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ARCHAEOLOGY UNFOLDING: DIVERSITY AND THE LOSS OF ISOLATION

Summary. British historical archaeology has seen new theoretical engagement in recent years. A diverse and distinctive body of theory has developed in this increasingly vibrant and international area of study, testing disciplinary boundaries, especially with history, social anthropology and material culture studies.

This paper takes stock of three distinct processes within the new historical archaeology: the birth of material history, the loss of antiquity, and the loss of isolation. The implications of these processes for the wider discipline are explored with reference to landscape archaeology, using the example of the Ironbridge Gorge, Shropshire. In a consideration of future directions, it is argued that historical archaeology provides particular insights to the need across the discipline for archaeology to respond with self-confidence to complexity by drawing out and celebrating diversity in theory and practice.

I

In recent years, archaeological theory has been increasingly characterized by a nervous plurality of fragmented specialisms (Hodder 2001a). In the pages of *Antiquity*, David Clarke's 'loss of innocence' (1973) has been repackaged as an early announcement of an 'end of disciplinary isolation' which calls into question the future of archaeology as a discipline (Tilley 1998, 693). The more optimistic feeling that archaeology could celebrate this loss of isolation, 'make use of the loosening of categories that deconstruction has brought with it: and from the materials which it has released . . . build anew' (Sherratt 1995, 26) has, like the many-headed post-processual project itself, failed so far to make the transition from critique to viable alternative embracing the practice of archaeology. This paper is written in the belief that a distinctively archaeological approach has a central role to play in the social sciences. It examines one possible escape route from the current stalemate, inspired by three distinct recent, radical and transformative processes in British historical archaeology.

THE BIRTH OF MATERIAL HISTORY

In tearing itself away from traditional archaeology, the new anthropological archaeology of 1970s Cambridge presented history and archaeology as exclusive though complementary fields of inquiry. David Clarke warned against the 'selective conflation of both

sets of evidence and their appropriate disciplines'.¹ Nevertheless, engagements with later historical material developed, especially as the influence of ethnohistorical perspectives grew (Deetz 1977; Hodder 1982). By the mid-1980s, Cambridge post-processualists routinely, if rhetorically, deployed modern material in case-studies of beer cans or bow ties (Shanks and Tilley 1987, 172–239; Hodder 1987). An important turning-point came when the logic of the post-structuralist comparison of the archaeological record with a text (Hodder 1986; cf. Marcus and Cushman 1982; Clifford and Marcus 1986) was extended and inverted by the identification of historical documents as artefacts (Johnson 1996).

The repercussion of this new awareness of the context and materiality of written sources (Moreland 2001), and of ethnographic perspectives upon their power (Goody 1977, 36–7), has been to expose conventional historical studies as reliant upon a purely arbitrary selection of one source of evidence ('texts', or documents stripped of their materiality), disregarding the superabundance of other material sources of evidence: historic landscapes, buildings, artefacts or buried archaeology. The acknowledgement of the essentially material basis of our knowledge of the past has dovetailed with an awareness of the previous failure of historical archaeology to engage with historical narrative, and with an anthropologically-informed perspective upon the role of material culture in past social life, revealing the desirability of writing 'material histories'.²

THE EROSION AND LOSS OF ANTIQUITY

Archaeology has previously consistently chalked out a field of study separate from the present. As a diversity of archaeologies has proliferated around the world, 'buffer-zones' of varying lengths between past and present have been established and maintained. In Britain, an isolated 'post-medieval' archaeology emerged from medievalist origins, and served this function for the wider discipline. Even Johnson's (1996) seminal study of the *Archaeology of Capitalism* was restricted to capitalist origins, AD 1350–1750.

However, in the past few years the end-dates of archaeological research have been extended, encroaching at an increasing pace upon the present. The passing of the millennium accentuated this process, but it is among the practitioners of heritage management – in, for instance, English Heritage's use of the '30 year rule' in the process of listing buildings – that this beating of bounds has been most clearly exposed as a purely arbitrary exercise.

The loss of a delimited archaeological past, of that generalized disciplinary time bounded from the present, has occurred. This 'loss of antiquity' has been heralded in part in the fields of economic anthropology and material culture theory. The counter-intuitive identification of sacrifice among contemporary North London shoppers, and formal economics in pre-contact Melanesia (Miller 1998b; Gell 1992) has demolished the generalized distinction between

1 Clarke (1973) memorably picked out historical archaeologists, alongside 'amateurs . . . and practical excavators', as 'archaeologists who may be expected to be especially unwilling to welcome' his perspectives. Clarke's paper describes historical archaeology as offering only a useful control in experiments for other periods of archaeology, since results could be cross-checked against documentary accounts. Compare Hawkes 1968.

2 This process parallels the emergence of historical writing in social anthropology in the 1980s (Sahlins 1985; Comaroff 1985). For examples of studies which exemplify the development of 'material histories', see especially Appadurai 1986b, Weatherill 1988, Abu Lughod 1989, Shamma 1990, Beaudry *et al.* 1991, Leone and Little 1993, Yentsch 1994, Hancock 1995, Johnson 1996, Mukerji 1997, Gell 1998, Buchli 1999, Hodder 2001b, Beaudry *nd.*

modern and archaic attitudes to material culture (a distinction which, having emerged explicitly in the formalist/substantivist debate, dominates conventional 'historical archaeologies of Capitalism'). In a realignment of archaeological timescales of comparable importance to the end of short chronologies, the archaeologist's isolation from the past is sacrificed (see now Buchli and Lucas 2001). No longer simply foreign countries, the moment of confluence between past and present develops quickly from bilateral exchange into oceans of material interactions.

THE LOSS OF ISOLATION

The birth of material history and the loss of antiquity bring about a new engagement between archaeology and social anthropology. Meanwhile, ethnography has experienced a comparable revolution of its own by acknowledging that ethnographic societies, however apparently isolated, are universally engaged in complex long-distance social and economic interactions. Forced to abandon the 'old pretence of isolation' (Dresch and James 2000, 22), some scholars have reacted by presenting this connectedness as a new phenomenon: examining especially postmodernity, globalization, post-colonial diaspora or electronic media.

While these are undoubtedly important areas of study, this reaction belies an attempt to retain the integrity of the ethnographic canon. Once again, such particularist claims for the uniqueness of the contemporary situation do not stand up to scrutiny. As archaeologists are particularly aware, long-distance material connections are universally characteristic of human societies since the Upper Palaeolithic. Contemporary long-distance interactions undoubtedly have deep and complex histories (Wolf 1982): yet in the 20 years since the publication of Wolf's thesis, historical archaeologists have failed to do more than simply acknowledge it.

While it is common practice for our colleagues in history to carry out research at archives around the world, the most influential contribution to the much-discussed new 'global historical archaeology' is deeply unsatisfactory. Charles Orser (1996, 31–3, 137) uses the metaphor of the 'world space' of global capitalism to seek to identify general characteristics of 'local spaces' under capitalism through four organizing principles of global capitalism which he terms the 'haunts' of historical archaeology: 'The cosmic chalkboard that was used to chart the relationships between certain kinds of people was stored in a room that included four powerful, though shadowy forces. These forces were global colonialism, Eurocentrism, capitalism and modernity. Each one is central to historical archaeology' (Orser 1996, 55). Orser uncritically deploys a model of a universal, 500-year global entity – 'the modern world' – to permit the chasing of free-floating themes through comparative studies: between two places (Palmeres, Brazil and Gortose, Ireland) connected not by substantive historical links but by accidents of fieldwork. Similarly, the integrity of the new Plenum edited series of 'contributions to global historical archaeology' is maintained less by engagement with global processes or local contexts than by ticking off exotic locations.

The legacy of Orser's book has served to confuse the otherwise sophisticated approach of Martin Hall (2000, 16), who unpicks 'transcripts' – 'web[s] of relations that entwine both objects and words' – to reveal, like Orser's haunts, six 'themes'.³ The post-processual critique has failed to provide a contextual perspective upon the undoubted emergence of capitalist global

3 Hall's six themes are 'world order', 'locality', the 'multiplicity of meanings' and 'ambiguity' of material culture, the 'persistent connection between the past and the present', and hidden 'subaltern voices'. See Hall 2000, 198–9, 102–3.

structures during the past 500 years: a failure which currently provides no alternative to Orser's uncritical universalism. A contextual perspective demands that we accept Matthew Johnson's observation that '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' (Johnson 1999, 34–5). However, the third process of change in historical archaeology, and an answer to Johnson's concerns, is the embracing of the loss of isolation by recognizing that the interactions described by Wolf are essentially socio-material: brought about through objects in a plurality of contexts. World systems emerge as shifting, imagined social worlds, macro-contexts constituted by material exchanges, and thus particularly visible through archaeological study. As realised by some colleagues working in prehistory and the Classical world, economies of meaning, hybrid identities, zones of interaction similar to Braudel's Mediterranean emerge, created through and by objects.⁴

While the acknowledgement of the implications of the post-processual critique for historical archaeology was very important (Tarlow and West 1999), the discipline can no longer eschew historical process in favour of digging up events (e.g. Ludlow Collective 2001). The disciplinary unfolding brought by the birth of material history, the loss of isolation and the loss of antiquity runs counter to mainstream trends in historical archaeology, but bears implications for the entire discipline.

II

Using the example of landscape archaeology, I aim in this section to examine the implications for archaeological interpretation of the unfolding of geographical and temporal dimensions brought about by the birth of material history, the loss of isolation and the end of antiquity.

EXPLORING LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological excavation necessarily involves an engagement with 'small things'; coupled with the limited impact of stratigraphic perspectives upon North American methodology, this fact has brought about the 'artefact focus' of the majority of historical archaeology (Deetz 1977). Despite an overwhelming focus upon artefact identification and dating, some scholars such as Mary Beaudry have used such data to provide highly sophisticated accounts of the construction of individuals' social worlds through objects: historical ethnographies of 'people and their things' (Beaudry nd).

In contrast with North America, a distinctive 'empirical tradition' of landscape archaeology formed an important part of British post-medieval archaeology in the late twentieth century. Generally considered a conservative area of archaeological study, British landscape archaeology developed in the study of 'post-Roman', especially rural, settlements, during the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Aston and Rowley 1974; Aston 1982). Such studies have been extensively criticized for failing to acknowledge the contextual relativity of the concept of 'landscape', and producing "a history of what has been done to the land" which often seems quite remote from

4 Sherratt 1995; Woolf 1998; Horden and Purcell 2000.

the past human lives that were lived in these places' (Thomas 2001, 165 quoting Barrett 1999). While post-processual alternatives have emphasized the creation of meaningful landscapes through past social practice, the practice of landscape archaeology has been reduced, at best, to the reinterpretation of existing archaeological data. At worst, phenomenologists have frustratingly recast the practice of archaeology as 'encounters': superficial wandering across the turfed landscapes of scheduled ancient monuments, chasing experiential revelations (Tilley 1994).

While a return to uncritical empiricism is clearly impossible, an antidote to the existential and isolated presentism of phenomenological perspectives is provided by extending the recognition of the active role of material culture in social life (Appadurai 1986b) to landscapes (cf. Giddens 1984). A particular benefit of this model is its inherent processualism, underlining the changing 'social lives' of material culture. In an important passage, Appadurai distinguishes between the purely theoretical observation that material culture derives meaning from social action, and the methodological necessity of examining things 'in motion' (Appadurai 1986b, 5). This methodological focus and material engagement lead the archaeologist of landscapes to field practice, in which three clear strengths of the empirical tradition of survey-based landscape archaeology emerge:

- a distinctive field methodology integrating diverse sources of evidence: documentary, cartographic, standing buildings, landscape and earthwork survey, and excavation;
- the integration of research conducted at a series of geographical scales, producing an archive which fits together like a series of Russian dolls;
- Providing an account of the long-term development of a landscape, rather than single-period studies.

RETHINKING THE 'LANDSCAPE OF INDUSTRY'

A classic example of the application of these principles of landscape archaeology to post-medieval material is the 'Nuffield Survey' of the Ironbridge Gorge, which was carried out between 1985 and 1989 (Alfrey and Clark 1993). The town of Coalbrookdale lies on the banks of the river Severn in the Ironbridge Gorge, Shropshire, England. Coalbrookdale is conventionally described by economic and industrial historians as a key site in the development of the industrial revolution, since it was here in 1709 that Abraham Darby first smelted iron with coke. The significance of the Gorge was recognized in 1986 with its designation as a World Heritage Site.

In an influential paper, Clark (1987) described the Nuffield Survey's examination of a 'landscape of industry' as exposing conventional site-based industrial archaeology, in which production sites such as mills or blast furnaces were examined in isolation from broader systems of manufacture and exchange, as blinkered. Instead, Clark argued, Nuffield had pieced together the relationship between landscape context and industrial process. Complex systems of pools and sluices which provided water power for the forges and mills of the Gorge were identified. Groundbreaking field surveys were undertaken to disentangle how these systems worked – and how they made use of pre-existing medieval systems of water power – with tremendous success (Fig. 2). A complex industrial landscape of blast furnace complexes, potteries, tobacco pipe works, tile factories, lead smelters and engineering works, and a maritime landscape of warehouses and wharves, were identified, drawn and interpreted.

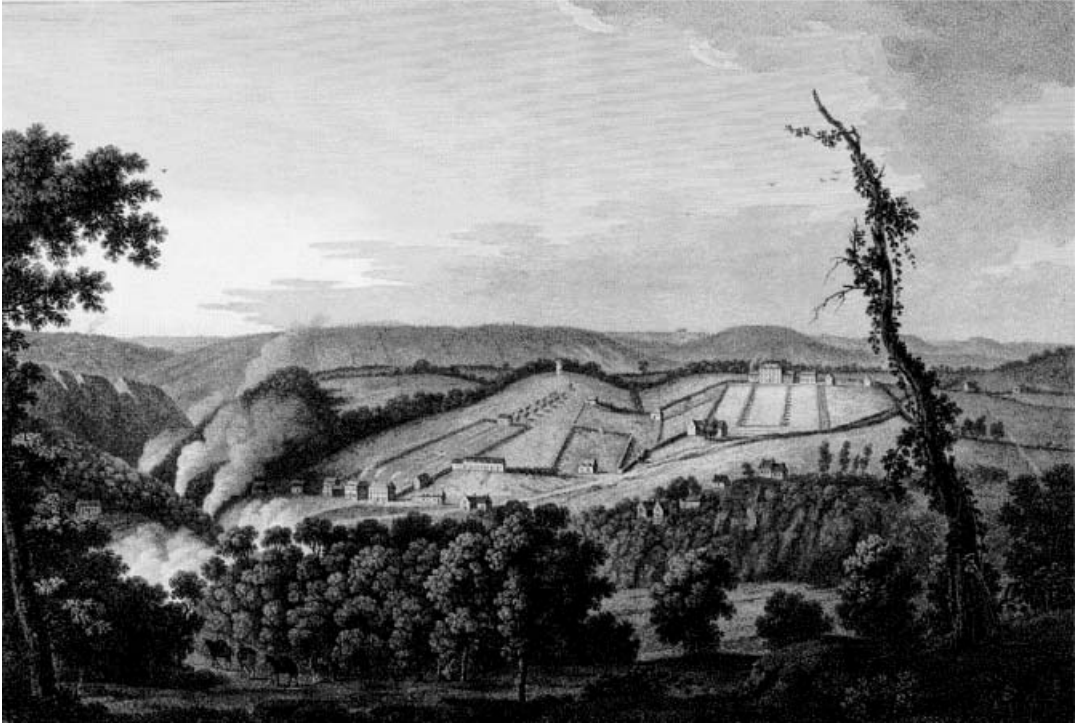


Figure 1
South-West prospect of Coalbrookdale. George Perry, 1758.

However the ‘landscape of industry’ was clearly more complex than acknowledged by Alfrey and Clark, especially because this was not the first time that these water systems had been drawn. The archaeologists made use of eighteenth-century surveys of precisely the same water systems (compare Figs. 2 and 3). The Ironbridge Gorge was more than a landscape in which industry took place. Rather, it was a carefully designed landscape of the 1750s (Figs. 1 and 4), and by the late eighteenth century it had become a rhetorically-presented ‘landscape of industry’, painted by Turner and drawing visitors to wonder at spectacular sights of industry and innovation. At its centre was the Iron Bridge (1777–81), an iconic symbol of novelty, industry and landscape. The industrious landscape was also one of riverside hotels and polite gardens, the vistas of which looked out onto mills and forges.

VALUE AND THE IRONBRIDGE LANDSCAPE

The landscape approach of the Nuffield Survey resulted in the generation of a huge quantity of data, the scale of which presented major problems for curation. In an interesting process, the broadening of perspectives brought by landscape archaeology spilled over into a new encounter between past and present. Clark’s frustration at the failure of the results of the survey to inform development controls – resulting in the demolition of important buildings – and her subsequent career in heritage management led to the use of the Nuffield Survey as the

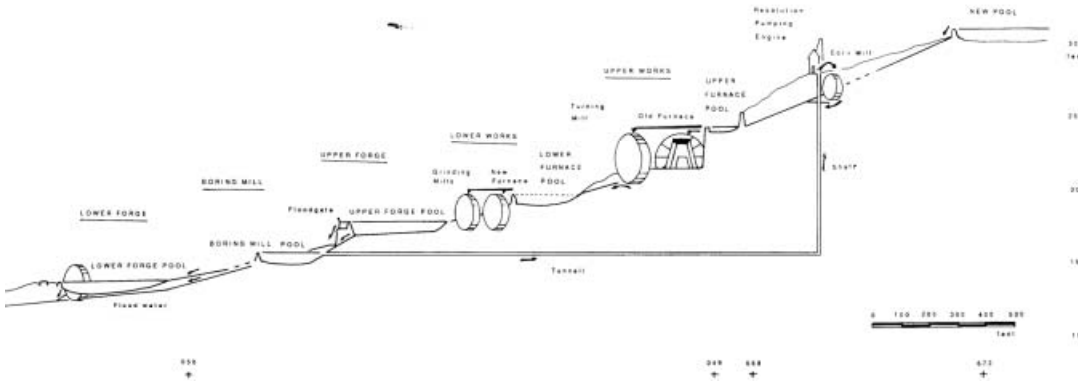


Figure 2
Water system at Coalbrookdale (1801–5, from Alfrey and Clark 1993).

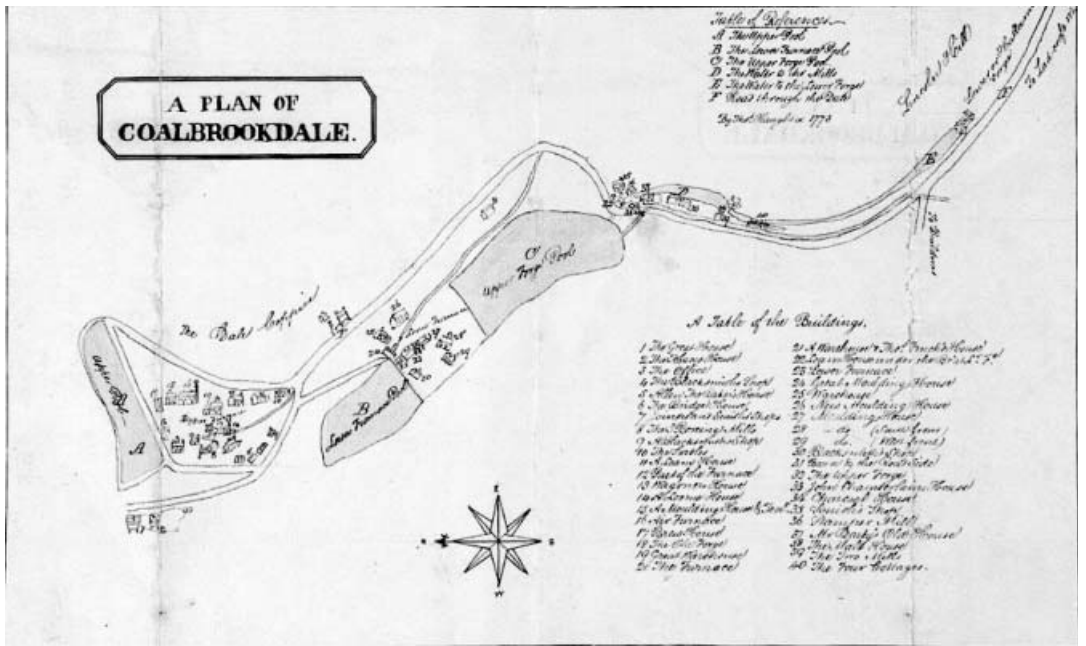


Figure 3
Plan of Coalbrookdale showing water system (Thomas Slaughter 1753).

basis for the introduction of the concept of ‘Value-led planning’ or ‘Conservation Plans’, a concept developed in Australia by James Semple Kerr, to English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund (Clark 2002). At the heart of the concept of ‘Value-led planning’ is the definition of the value or significance of a site or landscape (Heritage Lottery Fund 1999; Clark 2001). This formalizes the research process’ role in bringing together archaeological and historical



Figure 4
The Upper Works at Coalbrookdale (Unknown artist 1758).

material with not only academic judgements but also contemporary, political and community concerns in an encounter between past and present.

Returning to the methods of landscape archaeology employed at the Ironbridge Gorge, it is clear that their particular applicability was not unrelated to the active creation of the ‘landscape of industry’ in the eighteenth century. This contextual observation serves as a point of entry to the consideration of the limits and nature of the historic landscape of the Gorge. The empirical tradition of British landscape archaeology aimed to broaden out analysis from sites to wider contexts. Combined with an awareness of the ‘social life’ of landscapes, this perspective suggests the extension of the field of analysis, in this case into the much wider social and material landscapes in which eighteenth-century British industry existed.

For example, a newly-made steam engine cylinder is prominently displayed, drawn by cart along the riverbank, in Figure 4. Examining the material culture of Georgian Coalbrookdale ‘in motion’ leads us to wider landscape contexts, in the cart to the river Severn, along which industrial products were sent to agents at Bristol. From the 1730s, the Company began to supply large quantities of iron goods to an international market (Raistrick 1953). Despite its strong Quaker connections, the Company’s Bristol trade expanded from pots and pig iron to new items – especially large quantities of guns and shot to African and New World slaving markets. Large

amounts of Coalbrookdale domestic ironware flooded Atlantic markets, alongside ornamental ironwork, and industrial items such as furnace and engine parts, steam engines and wagon wheels.

In a similar contextual manner, the value or significance of the World Heritage Site at the Ironbridge Gorge is not innate or simply assigned: it is contingent upon an exchange between past and present, mediated by research. Traditional, insular accounts of the British Industrial Revolution emphasizing technological advances in production in isolation from broader social and economic history have traditionally led interpretation in British industrial archaeology. However, an emphasis upon 'social landscapes' brings an acknowledgement of how Coalbrookdale's exports formed part of an emerging web of bilateral trading relations of a British Atlantic merchant élite. These exports were closely bound up with the Atlantic slave trade and the bilateral trade with New World slave economies (Williams 1944; Hicks 2002): a fact which brings a second, moral dimension to the historical and contemporary significance of the Gorge (cf. Hicks 2000). Material history emerges as an important point of entry to the investigation of the influence of colonial contexts upon eighteenth-century Britain, a theme of contemporary importance in post-colonial situations. This adds a socially inclusive dimension to the value of Ironbridge, including the manufacture of guns, agricultural tools and chains for colonial plantation societies (not to mention Abraham Darby's Bristol brassworks, and the trade of manillas for slaves), as well as pots and pans. The diversity of field location brought by the loss of isolation and a landscape perspective, incorporating material from geographically diverse, but substantively linked, locations, is paralleled by a diversity of voices emerging from the encounter between past and present. The unfolding of archaeology brings contextual expansions such as these.

It remains to consider how to theorize the complexity of macro contexts which I have criticized Charles Orser (1996) for glossing. To continue with the example of Ironbridge, as economic historians are increasingly aware, the complex social relations of the Georgian Atlantic were constituted by material exchanges and commodity chains (Hancock 1995). Moreover, a distinctive Atlantic merchant community was characterized by a particular series of values and tastes in material culture – including houses, landscapes and luxuries – which Robin Blackburn (1997) has termed 'baroque'. This phenomenon is epitomized perhaps most clearly by that ubiquitous artefact of eighteenth-century Atlantic archaeology, the madeira bottle. David Hancock has described how, during the course of the eighteenth century, madeira came to be a luxury drink, consumed in élite social rituals, rather than a common table wine. Central to this transformation was the development of a spurious belief that the drink was enhanced by its being 'agitated' during transportation as maritime cargo for several months before consumption (Hancock 1998, 208). Some ships or journeys, of course, involved more 'agitation' than others. In this way, the wine came to gain, through 'commerce and conversation', value from its perceived journey through a wide maritime social landscape – becoming itself an important part of the creation of the Georgian merchants' Atlantic.

Such observations make it impossible to disentangle the economic, cultural and moral dimensions of the material history of the Atlantic worlds (Mintz 1985): they are a series of intersecting and alternative social worlds created through material culture. These range through time and to location from the Georgian merchant élite through seventeenth-century white indentured labourers, religious minorities, African slaves, free black populations, New World native populations and creole ethnicities, nineteenth century Indian indentured plantation

labourers in the New World, or the complex identities and global remittance cultures of the post-colonial Black Atlantic (Gilroy 1993). Such observations highlight the potential of historical archaeology to reveal social complexity in the multiple social worlds of the historical Atlantic, complexity often assumed to be part only of post-colonial (Gosden 2001) rather than colonial situations.

The potential of historical archaeology and economic anthropology to unravel the complicity of material culture in the appearance and historical change of this diversity of Atlantic worlds is an important area of future enquiry (Hicks *nd*).

III

THE LOSS OF ISOLATION: ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE MOVE

Extending analysis beyond single-sited fieldwork leads us, most clearly in the case of expanding colonial worlds, towards 'social landscapes' created through material culture (Horton and Middleton 2001), and to the global cultural flows which Arjun Appadurai refers to collectively as '-scapes', a 'suffix [which] allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes . . . multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the world' (1996, 33). The archaeologist can chase many, sometimes conflicting, narratives across borders, reading through materially constituted fields of social relations at both macro- and micro-scales. This plurality of macro-contexts across history and socio-geography brings a mass of local contingency. By acknowledging the eighteenth-century Atlantic merchant's world system as one of many worlds socially constructed and constituted by bulk and luxury material flows from production to consumption, a 'global', macro-contextual economy of meaning emerges, through which particular cosmopolitan connections ran. In an interpretative process similar to the ethnographic study of commodity chains or 'systems of provision' (Jackson and Thrift 1995, 215; Mintz 1985), the archaeological study of such situations juxtaposes one site with another for historical and contextual reasons, as the observer 'allow[s] the sense of system to emerge ethnographically and speculatively' (Marcus 1995, 98). Such an approach would, for instance, reposition the static structure of the Deetz/Leone/Johnson concept of the Georgian Order (Leone 1988) within a broader historical process of a shifting bundle of values brought about through objects (or economics) which would be close to Appadurai's vision of an 'ideoscape'.

MATERIAL HISTORY: FROM THE 'CONCEIT OF DISTINCTIVENESS' TO THE CONTINGENCY OF THEORY

Returning to the diagnosis of archaeology's death, Tilley memorably notes 'the irony here is . . . that the death of archaeology could only result from the conceit of distinctiveness. In this respect David [Clarke]'s paper itself displays a startling innocence. How could an archaeological theory of society or human action be produced that would not simultaneously be a social and anthropological theory?' (1998, 692).

It is argued here, despite Tilley, that archaeology grows up between a taphonomic accident (that knowledge of the past rests entirely upon things which survive) and the

ethnographic observation of the active role of objects in social life. This combination situates a distinctive and self-confident archaeology, unfolding at the vanguard of the social sciences (compare Miller 1995, 289; Miller 1998a, 19).

Combining 'material' and 'multi-sited' perspectives disposes of traditional comparative approaches, such as those of Orser, not simply because his sites are connected by artifice rather than history, but because theoretical perspectives are exposed as situationally contingent. This does not simply mean that archaeologists must be aware of their own social context and define the limits of 'global' or 'landscape' scales of analysis contextually. Rather, it demands critical thinking similar to that of those ethnographers who, raising their heads from area studies, have considered the dependence of the shift from structural-functionalism to structuralism in social anthropology upon the hegemonic shift from regional schools of ethnography in eastern Africa, to India and south-east Asia (Fardon 1990a; Dresch 1992). In anthropology, acknowledging the active relationship between fieldwork and theory-building reveals a tendency for ethnographic writing to privilege 'non-complex societies' in 'a kind of reverse Orientalism, whereby complexity, literacy, historical depth and structural messiness operate as disqualifications in the struggle for a voice in metropolitan theory' (Appadurai 1986a, 357. Quoted by Dresch 1992, 20). Here, the lack of fit between post-processualism and the complexity investigated by New Archaeology – whether Iron Age societies in Britain (Cunliffe 1974), Romano-British pottery production (Hodder 1979), long-term change in prehistoric social organization (Renfrew 1974) or scientific and field methodology (Clarke 1968) – is startling. Similarly, the application of the post-processual paradigm to North American historical archaeology, despite great efforts, has tended to result in ricochet rather than revelation. Recognizing the complicity of the material studied in the process of theory-building makes occasions in which theoretical perspectives are developed in new situations of particular disciplinary interest (cf. Sherratt 1993). Just as 'the collectivising strategies adopted by early writers of African tribal biography posed problems to ethnographers of Asia who felt compelled to excise manageable fields of studies from large-scale societies' (Fardon 1990b, 220) so theory building in historical archaeology is a risky business. The application of post-processual perspectives to the complexity of the modern world may well be inappropriate: especially since post-processualism developed in an artificially simplified world of the reinterpreted British Neolithic or Bronze Age, in which the conceit of a theory/practice divide was constructed through a perverse disengagement with fieldwork. This served to mask the contingent relationship between theory, methodology and material. While this sleight of hand allowed a distinctive and important body of archaeological theory to emerge, archaeology's major strengths – its access to massive diversity in time and geography, and its ability to inform other disciplines – were sacrificed.

The perspective of material history and the contingency of theory upon the particular requires an engagement in theory building similar to that advocated by David Clarke (1973), which develops from the variety of material studied and the practice of archaeology: fieldwork, interpretation, teaching.⁵

5 Clarke (1973) wrote of the 'epistemological adaptation to the empirical content of . . . new observations' running alongside the 'explanatory and conceptual adaptation now required to understand them'.

THE LOSS OF ANTIQUITY: TOWARDS DIVERSITY IN ARCHAEOLOGY

In sum, the loss of antiquity brings a new encounter between past and present, and an archaeology characterized by diversity:

Diversity in methodology. Just as for social anthropology, the ‘particularism’ inherent in current archaeological theory is inappropriate for an archaeology of the web of connections which forms the modern world. The methodology proposed here for historical archaeology builds upon the practice of landscape archaeology as integrating a diversity of field methodologies, to get at a range of sources of evidence.

Diversity in field location. The diversity of methodology is extended towards a diversity in field location in a contextual way, locating itself – whether through fieldwork or ‘within a multi-sited imaginary’ – in contextual, socially defined landscapes (Marcus 1998, 28).

Diversity of disciplines. The methodology also brings an interdisciplinarity – drawing across disciplines, especially from history, anthropology, geography, material culture studies and art history.

Diversity of voices. Most radically, the loss of isolation brings not only new ‘horizontal’ connections (multi-sited landscapes, the demise of the pristine society, primordial ethnic identity and the ethnographic or archaic ‘Other’) but also new ‘vertical’ connections in the unfolding of the ethnographic present or the historical moment. The loss of antiquity not only highlights doing, teaching, curating or presenting archaeology as social action in the present: it reveals a diversity of voices and values in the past as well as the present, and it defines the examination of the contingencies of this diversity as a central area of enquiry. Such work engages with the relativity of macro structures as well as the particular; it integrates the diversity of archaeological voices and their contingency; it recognizes ‘institutionalized’ obstacles to multicultural perspectives upon (especially colonial) history, and develops inclusivity in heritage and disciplinary space in the present (Hicks 2000; Horton nd).

The extension of the principles of historical landscape archaeology exemplifies one escape route from post-processual nervousness or uncritical universality. This route brings the loss of antiquity and isolation, and heralds the birth of material history. While alternative solutions exist, it is certain that across the discipline, archaeology must respond with self-confidence to complexity by drawing out and celebrating diversity in theory and practice.

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