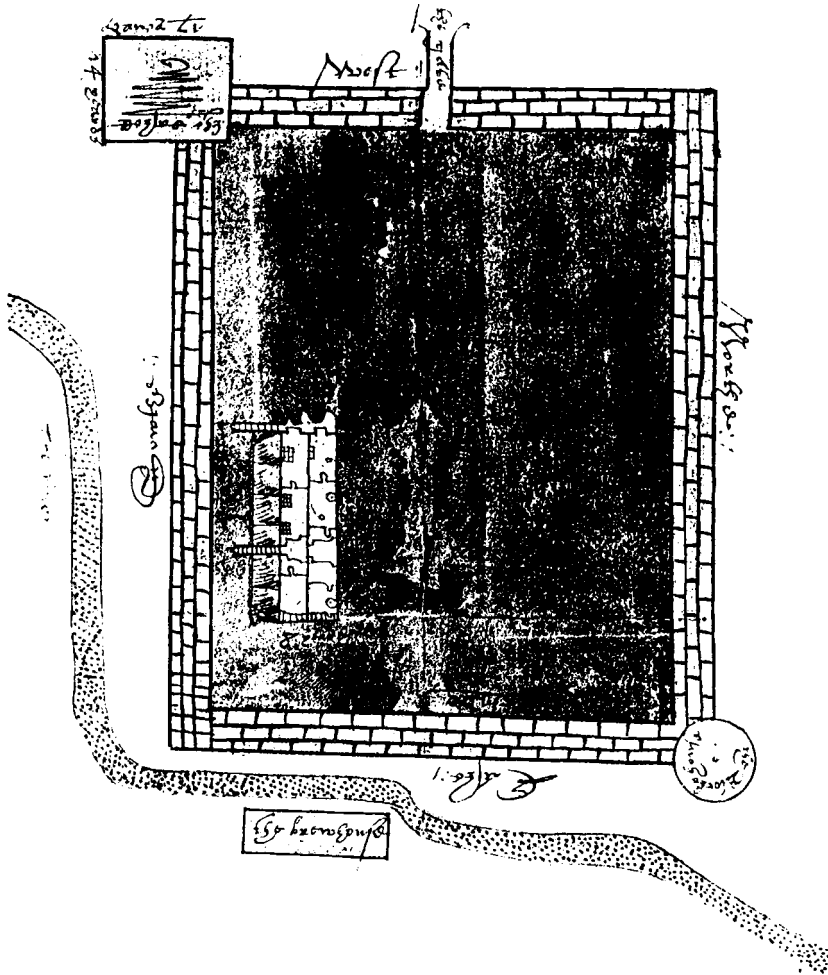


Figure 10.2 Fort Protector at Maryborough, c. 1550. Trinity College, Dublin, MS 1209/10 (with permission of the Director, Trinity College Library).

A proposal made in 1585 for the settlement of Munster contained a scheme to establish hundreds (the judicial and taxing divisions of an English county/shire), each of which would contain nearly a 1,000 families (C.S.P.Ireland, 2:588–9). For several reasons, migration to Munster may have reached only one-tenth that amount (Sheehan 1982). The tracts of escheated Desmond lands were widely scattered, and the native population refused to assist the surveying of the expropriated lands. Where established, the new grants were contested by Irish claimants to lands not personally owned by the Earl of Desmond. The grantees were rarely able to replace completely the Irish inhabitants with English farmers



Figure 10.3 Fort Governor at Philipstown, view of well-preserved masonry of outer wall, with entrance in left foreground, site of tower house in middle background (photo, E.Klingelhofer).

and artisans. Consequently, it seems that many of them sought profit in exploiting natural resources, above all the plentiful timber that was in such high demand in England.

As part of a long-term archaeological study of Elizabethan colonization, I turned to the activities of Sir Walter Raleigh, Elizabeth's favourite, who not only founded settlements in the New World, but also received a huge grant of 42,000 acres in the Blackwater River valley in eastern Munster. He administered these lands from his seat at Lismore Castle and from the port town of Youghal. Raleigh held most of his lands directly, but he did lease some tracts to friends and associates. One of the manors, that of Mogeely Castle, went to Raleigh's lieutenant, Henry Pyne. A map, now in the National Library of Ireland, was drawn in 1598 to accompany the re-issue of Pyne's lease, and its accuracy was confirmed by fieldwork there in 1990–3 (Andrews 1978: plate 12, 1985:43; Klingelhofer 1990; Klingelhofer and Myles 1994). Distances between surviving landmarks were found to match those of the map (see Figure 10.4). A village green was probably based upon the forecourt or outer bailey of the castle. English-style houses flanked the 'green' and the road leading south, while others were scattered throughout the neighbourhood. Test excavation and geophysical surveys located the southernmost colonial house opposite the church across the main access route into Mogeely. A 0.7 m wide mortar-filled foundation trench would

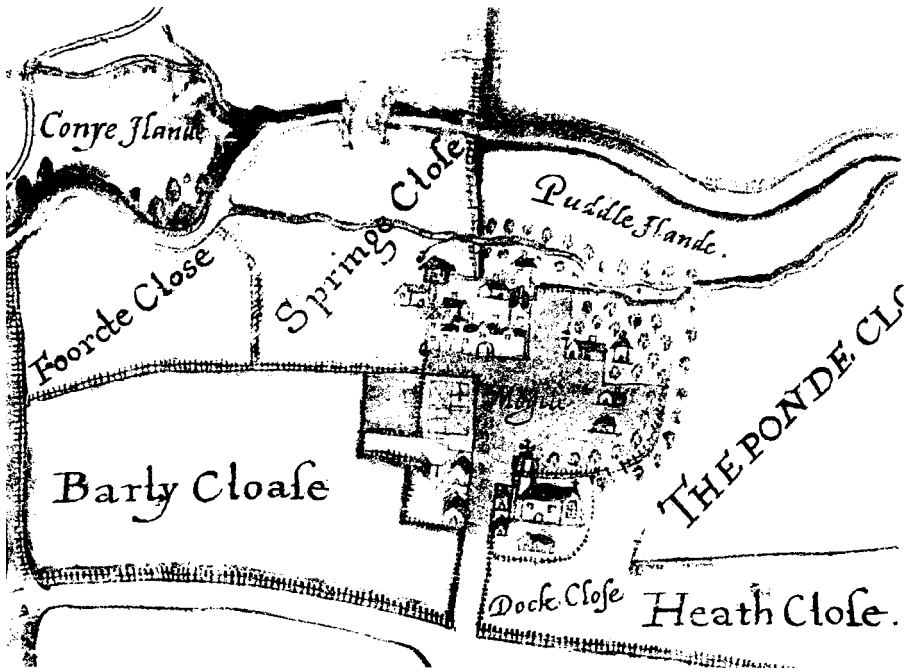


Figure 10.4 Mogeely Castle and village, 1598. National Library of Ireland, MS 22,028 (with the permission of the Director, National Library of Ireland).

have supported a single-storey structure of timber-framed walling; its area, 35 feet (11.6m) by 22 feet (7.3 m) internally, and its north—south orientation match the scale and angle of the cottage on the map.

Several observations can be made about Elizabethan Mogeely. First, the English houses (outbuildings were omitted) were sited by regular spacing and orientation. They flanked the road, but did not lie haphazardly along it, as in contemporary depictions of northern European villages. Second, nine years after the initial settlement, much of the town was still unoccupied, yet several houses were squeezed in awkwardly between the church and the street to the west. The placement of the house sites in such close proximity is striking, given the large amount of unoccupied land. The individual lots must therefore have been relatively small. In 1615, the standard lot in the English, redeveloped Ulster town of Armagh measured 50 feet (16.6m) by 150 feet (5m) (Hunter 1971:59). Wolstenholme Towne, Virginia, occupied from 1619 to 1622, appears to have been divided into properties with widths at multiples of approximately 45 feet (15 m) (Klingelhofer 1979; Noël Hume 1982:255–7). It is possible, therefore, that the Mogeely house lots measured 45–50 feet (15–16.6 m) wide (Klingelhofer 1990).

Sir Walter Raleigh's tenants at 'Moghelly' were given specific orders to 'dwell in the town...keep their arms in readiness...[and]...all upon the sound of the drum repair to the castle gate' (C.S.P.Ireland, 3:125). Yet the settlement did not develop sufficiently, and the Mogeely map shows that more English had settled in the countryside than at the castle (see Figure 10.5). Their houses appear among native Irish huts or cabins in the surrounding hamlets. To investigate this, the National Committee for Archaeology, for the Office of Public Works, funded the 1992–3 excavations of the Carrigeen settlement, northwest of Mogeely Castle. Evidence there suggested a shortlived English occupation of a pre-existing Irish *clachan* hamlet (Klingelhofer and Myles 1994). Although the site had been heavily ploughed in the recent past, patterns of stone scatter indicated the positions of two house platforms, 8 m apart, with different cobbled surfaces inside the structures and adjoining yards and paths. Slight traces of clay helped to indicate the line of robbed, 0.75 m-wide clay-packed stone walls that formed a two-bay structure with a 5m by 10 m interior, and a three-bay structure with interior measurements of perhaps 6.5 m by 15 m. Apparently built on a new site, the rectilinear features of the larger structure suggest an English style. The other house platform has

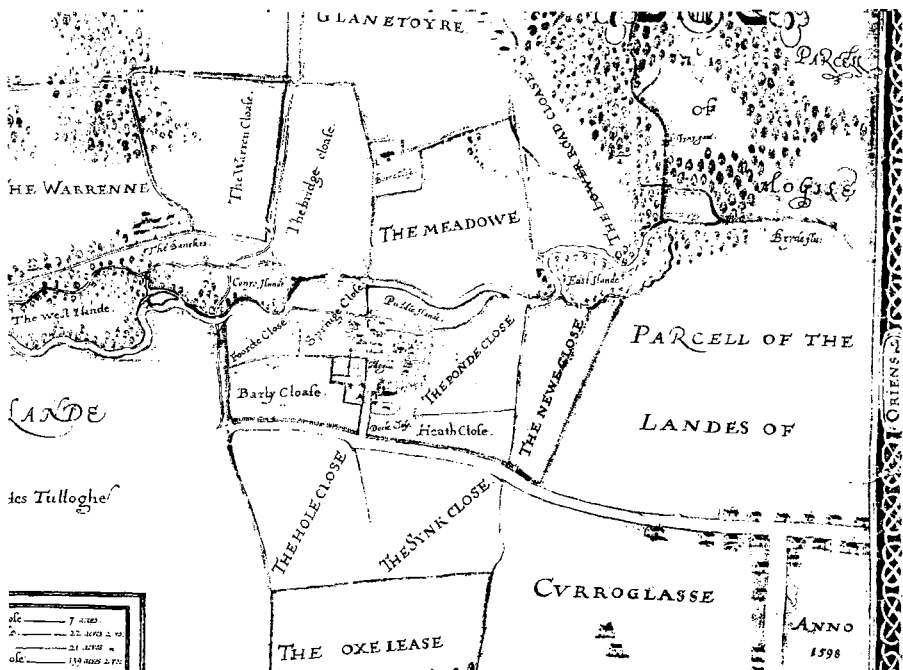


Figure 10.5 Mogeely Castle estate and adjacent settlements, 1598. National Library of Ireland, MS 22,028 (with permission of the Director, National Library of Ireland).

features at two clearly distinguishable orientations, the latest of which is parallel to, and presumably contemporary with, the larger building, while the earlier may have had rounded wall corners typical of the Irish peasant tradition. Although the few stratified finds offer little information, this architectural indication of cultural change marks the replacement of an Irish 'cabin' with construction more closely identified with the English. It is more likely to indicate the replacement of Irish inhabitants by English colonists than the adoption of English building techniques by pre-existing tenants.

The group of houses at Carrigeen appear on the map as both English and Irish, suggesting a slow conversion of *clachan* to hamlet, which does not necessarily indicate a slow replacement of population. The Mogeely Castle estate map also depicts an example of colonial settlement *de novo*. On part of the neighbouring manor of Curraglass was a newly founded settlement that may have been comparable to Tallow, its neighbour across the Waterford border, which held 120 'able bodied men, all English' (Sheehan 1982:17). Little is known about Curraglass except that its inhabitants were considered unruly and litigious. 'They were never quiet, while they had a penny in their purses, but arresting and binding to the peace, [so] that they were called the clampers of Curryglasse' (C.S.P.Ireland, 7:429). Yet despite its judicial disorder, the community was laid out with some regularity as a crossroads (or T-junction) settlement, a form which it still follows. On the map, houses fronted the streets and were clearly aligned to them; their properties probably also followed a standard size. Here, too, some English-style houses, most likely those of more prosperous settlers, were located outside the village, apparently on their own landholdings. Disappointingly, excavations at the one unoccupied site in Curraglass found that an eighteenth-century farmyard and buildings had destroyed evidence of the Tudor house.

Corroborated by archaeology, Raleigh's estate map reveals both the strengths and weaknesses of Elizabethan colonial settlement. It depicts one nucleated community (Curraglass), one quasi-nucleated (Mogeely), several hamlets (e.g. Carrigeen) and a few isolated English farmhouses. The map also depicted two Irish *clachans* that comprised scattered cabins. Both were clustered by streams on the edge of the wooded uplands, clearly excluded from the newly enclosed fields on good soils by the valley bottom. This physical exclusion from the new agricultural regime mirrored the exclusion of native population from the new political regime. Colonization by displacement meant that the Irish peasantry suffered for the rebellious actions of their lords, but this applied unevenly. On Desmond lands, the Irish could participate only where English settlers were few; on other lordships the traditional landholding and settlement patterns remained in place. Despite the lack of heavy immigration, English grantees could successfully impose their farming system, or exploit timber and mineral resources, suggesting that the colonists could have become permanent residents, and the Irish permanently displaced. Yet among the colonists themselves, the desire for independent farmsteads created such strong social and economic pressures that the

planned towns and villages of the First Plantation could not resist the trend toward dispersed settlement. When in October 1598 the Munster Irish rose in rebellion to join the Earl of Tyrone's war of independence, and Mogeely Castle managed to hold out for Pyne, all the other English houses and lands were lost for miles around (Sheehan 1982). The collapse of the colony in 1598 was attributed quite rightly to the settlers' dispersed and unprotected houses; William Saxey, Chief Justice of Munster, wrote that the successful unit of plantation should have been a community of at least twenty households enclosed by a defensive ditch (C.S.P. Ireland, 7:397).

Colonization relies upon military superiority, and after 1598 the conquest of Ireland became fixed government policy. Military experience and leadership was important to the elite that constituted both national government and colonial rule, and this should be reflected in its archaeology. It now seems that the Elizabethan wars, not the Cromwellian campaigns, began the replacement of traditional forms of military construction by Renaissance designs. English armies in Ireland, as in the Netherlands, employed regular designs for encampments and fortifications. Unfortunately, modern suburban development and deep ploughing have substantially eliminated earthworks that could have corroborated the illustrated siegeworks and fortifications of the most important military operation in the Nine Years War, the 1601 siege of Kinsale. The account of such Elizabethan victories, *Pacata Hibernia*, published by Sir Thomas Stafford in 1633, probably used the original maps and texts of Sir George Carew, a leader of that campaign (Stafford 1633). Other maps survive from the final campaigns of the Elizabethan wars, and those sites have great archaeological potential for comparative work in Ulster (Hayes-McCoy 1964; Lacy 1991; Kerrigan 1995).

The last Munster stronghold to fall to Elizabeth's armies was Dunboy Castle, and 1989 excavations revealed that the medieval tower-house, or keep, and its 'bawn' enclosure (see Figure 10.6) had been replaced in 1602 by new defences (Klingelhofer 1992). This Renaissance fort was a response to the English army's adoption of siege artillery, with field guns and borrowed ship's cannon. Thick earthen ramparts protected its interior stone revetment wall from bombardment. Angled bastions helped deflect shot as well, but their symmetrical placement was more important in providing 360 degrees firing capability. Designed either by Spanish expeditionary forces or by Irish officers experienced in the French religious wars (or by a combination of the two), it shows that even the enemies of the Tudor plantations employed Renaissance engineering. Fatally, the designer did not see fit to reduce the height of the tower-house adequately; and English batteries soon brought down so much debris into the interior of the fort that the main defences had to be abandoned. Nevertheless, English troops incurred heavy losses when storming the undamaged bottom level of the tower-house, because the last castle in Munster refused to surrender, and most of its defenders died resisting the forces of colonization.

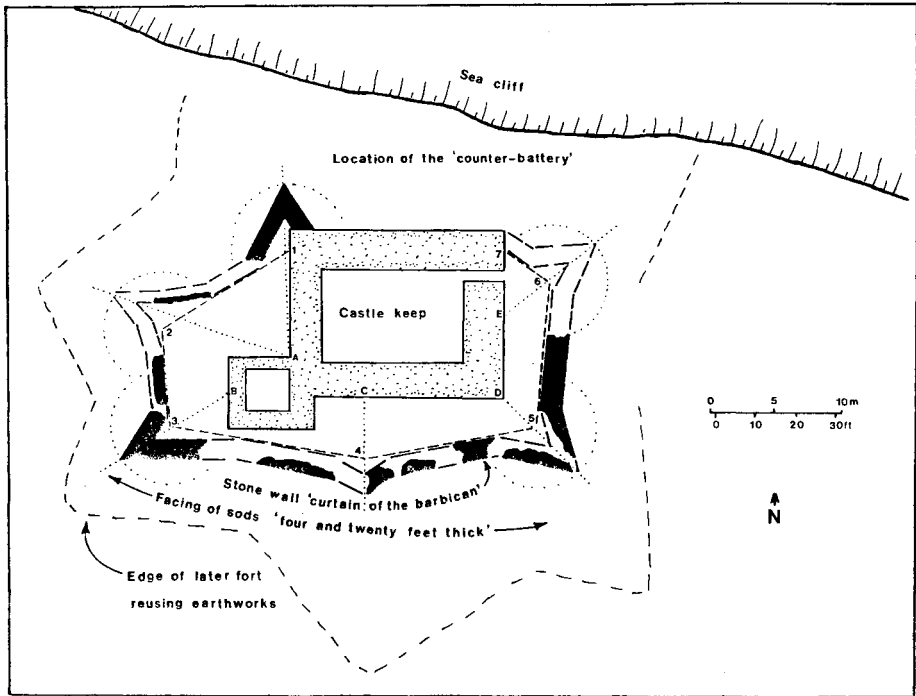


Figure 10.6 Dunboy Castle, interpretation of the 1602 defences, based on 1989 fieldwork (E.Klingelhofer).

JACOBEAN COLONIZATION

Following the English victory at Kinsale in 1601, the colonization of Munster resumed, but few landholders continued into the new century. The poet Edmund Spenser died soon after fleeing his burning house in 1598. Sir Walter Raleigh is said to have 'disposed of his grant in disgust', and settlers in Munster after 1601 were 'almost lost among the surviving native population' (Cheney 1907:516). Richard Boyle, Secretary of the Munster Council, seized this and other opportunities to amass the largest landholding in Munster. Boyle, whom King James soon knighted and later raised to the peerage as Earl of Cork, provided leadership for the second plantation of Munster. There was little resistance by the Irish or by the Catholic 'Old English' to the new rulers, whose power was based upon the English army's total victory. The government no longer maintained the original scheme for settlement, and the Elizabethan attempt to moderate landholding by limits on size and number of seignories was disregarded for the seventeenth-century rule of competitive cupidity.

Although the Second Plantation often reoccupied earlier settlements, some of the opportunists growing rich from abandoned holdings chose to establish new towns. Sir Thomas Crooke in 1605 acquired land at Baltimore to establish a community that thrived on southwest Ireland's privateering and smuggling trade (MacCarthy-Morrogh 1986:215–17). Baltimore was fully English, receiving its borough charter in 1612 (Caulfield 1879:xxxii; Barnby 1969:106–7). Archaeological fieldwork at Baltimore permits the 1632 map of the town (see Figure 10.7) to be interpreted as a planned, rectangular settlement set around an earlier castle, and to the east, a separate, irregular community representing an earlier Irish village (Priestly 1984; Klingelhofer 1990). Sir Richard Boyle founded the town of Bandon. Calling it 'as civil a plantation as most in England', Boyle compared it to the prosperous settlements in the north of Ireland:

My new town of Bandon is more in compass than that of Londonderry that my [sic] walls are stronger, thicker, and higher than theirs, only their [sic] have a stronger rampier within.... In my town there is built a strong bridge on the river, two large session houses, two market houses, with two fair churches.

(Townshend 1904:44)

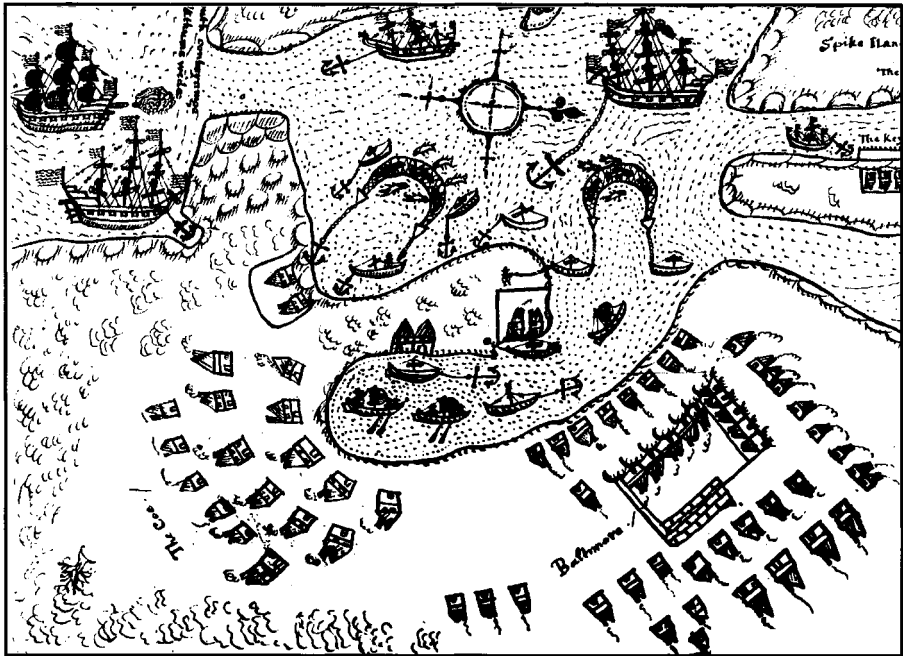


Figure 10.7 Baltimore Castle and town, 1632. Wentworth Woodhouse Strafford Papers 20/(b)/100 (with permission of the Director, Sheffield City Libraries and Olive, Countess Fitzwilliam's Wentworth Settlement Trustees).

The bridge, walls, civic buildings and one of the churches of Bandon were replaced long ago. Christ Church is the earliest surviving church of the Munster Plantation. It was founded in 1610 apparently as a cruciform structure, 30 feet (10 m) wide by at least 60 feet (20 m) long, with transepts 24 feet (8m) square (see Figure 10.8). The success of Boyle's 'civil' plantation led to a porch addition in 1629, and the nave walls were raised and the bell tower altered in the eighteenth century. But with the waning of British influence in Ireland, and in the absence of a viable congregation, Christ Church was de-consecrated in the previous generation and, after years of decay, is now serving as a community heritage centre. Not enough comparative structures are known from Munster to judge its typicality as a Plantation church.

PROTO-COLONIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Archaeological activity in Northern Ireland has a different context from that of the South. Public majorities on each side of the political border have strikingly differing views of their pasts, and these have coloured their



Figure 10.8 Christ Church, Bandon, south nave and transept, with a later chapel blocking an original window. Note the change of masonry two-thirds up the walls; below are coarse, thin slabs horizontally laid in the seventeenth century; above is uneven ashlar block construction, contemporary with the insertion of Gothic style windows in the eighteenth century (photo, E.Klingelhofer).

governments' interest in archaeology. In the South, proto-colonial archaeology has found little support, but in the North it has been welcomed as a way of verifying the history, and distinctiveness, of the Protestant settlement. This has involved basic urban research at such cities as Derry, Coleraine and Carrickfergus (Lacey 1991). The countryside too has been studied, especially the 'bawn' settlements typical of the Ulster plantations of the 1610s, some of which, such as Bellaghy and Tully Castle, have been partially restored and opened to the public. It was hoped that the deserted village of Salterstown would provide useful information to compare with American colonial settlements. In North America, early colonial sites of a single, brief occupation are not uncommon, but the test excavations at Salterstown found a lengthy and complicated occupation history that belied the documents (Miller 1989). My work on Raleigh sites in County Cork also suggests a greater intensity of land use than in the New World.

CONCLUSIONS

The proto-colonial archaeology of Elizabethan Ireland, particularly in the Irish Republic, has only recently begun, and caution warns against advancing conclusions at this stage. Nevertheless, some general observations are justified, because even limited fieldwork can significantly correct research dependent on insufficient documentation. I have previously asserted (Klingelhofer 1990) that the urban model was not necessarily the key to successful colonization in Ireland and does not explain why Munster failed and Ulster flourished. Archaeological and cartographic studies now provide several examples of town and village planning in the First and Second Plantations of Munster. It can further be argued that previous sixteenth-century state colonization, and most private efforts, did have an urban element at their core, for example, Maryborough, Philipstown, Sir Thomas Smith's unrealized 'City of Elizabeth' in northeast Ireland, and the short-lived 'Cittie of Raleigh' in Elizabethan Virginia. At the beginning of the next reign, but reflecting late Elizabethan ideas, George Weymouth wrote *The Jewell of Artes* to advance English overseas expansion. It contains a serious treatise on the planning and defence of colonial towns, accompanied by fanciful drawings containing fortified town plans of circular, rectangular and polygonal shape, often with highly concentric interior designs (Quinn and Quinn 1983:231–41).

Both Munster and Ulster had confident developers such as Raleigh, Boyle and Crooke who tried to establish population centres at strategic locations and to make such settlements profitable and secure by ruthlessly exploiting the natural resources and the native population. Yet, there were important differences between the colonies. In Elizabethan Munster, new settlers were always a minority. Until Kinsale, the Elizabethan plantations were limited spatially and legally. The towns and villages in Munster proved ill-prepared for defence, but it is less certain why so few castles, bawns and fortified houses of the countryside

successfully withstood the rebels. Rural defended sites are common in the Ulster Plantation, and American archaeologists are finding similar, but wooden, structures in seventeenth-century Virginia (Noël Hume 1994:148–55). My 1993–96 excavations at Edmund Spenser's castle at Kilcolman, Co. Cork, sought to discover to what extent the castle defences had been maintained, improved or possibly weakened by Spenser's rebuilding of a late medieval Irish tower-house and bawn.

The twelve-year span of the First Plantation of Munster may be too brief for substantive archaeological information to have been produced on the precise modes of domination and resistance in Elizabethan Ireland. Yet the colonial documents, comprising mostly reports from military and civil officers to Elizabeth and her senior counsellors, focus on just those issues, which are essentially the reason why the documents were created: to ensure English dominance and to forestall or eliminate resistance. Archaeology can, however, supply details about changing patterns of settlement, as the Irish *clachans* were abandoned in much the same fashion as the later Highland clearances in Scotland. And more light could be shed on the nature of Irish resistance, described by contemporaries in the same terms of treacherous barbarity ascribed to the Native Americans. Further study of military sites could produce evidence, independent of English sources, concerning the level of Irish technological capabilities in the armed struggle that overwhelmed the First Plantation, but would subsequently also end Irish independence.

The next stage of proto-colonial archaeology in southern Ireland will need to advance beyond the excavation of 'type sites' closely tied to the documents and the few surviving maps. In Northern Ireland, a series of plantation maps by Thomas Craven in the 1620s and 1630s offers many details of both colonial and native landscapes; these will continue to be an important asset for proto-colonial research (Andrews 1978:11–13). Eventually, data will be accumulated throughout Ireland to examine the deeper, more difficult questions about social and economic forces prevailing at the local level and, most problematic of all, the relations between the Elizabethan settlers and the Irish whom they displaced, but did not destroy (Quinn 1966b). Important work is already being undertaken in the urban centres, where a much-needed chronology of artefact types, of which the most important are the regional potteries, has been initiated from excavations in Waterford and Cork, as well as Dublin, of medieval walled enclosures that were not part of the Tudor and Stuart colonizing efforts.

A 'critical mass' of physical evidence is needed to identify the material cultures of the three groups competing in the proto-colonial period: the native Irish, the 'Old English' of Catholic and Norman heritage, and the 'New English' Protestant colonists. At that point, research will come up against serious methodological questions. How do patterns of artefact assemblages explain the socio-economic conditions determining lifestyles? If ethnic differences can be established, how do they inform relations among the three groups? Answers to both questions could be complicated by the effects on material culture of a fourth group of people whose behaviour was characterized by political pragmatism and about

whom we know very little from colonial documents: that is the merchants and artisans of the old medieval cities, whose fluctuating loyalties are likely to reflect ambiguities of identity. The simplest approach would be to look for temporal changes from one material culture type to another, and ascertain the chronology and nature (e.g. destructiveness) of such changes. Then more discrete questions can be addressed. What exactly was the make-up of the tenant population in Elizabethan Munster? Where were English colonists the majority, and where did the native Irish dominate? Is this reflected in the later histories of these localities? Can one estimate cost/resource factors, especially those of food and shelter? Under certain circumstances, rubbish pits, privies and middens can offer biological evidence for the quantity and variety of diet. Colonial standards of living could be addressed by a study of pottery containers, their volume, strength and distance of travel, but is this data relevant to the largely aceramic Irish peasantry? Materials and labour could be compared for building types, on a site-by-site basis, but can these be applied more broadly: spatially, for example, regionally in terms of the prevalence of building types, and temporally, in terms of durability or replacement rate? The discrete questions posed at this secondary level of investigation will indeed prove difficult, but they are, after all, the ones worth asking. They point us to the final level of investigation, explaining the behaviour of identifiable groups and their members under specific historical circumstances.

Changes in the intellectual and political climates—north and south of the Irish border—are bringing opportunities to seek out archaeological evidence relating to the trauma that has deeply affected both Irish and English, both Protestant and Catholic, and still scars many. Let us trust that the ghost of the colonial past can be exorcised, and that the careful assemblage of facts will challenge and dispel the myths of both conquered and conqueror.

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11 *West India: iconographic documents from the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in Brazil*

MARIA L. QUARTIM DE MORAES

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Brazil was a vast territory of forests and rivers incorporating more than 8,000 km of coast along the Atlantic Ocean. It has been estimated that the indigenous population numbered several million. Today they amount to 240,000 Indians, a very small portion of the Brazilian population. Many indigenous societies vanished from the face of the earth as a consequence of what is referred to by a shameful euphemism as ‘the encounter’ between the Old and the New Worlds. As da Cunha (1992:12) points out:

This unseen genocide was the outcome of a complex process performed by men and micro-organisms, but whose ultimate motors could be reduced to two sources: greed and ambition, cultural forms of the expansion of merchant capitalism.

Indeed, to paraphrase Jennings (1975): America was not discovered, it was assaulted.

Colonial production was established through slavery: from *pau-Brazil* (‘Brazil wood’) to the sugar-cane plantations, everything demanded human energy. West Indians were the first to be enslaved, prior to the importation of African slaves. Portuguese legislation made a distinction between allied Indians and enemy Indians, who could be enslaved (Royal Chart, 3 March 1686). Brazilian Indians were enslaved up until the nineteenth century in spite of the efforts of the Catholic Church and Portuguese government to prevent slavery.

With the initiation of African slavery in the Americas, ‘triangular trade’, the basis of the New World colonial system, was established. It consisted of a vicious exchange system: cheap European manufactured products were traded for Africans, who were in turn exchanged for tropical riches, such as sugar, to be sold in Europe with considerable profit. From then on Brazil became the biggest importer of African slaves. Slavery was formally maintained up until 1888, well

beyond the declaration of Brazilian independence from Portugal, which took place in 1822.

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY TRAVELLERS: DUTCH BRAZIL

By the end of the sixteenth century, sugar had become an important product for the Dutch economy (by 1594 there were twenty-nine sugar refineries in the Netherlands). When the Portuguese and Spanish crowns became united, however, the Netherlands lost its access to Brazilian-Portuguese sugar. Thus, economic interests were one of the primary factors stimulating the Dutch occupation of Brazil which began with the capture of Pernambuco in 1630. The brief, but intense, Dutch occupation of Brazil (1630–45) was led by the extraordinary figure of the Prince of Orange, Count Joahan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen (1604–79), in the service of the Dutch West India Company. After seven years of war he made an alliance with sugar-cane plantation owners because his company lacked the means and knowledge to produce sugar. The Dutch West Indian Company profits came from trading the sugar produced by the Portuguese-Brazilian plantation owners.

The ‘humanist prince in the New World’, Maurits of Nassau was a cultivated man who left an artistic and scientific legacy besides his commercial enterprise. He brought to Brazil a significant number of Dutch scholars who produced an important ‘*corpus brasilianum*’¹, including the first lively portraits of the tropical landscape and its peoples painted by artists such as Albert Eckhout (1610–66) and Frans Post (1612–80). Eckhout’s portraits of the indigenous population are of exceptional interest and were described by Sturtevant as ‘the first convincing European paintings of Indian physiognomy and body build’ (quoted in Valladres 1981:27). In fact, the eight life-size illustrations of the inhabitants of Dutch Brazil represent the several ethnic groups of Brazil, as shown below.

- 1 The two Tupi paintings show individuals belonging to one tribe speaking the Tupi-Guarani dialect (see Figure 11.1). In the sixteenth century they were the most important group living in Brazil—occupying an area from the modern state of São Paulo, in the south, to the mouth of the Amazon river in the north. They were peasants and practised cannibalism. By the seventeenth century many Tupi Indians had become Christians and worked in the European plantations. It is in this context in which Eckhout painted a ‘domesticated’ woman, carrying her baby with a typical sugar-cane plantation farm as background. The acculturation of the Tupi is evident in the use of European cloths.
- 2 The Tarairiu pair of paintings represent individuals from one Gespeaking tribe, who are now extinct (see Figure 11.2). They were depicted as cannibals, but in fact did not engage in cannibalistic practices. Probably to emphasize their ‘savagery’, Eckhout depicted them in an uncultivated landscape carrying severed human hands and feet.



Figure 11.2 The Dutch artists of the seventeenth century: Eckhout's representations of the Tarairiu Indians from the Ge-speaking tribe.



Figure 11.1 The Dutch artists of the seventeenth century: Eckhout's representations of the Tupi Indians.

- 3 The Mameluc woman and the Mulato man represent new ethnic types: the woman was the descendant of a European man and an Indian woman (see Figure 11.3). Such women were appreciated and were accepted into the higher social levels of colonial society much more readily than men of indigenous descent.
- 4 The African woman and man are one of the oldest paintings of Africans in Brazil in their native costumes (see Figure 11.4).

Are Eckhout's paintings realistic? Both the richness of detail, colour and form and his scientific concern in reproducing natural characteristics mean that his paintings constitute fairly accurate representations. The eight characters of the *Brasiliana* series are equal in dignity, having been depicted as nobles from the Flemish Court. However, an element of passivity filters into the portrait of domesticated indians as opposed to the freedom of the 'barbarians'. In this sense it is interesting to observe that the Tarairiu couple represented in a 'savage state' are shown as cannibals, which was untrue. In fact, the Tupi are to be assigned this cultural characteristic. It is also interesting to observe that all couples are barefoot, except the 'savages'. As we will see in Debret's paintings of nineteenth-century Brazil, the bare foot was the most visible sign of slavery. Last but not least:

It is about time that Eckhout's paintings are analyzed according to what they mean and not just what they represent. Eckhout should



Figure 11.3 The Dutch artists of the seventeenth century: Eckhout's representations of a Mulato man and a Mameluc woman.



Figure 11.4 The Dutch artists of the seventeenth century: Eckhout's representations of an African man and woman in native costume.

not be seen as a simple science reporter, or a Dutch painter lost in the tropics, reproducing strange people or unknown plants and animals. He should be acknowledged as a singular artist of great force, originality and sensibility.

(Leite 1991:24)

NINETEENTH-CENTURY TRAVELLERS: THE ENLIGHTENMENT VISION

In spite of an extensive literature published during its first 300 years, Brazil was rather unknown in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1808 the transferral of the Portuguese court to Rio de Janeiro provoked by the Napoleonic invasion in Portugal opened the main Brazilian port of Rio de Janeiro to England and other 'friendly' nations. Brazil ceased to be a colony and became the seat of the Portuguese Imperial government. This fact prompted deep changes in social relations in Rio de Janeiro, now an imperial city. Public life was intensified and the urban landscape was also modified.

Foreign travellers who visited or lived in Brazil during the nineteenth century, especially in the first half, brought a new vision. Influenced by Enlightenment

ideas, scientists and artists adopted a new concept of nature, involving detailed description. According to Buffon, whose work was a precursor to the ‘archaeology of nature’, to unravel nature’s secrets means to know it from its physical manifestations. The testimonial aspect of this naturalist vision has to be emphasized. Scientists and artists turned the New World into a great laboratory. During the nineteenth century, flora, fauna, men and women were all the object of extensive documentation. Thus, in three years the great naturalist, Martius (1794–1868), accomplished the *Flora Brasiliense*—a thorough account of the 20,000 species which form the basis of Brazilian botany. At the same time, another eminent naturalist, Auguste de Saint-Hilaire (1779–1853), travelled around Brazil over a period of six years leaving a large body of documentation about the Brazilian natural and social worlds.

Jean-Baptiste Debret (1768–1848)

Giving so much importance to the advantage of being able to admire the beauty of Brazilian atmosphere, and mainly to the glory of propagating knowledge of the beaux-arts among an infant people, I could not hesitate to join the distinguished French artists who sacrificed for a time their particular interests to participate in this picturesque expedition.

(Debret [1834] 1989:14)

These words begin Debret’s report of his participation in the 1816 French Artistic Mission, testifying to his civilizing project of elevating the imperial capital to its new functions. Despite the neo-classical tradition in which he had been trained, he soon incorporated the rudeness and harshness of Brazilian social relations into his aesthetic patterns.

What kind of society does Debret reveal? According to Ferdinand Denis, the population at this time was around 4.7 million; 2.5 million were free; 1.1 million were slaves; and 800,000 were known to be Indians. Hence, the following remark is not surprising:

In this country every thing is supported by black work. In the country, he waters the plantations with his sweat, in the city he carries heavy burdens for the traders. If he belongs to the capitalist he is rented as a worker. Always badly fed and ill treated...without the consolation of the past and deprived of the confidence of the future the African forgets the present [and] ends up dying thousands of yards from his country, with no reward for his belittled services.

(Debret [1834] 1989:24)

Even Debret, who states that the situation of the Brazilian slave is better than that of others elsewhere, presents indisputable evidence of the terror suffered by the blacks (see Figure 11.5). Analysing Debret’s watercolours, Rodrigo Naves (1994) remarks how his art form is affected by the perverse logic of slavery.

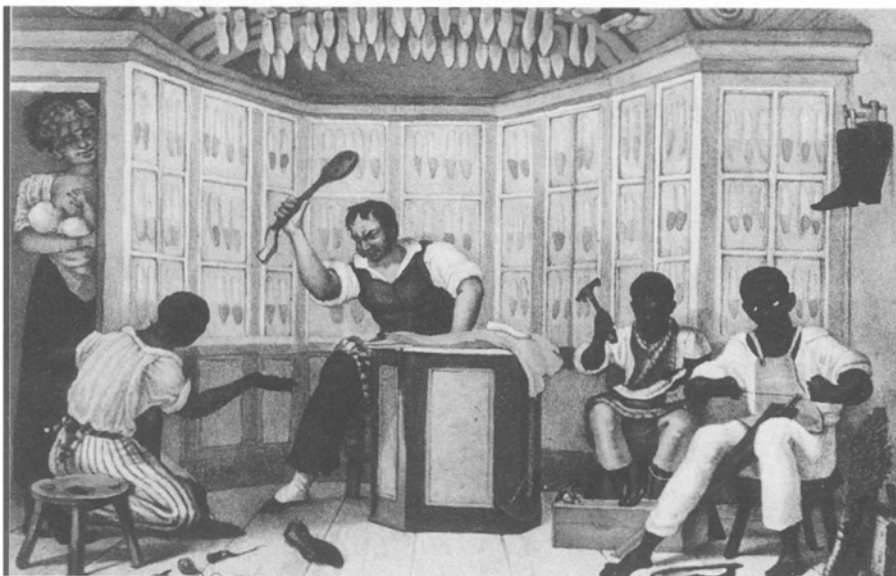
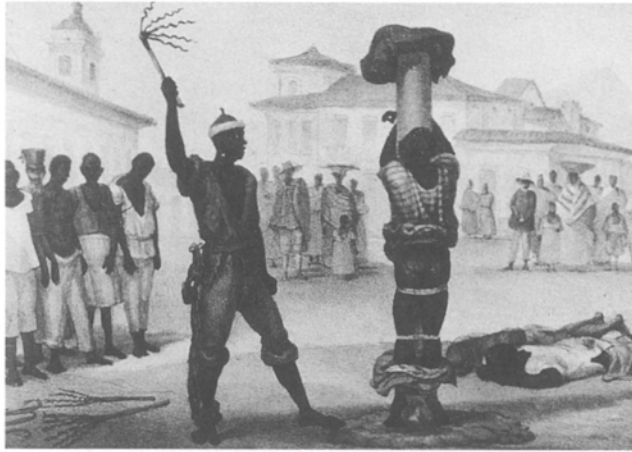


Figure 11.5 The French artists of the nineteenth century: Debret's representations of slavery in Brazilian society showing the cruelty and terror suffered by the slaves.

In the watercolours the dubious status of *escravos de ganho* ('gainslaves')—the majority of the slaves in Rio—who only had to report to their owners by the end of the day, when they were to give them a pre-established sum—was represented in a highly revelatory light. Temporarily free to accomplish their task—selling snacks, fruits, carrying burdens—the 'gain slaves' appear in the city with a freedom impossible to be found in country slaves.... Debret depicts with perfection the vitality of Rio streets. In his scenarios, black men and women and even whites present themselves with a naturalness almost reminiscent of joy. However the form of representation of this coloured and agitated existence contradicts that vitality. The bodies and the drawing composition reveal a weakness unable to confirm the slaves' 'freedom'.

(Naves 1994:4, 10)

The moments of liberty and joy expressed in some of the scenes (see Figures 11.6 and 11.7) are pervaded by the violence of the slave-owner relationship that dominated other spheres. The 'gain slaves' became an allegory of social relations, or else a proto-form of the relations of dependency and submission that still tie millions of Brazilians to patriarchal rule.

A WAY OF LIFE: SLAVERY AS A RELATIONAL PATTERN

The 'gain blacks' were everywhere in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro: the streets were full of them (see Figures 11.7, 11.8 and 11.9). They supported both themselves and their masters, rich or poor. For a master in misery, his last resource was a *negro de ganho* ('gain black'), even an old one. Also known as the 'small capitalists', the urban middle class was satisfied with a weekly income which allowed them to lead an idle life quite different from the coffee farms with large numbers of slaves. To have slaves was a 'lifestyle': 'former slaves, when liberated, had slaves of their own who were rented as

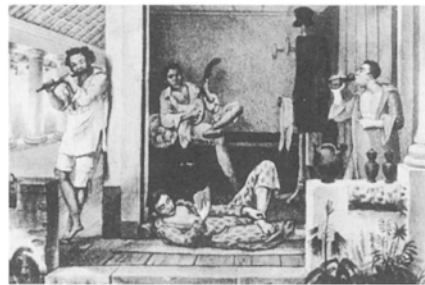


Figure 11.6 The French artists of the nineteenth century: Debret's representations of slave—master relationships in the domestic sphere suggesting a harmony which is exposed by the violence pervading other scenes.



Figure 11.7 The French artists of the nineteenth century: Debret's representations of slave—master relationships in the domestic sphere and on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

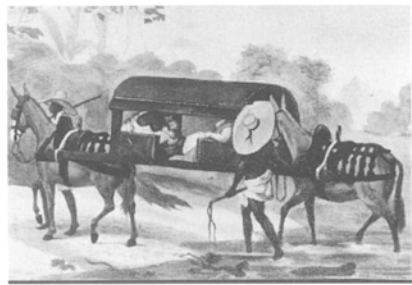
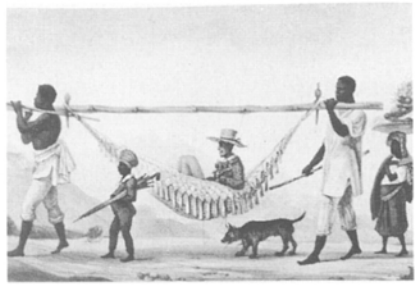
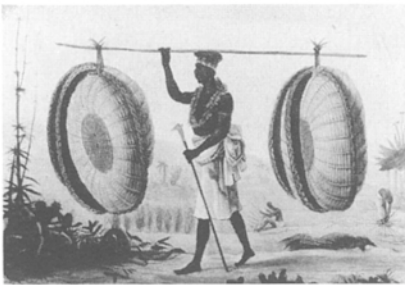


Figure 11.8 The French artists of the nineteenth century: Debret's representations of the 'gain slaves', *escravos de ganho*, who were sent out to work on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.



Figure 11.9 The French artists of the nineteenth century: Debret's representations of the 'gain slaves', *escravos de ganho*, on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

servants, pages, typographers, barber's aids, or "gain blacks" in the streets' (da Cunha 1988:xiv).

The slavery question pervades Brazilian social thought, varying in importance and value according to different thinkers. The inaugural work of Gilberto Freyre (1933)—in which slavery is said to appear in a positive light—shows the affective and interactive dimension of the relationship between blacks and whites. Caio Prado Jr and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda are proponents of another argument, and here the negative and corrosive aspects of this civilizatory paradigm—a slave-based/monocultural enterprise—are also emphasized. From these three central contributions it emerges that the worst consequences of slavery are related to the myth of idleness and the devaluation of black populations. Slave roots, it is argued, are an impediment to the essential rights of citizens.

In his *Vision of Paradise*, Buarque de Holanda (1969) examines the European social imagination in the centuries following the discovery of America through a series of mythical motifs, such as fantastic geography and prodigal nature. From these mythical motifs the author distinguishes two tendencies which were to be projected onto the historical progression of the two hemispheres in the Americas. The first was embodied by the pilgrims who set out for British America and was prompted by the desire to dominate the desert harshness. Free from religious and civil oppressions at home, this community aspired to realize a pure evangelical ideal. The second tendency was manifested by the Iberian settlers who fantasized about indulging themselves in a paradise of natural richness and celestial beatitude. The gratuitous gift could not imply any labour. According to Buarque de Holanda these tendencies explain the further distinctions between the North American and Ibero-American societal models of development. In his classic *Roots of Brazil*

(Holanda [1936] 1969), he pointed out the ‘organizational inability’ of Ibero—American societies. According to Holanda, Iberians have always:

been unaffected either by the modern religion of work or utilitarian tasks. To a good Portuguese or Spaniard the struggle to earn a living never seemed as dignifying as an honourable idleness. Both aspired to a master lifestyle, excluding any effort whatsoever, any preoccupation at all.

(Holanda [1936] 1969:10)

The disdain allotted to workers—slaves, liberated or free—is therefore understandable. Throughout Brazilian history their labour activity never implied a recognition of their citizenship. In this way, the ruling class, composed of plantation owners and high administrative bureaucrats, has always held an enormous power, practically undisputed. Brazil still suffers from its evil consequences. The specific features of the Brazilian independence process and its de-territorialized workforce (between 1550 and 1850 around 4 million Africans were brought here) are the root of Brazilian authoritarianism, which is also pervaded by patriarchy (Alencastro 1987:19). The morality implied in the mercantile enterprise—where profit is generated through unequal exchange—became constitutive of relations between peoples and cultures and the paradigm of relations among countries of Western Europe, Africa and the ‘New World’.

Focusing on Rio’s shift from colonial city to imperial capital, the work of Mary Karash (1987) addresses the slave’s everyday life, establishing a direct dialogue with Gilberto Freyre’s much earlier work (1933). Being a complete reconstruction of Brazilian slaves’ everyday lives, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro 1808–1850* challenges certain myths regarding the nature of Brazilian slavery. To begin with Karash refutes the idea that Brazilian slaves, coming from Western Africa (as was the case in Bahia), represented the elite of African peoples, providing an accurate map of African ethnic origins showing that the majority of slaves (around 70 per cent) came from Central Africa (Congo, Angola, Benguela). She then goes on to challenge the myth, generally known as the Freyre thesis, that the benevolent nature of Brazil’s slave masters meant that slave life in Brazil was less rigorous than in North America (Karash 1987: xix). This myth has been propounded by the assumption that there is no documentation regarding black slavery that can provide information in place of the official documents, which were burnt during abolition. Karash’s (1987) argument relies on data concerning urban slavery, which not only clarifies its importance, showing that in 1850 c. 80,000 slaves worked in Rio de Janeiro (a number never equalled in any other American city), but also shows that in the post-1830 period most of the New Africans sold on the Rio market were children, about 5 or 6 years of age, and young teenagers. The slaves died at a higher rate than that of the free population, and many of those who died were young boys and women in their childbearing years. Through a detailed analysis of the poor conditions under which slaves lived in Rio—the physical punishment they received, their food,

lodgings and economic situation—Karash challenges the Freyre thesis, demonstrating that far more slaves died of disease under such conditions than non-slaves. Slaves who were:

badly fed, badly dressed, exposed to all injuries of the air, [and] subject to almost continuous work could not preserve their health or resist the attacks of disease. The result was inevitable ‘depopulation’ among the slaves, or, as a planter’s manual admitted, America ‘devoured’ the blacks.

(Karash 1987:33)

Thus, Brazil not only devoured its slaves, but carried it out mainly through infanticide. Children and the young (including young mothers) were hit with more intensity by the material deprivation imposed by slavery. At the same time, by the force of their presence, African culture transformed the whites’ everyday life, through nannies, maids, the ‘old black woman’ and omnipresent feminine figures at home and in the streets; not to mention the process of miscegenation, creating a country in which most of the population is not white, but not black either. In fact, Brazilian life is not ‘black or white’. Slavery in Brazil was as abominable as anywhere else. However, in contrast to the United States, the fact that society was not broken up into ‘untouchable’ groups allowed for a more extensive mixture of races and colours somewhat more complex than a straightforward identification of slave with black.

CONCLUDING: BRAZIL AS IT IS

Colonial heritage is a heavy burden for present generations. In this context, the fascination provoked by the United States—especially the Puritan colonies—is not surprising, nor is the way in which they have been taken as a positive ideal paradigm for democracy and economic development vis-à-vis the historical vicissitudes of their poor cousins from the Iberian Peninsula. The polarity between the North American and the Hispanic American paradigms of civilization is a central question in Latin American social thought. Buarque de Holanda takes this polarity as a point of departure in explaining our disadvantaged state with respect to the emergence of citizenship. The cordial Brazilian man is a synthesis of our limits and imposes a negative vision towards our past (and present). Gilberto Freyre (1933) in this sense represents the scholar who assessed our roots positively, bringing out unknown aspects of Brazil’s history of slavery, revealing the originality and success of the Iberian—African encounter on Brazilian soil.

Is Brazil less racist than the United States? Brazil is the land of miscegenation, where colour qualification varies according to social status, as opposed to the USA, where a drop of black blood makes someone irremediably black. The most important factor in determining social status in Brazil is economic power: a

successful person, in Brazil, is not black any more. On the other hand, Brazil is a country where the family—as a hierarchical group—constitutes the paradigm of all social relations which is not conducive to individualistic patterns of behaviour.

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha addresses another dimension of the polarity between north and south: the question of the ‘kindness’ of Brazilian slavery. In response to both the proponents and opponents of this debate, da Cunha (1985:12) argues that ‘the paternalism described by Gilberto Freyre (1933), very much criticized subsequently, had a real and crucial existence’. However, this paternalism did not mean that Brazilian slavery was a particularly gentle system in comparison to others. Rather, ‘the Brazilian way—characterized by favours, personal loyalties, “paternalism”—resulted in the creation of dependent strata’ (da Cunha 1985:12).

NOTE

- 1 Which consisted mainly of three volumes: a historical account written by Gaspar Barlaeus and illustrated by the painter Frans Post; a natural history book by Piso and Margraff; and a travel account by Neuhoft.

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12 *Subaltern voices? Finding the spaces between things and words*

MARTIN HALL

I

How can historical archaeology develop an understanding of resistance? How can historical archaeologists avoid mapping and remapping the material culture of domination—the houses, ceramics, glasswares and personal possessions of people in positions of power? ‘Small things forgotten’, the mundanities that make up the assemblages from many sites, have long been celebrated as the mark of the common people. But, more often than not, the collections with which we work were left by slave owners, masters, bourgeois householders and farmers. The underclasses, often so difficult to find in the documentary record, are equally elusive in their material traces as well.

In this chapter, I argue that one way of changing the perspectives of historical archaeology, of finding what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1985) has called ‘subaltern voices’, is to concentrate on contradiction rather than consistency—to look for those areas of confusion where sources such as built form, probate records, ceramic sets, travellers’ accounts, glasswares and the like seem to defy interpretation as consistent, mutually reinforcing strands of evidence. My contention is that these could be points of vulnerability, places where the heavy, muffling shrouds of domination come unstitched, the point of disappearance of the subaltern; the aporia, the ‘blind-spot where understanding and knowledge is blocked’ (Young 1990:164).

But how can people who have been systematically denied a voice be ‘heard’ through a patchwork conglomerate of disparate sources? Here, again, recent writing in critical cultural theory is helpful. Homi Bhabha has shown how hegemonic forms of control require repetition and differentiation to be effective. But the very process of repetition introduces uncertainty and panic, while to establish difference is to emphasize contrast. The consequence is ambivalence: why does the ‘self-evident’ cultural superiority of the person with power constantly have to be repeated (Bhabha 1994)?

For Bhabha, such ambivalence is diagnostic of a 'third space' between those with power and those subjected to power, an area of interaction where the 'mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code' is destroyed. Unrepresentable in itself, the 'third space' sets the conditions for enunciation, ensuring 'that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew' (Bhabha 1994:37). In the rest of this chapter, I will expand these points through an extended example: the archaeology of colonialism at Africa's southern tip, and the problem of the supply of women to ensure the continuity of colonial society.

II

The Cape of Good Hope was claimed by the Dutch East India Company in 1652. A rough fort—and later, a more substantial castle—was built and an orthogonal grid of streets laid out, the skeleton of present-day Cape Town. Five years later, the company granted land rights to the first free farmers, the beginning of a process of colonial expansion which was eventually to result in the appropriation of all of southern Africa for Europe.

Life for an ordinary soldier in the company's colonial possessions was hard. Many employees were permanently indebted, poorly fed and housed and subject to brutal punishment. The right to farm, initially along the banks of the Liesbeeck River and later further in the interior, was desired by many. The acquisition of a wife was the key to such freedom (Hall 1997). This was underlined by one marriage custom. After the betrothed couple visited the castle's Matrimonial Court (which formally authorized the intended union), their exit was barred by the drawn swords of the junior officers and the castle's *rondegangers*, or time keepers—the soldiers responsible for turning the hourglass and sounding the castle bell on the hour. It was customary for the couple to purchase their ransom with a large gratuity (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:64). Clearly, such rituals served to emphasize the significance of the rite of passage. But, in common with many colonies, women were in short supply at the Cape. In 1679, of 142 free adults, eighty-seven were men and fifty-five women. The garrison was almost entirely male, and by 1717, when the total free population had grown to about 2,000, there were considerably fewer adult women than adult men. During the eighteenth century, the ratio settled down to about three men for every two women (Guelke 1989).

One solution to this shortage was to bring orphan girls from Amsterdam (see, for example, Raidt [1726] 1973:161). Such orphans had their possessions inventoried before their departure, and their value was paid out in cash against an order on the VOC Pay Office once they had married at the Cape. In other words, to arrive at the Cape and refuse marriage was to face immediate destitution. From the prospective husband's point of view, there was a double

bonus—a wife and the possibility of a small dowry. But despite the apparent elegance of this form of compulsory indenture, in which the care of orphans was removed from civic responsibility in the Netherlands and women were provided for the new colony, it does not seem to have continued for long. Perhaps the system was too close to a white slave traffic for Dutch moral sensibilities; some relatives of the orphans prevented their export (Mandelbrote [1785] 1921:53).

A second solution was to turn to a more manipulable source of women—slaves. In 1681 Ryklof van Goens complained that white men and slave women danced naked together in the slave lodge. Four years later, Commissioner van Rheede commented on the number of children living in the slave barracks in the Heerengracht who had European fathers, fiftyeight at the time of his inspection, writing that ‘the Company does nothing to prevent this promiscuous intercourse, since, for one thing, it tends to multiply the slave population, and does away with the necessity of importing fresh slaves’. Van Rheede also noted that ‘three or four generations of this admixture...have produced a half-caste population—a mestizo class—but a slight shade darker than some Europeans’ (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:125). Although the company took a moral line, dictating heavy punishments for European men caught in such dalliance, miscegenation had the advantage of producing generations of Cape-born women whose servile and lascivious origins could be deracinated to effect a transformation to *huisvrouw*. In his now-classic study of miscegenation at the Cape, Heese (1984) has shown how numerous children were born with European fathers and mothers who were either slaves or themselves the mixed descendants of slave women and European men. Mixed marriages became a feature of life at the Cape from the earliest years of the settlement. The first to be recorded was in 1656, between Jan Woutersz van Middelburg and Catharina Anthonis van Bengale. Van Middelburg was appointed superintendent of Robben Island, where the couple’s first child was born in the following year (*ibid.*).

Despite his moral rectitude, then, Van Rheede set up a system which effectively turned the transformation of mixed-descent women from the slave barracks into a commercial arrangement. At the age of 22, such women could obtain manumission if they could speak passable Dutch, had embraced Reformed Christianity and could pay the company a fee of 100 guilders—the reimbursement of the cost of their upkeep (Heese 1984). The rub, of course, was the fee. Few slave women aged 22 were likely to have such money, encouraging them to accept sponsorship in return for marriage. Another option was for a European man first to establish a family with a ‘*houvrouw*’, or kept woman, and then to legitimate his line through marriage and baptism. This form of concubinage increased in popularity through the eighteenth century. Children from such marriages were fully absorbed within colonial society, and the daughters of such parents became ‘European’ marriage partners (Heese 1984).

III

The solution to the shortage of women at the colonial Cape, then, was to facilitate miscegenation between European men and slave women, legitimated by manumission, marriage and deracination wherever possible. Although the Cape developed its own distinctive colonial culture, it shared with places like Batavia a trajectory towards extensive creolization as former slaves brought language, music, cooking and other cultural traits into their new family identities. Hence the popularity of eighteenth-century travel accounts; the Cape was another country, and these books were ethnographies, describing the unusual to the credulous citizens of London, Amsterdam or Paris.

But such a solution carried its own contradiction within the hierarchical structure of patriarchy. Slave women kept as concubines or converted to housewives bore children who confused the distinctions between dominant and subordinate fractions. Concubinage and intermarriage were both confirmation and compromise of racial hierarchy, resulting in a 'third space' where the 'primordial unity or fixity' of cultural symbols was in doubt, where signs could be 'appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew' (Bhabha 1994:37). Such lack of fixity in cultural meaning can be demonstrated by reading together several mundane texts of everyday life; an account by an early eighteenth-century visitor to Cape Town, faunal assemblages and official company statements of slave diet and domestic records.

Cape Town's seventeenth-century castle was a microcosm of life in the colony, housing the governor and senior officials, the garrison, smiths, coopers, wheelwrights, carpenters, merchants and slaves. It has yielded a rich archaeology, including faunal assemblages from both the officers' kitchens and, close by, a storeroom almost certainly used to house slaves (Hall 1992, 1996).

At first sight, the faunal components of these two assemblages show a simple differentiation between high and low status diets. Common to both were the more abundant shoal fish, mutton, beef, wild and domestic fowl, black mussels and periwinkles. The frequencies of body parts in the two assemblages show the sort of differentiation that is so characteristic in faunal assemblages from plantations in the American South. The military officials enjoyed leg of lamb at their table, while slaves were given shoulder of mutton and sheep heads, which they broke open for the brains. Parallel differences are reflected in the avian fauna. The assemblage from the officers' kitchen has twice as many domestic species than the slave assemblage and, of the wild species, the slave assemblage has a higher proportion of the less palatable marine birds such as flamingos, penguins and cormorants. Immature chickens and pigeons were reserved solely for the officers, who also more frequently enjoyed the fleshy leg bones. Black mussels were about as common in the meals of both officers and slaves, but periwinkles were ten times more frequent in the diet of the underclass.

These relative values of different foods are borne out by official memoranda. For example, on 11 March 1710, the Council at the Cape ruled

that each company slave was to receive 40 pounds of rice, or bread, per month and half a pound of fresh meat per day, and in addition half an aum (about 70 litres) of salted fish was to be issued to each of the fifty slaves each week: three or four fish for each adult every seven days (Leibbrandt, 1896). Prices of meat fixed by the Dutch East India Company in the eighteenth century show that pork was valued above mutton, which was in turn preferred to beef. This documentary evidence is supported by the archaeological assemblage. There was a low incidence of pig bones from both castle assemblages, and the ratio of sheep to cattle was approximately 6 to 1 in the officers' assemblage and 3 to 1 in the slave assemblage. Favoured wild game was expensive, fish was cheap and marine birds and shellfish were not worth mentioning. But there was a deeper level of complexity in the meaning of food, and in the differentiation between slave and master. This complexity is revealed in a contemporary account of the Cape.

Otto Mentzel had been born in Neustadtel, lower Silesia, in 1709 and arrived at Cape Town in July 1733 at the age of 24. Son of an aristocratic Prussian family associated with the court, he had enrolled with the Dutch East India Company as a soldier, but was soon given a sinecure consistent with his standing in life, and spent the next eight years tutoring the children of prominent colonists and enjoying Cape society. He left the Cape inadvertently when the ship to which he was delivering letters sailed from Table Bay before he could get ashore, and Mentzel found himself back in Amsterdam without any personal possessions. In the following year, Mentzel entered the Prussian civil service, retiring as Chief of Police in Silesia (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925). Mentzel only started writing about the Cape in the 1780s, some forty years after his departure, and then in reaction to other texts on southern Africa that had appeared in intervening years. This perspective—subjective intent portrayed as objective account—makes the inconsistencies in Mentzel's text particularly revealing.

Mentzel pities the arduous workload of slaves and their frequent bad treatment at the hands of their masters, yet elsewhere he provides, without comment, a detailed account of flogging, the rubbing of salt water into wounds, riveting in chains, breaking on the wheel, crucifixion and breaking on the rack (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925). In contrast, again, the reader is presented with a romantic apology for slavery: 'although the slave has worked fairly hard and suffered from heat during the day, yet he is happy and sings, and plays on his raveking (ramkie) and even dances' (Mandelbrote [1787] 1944). But elsewhere Mentzel reveals his disgust at contact with slaves, their habit of chewing betel leaves and shell lime, and the smell of hair smeared with coconut oil, 'clammy and offensive to European nostrils' (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:131).

Mentzel's complicated consciousness of slaves finds a homology in his attitude to food. Although he tells us that 'elaborate dinner parties do not form part of the social life of the people of the Cape' because 'mutton forms the staple diet; excellent mutton, undoubtedly, and made more appetizing by being prepared in a variety of ways, but—still mutton' (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:101), Mentzel

does enthuse about the Wedding Feast. 'It is almost incredible', he tells us, 'what an infinite variety of foods find their way on to the table at a fashionable wedding. I have myself, seen at least 50 different dishes on the table, including the vegetable dishes' (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:121):

There is an abundant supply of local dishes, stewed and roasted meats, boiled and fried fish, pastries and sweetmeats, prepared in a variety of ways, and also a good supply of imported smoked and corned meats.

(Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:104)

But there is a dark side to this gay gastronomic abandon, for the 'infinite variety of foods' at the wedding feasts of the best families include, of course, the foods routinely allocated to the slaves. Again, Mentzel contradicts himself. On the one hand, he describes the 'vast quantities of fish' that are caught from small boats with dragnets at night and which are used as food for slaves (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:88–9). But on the other hand, he states baldly that few fish are available to relieve the tedium of mutton.

Read in conjunction with the archaeology of the castle, Mentzel's text interprets the fish assemblage, and the fish assemblage interprets Mentzel's text. For although the fare on the officers' table contains—in the common shoal fish—the fare of the slave doss-house (just as the fare of the wedding feast contains the fare of the back yard and outbuilding), differentiation is achieved by the small quantities of game fish only obtainable by line from the Indian Ocean, on the opposite side of the peninsula from Cape Town: Red Roman, Galjoen, Silver Fish and Red Steenbras which, together, make up about a fifth of the assemblage from the officers' kitchen, but which were not found at all in the grain store. Indeed, at one point in his text, Mentzel only recognizes such species:

The commonest kind of fish caught here is the so-called Rooymanns. They retain their blood red appearance even after they are boiled, and are about two feet long and proportionately heavy. ... Besides the above-named red fish and another kind known as galleon-fish *there are few other fish available.*

(Mandelbrote [1785] 1921:81–2; emphasis added)

IV

The table at Mentzel's wedding feast, overloaded in its cultural meanings already, also carries the suggestion of differentiation between women. For with the description of bucolic indulgence is the dark shadow of compromise in colonial marriages; the risk of being overwhelmed by 'lascivious' slave women, and the difficulties in maintaining social hierarchies.

In Mentzel's account, the stress on quantity is set against the contrast between rare 'spiced and seasoned' imported meats and abundant, 'fresh' 'local dishes'. Mentzel remembers that 'the spiced and seasoned meats are eagerly consumed, whereas the fresh foods are scarcely touched'. This, Mentzel tells his readers, is the consequence of sufficiency: 'no man can eat more than to repletion' (Mandelbrote [1785] 1925:104).

Clearly a wedding, and the symbolic language of the wedding feast, is part of the regulation of sexuality, confirming the legitimacy of the transfer of a woman between two families, and marking the exclusion of other possible suitors and brides. Could the spiced and seasoned imported meat be a metaphor for a superior bride—a European-born wife and a marriage that would lead past the *rondegangers'* drawn swords to a status higher than that of those married to women of mixed blood? Could the local dishes—the avalanche of mutton that stifles sociability—remind the writer with a shudder of the dangers of those 'lascivious creatures', women who might well make 'helpmates' in cooking, washing, baking and milking, but who would assign their husbands to the lesser ranks of colonial society?

Another segment of the archaeological record—architecture—illuminates the ambiguities that such differentiation seems to have carried. Peter Kolb, writing before Mentzel, mapped out a straightforward progression in status. Initially, settlers had 'many Debts' and 'great Incumbrances'. Under these circumstances, they had to be content with 'cots' that provided 'no more than convenient Room and Shelter from the Weather' (Kolb [1731] 1968, Vol. 2:48–9). But success brought the opportunity of building a better house, a process of improvement which was characteristic of the early eighteenth century at the Cape. Writing half a century later, Hendrik Swellengrebel, the son of a former governor of the Cape, drew the comparison. Lesser farmers, he commented, lived in

tumble-down barns, 40 feet by 14 or 15 feet, with clay walls four feet high, and a thatched roof. These are mostly undivided; the doors are reed mats; a square hole serves as a window. The fireplace is a hole in the floor, which is usually made of clay and cowdung. There is no chimney; merely a hole in the roof to let the smoke out.

(letter dated June 1783 quoted in Schutte 1982:357)

Their owners often chose concubinage—they 'long remain unmarried; many never marry and mingle with Hottentot women'. Families huddled together promiscuously—Swellengrebel had seen 'up to three households—children included—living together in such a dwelling' (Schutte 1982:357). In contrast 'quite respectable houses'—the notch above the lowliest cottages for Swellengrebel—were so defined by their divisions. 'Good doors and windows' made clear the distinction between indoors and outdoors while internal walls—'a large room partitioned into 2 or 3'—allowed the proper distinctions between families and generations (Schutte 1982:357).

It is difficult to explore Swellengrebel's 'tumble down' cottages further from direct evidence as there is little surviving architecture, and as yet little archaeological evidence, for this period. But the combination of documentary sources and the design of later buildings constructed in the long-established tradition of the Cape countryside bears out the documentary inferences. One such area is Verlorenvlei on the Cape west coast, where a substantial stretch of wetland has been a natural focus for settlement in this otherwise arid area. Today, small clusters of houses are scattered across the land. Walls are of packed clay, mudbrick and fired red brick, sometimes with clay mortared stone. Buttressing, added later, may support sagging walls. Timber beams support thatch or iron roofs. From a close study of a sample of some forty such buildings, John Gribble (1989) has deduced a rule set for the houses of the Verlorenvlei as a whole, following the structuralist methods adopted by Henry Classic in his research in Virginia. When combined with other information from the region, this 'competence' provides a valuable amplification of earlier accounts such as Mentzel's and Swellengrebel's. This, then, was the colonial vernacular—the corollary of ordinary mutton at the table, of 'local dishes' at the wedding feast.

One way in which architectural differentiation—Kolb's 'better houses'—was achieved was through an obsession with symmetrical order in house plan and the construction of high, baroque gables at the centre of front facades and as end gables (Hall 1994). Such manor houses were first built in the third decade of the eighteenth century, and soon became the mark of the elite—an equivalent of the differentiation achieved through the preparation of different cuts of meat for officers and slaves within the castle. But, again, such differentiation was not straightforward, and a close reading suggests areas of ambiguity and uncertainty.

Study of gabled buildings with traceable histories of ownership that can be firmly dated to before 1795 has revealed that almost all of these were manor houses on wheat and wine farms, and all of them depended on slave labour. The names of title holders can be connected to only eight of the 2,000 or so families that made up the colonial component of the eighteenth-century Cape. There were close connections between the members of this small elite; just over 80 per cent of the male title holders were married into their own or into one of the other seven families.

Marriage and descent, of course, are critical to the movement and accumulation of wealth in an affluent class. Thus this web of conjugal and consanguinal links protected the interests of the rural, slave-holding elite of the Cape countryside by keeping economic capital circulating among a small group—a fraction of the complete colonial population. One of the distinctive features of this elite network was the role played by women. For the most part, male title holders played a nominal role in histories which had women as their central actors. Many of the estate biographies map out a 'shadow lineage' of women, standing behind the formality of male legal ownership (Hall 1994).

The power that women could have within the ranks of the Cape farming elite is epitomized in the life of Sibella Pasman, and voiced in part through her will. Baptized in 1693, she was first married in 1714. In the same year her mother bought the farm Nooitgedacht, transferring the property into her son-in-law's name four years later. In 1722, after her first husband had died, Sibella married Jacobus Cloete, a member of a family with which she already had connections. Sibella was widowed for the second time in 1757 and died some time after May 1777 when, at the age of about 85, she signed a codicil to her second will.

During this last quarter of her life, Sibella Pasman clearly had great influence, exercised through patronage. She had inherited Nooitgedacht (and thus her mother's investment) and had transferred the estate to her son Hendrik Cloete in 1761; by now Hendrik was in his late thirties, had been married for eight years, and already had four children. His mother clearly continued to exercise considerable influence over the farm's affairs. Sibella's will makes it clear that she lived in the main house, and also favoured particular heirs. Lest she be forgotten, she directed that her daughter should have her gold chain, and that a grandson should get 'one pair single gold shirt buttons to wear in memory of me'.

Sibella Pasman's son, Hendrik Cloete, had built the gable at Nooitgedacht in 1774, and was later to build a gable at a second house, Groot Constantia. Eight more of Sibella Pasman's male relatives had held titles to houses when gables were built, or were to hold such titles. Three female relatives were married to men who were, or would be, title holders to estates when gables were built. In sum, Sibella Pasman had direct family connections with more than a quarter of the dated eighteenth-century gabled buildings that survive today (Hall 1994).

There is, then, a correlation between gabled houses and the eighteenth-century rural elite, as well as evidence that women played a central role in structuring the relations between members of this class. Such a correlation implies that gables were a material signification of this elite; attributable artefacts that connect the surviving remnants of a material world with the surviving remnants of a documentary corpus.

There is more to this than simple differentiation, though. Images of fertility abound on decorated gables—wheatsheafs, grapes, vines, sometimes the entwined initials of husband and wife and, spectacularly, the pediment which Hendrik Cloete had built on Groot Constantia's wine cellar in 1791, in which Ganymede—the cupbearer to the gods—is surrounded by frolicking putti (Fransen and Cook 1980). However, the ebullience of the gable and its associations of fertility and natural increase is contained by the second definitive component in the design of the Cape country manor house—the strict symmetry of the building plan. Cape houses invariably have balanced façades, with a front door directly beneath the gable leading into a reception room. To the left and the right are equally sized rooms, and the regular layout is repeated in the back offices. The surrounding werf is usually symmetrical as well (Fitchett 1987; Brink 1992); the effect is that of approaching, and

passing beneath, an emblem of excess that is contained within a strict system of regulation.

An equivalently structured verbal metaphor is to be found in the descriptions of the company's garden at the Cape. Many writers comment on the seemingly unbounded fertility of the Cape soil. François Valentyn, at the Cape in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, wrote about 'astonishingly large nurseries of melons, whole rooms full', which he fantasized as being 'in the womb of this African Mother-Garden'. And Peter Kolb, revelling in the garden's female qualities, wrote that 'Nature has Little or Nothing to set her off there besides her own Charms and the Hand of the Gardener.' But these, and other, contemporary writers are at pains to point out that the garden is also strictly contained within a regular grid of paths, hedges and walls. Many of them paced it out, enumerating the grid and testing its regularity. Many of them made it clear that its walkways formed an extension of Cape Town's street grid; the male domain where respectable women could not go alone.

I have suggested that this same metaphor interprets the eighteenth-century baroque gable at the Cape. The house as a whole signifies colonial control and dominance. But the gable stands for excess that must be contained within order. There seem to have been few cases where human figures were incorporated in gable decoration, but one example further amplifies my point. Willem Berg's Canteen in Dorp Street, Cape Town had a particularly ornate gable, probably made in 1777 (Fransen 1987). Exuberantly curved mouldings enclose figures of soldiers and of mermaids. What could such decoration mean? The unknown artist who executed Berg's façade could have drawn on a wide stream of biblical and pagan iconography in coming up with a design for which the tavern's owner was prepared to pay. But such iconography was, in itself, frequently ambiguous, and the image of the mermaid carried specific connotations of magical powers, misfortune and the danger of shipwreck. Folktales retold stories of men who married mermaids after stealing some possession of their brides', only to lose their wives once the theft had been discovered. For William Berg's inebriated clientele, the sign above his door must have evoked a complex cocktail of titillation and desire, wariness and misogyny.

Material culture, then—whether fish or façade—can be implicated in both the emphasis of difference and in the ambiguities of the 'third space'. Such an approach requires a close, detailed reading of specific circumstances; work that is rewarded by a contribution to the rich discourses of the past that extends beyond the documentary evidence of the historian. Such an approach stands in contrast to the generalizations towards which positivist and structuralist archaeologies incline. For what is lost in eschewing detail are the hints of ambiguities and anxieties; the shadows and traces of 'subaltern voices'; the complexities of the 'third space' which drove those who made the archaeological record to obsessive levels of material differentiation and repetition.

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13 *On rejecting the concept of socio-economic status in historical archaeology*

GREGORY G. MONKS

INTRODUCTION

A number of researchers have tried to detect and measure economic variability in archaeological deposits and to relate this variability to documented social variability. This avenue of inquiry is important because it focuses directly on the central elements of survival; namely, the organization of people in order to accomplish both biological and social reproduction. In this context, such research tries to contribute statements about the operation of society (i.e. processual statements) that are empirically grounded; that is, middle range theory in the sense of Merton (1948), Raab and Goodyear (1984), and Leone and Crosby (1987). A number of difficult issues must be addressed in order to develop and apply these economic measurements and to establish their relationships to social variability. This chapter is a summary of these issues and a commentary on them.

All attempts to establish such correspondences have presented documented economic and social variability within concepts borrowed from sociology. 'Socio-economic status', 'class', 'prestige', 'social rank', 'stratification' and other hybrid terms are used liberally in the historical archaeological literature. These borrowings often impede our understanding of the historical past as it is presented to us in the archaeological record (Orser 1988:738). First, many of these concepts are ambiguous within sociology itself. Second, these concepts are poorly understood and loosely applied by historical archaeologists. Third, a poorly tested assumption is made that these concepts, developed for twentieth-century industrial society, can legitimately be applied to a variety of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century social systems.

There is also a lack of clarity on what research aims are to be furthered by the use of these terms. Topics that have been addressed include social reconstruction, economic reconstruction, model building, the applicability of sociological concepts and consumer behaviour. Without a clear idea as to which aims will be served by the use of which concepts, advancement in this area of

historical archaeology seems unlikely. Further, it seems clear from the literature of recent years that different categories of data provide different kinds of information that are relevant to some of these aims but not to others. Frequently, however, all data bases are treated as though each can provide the same kinds of information for all aims.

In the last decade, historical archaeologists have developed some useful analytic and interpretative tools for examining the material and documentary records (Henry 1987:360). In particular, cost indexing of faunal remains and ceramics, ratios of one material to another, wealth evaluations based on census data, probate inventories and occupational prestige, consumer choice profiles and cost efficiency models all provide economic and social information when applied to different data bases. Previous studies have tended to approach these issues from a 'top down' perspective in which sociological concepts are assumed to apply to whichever archaeological data base is being examined. My own earlier work (Monks 1985), for example, attempted to apply the concept of 'socio-economic status' to the archaeological record of the Red River Settlement. A built-in lack of clarity in the concept, an uncritical borrowing of it and an inability to operationalize it in terms of the archaeological data led, in retrospect, to an unsatisfying result. Others (e.g. Joseph and Byre 1992; O'Brien and Majewski 1989; Reitz 1987) have also experienced this difficulty to a greater or lesser degree. Several notable articles (LeeDecker *et al.* 1987; Stine 1990) have provided searching and useful discussions of sociological terms, but most articles pay little or no attention to the applicability of the sociological terms they use to the archaeological data bases. There is also a general failure to link the information gained from the archaeological record to economic and social variables such as those mentioned in the reviews cited above. This failure supports Renfrew's (1984) argument that concepts developed in social anthropology (or in this case, sociology) have little applicability in the study of social archaeology.

A remedy to this problem is to approach it from a 'bottom up' perspective. Accordingly, the balance of this chapter reviews the archaeological analytic methods that have appeared in the literature of the last decade and evaluates what economic and social variables they appear to address best. This approach helps indicate which data bases are best treated with which techniques, which aims can legitimately be achieved with these techniques and data bases, and which economic and social variables can legitimately be addressed.

ANALYTIC TOOLS: ARCHAEOLOGICAL

Price indexing

The best known indexing method is that of Miller (1980), which has recently been updated (Miller 1991). Manufacturers' price lists are used to assign index values to various ceramic forms based on their cost in relation to the least expensive related item. The growing sophistication of knowledge regarding

variation in form and variation through time is evident in Miller's updated work. Vessel counts for each ceramic form are multiplied by the index value for that form, and the sum of all index values is divided by the number of vessels to obtain an average index value for the entire assemblage. One assemblage can then be compared to another for the relative value of ceramics that each contains. This comparison reveals variation in the amount of money invested in ceramics by those who deposited the assemblage.

A similar approach has been taken to the analysis of faunal remains. The cost of beef, mutton, and pork cuts has been used to index the relative value of faunal remains in historic faunal assemblages (Henry 1987), and Huelsbeck's (1991) discussion has shown that the proper unit of analysis is important to the interpretative results. Also, the costs of different fish species has been used to create an index scale for this portion of a faunal assemblage (Singer 1987). Added sophistication has entered the discussion in the form of indices of cost efficiency of meat (beef) purchases (Lyman 1987).

All of these studies make the assumption that the more money one has the more one will spend on the materials under discussion (e.g. Branstner and Martin 1987:302; Huelsbeck 1991:64). While there is general agreement that available wealth is an important factor in the creation of variability in those aspects of the assemblages under discussion, other factors such as ethnic background, social class, availability, household composition, household life cycle, site function and the effects of time all influence the decisions that are made (Garrow 1987:218; Henry 1987:362; LeeDecker *et al.* 1987:257; Reitz 1987:101-2; Spencer-Wood 1987b:323; Hardesty 1988:103; Ackerman 1991:26; Huelsbeck 1991:64; Klein 1991:77, 79, 85, 88). Also, the marginal utility concept means that above a certain income level, investment in consumer goods begins to decline as a proportion of income, even though the absolute value of acquisitions may continue to increase (SpencerWood 1987b:325). Consequently, not only is the relation between price, consumption and the archaeological reflection of consumer behaviour not well understood and in need of more study (Huelsbeck 1991:64), but also the relations between price indices and specific cultural variables require more scrutiny.

Lyman's (1987) cost efficiency model presents an ultra-rationalist perspective on the acquisition of consumables. The extent to which it is generally applicable has not been closely evaluated. Some social groups may be more inclined to follow strictly rational decisions than others. An army quarter-master, for example, may buy meat on a strictly cost efficient basis, especially for the enlisted mess, and a restaurant buyer might be expected to pay close attention to cost efficiency. Other social groups, like exclusive clubs or restaurant patrons, might be less inclined to buy on a strictly cost efficient basis. Similarly, some economic groups are likely to be more constrained by cost efficiency considerations than others. Lower income groups are likely to purchase so as to obtain the best value for their money, whereas upper income groups often have greater leeway to indulge their non-economic considerations. Before one can apply the cost efficiency model with confidence, a careful evaluation of the data and of the

group(s) that are involved must be undertaken to ensure that the strictly rationalist assumptions of the model are likely to be met. Rathje's (1977) work suggests, for example, that attempts to become more cost efficient may lead to reduced efficiency/greater wastage. His research showed that during the artificial beef shortage of 1973, consumers attempting to stockpile beef bought unfamiliar cuts that they were not experienced in cooking. The outcome was a disinclination to cook these cuts, or an unwillingness to eat unsuccessfully cooked ones, resulting in higher discard rates and increased wastage when the intention had been to increase efficiency (Rathje 1977:40). Also, the cost efficiency model seems more suited to faunal remains than it is to ceramic remains. Food is bought or obtained on a more frequent basis than ceramics and is less frequently used for display. Greater frequency of food acquisition means that adjustment to cost can be more finely tuned to the need in terms of everyday food, display food and starvation food. A subjectively satisfying cost efficiency can then be achieved through an ongoing monitoring process. Ceramics (durables) tend to be acquired less frequently and to serve both utilitarian and display functions. They represent a longer-term investment because there is less opportunity to monitor a satisfying cost efficiency, especially with display wares that may sit unused for long periods. While one could consider how many ceramics were obtained for a given amount of money, a method whereby this could be a meaningful measure of expenditure has yet to be developed (e.g. cost per unit area or volume). Such a method would, again, be subject to the assumption of complete rationality on the purchaser's part.

The use of price indices with faunal data is a perilous exercise. To date, studies using this approach have not considered in sufficient detail the applicability of the method to the data base being considered. Neither have they differentiated between their results, based on assemblages of consumables, from the results of similar indexing methods based on durable goods, such as ceramics (Branstner and Martin 1987:302; Garrow 1987:218; Henry 1987:363; Huelsbeck 1991:64; Klein 1991:83). Further, the relation of the analytic results to the economic and social variables in the original cultural system are not well established (Reitz 1987:101; Huelsbeck 1991:64). However, these indices are still among the few tools available for analysing faunal assemblages in terms of economic variability. The non-economic factors that affect the acquisition, consumption, discard and recovery of faunal subsistence remains must be considered, and the discrepancies between archaeological recoveries and documentary expectations must serve as a starting point in refining the middle range concepts that will eventually account for these discrepancies (Garrow 1987:230; Leone and Crosby 1987).

Ceramic indices apply to a separate category of data that is acquired, used and disposed of in an entirely different way for different reasons than faunal remains. Cost indices for ceramics provide a general, relative measure of the total investment made by the site occupants on this category of durable material. Some critiques of the indexing method have pointed out that much information

is hidden behind such indices, and that alternative analytic methods, to be discussed below, provide a finer-grained analysis. In particular, Spencer-Wood shows that similar ceramic cost indices can be produced by assemblages that differ markedly in their internal composition (SpencerWood 1987b:352–3). Other researchers have also expressed concern that ceramic indices are ambiguous in what they indicate about economic and social variables (Baugher and Venables 1987:51; Henry 1987:363; Klein 1991:80–3) and about their usefulness at all (Howson 1990:90).

Nevertheless, ceramic indices do indicate relative expenditure levels within the constraints of financial means and priorities, availability, social group, household composition and stage in household life cycle. These indices are general in nature and cannot reflect accurately the many interlocking factors that influence the archaeological record. They do focus directly on economic behaviour and thus provide information on household expenditure patterns. Comparison of economic variability between households is therefore enhanced through the use of these indices.

Ceramic and faunal indices both provide information on economic variability between households. Because faunal remains represent economic decisions relating to consumables, whereas ceramics represent economic decisions relating to durables, the two types of indices should not be treated as equals. It is praiseworthy that a number of studies have presented evaluations of both these data bases (e.g. Otto 1977; Baugher and Venables 1987:51; Branstner and Martin 1987:318; Garrow 1987:230; Henry 1987:363), but it still remains to discuss fully what aspects of past economic systems are addressed by each type of index.

Consumer choice profiles

Spencer-Wood (1987b) has developed a useful set of tools known as consumer choice profiles, that, when used in addition to the indexing method, can reveal details of variability in economic behaviour. Her method was applied to ceramics, but the concept clearly has application to other durable goods (e.g. de Cunzo 1987:291), although it has long been applied to faunal remains (Schulz and Gust 1983). Consumer choice profiles reveal the differing proportions of each type within the data category under discussion, thus showing the internal composition of the assemblage in addition to its overall relative value.

Consumer choice profiles provide a clearer view of economic behaviour than indices alone. Which segments of the data category were selected by different consumers, and in what proportions, indicate details of economic behaviour that are unavailable from indices alone. In addition, this intraassemblage detail can lead to further inferences about social aspects of consumption behaviour. The complexity of this step, however, is amply documented in the references cited throughout this chapter.

The consumer choice profile is a formalization of the approach taken by studies that evaluate ceramic assemblages according to the quantity, quality and variety of their constituent materials (e.g. Baugher and Venables 1987: 51; McBride and

McBride 1987:145; Shepard 1987:165; Klein 1991:78). These studies provide information that goes beyond simply economic considerations (Henry 1991:10); consequently, they are more amenable to investigation of social variables than are indices. Similar characterizations of faunal assemblages, while providing additional information on the internal composition of the assemblage, do not necessarily provide the same insights into economic and social variables that are provided by ceramics (e.g. Reitz and Scarry 1985:94; Branstner and Martin 1987:317–18; Reitz 1987:101–2, 116; Singer 1987:98; Huelsbeck 1991:63).

Ratios

The ratio of cups to plates is frequently calculated by historical archaeologists (e.g. Kenyon and Kenyon 1986; Spencer-Wood 1987b:352). These ratios are calculated on the assumption that a high ratio of cups to plates indicates greater wealth, due to the economic ability to buy matched ceramic services that contained cups and saucers, and higher social position, due to the practice of formally serving tea. Problems interpreting these ratios are quickly apparent. First, there is no clear separation of the economic from the social variables that this ratio measures. Second, there is no empirical demonstration that this ratio has either social or economic significance. Third, tea was often consumed from bowls instead of cups, so that local and temporal considerations limit the usefulness of this approach. Like indices, it may be a useful preliminary indicator of variation between assemblages, but its usefulness in addressing specific variables remains questionable.

Ratios calculated for faunal variables present a different kind of information. Branstner and Martin (1987:302) cite Mudar's (1978) calculation of beef/pork and beef/mutton ratios as a superior approach, compared to the analysis of meat cuts, to inter-site variability in socio-economic status. Leaving aside the ambiguity of 'socio-economic status', these ratios may indicate as much ideological information as social or economic information. Jews, for example, would be unlikely to leave many pork remains in their refuse deposits. Conversely, Catholics might be expected to leave behind somewhat higher proportions of fish remains in their refuse than non-Catholics. The clarity of interpretation of ratios for faunal analysis is thus poor. More thought needs to be given to their formulation and use before interpretations based on them can be accepted with confidence.

Sources

An approach to recovered materials that is analogous, in some ways, to the consumer choice profile, is the attribution of source of origin. In ceramic analysis, the approach has been applied, for example, by Joseph and Byrne (1992:54) to Spanish settlements in the Caribbean. They show that a rough correspondence exists between the proportions of different ceramic wares according to source and socio-economic position of those who created the deposits (Joseph and Byrne 1992: Figures 5, 6). While the approach is interesting, the meaning of

‘socio-economic’ position is unclear, and therefore the proper interpretation of such results remains in question. Both economic and social factors seem to be mixed in this method of examining ceramic remains. Whether this approach is applicable to other times and places is a matter of further investigation.

Sourcing faunal remains may involve describing them as wild or domestic and as local or imported (e.g. Reitz and Scarry 1985:94). Diversity and rarity of goods, presumably including food resources, is said to be associated with relatively high social position (Reitz and Scarry 1985:93). Reitz and Scarry (1985:94) note, however, that diversity of resources may also indicate subsistence scarcity among lower economic/social groups. Classifying faunal remains according to source may provide some useful information about variability between assemblages, but precise interpretations of economic or social variables are not presently forthcoming. Similarly, classifying foods as basic provisions or luxury goods implies as much economically as it does socially, and it often involves a value judgement on the investigator’s part that may or may not be an accurate reflection of the perceptions of those whose deposits are under investigation.

ANALYTIC TOOLS: DOCUMENTARY

Wealth evaluation

Documentary evidence of individual wealth is often used to establish expectations of the archaeological record or to interpret variation within it. Wealth may be measured from evaluations in probate inventories (e.g. Ackerman 1991) and census data (e.g. the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives), and it may be measured in terms of earned or inherited money or possessions. One of the most sophisticated approaches to this exercise is the indexing of wealth, based on income-generating possessions, of the 100 wealthiest Virginians in the period 1787–8 (Ackerman 1991:26). As with most indices, much information is hidden. The proportions of each wealth source are not clear until the proportions of each source are presented, much like the consumer profile. There is also an interdependency among the wealth sources, contrary to what Ackerman says (1991:30), in that land is a prerequisite for possession of bound labour, cattle and horses. A bias exists in this method in that wealthier individuals are more likely to have details of their lives recorded than are less well-off individuals (Ackerman 1991:26). Also, comparison of much earlier or much later assemblages to the 1787–8 standard, and to each other, introduces potential error as a result of inflation, which has been argued to operate in other contexts (Klein 1991:79 citing Wall 1987). Nevertheless, Ackerman’s Comparative Status Value (CSV), which might better be termed Comparative Economic Value, and his Economic Means Index (EMI) are useful measures of relative wealth against which economic indicators from carefully selected assemblages can be compared.

The basis of such comparison needs to be developed, however, since the index is based on at least two variables that are not directly recoverable in the archaeological record. Cows may be evident in the archaeological record, but the concept of marginal utility may have an important effect because only so much beef can be eaten regardless of how many cows are owned. Horses may appear in the archaeological record, but since their uses were probably less for food than for work or display, their presence is likely to be governed by different factors from those affecting cows. Which archaeologically derived measures should be used to address the effects of land ownership and control of bound labour needs further discussion, although some of the faunal and ceramic indices discussed above might be found to correlate with the EMI. The virtue of the CSV and EMI measures, however, rests with the economic basis of their construction and the possibility of establishing economically derived links between the documentary and archaeological records.

Occupation

Occupation has been used by a number of researchers as a measure of an individual's economic and social position (Garrow 1987:230; Henry 1987:363; Spencer-Wood 1987b: 324–5; Stine 1990:38). Sociologists have ranked occupations subjectively by their prestige value; that is, the value that society's members attach to an occupation, for example the Pineo—Porter—McRoberts scale (Pineo 1985), and objectively on the basis of the education required for an occupation and the rewards (income) accruing from it (Blighen *et al.* 1987:467). It has been shown that there is a high correlation between objective and subjective ranking scales (Blighen *et al.* 1987:470). Historical archaeologists have not been clear on whether they are using occupation as judged on the subjective basis of prestige or on the objective basis of education and income. The point is not moot, because the subjective system of occupational prestige evaluation that existed in a past society is seldom revealed in historical documents. Archaeologists are thus faced with the alternatives of inferring that system or of applying modern systems that may not accurately reflect those of earlier, and changing, times. For example, when Mozart was composing, musicians were regarded as craftspeople along with carpenters and butchers. Slightly later, Beethoven demanded and received recognition that was equal to that of his wealthy patrons. By the late nineteenth century, Liszt viewed musicians, and was treated himself, as *génie oblige*. It is clear then, that occupational prestige systems can change quickly, although documentary information may only provide fragmentary direct or indirect insights into earlier occupational prestige systems. Similarly, the objective system of educational credentials required of a certain occupation is often difficult to establish from the documentary record. Universal education is a recent phenomenon, so it is difficult to apply the concept of educational level to past societies in which formal schooling was of a different type and was available on a more restricted basis.

There are obviously a number of problems with occupational ranking scales. First is the fact that they apply only to occupations, not individuals (Blishen *et al.* 1987:468). Any individual's education and income may vary considerably from the composite values of the objective scale, so knowing a person's occupation and where that occupation sits on a scale of occupations will not necessarily be a good indicator of how well educated that person is, or of how much income s/he has. Similarly, prestige ratings of occupations will not necessarily indicate the personal prestige of an individual holding such an occupation. Second, both these scales address occupations, and these occupations are held by individuals. Historical archaeology deals with households, not individuals, as the minimal unit of analysis (de Cunzio 1987:262; Henry 1987:361, 1991:12; LeeDecker *et al.* 1987:258; Klein 1991:88), which means that not only are individuals being used to represent entire households, but individuals are being represented by occupations that are scaled on some unclear basis. The lack of precision and clarity of thinking in such studies has the predictable result that a poor correspondence exists between expectations derived from occupational documentation and analytic results derived from archaeological data (Garrow 1987:230; Heberling 1987:214; Henry 1987:363, 378; Spencer-Wood 1987b: 353; Stine 1990:41; Klein 1991:83, 88).

Documentary records do provide archaeologists with objective information about an individual's occupation. They also provide information about the costs of various items. Wills and probate inventories are also objective documents that, along with information about costs, can indicate a person's wealth as derived, at least in part, from his/her occupation. These wealth evaluations, as Ackerman (1991) points out, can be used to order individuals on a scale of relative wealth. Because of the close correlation between subjective and objective rankings of occupations based on education and income (Blishen *et al.* 1987:467), such a scale provides an objective model for ordering them. This kind of model not only facilitates the derivation of expectations of archaeological data, but it also allows stronger subjective arguments to be made, once contextual considerations are applied, about the correspondence between a given relative economic position and a social position based on occupation.

The poor correspondence between expectations and analytic results noted above occurs because occupation is used to derive those expectations when, in fact, it is generally unsuited for that purpose in historical archaeology. Wealth evaluation, because it can be measured in both the archaeological and documentary records, provides a common yardstick that can link the two records. This link is a critical step in identifying material culture associated with social groups (Orser 1988:748), because it enables historical archaeologists to argue for correspondences between the archaeological record and social phenomena.

A QUESTION OF AIMS

A variety of aims has been addressed using the tools and data bases described above. Economic reconstruction is one of the most common aims (e.g. Miller 1980; Schulz and Gust 1983; Lyman 1987; Singer 1987; Spencer-Wood 1987b; Ackerman 1991). Indexing methods are used to establish where individuals or households stand in relation to each other on a relative economic scale. Such studies form the most secure links between the archaeological record and the systemic context under investigation. It has been correctly stated that scaling cost indices is only the first step in social reconstruction (Stine 1990:42), yet it is this next step that continues to cause so much trouble for historical archaeologists. Attempts have been made to serve social reconstruction by imposing sociological concepts on archaeological data and/or by developing expectations of the archaeological record based on documentary records (e.g. Reitz and Scarry 1985; LeeDecker *et al.* 1987; Shepard 1987; Stine 1990; Ackerman 1991; Joseph and Byrne 1992). Consumer behaviour (Spencer-Wood 1987a) has emerged as a perspective designed to illuminate variations in material assemblages, and Howson (1990:88) has argued that emphasis on social relations, rather than economic or social categories, is the most productive approach to social reconstruction. Like Howson, Leone and Crosby (1987) advocate a contextual approach when they discuss linking the archaeological record with the past cultural system by developing middle-range theories.

All of these aims are valid and significant. The real questions are: in what sequence do we attempt to address these aims; and, which analytic methods and data bases are appropriate for which aims? The sequence has already been indicated by Stine (1990:42). Economic variability between analytic units needs to be discerned first. Depending on the data base within which this variability is detected and the analytic method used to detect the variability, the second step may be taken. This second step requires more thought from historical archaeologists (Huelsbeck 1991:64); namely, linking both formal and economic variability in the archaeological record with the many cultural and natural factors that are also thought or known to affect what is left for our inspection. The result of research linking the archaeological and systemic contexts (*sensu* Schiffer 1972, 1976) will be a body of middle-range theory that accounts for a wide range of variability among the units of analysis that have been, and will be, defined. As for the applicability of different data bases and analytic methods to specific aims, no neat solutions can be offered at this point. Present indications suggest that consumables with short use lives are more likely to indicate strictly utilitarian economic considerations than are durables with longer use lives. These latter materials seem to incorporate social and ideological functions beyond, or even exclusive of, utilitarian ones. Well-rounded views of the economic and social characteristics of the analytic units under discussion cannot be achieved through consideration of only one data base, and studies that have pointed

this out and used several lines of evidence at once are clearly in the vanguard of current research (e.g. Otto 1977; Garrow 1987; Henry 1987).

DISCUSSION

As a first step in historical archaeological analysis, economic reconstruction needs to be made more secure. To do this, a primary link needs to be made between the archaeological record and the group that produced it. The documentary and archaeological records have a common denominator in the form of indices that provide economic indicators of the relative position of one deposit to another. The EMI and CSV indices, based on documentary evidence, provide models from which expectations of the archaeological record can be derived. Similarly, consumer choice profiles based on documentary evidence can illuminate some of the reasons behind relative economic ordering of historical deposits, individuals or groups. Cost indices of various artefact and faunal categories in a series of deposits provide the tests for the expectations using a common measuring device. Consumer choice profiles of the various data categories from the indexed and scaled deposits provide a more detailed picture of the reasons behind their relative economic position.

Once the relative economic ordering of deposits is achieved, researchers may use that as a basis for arguments about corresponding social variability. Research that links economic and social variability, at least for twentieth-century Euro-American industrial society, has been noted above, and arguments based on earlier documentary material can be developed to extend and/or modify that research for earlier and different applications. A procedure is then in place in which variability in the archaeological record can be examined in terms that allow interpretations to be made about the economic and social systems of the people who created the deposits.

This course of action will address the most commonly undertaken research aims in historical archaeology—economic and social reconstruction. Analytic units and interpretative concepts described here do not rely on borrowed and misapplied sociological concepts such as socio-economic status and do not impose these concepts on the archaeological record as a context in which analysis and interpretation must occur. Instead, a set of data categories that are common to both the documentary and archaeological records are examined by a common set of analytic devices in order to provide relative economic information that can then be related into social variables. Renfrew's injunction not to apply social anthropological concepts and measures to archaeology will thus have been observed with the beneficial result that historical archaeology will continue to develop its own methodological devices and units of analysis that are appropriate to the aims that it can legitimately pursue.

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ISSUES OF IDENTITY,
NATIONALISM AND
ETHNICITY

14 *Historical categories and the praxis of identity: the interpretation of ethnicity in historical archaeology*

SIÂN JONES

The interpretation of ethnic groups within historical archaeology has taken place within a narrative framework derived from surviving written sources and reflects the privileged status traditionally accorded to the written word over and above material culture in the study of ‘historical periods’. This historical determinism has frequently resulted in a circular, self-referential use of documentary and archaeological evidence, and has led to the conflation of the material record with monolithic ethnic categories extracted from historical sources. In this chapter I explore some of the problems arising from such an approach in the context of recent debates about the value and use of historical versus archaeological evidence. However, rather than merely asserting the priority of one kind of evidence over another, an alternative approach is suggested based on a consideration of the ways in which material and written traditions are involved in the construction of ethnicity. Such an approach shows that attempts to seek out the archaeological correlates of historically known ethnic groups are flawed not only because they often ignore the situated and subjective nature of the historical sources, but also because they disregard qualitative differences in the manifestation of ethnicity in written sources and material culture. Recognition of these qualitative differences is essential for the development of an analytical framework for the analysis of ethnicity in which both archaeological and documentary evidence are ‘seen as equal and potentially opposing elements in the dialectical process of knowledge’ (Austin 1997:35).

THE PROBLEM: THE INTERPLAY OF TEXT AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN THE INTERPRETATION OF ETHNIC GROUPS

Trigger (1995:277) has recently stated that ethnicity is a subjective concept which archaeologists cannot hope to study to any significant degree without specifically relevant historical or ethnographic data. This argument appears to hold sway

among archaeologists and it is reflected in the number of studies of ethnicity carried out in historical as opposed to prehistoric archaeology. Historical archaeologists—those who study past societies for which we have written records available—spend a great deal of their time establishing the ethnic affiliation of the people who made and used the sites and objects which they are investigating. The question of ethnic association is particularly prominent in the colonial and post-colonial archaeology of countries such as the USA and Australia, but is also apparent in other regions and periods such as medieval Europe and Graeco-Roman Palestine. In contrast, since the demise of culture-history, there have been very few studies of prehistoric archaeology which are explicitly concerned with past ethnic groups.

This pattern of research reflects the assumption, prevalent among both historical and prehistoric archaeologists, that the study of ethnicity requires access to people's self-conscious reflections on identity, and that written records provide an authoritative source of information about such reflections. Historical sources are used to construct a narrative framework concerning the spatial distribution and movements of particular ethnic groups. Such information is then used to determine the ethnic status of particular regions and sites, and archaeologists then seek out material relating to that particular ethnic group. Moreover, this use of written sources is associated, for the most part, with a straightforward and commonsense notion of ethnicity which fails to take into account the complexity of the processes involved in the construction of such identities. The study of ethnic groups in historical archaeology usually involves the identification of material correlates—'ethnic markers'—for particular groups. In almost all cases these 'ethnic markers' are themselves defined using historical documentation, and are then used to verify the historical sources, as well as to establish the ethnic status of sites for which there is no surviving historical evidence. The circularity of the process is self-evident and relies on a number of assumptions: (i) that historical sources can be taken as straightforward and valid statements concerning ethnicity; (ii) that there is a fixed relationship between particular styles of material culture (the 'ethnic markers') and a particular identity; (iii) that ethnic groups are homogeneous bounded entities.

Such an approach dominates the analysis of ethnicity in historical archaeology and is integral to the interpretation of a wide range of regions and periods. For instance, the identification of Jewish sites in Graeco-Roman Palestine is determined by historical references concerning the location of Jewish communities in association with a small number of supposedly diagnostic ethno-religious material traits, such as Jewish inscriptions, Jewish symbols, for example the menorah, and particular objects and structures, most notably ritual baths and synagogues. As pointed out by Rajak (1994:239), 'non-Jewish' material on supposedly Jewish sites is frequently ignored or marginalized, interpreted either as evidence for the presence of other ethnic and religious groups, or as evidence for assimilation with an associated loss of Jewish culture and identity. Such modes of interpretation

clearly assume that there was a fixed one-to-one relationship between particular types of material culture and Jewish identity, and that Jewish identity in antiquity was essentially homogeneous across different regions and periods, and different classes or social strata.

These assumptions about ethnicity are mirrored in the archaeology of other periods and regions. For instance, in the study of medieval Europe archaeologists have unquestioningly pursued ethnic entities, such as the Franks, the Anglo-Saxons, the Danes and the Slavs, which are found in the written sources. Archaeological sites and artefacts have been labelled, for instance, as Anglo-Saxon simply because they are located in the areas where historical sources state that Anglo-Saxons settled. Furthermore, as in other periods, types of object which are not considered to represent Anglo-Saxon culture are ignored (for recent critical discussions see Lucy 1995; Austin 1997). Similarly, in the United States research on material from the post-European conquest period has been determined by historical sources and archaeologists have concentrated on the identification of 'ethnic markers', such as clay pipes for west coast Chinese (e.g. Etter 1980), and the controversial 'Colono Ware' pottery for Native American and Afro-American groups (e.g. Ferguson 1978). As in other regions, archaeologists have assumed a fixed one-to-one relationship between ethnic groups (both immigrant and native) and their respective cultures. Consequently, any changes in the relevant cultural assemblages have been interpreted in terms of assimilation and loss of identity (for recent critical discussions see Praetzelis, Praetzelis and Brown 1987; Rubertone 1989; Orser 1991; Burley, Horsfall and Brandon 1992).

Thus, the description and interpretation of material remains within historical archaeology is positively saturated with discourses of identity derived from written sources. The problem is that such discursive categories are rarely the subject of analysis themselves. Rather, they are accepted as given and constitute an *a priori* framework for description, classification and interpretation. As argued by Rajak with relation to studies of Jewish sites in ancient Palestine:

to determine in advance what is Jewish and what is not (or even 'probably' not) is to operate with a pre-conception of Jewish identity when our task is, precisely, to seek to define that identity.

(Rajak 1994:239)

The same criticism can be made of the analysis of any other ethnic group. However, once identity becomes the subject of analysis itself, rather than an essential, taken-for-granted character, it becomes necessary to consider the nature of the social and cultural processes involved in the construction of ethnic identities. As yet, only a few historical archaeologists have considered the implications of recent research which reveals that ethnic identity is a dynamic, contested and multi-layered phenomenon (see below). Furthermore, even those who have emphasized the complexity of the processes involved in the construction of ethnicity for the most part still accept the written evidence as an authoritative

and straightforward source of information about past identities (e.g. Kelly and Kelly 1980; McGuire 1982; Clark 1987). The relationship between written and material manifestations of ethnicity has not been in question. In contrast, in general terms, there has been much debate in the last ten to fifteen years concerning the relationship between archaeological and historical evidence, and the priority, if any, which should be accorded to one or the other.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY: 'HANDSERVANT' OF HISTORY OR OBJECTIVE SCIENCE?

The criticism that archaeology has been the 'handservant' of history is now well known and can be applied to the situation discussed here whereby historical sources have played a decisive role in the identification of ethnic entities, their geographical and chronological provenance and the material correlates associated with them. As in other areas of research, archaeological evidence has been slotted into a historical framework, thus confining interpretations of it to the perspectives represented in the documentary sources. As Leone and Potter have argued in a discussion of historical archaeology in general:

the archaeological record and the documentary record are treated as if they are linked, with one a dependent version of the other. Rarely is this assumption made explicit or justified, but it leads the researcher to integrate documentary and archaeological materials in a single move, from one line of evidence to the other, and to do little more than search for extremely circumscribed information.

(Leone and Potter 1988:12)

The dominance of the written word over archaeological material has recently been challenged by the recognition that historical sources do not provide objective, absolute statements about the nature of past societies. Rather, they constitute partial and fragmented perspectives on the past, not only as a result of differential survival rates, but also because they represent the points of view of particular sections of society, frequently the dominant group (see Austin 1997:12; Champion 1997). This realization has resulted in a number of positions. Some archaeologists (e.g. Rubertone 1989:32, 38–9) are suspicious of the use of historical sources, arguing that archaeological material provides a more 'objective' source of evidence and suggesting that historical sources be relegated to a minor role in archaeological interpretation. Yet such an approach embodies what Beaudry, Cook and Mrozowski (1991:161) have called a 'fear of the emic', attempting to strip away subjectivity (interests, politics, ideological factors and so on) rather than accept it and develop critical perspectives for examining subjective representations of the past. In effect this approach leads to a reversal of the deterministic relationship between historical and archaeological evidence; archaeological evidence is now accorded priority.

Another reaction is characterized by the argument that archaeological and historical evidence should be considered as independent and separate sources of evidence about the past (e.g. Dever 1977; Whitelam 1986; Leone and Potter 1988). For some, this argument has been associated with a shift away from the reconstruction of political history in favour of the analysis of longterm social and economic processes, and consequently archaeology and history tend to be regarded as complementary sources of information relating to distinct aspects of past social life. However, others (e.g. Leone and Potter 1988) have focused on issues such as identity and social status using the historical record to construct a descriptive grid and the archaeological record to explore ambiguity and contradiction, rather than as a source of complementary evidence. The argument that archaeological and historical evidence should not be conflated with one another is important, but neither of these approaches really addresses the issue of the subjectivity of historical sources. Furthermore, both tend to see archaeological evidence as a more 'objective' source of information.

As a number of people have recently argued, both archaeological and historical sources provide subjective perspectives on the past (e.g. Beaudry, Cook and Mrozowski 1991; Little 1992; Hall 1994). They are subjective both as a result of the processes involved in the production of literary and material remains, and in terms of their contemporary interpretation. For instance, Hall has used the notion of 'text' to refer to both literary and material remains:

By viewing the past as a set of complex texts, intertwined to form a discourse, we can avoid privileging written documents over the archaeological record, or artefact assemblages over travellers' accounts, probate records and paintings.

(Hall 1994:168)

Furthermore, as Little (1992:219) has suggested, meaning is ambiguous in texts, images and material culture; as in literary sources, meaning in material culture is 'neither fixed nor universal. Interpretation [in the past and the present] relies on social context and situation, not only of the author [or producer], but also of the reader and the listener.' Moreover, such ambiguity and subjectivity can provide an important source of information if subjected to critical analysis, so that, for instance, documents produced by the elite can be revealing about otherwise disenfranchized and/or inarticulate groups within society (see Beaudry, Cook and Mrozowski 1991; Hall 1994).

These approaches provide a useful basis for reconsidering the use of literary and archaeological remains in the analysis of past ethnicities. Textual sources themselves need to be subjected to in-depth analysis concerning their active involvement in the construction of past identities. Rather than being taken at face value, documentary sources should be considered in terms of the social and political contexts in which they were produced, the positions and interests of the authors and the audiences, and the active role which texts may have played

in the construction and negotiation of cultural identity. For instance, as Kraabel (1985) has shown, representations of (diaspora) Jews in early Christian texts are not always as they seem. Jews in these texts are often fictional characters in disputes between Christian groups. References to Jewish practices do not necessarily indicate the presence of Jews, nor do they accurately represent Jewish practices. Such representations, he argues, are not dispassionate, 'objective' representations of Jews and Judaism (Kraabel 1985:241). Once their subjectivity is acknowledged, such documents can provide important information about the cultural contexts of Jewish identification and the construction of 'Jewishness' by others in the early Christian period. However, recognition of the subjective and active role of written sources in the construction of ethnic identities does raise further questions about the relationship between material and literary manifestations of ethnicity. Can we expect to find the same kind of representations of ethnic identity in the archaeological record as we do in historical sources? I suggest that we cannot, and that we can obtain a better understanding of the ways in which historical and archaeological evidence can be used in the analysis of past ethnicities if we take into account the processes involved in the construction of ethnic identity.

A THEORETICAL APPROACH TO ETHNICITY

Over the last three decades a considerable body of research has been carried out in the human sciences which reveals that ethnic groups are not merely culture-bearing entities. That is, group identity is not a passive and straightforward reflection of a distinct culture and language. Instead, ethnicity involves the subjective construction of identity on the basis of real or assumed shared culture and/or common descent, and groups have been studied by anthropologists and sociologists on the basis of self-definition and definition by others (e.g. Barth 1969:10; Cohen 1978; Chapman, McDonald and Tonkin 1989; Ringer and Lawless 1989; Shennan 1994). In many instances, only certain cultural practices are involved in the perception and expression of ethnic difference, whilst other cultural practices and beliefs are shared across ethnic boundaries (see Hodder 1982). Furthermore, the processes involved in the construction of ethnic identities and the selection of particular cultural and linguistic characteristics as relevant symbols of identity take place in the context of social interaction and involve the ascription of identity vis-à-vis others (see Barth 1969; Roosens 1989; Eriksen 1992). In many instances, this active construction of identity is embedded in the negotiation of economic and political interests or what can be broadly termed power relations. For instance, it has been shown how individuals may shift identity in different situations or even permanently depending on their interests (e.g. Barth 1969; Eidheim 1969), and many studies have explored the ways in which ethnic groups have been formed in the context of resistance to colonial and state domination (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Devalle 1992; Eriksen 1992).

Such an approach to ethnicity marks a significant departure from the traditional assumption that ethnic groups reflect discrete cultures and languages, an idea which has been central to a number of disciplines in the human sciences including archaeology. It can no longer be assumed, as in culture historical archaeology, that archaeological cultures reflect past peoples; a point which has been stressed from a variety of positions from the 1960s onwards (e.g. Binford 1962; Ucko 1969; Hodder 1978; Renfrew 1987; Shennan 1994). Certain aspects of material culture may have been involved in the expression of ethnic identities in the past, but many others may have been shared between groups. Indeed, a particular group's identity is unlikely to have been monolithic or homogeneous, and neither are the beliefs and practices which informed that identity. It is also likely that the relationships between particular ethnic identities and particular types of material culture ('ethnic markers') were fluid and ambiguous and the expression of ethnicity may have changed in different contexts of social interaction. Thus, the adoption of 'western' style pottery by immigrant Chinese communities in the USA, or the adoption of Graeco-Roman architectural styles by Jewish communities in the late first millennium BC, does not *necessarily* represent evidence for acculturation or Hellenization. It is just as likely that such types of material culture were deliberately appropriated and redefined in the expression of Chinese or Jewish identity (and see Rubertone 1989:36; Rajak 1994:235).

Thus, recent theories of ethnicity in the human sciences present an important challenge to traditional techniques for identifying ethnic groups in archaeology. If we accept that ethnic identity is essentially based on self-conscious identification with a particular group (Shennan 1994:14), such theories would appear to support the argument that archaeologists are dependent upon historical sources which provide access to people's self-conscious reflections on ethnicity. However, for the most part theories of ethnicity which emphasize the subjective, self-conscious aspects of identity fail to address the relationship between culture and ethnicity (see Jones 1997:87–8). It has been convincingly demonstrated that there is not a one-to-one relationship between ethnic groups and cultures, but the precise relationship between actors' perceptions and expressions of ethnicity, and the cultural contexts and social relations in which they are embedded, has been neglected (e.g. Barth 1969; Glazer and Moynihan 1975; Ringer and Lawless 1989). Instead, culture has been reduced to an epiphenomenal and arbitrary set of symbols manipulated in pursuit of group interests in changing social and historical contexts (Eriksen 1992:30, 44).

The relationship between people's consciousness of ethnicity and their cultural contexts can be explored through theories of practice which address the general relationship between the conditions of social life and people's subjective constructions of social reality (see Bentley 1987, 1991; Jones 1997). The anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977) has argued that people possess durable, often subliminal, dispositions towards certain perceptions and practices (such as those relating to the sexual division of labour, morality, tastes and so on). Such dispositions become part of an individual's sense of self at an early age,

and are generated by the conditions making up a particular social environment, such as modes of production or access to certain resources (Bourdieu 1977:77–93). Bourdieu calls the totality of these dispositions the *habitus*. In contrast to traditional theories of culture, the *habitus* does not consist of a system of normative rules which exist outside of individual history (Bourdieu 1977:72). Rather, the orientations of the *habitus* ‘are at once “structuring structures” and “structured structures”; they shape and are shaped by social practice’ (Postone, LiPuma and Calhoun 1993:4).

The concept of the *habitus* can be used to explain the way in which subjective ethnic classifications are grounded in the social conditions characterizing particular social domains. Ethnicity is not a passive reflection of similarities and differences in the cultural practices and structural conditions in which agents are socialized. Nor is ethnicity entirely constituted in the process of social interaction whereby epiphenomenal cultural characteristics are manipulated in the pursuit of economic and political interests. Rather, drawing on Bourdieu’s theory of practice, it can be argued that the construction of ethnic identity is grounded in the shared subliminal dispositions of the *habitus* which shape, and are shaped, by commonalities of practice:

[a] shared habitus engenders feelings of identification among people similarly endowed. Those feelings are consciously appropriated and given form through existing symbolic resources.

(Bentley 1987:173)

Furthermore, these ‘symbolic resources’, such as language, material culture, beliefs and so on, are not arbitrary. The cultural practices and beliefs which become reified as symbols of ethnicity are derived from, and resonate with, people’s habitual practices and experiences, as well as reflecting the immediate conditions and interests which characterize particular situations. As Eriksen has argued, symbols of ethnicity

are intrinsically linked with experienced, practical worlds containing specific, relevant meanings which on the one hand contribute to shaping interaction, and on the other hand limit the number of options in the production of ethnic signs.

(Eriksen 1992:45)

Yet, the *habitus* and ethnicity are not directly congruent, as in the traditional equation of culture and ethnicity. There is a break between the cultural dispositions making up the *habitus* as a whole and the objectified representation of cultural *difference* involved in the expression of ethnicity. Shared habitual dispositions provide the basis for the recognition of commonalities of sentiment and interest, and the perception and communication of cultural affinities and differences, which ethnicity entails. However, a consciousness of ethnicity only emerges in the context of social interaction between peoples of differing cultural traditions. Such forms of interaction lead to a reflexive mode of perception

involving a conscious rationalization of cultural practices which had previously constituted subliminal, taken for granted modes of behaviour. Such exposure to the arbitrariness of cultural practices, which had hitherto been taken as self-evident and natural, permits and requires a change 'in the level of discourse, so as to rationalize and systematize' the representation of those cultural practices and, more generally, the representation of the cultural tradition itself (Bourdieu 1977:233). It is at such a discursive level that ethnic categories are produced, reproduced and transformed through the systematic communication of cultural difference with relation to particular 'ethnic others'.

There are numerous examples of this process in the ethnographic literature. For instance, in the process of interaction and communication between the Tswana people of southern Africa and evangelist missionaries, both groups began to recognize distinctions between them. In effect they began to *objectify* their world in relation to a novel other, and in the process they invented for themselves a self-conscious coherence and distinctness. This objectification of culture is not a fabrication, an entirely instrumental construction. Tswana ethnicity is based on the perception of commonalities of practice and experience in *Setswana* (Tswana ways) in opposition to *Sekgoa* (European ways). But it has also been fundamentally affected by the colonial situation which resulted in a break with pre-existing forms of identity. It was only as a result of the interaction between the Tswana and members of the colonial society that Tswana tradition was objectified as a coherent body of knowledge and practice uniting the Tswana people as an ethnic group. (For further discussion, see Comaroff and Comaroff 1992.)

Thus, the form which expressions of cultural difference take is constituted by the intersection of people's *habitus* with the social conditions constituting a particular historical context. These conditions include the prevailing modes of domination, and the relative distribution of the material and symbolic means necessary for the imposition of dominant regimes of ethnic categorization. The extent to which ethnicity is embedded in pre-existing cultural realities represented by a shared *habitus* is highly variable and contingent upon the cultural transformations engendered by the processes of interaction and the nature of the power relations between the interacting 'groups' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:56). Moreover, expressions of ethnic difference are a product of the interrelation between the *particular* cultural practices and historical experiences activated in any given social context, and broader discourses of ethnicity. Consequently, the cultural content of ethnicity may vary substantively and qualitatively in different contexts, as may the importance of ethnicity (see Eriksen 1991 and 1992).

Such a theory accounts for the dynamic and contextual nature of ethnicity at the same time as addressing the relationship between people's perceptions of ethnicity and the cultural practices and social relations in which they are embedded. Furthermore, it suggests that there are likely to be significant differences between discursive literary representations of ethnicity and its manifestation in social practice which have important implications for the interpretation of ethnic groups in historical archaeology.

PRACTICE AND REPRESENTATION

The theory of ethnicity proposed here suggests that archaeologists may not be able to find a reflection of the 'ethnic entities' represented in historical sources in the archaeological record (see also Miller 1985:202, with relation to caste). Indeed, it is possible to question the very existence of bounded, homogeneous ethnic entities except at an abstract conceptual level. Ethnic categories are based on a conscious reification of transient cultural practices taking place in different spatial and temporal contexts (cf. Bourdieu 1990:84, on genealogy and mapping), and the 'group' only exists in the context of interpretation where it justifies and explains past practices and modes of interaction and informs future ones. In contrast, the praxis of ethnicity results in multiple transient realizations of ethnic difference in particular contexts. These practical realizations of ethnicity in many instances involve the production and consumption of distinctive styles of material culture. But they are a product of the intersection of the perceptual and practical dispositions of the people concerned and the interests and oppositions engendered in a particular social context rather than abstract categories of difference.

This distinction between abstract conceptual representations of ethnicity and the praxis of ethnicity is in some senses analogous to Connerton's (1989:72–3) distinction between contexts of 'inscription' and 'incorporation'. Abstract representations of ethnicity are frequently found in 'inscribing practices', such as writing, art and other symbolic forms, which trap and hold information long after the 'author' has stopped informing. Whereas the praxis of ethnicity falls in the domain of 'incorporating practice', such as everyday practices, performative acts and bodily comportment which carry messages that a sender or senders 'impart by means of their current bodily activity, the transmission occurring only during the time that their bodies are present to sustain that activity' (Connerton 1989:72).

These different forms of practice, inscriptive and incorporating, should not be seen as exclusive, fixed categories; they overlap with one another and persist alongside one another in any particular socio-historical situation. However, they do represent a useful heuristic device in that they allow us to isolate qualitative differences in the manifestation of ethnicity in different contexts. As Connerton (1989:4, 100–1) points out, interpretive history has traditionally taken inscription, most commonly textual inscription, as its privileged object of enquiry. In reconstructing past ethnic groups historians and archaeologists have colluded in giving precedence to literary representations of ethnicity and searching for an isomorphic reflection of such categories in the archaeological record. But to do so is to make the mistake of conflating qualitatively different manifestations of ethnicity. The archaeological record may provide evidence for some aspects of inscriptive practice, such as in symbolic motifs and architectural styles, but the vast proportion of the material recovered is the product of transient, but ongoing, cultural practices, some of which may have been involved in the recognition and expression of ethnic difference.

That is not to suggest that the vast majority of archaeological material is not relevant to the analysis of ethnicity. On the contrary, the analysis of such material can provide important information about the experienced, practical contexts with which inscriptive representations, or discourses, of ethnicity intersect and derive their power. Also, the study of material culture potentially provides access to multivocal practices which can be reduced to decontextualized, univocal, representations by certain forms of textual analysis (see Rappaport and Cummins 1994:92). The point which I wish to emphasize here is the importance of recognizing the qualitative difference between objectified, inscriptive, representations of ethnicity and the praxis of ethnicity. Rather than the seemingly coherent ethnic categories which are produced at a discursive level, the praxis of ethnicity may be manifested in the archaeological record as a complex web of overlapping stylistic boundaries constituted by expressions of ethnic difference, expressions which were at once transient, but also subject to reproduction and transformation in the ongoing processes of social life.

CONCLUSIONS

Recent debates in historical archaeology have contributed to the development of a meaning-centred and contextual approach to the use of both historical and archaeological sources. In emphasizing the situated and subjective nature of historical evidence this work provides an important basis for exploring the active role of texts in the construction of past identities. Beyond this, however, it is also important to consider the precise manner in which material and literary traditions are bound up in the construction of social reality. In exploring the ways in which literature and material culture are simultaneously involved in the construction of ethnicity it becomes clear that there are important qualitative differences between the representation of ethnicity in literature, and other forms of inscription, and expressions of ethnicity embodied in the cultural practices which contributed to much of the archaeological record. As a result archaeological and historical sources can provide both complementary and contradictory perspectives on past ethnicities.

Such an approach has important implications for the analysis of ethnic groups in historical archaeology. Neither archaeologists nor historians can continue to accept the ethnic categories represented in literary sources as straightforward representations of homogeneous ethnic entities with singular spatial and temporal co-ordinates. But conversely they should not disregard literary evidence in favour of supposedly more 'objective' archaeological analysis of long-term history, as has been the recent vogue. Whilst there is a place for the analysis of, for instance, long-term social and economic processes, there is also considerable scope for an archaeology of the social praxis of identities. In order to do this, it will be necessary to abandon the search for homogeneous, bounded ethnic groups and focus on the ways in which particular styles of material culture may have been involved in the active expression of ethnicity in different contexts. Moreover,

through the analysis of spatial organization, modes of production, architectural styles and so on, archaeologists can explore the ways in which discursive systems of difference intersect with the values and modes of practice, the *habitus*, which characterized particular historical contexts.

Thus, contrary to the idea that archaeologists cannot hope to study ethnicity in the absence of historical sources, this approach suggests that historians cannot hope to study past ethnic groups without considering material culture. A contextual and meaning-centred approach to the archaeological analysis of ethnicity offers an essential counterpart to the critical study of textual representations of ethnicity. The praxis of ethnicity cannot be ignored in favour of analysing social identities as entirely discursive constructions, for as Norton points out:

analysis of discursive processes tends to neglect the question of how meanings are socially experienced and lived. The equation of the social with the discursive seems often to flatten or impoverish the texture of social reality.

(Norton 1993:756)

In order to avoid such a flattening out of ethnicity, it is necessary to focus on the ways in which cultural discourses on identity are related to concrete social relations and activities, and the variable nature of the social existence of these discourses (*ibid.*). Archaeologists may not have easy access to the way in which people experienced life in the past, but they can certainly endeavour to explore the praxis of ethnicity, and the ways in which this intersected with the discursive systems of difference represented in historical sources, rather than accept the latter as straightforward representations of social reality.

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15 *Lost kingdoms: oral histories, travellers' tales and archaeology in southern Madagascar*

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Since 1991 we have been working together on a multi-disciplinary project organized by the University of Sheffield and the Museum of Art and Archaeology in Antananarivo. The main aim of the project is to examine the history of tombs, land use and landscape in the extreme south of Madagascar. In recent years we have become particularly interested in studying the formation of the Tandroy kingdom through the separate strands of local oral histories, European written records and archaeology. We are primarily concerned with the recent past of the last 1,000 years and particularly with the pre-colonial period between the fifteenth century and 1900. The extreme south of Madagascar, an area of 19,000–20,000 sq. km of semi-arid grassland and spiny forest, is known as Androy ('the land of thorns'). The Tandroy ('people of the land of thorns') have lived here for centuries though most, if not all clans, have origin stories which involve a migration from the north or east. Tandroy people have a strong sense of ethnic identity which is reinforced and reproduced through dialect, a distinctive house-building tradition, a lavish attention to funerals and tomb-building, polygamous marriage, mixed pastoralism, the growing of non-rice crops such as manioc, and a reputation for toughness. The dead are buried singly and without any secondary rites in contrast to most other parts of the country. So strong is this sense of ethnicity that many Tandroy consider other Malagasy to be virtually foreigners. Just how this notion of difference and identity has come about is a question to which the answers lie in the distant past.

Madagascar, a large island off the east coast of Africa, appears to have been settled for only the last 2,000 years, probably initially by people of Indonesian and African origins. The people of the south share a heritage which is more strongly African, with its cattle pastoralism, Swahili loan words and semisedentism. The similarities with mainland African culture go back 1,000 years in southern Madagascar, with cattle-keeping communities inhabiting stone-walled enclosures (Radimilahy 1988) similar to those found in eastern and southern Africa in the early Late Iron Age after AD 1000. The populations of Madagascar share not only one language, but also a common

concern for the ancestors, which is manifested in a wide variety of regional and ethnic expressions.

METHODS AND SOURCES

The theoretical basis of this research springs from the ethnoarchaeological trend within archaeology concerned with the reformulation of theories of material culture, a project that marked the origins of the contextual appreciation of practice which came to be called post-processual archaeology. The single greatest failure of previous 'post-processual' archaeologies has been their inability to develop a proper appreciation of long-term historical change and context, just as their processual predecessors had been unsuccessful in this area. The Androy project has sought to redress this problem in its study of funerary monumentality, a theme which had been initiated in the late 1970s (Parker Pearson 1982), although this chapter is specifically concerned with the development of royal power and ethnicity through time. The interplay of historical sources was a crucial reason for choosing this particular study area. Not only are there archaeological remains and oral histories (Heurtebize 1986b; n.d.), but also pre-colonial European texts dating from the seventeenth century onwards (Flacourt 1661; Drury [1729] 1890; Grandidier 1868). Such texts were not implicated as expressions and instruments of rule as were the French colonial ethnographies of the occupation, between 1900 and 1960, but they certainly had their own agendas. Flacourt's history is one of frustration and failure in attempting to establish a colony in south-east Madagascar. Drury's account of his experiences as a royal slave is a 'shocking, but true' story in the genre of Defoeian high adventure (Parker Pearson 1996). Grandidier's account is that of an explorer and scientist. Whilst none are unproblematic, recent readings stress the degrees of accuracy and reliability of their observations (Allibert in Flacourt [1661] 1995; Parker Pearson 1996; Vérin forthcoming). Finally, the expectations and preconceptions embedded in this research by the backgrounds and experiences of the authors are many; we are a Luxembourger, three Britons, a non-Tandroy Malagasy and a Tandroy 'insider'. Our own ingrained stereotypes concerning the postcolonial world do not mesh with the particular French conception of what Madagascar is and means in the post-colonial world. Its appearance and status as a former French colony impinges as an alien conception for the non-Malagasy team-members.

As mentioned earlier, the project is multi-disciplinary and combines archaeological investigations with other approaches. Archaeological survey of settlements and ancient burial sites is combined with excavation of settlement sites (Parker Pearson *et al.* 1994). Studies of the contemporary landscape have focused on the placing and character of tombs and forests (Parker Pearson 1992; Parker Pearson *et al.* 1995). Satellite remote sensing

image analysis is being used in conjunction with vegetational and archaeological surveys to explore present day vegetational patterns and land use, and to investigate recent changes in afforestation and deforestation (Garrod *et al.* 1995; Clark *et al.* forthcoming). We are also liaising with David Burney's current study of palaeoecological trends from palynological sequences in the region (Burney 1993). Studies of oral traditions are currently being undertaken by Georges Heurtebize (1986b), who has been collaborating with our project. There is also a rich supply of written records compiled by French administrators and ethnographers from the turn of the century until independence in 1960, as well as recent anthropological research from 1966 to 1995, notably by Georges Heurtebize (1986a), François Benolo (1992), Retsihisatse and Sarah Fee in Androy and by Karen Middleton in Karembole to the west (1987).

The last Tandroy king, Bahary, died in 1888. In 1900 the French invaded Androy, abolished slavery and disarmed the Tandroy, destroying some 12,000 firearms, mainly muskets (Heurtebize, pers. comm.). Within this short span of a few years three of the dominant features of Tandroy life, kingship, slavery and warfare, disappeared. This remarkable transformation was, to a large extent, enforced by the new colonial masters. Subsequently, these institutions can only be recognized in shadowy form. The descendants of the royal lineage, the Andriamañare clan, have slightly different burial practices and styles of greeting to other clans, but otherwise do not set themselves apart. In some areas the institution of slavery lies behind the relationships of obligation at funerals, in that descendants of ex-slaves provide the 'funerary priests' to bury the dead of descendants of 'free' clans. Also in some areas, members of exslave clans do not own their land which is that of their former masters. Except for occasional revolts and unrest, the French administration was not faced with quelling warfare other than cattle raiding and similar disputes. Since independence, grievances and disputes between groups have been settled by negotiation, tribunals and police intervention.

A few of the very oldest people have witnessed the arrival and the departure of the French. Otherwise, the 'time before the French' is known only sketchily from stories largely of genealogy and places of migration and origin, for example as recorded for the Afomarolahy clan by Heurtebize (1986b). Historical accounts written by Europeans only help for specific moments in the past. Unlike their neighbours, the Tanosy, the Tandroy were not particularly interested in trading with Europeans until the later nineteenth century and their only trade interests before this time were in slaves, guns and tobacco. Accounts written by foreign visitors are largely about brief and often tragic encounters (Flacourt 1661; Drury [1729] 1890; Grandidier 1868). In the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, Madagascar was of strategic and mercantile interest to the Portuguese, Dutch, French and English. Along with colonies of merchants and slavers at St Augustine, Tamatave, Fort Dauphin and other ports, there were havens for pirates in the north and on Ile Ste Marie. The extreme south was rarely visited, except by accident. The

dangerous, reefstrewn south coast was responsible for many recorded and reported shipwrecks (Flacourt 1661:36; Drury [1729] 1890:203; Defoort 1913:143 note 2; Parfait, pers. comm.). The one about which we know most is that of the *Degrave*, an English East Indiaman which was run aground in 1703; most of its crew were subsequently massacred (Drury [1729] 1890). Fortunately, Robert Drury's journal, written by a survivor many years after his escape from slavery in Androy, provides us with a detailed insight into life and society nearly 300 years ago. The other notable historical source is a book by the French governor of the port of Fort Dauphin in south-east Madagascar (Flacourt 1661) in which he briefly describes the Ampatres, the area we know as Androy.

EUROPEAN WRITTEN SOURCES: FLACOURT AND DRURY

Flacourt wrote mostly about the region of Anosy, whose capital was Fort Dauphin of which he was governor. His initial book, a history of Madagascar published in 1658, was updated with further accounts of events and published again in 1661. He records the people of the south as the Carcanossi (Tanosy), the Caremboules (Karembola), the Mahafales (Mahafaly), the Machicores and the Ampatois. The last lived in the area which is now Androy, but which Flacourt called the Ampatres (probably *Ampatra*, today found in the word *Ampatrambe*, the ancient name of the area of treeless plains of southern Androy). He states, probably accurately, that the province of the Ampatres is 20 leagues along the coast (c. 89 km) and 12 leagues wide (c. 53km).

It is a land without rivers and without water, as far as the Manambovo, except for several lakes here and there, there are some villages which are three to four leagues [13–17 km] from water. The coast is straight without any harbour, as far as Karembola. The countryside is very fertile, full of woods, in which the inhabitants locate their villages, well enclosed by stakes and spiny trees: such that it is impossible to enter them other than by the entrance. The people are governed by *grands* [great men or nobles] who are masters of villages: there is always one who is above the others, and all the other *grands* are his kin. They are frequently at war with each other, most often because of women whom they take by force from each other; these are also men strongly given to robbing and pillaging their neighbours, because of which they always have enemies, and strangers are very unwelcome.

(Flacourt 1661:35–6)

He also says that the Ampatois can raise an army of 3,000 warriors (Flacourt 1661:37) and that the western part of the region has been in a state of war for at least the previous fifty years:

The river of Manambouve is deep, running towards Caremboulle, and separates it from the Ampatres, descending from the country of the Machicores and it is some fifteen or twenty leagues long, along which there is a great quantity of cattle which, a long time ago, because of the wars which there have been continuously for more than fifty years, have become wild in an area of more than twenty-five leagues of the country, which is filled with them.

(Flacourt 1661:39)

He mentions a similar situation in the Mandrare catchment though it is not entirely clear whether he is referring to the Mandrare or to its tributary, the Mananara:

Mananghare is another river, which descends from the said mountain [Hiele] to the coast of the south-west, and falls into the same river of Mandreirei. Along the length of this river the land is very fertile, the countryside beautiful: but uninhabited because of the wars, more especially as each *grand* [ruler] of the surrounding regions pretends to be the master, and thus nobody dares to undertake any cultivation for fear of the war. This land becomes deserted, and is left to the pigs and wild cattle which are there in quantity.

(Flacourt 1661:34–5)

Through the results of archaeological survey we have been able to understand the full significance of these passages, providing an insight into the formation of Tandroy settlement patterns in which whole communities may live many kilometres from water, as we discuss later. Flacourt mentions only one political centre within the Ampatres, the great village of Montefeno (see Figure 15.1):

Having arrived at Montefenou, *grand village* [great village] of the Ampatres, at the residence of Dian Mififarive, Le Roy was very well received by him and was warned to not trust the negroes at all, not even his children, who were six or seven well-built men each with many negroes under him. He sent in haste the aforementioned soldier, Saint Martin, with four negroes to bring me letters and to ask me for help. Near the Mandrare river he met Ramanghelats [Ramañahelatse] who, knowing that Saint Martin liked hunting, said to him; I hear guinea fowl, come and shoot, Saint Martin. Saint Martin said that he was not in the mood for hunting. Manghelats said to him that he would make a little flame with his rifle to take some tobacco. This Saint Martin wanted to do and, as he corked the *lumière* [flashpan?] of his musket, Ramangahelats speared him in the side and killed him. The negroes who were with Saint Martin took flight and came back to bring this news to his lordship the king, who sent these negroes

RELATION

avec dix-huit foldats, qui en chemin enterrentent le corps du nommé saint Martin qui fut tué en trahison par vn nommé Ramanghellats en venant m'apporter des lettres. La Roche fe joignit avec le sieur le Roy, ramenerent le bestial, & en chemin les Ampatois disoient que c'estoient les Roandrian d'Anoffi qui leurs faisoient faire ses hostilittez, ce qui nous fit connoistre dés lors le mauvais dessein des Grands du pais de Carcanoffi.

Le sieur le Roy estant arriué à Montefenou, grand village des Ampatres, chez Dian Miffariue, fut tres-bien receu de luy, & aduertiy de ne se fier point aux Negres, pas mesmes à ses enfans, qui estoient six ou sept hommes bien faits, & auoient chacun beaucoup de Negres sous eux, il depescha le nommé saint Martin, soldat, avec quatre Negres, pour m'apporter des lettres, & me demander secours. Il rencontra proche la riuere de Mandrerei ce Ramanghellats, lequel sçachant que saint Martin aimoit la chasse, luy dit; j'entends des pintades, viens tirer Saint Martin, Saint Martin luy dit qu'il n'estoit pas d'humeur à chasser, il Manghellats luy dit qu'il fist vn peu de feu avec son fusil pour prendre du tabac. Ce que voulut faire saint Martin, & comme il bouchoit la lumiere de son fusil, Ramanghellats lui donna vn coup de Sagate dans le costé, & le tua. Les Negres qui estoient avec saint Martin prirent la fuite, & s'en retournerent porter cette nouvelle au sieur le Roy, qui depescha viste ces Negres qui m'en apporterent les nouvelles. J'enuey dix-huit François conduits par la Roche, Caporal, qui arriuerent à Montefenou six iours apres, d'où ils partirent & arriuerent au Fort avec six cens bœufs & vaches, & plusieurs pagnes que le sieur le Roy traitra dans les Ampatres: Or toutes ces menées-cy estoient fait faire par Dian Ramach, Dian Theron, & Dian Machicore, lequel Dian Machicore auoit mesme enuoyé Dian Mahauave son frere, avec trois cens hommes au deuant du sieur le Roy, mais ils n'oserent l'attaquer. Les Ampatois mesme crierent que ce n'estoit de leur chefce qu'ils en faisoient. Mais que s'escrioient les Grands d'Anoffi leurs Maître, ou leur auoient

DE LISLE MADAGASCAR.

commandé de ce ce faire.

Peu de temps apres le depart du sieur le Roy, il y eut vn François nommé Ranicaze qui me proposa de faire faire vn voiage en la Prouince d'luonrhon, où il disoit qu'il y auoit bien du bestial à traicter, & qu'il n'y auoit pas moins de deux mille bœufs & vaches à acheter. Je me stay à ses paroles, & luy donnay huit François pour aller avec luy. Mais estant là il n'y eut aucune chose à faire, il fit tant qu'il me laissa couler quatre ou cinq mois sans rien faire, & me fit perdre l'occasion de faire vn bon voiage dès ce temps-la, il commençoit à machiner la trahison qu'il a brassée depuis à son deshonneur, & à la perte de vingt-six François, ainsi que ie diray cy-apres.

CHAPITRE XXVII.

Sibran Hollandois, se veut desbaucher pour s'en aller demeurer dans les terres.

LE neuuesme d'Aoult mil six cens quarante-neuf, le nommé Sibran Hollandois, me vint demander congé d'aller à Manambouille demeurer avec trois François que l'on auoit laissé avec Dian Panolahé ou estoit Georges Titre aussi Hollandois: mais d'autant qu'il auoit mauuais vin, & querelleux outre que ie soupçonnois qu'il auoit esté laissé au Fort comme vn espion par le Commandeur de l'Isle Maurice, ie ne luy voulus pas permettre d'y aller. Le lendemain l'on me vint auertir qu'il estoit parti la nuict, qu'il auoit tout emporté ses hardes, & qu'il auoit dessein de s'en aller à la Baye d'Antongil par terre, qu'il auoit voulu desbaucher Raphaël Bordeman, Anglois, qui refusa de s'en aller. Ce Sibran entendoit & parloit fort bien la langue de cette Isle, & auoit desja demeuré trois ou quatre ans à la Baye d'Antongil. La crainte que j'eus que cet homme estant arriué à Manambouille, ne surprist les deux François

Figure 15.1 An extract from Etienne de Flacourt's book of 1661, referring to the *grand village* of Montefeno.

in haste to bring me the news. I sent eighteen Frenchmen led by La Roche, corporal, who arrived at Montefenou six days later, from whence they left and arrived at the Fort [Fort Dauphin] with six hundred steers and cows and several loincloths which Le Roy traded in the Ampatres.

(Flacourt 1661:264–5)

Today Montefeno is a small village south of the town of Ambondro, where deep hand-dug wells provide the only reliable water source for many kilometres around. Flacourt's story of his soldier's visit to Montefeno underlines the social climate of warfare and mistrust between local rulers which had resulted in the most fertile and watered parts of the country being abandoned. The visit to Montefeno was part of a larger campaign in which French soldiers were sent at the request of Andrianmanela, the king of the Mahafaly (living in south-west Madagascar) to fight with Mahafaly troops against Andrianraua, a king of the Machicores to the north. On their return, the French soldiers were attacked by the Ampatois and sent for reinforcements. Whilst they were waiting for the relief force of nineteen French soldiers, they were given hospitality by Andrianmiffarivo, a friendly local ruler among the internecine Ampatois.

Flacourt later discovered that the attacks by the Ampatois against his troops had been orchestrated by duplicitous Tanosy rulers. Several points are of interest. Guns were extremely rare and had a devastating psychological effect; European soldiers created tremendous fear and were much sought after by local rulers to win battles against their rivals and enemies. These rulers, whose titles are *dean*, *andrian* or *roandria*, are probably best considered as petty chieftains, nobles or princes. Andrianmifarifivo was simply one of many rival leaders in a land without any strong central leadership.

Robert Drury's account of the same area fifty years later reveals significant differences. Muskets and pistols were commonly carried by men of noble rank. Not only was the region ruled by a single *roandria* but there was also a large population of enslaved war captives. These were being taken in the wars that Drury describes against the Mahafaly and Tanosy, though he later witnessed this co-ordinated military organization breaking down into dynastic struggles and civil war, similar to the time of Flacourt. Drury is the first outsider to name the people as Antandroy (today, generally shortened to Tandroy). The change in name from Ampatois to Tandroy between 1650 and 1700 is difficult to explain, but our research demonstrates that these were one and the same people.

Robert Drury's journal (1729) records the shipwreck of the *Degrave*, an East Indiaman returning from India, which developed a leak and was beached on the Androy coast in 1703. The crew of about 150 people were taken to the Tandroy king's residence in the town of Fenoarivo ('full of a thousand') where they were to remain as permanent guests and act as soldiers in the war against the neighbouring Mahafaly and Tanosy. They seized the king in a brief armed struggle and attempted to walk the 70 miles to Fort Dauphin with the king as hostage to guarantee their escape. After three days and a night's march they reached the River Mandrare, the boundary between the Tandroy and the Tanosy, where the Tandroy warriors closed in and began to massacre the crew. Though weakened by thirst and exhaustion, the crew crossed the river and fought off the Tandroy in a musket fire-fight until darkness came. The captain and a few others slipped away in the night, abandoning the remainder who surrendered in the morning. All were killed except for the young Drury and three other midshipmen. Drury was kept as a slave of the king's grandson for many years before escaping to the English colony of St Augustin on the west coast.

The events leading up to the massacre are corroborated by those who fled in the captain's party, but there has been dispute about the veracity of Drury's account for over a century. Some claim it to be attributable to Daniel Defoe (Moore 1943; Molet-Sauvaget 1992), thereby destroying its credibility as a historical source. Many such travellers' tales were being written at this time of colonial encounters with distant and exotic peoples, with these new settings and experiences providing fertile ground for moralizing and didactic writings. It was within this genre that the fictional novel was developing as a best-selling literary device. We might be forgiven for dismissing Robert Drury's *Journal* as a fanciful cobbling together of sailors' yarns, woven into a

wondrous yet supposedly true story by Daniel Defoe. Yet research by other literary scholars on the style of the book and on the historical records of Robert Drury's life (Secord 1961; Mavrocordato 1966; Furbank and Owens 1988, 1994) has led to opposite conclusions being drawn, namely that this is a genuine account of an Englishman's experiences among the Tandroy.

Surprisingly, no one involved in this debate has asked the Tandroy or even visited the region to see what aspects of the story might be evaluated by observation. There is, in fact, a story among the Andriamañare about a white slave who was kept for three years, but any more precise details are not remembered. Drury recorded a number of observations on lifestyle, material culture, funerary practices, wildlife and vegetation, physical geography and political geography which can be compared to current observations. In addition, there is a lexicon of words which he supposedly learned whilst in Madagascar. We have discovered that a few details are in error. None the less, these are minor points when compared to the great number of corroborated observations about rivers, mountains, vegetation and wildlife in Androy (Parker Pearson 1996). We have to be more circumspect when comparing cultural practices since nearly 300 years have elapsed. However, there are striking parallels in cattle raising, bee-keeping, house construction and exploitation of certain wild resources. With the lexicon, most words are common parlance throughout Madagascar and certain dialect words are taken from other regions. Nevertheless, there are particular words which are spoken only in the Tandroy dialect today. It is now clear that someone, whether Drury or not, spent a long time in Androy in the early eighteenth century and later recorded what he saw and experienced there. Of course, we cannot know for certain whether those aspects of lifestyle which do not tally have actually changed or were originally misreported or fabricated. For example, clothing styles even in the early twentieth century were very different from those reported by Drury. Funerary practices seem also to have changed not only in their form but also in their relative significance to the other rite of passage of male circumcision. Finally, there have been major changes in subsistence with the introduction of potatoes, tomatoes, peanuts and manioc.

Drury describes wars between the Tandroy and their neighbours to the east (Tanosy) and west (Mahafaly), cattle raiding, and internal power struggles among the ruling dynasty for the period 1703–11. Whereas the king was located at Fenoarivo, three days walk from the coast and three to four days to the Mandrare river, his grandson lived somewhere to the east just two days walk from the Mandrare. One of the king's nephews lived in a 'town' west of the Manambovo not far from the sea; another lived in a 'town' on the hill of Angavo at the northern limit of Androy; and a third lived 5 miles from the king's grandson. Drury also describes the 'towns' of two of the four sons of the king, one 7–9 miles from the grandson's residence (where Drury spent many of his years) and the other in the region immediately west of the Mandrare. Thus he describes seven royal residences which also appear to have been major

settlements—substantial, defended villages rather than ‘towns’. Whilst we think that Fenoarivo and the Angaro settlement can be identified, the others have yet to be identified and located.

ORAL HISTORIES

The patrilineal lineages of the Tandroy are organized into many clans, all of which have their own clan history concerning origins and genealogy. These often go back at least six generations but are rarely traced more than ten generations. In other words, the people and events of Drury’s day, 300 years ago, are largely forgotten. Even when tracing ancestry back over five generations there may be uncertainties about sequences and relationships. It is very pertinent to recall Van Gennep’s observation that oral traditions record the history of only the previous 150–200 years (cited by Defoort 1913:168 note 4). Despite this pessimistic guidance, there is evidence that oral traditions can shed some light on the earliest history of the Tandroy and thereby provide links with the people and places of Flacourt’s and Drury’s times. However, matching the names of ancient kings is not straightforward since the names of deceased ancestors are often changed after their deaths. The following account is drawn largely from Heurtebize’s on-going and published research (1986b; n.d.).

A brief survey of the entwined oral traditions of three long-established clans, the Andriamañare, the Tetreso and the Afomarolahy, reveals interesting interconnections concerning land and kinship. The Afomarolahy trace their origin to a group of Bara, led by Andriamarolahy, who left their country, many kilometres to the north-east, probably towards the end of the seventeenth century. They settled in the area of Faralambo, in western central Androy, entering into peaceful relations with the Temañorikandro clan who were subjects of an Andriamañare king living east of the Manambovo river mouth. This king or one of his descendants married one or more Afomarolahy wives. By the mid-nineteenth century this small family group of Afomarolahy had grown to fourteen lineages of nearly 1,000 people living around Andrañanivo. This remains their ancestral land though most of the lineages moved over 30 km north around 1900.

The Andriamañare share a tradition with the Mahafaly that the founders of the Andriamañare and Maroserana dynasties were two brothers, originating in the Fort Dauphin area. The Andriamañare, previously known in the literature as Zafimanare, moved to the mouth of the Mandrare river and thence to the Ambondro area, where their ancestral village was at Anjampenorora. They established settlements at Montefeno and then on the west bank of the lower Manambovo. The act which marks the true beginning of their history may be dated to the end of the seventeenth century, with a dispute between two ‘brothers’ (true brothers or cousins), Andriampiarena and Andrianjoma (see Figure 15.2). Andriampiarena remained in the region between Ambondro and the

Manambovo, and is remembered today as the founding ancestor of the Tefanomboke lineage. Andrianjoma left towards the north and, after a lengthy progression around northern Androy, settled at Ambaro, where he established a royal residence and supposedly kept 2,000 slaves. This was on the ancestral land of the Tetreso clan, who had lived here for some time, and is considered to lie beneath the sacred forest of Ampozy Be (Ambaro Faly), between Ambaro and the Tetreso village of Laparoy. Andrianjoma’s descendants are the Tekonda or Tambaro Andriamañare. The *roandria* of this lineage continued to rule most or all of Androy, culminating with Bahary’s reign in the second half of the nineteenth century. He had three residences at Ambaro, one of which is known as Fanarive (Fenoarivo).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND EXCAVATION

There has been considerable archaeological investigation in Androy since the 1960s, notably by Pierre Vérin, Georges Heurtebize and Chantal Radimilahy (much of this is summarized or referred to in Radimilahy 1988). A ceramic type

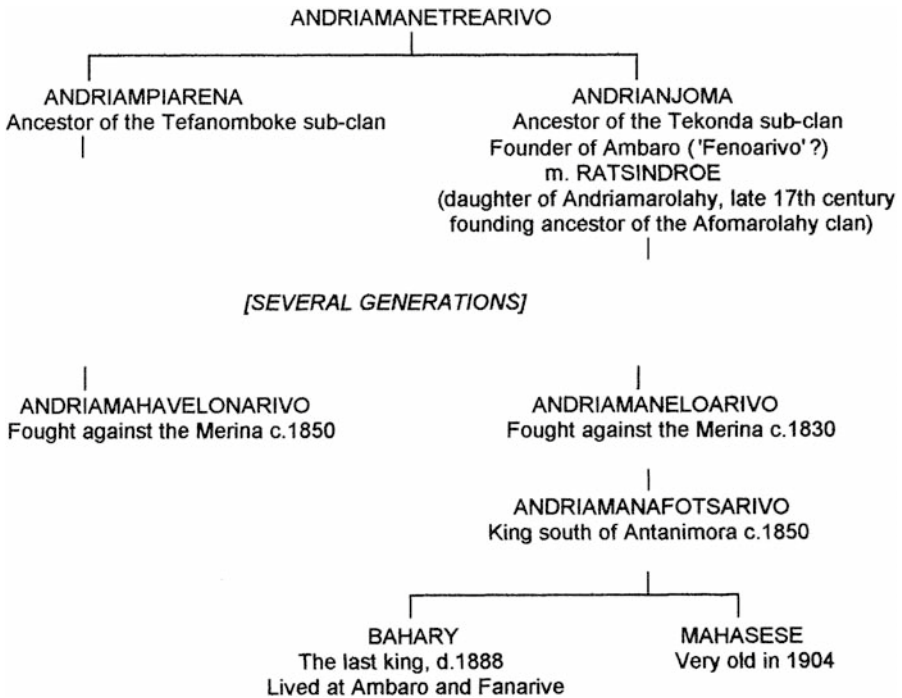


Figure 15.2 A simplified genealogy of the Andriamañare kings, collected by Georges Heurtebize (1988b: 184, table 57) largely from the testimony of Imbina (b. circa 1890).

sequence has been established from AD 1000 to the late nineteenth century (when pottery making was abandoned), through the strategic excavation of a series of key sites. There is also a broad understanding of social and settlement transformations during that period, from the extensive survey of parts of northern Androy.

In the harsh environment of Androy, organic remains do not survive long. Since most of Tandroy material culture is of wood, fabric or reed, there is little for the archaeologist to find. The main types of evidence are pottery sherds, animal bones, glass beads, stone pipes, gun flints and, particularly in the twentieth century, metal vessels and imported porcelain. The wooden remains of houses do not survive and only occasionally can house floors be discovered during field survey as soil discolourations or by excavation as small, low mounds (Figure 15.3). In some areas pre-Tandroy fortifications survive as dry-stone walls or as earthworks, though in others they do not survive at all. Drury describes the defences of Tandroy towns as forests of natural or planted spiny trees, broken only by narrow entrances. Here is his description of 'Fenno-arevo' (Fenoarivo):

The residence of this king is about fifty miles from the seaside; for I suppose, we might travel sixteen or seventeen miles a day. It stands in a wood, and is secured in a particular manner with trees all round it, which seem to have been planted there when very young. They



Figure 15.3 The low platform of an eighteenth-century house floor, excavated adjacent to the sacred forest of Ambaro Faly, the site of Andrianjoma's capital (photo by M.Parker Pearson).

grow very straight and tall, and so near together, that a small dog can't pass between them. They are also naturally armed with large strong thorns, so that there's no breaking through nor climbing over. There are but two passages, or gates, no wider than for two to go abreast, one of these to the northward and the other to the southward. The whole in compass is about a mile.

(Drury [1729] 1890:58–9)

Such defences leave no traces above ground and were constructed around many settlements in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries even in areas where there was suitable stone for building walls. Since 1991 intensive fieldwalking has located defended settlements of both forms. The latter survive only as large spreads, sometimes many hectares in extent, of pottery and bone-rich, dark soil.

Finding Fenoarivo: is it Andrianjoma's capital?

In 1993 part of the heartland of the Tandroy was intensively surveyed in the search for Fenoarivo, the royal centre recorded by Drury. The area was selected on the basis of place names (lake of Fenoarivo next to Bahary's residence; Laparoy 'palace of thorns'), its location as Andriamañare ancestral land and residence of kings, and the approximate location in days' walk from the coast and River Mandrare as recorded by Drury. A sequence of three large settlement scatters, dating from probably the later seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, were located in this one area. These would seem to be different phases of the royal town, with the most easterly, Ampozy Be (Ambaro Faly site 150), the earliest. Another large scatter nearby, east of Laparoy, was thought to be an earlier phase but excavations in 1995 (see Figure 15.4) demonstrated that it is the remains of a small village occupied continuously from the sixteenth or seventeenth century until the early twentieth century, when it was deserted for the Tetreso village of Laparoy. In this case archaeology is in agreement with oral tradition, indicating that the Tetreso have lived here for 400–500 years.

The sacred forest of Ambaro Faly now covers the remains of the residence of Andrianjoma (some 12 ha). This is traditionally part of a larger site, with Andrianjoma's retinue and slaves living to the west, forming a total area of over 20 ha. It was not possible to excavate within the limits of the sacred forest but excavations within the western area (Ambaro sites 145–6) were carried out (see Figure 15.5), once the blessing and consent of Andrianjoma and the ancestors had been obtained by the sacrifice of a goat and a chicken. It is too early to be certain of the dating of this site but finds of gunflints, clay and stone pipes, metalwork and glass, among the characteristic Tandroy coarse pottery, suggest occupation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Similar finds were also made in excavations outside the western edge of the sacred forest (Figure 15.3) and may post-date the earliest settlement now covered by the forest.



Figure 15.4 Excavations at the seventeenth- to nineteenth-century settlement at Laparoy (photo by Ramilisonina).



Figure 15.5 Excavations at the eighteenth- to nineteenth-century settlement at Ambaro (site 145–6). Beyond the trench is a sacred tomb forest of primary woodland (photo by K.Godden).

Whilst we are able to link archaeology and oral tradition, we do not yet have the dating evidence to be absolutely certain that Ambaro Faly is the 'royal town' of Fenoarivo which the crew of the *Degrave* were taken to in 1703. If they are one and the same, then Drury's king, 'Dean Crindo' (Andriankirinda?), was probably Andrianjoma. A further point of agreement is that Drury's account of the circumstance and numbers of Crindo's family tallies with oral histories of those of Andrianjoma, in both having one brother (with whom they had fallen out) and each having four sons.

Montefeno: seventeenth-century settlements and the umbilical cord tree of the Ambaro roandria

Montefeno is one of a number of villages located on the southern edge of a high plateau which drops towards the sea amid ancient dunes. As with Andrianjoma's village at Ambaro, Montefeno enjoys dramatic views to the hills and mountains which form the traditional boundaries of Androy. We now think that this is no coincidence since we have located seven large seventeenth- to eighteenth-century settlements in different parts of Androy which all have commanding views across large expanses of countryside to these fringes of hills. A raised, but not mountain-fast, placing within the landscape undoubtedly provided a useful vantage point from which to survey the surrounding countryside for signs of impending danger (war parties, burning villages), and also to create a sense of power and control over large tracts of land.

Either side of the present village of Montefeno are two large ancient settlements. One, to the west, is densely covered in the shiny graphite-burnished pottery of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Montefeno site 331), a ceramic style which was observed and described in some detail by Flacourt (1661:74). The other, to the east (Analalava III site 351), has a sparse cover of graphite-burnished and coarse pottery which we date provisionally to the later seventeenth century. These sites lie within a densely occupied landscape of seventeenth- to eighteenth-century settlements, most of them located along the break of slope which forms an ecotone between the plateau grazing land to the north and the easily cultivable sandy soils of the ancient dune system to the south. These two sites are the closest to the area of deep wells to the north at Ambondro 3.5 km away. Further excavation is needed to clarify their relative and absolute dates of occupation. We cannot say which one is the *grand village* referred to by Flacourt. Neither can we be certain that they were occupied consecutively by the same royal group. As today, the ancient settlements along this ridge were inhabited by many different clans, a number of whom have left. The Andriamañare abandoned a nearby eighteenth- to nineteenth-century village (Belanky XI site 333) in the nineteenth century. However, there is one very important clue which allows us to connect these settlements with Ambaro and Andrianjoma.

At the centre of Analalava III site 351 there is a large and ancient *amontana*, or *fihamy* tree (a type of fig), which is the umbilical cord tree of the *roandria* of

Ambaro. Throughout Androy there is the tradition that umbilical cords are kept for special burial at the place where the lineage ancestors live. This tree must mark the ancestral village of Andrianjoma and his descendants of the royal line. It seems that, by chance, we have found the settlement from which he set out to eventually settle at Ambaro.

Anjampanorora and the origins of the Andriamañare

At the beginning of this century, Defoort noted from oral traditions that the most ancient Andriamañare village was at Anjampanorora ('at the baobab full of spit'), c. 8km east south-east of Ambondro (1913:162, note 2). This is probably the sacred tomb forest of Anjampanorora, 12 km east of Ambondro in the territory of the Maromena Andriamañare. The forest can only be entered for funerals, and funeral-goers have noticed pottery sherds around its centre. Early graphite-burnished triangle-impressed wares from a settlement scatter (Anjampanorora IV site 357) on its south-eastern edge are closely comparable with pottery from only one other site in the area, Montefeno 331. We may tentatively date the origins of the Andriamañare to the sixteenth century.

Despite extensive field survey in the Anjampanorora-Montefeno area, none of the eighty-five settlement sites may be dated before the sixteenth century. It seems that, in contrast to the river valleys of Androy, this area was unoccupied and perhaps uncontested when the Andriamañare arrived here. Returning to Flacourt's comments about warfare causing the abandonment of the Manambovo and Mandrare river valleys, this moment of arrival in the sixteenth century, as dated by the pottery, compares closely with Flacourt's estimate of 'more than fifty years' before 1658. It is also intriguing that the Andriamañare consider their previous home to have been the mouth of the Mandrare. Field survey of this area, also in 1995, failed to identify any sites of this period; all but one dated to the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, suggesting that this fertile, well-watered and strategic location was largely deserted until the eighteenth century, presumably due to endemic warfare.

THE ORIGINS OF TANDROY ETHNICITY

We had previously considered that the formation of the Tandroy sense of ethnic identity could be dated back to two independent events: the replacement of the terms Ampatres and Ampatois by Androy and Tandroy between 1661 and 1703 and the appearance at the beginning of the eighteenth century of a coarse pottery style characteristic of Androy as a whole. After the sixteenth century large areas of north-western Androy were deserted (Parker Pearson 1992) and we had considered that the Ampatois were driven out or assimilated into the conquering Tandroy. However, this all requires reassessment. The facts that Andrianmifavarivo of the Ampatres was considered, in Defoort's day, to be of the Andriamañare line, and that the Andriamañare were settled in the

Montefeno—Anjampanorora area by the time of Flacourt's writing, strongly suggest that the transition from Ampatois to Tandroy was not a radical break but a continuation of the same people. The transition is probably a perceptual one, from Flacourt's external perception of a land and its peoples to Drury's inside view of a people and their land.

The discontinuity of settlement in north-western Androy may relate to different groupings. The early settlements and tombs (i.e. pre-nineteenth century) in this area are attributed locally to the Bara, the cattle pastoralists who now live 70 km to the north. Whilst we realize that forgotten archaeological remains are often attributed to peoples other than our own ancestors especially in an area largely resettled by new groups, the relatively recent dates of some of these sites (seventeenth to early eighteenth century) may make this unlikely. Oral traditions affirm that the Bara left this area either before the arrival of the Afomarolahy and other clans or were driven out by them. Our current interpretation is that the tenth- to sixteenth-century sites of north-western Androy are those of the Machicores, a territorial grouping of people north of Androy and Mahafaly country, whose descendants, the Masikoro, form a small ethnic group who live far in the west.

The date of origin of the Tandroy can be estimated in several ways. The oral traditions of the Andriamañare indicate that Anjampanorora and Montefeno were their earliest settlements, and these can be dated to the sixteenth century. There may well have been other Tandroy in the region but the ancestral settlements of other clans with long ancestries, such as the Tetreso, can not be dated any earlier. In Androy, this moment is marked in ceramic terms by the replacement of grooved pottery (Rezoky ware) by graphite-burnished triangle-impressed pottery (dating to the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries). It is also marked by a change in settlement pattern. Pottery of Rezoky and earlier styles is found on settlements in markedly riverine locations, always in close proximity to a streambed, riverbed or lake. In contrast, later sites have a tendency to be located far from water as Flacourt observed. This locational shift was brought about by endemic warfare and, in the Andriamañare's case, probably the search for new land.

The constituents of Tandroy ethnicity are broadly ancestry and territory. The principal unit of belonging and group identity is the clan, which may be sub-divided into a complex system of patrilineal lineages and sub-lineages. This is given material form by the placement of a *bazomanga*, a sacred post at which clan meetings, circumcision ceremonies and sacrifices may be held. With the exception of the Andriamañare, clans live in geographically localized ancestral territories. They are, however, by no means static; clan migrations and the creation of new clans have changed radically their geographical distribution since Decary's clan map of 1930. Although clan membership is such a major component of ethnic identity, it is a concept wholly absent from Flacourt's and Drury's accounts even though the clan histories may reach far back in time. In Flacourt's case, he wrote down the accounts of others and never visited the Ampatres. For Drury's story it is a

major omission. That said, his major concern was with the royal dynasty (what we know to be the *roandria* of the Andriamañare) whose leading men he writes about in detail.

Whereas clan territory and ancestry are regularly reaffirmed through practical action and ritual recitation in boundary disputes, funeral gatherings, sacrifices and *hazomanga* gatherings, the concept of Tandroy ethnicity is more nebulous and relates to dialect, lifestyle, certain aspects of material culture and to a shared but sometimes vague conception of Androy. The traditional lifestyle of the Tandroy is not exclusive but is shared with the Karembola and the Mahafaly. They share the same subsistence practices and settlement patterns, and similar house and tomb styles. Those material aspects which visibly defined Tandroy ethnicity alone have gone; pottery was no longer produced after the nineteenth century and the distinctive hairstyles photographed by early ethnographers have disappeared. Whereas everyone is aware of Androy as a geographical entity (see Figure 15.6), its edges are not always plain. Its eastern limits lie just beyond the Mandrare river where the lowlands reach the edge of the Anosy mountains. Its western limit may be considered as the Menarandra river, though the Karembola clans regard themselves as distinctly different, with the boundary just west of the Manambovo river. To the north, there is no clear boundary and Tandroy and Bara groups merge about 130 km from the south coast. Historically (largely from oral tradition and from Drury), the boundaries were slightly different. The Mandrare formed the east limit whilst the land north of Angavo was largely deserted. The western limit lay just beyond the Manambovo. This closely matches Flacourt's description of the extent of the Ampatres. This last century has seen a major Tandroy expansion, commencing with the Renevave clans (Afomarolahy, Afondriambita and Afomihala) moving north of Angavo, and culminating today in Tandroy villages deep into Bara country, hundreds of kilometres to the north.

CONCLUSION

The names Flacourt uses for other peoples of the south remain largely the same today (Caremboules=Karembola; Mahafales=Mahafaly; Carcanossi = Tanosy; Machicores=Masikoro) so why is it that the name 'Antandroy' does not appear until Drury's experiences between 1703 and 1710? We know that there have been surprisingly rapid transformations in ethnicity in the region; for example, the Machicores were a large population inhabiting extensive areas of inland pastures in Flacourt's time whereas today they constitute a small group within the greater identity Sakalava of western Madagascar. The twenty-two 'official' ethnic groups of Madagascar are also derivations from French administrative ethnography, which curiously exclude the Karembola and many other more recently constructed ethnicities. In Androy this process can be observed in the clan histories of the Tandroy, with major changes taking place in clan movement,

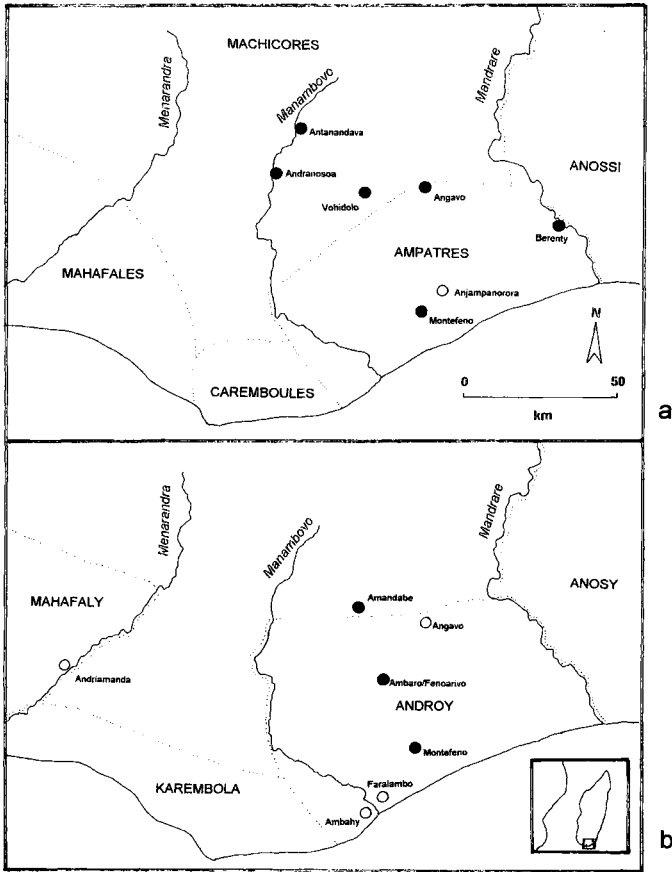


Figure 15.6 The distribution of major centres in Androy: (a) large sites of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries; (b) royal centres of the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries. Filled circles indicate sites confirmed by archaeological reconnaissance. The ethnic boundaries are derived from Flacourt (1661), Drury (1729) and oral traditions.

migration and formation since the 1930s (Heurtebize 1986b). In contrast to the amorphous melanges which make up ethnic groups such as the Sakalava (Feely-Harnik 1991), the Tandroy have a very clear self-identity. They are also aware of their reputation among other groups in Madagascar and certain cultural practices are constructed as oppositional to those of neighbouring groups, or to Malagasy more generally (for example, through the placing of doorways to the north, the marking of seniority from south to north, and the driving of cattle in front of the coffin). At the same time there is no absolute connection with the land; the Tandroy are well aware that their ancestors were not always in Androy and that they came in from elsewhere. Currently, Tandroy ethnicity can be

attained through intermarriage and cultural assimilation thereafter. Outsiders are also able to assimilate (as was Drury), and a good example is found in the formation of the Afomarolahy and associated Renevave clans (Heurtebize 1986b). Oral histories describe the Afomarolahy clan as descendants of Bara pastoralists from the north-east who arrived in Androy in the late seventeenth century and were given permission to settle by Andrianjoma. In the subsequent centuries they intermarried with the Andriamañare clan among others, and thus established themselves as a clan of intermediate status between the royal clan and others. Since the later nineteenth century, the expansion and migration of the Renevave northwards has extended Androy beyond its earlier limits, though this northern area is referred to as Renevave. Another somewhat ambiguous ethnic relationship is apparent with the Karembola; whilst considering themselves ethnically distinct (Middleton 1987), the Tandroy consider them to be Tandroy. In terms of material culture, Tandroy ethnicity is supposedly identifiable by house form, traditional clothing, stone tombs and mats. However, increasing numbers of Tandroy live in houses whose styles are traditionally associated with other groups and the same is the case for clothing fashions. At the same time, these aspects of distinctive Tandroy material culture are all shared among the three pastoralist groups of the extreme south, the Mahafaly, the Karembola and the Tandroy.

Thus, Tandroy ethnicity has been a fluid and changing identity which, even though it is perceived as very distinct, is of recent origin and has very permeable boundaries. It is within this context that we can reassess the question of whether the origin of the ethnic name coincides with the origin of the ethnic identity. We had initially wondered whether Flacourt's naming of the Ampatres was due to his external perception of a land and its people, in contrast to Drury's view from the inside. This is unlikely since Flacourt's records, are derived from the experiences of his *coureurs de brousse* such as Le Roy who, along with their Tanosy guides, developed a close acquaintance with the people of the Ampatres (Hébert, forthcoming). We also thought that perhaps the encounters with the French in the mid-seventeenth century might have been responsible for the genesis of Tandroy ethnic identity. Yet this also seems unlikely since no other group in the south went through such changes and the Ampatois/Tandroy were relatively unaffected by French interference in contrast to their neighbours. The answer to this problem may be resolved using the archaeological evidence. Andriamififarivo, the *roandria* of the Ampatres, ruled from his *grand village* at Montenfeno according to Flacourt. This lay within the large sandy and waterless plateau known as the Ampatrambe which experienced an explosion of settlements during the seventeenth century in what had been an uninhabited plain. In other words, shortly before Flacourt was writing, there had been no settlement here at all. If Flacourt is right (and initial survey results support his observations), the river valleys were the centres of population and became depopulated in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the result of warfare. The creation of a new community, divided into villages protected by defences of thorns, on

the waterless plain of the Ampatrambe was actually in process at the time of Flacourt's writing. It is probably through this great event that the identity of the 'people of the land of thorns' came into being as a self-constituted group identity later known to Drury as the 'Anterndroui' (Antandroy). The distinctive practices of the Tandroy, revolving around the keeping of cattle despite the scarcity of water, arose from this moment. Thus, their ethnicity was established, embodied in these new conditions and practices of daily life.

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16 *Pidgin English: historical archaeology, cultural exchange and the Chinese in the Rocks, 1890–1930*

JANE LYDON

pidgin: jargon chiefly of English words used between Chinese and Europeans

(Concise Oxford Dictionary)

In the mid-nineteenth century, a combination of natural and social disasters at home, and the attraction of gold elsewhere, caused an exodus of Chinese men from the southern province of Guangdong to countries such as Canada, the United States and Australia to seek their fortunes. This large-scale phenomenon, often termed the Chinese diaspora, forms the global background for the more specific processes which this chapter addresses. I examine the cosmopolitan community which comprised the Rocks, in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (Figure 16.1), between 1890 and 1930, presenting an account of a form of communication between Chinese and whites which I refer to as ‘pidgin English’.

Within archaeology, analysis which explores the symbolic dimensions of the material world has become increasingly established, seeing cultural context as essential to understanding the meaning of things. This approach originated with the work of American historical archaeologists such as Jim Deetz (Deetz 1965, 1967, 1977a, 1977b; and e.g. Glassie 1982; Beaudry, Cook and Mrzowski 1991:160; Hall 1992; Yentsch 1994), and while critiques of structuralism have pointed to problems such as ahistoricism and the monolithic, too-coherent notion of culture it entails, I argue that symbolic meanings and their ‘real’ context can be addressed through the archaeological record and the cultural schemes which enframe it. Knowledge is constructed according to a discursive field which creates a representation of an object of knowledge, and recognition of the way that social practices condition cognitive discourse has undermined the separation of text and world (Foucault [1970] 1994). The symbolic world of meaning embodied in a text must be examined in relationship to the world outside it, because it stands in dialectical relationship to that world (Biersack 1991:8; Sahlins 1985). This dialectic is inherent in the notion of discourse as a social practice, and its engagement of material and practical life suggests a starting-point for

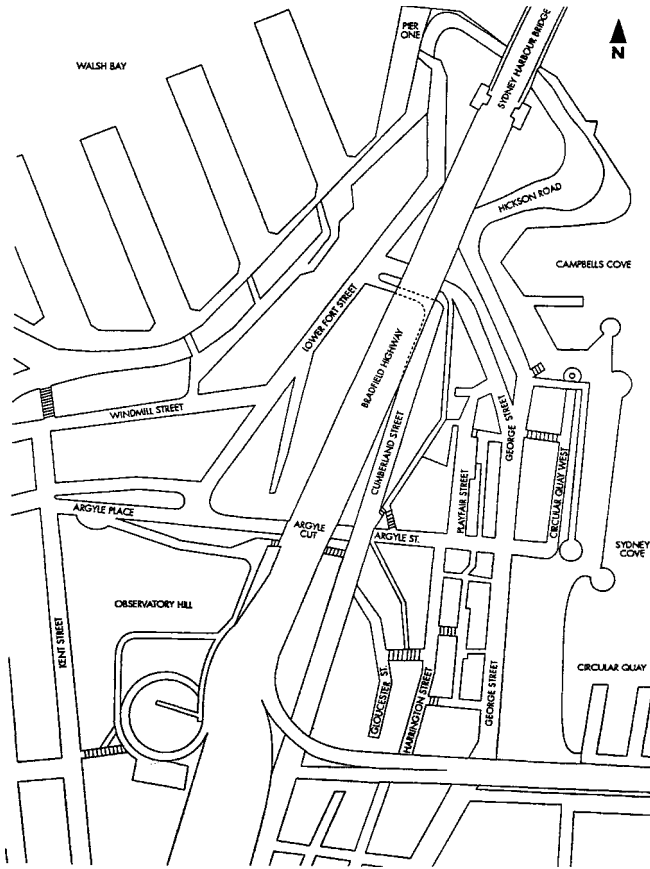


Figure 16.1 Location plan showing the Rocks, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

archaeologists pursuing the larger cultural schemes of things. Several recent studies in historical archaeology explore the discursive, symbolic nature of the material (e.g. Hall 1992; Praetzellis and Praetzellis 1992; Stewart-Abernathy 1992; Yentsch 1992, 1994).

Historical archaeology has so far dealt with evidence for the Chinese diaspora of the nineteenth century in an extremely narrow way, tracing their so-called ‘acculturation’ and gradual assimilation into European society through measuring changing proportions of Chinese items in the material record. This perspective can be criticized on a number of grounds: it involves an essentializing and monolithic notion of culture; it perceives culture change as linear and one-way, comprising the absorption of one, less powerful culture into another; it crudely and directly equates such processes with material patterns. More satisfying means of understanding cross-cultural exchange

point to a need to address the particular context of material culture in creating identity, to recognize its dynamic and manipulable character, and to explore its strategic symbolic meanings (e.g. Sahlins 1981; Hodder 1982; Thomas 1991). I explore these issues in the following account, examining white perceptions of the Chinese, and Chinese responses to their new context, both turning inwards, and outwards, to develop an inventive, mutually understood cultural jargon.

THE ROCKS

Representations of the Rocks from its earliest days stressed its dangerous, subversive qualities: convicts from Hyde Park Barracks escaped here whenever they could; it was often compared with London's St Giles, inhabited by felons, prostitutes and fences. The image of the Rocks as disorderly, a dark whirlpool of vice, drawing in the helpless, weak and wicked continued to shape outsiders' perceptions. It was, as proclaimed by one of its early pubs, 'The World Turned Upside Down'—a heterogeneous, shifting, subversive place, a waterside theatre outside the usual order of things (Lydon 1996) (Figures 16.2 and 16.3).

Lower George Street in the 1890s was a place of movement—swirling foot traffic, horse-drawn vehicles, the shipping and loading of the docks (Figure 16.4). The 'floating' population of sailors and new arrivals eddied around the Rocks' fixed places and people. Some were part of the street life: the policemen of No. 4 Station—uniformed men such as Inspector Atwill who had been on the Rocks beat for many years, and plainclothes men like Constables Carson and Beadman, known for their 'flash appearance', and their friendliness with the Chinese. Outside the gambling 'dens', touts or 'bummers' stood to entice passers-by inside; 'respectable' Europeans hurried in and out trying not to be noticed, but larrikins stood around the doors, and 'seemed to be rather proud of it'. Assignment houses, or brothels, were kept in Essex Street, Harrington Street and Queens Place, and men of all classes would gather across the street, waiting their turn. Girls hung about Suez Canal, 'where the very lowest dregs of society in Sydney are to be found' (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality* 1891–2:45).

By the late nineteenth century, Sydney's mainly Anglo inhabitants still eyed the Rocks' exoticism, by now enhanced by its relative age, with caution: middle-class attempts to survey and control it persisted, although some were attracted by its heterogeneity and seedy excitement. Most of the city's foreign population clustered near the waterside. The Rocks' former mix of classes had altered by the 1890s, as beginning in the 1870s many of the wealthier inhabitants moved out along the railway line, leaving the working classes, especially wharf-labourers and coal-lumpers, who needed to live near their place of work (Walker 1901:299; and see Karskens and Thorp 1992; Mullens 1993; Karskens 1994).

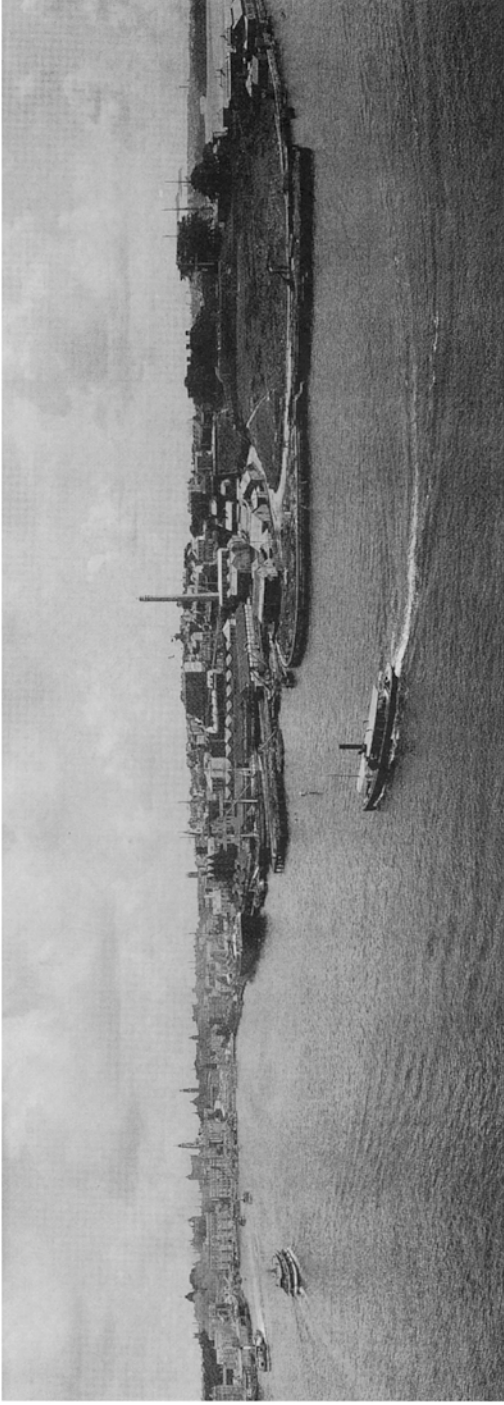


Figure 16.2 Entering Sydney Cove, the Rocks are on the right. 'Sydney 1904—Australia' (courtesy of Philip Gray Photography Ptd Ltd, 4 Oakville Road, NSW 2068). The Sydney Harbour Bridge was not built until the 1930s, its southern end in Dawes Point appears here as vacant land.



Figure 16.3 Looking south down over the Rocks, 1907–9, from approximately the vantage point offered today by the Sydney Harbour Bridge (courtesy of the State Library of New South Wales, ML Px ?D611 £69).

From outside, in elite eyes, the Rocks represented the conflation of the city’s ‘lamentable other’—the poor, the immoral, the foreign Chinese. Against its supposed filth and degeneracy, the upright middle classes defined themselves (Figure 16.5). But from within, this untidy domain resolved itself into meaningful patterns created by women and their families, pursuing their productive ways of life. The archaeological record, largely reflecting the domestic, female, everyday life of the Rocks, refocuses the larger-scale, male view of the area’s past which has usually prevailed.

White views

The complex discourse of bourgeois concern for urban health and morality culminated in resumption of the area in 1901. In May 1907 the politician and urban reformer J.D.Fitzgerald wrote:

The slum is often the most picturesque quarter of a city—at a distance. It has usually the glamour of antiquity upon it. A slum cannot be manufactured in a day. But certain races can create slums in quicker time than others. Our Chinese—also picturesque,

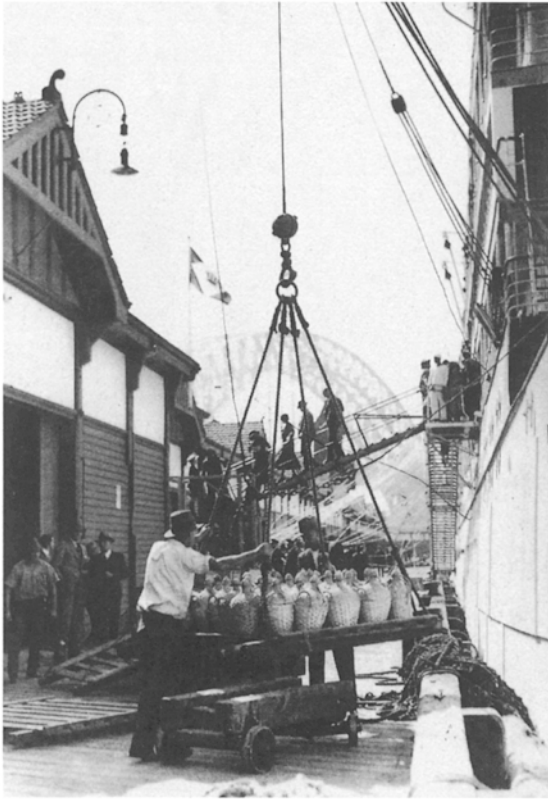


Figure 16.4 Wharf labourers unloading cargo in Sydney Cove, 1930s (*Fixed in Time. Photographs from Another Australia 1900–1939*, The Fairfax Library, John Fairfax and Sons, 1985, p. 117).

but dirty—have a fatal facility in evolving slums out of the newest and most unpromising material. They board out the air and light, and sedulously cultivate darkness and bad ventilation. The slum, however picturesque, from a distance, is, on close scrutiny, hideous, pestilential...the wages of the slum is death.

(Fitzgerald 1907:562–3)

Unfortunately for Fitzgerald, his grim prose was accompanied by Lionel Lindsay’s delicate, romantic etchings of the Rocks, stressing its age, squalor and exoticism—represented by the emblematic Chinese hawkker (Figure 16.6). This combination creates a dissonance born of two quite different attitudes: Sydney’s bohemian artists and writers enjoyed the worn patina and old-fashioned spaces of the Rocks (Figure 16.7), while officials saw it simply as another portion of the city’s ‘slumland’, a source of pestilence and a threat to the city’s middle classes (cf. Mayne 1993; Davison and Dunstan 1985:34, 52–3). The Chinese were



Figure 16.5 An image often used as emblem of the Rocks 'slum': 'A rear view of Cumberland and Gloucester Street', c. 1900 (courtesy of the State Archives Office of New South Wales. SAO COD 121B 831).

represented in very different ways: as emblems of the exotic, or, like its working-class population, the sailors, and the boarding-houses, as a source of contagion. The Chinese were constructed as a source of corruption, defined in distinctively racial and cultural terms, but susceptible to control by the familiar means of uncovering, mapping, cleansing. There is a notion of movement beneath the surface, hidden, unknown, dangerous; the Chinese were concealed within their impregnable houses, on the other side of an ethnic boundary. The Chinese-occupied George Street tenement and 'gambling-den' is depicted as secret, dark, dirty, immoral; young girls and working men are drawn helplessly across its threshold into an exciting, dangerous world.

Other views of the Chinese are evident within the material discourses of domesticity. As the site of gender and class relations, the form of the home, like the street, was constructed as an emblem of social status. The economic need to keep up the appearance of respectability meant that domestic life became a mode of presenting the self to the wider world. At Samson's Cottage (Figure



Figure 16.6 'In the picturesque Rocks area', by Lionel Lindsay, c. 1905, *The Lone Hand*, May 1907.

16.8), a small household in Kendall Lane built in 1844, the single room on the ground floor had been used for most domestic tasks. Inhabitants of the cottage were working-class; from 1885, when the George Street frontage was rebuilt as two tenements, the cottage was occupied by a Mrs Brown (Lydon 1991a). The subsistence pattern at this site exemplifies European domestic working-class Rocks' life generally, forming a strong contrast with that of the Chinese, who lived at the site in the 1920s. It is characterized for example by a wide range of available resources, a strong maritime identity and dining rituals which defined and maintained social bonds within the complex language of Victorian ideology. The individualized, relatively elaborate settings at Samson's Cottage reflect a concern with the appearance of respectability, expressed through British rituals such as tea-drinking, an essential sign of hospitality (e.g. Historic Houses Trust of NSW 1992).



Figure 16.7 ‘Chinese Fishermen [sic] carrying Shoulder Baskets. The Rocks, Sydney, 1886’, by Livingstone Hopkins (courtesy of the National Library of Australia. Location, 3822, Accession no. 51594, Sepia etching, 30 × 19.9cm).

From the early nineteenth century Chinese export wares were used in all classes of Rocks households, including this one. At sites such as Lilyvale for example, a wide range of blue-and-white export ware as well as more elaborate forms and decorative types were recovered (Thorp 1994). These forms echo *chinoiserie*, strongest before the mid-eighteenth century and the source of the enduring popularity of Chinese ceramics (e.g. Neave-Hill 1975; Godden 1979; Kerr 1986; McClure Mudge 1986). From the 1850s, with the influx of Chinese immigrants associated with the goldrushes, a wider range of Chinese-made ceramics appears in the Rocks, as export ware is augmented by that made for use by the Chinese themselves (Wilson 1989; Lydon 1991a, 1991b).

The ‘symbolic valence’, or hybrid character of Chinese ceramics and their western imitations has been seen as the coalescence of traditional Chinese art with the demands of occidental taste (McClure Mudge 1986:33). More

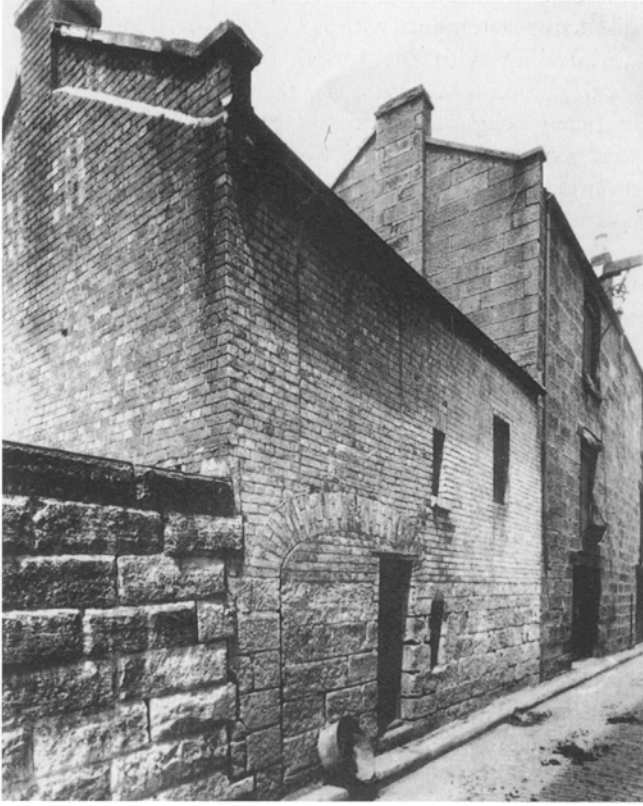


Figure 16.8 Samson's Cottage, looking south along Kendall Lane, parallel to George Street, cleansing operations (courtesy of the State Archives Office of New South Wales. SAO COD 121B 1633).

specifically, I argue that the pattern of use by Europeans in the late nineteenth century, assimilating objects like the popular blue and white ceramics into their households, represents the persistence of a fascination with a particular, artificial, image of the East, familiarized and yet emblematic of exoticism, like the Chinese hawker on the streets of the Rocks. Despite the threat that the Chinese were often seen to represent, certain forms were domesticated, transformed in particular ways into the familiar and appealing.

Similarly, following the British popularization of transfer-printing on earthenware in the early nineteenth century, allowing elaborately decorated pottery to be mass-produced and widely owned, the enduringly popular 'willow pattern' appeared, copied from Chinese landscapes (Wills 1978:174; Copeland 1980). It became the best known of many blue on white decorative schemes, due both to the diminishing China trade at the end of the eighteenth century and to the new availability of English blue and white pottery (Figure 16.9).

These Chinese objects in nineteenth-century Euro-Australian households may be seen as discursive statements within Orientalism, Edward Said's 'corporate institution for dealing with the Orient'. They make the strange familiar, creating an understanding of China and the Chinese as static, exotically feminine and mystically religious, within a conceptualization of the Orient as a systematic and rational panorama (Said 1970:2–3). But as objects, these tangible 'statements' have a polysemous, mutable character, their meaning defined by particular, historical circumstances and so subject to change. Like other forms, they could be manipulated according to need, forming part of larger cultural strategies of understanding and interaction.

For example, what did it mean for a European to display a fourteenth-century porcelain figurine of the Chinese goddess of mercy, Guanyin? In one, presumably wealthy, household on Cumberland Street, this collector's item stood (Figure 16.10) (Thorp 1994). The Guanyin statue had been produced in *blanc-de-chine* from the seventeenth century, and was even more popular than the Buddha himself. She sits or stands, dressed in flowing gown and wearing precious jewels, sometimes holding a child, and occasionally wearing a cross as pendant (e.g. Christie 1983:110).

These traits often suggested Christian images to westerners; in fact, some mistook them as being Christian in origin, and they were termed 'Sancta Marias'

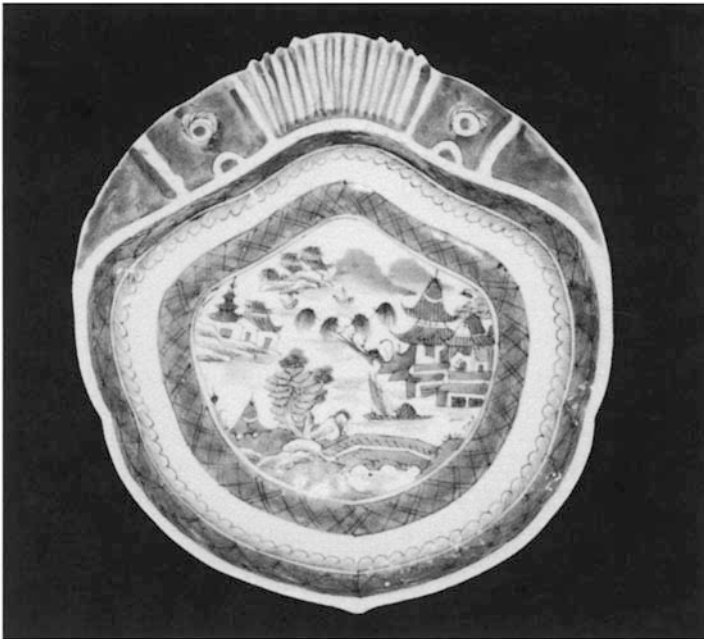


Figure 16.9 Blue and white Chinese export porcelain, 'Canton' ware: 'willow pattern' decorative scheme on western forms (plate) (photograph by the author, collection of Roberta Greenwood).



Figure 16.10 Statuette of Guanyin, goddess of mercy. Ht 17.5 cm. Lilyvale, context 13.067 (photograph by the author, courtesy of the Sydney Cove Authority).

in English shipping records. McClure Mudge (1986:76) argues that they were used by westerners as art objects or souvenirs rather than for 'religious purposes', but there is evidence for their deliberate deployment in just this way. In the last years of the nineteenth century a missionary travelling through China observed the 'marvellous resemblance' between the rites performed in a Buddhist monastery and 'the Romish mummeries called the Mass'. He noted twenty-two resemblances, including the image

Kwan-im, [which] is surprisingly like the Romish statues of the Virgin carrying the infant Jesus...[these] statues of the Goddess of Mercy, the 'Hearer of Cries', called also the 'Holy Mother', and the 'Queen of Heaven', bear the child in her arms.... In a Romish chapel at Foochow there is a large white earthenware statue of Kwan-im used to represent the Virgin and Child. I fancied the priest seemed uncomfortable as we looked at the imposture.

(Dukes *c.* 1900:227–8)

Guanyin's appropriation by the Catholic missionaries of Foochow suggests one possible understanding of her appearance in a nineteenth-century Rocks

household—that is, signifying familiar Christian values. Again, like Chinese or Chinese-inspired ceramics, she may have been a statement within the discourse of Orientalism, creating a particular, familiar view of things Chinese. But a rigid conceptualization of such hybrid objects overlooks their polysemous quality: the Guanyin statuette typifies the mutable, multiple quality of these cultural forms, characteristic of Chinese—European interaction, exploited by one side or another to achieve particular ends, and often simultaneously within the cultural schemes of both.

Chinese responses

On their side, the Chinese developed strategies to achieve their own goals, quietly subverting European strictures, developing their own, autonomous networks independent of European institutions and manipulating traditional Chinese cultural forms to create a new identity. In 1901 the Chinese occupied tightly defined areas in the Rocks, between George, Argyle, Cambridge and Essex Streets, where 200 people occupied fifty-eight dwellings (Lydon 1996:117–18). Whites argued for confining them in one, easily controlled area. The Chinese had reasons of their own, however, to define themselves, creating a focus of support and familiarity. They transformed the European spaces they occupied, albeit relatively briefly. The Victorian architecture of the Rocks was manipulated for Chinese purposes: at tenements such as Unwin's Stores, 77–85 George Street, the basements were closed in and outbuildings constructed in rear yards to provide more space, with access via ladders. They strengthened the physical boundaries around these refuges: in 1891 shopkeeper Robert Nolan described the places 'built for Chinese gambling-dens' along George Street, which had 'a door here and a door there', providing multiple exits which were impossible for the police to inspect (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality* 1891–2: 34). They ensured their physical autonomy through the manipulation of their environment, as far as possible enclosing and barricading themselves within their rented properties, despite the overcrowding this required.

The Chinese community was in fact originally bound together by little more than a common destination and European perceptions of it. Divisions within it related to wealth as well as to status within the Confucian social order, or were caused by issues such as gambling and opium-smoking. In 1890 the Chinese of Sydney were classified as merchants, storekeepers, cabinet-makers, market-gardeners, hawkers and gamblers. The merchants and storekeepers were regarded by whites as:

well-conducted residents. They trade principally with their own people whom they supply with tea, rice, opium, and the more distinctly national commodities of their own race, and in their own lives they realise to a very large extent the European idea of comfort.

(*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality* 1891–2:27, 119)

The merchants' role

Within the Chinese community, merchants represented the uppermost stratum, unlike the despised position they would have held in China. Their wealth was spent in China, and in Sydney, to acquire the symbols of elite lifestyle and status (Smith 1994:246). I have focused on this elite class because it is better represented in both documentary and material records, and because it was a dominant element in the organization of the Rocks community, whose influence extended far beyond the locality. Several underlying traditions shaped Chinese life, such as the set of practices colloquially termed *guanxi*. This system of personal relationships and networks of mutual dependence manufactured obligation through the exchange of gifts, favours and banquets (Yang 1994:6). The Chinese merchants of George Street were nodes in a wide-cast net of business, kinship and other social ties, patterned on Chinese family structure. Kinship was a dominant element in the thought and basic organizational framework of late imperial China (e.g. Baker 1979).

Exchange behaviour, such as throwing banquets and giving gifts, was therefore laden with the symbolism of social solidarity, concretizing and nurturing social relationships (Yang 1994:122). With wealth and status went responsibilities; loss of wealth and a failed business was equated with a loss of moral standing also. The phrase 'going into crooked ways' expressed this double, financial and moral, character. When Way Shong, treasurer of a native place association, became insolvent around 1890, he had to give back the account books (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality* 1891–2). I argue that in turn-of-the-century Sydney, *guanxi* was manipulated by merchants within a largely repressive 'host' society to 'beat the system', both within the Chinese community and in its dealings with Europeans. The use of *guanxi* and other Chinese traditions and material culture formed part of strategies through which the Chinese in the Rocks acted upon and reformulated Chinese and European cultural practices.

The Chinese businesses of George Street were multi-purpose depots, located at the nexus between Sydney's main shipping centre, Sydney Cove, and the land transport artery of George Street. They were ostensibly business people—such as storekeepers, importers, tea merchants, boarding-houses landlords, saloonkeepers and cabinetmakers. But they were also ideally placed to play an essential role within Chinese-Australian society—to house newly-arrived countrymen, providing board and lodgings, but also information, assistance and protection (and see *Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality* 1891–2:67). They acted as conduits, channelling them out to the market gardens of Belmore and Alexandria, or further inland to country towns. They lodged those Chinese preparing to leave Sydney, again sponsoring their business and personal affairs, such as applications for Certificates of Domicile. The George Street merchants were essential stations in a web extending inland to country towns and suburbs, and overseas to China, Hong Kong and other 'Trading Stations', like On Chong and Co.'s in the Gilbert Islands (Figure 16.11).



Figure 16.11 142–2 George Street, ‘Yeesang Loong, Importer and Exporter’ (courtesy of the Foster Collection, Royal Australian Historical Society, 121F).

As protectors and sponsors these merchants developed *guanxi* networks which functioned independently of European systems, subverting regulations which sought to control and restrict them. For example, on the day before Christmas, 1908, the Collector of Customs in Sydney discovered eight stowaways on the *S.S. Courtfield*, which had just arrived in Sydney Harbour from Hong Kong. Interrogation of the men, all from rural villages in southern China, revealed how they had made a deal with a stranger in Praya Road, Hong Kong, to be brought into Australia.

The ship’s cook brought them on board about midnight, the night before the ship sailed. They were put in the rice store room in the after part of the ship, were never let out and only received one meal about midnight each day, which sometimes consisted only of rice soup.

(Correspondence of the Collector of Customs, SP 42/1, 1909)

While the men claimed not to know who was meeting them in Australia, perhaps to protect their contacts, letters were found addressed to Hong On Jang, storekeeper, of George Street, the Rocks, where they were to be housed until they could be sent to their relatives, further inland. This incident demonstrates

the connections linking China, the George Street merchants and other Australian destinations, as well as the supportive role played by the merchants in receiving and protecting their countrymen, extending in emergency to raising a substantial bond.

It has been argued that for an oppressed group such as the Chinese overseas, boundary expression—clear definition of the difference between themselves and the alien society they found themselves in—would have been especially important, expressed through ‘*aggressive perpetuation of traditional behaviour*’ or the creation of new symbols of traditional identity (Praetzellis, Praetzellis and Brown 1987; emphasis mine). Material culture—food and its accoutrements, medicine, ritual—was used to assert sameness and difference, within the overall conceptual schemes of Chinese culture. Food, for example, had enormous social importance in traditional China. It was used in sophisticated ways to create and maintain personal ties; meals were a concrete expression of social bonds. However, the accustomed diet of rural south China was also determined simply by what was available in this densely populated, sometimes hungry region. The staple was rice. Chicken and pork were luxuries and so protein came mainly from beans and fish, supplemented by a vast number of green vegetables, especially members of the cabbage family.

In Sydney in 1891 it was said that ‘the Chinaman appreciates a full meal; and if European luxuries are conspicuous by their absence, he has nevertheless his periods of sober feasting’ (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality 1891–2:28*). In cities, however, there have been few recorded archaeological assemblages reflecting Chinese households. This may be due to Chinese transience, efficient rubbish collection or perhaps to the furious activity associated with the ‘cleansing’ operations of 1901, especially of Chinese premises.

One exception to this blank record is the household of merchant Hong On Jang, established at 75 1/2 George Street—Samson’s Cottage—between 1916 and 1924. Hong On Jang was a merchant who boarded his countrymen, legally or illegally, as indicated by the 1908 stowaways, on his premises in Harrington and then George Street. He functioned like other Chinese merchants in the Rocks as surrogate kin, nodes in a *guanxi* network. The material remains tell us what the household was like from the inside, in Chinese terms. They demonstrate that cultural forms of eating and treating sickness persisted, as well as changing (and see Lydon 1996: Appendix 1).

The 1844 cottage appears to have been demolished *c.* 1920 or later, and the site became rear yards for the three-storey tenements which had been built on the George Street frontage in 1883 (Figures 16.12 and 16.13). The southernmost yard was used by Hong On Jang’s household after this time, and produced numerous artefacts of Chinese provenance (Lydon 1991a, 1996). It is likely that the yard area was used for boarding lodgers, and detailed evidence for its construction, space and its inhabitants’ lifestyle was found. Over the ground surface a scatter of artefacts represented rubbish discarded by the household. A small rubbish pit was dug into the ground in the corner of the shed, next to the



Figure 16.12 Location of Samson's Cottage allotment, at 75, 1/2 George Street, backed by Kendall Lane, 1900. Darling Harbour Resumptions, within sections 85, 87, 88 and part of 86. Plan N. City of Sydney. Sydney Cove Authority HP 161.

fireplace, and was found to contain a 'sand-pot' and many small glass medicine vials which had been broken and thrown away (Figures 16.14 and 16.15). Most objects reflect the household's storage, preparation and consumption of food and drink. The pattern of consumption represents the persistence of traditional diet, with fish remaining important, but with the occupants taking advantage of the new, readily available variety of meat.

As well as a range of Chinese items, European artefacts had also been used by the household. A large part of the total assemblage was made up of European alcohol bottle fragments, and 31.6 per cent (by number) of these were catalogued as wine and/or beer. Traditionally, alcohol was sometimes used medicinally, but had become a regular part of the diet of most people (Naquin and Rawski 1987:74). Drinking games, for example, were popular. Chinese 'wine' was carried with overseas communities in Australia and elsewhere in distinctive teardrop-shaped stoneware bottles known as *Jian You*, but no examples were found at Hong On Jang's. This suggests another area of change, to the consumption of European alcohol (cf. McCarthy 1986).



Figure 16.13 Looking to south east, over Kendall Lane and the archaeological site, prior to rebuilding, 1991. The profile of the 1844 cottage was preserved in the wall of the ‘Coachhouse’, built adjoining and slightly around the earlier structure. The wall fronting the lane is largely original (photograph by the author).

A large part of Hong On Jang’s household ceramic assemblage is Chinese-made. These Chinese utensils include sherds of celadon rice bowls and stoneware ginger jars, barrel-shaped storage jars and a stoneware ‘sand pot’. There are thirty-eight medicinal vials. The ‘ginger’ and other plainer storage jars were used for importing a range of pickled vegetables and fruit, and then re-cycled for a variety of purposes. Recent investigation of Chinese use of this class of vessel indicates that they were all-purpose tools (Yang and Hellmann 1996).

The casserole or ‘sand pot’, so named because of its light porous fabric, was used for braising, stewing, making soup and a multitude of other processes, usually in the preparation of foods which require long cooking times—it was tightly covered and used over a low flame. Rice can be boiled in a sand pot glazed inside, such as Hong On Jang’s (Anderson and Anderson 1977:365). This vessel is also very similar to a ‘medicinal teapot’ shape, which, however, has a spout as well as the hollow handle. It would be unwise to rule out its possible medicinal use, both in light of the Chinese tendency to use utensils for

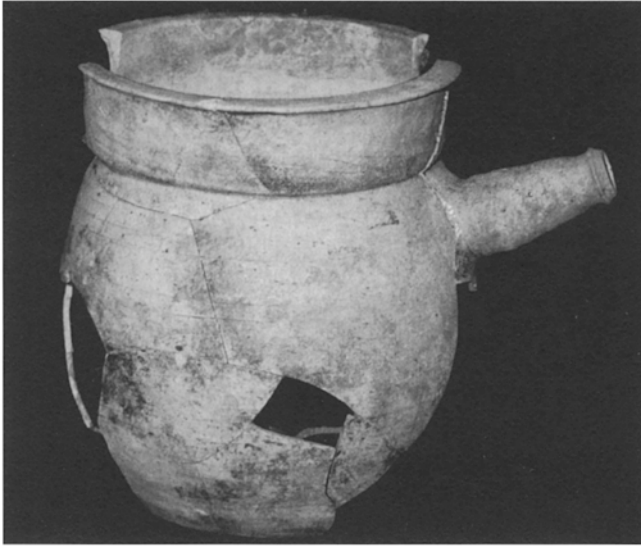


Figure 16.14 ‘Sand pot’ (photograph by the author, courtesy of the Sydney Cove Authority).



Figure 16.15 Glass vial (photograph by the author, courtesy of the Sydney Cove Authority).

any purpose at hand, and the pot’s location of discovery, in a rubbish pit with numerous medicinal vials. This type of pot is rarely found outside China: only a few other examples have been recorded—one each in Sacramento and San Francisco, California, and one in New Zealand (Praetzellis and Praetzellis 1979:

Figure 67c; Pastron, Pritchett and Ziebarth 1981: Figure 9.21; N.Ritchie to P.Wegars, pers. comm.). Its presence at Hong On Jang's can perhaps be interpreted as evidence of unusual care taken to reproduce traditional dishes or processes. The bonds forged between Chinese through sharing food were maintained within Hong On Jang's household.

Medicine

From the small rubbish pit, scattered across the yard area, and at the bottom of the 'stove' depression, came more than thirty small glass bottles. These are 10–12 cm high, with necks of thin glass designed to be snapped off, like an ampoule. Raised Chinese characters, transliterated as 'Tung Kwan Kok' are impressed on their base, and can be interpreted as a maker's or factory mark. Similar vials have commonly been found on sites occupied by Chinese people in the United States, New Zealand and Australia (Lydon 1996: Appendix 1). Once identified as 'opium bottles', they are more accurately termed 'medicinal' (e.g. Ritchie and Harrison 1982:28; Wegars 1988:10). Folk medication in south China was largely by oral prescription—acupuncture and other methods being too expensive for non-elite Chinese. Dietetics and herbal medication were the main curative methods and were constantly used (Anderson and Anderson 1977:368). In the 1890s the Chinese doctor, Way Shong, who lived in Essex Street, ran a business named Tong Fong, which sold English and Chinese goods and housed a Chinese chemist. He sent to China for his medicines, stating that 'nearly 1000 pounds worth used to come out through my hands to be distributed here' (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality 1891–2:70*). These household objects clearly played a role in maintaining traditions surrounding food and medicine, marking and communicating social transactions. The assemblage indicates the ways that for pleasure, and peace, the Chinese turned inwards, re-enacting familiar ways.

Pidgin English

In public, however, watched and distanced, the Chinese community developed strategies of difference and similarity. Appropriation of cultural symbols such as transfer-printed dinner plates and cups, to which merchants would have had easy access, created new structures of eating and drinking—perhaps peripheral to traditional Chinese day-to-day existence. But use of European forms, such as tableware, tobacco pipes and jewellery, may have acted, as Praetzellis, Praetzellis and Brown (1987) have argued, to define their role as intermediaries between Chinese and European. Merchants, whose wealth and resources distinguished them from poorer countrymen, were 'cultural brokers' between Chinese and European communities, operating 'on the boundary between their own insular community and society at large' (Praetzellis, Praetzellis and Brown 1987:46). Hong On Jang, like many Chinese living in the Rocks, belonged to the elite

merchant class, which by virtue of their commercial value and 'tidy-looking European dress', were exempt from many of the restrictions imposed upon working-class migrants (Choi 1975:34).

Personal physical appearance was a crucial aspect of the city landscape: codes of dress, movement, association and expression all combined to produce persons' demeanour, indicating where they stood in the social world. People constantly observed and measured each other, deciding who was worthy of respect, who measured up. The term 'respectable' had meaning for Chinese and whites, relying a great deal on appearance and the income required to maintain it. When, in 1891, the white shopkeeper Nolan referred to the gambler Moy Ping as being, as far as he knew, a 'respectable man', the commissioners pressed him further: 'when you say respectable I suppose you mean respectable to look at?' (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality 1891–2*:35–6). Occasionally a distinction is made between appearance and a more profound, interior quality, but usually it refers first to the double quality of appearance and economic status, whether it is a white or a Chinese person being spoken of, and only secondarily to moral standing. For the Chinese, wealth and business success also signified the ability to adhere to ritual and rectitude (Smith 1994:246); poorer countrymen—the gardeners and hawkers—would come, one by one, to give a merchant such as Way Kee their savings; they entrusted him with the books of their native place society. Loss of wealth caused a corresponding loss of face. So in this amalgam of economic, moral and material worth, signified by one's outward appearance, the notion of 'respectability' represents a convergence between Chinese and European views. It suggests that a language common to both cultures was often understood through everyday symbols such as clothing, accoutrements and general comportment, even if it was contested.

Other convergences in social forms included the gambling-dens of Lower George Street, which were very popular with Europeans; economic associations; gender attitudes and relationships; and displays such as the parade the Chinese performed at the Sydney Showground on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee charity carnival (Lydon 1996). Sometimes the Chinese appropriated English forms, such as when Sun Johnson wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, angrily complaining about his countrymen's arrest by policemen who tied their queues together, or when Chinese boys were sent to Australian schools in preparation for becoming 'Commonwealth men of the future'.

As well as connecting the diasporic Chinese community, objects were used to create and maintain social bonds with whites. By deploying artefacts and images deriving from Chinese tradition, but which could also be appropriated by whites in pidgin forms of communication, they made their way. Food and drink was one system, creating tangible expressions of social relationships, which was manipulated and managed on public occasions. For example, in March, 1894, Quong Tart, on behalf of the Lin Yik Tong, presented visiting opera singer Miss Ada Crossley with a 'China cup and saucer' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 March

1894). And Quong Tart's very popular tearooms were a unique mix of east and west, as reported by white observers (e.g. *Evening News*, 8 December 1898).

Gatekeepers and guanxi

The merchants of George Street decisively shaped the forms of Chinese interaction with Europeans, often successfully subverting European regulations, or getting things done through *guanxi* connections. The notion of gatekeepers as key figures in *guanxi* networks, or *guanxiwang*, informed the relationships between the Rocks' Chinese and the officials with whom they had contact, such as policemen and customs officials. The presentation of offerings to officials and influential persons is reminiscent of the practical attitude toward the gods or immortals in traditional Chinese popular religion. The *guanxi* network mediated between social groups, but always through strategically located individuals; these often stood to benefit personally, thus blurring the line between *guanxixue* and corruption. Nevertheless, Yang argues, 'the art of *guanxi* cannot be reduced to a modern western notion of corruption because the personalistic qualities of obligation, indebtedness, and reciprocity are just as important in transactions as material benefit' (1994:108).

To whites, the Rocks police represented law and order—the barrier between evil and the public. They spent their time on the streets, passing and re-passing the shops and houses, becoming familiar landmarks—in their uniform, an emblem of security and safety. They developed good relations with the Chinese community, presumably based on familiarity, co-operation and knowledge built up from daily encounters; these ties fitted into Chinese and white ways of understanding personal relationships. To other whites, the evident friendliness which prevailed was evidence for corruption. As Thomas Davis of the Seamen's Union claimed in 1891:

It was well known that Lower George-street was one of the best beats for making money. The police there were not content with making a watch in three or four months, but must have diamond rings as well. They were simply paid to shut their eyes.

(Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, Rec. 91.11446)

Similarly, in 1891, Nock and Chambers accused Ah Toy of giving a fancy cabinet to Inspector Atwill. Ah Toy was a well-known George Street cabinetmaker, employing twenty-one men. When questioned, Ah Toy explained that he normally charged about £7 for such a bookcase, but:

If it was a friend I would give it him cheaper. If he was a good man, who looked after me in the city.... A Chinaman who has a good heart will give a box of tea or some other present. There is nothing in that.

(*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality 1891–2:37–9*)

He had sold the bookcase to Inspector Atwill for £5, because '[w]ell, sometimes if people know me for a time I give them something for nothing'. In official European terms, bribery was dangerous because it was submerged; the forces of law and order were being corrupted by the alien Chinese in hidden ways and places. Reading between the lines, it seems clear that the police were tolerating gambling. From the Chinese side, informal relationships with 'gatekeepers' like the police was part of *guanxixue*, transforming the other into the familiar through exchanging gifts.

Customs officials

Similarly, the administration of the NSW Restrictive Immigration Act of 1888, and then the successive acts of 1898 and 1901, was carried out by customs officials working from Customs House at Circular Quay, from the water police docks at Campbell's Cove and around to Walsh Bay. Inspector Donohoe's duties included boarding new arrivals in the harbour, checking passengers and cargo, apprehending stowaways and runaways, administering the Dictation Test, and taking photographs of crews as an identity check. Sometimes he moved away from the water, into the Rocks or the Domain, to pursue connections and people. He developed a close relationship with many Chinese, especially those merchants of George Street who had trading and maritime links, and with whom he dealt regularly over a long period (Lydon 1996).

Inspector Donohoe's primary role, however, was to exclude the Chinese who proved indefatigable in overcoming official restrictions, and who 'once ashore were seldom recovered' (Yarwood 1964:45–66). But as time went on, his contact with the Chinese became increasingly friendly and co-operative, even as the nation's White Australia Policy was cemented in place. The Certificates of Domicile which were required by those hoping to return to China and then re-enter the country required testimonials to the applicant's character and the accuracy of the information provided was usually endorsed or annotated by Inspector Donohoe (Lydon 1996).

These relationships suggest one way of interpreting the wide range of Chinese-made ceramics which appears on sites in the Rocks from the 1850s, as export ware is joined by that made for use by the Chinese themselves. For example, there is an increase of jar forms at the Lilyvale site on Cumberland Street (Wilson 1989), probably reflecting the import of Chinese condiments in 'ginger jars' for use by immigrants, and the subsequent popularity of the contents, the jar or both with Europeans (Figures 16.16 and 16.17). Their popularity is evidenced widely in documentary sources as well, in 1896 for example, one woman referring to the 'mysterious hieroglyphics which daily confronted me on the tops of ginger jars and tea caddies', and of being presented with 'three jars of ginger, a caddy of tea, and two feather dusters' by a grateful Chinese vegetable seller ('Veracious Chronicler', *Cosmos Magazine*, 19 September 1896:124; 19 October 1896:138). Hence it was appropriate in 1891 for Way Kee to 'give a little ginger away to different people.... The

people in the Custom-house and people on the wharfs I would give to' (*Report of the Gambling Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality* 1891–2:56). It seems probable that these objects point to the network of neighbours, policemen and other officials with whom the Chinese established links, according to *guanxixue*.



Figure 16.16 Blue-and-white ginger jar (mended). Blue underglaze decoration, stoneware. Diameter at base: 16.5 cm. Lilyvale, context 22.000, reg. no. 16953 (photograph by the author, courtesy of the Sydney Cove Authority).



Figure 16.17 Stoneware, green-glazed ginger jars. Examples from the Asian-American Comparative Collection.

CONCLUSION

There are many accounts of white racism and conflict with the Chinese, and I do not wish to deny the ugliness of what they reveal. It is, however, important to acknowledge the diversity of cultural relations in specific historical context. Within and across a dualistic opposition structured by ‘race’, a multitude of attitudes, alliances and identities emerged. When the commissioners to the 1891 Royal Commission, one of whom was Quong Tart, interrogated members of the Rocks’ Chinese community, alliances between elites were evident in their shared values and interests, transecting race. In the ‘village atmosphere’ of the Rocks, knowledge of other people developed in fine-grained detail: shopkeepers, long-term resident families and those expressing other local identities encountered each other every day, and understood each other in terms which went beyond the abstract level of stereotypes and representations (Figure 16.18). The Chinese cultivated a particular façade which, in the form of alien picturesqueness, could displace unwelcome attention, or, like the well-barricaded gambling-houses of Lower George Street, ward it off. They manipulated material and other cultural forms in dynamic strategies which resisted dominant colonial strictures, for example when they wove together the familiar *guanxi* cats-cradle of business contacts and obligation. Within the framework of colonialism, there were spaces where a more complex, contingent set of relationships was built, showing that analysis which posits an immutable structural opposition between Chinese and white does not fully account for their interaction.



Figure 16.18 A Chinese hawker swings through Argyle Place, at the Millers Point end of the Argyle Cut (courtesy of the State Library of New South Wales, ONCY47'25).

This situation exemplifies the persistence of social structures, but also human ingenuity in the face of the new, as social reproduction entailed transformation. Different viewpoints, individuals and events comprised Chinese 'culture' and 'community'; this heterogeneity contests deterministic frameworks which stress colonial power over Chinese agency, not by denying their strength, but by showing that there were other possibilities as well. Convergences existed between white and Chinese structures; invention and resistance successfully side-stepped them. Mimicry and the creation of hybrid forms are exemplified by Quong Tart's philanthropy, or complacent European appropriation of a softened, less alien representation of China printed on blue and white plates, or by the multivalent *Guanyin*. Sometimes there was a refusal to speak—a silence which served its own purpose, like the enactment of Chinese solidarity through sharing food, walling out the hostile street life of Sydney; the autonomy which continues to characterize the diasporic Chinese has never been fully effaced by colonial discourse. In crafting 'pidgin' systems of mutually understood meaning and identity, Chinese and European drew upon cultural forms of all kinds.

Archaeological evidence forms one strand in this complex exchange. Different aspects of experience are combined in practice, and the material world is integral to the complex process of cultural interaction. This study argues that historical archaeology is an inherently interdisciplinary means of looking at the past, and that the material constitutes only one component of a diverse range of evidence, forming a larger discourse. To exploit archaeology's unique, tangible qualities I argue that the physical data needs to be located within the wider world of cultural meaning and process. In the nineteenth-century Rocks, objects and ideas were manipulated to create many identities and, for archaeologists, one implication of this process is the need to recapture the wider, symbolic dimensions of the material record; to see it as one of the many texts written in and about the past.

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17 *The formation of ethnic-American identities: Jewish communities in Boston*

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the importance of the material world in the dynamic processes through which Jewish-American ethnic/religious identities were continually negotiated and constructed in Boston communities, c. 1840–1925. Historical archaeology has progressed from simply identifying the ethnicity or race of site inhabitants based on distinctive house styles or artefacts (e.g. Deetz 1971; Schulyer 1980) to more complex analyses of the diversity in ethnic material culture due to class or economic divisions (e.g. Geismar 1982; Clark 1987; De Cunzo 1987; Henry 1987; Orser 1987; Shepard 1987). Further, material culture diversity due to behavioural variation across intersecting gender, class, racial and ethnic social divisions has been analysed (e.g. Deagan 1983; Spencer-Wood 1987:20–4, 1991a: 260, 265–7, 274, 1994; McEwan 1991; Whelan 1991; Scott 1994).

In this chapter my inclusive feminist theoretical approach is used to increase our understanding of the complex processes by which Boston's diverse Jewish-American identities and communities developed during and after large-scale European immigration to America. A feminist approach is particularly appropriate because the gender system is at the heart of Judaism. Changes in gender beliefs, roles and dynamics were central to the development of Jewish-American identities. While many associate feminism only with gender research, the fact that all social groups are composed of gendered people means that an inclusive feminist theoretical approach can increase our understanding of all kinds of social groups. Feminist frameworks that reveal how women acted to shape their own lives and identities while resisting domination can also increase our understanding of other oppressed social groups (Spencer-Wood 1992a, 1992b, 1993). Of particular utility, feminists ask questions and seek evidence of the extent to which oppressed people were active social agents, rather than passive victims of the dominant social group or its ideology as argued by Marxian historical archaeologists

using the dominant ideology thesis (e.g. Leone 1988). In contrast to male-biased hierarchical views of power that focus on domination (e.g. Leone 1988; Wolf 1990), Crumley (1987:144) has developed the model of a heterarchy of powers that includes not only hierarchy, but diverse parallel and unranked powers. While many early feminist anthropologists viewed women as a homogeneous class oppressed by a dominant male class (e.g. Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974), feminism has transcended such essentialist constructions of gender to develop more sophisticated analyses of the processes by which diverse gender systems are constructed between and within classes, races and ethnic groups (e.g. Scott 1994). In contrast to static definitions of social groups as monolithic, with one fixed, undifferentiated identity, an inclusive feminist theoretical approach has led me to view not only gender, but other socially constructed groups as polythetic categories that partially share diverse characteristics and identities. Intersections between culturally constructed categories of ethnicity, race, class, gender and religion produce diversity in processes of social self-identification. In different social contexts and situations individuals may identify themselves only with one social group or with any combination of their social identities. The social politics of fluid internal identities and external representations of identity are complex (Spencer-Wood 1991b, 1992b: 105, 1993:129–30, 1994:177–8).

From the contextual feminist view which I have developed, complex social identities are continually constructed in dynamic negotiated relationships between individuals, families, social groups and communities (Spencer-Wood 1992a, 1996:403, 407). The multiple meanings of being Jewish have continually changed in America through processes of contact between Jews of different ethnicity and religious sects, and between Jews and non-Jewish Anglo-Americans, whom I short-hand as Yankees. My research has shown that it is difficult for the dominant culture in a democracy to force its values, beliefs or lifeways on to non-dominant individuals or groups because they are also social agents pro-actively shaping their own lives by making choices within the contexts of their own community and the wider culture (Spencer-Wood 1996). Jewish-American acculturation is considered as a two-way interactive process that changed both immigrant cultures and American culture.

Although most non-Jewish European Americans historically viewed Jews as a monolithic 'race', Judaism is in fact a religion with many different sects that can be modelled on a continuum from Orthodox to Reform. Despite differences in beliefs, rituals and practices between Jewish sects, classes and ethnic groups, Judaism is similar to a culture in creating polythetically shared fundamental values, rituals, language, foodways and gender roles. While there are many social divisions among Jews, they are united by connections with the Torah, the Talmud, Yiddish, Hebrew and by the belief that they have special ethnic obligations as God's 'chosen people' to care for other Jews and promote a universal morality (Telushkin 1991:24, 91, 97). The more Orthodox a sect was, the more it maintained traditional Jewish languages, values, beliefs, foodways, rituals and institutions. In response to the question

of whether Judaism is a religion or a culture, in my inclusive feminist approach Judaism can be viewed as a religion that can also form a culture, especially in its more Orthodox forms. Judaism is a polythetic religion that partially corresponds to a polythetic Jewish culture in Israel, and can be considered a polythetic set of subcultures in America.

EUROPEAN ORIGINS OF JEWISH-AMERICAN IDENTITIES

It is necessary to briefly outline some major aspects of European Judaism in order to understand what was involved in creating Jewish-American identities and communities. Orthodox religious practices were largely retained in Europe because most Jews were only permitted to live in segregated city ghettos or rural villages, restricting interaction with their host cultures and preventing the negotiation of national identities. Foundational to Orthodox Judaism is a binary gender ideology that defines men as pious, intellectual, public and dominant over domestic, physical and subordinate women. Families were represented by at least ten men in the Orthodox minyan (congregation). Men held all positions of power in Orthodox synagogues, communities and families. In synagogues women could not actively participate in worship services and had to sit in a curtained balcony where men would not see them and be distracted from their prayers. The highest status a man could achieve was to be educated as a rabbi. Men could achieve heaven by studying God's Torah, while women could only achieve heaven by becoming men's servants. Therefore Orthodox Judaism was against educating women beyond training them in housekeeping. Orthodox men could not touch menstruating women, who had to purify themselves in a mikveh (ritual bath) in order to become touchable after their menses. Therefore women could not be touched except by their husbands, who knew their condition. Parents traditionally arranged marriages for girls as soon as possible so they could help men fulfil their fundamental religious duty of procreation (Braude 1982:151, 181).

In contrast to its male-dominated ideology and synagogue rituals, Orthodox Judaism's prescribed gender roles could be sources of power for women in everyday life. Women's roles were essential to the performance of rituals in the home, which was viewed as sacred. Women's rituals practically formed a parallel religion, including Yiddish prayers specifically for women's experiences, observing kosher dietary laws, attending the mikveh, baking challah (holiday bread), lighting Shabbas-eve candles, preparing ritual objects, clean clothes and special meals for holy days. Homes were so sacred that a room was often used as a synagogue in communities that were poor and/or oppressed. Men could not meet their religious obligations, including procreating and household rituals, without establishing a marital relationship with a woman. Women's essential religious roles provided them with avenues for gaining community respect and powerful positions as matriarchs of Orthodox families. Further, parts of the Talmud Rabbinic writings

contradicted Orthodox ideology and provided high status role models for women by glorifying several prophetesses, queens, female intellectuals, religious teachers, leaders and pious learned mothers. Contrary to Orthodox ideology, the public roles of women in the Talmud, in conjunction with poverty, oppression, and men's paramount concern with religion, led many women to work outside the home (Braude 1982:152).

Following the eighteenth-century European Enlightenment, Germany and Napoleonic France lifted many restrictions on Jews, granted them equal civil rights as individuals (but not as a people), and permitted them to interact more with Christians. As a result many Jews in these countries dropped Yiddish and began to speak national languages within one generation. Elite educated Jews increasingly converted to Christianity, especially women seeking freedom from Jewish restrictions. These factors and egalitarian Enlightenment ideology influenced Jews to create Reform Judaism, where worship was carried out in national languages instead of Hebrew, and women were counted in the minyan, allowed to sit in the men's section of the synagogue and given equal access to religious education. Jewish women were made the religious equals of male laity in the Reform Synod of 1846 (Braude 1982:152–3; Telushkin 1991:227, 230–33).

OUTLINE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF JEWISH-AMERICAN IDENTITIES

The diversity of Jewish-American identities developed out of the different religious, ethnic and class origins of Jews immigrating to the USA, often fleeing European persecution. Friction developed between different Jewish groups. Sephardic Orthodox Jews occupied elite positions in small early Jewish communities established in New York City (1730), Newport (1658), Savannah (1733), Philadelphia (1737) and Charleston (1750s). When Central European Jews started to arrive in the 1700s they were viewed as unwelcome strangers by the Sephardic Jews, who considered themselves Americans and held the religious positions of power in their communities. Between 1820 and 1880 *c.* 200,000 Central European Jews emigrated to the USA, including many fleeing restrictive laws and taxes imposed by the German and Russian governments. Central European Jews, called 'German' Jews, established their first community and synagogue in New York in 1825. As 'German' Jews developed American Reform Jewish identities they in turn felt threatened by the 1880–1925 immigration of about 3 million Orthodox East European Jews fleeing escalating persecution. Many of the middle-class Reform 'German' Jews called all the East Europeans 'Russian' Jews, and viewed them as backward, uncouth, superstitious and ignorant (Fein 1976:37–41; Smith 1981:25; Smith 1995:25, 52). Jews were not passive victims of the dominant American culture, but actively chose how much to acculturate. Jewish values and European experiences were combined with American democratic and

Protestant ideology and practices to develop Jewish-American identities, religious sects and cultures. The fundamental Jewish belief in taking care of their own led 'German' Jews to respond to the mass immigration of 'Russian' Jews by developing many new kinds of charitable institutions, many modelled on non-Jewish charities. Despite the frequent patronizing attitudes of 'Germans' toward 'Russians', charities became a unifying cultural force among Jews. Synagogues assisted immigrants from the same European town or region of origin and 'Russians' developed their own charities (Fein 1981:1-2; Ebert 1995).

The Jewish European experience in ghettos, in combination with widespread American anti-semitism, resulted in the development of largely self-supporting Jewish-American urban ghetto-like communities. Because American banks would not make loans to Jews, they established Jewish free loan societies that made loans to recent immigrants so they could start in business, often as pedlars. Many Jews became entrepreneurs as they had in Europe, opening small shops that sometimes grew into large stores or factories, usually in the clothing or leather trades. By the late nineteenth century many 'Russian' Jews were employed in 'German' Jewish factories and sweatshops. Because work was prohibited on Sunday in Christian America, many Jews were required or desired to work on Saturday, violating the Jewish shabbas. This led to Sunday worship in many synagogues, although some Orthodox synagogues retained Saturday worship (Braverman 1995:78-80; Smith 1995:57-61).

American democracy, Reform Judaism and women's frequent need to work outside the home combined in the development of Jewish-American gender roles that were more egalitarian than was traditional in Europe. Under American democracy Jewish girls and boys both had access to primary and higher education, which had been difficult or impossible in Europe. Because Jews prized education as the road to economic and social success, attendance was high in classes teaching English, civics, mathematics and technical job skills in synagogues and in Hebrew schools as well as in Yankee industrial schools. The use of Yiddish slowly declined as English became the primary language of second and third generation American Jews. Jews maintained their Hebrew religious language in schools that were originally established to prepare boys for bar mitzvah, but were first opened to girls by Reform synagogues that started confirming girls in the 1870s. Around the turn of the century Orthodox and Zionist Hebrew schools were also opened to girls. Orthodox and Reform Jews worked together to ensure high educational standards by creating the first Bureau of Jewish Education (1921) and the Hebrew College to train Hebrew teachers (1925), both in Boston. Many families scrimped and saved to send as many children as possible to college. Jewish-American women increasingly became educated and economically independent. American democracy also encouraged increasing numbers of youth to refuse unwanted arranged marriages, although this could have the high price of being ostracized from one's family (Smith 1981:25-6; Braude 1982:157-8; Reimer 1995:280-4).

Jewish religious sects and their communities did not all Americanize their beliefs and practices to the same extent. 'Russian' Jewish-American communities retained the most Orthodox practices and beliefs, while 'German' Jewish-American communities developed Reform Judaism with highly Americanized beliefs and practices. Although many early 'German' immigrants were Orthodox Jews, they developed American Reform Judaism, which by 1881 was adopted by 188 of the extant 200 American synagogues. American culture, democracy and Protestantism influenced the development of radical Reform congregations that worshipped together as families on Sunday in English, with instrumental and choral music. Boys and girls attended English Jewish Sunday schools and Hebrew schools until their confirmation. In direct contradiction to the Orthodox belief that men were more pious than women, many American Jews were influenced by the Protestant belief in women's innately superior piety and morality, which justified women's increased participation in male-dominated synagogues and leadership in Jewish charities. Jewish women were often the majority of both students and teachers in confirmation classes and Sunday schools. Many American rabbis, like ministers, were expected to present vernacular sermons pertinent to mixed gender audiences, to take social leadership in the community and to advise women's organizations on their charitable activities. In 1885 leading Reform rabbis proclaimed in the 'Pittsburgh Platform' that Orthodox rituals should not be followed because they were interfering with Judaism's mission to work for a moral American society. Many women objected because this threatened the household rituals that were their traditional source of power. The Protestant cult of home religion supported Jewish women's role as keepers of Jewish faith, law and rituals in the sacred temple of the home. Many homes continued the Shabbas-eve ritual but did not completely follow kosher dietary laws. Many women and men were drawn to American Conservative Judaism, which was founded in 1887 as a more traditional alternative to Reform Judaism, and is today the most prevalent American sect (Braude 1982:153-8; Telushkin 1991:392-8).

A HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOSTON'S JEWISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IDENTITIES 1840-1920

From an archaeological perspective my theoretical approach can be called contextual material feminism. Material feminism means that material culture, including built environments and landscapes, are viewed not only as human products that reflect or express aspects of a culture, but also as social agents that people pro-actively use to shape culture and identity. Beyond simply using material culture to identify social groups or subgroups, contextual material feminism constructs several levels of historical context in which individual site analyses can yield meaningful information (Spencer-Wood 1996). The following

historical archaeological survey delineates the temporal development of Boston's Jewish identities through communities and landscapes. It is also the context in which feminist questions revealed documented negotiations of Jewish-American identities involving material culture at individual sites, from built environments to artefacts.

The site survey maps the growth and spread of Jewish communities on the Boston area landscape, represented by the number, movement, division and merging of synagogues that formed the heart of Jewish communities. In this initial survey the community locations of some other major sites are also noted, although there are many more unmapped Jewish sites. The survey draws on Jewish sites already identified and mapped by Grossman (1981), Gamm (1995), Spencer-Wood (1996) and Woods (1903). Some site addresses from Gamm (1995), Kaufman (1995), or historic documents first had to be located on historic maps in order to be accurately mapped on Figure 17.1. Many historic guides to Boston were anti-semitic in not including Jewish sites (e.g. King 1885).

The geographical development of Boston's Jewish communities

In general, Jewish communities first developed in parts of Boston proper and subsequently spread out to suburbs as Jews became wealthier (see Figure 17.1 for location of geographical areas). After the state constitution of 1821 granted Jews full rights of citizenship, the first large-scale immigration brought c. 5,000 'German' Jews to Boston by 1880. In 1845 Boston's first synagogue, Orthodox Ohabei Shalom, complete with mikveh and Hebrew school, was constructed in the South End for a congregation of c. 100 Poles and Germans. In 1854 ritual differences led the less Orthodox German members to form the second synagogue in the South End, Adath Israel. The two synagogue congregations developed different identities. Around the synagogues clustered small shops of kosher butchers and grocers, tailors, artisans and small merchants. In 1858 the Mishkan Israel synagogue branched off from Ohabei Shalom, and by 1875 six Jewish synagogues identified the rapid growth in diverse religious and ethnic community identities (Polish, German, Dutch) among the mostly 'German' Jewish population of 3,000 in the South End. Due to increasing immigration in 1864 Boston's first two synagogues went beyond the traditional practice of congregational mutual assistance to found the Hebrew Benevolent Society, which adopted the Yankee custom of fundraising through social events. In the 1870s the South End synagogues began to develop Americanized Reform Judaism with Sunday services because so many Jews had to work on Saturday, the traditional Shabbas. Peddling was the initial occupation of most of the 'German' Jews. Through hard work many became small shopkeepers in traditional Jewish-European occupations of clothing or dry goods merchants, or artisans—watchmakers, opticians, cigar-makers and furriers. Some became prominent merchants and manufacturers on Boston's downtown public

landscape, including the clothing stores of Filene's and Shuman's. By the 1890s most of Boston's more prosperous Reform 'German' Jews moved to the new 'upper' South End, fleeing in prejudice against the immigration of poor Orthodox 'Russian' Jews into the 'lower' South End. A few wealthy Jews, mostly clothing merchants in the Americanized 'German' congregation of Adath Israel, moved to Boston's fashionable Back Bay. In the 1880s some prosperous 'German' Jews began to move to the suburbs of Roxbury/Dorchester/Mattapan or Brookline (see Figure 17.1; Braverman 1995:72; Ebert 1995:212; Gamm 1995:133-4, 149; Smith 1995:49, 52-7, 61-2).

The largest immigration of predominantly East European Orthodox Jews rapidly increased Boston's Jewish population from 5,000 in 1880 to 80,000 in 1920. 'German' and 'Russian' Jews separately created a number of charitable institutions to aid the many poor immigrants. Middle-class American Reform 'German' Jews did not culturally identify with the poor Orthodox 'Russian' Jews. By 1895, 3,500 'Russian' Jews lived in the old 'lower' South End, 6,200 predominantly Orthodox Jews lived in Boston's North End, and 6,300 lived in the West End. Between 1880 and 1995 the North End was the main Orthodox Jewish community, including synagogues, a Hebrew school, a matzo bakery, the Hebrew Industrial School for Girls, separate Jewish hospital dispensaries for men and for women and children, and the Daughters of Israel Sheltering Home. But by 1905 the North End Jewish community declined to 4,700 and the main Orthodox community moved to the West End, where the population exploded from 17,000 in 1905 to 24,000 in 1910. By 1910, the South End Jewish community grew to 8,000. Spreading further, predominantly Orthodox communities had developed in East Boston (5,000) and Chelsea (10,000) by 1910. With the growing 'Russian' Jewish population in Boston communities, the number of Orthodox Jewish sites increased, including Yiddish schools for bar mitzvah, Hebrew schools, mikvehs, kosher butchers and grocers, and synagogues, which numbered fifteen in the West End by 1910. In these Boston communities most Jews lived in overcrowded cold water tenements without bathtubs and usually one toilet per building in the back yard or basement (Fein 1976:38-41; Fein 1981:2; Smith 1991:17; Braverman 1995:80; Ebert 1995:212, 215, 217, 220; Gamm 1995:135-7).

By 1910, Greater Boston's Jewish population was nearly 100,000. Sizeable predominantly working-class Jewish communities developed in a number of suburbs, including Maiden (5,500), Revere (5,000), Lynn (4,000), Brockton (4,000), Cambridge (3,500) and smaller communities in Somerville, Everett, Salem, Peabody and Winthrop. The Chelsea Jewish population grew from 10,000 in 1910 to a maximum of 24,000 in the 1950s, which was about half that city's population (Gamm 1995:137-9).

Most members of poor immigrant 'Russian' families had to work and were employed in the textile and leather industries, including 'piece-work' at home, or in stores, factories and sweatshops often operated by 'German' Jews. Some 'Russians' started as peddlars or rag pickers. Many worked hard and saved enough to open small shops as junk dealers, pawnbrokers, second-hand clothing dealers,

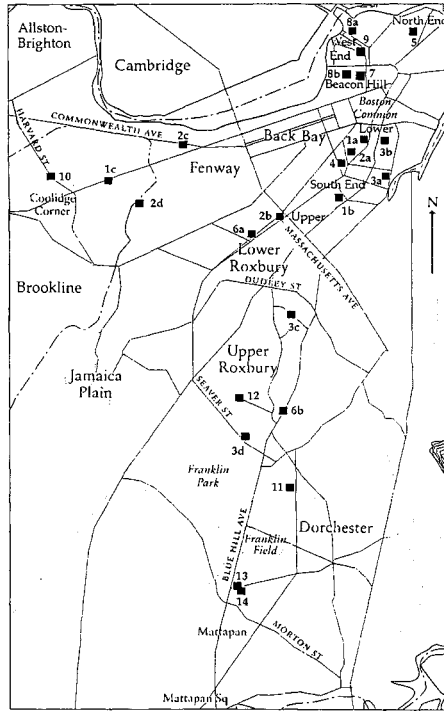


Figure 17.1 Map locating major Jewish synagogues on Boston's landscape, 1842—present. The map shows the movement of synagogues and thus their communities over time.

1. Ohabei Shalom (Polish/German), founded in 1842, underwent several moves (1a and 1b) before being located at 1187 Beacon Street, Brookline (1c), where a synagogue was built in 1928 and is still in use (see Grossman 1981:7, 18; Gamm 1995:130; Kaufman 1995:168, 171, 175, 195).

2. Adata (Temple) Israel (German), founded 1854, following several moves (2a, 2b and 2c), is today located at Riverway and Longwood (2d), where a synagogue was built in 1928 (with modernist 1974 addition), and is still in use (Grossman 1981:18; Gamm 1995:130 and personal communication; Kaufman 1995:170, 176–7, 196).

3. Mishkan Israel (E.Prussian), later Mishkan Tefila, founded 1858, ultimately moved to Seaver Street, where a synagogue was built in 1925, but sold in 1958 (now an extant building). The Young Men's Hebrew Association was located one block to the west (1897 *Map of Boston Proper*; Grossman 1981:18, 27; Gamm 1995:130; Kaufman 1995:170–1, 175, 180, 184, 193).

4. Orthodox Shaaray Tefila (Polish), founded 1876, underwent several complex moves, including the re-use of the Adata Israel Pleasant Street building in 1885 (2a), before merging with Mishkan Israel to form Mishkan Tefila in 1895 (Kaufman 1995:174–5).

5. Orthodox Beth Israel (Lithuanian), founded 1888, moved into a Baptist church at the end of Baldwin Place in 1890 (Woods 1903:70; Grossman 1981:2; Kaufman 1995:179).

6. Orthodox Adata Jeshurun, founded 1891, in 1905–6 built the first synagogue in Roxbury at 397 Blue Hill Avenue, used into the 1950s. It was a predecessor of synagogue-centres (Grossman 1981:2; Gamm 1995:130, 144, 146; Kaufman 1995:179, 184, 186).

dry goods, shoe merchants or grocers. Boys preferred the occupation of paperboy because it could be done before or after school. 'Russian' Jews created a working-class culture, joining labour unions and organizing some unions for female sweatshop garment workers. The need to work on Saturday led many to violate the Orthodox prohibition against working on Shabbas. Some 'Russian' Jews became prosperous in the same businesses as 'German' Jews, including banking. But the greater Orthodox emphasis on men's education led many more second generation 'Russian' Jews to go into professions as lawyers, judges, scientists and professors (Smith 1981:21; Braverman 1995:76–82).

7. Orthodox Anshe Libawitz bought the former African Meeting House on Smith Court in 1899 and slightly altered it into a synagogue, used until the late 1940s (now a preserved historic site). In the early twentieth century it was joined by two other landsmanshaft shuls, Anshe Stonier and Anshe Zytomir (Grossman 1981:22–3; Kaufman 1995:179).

8. Anshe Vilna (Lithuanian), founded in the late 1890s, after two moves built a brick Rundbogenstil-style synagogue (see Figure 17.3) at 16–18 Phillips Street in 1920 (historic site) (Woods 1903:320; Grossman 1981:23–4; Kaufman 1995:179–80, 182–3).

9. The location of the 'Wall Street' shul (synagogue), as well as a Chassidic congregation, which moved into 87 Poplar Street by 1919 and a number of other Jewish institutions (Grossman 1981:23; Gamm 1995:134). Most of the West End was destroyed by urban renewal in the 1960s.

10. Kehillath Israel, founded 1911, the first congregation in Brookline, met in private homes until in 1923–5 it built a synagogue centre at 384 Harvard Street, which is still used. Harvard Street includes many Jewish bookstores, kosher restaurants and kosher butchers (Gamm 1995:130, 149; Kaufman 1995:190–1).

11. Beth El, the first congregation in Dorchester, founded 1908, on Fowler Street, in 1910–12 built a synagogue that combined round-topped doors and windows with a Greek pediment over the entrance decorated by a Jewish star. The flat roof of the square main structure was topped with a large dome, echoing Temple Israel (see Figure 17.3; Gamm 1995:130, 145; Kaufman 1995:189).

12. Beth Hamidrash Hagadol built a large synagogue at 105 Crawford Street in 1915, of a similar shape to Mishkan Tefila's synagogue centre (3d, Figure 17.5), but with a Rundbogenstil-style gable entrance with narrow round-topped windows flanking a central large round arch over a rose window. It was a predecessor of synagogue centres (see Figure 17.3; Gamm 1995:130, 145; Kaufman 1995:188, 191).

13. Hadrath Israel, founded 1908 in Roxbury, moved in 1914 to Dorchester and bought a building in Woodrow Avenue in 1919. In 1928, Chevra Shas built its synagogue next to Hadrath Israel. Across Blue Hill Avenue the Young Israel congregation, a 1920s offshoot of Adath Jeshurun, established a synagogue in 1930 (Grossman 1981:27; Gamm 1995:130; Kaufman 1995:188–9).

14. Agudath Israel Anshei Sfard, an offshoot of Hadrath Israel, founded 1915, built its synagogue in 1923, on Woodrow Avenue across the street from Hadrath Israel. These synagogues (13, 14) formed a community centre (Grossman 1981:26–7; Gamm 1995:130; Kaufman 1995:190).

Site locations have been mapped using the 1897 *Map of Boston Proper*, George Walker and Co., Boston, MA; the *Arrow Official Map of Boston and Suburbs*, Arrow Publishing Co., Inc., Canton, MA; Grossman 1981; and Gamm 1995:130.

As 'Russian' Jews in Boston became increasingly prosperous, many moved, starting in the late 1890s, to the Roxbury/Dorchester/Mattapan suburban area. By the early 1920s working-class 'Russian' Jews were moving into Roxbury middle-class single-family homes that had been converted into tenements, as well as newer, cheaply constructed triple deckers (three apartments stacked vertically in one building). Many middle-class 'German' Jews settled further south in Dorchester and Mattapan. 'German' American Reform Jews and 'Russian' Orthodox Jews continued to maintain separate identities and synagogue communities. The Jewish population of Roxbury/Dorchester/ Mattapan grew from 12,000 in 1910 to 44,000 in 1920 and to a maximum of 76,500 in 1930. From 1915 to the late 1950s this area was the centre of Jewish life in Boston. By 1925 it was the largest Jewish community in New England. By the mid-1960s most Jews had migrated to form large communities of predominantly middle- and upper-class Orthodox Jews in the suburbs of Newton (c. 31,000), Brookline (over 29,000) and Allston-Brighton (c. 15,000 in 1950) (Gamm 1995:137–8, 142–8, 150–3, 330) (Figure 17.1).

Archaeological assessments

Archaeologists could potentially find remains in Jewish site yards and privies in Boston's early poor Jewish communities in the North End, West End and South End because there was little if any municipal garbage collection (Spencer-Wood 1987:9–10). However, we cannot expect to identify Jewish sites by the presence of distinctive Jewish artefacts or kosher food remains. Jewish artefacts such as menorah, six-pointed stars, brass candlesticks and brass or copper pots were usually carefully curated and not discarded in site yards. It is possible that small items such as religious jewellery were occasionally lost. If an Orthodox Jewish kosher diet were followed, no remains of pork, shellfish, fish without scales, marine mammals or wild birds would be found (see below, Lipschutz 1988:17–19, 47–8). However, poverty alone could account for the absence of these foods. Thus, it is difficult if not impossible to identify Jewish sites from archaeological data alone. Even from documents it is difficult to identify the ethnicity of tenement residents for more than a short time period. In 1902 the Yankee South End Settlement headed by Robert Woods mapped the ethnic composition of the South, West and North Ends. This short-term snapshot of the ethnic communities in these areas may be useful in the ethnic identification of households. However, tenements often had a rapid turnover of tenants and could have tenants of more than one ethnicity. The same problems limit the utility of creating more snapshots of tenement ethnicity from census data, though census data could be useful in identifying the longevity of Jewish occupation of a tenement being excavated. In the heart of these Jewish communities tenements could have Jewish residents for a number of years, possibly even a decade or two as these communities grew. It might be possible with fine stratigraphy to excavate evidence indicating the extent to which Americanization of these communities resulted in any violation of kosher dietary prohibitions, especially in crises such as the large

Chelsea fire of 1908, after which many people were fed by Jewish charities run by 'German' Reform Jews (Ebert 1995:223).

This survey focuses on public institutions and businesses that are more easily identified historically and more often occupied one building for longer periods of time. These types of institutions include: synagogues, Jewish schools; Yiddish newspapers, bookstores and theatres; kosher food factories, restaurants, markets and butchers; and Jewish charitable institutions such as hospital dispensaries, homes for the destitute, the Hebrew Industrial School and settlements. Woods's 1902 maps of building types in the North, West and South Ends allow archaeologists to identify public buildings, factories, stores and combinations of stores under tenements or factories, and this is very useful in determining whether or not site yards may have mixed deposits.

Since Woods's survey used documentary data to identify and locate historic Jewish sites, the archaeological question can be changed from simply trying to identify Jewish sites, to exploring the extent to which Jewish or American material culture was used by Jews and discarded in site yards. For instance, once we have identified the site of a Jewish household, market or restaurant, if excavations turn up bones or remains of pig, shellfish, swordfish, sturgeon, turbot, lumpfish, shark, catfish, monkfish, sculpin, marine mammals, quail, pheasant, wild geese, guinea hen or peacock in these site yards dating to their Jewish occupation, it suggests that kosher dietary laws were not followed. An unusually large number of pots, dishes and glasses, especially for a poor household, is consistent with adherence to the kosher law of separately preparing and consuming meat and milk (Lipschutz 1988:17–19, 43–4, 47–8). If we find Jewish religious objects or jewellery in site yards it may suggest the Jewish rituals that were practised at those sites, and/or the degree of Jewish self-identification.

The quantity and types of artefacts discarded in site yards may provide further information about cultural discard practices and underlying values. Of particular interest to archaeologists is the extent to which distinctive material culture involved in ethnic identity was curated, in comparison with non-Jewish material culture commonly found at sites that could have been used in ethnic rituals and behaviour although it is not ethnically distinctive. It is expected that poor Jewish immigrants, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform, would incorporate into their lifeways, including household rituals, inexpensive artefact types such as ceramics and glass tableware available in Boston. We can expect to excavate many more pieces of inexpensive ceramics and glass than distinctive Jewish material culture. Institutional sites may yield more distinctive Jewish artefacts. Site yards or municipal dumps might yield shards of storefront and restaurant windows with Hebrew writing identifying whether a site was a kosher butcher, tailor, grocer, restaurant, and so on. Kosher knives found in site yards would identify kosher butchers (Lipschutz 1988:19–21). Archaeological evidence might indicate whether scientific glassware and other equipment was used in Jewish hospital dispensaries, orphanages and homes for the elderly and infirm. In the yards of Jewish sites such as Hebrew schools, industrial schools, day nurseries,

kindergartens and settlements, children probably used and to some extent lost or discarded some combination of American and Jewish artefacts (Ebert 1995:215–21; Reimer 1995:288). Such historically generated expectations can be compared and contrasted with archaeological data to find areas of agreement and other areas of disagreement or ‘ambiguities’ that require further research and explanation, as noted by Leone and Crosby (1987). Archaeological data may add to our understanding of the process by which the use of Yiddish slowly declined from its height of seven Yiddish newspapers and numerous Yiddish stage productions in rented halls whose popularity led to the construction of a Yiddish theatre in Dorchester in 1923 (Grossman 1981:26; Smith 1981:25). In the yards of Yiddish printers archaeologists might find the extent of broken and discarded remains of Yiddish versus English type used in printing newspapers, playbills and other documents.

Beyond the individual site scale of archaeological data on Jewish-American identities, this survey analyses how the types of sites, architecture and built environments comprising communities expressed developing Jewish-American ethnic identities. The size of a community’s Orthodox Jewish population that sought to maintain their traditional identity rather than negotiate a Jewish-American identity is indicated by the number of Orthodox synagogues, mikvahs, kosher groceries and restaurants, and Yiddish newspapers, bookstores and theatres. The number of mikvahs in a community indicates the extent to which the traditional Jewish gender system was maintained. As second- and third-generation Jews moved to the suburbs mikvahs and Yiddish dropped out of Jewish practice. Synagogue architecture changed dramatically, publicly revealing developments in Jewish-American identities as communities moved across Boston’s landscape (see below). Jewish burial grounds, which were mostly located in the suburbs, are expected to be Conservative in retaining traditional Jewish inscriptions on gravestones. Archaeologists could analyse the extent to which the traditional burial practices were followed, including a separate burial-ground area for children, use of tribal symbols, and placing stones on top of gravestones, and whether the American practices of photographs or English words are included on gravestones (Grossman 1981:32, 40–1, 51; Smith 1981:25).

The site survey provides data on differences between communities in the material negotiation of Jewish-American identities while at the same time identifying Jewish sites and providing their community context. Historic sources reveal that material culture, from landscapes to built environments and artefacts, was instrumental in the process of negotiating Jewish-American identities. Jews negotiated their identities not only with Yankees, but also with Jews of other classes and ethnic groups. Class and ethnic cultural differences among Jews sometimes could not be negotiated and led one congregation to split into two, creating two new communities with different synagogues, rituals and material culture, as in the case of Adath Israel branching off from Ohabei Shalom.

The material development of synagogues and community identities

As Jews Americanized, synagogues and communities increasingly diversified their identities beyond the Orthodox versus Reform dichotomy to create different varieties of 'modern Orthodox', Conservative and radical Reform Judaism. Over time population growth or ideological differences often led a synagogue to split into two synagogue communities with different religious and/or ethnic identities. The different beliefs, practices and rituals of Judaic sects created diversity and change in Jewish-American subcultures. Jewish congregations could shift from Conservative to Reform to Orthodox and retain the same name. Communities, synagogues and families were all polythetic sets that often included a mix of Orthodox and Reform individuals, who all identified themselves as Jewish. In some cases shrinking congregations would merge into a new congregation that often also took the first name of one congregation and the last name of the other. For instance, in Boston's South End traditional Mishkan Israel merged with Orthodox Shaaray Tefila to become Conservative Mishkan Tefila in 1895, which subsequently became one of the four monumental synagogue centres in the Boston area (Kaufman 1995:175, 191–3). The site survey traces the movement over Boston's landscape of diverse Jewish communities which created new synagogues in each new community they established (see Figure 17.1).

Synagogues were the focal point of life in Jewish communities, providing not only a place for worship, but also for study, assembly, socializing, social welfare and celebrations of holidays and life cycle events. Synagogues offer particularly rich material evidence symbolizing and implementing different concepts of the role of religion in community and culture. Boston's synagogues increasingly became centres for generating community identity as they grew from rooms in homes and rented halls to modest single structures and finally monumental structures and/or clusters of structures. Initially immigrants from each different European town or region formed different congregations that generated community by meeting in members' homes for religious worship, rituals and as mutual aid associations that financially assisted immigrants of the same ethnicity. As soon as immigrant congregations could afford to rent a building for a synagogue most also used the room(s) for a Hebrew school and a variety of social functions (Sarna 1995:3–4; Smith 1995:49). Many of these ethnic congregations merged their identities with synagogues of other ethnic groups because they did not maintain their congregation through the generations by having their own synagogue structure and Hebrew school (Smith 1981:15; Kaufman 1995:170–2). As communities prospered they built synagogues with separate rooms for meetings, social functions, secular classes and a Hebrew school. As Hebrew schools grew they became housed in separate buildings, though often near a synagogue. Major turn-of-the-century synagogues, including the North End's Orthodox Beth Israel and Adath Jeshurun in Roxbury, included rooms for technical classes and club meetings, kitchens, banquet halls, public halls and neighbouring Hebrew schools and libraries. The even larger built environments of synagogue centre complexes included these amenities and added

auditoriums, gyms or recreation rooms, music rooms, and a museum at Ohabei Shalom. Synagogue centres were the most elaborate development in a long tradition of synagogues that included community spaces (Kaufman 1995:169, 179, 187, 189, 195).

In general, Jewish communities and their synagogues followed one of two patterns in moving across Boston's landscape. First, some of the older Central European congregations, notably Ohabei Shalom, Adath Israel and Mishkan Tefila, moved as relatively cohesive communities across the landscape. Their movements can be easily traced because they always gave the same name to the churches they renovated and the temples they constructed in each new community they created. In contrast, the second pattern often created by less cohesive, mostly East European congregations was to move more as individuals, founding new congregations with new names in new communities. In the suburbs synagogues were often constructed first by a few Jewish pioneers (usually in real estate) to attract Jewish immigration that would develop a community around the synagogue. This strategy was successful in Roxbury, East Saucos and Newtonville, but unsuccessful in attracting Jews to the mainly Irish neighbourhoods of Jamaica Plain, Hyde Park and South Boston (Figure 17.1).

Synagogues presented the image of Jewish communities both to themselves and to outsiders. The external architecture presented a public image of the Jewish community identity which sometimes contrasted with the internal architecture and material culture that expressed each Jewish community's religious beliefs and practices. Initially synagogues used rented buildings whose architecture could not be distinguished from the surrounding buildings. The lack of external material Jewish symbols, such as Jewish stars, Torah or Hebrew writing, may have been due to the poverty of many recent immigrant congregations. However, as the wealth of most congregations grew they did not initially build synagogues with any obviously Jewish external architecture. Instead, early synagogues externally blended into Boston's existing architecture, reflecting the insecurity of early small Jewish communities that suffered from widespread anti-semitism. For instance, Boston's first synagogue, constructed by Ohabei Shalom in 1852 in the South End, carried no external Jewish symbols and blended in with local architecture (Figure 17.2). The small elegant building combined Greek Revival pilasters, mirroring the Universalist church across the street, with Italianate features that hint at a new sense of cross-ethnic community identity with the Italianite Sephardic Touro synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island. In addition the Italianite apparently secular Italianate double windows evoked the tablets of the Ten Commandments. The synagogue's internal layout and material culture expressed the congregation's Orthodoxy, with seats facing east to Jerusalem, a central bimah (Torah-reading platform), built-in aron kodesh (holy ark) and separate women's gallery. An annex included a mikveh and rooms for business meetings, a Hebrew school, English classes and social gatherings. When Adath Israel split from Ohabei Shalom it rented a nearby 'long narrow yellow frame structure', in which they built an orthodox

interior, complete with a separate gallery for women around three walls (Kaufman 1995:168–70). Subsequently many growing congregations that sought larger quarters, including Ohabei Shalom and its offshoots, bought churches to use as synagogues. Kaufman (1995:172) states that ‘The move into a church building demonstrated the powerful idea that in America, Judaism was as much at home as any Christian denomination.’ By not altering the external architecture of churches these synagogues did not publicly display their Jewish identity. The internal built environment was usually altered to express Jewish identity and practices by removing the Christian pulpit to construct a bimah and a holy ark, sometimes with the twin stones of the Ten Commandments held by lions painted on a wall.

The use of churches materially changed Jewish religious practices, integrating them with American Protestant practices. For instance, few church sanctuaries faced east to Jerusalem, so the transgression of this Jewish custom was the first reform enacted by Ohabei Shalom and many other congregations. Reform Judaism developed in Boston after the Civil War not simply as a result of the immigration of Reform rabbis from Germany, but also as a result of ‘Protestantization’ of Judaism, to which the internal built environments of churches contributed. Churches materially shaped the mixed-gender, Protestant-like services of Reform Judaism, which included family pews, a choir, an organ, sermons and Sunday services. By the early 1870s, both Ohabei Shalom and Adath Israel had become Reform congregations, in part because of the decline in men’s attendance at traditional Saturday services as Jews adopted the American practice of working Saturdays. As women became more prominent at Ohabei Shalom, it celebrated the first Boston confirmation of both boys and girls in 1870. The Americanization of the younger generation also led to shorter services in which families were seated together Protestant-style, and the establishment of Sunday schools for children. In 1875 the YWCA next to Ohabei Shalom inspired the founding of the Young Men’s Hebrew Association as a ‘youth wing’ of the synagogue. The YMHA became a separate social centre serving South End ‘German’ Jews with club rooms, a simple gymnasium and an employment bureau. In 1887 Ohabei Shalom transgressed against Jewish prohibitions by following the Protestant practice of installing new stained glass windows depicting biblical figures in the church they had just bought. By 1920 some elaborately constructed arks included not only the traditional Ten Commandments, gilded lions and Jewish stars, but were topped by gilded American eagles. In some cases American and Israeli flags flanked the ark, expressing the dual identities of American Reform Jews. However, not all Jews easily adopted American or Protestant material culture and practices. In 1907 Mishkan Tefila purchased its second church building, but the congregation could not agree to use the organ, except for entertainments, until 1914, when a new young rabbi convinced them that organ music was permissible in Shabbas services (Gamm 1995:134; Kaufman 1995:165–6, 172–3, 175, 180, 184–5; Reimer 1995:280).

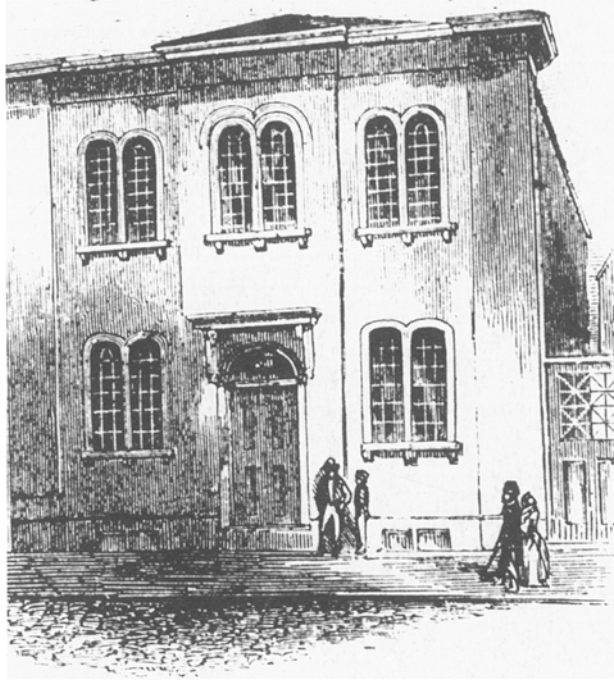


Figure 17.2 Ohabei Shalom, the first Jewish synagogue built in Boston, 1852 (destroyed, see Figure 17.1, 1a). The combination of Greek Revival and Italianate styles, including hip roof, echo the style of the 1763 Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island. Paired Italianate rounded windows evoke the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Side columns echo the Greek Revival Universalist church across the street that Ohabei Shalom bought in 1863 (Kaufman 1995:168–9, 171). Photograph courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society.

In 1885 Adath Israel started a new trend by building a synagogue that combined architectural styles of American churches with a round-arched Romanesque style in contemporary Bavarian synagogues called Rundbogenstil (Figure 17.3). This style expressed the ‘German’ Jewish congregation’s European ethnic and religious heritages. Further, this synagogue expressed the growing confidence of the Jewish community by proudly displaying Jewish material symbols on its exterior architecture. The gable end where the entrance was located was topped by a stone replica of the Ten Commandments. On either side of the gable German Protestant-style twin church steeples were designed to blend with other steeples in Boston, but were topped by tiny Stars of David. The melding of Jewish-American identity was also materially expressed in a church-style central round rose window of stained glass depicting the Star of David. The impressive architecture of this leading synagogue influenced the architecture of about ten other synagogues built *c.* 1900–28, becoming the most popular style in the Boston area. For Bostonians the German Romanesque Revival style



Figure 17.3 Adath (Temple) Israel's first purpose-built synagogue, 1885, was the source of the widespread Rundbogenstil synagogue style in Boston (see Figure 17.1, 2b). Main elements copied in other synagogues include the rounded windows and doors, especially the narrow windows flanking the front door, the round window with the Jewish star, the large high arch above it, and the gable end topped by the Ten Commandments. The tall Bavarian church steeples topped by Jewish stars were not copied (Kaufman 1995:176, 182). Photograph courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society.

was recognized as similar to the style of 'ethnic' churches in immigrant Catholic communities. Temple Israel became the leading synagogue in Boston as Rabbi Schindler's radical Reform sermons on the common religion of humanity attracted large audiences of both Jews and non-Jews and were reprinted in local newspapers (Gamm 1995:133, 143–5; Kaufman 1995:176, 181–3, 186, 188, 190).

In 1906 a new trend in synagogue architecture was started when the first synagogue in Roxbury, Adath Jeshurun (moderate Orthodox), was constructed with an imposing transitional style combining the Rundbogenstil with Byzantine dome-topped towers. The new style was fully expressed in the 1907 construction of the new massive Reform Temple Israel, which was designed as an imaginative

replica of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem (Figure 17.4). Influenced by Zionism, the architecture publicly proclaimed the Reform congregation's pride in their heritage by combining Egyptian and Byzantine motifs, including a large central dome and four corner towers topped with smaller domes. The interior 'Egyptian' ark and bimah included pylons, obelisks and trumpet-shaped organ pipes forming a lotus blossom. The 'Solomonic' Temple Israel strongly influenced the style of the 'Modern Orthodox' Kehillath Israel synagogue centre constructed in 1925, which included the first mixed gender seating for this congregation. The Byzantine style was also adopted by the Conservative to moderate Reform Ohabei Shalom, which in 1928 built its Brookline synagogue centre as a replica of the Hagia Sophia without the minaret (Figure 17.5). These imposing synagogues publicly displayed Jewish pride in their Near Eastern roots (Gamm, pers. comm.; Kaufman 1995:177, 186–7, 190–1, 195).

Four monumental synagogue complexes were built as Boston became a leader of the nationwide synagogue centre movement in the 1920s. Four wealthy congregations competed to build the largest synagogue centre, including Kehillath

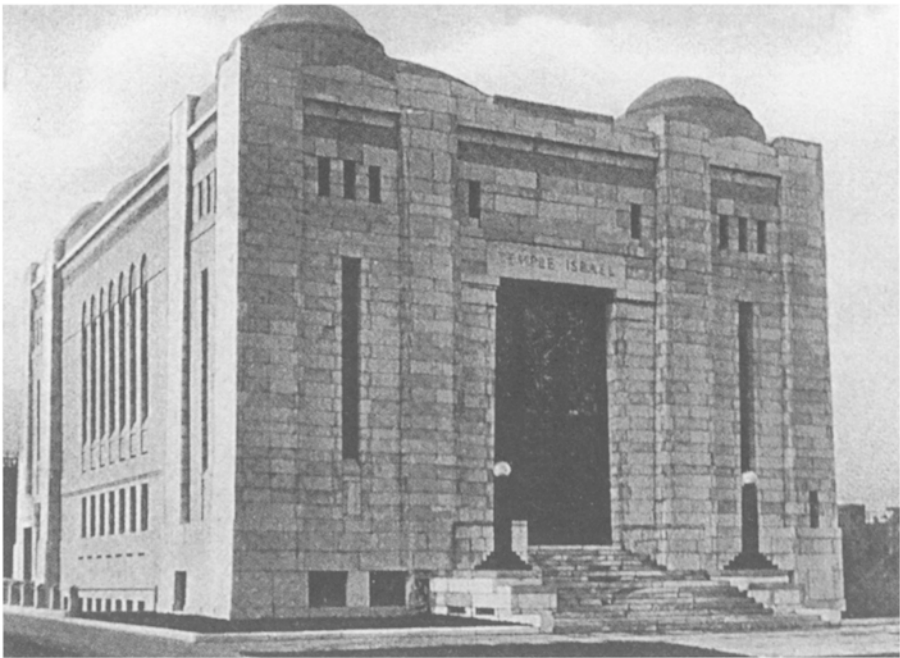


Figure 17.4 Adath (Temple) Israel, built 1907, inspired a new Zionist style in synagogues (see Figure 17.1, 2c). This monumental vision of Solomon's temple is topped with one large and four small Byzantine-style domes, combined with the Rundbogenstil-style configuration of towers and slit windows flanking the entrance, as well as the side rounded windows (see Figure 17.3; Gamm, personal communication; Kaufman 1995:177). Photograph courtesy of the Temple Israel, Boston.

Israel and Ohabei Shalom in Brookline (Figure 17.5). In 1925 in Roxbury, Mishkan Tefila built the first Conservative synagogue centre, in American neoclassical style architecture with the Ten Commandments in stone over the entrance (Figure 17.6). Adath Israel designed a large neoclassical Greek Temple in Brookline that was never completed as a result of the 1929 stock market crash and subsequent depression. These two synagogues publicly displayed few Jewish symbols and used the most prevalent American architectural style for public buildings. In the 1930s, as Nazi sympathizers fanned anti-semitism in the USA, Jewish communities built modest synagogues without public Jewish symbols in common architectural styles that blended inconspicuously into American suburbia (Kaufman 1995:190–1, 194–7). The proud public display of Jewish community identity disappeared.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that the construction of social identities involves complex fluid processes that have no end product in terms of an identity with a fixed meaning. Rather, identities are continually negotiated through dynamic

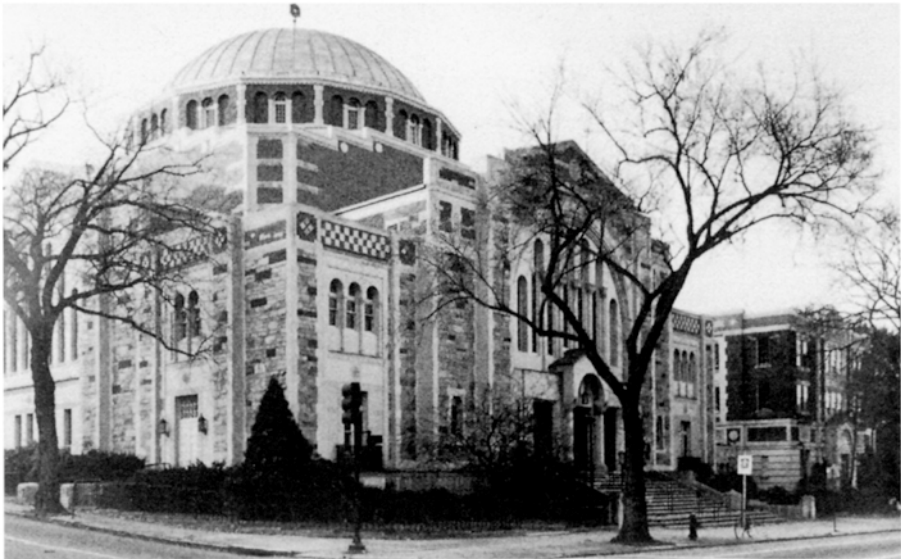


Figure 17.5 Ohabei Shalom synagogue centre, built 1928 in Brookline (Figure 17.1, 1c). It is Boston's version of the Hagia Sophia, without the minaret. The large Byzantine dome sits on top of a huge structure with two Rundbogenstil-style gables, each including a large arch over rounded windows, flanked by towers and more rounded windows. The Byzantine dome and variegated stone are reminiscent of the Solomonic Temple Israel (see Figure 17.4) (Kaufman 1995:129). Photograph by Carl Mastandrea.

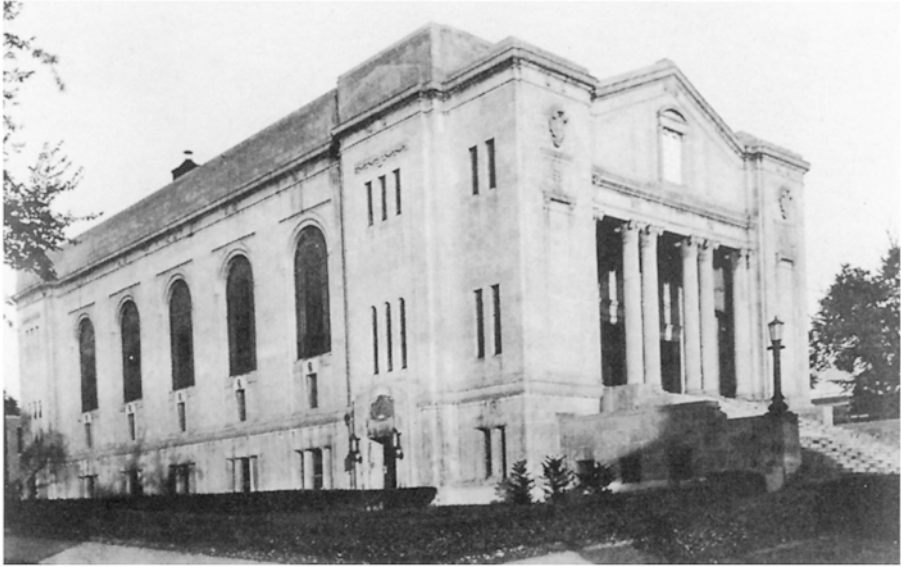


Figure 17.6 Mishkan Tefila monumental synagogue centre, built 1925 on Seaver Street, which borders Franklin Park (Figure 17.1, 3d). It combines Greek columns with a Rundbogenstil-style gable end and twin tower front, as well as the rounded windows along the side (see Figure 17.3; Kaufman 1995:193). Photograph courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society.

interactions between individuals, social groups and communities. A survey of Jewish-American sites, especially synagogues, has shown how Jewish-American communities with different ethnic/religious identities developed by merging, splitting and spreading in a mini-diaspora across the Boston area landscape. The degree to which Orthodox Jewish practices were followed was expressed in new site types and artefacts that may have been discarded in site yards in poor neighbourhoods.

American material culture and beliefs have been shown to be instrumental in ongoing processes of constructing the multiple meanings of being Jewish-American. Material culture was instrumental not only in the internal constructions of Jewish-American identities, but also in the public representations of those identities in communities. Synagogue architecture and built environments symbolized diverse Jewish identities that blended religious affiliation with cultural influences from Europe and America. A diversity of Jewish-American religious sects, rituals, practices, cultures and communities developed from the changing historical relationships, first among Jews of different ethnic and religious origins and second between the diversity of Jewish religious sects/cultures and American culture. The ongoing processes of creating diverse Jewish-American identities are illustrated by the continuing democratization of Judaism that has led to the ordination of women as Reform rabbis starting in the early 1970s and as

Conservative rabbis since 1983. Orthodox rabbis remain exclusively male (Telushkin 1991:428–9).

Acculturation has occurred in both directions with the increasing interaction between progressive Jews and non-Jews. Not only was Jewish culture modified by American culture, but the diversity in American culture has been enriched by Jewish culture. American culture has benefited from the high value most Jews place on education, charity, morality and justice, which in conjunction with American democracy decreased anti-semitism. Materially Jews created new types of sites for American communities, such as synagogues, kosher butchers, matzo bakeries and Jewish delicatessens. At Jewish-American sites distinctive ritual objects from kosher knives to menorahs were used. Jewish holidays are marked on American calendars. A number of widely used Yiddish words are in American English dictionaries, and have broadened our conceptions of people's behaviours, including mensch (a non-macho male ideal), maven, chutzpah, schmuck, schmooze, schlepp, schlemiel, kvetch, kibitz, yenta, mazeltov and meshugga. Other words indicate the integration of Jewish foodways into American culture, including bagel, lox, pastrami, matzo and kosher. The meaning of kosher has been expanded beyond food and is often used in the negative to indicate when any action violates customary norms as in 'That's not kosher'. The common phrase 'beyond the pale' comes from the exclusion of Jews from the Russian 'Pale of Settlement' by the Czar's ruling of 1882 (Morris 1969:944; Ebert 1995:214). In addition, the work week for most occupations was shortened, permitting Jews to celebrate Shabbas on Saturday, unless they worked in stores (Smith 1981). American life and culture has benefited from Jewish influence.

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18 *Maroon, race and gender: Palmares material culture and social relations in a runaway settlement*

PEDRO PAULO A.FUNARI

INTRODUCTION: SLAVEHOLDING SOCIETIES, RUNAWAY SETTLEMENTS AND PALMARES

The colonial system used Africans as slaves in the Americas for different reasons. Slavery never disappeared in Europe and in the late Middle Ages it was taken for granted that some people should be considered as property (*res*). In the scholarly language of the period, Latin, classical terms, such as *instrumentum uocale* ('a speaking tool'), were used regularly to refer to what ordinary people in their vernacular languages called *slaves*, *esclaves*, *schiaivi*, *Sklaven*, *esclavos*, *escravos* (cf. Carvalho 1987:109). There was thus no opposition to slavery in late medieval and early modern European *Weltanschauungen*, and there is no reason to be astonished by its spread into the New World (cf. Varnhagen 1975:222).

The use of Africans, however, does need an explanation and different authors have offered a wide variety of reasons for this choice. Wallerstein emphasized that Europeans used Africans:

because of exhaustion of the supply of labourers indigenous to the regions of the plantations, because Europe needed a source of labour from a reasonably well-populated region that was accessible and relatively near the region of usage. But it had to be from a region that was outside its world economy so that Europe could feel unconcerned about the economic consequences for the breeding region of wide-scale removal of manpower as slaves. Western Africa fills the bill best.

(Wallerstein 1974:89)

The acceptance of these factors depends on the use of a *Weltwirtschaft* model for this period, grounded on the interpretation of the modern period as a kind of jigsaw puzzle composed of at least three different areas: a narrow core, a fairly developed middle area and a vast periphery (Braudel 1984:39).

Novais (1991) is keen to note that the profits deriving from the capture of Amerindian slaves were kept in the hands of the colonists. On the other hand, the accumulation generated through the African connection ended up in the hands of metropolitan merchants dealing with this very special merchandise, the African captive. Indeed, Novais (1991:45) goes so far as to propose that 'it is by commencing with the slave trade that one is able to understand colonial slavery, and not the other way around'. That is, the slave trade should not be interpreted as a side-effect of a colonial slave system, but the reverse (Alencastro 1991:176). Maestri (1988:35) concludes that the whole colonial framework depended on the slave merchants and their interests and Tomich (1992:108, 112, 117 *et passim*) relates the development of wage labour in Europe to the spread of slavery into the New World, stressing that there could be no accumulation of capital in Europe without slave exploitation in the periphery. As Novais (1991:42) puts it bluntly, 'the colonies displayed Europe's viscera'. However, we must acknowledge that 'so long as slavery is predominant, the capital relationship can only be sporadic and subordinate, never dominant' (Marx 1978:419).

We should not, however, underestimate the importance of African slave traders in this process. Klein (1989:9–10) recalls that Africans controlled the sheer volume and ethnic origin of captives offered to Europeans, selling the slaves at prices they were able at least to manipulate. The most comprehensive study of the role of Africans in the early modern period concludes that:

we must accept that African participation in the slave trade was voluntary and under the control of African decision makers... the willingness of Africa's commercial and political elite to supply slaves should be sought in their own internal dynamics and history.

(Thornton 1992:125)

Altman and Butler (1994:485) agree with Thornton and suggest that we should consider that Africans involved in the slave trade were the equal and uncoerced partners of metropolitan merchants and officials, and that the development of the slave trade enhanced African control and choice.

Africans in the New World though were submitted to inhuman hardships. There is no need here to recall the details of the oppression suffered by slaves, even though we should acknowledge their suffering and realize that the negation of past exploitation usually means the manipulation of history. Higgins (1991) has recently studied how the master narrative of American history deforms slavery, representing it as a minor abnormality or aberration. If we are aware of the unbearable levels of barbarism associated with slavery in the New World, it is easy to understand the importance of runaway settlements. Resistance to slavery was the main feature of the history of Africans in the American colonies (Davidson 1979:82), and slaves responded to exploitation by malingering, by poorly carrying out their tasks, by revolting or by escaping to runaway settlements (Escalante 1979:74). Considering that the lingua franca of the period was Latin,

it was only too natural that runaway settlements were called in the contemporary documents *res publicae* (polities), soon to be translated into modern languages as *republics*, *repúblicas*, *républiques* (cf. Carneiro 1988:33). *Maroons*, *palenques*, *mocambos*, *quilombos* were terms introduced somewhat later, usually with derogatory connotations. In documents referring to Palmares, this particular fugitive slave settlement is known as *mocambo*, from the Ambundu term, *mu-kambo*, or hideout (Kent 1979:174). The English term *maroon* comes from the Spanish *cimarrón*, initially applied to escaped feral livestock (Wolf 1990:156) and is a good translation of the scholarly *latebra* and *pagus* used by the documents in Latin.¹

Runaway settlements were soon to become an ubiquitous feature of colonial life in the Americas (Reis 1992:17), the most effective way of opposing slavery (Moura 1972:87). Freyre's (1979:29) study of nineteenth-century newspapers concluded that runaway slaves were particularly abused by their supervisors prior to their flight, and the same was probably the case in the first centuries of colonization. Maroons have been studied by social scientists (e.g., Moura 1981, 1987) and historians (e.g. Freitas 1980, 1984), and the seventeenth-century runaway settlement of Palmares was soon to be considered the most important large and long-standing maroon in the Americas. Most of the inhabitants in the famous maroon came from Africa, particularly from the Congo and Angola Bantu areas. The history of Portuguese intervention in Africa is a long one. In 1491 a Portuguese mission arrived at the court of King Nzinga Kuwu, head of a confederation of local states. The monarch, called *manikongo*, and many of his companions became Christians. The Christian King Afonso succeeded to the throne in 1506, but the Portuguese were more interested in enslaving than evangelizing the locals and within some years Afonso was considered by his own people as a Portuguese puppet. The king lost control of the situation and after he died in 1545 the traffic in slaves encouraged rivalry among local rulers, undermining the authority of the *manikongo*. The arrival of the eastern Jaga finally put an end to the kingdom.

Slavery had decimated the people and destroyed the kingdom's unity. The slaving interests of the Portuguese shifted southward to Angola. During the sixteenth century the slavers searched for slaves down the coast and from the early part of the century a small Ndongo chiefdom spread in size and power, gaining independence in 1556. In 1571 it became a Portuguese colony. For the next few centuries Angola was condemned to produce slave labour for the plantations of Brazil and elsewhere (July 1980:187–91, *et passim*). The Portuguese Atlantic trade drew slaves mostly from the Angolan coast, south of the Zaire river, especially from Luanda, from the 1570s, and from Benguela since the 1610s (Miller 1991:123–4). Most African societies enslaved war prisoners, but the winners seldom kept them as servants and most of them were sold to traders (Curtin 1990:37). It is, however, true that since the late sixteenth century kings in Angola drew substantial revenues from villages of their slaves planted throughout the country (Thornton 1991:29).

A formal alliance between the Imbangala, or Jaga, and the Portuguese became effective around 1612. The Imbangala state of the *kulashingo*, and other related Imbangala chiefdoms among the Mbundu, formed mercenary camps on the fringes of the Portuguese in Angola. These states were ruled by skilled warriors who captured local farmers for sale as slaves and who joined Portuguese expeditions to fight in the backlands. South of the Kwanza river, though, the warriors of the *kilombo* were in a state of permanent hostility with the Europeans. The *kilombo* was an Ovimbundu warrior society with well-defined initiation procedures and strict military discipline. The strong magic associated with their rulers and their military skills enabled these bands of Imbangala warriors to overrun the Mbundu later in the seventeenth century. The warriors of the *kilombo* would supply captives in exchange for European trade goods (Miller 1976). The degree of cultural interaction between Africans and Portuguese can be judged by the fact that a new art of warfare developed in Angola that combined European and African aims and strategies (Thornton 1988:361).

On the other side of the Atlantic, the Portuguese were soon to develop sugar plantations in Brazil (Pendle 1963). By 1570 there were already more than fifty mills, or *engenhos*, in the colony, and by 1584 there were some 15,000 African slaves working in plantations (Palacin 1981:82). Indians were also enslaved and some authors consider that the *bandeirantes*, or pioneers from São Paulo, in the south of the Portuguese colony, brought about some 350,000 slaves during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one third of all slaves entering the Brazilian economy in these two centuries (Curtin 1990:203). It is thus probable that plantations combined African and Indian slaves with some free wage labour (Wolf 1990:150).

Sugar production was controlled by the Portuguese and processing and financing by the Low Countries. In 1629 the Dutch managed to occupy Pernambuco and to stay at Recife until 1654. By 1600 there were already some 20,000 African slaves and by the mid-seventeenth century between 33,000 and 50,000 (Simonsen 1978:133). Thanks to the Dutch invasion and to the low sugar prices from the mid-seventeenth century there was a steady decline in the sugar industry, which was very evident from the 1670s onwards (Furtado 1982:65). Politically, Brazil has been permeated with patrimonial forms of organization and we could interpret Brazilian colonial politics as a series of patrimonial struggles between the crown and its subjects over the control of resources and opportunities, impeding the emergence of modern capitalism (J.R.Hall 1991:62, 64–5, *et passim*). In Portugal itself, whether under Habsburg control until 1640, or after the restoration of independence, the nobility retained control of the state and it can be strongly argued that the official persecution of New Christians was really an attack against merchants in general, concealing a struggle between bourgeoisie and nobility (Schwartz 1991).

Just after the restoration of independence, King John IV established the centralizing *Conselho Ultramarino*, or Overseas Office, whose constitution was

publicized 14 July 1642 (Prado Jr 1974:51). As a result of the central patrimonial control, the *Companhia Geral do Comércio para o Estado do Brasil*, or Brazilian Company, was established in 1647. From 1661 foreign ships were no longer allowed to trade in the colony, and from 1684 ships going out of Brazil could not reach foreign ports (Faoro 1976:151). Within the colony, the armed slave-raiders from São Paulo, the *bandeirantes*, played an important role in the maintenance of the slaveholding society. They travelled huge distances, and from the 1620s their main hunting-ground was on the borders of Paraguay, but they were also used to chase runaway slaves in the north east. It is in this context that we must consider the history of runaway settlements in seventeenth-century Pernambuco, their dispersal, conflicts and final destruction.

Runaway slaves settled in the hilly forest areas, some fifty miles from the coast, at the beginning of the seventeenth century and the first Portuguese expedition to Palmares, in 1612, attested to the importance of the *res publica* early in the century (Figure 18.1). The polity continued to grow up to the 1640s, when the Dutch considered Palmares as a 'serious danger'. Bartholomeus Lintz describes the state as formed by two main settlement areas: the capital village at the Serra da Barriga and a smaller hamlet on the left bank of the Gurungumba River (Figure 18.2). Lintz 'lived among them [and] after staying with them [knew] their places and mode of life' (cited in Barleus 1974:252; cf. Orser 1994:14). The presence of this man seems to indicate that white people lived within the maroon and caused no suspicion,

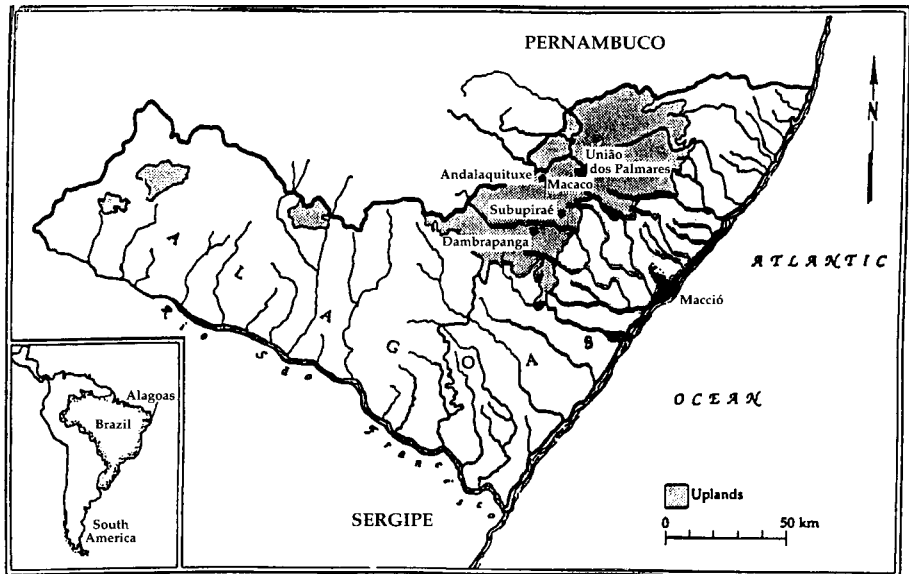


Figure 18.1 Map of Palmares in the State of Alagoas (from Araújo 1985).

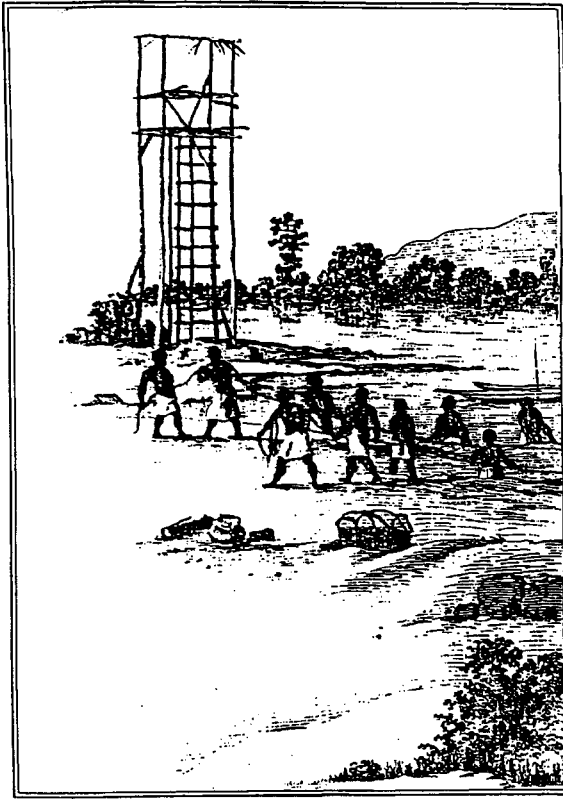


Figure 18.2 Only known contemporary image of Palmares (from Barleus 1647).

as Barleus refers to Lintz and his ‘ancient companions’. Perhaps the persecution of ethnic minorities, Jews (Mello 1963:248), Muslims and others, and the fight against witches, heretics, thieves and criminals, could explain the fact that at least some white people decided to settle at Palmares and were apparently accepted by the runaway community.²

Baro carried out a Dutch attack on the kingdom in 1644 and claimed to have killed 100 people and captured thirty-one out of the 6,000 people living in the main settlement. It was described as a half a mile long village (0.8 km), surrounded by a double-stake fence with two entrances and agricultural fields nearby. Out of the thirty-one captives, seven were Amerindians with some mulatto children, suggesting that some 20 per cent of the population could be considered as natives.

The next year Reijmbach led a Dutch expedition to the New Palmares and he also described Old Palmares as a village containing some 1,500 people in 220 dwellings. Overall, Palmares was a polity comprising nine separate villages (Figure 18.3).³ After the Dutch left Brazil, the Portuguese were able to carry out several

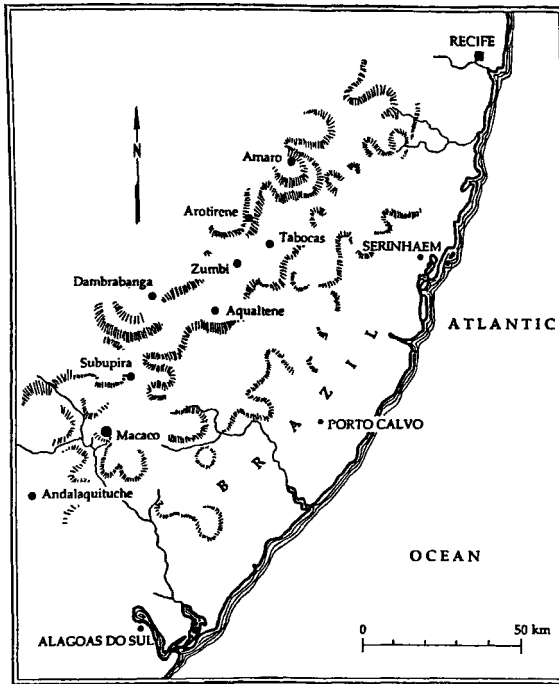


Figure 18.3 Map of Palmares settlements (from Freitas 1984).

expeditions against Palmares, from 1654 to 1667. From 1670 the authorities executed a systematic campaign to destroy Palmares, with almost yearly assaults on the villages. Between 1670 and 1687 the polity was ruled by a Great Lord, or Ganga Zumba,⁴ living at the capital *oppidum* of Macaco, founded perhaps in 1642 (Carvalho 1902).⁵ The name of this town could be derived from Bantu languages (e.g. *mokoko*; cf. Kent 1979:180), even though it was interpreted by the Portuguese-speaking colonists as a reference to monkeys (*macaco*). It was also known as the Royal Stockade.

In 1667 there was a reconnaissance mission to Palmares by Zenóbio Accioly de Vasconcelos and soon afterwards the governor of Pernambuco tried to prevent the colonists from trading with the maroon settlers. Two years later, Antonio Bezerra attacked Palmares (1672), and again in 1673 there was a new expedition led by Cristóvão Lins. The governor of Pernambuco, Pedro de Almeida, in 1674 emphasized in his inauguration that he would fight Palmares and an expedition organized by Manoel Lopes in the following year found a large sandy area with an *oppidum* containing over 2,000 dwellings. The village was destroyed, but most of the inhabitants were able to flee and to establish a settlement deep in the jungle (*per sylvas et nemoras*). The nephew of King Ganga Zumba, Zumbi,

first distinguished himself in this battle. His own name, Zumbi, refers to his probable spiritual role in the community, *nzumbi* being associated with a Bantu priestly and military title.⁶

Fernão Carrilho led an expedition against Palmares in 1676, discovering a fortified village at Subupira, burned and abandoned before he was able to assault it. In 1678 Carrilho claimed to have destroyed the maroon, bringing with him two sons of King Ganga Zumba. The Portuguese and representatives of Palmares met at Recife and a peace treaty was struck. However, this outcome was not accepted by some maroon leaders; King Ganga Zumba was killed and his nephew Zumbi was proclaimed King of Palmares. The next fifteen years witnessed the most violent period in the history of the polity. From 1679 up to 1692 different local captains tried to destroy Palmares with very limited effect. Gonçalo Moreira (1679), André Dias (1680), Manoel Lopes (1682), Fernão Carrilho (1683) and João de Freitas Cunha (1684) all failed to curb the independence of Palmares.

By this time it had become clear that local expeditionary forces would not be able to cope with the rebel kingdom. The Brazilian sugar industry entered a period of stagnation and decline, resulting from the declining prices for sugar, as well as from the steadily rising prices for slaves (Price 1991:298). From 1670 the sugar industry, and as a consequence the Brazilian economy, was in tatters (Mauro 1980:147). The unsuccessful efforts by the local militias to destroy Palmares emphasize the importance of the *bandeirantes* in the maintenance of the colonial order in Brazil. They brought some 350,000 slaves during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, nearly one-third of all slaves entering the economy in these 200 years (Curtin 1990:203). Antonio Vieira's comment in 1648 that 'without Angola there are no blacks' (cited in Orser 1992c: 7) should be complemented with another one: without *bandeirantes* there could be no safe slavery.

By 1685 Domingos Jorge Velho, a mercenary *bandeirante*, asked for a licence to conquer the native Brazilians in the Pernambuco captaincy and two years later the authorities decided to use him against Palmares. An agreement relating to the use of captives and land was drawn up between the pioneer and the governor for the destruction of the maroon. As commander in chief of the expeditions, Velho claimed ownership of most of the booty, following the accepted rule of Roman law: *iuste possidet, qui auctore praetore possidet* ('it is lawful to own anything obtained through military command'). In February 1694, after a forty-two day siege, Macaco fell, 200 maroon settlers died, another 200 perished falling from high precipices, 500 were captured and sold out of the captaincy. Several rebels, among them Zumbi, managed to flee, but on 20 November 1695, the king was captured, executed and his head put on public display as a frightful memento: slaves must obey, not defy the slave system.

Historical documents refer to the existence of houses, streets, chapels, statues (of Jesus and different Catholic saints), granaries and even palaces at Palmares (cf. Carneiro 1988:203, *et passim*). They grew crops, in particular

corn, cassava, beans, sweet potatoes and also side sugar-cane and bananas. In 1671, Fernão Coutinho found workshops and blacksmiths' shops, and the people at Palmares also produced pottery and timber. In their heartland therefore:

a good deal of maroon technology must have been developed on the plantations during slavery. Indians interacted with slaves, whether as fellow sufferers, as trading partners, or in other capacities. Indian technologies—from pottery making and hammock weaving to fishing and manioc processing—were taken over and, often, further developed by the slaves.

(Price 1979:12)

It is in this context that an archaeological study of Palmares is a particularly useful way of obtaining new evidence on slave resistance and the struggle for freedom.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, ITS OBJECTIVES AND THE PALMARES ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

Whatever the stand we take, the main issue relating to the archaeology of any historical period is the complex relationship between documentary and material data. Austin (1997:25) has been keen to condemn a strong scholarly tradition which considered archaeology as *ancilla*, or 'handmaiden', to history. Archaeologists dealing with historical periods are well aware that we must rely both on documents and excavations (Orser 1987:131) and as archaeologists it is not difficult to note that 'archaeology certainly can provide insights into historical processes that the written documents simply do not provide' (Deetz 1991:6). Material culture is used by different social actors to control and resist power (Little 1988:287) and, as a result, the study of the unwritten record enables us to look for neglected segments of society, like poor people, native inhabitants and slaves (Rubertone 1994:32). Using at the same time written and unwritten documents, historical archaeology aims at recovering the active voice of silent majorities (Beaudry, Cook and Mrozowski 1991:175), and can thus be described as 'one of the most democratic social sciences' (Deagan 1991:110).

The social history of things, in the illuminating definition of Orser (1992b: 98), deals with *unconscious* and everyday resistance (Ferguson 1991:28; M. Hall 1992:384), pays attention to the lives of the common people (M.Hall 1991:78) and serves to challenge the domination perpetuated through architecture, town planning and work rules which mystify power relationships (Paynter and McGuire 1991:9). A post-processual, contextual or critical approach has enabled archaeologists to read meaning *into* a written or unwritten text, instead of *out of it* (Little and Shackel 1992:4; Austin and

Thomas 1997:45). It has thus been possible to shift the focus from the material culture of the elite to that of ordinary people (Orser 1988b:314), and turn increasingly to issues relating to racism (Orser 1990:6), ethnicity, gender and oppression. As material culture is a major medium through which social relations are maintained or transformed (Johnson 1992:45), exploitation and resistance (Singleton 1990:74) and symbolic violence, including that which is often associated with domination along ethnic and gender-based lines (Leone and Potter 1988:7; Kern 1993:184), are at the heart of historical archaeology's agenda and concerns.

Many historical studies have been written about Palmares (cf. Freitas 1984), but archaeological research was not carried out until the 1990s. As a result, most of the cultural and social aspects of the polity remain unknown. The importance of African, native American and European influence within the community, for instance, is still a matter of speculation. The traditional standpoint is that the fugitives lived 'in the same way as they did in Angola' (Boxer 1973:140). However, if native Americans, Europeans and Africans lived there and interacted as the written documents indicate, then it was probably a multi-ethnic society. Historical archaeology provides the best way to study Palmares as material culture should help us to understand much that is presently unknown about its cultural and social life. The study of pottery alone can provide information about style, design and ethnicity. The entire settlement, comprising houses, paths, walls and other features, should also bear witness to different origins in Africa, America or Europe, or to a unique syncretistic culture. Palmares thus provides a special vantage point from which we can study how runaway slaves, far from Africa, forged a new culture in Brazil and made it operate for almost a century. Considering that the roots of Palmares lie in resistance to slavery, we can learn much about how these people were able to defy the dominant slavocracy in the country.

In 1991, the Palmares Archaeological Project was created in order to study the maroon using historical archaeology.⁷ Even though it is not always easy to have an impact within the black community (Singleton 1988:364), as archaeology is often considered as too abstract and elitist, the Palmares Archaeological Project was conceived, from its inception, as *social archaeology*. The first season of fieldwork at Palmares was conducted during July 1992. The archaeological fieldwork began with a survey of the capital city of Macaco, now called Serra da Barriga, some 8 km from the modern town of União dos Palmares (Figure 18.4). The hill is some 4km long from east to west, and between 500 m to 1 km north to south, within the hot and humid Alagoan Forest. The research strategy was to collect a representative sample from as many sites as possible. In 1992 and 1993 we collected 2,448 artefacts from fourteen sites, 91 per cent pottery, 4.5 per cent European ceramics, 1.3 per cent stone, 0.6 per cent glass, 0.1 per cent metal and 1.9 per cent other (Figure 18.5; and see Rowlands, Chapter 19, this volume, Table 19.1).⁸

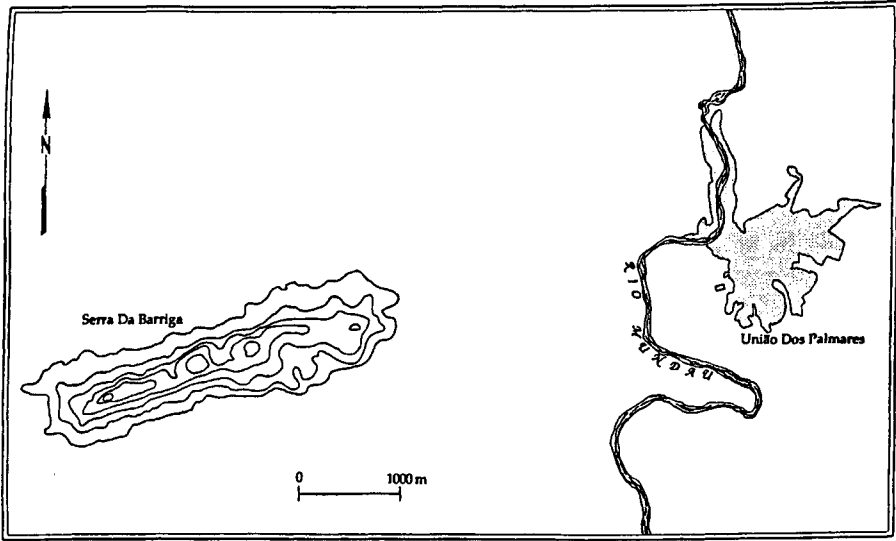


Figure 18.4 Map of Serra da Barriga and União dos Palmares.

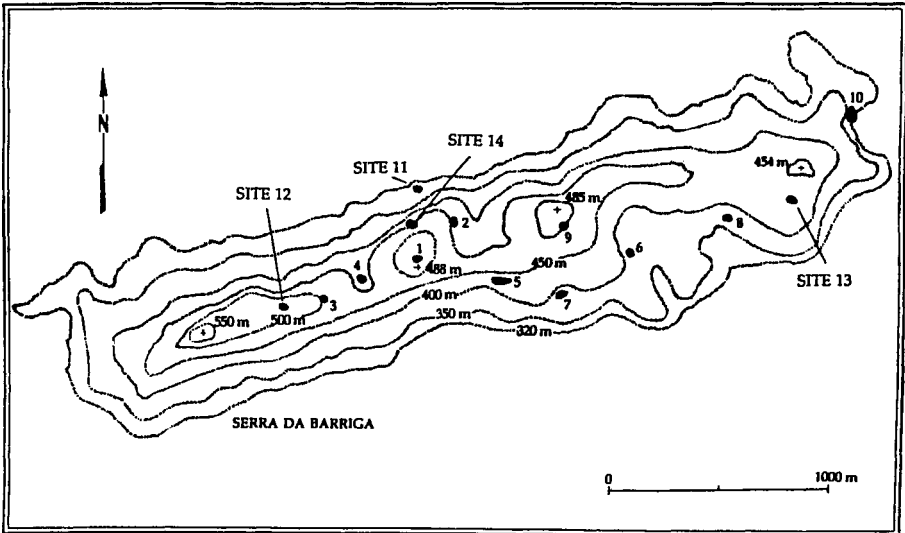


Figure 18.5 The location of sites found in 1993 at the Serra da Barriga. Sites discovered in 1992 are also shown.

ETHNICITY, MATERIAL CULTURE AND PALMARES

Ethnicity is an ambiguous concept and there is no need here to explore the history of its use by anthropologists and archaeologists. A working definition proposed by Jones (1994) can be adopted:

Ethnicity is a multidimensional phenomenon constituted in different ways in different social domains. Representations of ethnicity involve the dialectical opposition of situationally relevant cultural practices and historical experiences associated with different cultural traditions. Consequently there is rarely a one-to-one relationship between representations of ethnicity and the entire range of cultural practices and social conditions associated with a particular group. From a 'bird's eye view' the resulting pattern will be one of overlapping ethnic boundaries constituted by representations of cultural difference, which are at once transient, but also subject to reproduction and transformation in the ongoing process of social life.

(Jones 1997:78)

Cultural traditions are thus the main focus of attention of archaeologists dealing with complex societies. Palmares has been characterized by different historians as overwhelmingly African. Kent (1979:181) concluded that 'Palmares did not spring out from a single social structure. It was, rather, an African political system that came to govern a plural society.' Schwartz (1987:85) closely associated the Angolan military society, *kilombo*, and its American counterpart. However, the distinguished African specialist Joseph Miller (1976) in his monograph on the Mbundu states, described the Ovimbundu *kilombo* as a very specific warrior society and the Imbangala *kilombo* as a unique male warrior fraternity. The use of the same term in the New World could not refer to the same kind of society. Furthermore, as proposed by another expert on colonial Africa, 'Portuguese and Kongolese society were much more similar to each other than many students of Kongolese history believe' (Thornton 1981:186). In the Americas there is no pure African culture, there are new American cultures (Glassman 1991:278).

Another related question is the thorny issue of tribal identity in Africa and its continuity, or not, in the Americas. There is a consensus that most slaves came to Palmares from Angola and that they brought with them some common features of Bantu peoples, from technology to sexual division of labour (Gwete 1991:70, 89), and although the 'Angolans' comprised different ethnic groups, modern research has shown that they shared broad principles, assumptions, aesthetic ideals and cultural understandings (Palmer 1995:233). It is even possible to suppose that very general African cultural traits, like their gregarious character (Reis 1993:13), played a role in the overall cultural *ethos* of palmarinos. Traditionally, it was accepted that there was, as a consequence, a diversity of ethnic cultural traits in the New World. Historical

documents often refer to different tribes (Hansens 1989:177), and the ethnicity of the slave population in general is difficult to determine, but it is probable that it comprised a mix of different groups (DeCorse 1994:168). It would therefore be better to refer to specific manufacture techniques with narrowly defined terms, like 'Fanti-influenced' or 'Congolese style', rather than African (Haviser and DeCorse 1991:327). Recently though, Thornton (1992:206) has concluded that 'the degree of diversity in Africa can easily be exaggerated'. Some prefer to emphasize that acculturation was a common process in Africa itself (e.g. Nsonde 1992:706) and that as slaves were living in a very specific colonial environment, they were bound to adapt their African cultural traits (Schwartz 1988).

At Palmares, we found three different pottery types most probably contemporary in use (see Rowlands, Chapter 19, this volume, Figures 19.3 and 19.4). The native Brazilian pottery can be associated with the broad prehistoric Tupiguarani ceramic tradition, being handmade using the coil technique and sand-tempered. The presence of native pottery should not surprise us, considering that in other early colonial sites, like Santa Fe la Vieja, in the north east of Argentina both Tupiguarani and European ceramics were used from 1573 to 1660 (Zarankin 1995:56). At Palmares, European ceramics consisted of four varieties of lead-glazed earthenware, three of them revealing glaze only in the interior, and all glazes were applied carelessly suggesting an early date of manufacture. They are similar to some sherds from a Dutch fort of the 1640s located some 60 km to the east of the Serra da Barriga. Locally-made 'Palmarino ware' comprises wheel-thrown, low-fired pottery, usually in the form of small, shallow bowls, the basal fragments of which reveal a flat base incorporated into the body (Allen 1995).

Orser (1994:13) assumed, based on the idea that Palmares was a 'cultural mosaic'—uniting Africans, native South Americans and Europeans—that these ceramics may have related to these different ethnic groups and to relations between them. Allen (1995:32) on the other hand considers that if the analogy of Palmares as a mosaic is an appropriate one, then each tile represents a particular culture and tradition. Instead, Allen reminds us that Palmarinos forged a new culture and that the concept of 'syncretism' may best illustrate this process. It is probable though that at Palmares ethnic differences persisted alongside new forms of ethnic syncretism. The importance of native and European ceramics seems to indicate that at least in some respects native and European identities were kept alive, whilst Palmarino ware is a direct result of a mix of techniques and tastes.

As archaeologists, though, we face some very difficult problems if we are really interested in how ethnicity was expressed through the material culture. DeCorse has studied the material culture of the Limba, Yalunka and Kurango and was struck by the fact that 'the Yalunka and Kurango sites have more in common with Limba settlements than with those of more-closely related Mande groups living in the Sudan' (DeCorse 1994:137–8). There is therefore no straightforward link between the sharing of common features and

ethnicity. The preliminary analysis of material found at the Serra da Barriga suggests that indigenous peoples had a strong impact on Palmares, but for the moment the meaning of this impact is not clear. There is no doubt that the main archaeological issue at Palmares relates to ethnicity and material culture. Epperson (1990:36) was right when he emphasized that the two goals of valorization of the African-American culture of resistance and the denaturalization of essentialist racial categories are not antithetical, but essential if we aim at creating a more humane social order (and see Rowlands, Chapter 19, this volume). At Palmares we should refer to the resistance of Africans, native Americans and poor Europeans, and the study of its multiethnicity is precisely the main challenge.

It is a challenge for two different reasons. First of all, 'race is not a physical fact but only an ideological notion' (Orser 1988a:739). Ethnicity is therefore not a hard fact, but a concept, and the same applies to 'acculturation' or to 'lusotropicalization' (Bastide 1972:238). The second difficulty relates to the possible links between material culture and ethnic identity. The display of African or native American influences in artefacts, even though important in itself (Singleton 1991:158, 161), is probably not sufficient to establish the actual mix of different cultures in the maroon settlement. If these are the challenges, though, the continuing research effort on such rich archaeological sites should allow us to address these complex issues from a particularly fruitful body of evidence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

- 1 The publication of historical documents relating to Brazilian colonial history in general, and to Palmares specifically, is almost entirely concerned with texts written in modern languages, and the same applies to Angola. The few documents in Latin already published indicate their potential importance. Evidence about African expeditions written in Latin or in Portuguese (Leite 1958:165) are still mostly unpublished. We should keep in mind that evidence relating to Indians and *bandeirantes*, who did not speak Portuguese themselves, is to be found in the texts written by the priests who were able to understand their language, Tupi, much better than ordinary colonists. The study of these documents, kept in archives in

- Brazil and Portugal, but also in Italy, would greatly improve our knowledge of the period.
- 2 There are explicit references to Moors, native Indians and Whites at Palmares (cf. Carneiro 1988:62–3). *Mulatos*, or people of mixed race, are also often mentioned in the historical documents. Various modern scholars refer explicitly to the fact that Palmares assembled Africans, Indians, Europeans and outcasts in general. A recent example is Saraiva's (1993:46) description of this polity: 'It was to become the most important focus of resistance by Africans, natives and other fringe groups apart from the slaveholding order.' The famous description of maroon culture by Genovese (1981:53) should also be recalled: 'The culture that arose on these foundations combined African, European, Amerindian, and slave-quarter elements into new and varied complexes.' Archaeological remains from the maroon will probably enable us in the future to evaluate the actual importance of different ethnic and cultural traits within the community.
 - 3 The names of the sites are Andalaquituche, Macaco, Subupira, Aqualtene, Dambrabanga, Zumbi, Tabocas, Arotirene and Amaro. Kent (1979:180) relates Macaco to Loango, Tabocas to Ambundu, Andalaquituche, or Ndala Kafuche, to Kisama, Osenga to Kwango, Subupira to Zande, Dombrabanga to Benguella-Yombe; all of them, including Zumbi, would have been of Bantu linguistic origin. Amaro 'derives from a very bitter kind of wild-growing tea shrub, *chimarrão*, which is close enough to *cimarrones*, as marooned slaves were called in the West Indies'. However, Subupira is an Amerindian, Tupi toponym meaning a kind of wood; the same applies to Tabocas ('lawn'). It is difficult to accept the link between the Portuguese word *amaro* ('bitter') and the Spanish *cimarrón*. For Tupi toponyms, see Sampaio (1987).
 - 4 On the title *nganga*, Jean Nsondé (1992:706) explains that it 'was used formerly to refer to traditional doctors, and priests, and at the same time *nganga* was used to name the Catholic priest'. See Rowlands and Warnier on the importance of sorcery for African rulers: 'sorcery is not only a mode of popular action but lies at the centre of the state-building process both in the present and in the past' (Rowlands and Warnier 1992:121; see also Rowlands 1989:29).
 - 5 Nowadays, it is called Serra da Barriga, or Belly Hill. Most contemporary documents in Portuguese, however, refer to Oiteiro da Barriga (cf. Carneiro 1988:61, *et passim*).
 - 6 We are not sure about the language spoken at Palmares. Bryan Edwards ([1774] 1979:239) wrote about the maroon inhabitants at Jamaica, and stated that 'they are in general ignorant of our language, and all of them attached to the gloomy superstitions of Africa'. Apparently though people at Palmares, as a mixed society, incorporating Africans from different tribes, native Brazilians and Europeans, used some kind of common tongue, not necessarily Bantu.
 - 7 The idea for an archaeological project focused on Palmares developed in June 1991 when the author invited Professor Charles Orser Jr, from the Illinois State University at Normal, in the United States, to lecture in São Paulo, Campinas and Santos about historical archaeology and the archaeology of New World slavery. After a series of discussions with Professor Orser and Clóvis Moura, a Brazilian authority on African-Brazilian history and culture, we decided to set up the Palmares Archaeological Project (Orser 1992c: 8, *et passim*). The project was planned to bring together archaeological, historical, geographical and ethnographic research about Palmares, being thus multi-disciplinary in character.

In February 1992 Professor Orser and the author met again in London, where we also met Professor Michael Rowlands of University College London. As a leading anthropologist and archaeologist studying Africa, Professor Rowlands applied for, and received, a grant from the British Research Council in order to travel to Brazil and join Professor Orser and the author in the survey of the area. Professor Orser received a grant from Illinois State University Research Office and from the National

Geographic Society (grant number 4805–92) and travel funds from these grants were made available to the author and to Clóvis Moura. In 1993 research was also assisted by a grant from the Joint Committee on Latin American Studies of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation.

The support and assistance of Zezito de Araújo, director of the Centre for Afro-Brazilian Studies at the Federal University of Alagoas at Maceió was also important. The project could not have been carried out without his interest and help. In 1993 Professor João José Reis, then a historian of slavery at Bahia, with his son Demian Moreira Reis and Senilda Alancântara Guanaes, assisted with the fieldwork for several days. Professor Orser co-directed the fieldwork and was responsible for project management, while the author co-directed the fieldwork and reported directly to Brazilian Heritage (IBPC) concerning the research.

- 8 A detailed description of each site is to be found in Orser and Funari (1992), Orser (1992c) and Orser (1993). The author has lectured on the subject in different universities in Brazil and abroad, most recently at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (27 January 1994).

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19 *Black identity and sense of past in Brazilian national culture*

MICHAEL ROWLANDS

INTRODUCTION

In Brazil ideas about equality through racial mixing have long been important in representations of nationhood. The writing of national histories continues to successfully export a stereotypical image suggesting that racial mixing, samba, carnival and sex have created an ideal pluralist modern society free of primordialism and essentialized pasts. This ideal of mixing or fusion in which everyone has his or her chance has been contested by those who draw upon a history of resistance that reaches back to great events in order to mobilize a sense of black identity. It is therefore quite understandable that archaeology should be seen as the technical means of subverting texts written for a dominant white culture in order to uncover the reality of 'black power' as an act of resistance against white colonialism.

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF RESISTANCE?

One such instance is the excavation of Palmares, a great seventeenth-century maroon, or runaway slave settlement in the state of Alagoas in north-eastern Brazil. For a number of Brazilian colleagues archaeology constitutes a bundle of scientific techniques that can reveal, they are convinced, the scientific truth concerning the existence of Macaco, the capital city of Palmares. The Palmares maroon community held out against Portuguese and Dutch armies for nearly 100 years before succumbing, in 1694, to a mercenary army of *bandeirantes*, or pioneer, mercenary fighters, from São Paulo. This armed resistance, led by the last African king of Palmares, Zumbi, is widely revered in Brazil today, and provides a vital and important element in the construction of contemporary African-Brazilian identity. Zumbi is today considered to be the 'first great Negro of Brazil' and has been immortalized in two Portuguese language, full-length feature films. The principal site of Serra

da Barriga was declared a national heritage monument in the 1980s (cf. Freitas 1980). Furthermore, in 1969 a leftist group took the name Palmares, calling themselves the 'Armed Revolutionary Vanguard-Palmares', and, not to be outdone, the state appropriated the name in setting up the Palmares Foundation as the national body for ensuring the cultural identity of blacks in Brazil.

The desire for an archaeology of slavery in Brazil is, as they say, a contested domain. This, as one would expect, is related to what it means broadly speaking to be black in Brazil as against elsewhere in the black Atlantic world. Black identity in Brazil is at present a fluid and dynamic identity set against the pervasive ideology of racial mixing—*branqueamento*, or whitening (originally involving the rape of black slave women by white slave masters to eradicate the African element and reproduce the slave population, now manifested in the pervasive sense of the desirability of lighter skin as a sign of social mobility). It is claimed that in Brazil, unlike the United States, where a greater racial and sexual apartheid exists, the same black/white hatred set in irresolvable cultural difference does not exist. Thanks largely to Gilberto Freyre's *The Masters and the Slaves*, the idea that Brazil has achieved 'racial democracy' became an article of faith, something that children are still taught in schools and outsiders sometimes uncritically accept. 'Racism doesn't exist here', Antonio Carlos Magalhaes, the white governor of Bahia (population 80 per cent black), told *Newsweek* in November 1993, 'There is perfect integration.'

If so, it is hard to see. Politics, big business and the professions remain white preserves. On television, Brazil is made to look white and European. The illiteracy rate among blacks is twice that of whites, the majority of the street children killed by off-duty police in order to deal with street crime are black, and blacks head only 1 per cent of companies. These inequalities are deepened by the most uneven income distribution in Latin America. Discrimination is most striking in the workplace where white factory workers, for example, can earn 75 per cent more than their black peers. After more than a century since the formal abolition of slavery in Brazil, labour relations are still influenced by its legacy and are reflected in the organization of labour, pay differentials and other forms of discrimination in housing, health and education. Traditionally the gap has been explained, and racial democracy defended, in terms of class. The government made it hard to dispute this by including no racial data in any federal census between 1940 and 1970. The production of statistics—science if you like—has therefore been crucial to the promotion of black awareness of the importance of racial discrimination in Brazil.

Self-respect has also become the watchword of black activism in Brazil since 1985, when civilian rule replaced the military and ushered in a relative degree of freedom of speech. Black carnival troupes, such as *Olodum* and *Ile Aiye*, whose music, a mixture of Yoruba-inspired drumming and singing, has spread throughout the country and formed the basis of black cultural movements, preach a simple message of 'accept your negritude'. They

promote black social welfare through the protection of street children from death squads and by running educational collectives in order to help black students get training and a university education. A more overt and pronounced social criticism has developed of the representation of black and mixed-race identities in Brazil. A Salvador/Bahia black group once criticized a beer advert that showed a group of white men with a mixed-race woman accompanied by a slogan—‘the national favourite’. ‘Our mulatas are the result of rape not love’, said one member.

Even so, identifying oneself as black in Brazil is not simply opposed to being white. Racial identification is claimed to be a matter of choice and the government figures count only 5 per cent of Brazilians as black and 39 per cent as mulato. Social activism is a luxury that few can afford in the *favelas* (slums) of contemporary Brazil, where most black Brazilians can barely feed themselves. The equation of racial mixing with life chances creates a sense that, whilst a history of slavery and resistance should be generally acknowledged, the dissemination of such an awareness in itself will never lever open the conditions of future prosperity.

For many, only the ideal of *branqueamento* will do this. Freyre’s paternalistic vision of race relations in Brazil—founded on the notion of mixing as formative of a ‘tropical society’—was implicitly motivated by an opposition to vigorous discrimination against blacks and the strict maintenance of boundaries of colour. Even with all the studies undertaken since the 1950s directed towards undermining the racial democracy argument in Brazil, the contrast between black identity in Brazil and that of the United States has been maintained with the implication that, unlike in the latter case, race in Brazil is not a real issue. Degler (1971) explained this contrast in biological terms as a product of the Brazilian emphasis on appearance (phenotype), versus an emphasis on genotype and essential biological difference in the United States. Brazil, then, is a society where distinctions are made on the basis of variety of colour rather than by race as in the United States.

As Wade has recently argued, this opposition is part of a more fundamental ideology of race which implies that ancestry refers ultimately to a deeper level of biology from which stark contrasts arise (Wade 1994). Categorizations, based on a deep biology of essences (genotype), are appropriated by and leave their marks on a society with deeply embedded ‘racial identities’ and ‘racial problems’. Emphasis on phenotypic difference, or an emphasis on appearance and its mutability—although no less biological than genotypic difference—gives rise to vaguer, more flexible and ambiguous notions of physical difference. Since, however, both forms rely on appearance—it is a question of colour—then it is the issue of ancestry, or claims to ancestry and origin, that makes the difference. Appeals to biology are never unmediated by history and claims appealing to nature as the basis of difference therefore have an origin. The fact that race is said to matter fundamentally in the one context and not the other is not itself a product of history, or a means of coming to terms with it, but rather a means of interpreting it.

The archaeology of Palmares is part of this internal debate. By and large slaves did not leave any written records and hence a historical account of slavery depends on interpreting accounts of white conceptions and misrepresentations. The fact that the material culture of slave life is the only direct access to black slave identity has been the basis for the whole development of an archaeology of slavery and plantation life in the United States (cf. Orser 1990; Singleton 1991). The motives of this research have not only been to discover how slaves really lived on the plantations of the ante-bellum South, but also to discover the essential African roots and inheritance of blacks in America. Hence the emphasis on certain issues, such as demonstrating the persistence of African pottery (the so-called *colono wares*) and types of rice indigenous to Africa, or detecting continuities in house type and building materials, is essentially a quest for African roots. In Brazil, the identification of African roots has traditionally been linked to Afro-Brazilian religion, in particular *Condomble* in Bahia and *Umbanda* in the south. These syntheses or hybrids of African and Catholic religions are of course part of the debate about the rich fusion and mixing of Afro-Brazilian culture. They have also been studied predominantly by white anthropologists and film-makers who often make romanticized films with an exoticized view of Africa in the New World as their centrepiece.

In a number of senses the history of Palmares is different from this. Black writers categorize it as the first African kingdom in the New World (cf. Genovese 1981). It represents one of the earliest and most important cases of resistance to slavery in the Americas and a clear example of the way in which it was possible for slaves from a number of different origins in central Africa to re-create their African identity in the New World (slaves from the same ethnic group/region were deliberately split up before boarding ship on the West African coast for fear of revolts at sea and in the plantations). *Quilombo*, for example, is said to be a Portuguese representation of an Angolan word, more precisely *Ovimbundu* (Ki-lombo), the name for a male warrior society that built a fortified settlement where young men stayed during initiation (Kent 1979; Reis 1992). Some authors have suggested a direct line of descent can be traced between the Angolan kingdoms and Palmares (Schwartz 1985; Thornton 1992). The problems of establishing such a connection in documentary or etymological terms are immense since slaves were often designated simply by areas of origin, such as the Angolas (referring to the mouth of the Congo), or by their port of embarkation, for example Mina (referring to Saint Georges d'el Mina). The first king of Palmares had the title Ganga Zumba—which can be identified vaguely as a central African praise name for a king. Whilst many studies of Palmares have been written based on documentary sources, the precise origins of the free slaves who lived there remains unclear. Genovese (1981:61), for example, thinks that 'Bantu speaking Angolan-Congolese people predominated'.

By the 1580s, over 4,000 slaves a year were landed at the captaincy of Pernambuco and almost immediately escapees fled into the forested backlands. Palmares is first reported in 1605 as a centre of resistance, which slave owners

feared less for the physical threat it presented to them than for the fact that slaves on the coastal sugar plantations would get to know there was somewhere to flee to and be emboldened to do so. Runaway settlements were soon to become a ubiquitous feature of colonial life in the Americas as the most effective way to resist slavery and to challenge the autocratic rule of slave owners (Moura 1972, 1981; Hall 1991; Reis 1992). *Palmares* (meaning place of the palms) was the Portuguese name for a *quilombo* described by Portuguese and Dutch writers in the seventeenth century, which the inhabitants are reported to have referred to as *Angola Janga* or *Little Angola* (Freitas 1980:44; Schwartz 1985:342). The Portuguese Atlantic trade drew slaves mostly from the Angolan coast, south of the Congo river, specifically from Luanda after the 1570s and from Benguela after 1610 (Miller 1991:123–4). The Portuguese established an alliance with the *Jaga* or *Imbangala* around 1612 who expanded against and took war captives from the *quilombo* (Miller 1976). By 1584, there were already some 15,000 slaves working in the sugar plantations in Brazil and it is estimated that one third of all the slaves who entered Brazil arrived during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Curtin 1990:203). Indians were also enslaved and it is very likely that plantations combined African and Indian slaves as well as some free wage labour (Wolf 1990:150). By the mid-seventeenth century, there were between 33,000 and 50,000 African slaves concentrated in the coastal sugar plantations of Pernambuco and Recife (Simonsen 1978:133). The Dutch managed to occupy Pernambuco in 1629, staying until 1654, and, worried about the growing power of *Palmares*, sent several expeditions to destroy it ‘with iron and fire’, none of which had much effect (Barleus 1923:304). In fact the thirty years from 1640 onwards was a period of great prosperity, when *Palmares* is described as having fine buildings, as being heavily defended and self-sufficient in technologies and craftwork. Barleus (1923:253) reports that the *quilombos* grew in size not only from slaves fleeing to them, but also from the capture of slaves from sugar plantations on the coast, indicating growing military strength. The period from 1670 is less propitious, with declining prices for sugar in the later seventeenth century and competition from the rise of the Caribbean sugar plantation economies. This led to increasing patrimonial struggles between the landowning nobility, the merchant class and the crown, resulting in greater control over trade and the introduction of sanctions against foreign ships trading in the colony. Force became the principal means of retaining control over diminishing revenues and the maintenance of order in a slave-holding society. The incentives both to found new runaway settlements and to destroy them therefore increased inexorably during the later seventeenth century.

A SHORT HISTORY OF PALMARES

Runaway slaves settling in hilly areas about fifty miles inland from the coast are reported from the beginning of the sixteenth century. *Palmares* was established

in a low range of hills parallel to the coast in the colonial captaincy of Pernambuco (see Figure 18.1). The first Portuguese expedition to Palmares in 1612 already reported it to be an established settlement with a capital at Serra de Barriga and a smaller settlement on the banks of the Gurungumba river. The Dutch sent a scouting party in 1640 led by Bartholomew Lintz, who was said to have lived in Palmares before, which suggests that the presence of Europeans was not an anomaly (Orser 1992:4). He mentions two settlements, Greater Palmares with about 5,000 people and Lesser Palmares described as a village with three streets and huts made of 'straw twisted together, one near another'. Greater Palmares was said to be composed of 'straggling' houses located throughout wooded valleys (Nieuhof 1813:707-8). Baro carried out an attack on Palmares in 1644 and describes a half-mile long village surrounded by a double stake fence with two entrances and agricultural fields nearby. Out of thirty-one captives, seven were Amerindians and some were mulatto children, suggesting a combined runaway African and Indian slave population (Barleus 1923:253, 304). Between 1670 and 1687 the kingdom was ruled by a Great Lord, or Ganga Zumba, said to have lived at the capital of Macaco, founded perhaps in 1642. During this period there seems to have been an active trade between Palmares and the merchants on the coast leading in 1670 to the Portuguese governor formally denouncing all settlers who continued to pass firearms to the people of Palmares as acting 'in disregard of God and local laws' (Carneiro 1988:227-8). The conflict between slave owners and merchants turned to the issue of who controlled the colonial state, exacerbating the need for plantation owners to destroy Palmares. From the 1670s almost annual forays were directed against Palmares, all of them unsuccessful until the advent of the *bandeirantes* who were increasingly used to maintain order in the colonial state, which was impoverished by declining revenues. In February 1694, after a forty-two day siege, Macaco fell with reports of several hundred deaths and 500 captured and sold out of the captaincy as slaves. Several rebels, including Zumbi, escaped, but he was captured the following year, executed and his head put on public display.

At the time of its destruction, there are references to the existence of houses, streets, chapels, statues, granaries and even palaces in Palmares (Carneiro 1988:203). In 1671, workshops for ironwork, pottery and woodwork were observed, implying that a mixture of colonial and native Indian technologies were adopted and developed by the runaway slaves. Palmares is therefore unique among New World *quilombos* in the length of time it survived and developed and the extent to which it appears to have incorporated many different elements in colonial and native Indian societies. The multi-ethnic composition of its population is often cited as demonstrating how Brazilian society was founded in freedom as a composite society of hybrid origin, for example:

At Palmares, there was an organized slave uprising, and the result was a multi-ethnic society strongly anti-colonial in outlook. This was the first libertarian movement in the Americas.... There is

now the opportunity to re-enact the pluralistic experience carried out at Palmares. If you look at this most glorious page in Brazilian history, you will remember that at Palmares there were, not only blacks, but also Indians, Jews and all other people subjected to discrimination.

(Serra 1984:107–8; see also Genovese 1981:53)

This assumption raises the questions as to what extent Palmares was multiethnic rather than a runaway slave settlement and to what extent it was anti-colonial. One explanation of its long survival could be precisely that it was protected by the role it played in encouraging trade between the coast and the backlands and its extension of mercantile interests in the colony. These factors in turn led to its eventual downfall in a period of economic decline and increasing conflict between nobility and mercantile bourgeoisie over control of the colonial state of Pernambuco.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PALMARES

Obviously to begin to address some of these questions it would be necessary to develop an archaeology of Palmares that would allow us to go beyond simply assuming that resistance means isolation or refugee status. A possible implication might be that such sites were part of the internal structures and contradictions of colonial society and their fortunes waxed and waned depending on who won the conflicts between the mercantile traders and patrimonial landholders for control of the state. Since the Dutch had greater control over the processing and financing of sugar production, it might be assumed that Palmares flourished during the Dutch phase, rather than post-1670, when the Portuguese crown and the nobility were intent on re-imposing their control over the colony.

Whilst much has been written about Palmares, no archaeological study had been attempted before the 1990s. The aim of the Palmares Archaeological Project, established by Orser and Funari (cf. Orser 1992) was to develop an approach to the archaeological study of Maroon settlements (for a more detailed discussion of the background to this project, see Funari, Chapter 18, this volume, especially note 7). Even with poor preservation conditions, glass, ceramics and building materials could be used to distinguish between those of colonial origin and those of African or native Indian derivation. Moreover, it was assumed that pottery style and manufacture would be sensitive indicators for ethnic differentiation or assimilation. Surveying concentrated on the principal site of Macaco, nowadays called Serra da Barriga, near the modern town of União dos Palmares (Figure 19.1). The hill is about 4km long and 1 km wide and the field survey and test excavations were directed towards establishing the overall densities of settlement and to gaining representative samples of material. In total, fourteen sites were identified and 2,448 artefacts

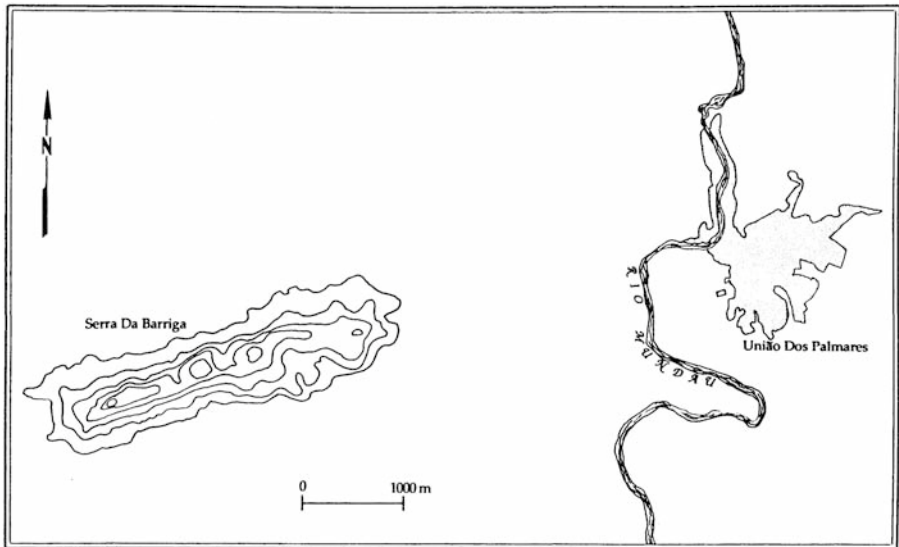


Figure 19.1 Location of Serra da Barriga and União dos Palmares.

collected, of which 91 per cent were pottery, 4.5 per cent ceramics, 1.3 per cent stone, 0.6 per cent glass and 0.1 per cent metal (Table 19.1). Of these the preponderance of surface and excavated finds derived from two seasons and the evidence for the most complex structural features came from sites 1 and 3 which indicates the location of the greatest density of settlement (see Figure 18.5). Unfortunately, it appears that site 1 was the principal area of settlement and a large part was bulldozed when the modern-day monument and flagpoles to Zumbi were erected in the 1980s.

Much of the pottery from site 1 can be divided into two groups common at all sites within Serra da Barriga. The first and most numerous is a thick (1-1.14cm) undecorated, reddish ware with heavy to medium temper and the second is a thin (0.6-0.8cm) buff to red ware with light to medium temper. A large storage vessel was excavated with thirty-one small pottery fragments inside suggesting it was a storage vessel for grain or other materials and was found associated with two ground stone axes with sharpened edges pointing downwards. Such urns are well known in Brazilian prehistory (Meggers

Table 19.1 Summary of all the artefacts collected at Serra da Barriga

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pottery</i>	<i>Ceramics</i>	<i>Stone</i>	<i>Glass</i>	<i>Metal</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
1992	93.0	2.3	0.9	0.1	0.1	3.6	100.0
1993	91.1	5.5	1.5	0.8	0.1	1.0	100.0
1992/93	91.7	4.5	1.3	0.6	0.1	1.9	100.1

1948:159), but it could be of African origin since large pottery vessels are used for storing grain among the Ovimbundu in Angola (Hambly 1934:368, plate XIV). The 1993 season on site 1 produced a great deal more of the unglazed, thick handmade pottery than appears on all the other sites within Serra da Barriga, as well as two ground stone hammers. The size of the settlement area (sites 1, 2, 5 and 14 on Figure 18.5 appear to be coterminous), the large amounts of domestic pottery, the ground stone artefacts together with the absence of European colonial artefacts, except for one sherd of maiolica ware, from what is the largest sample on the site, and the fact that the same domestic pottery is found on many of the other sites over the whole surface of the hill, all suggest that this was a native Indian site possibly preceding and existing at the same time as the historical Palmares. Soil acidity is detrimental to bone, wood and metal preservation on the site, but the complete absence of colonial pottery, ceramics, glass, pipes or metal in this part of a heavily occupied settlement suggests some form of deliberate exclusion of colonial influence, although what this may have consisted of cannot be determined at present (Table 19.2). The evidence of a stockade on the western edge of site 1 suggests that whatever the extent of an original Indian settlement, part of this settlement had been enclosed defensively at some point which is consistent with the historical account of Palmares as defended by two rows of wooden stockades (cf. Freitas 1980).

Site 3 differs in the quantity and quality of ceramics and pottery as well as some of the sub-features. The pottery includes samples of the thick bodied domestic wares found at site 1, tin-glazed earthenware ceramics that are of colonial European origin and unglazed, fine bodied ware that appears to be wheel-turned and painted and finely decorated native Indian wares. None of

Table 19.2 Artefacts collected from Serra da Barriga

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pottery</i>	<i>Ceramics</i>	<i>Stone</i>	<i>Glass</i>	<i>Metal</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	1,394	1	25	1	0	18	1,439
2	13	0	0	0	0	0	13
3	334	32	0	0	0	22	388
4	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
5	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
6	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
7	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
8	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
9	4	3	0	0	1	0	8
10	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
11	36	73	1	13	1	0	124
12	64	0	0	0	0	0	64
13	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
14	202	0	1	0	0	5	208
Other	165	0	4	0	0	1	170
Total	2,246	109	31	14	2	46	2,448

the wheel-turned sherds show any signs of temper and appear to be finger-smoothed on the inside, which Orser believes resembles certain Colono wares found at early antebellum slave villages in the southern United States (Ferguson 1992; Orser 1992:32). The idea of convergence of African and native colonial wares at Palmares in terms of a fusion of technical skills and styles may not be surprising. This was the only site where native wares, wheel-turned and maiolica ceramics were found together. Maiolica, also widely known as majolica, is widely found on settlements associated with Spanish and Portuguese colonialism (Deagan 1991). The sherds found at site 3 could be Portuguese or could perhaps even be Dutch because the colour of the glaze on the sherds is similar to that of contemporaneous Dutch colonial sherds found in the United States (Wilcoxon 1987: plate 5). Maiolica ware with a yellow greenish glaze and decorated on the inside with red parallel bands was also found associated with coarse unglazed pottery and fine-bodied, wheelturned pottery in a test excavation of a habitation site at site 3, confirming that colonial and domestic wares are associated with one another on the site (Figures 19.2 and 19.3). Whilst the wheel-turned wares all seem to come from flat-bottomed bowls, the maiolica wares represent three different vessel forms ranging from cups, or small bowls, to large bowls with a

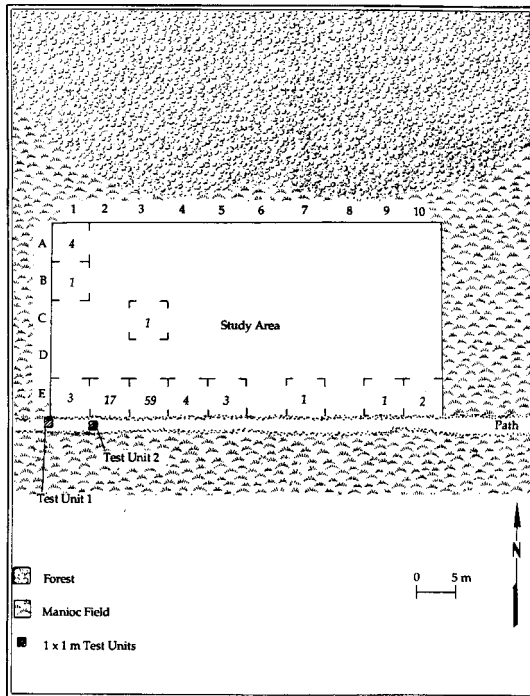


Figure 19.2 Plan of site 3, Serra da Barriga, showing the location of test units.

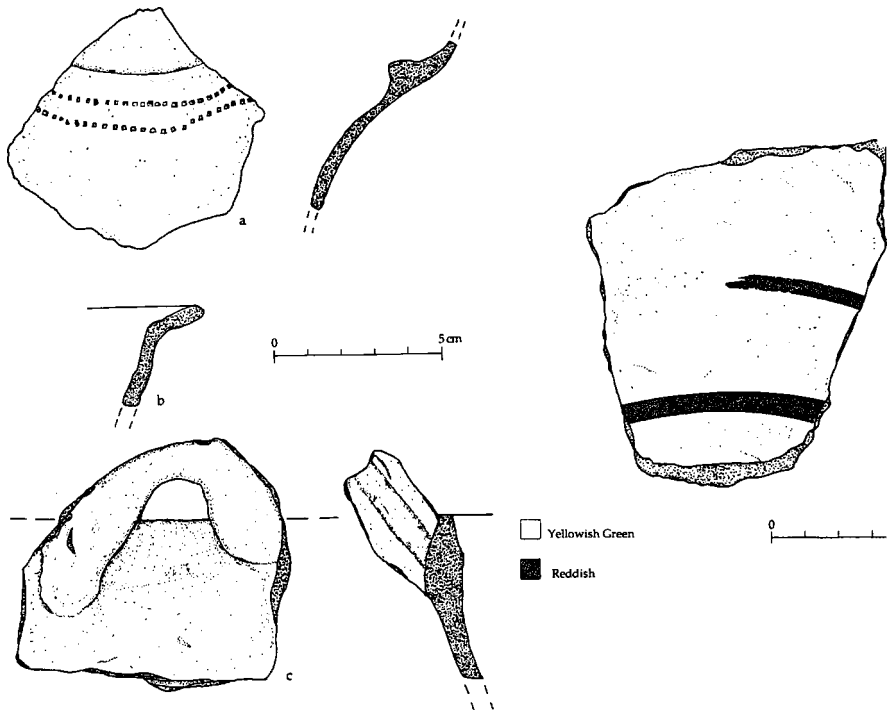


Figure 19.3 Pottery from site 3, Serra da Barriga.

diameter of 34cm (Figure 19.4). Specimens of both the maiolica and the wheel-turned wares were blackened on their surfaces from intense burning. Both glazed and unglazed maiolica wares were found in both seasons at site 3 which identifies this site as the only part of the whole settlement unequivocally associated with colonial wares and European imports. The imports were produced either on the coast or in Portugal and were so crudely made that it is unlikely they would have been intended for use by the Portuguese elite. They were definitely for utilitarian usage. It is possible of course that they came to be there as a consequence of one of the attempts to destroy Palmares or even the final successful attempt. But the range of vessel types and their association with the wheel-turned wares and coarse unglazed pottery in one of the test excavations suggest that all the ceramics were used together and are contemporaneous. Three kinds of decorated unglazed pottery were found at site 3, including a painted ware, red in colour with a thin white stripe, and again blackened from intense burning, and two other types with an etched design or with parallel rows of punctuates. The cultural affiliation of these decorated sherds is unknown, but the impression is that they parallel the Tupinamba pottery illustrated by Meggars and Evans (1983). We therefore have examples of elite colonial, native Indian and possibly

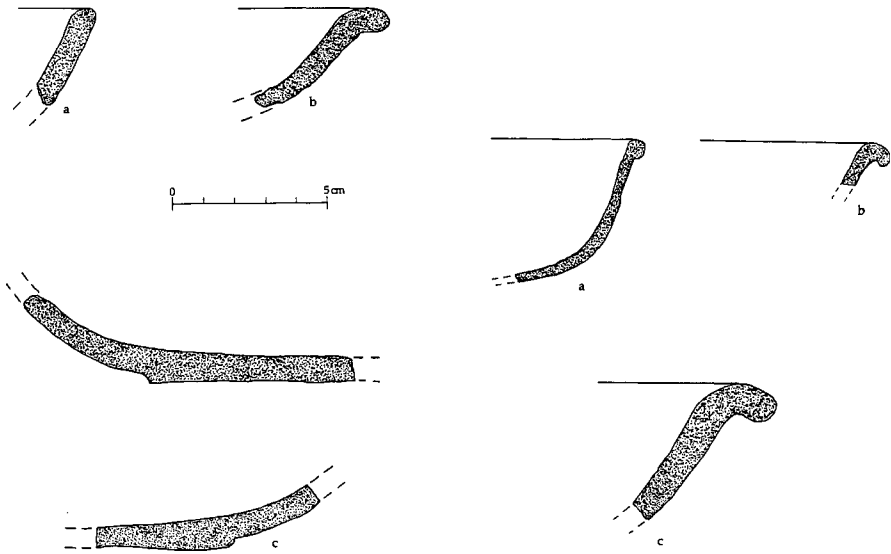


Figure 19.4 Wheel-turned pottery sherds and Maiolica vessel rims from site 3, Serra da Barriga.

African derived styles of pottery at the same location, associated with each other and all with evidence of burning.

Logically it makes sense that runaway slaves would have needed the support and acceptance of local native Indian peoples to settle in Palmares in the first place. The widespread use of thick walled domestic wares in all the sites excavated on the hill suggests that Palmares was a refuge settlement for runaways precisely because it was settled already by native Indians who gave them help and support. The evidence of a defensive stockade around the western edge of site 1 suggests some modification of the settlement in its latest phase, perhaps associated with a more intense occupation of a defended area. The association of the ceramics at site 3 is more consistent with another type of settlement possibly contiguous with site 1, but with a much greater colonial presence demonstrating trading links with the coast. A much larger excavation would be needed to establish the details of this broad pattern and in particular we would need more finds of glass and metalwork to support the ceramic evidence.

The archaeology of Palmares suggests in a preliminary fashion that the site was already occupied by native Indians with whom the first runaways found refuge. A more fine-grained analysis of the domestic pottery is needed to confirm the possibility that aspects of these wares might exhibit African influences. It is certainly the case that all the other sites except site 3 lack the more highly decorated, painted wares found elsewhere on native Indian sites

in north-eastern Brazil (cf. Meggars and Evans 1983:316–17). However, the fairly uniform grouping of thick- and thin-walled pottery over such a large area of the site suggests that, at first contact, Palmares had already been inhabited by native Indians to whom the Palmarinos became affiliated. The evidence from site 3 for elite wares identified with native Indian, slave and possibly European or colonial statuses at Palmares suggests that one part of the settlement may have been associated with a pluralistic elite that also maintained systematic trading links with Europeans on the coast. This would fit the historical reports of Europeans such as Bartholomew Lintz living in Palmares prior to leading a Dutch expedition to destroy it and the declaration by the Governor of Pernambuco in 1670, threatening to ban any European caught selling guns to the ‘negroes’ of Palmares.

Archaeologically, therefore, we have a complex picture that suggests neither a multi-ethnic society of fusion and assimilation, nor one of ethnic difference. In fact there is a possibility of a more pluralist structure with relatively little differentiation in the material culture of much of the site, but increasing elite distinction in a separate area of the settlement. An important strand in this pluralistic thesis would be evidence to identify class, gender and ethnic divides which may have cross-cut the obvious distinctions between native Indian and colonial identities in the material culture. The restriction of data to pottery rather inhibits coming to any firm conclusions on this point, but it is surely significant that not only were all three types of elite ware found associated in a single test excavation on site 3, but also that the functional differentiation of associated wares suggests that a single household might have expected to use material from different ‘ethnic categories’ on a daily basis.

AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURE AT PALMARES?

If we were to assume that Palmares was a *quilombo* in the sense of a remote refuge for runaway slaves, this would be to deny important aspects of both the archaeological and historical evidence. The assumption has always been supported by an ideology which interprets Palmares as the first multi-ethnic state in Brazil which created the model of racial mixing for what now characterizes Brazilian society in general. Other black activists in Brazil would take the opposite position and argue that Palmares was the first African kingdom in the Americas where Africans rejected colonial racial mixing and for 100 years managed to preserve their identity and that they should continue to do so in the present. The archaeology of Palmares suggests a somewhat different picture.

The evidence of European goods indicates that Palmares was not an isolated refuge site, but was actively trading with the colonies on the coast. The possibility that Europeans were resident at the site would be particularly interesting evidence that Palmares may have become a trading intermediary between the coast and

the more remote backlands in which gold would have been a particularly important commodity. The absence of wheel-turned or maiolica wares except on site 3 (one sherd of maiolica came from the northern part of site 1) suggests a specialized settlement involved in European trade on part of the site, whereas the bulk of the population appear to have been engaged in self-sufficient subsistence activities. At present we have no way of knowing the extent of the regional exchange, but it is sufficient to suggest that Palmares for at least part of the seventeenth century (and one would guess particularly during the Dutch period of control of Pernambuco) was part of the colonial political economy and not outside of it. Moreover, the conflict between the merchants and the plantation owners in Pernambuco was not simply a matter of ownership of resources, but represented a struggle for the future of the colony between a landowning nobility that required monopoly control over sugar production, which it ensured through its special prerogatives with the crown, and a mercantile class whose interests probably lay in expanding mercantile capital through inland trade (Schwartz 1991). From 1670, the sugar industry entered a new period of crisis with declining values and rising prices for slaves, which is consistent with evidence for a renewed will to destroy Palmares. The Governor of Pernambuco, Pedro de Almeida, declared in his inauguration in 1674 that he would bring about the destruction of Palmares and the following year a settlement containing over 2,000 dwellings is said to have been destroyed. In 1678 two sons of the King of Palmares, Ganga Zumba, are said to have been captured, leading to the Portuguese and representatives of Palmares signing a peace treaty at Recife. The outcome was not accepted by some of the maroon leaders and Ganga Zumba was assassinated, his nephew Zumbi being proclaimed king in his place. The next fifteen years are a period of unprecedented violence ending in the final destruction of the settlement, the selling of the inhabitants into slavery outside the province and the execution of Zumbi in 1695. The fortunes of Palmares were therefore held in sway by the shifts and turns of the wider politics and economics of the Portuguese colonial empire on the north-east coast in the seventeenth century. But perhaps not completely. The imports of pottery can be dated to the seventeenth century, although the vast bulk of the domestic wares could be either earlier or later, and it would be nice to think that some remnant population managed to survive and achieve a certain sort of freedom over a longer period. It is ironic that the only evidence for nineteenth-century and modern occupation of the hill is material that identifies the presence of a sugar plantation at site 9.

CONCLUSION

Questions of culture and identity can sometimes be related to hard issues of economic exploitation and political domination in colonial situations. Maroon societies are widely described in the language of resistance as the answer by slaves to colonial domination. After all, Africans were only in the New World as

slaves and their agency has to be conceived in terms of the structural conditions that gave some opportunity for resistance to barbarism and some degree of personal freedom.

But perhaps Palmares cannot be understood entirely in these terms either. The brutality of owners towards their slaves in the plantation economies of Brazil is well known, as is the tendency to acknowledge their suffering as part of the process of consigning past exploitation to the aberrations of history. In his recent study of how the master narrative of American history constantly deforms slavery as a minor abnormality, Higgins (1991) stressed how the recognition of what was done by so few to so many became part of the means of treating slavery as a historical aberration best forgotten (comparisons with certain holocaust discourses are inevitable). If we are aware of the unbearable levels of barbarism associated with slavery in the New World, then we are also able to understand the importance of runaway settlements. Slave resistance was a principal feature of the history of Africans in the American colonies and slaves resisted exploitation by malingering, poorly carrying out their tasks, by revolting and by escaping to runaway settlements.

It may therefore seem somewhat strange that the archaeology of Palmares confirms that many *quilombos* probably played a more interstitial role in reproducing the colonial society from which the slaves had escaped. If Palmares was not a refuge site finally winkled out and destroyed after 100 years, but owed its growth and survival and final destruction to the role it played in colonial/inland trade, then runaway slaves may be credited with something more than resistance. Whatever the details of its pluralism, Palmares seems to have inverted its slave identity and established a relationship with colonial society earning creditable testaments from visitors about the sophistication of its facilities and its overall importance in the regional politics of the captaincy of Pernambuco. There is little doubt that this took place in the context of a colonial politics and probably saw an alliance between mercantile interests and the inhabitants of Palmares set against those of the Portuguese nobility and plantation slave owners who triumphed in the end. But equally, we can see that the ideal of racial mixing, characteristic of slavery from the end of the seventeenth century when it was cheaper to reproduce the slave population locally than to buy in new slaves, was born out of this crushing of a tendency towards pluralism in the early history of one part of Brazil. There is no better justification for the importance of an archaeology of slavery than to show its role in producing a past which demonstrates how things might have been otherwise.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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