

Anthropology & Archaeology

A changing relationship

Chris Gosden



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Anthropology and Archaeology

The disciplines of archaeology and anthropology have, since their beginnings, influenced and informed each other. Chris Gosden charts and analyses their changing relationship, and provides a valuable and much-needed introduction to the theories and methods of these two inter-related subjects. This volume covers the historical relationship and contemporary interests of archaeology and anthropology. It takes a broad historical approach, setting the early history of the disciplines within the colonial period during which the Europeans encountered and attempted to make sense of many other peoples. It shows how the subjects are linked through their interest in kinship, economics and symbolism, and discusses what each contribute to debates about gender, material culture and globalism in the post-colonial world.

This book is unique in its survey of both anthropology and archaeology. This dual consideration is necessary as each discipline has continuously influenced the other. Together, anthropology and archaeology can inform us of the full variability of life, past and present.

Anthropology and Archaeology is an indispensable guide to each discipline for students or researchers studying archaeology, anthropology, or both subjects.

Chris Gosden is presently lecturer-curator at the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. He has held teaching positions both in Australia and the UK, and has published widely on a range of issues in archaeology and anthropology.

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Christopher Gosden



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To Emily and Jack

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Preface

One possible way to write this book was as a volume entitled 'Anthropology for Archaeologists'. A book with this title already exists (Orme 1981), as do others with similar aims (Hodder 1982). As well as not wanting to cover old ground, I soon became convinced that to explain anthropology to archaeologists was not possible. Books have been written on statistics for archaeologists, for instance, as these two disciplines have had largely separate histories and only the slightest of mutual influence. This is patently not the case with archaeology and anthropology, which have been and remain linked intimately, albeit in different ways in various parts of the globe. The only way forward seemed to be to look at the interrelationship of the two subjects and how each had provided contexts for the other.

Interlinkage has been closest in North America, although it can be argued that now the two elements of the joint discipline are somewhat estranged. In Britain and elsewhere in Europe there has been a fluctuating relationship between the two, so that at the end of the last century, when an evolutionary scheme held sway, they were almost indistinguishable, but early in this century they parted company. It is a major part of my argument that social anthropology was set up in Britain, by people like Malinowski, using strategies of institutionalisation which deliberately emphasised and exacerbated the difference between the two. Thus, even at periods when the two subjects parted company, one was still defined in terms of the other, even though this was a definition through difference. Today there is *rapprochement* in Britain, but distance in North America, Australia and New Zealand, where relations have been more cordial in the past.

For these reasons, which will be elaborated in the body of the book, it is impossible to write a book on anthropology for archaeologists as this would imply the relationship of two separate entities. Instead I have dwelt on the mutual history of the two, although the main emphasis is to provide an account of anthropological concepts and trends which may be of use to archaeologists. This emphasis is legitimate, I think, as archaeology has been an importer of anthropological ideas and suffered a balance of trade problem due to the lack of export of archaeological results and theories. Things are changing, however, and in many areas anthropologists are becoming more aware that it is impossible to approach the present

without a knowledge of the past and that much of this past is prehistoric and thus only accessible through archaeology. The general emphasis on anthropology has meant that I have given a more consistent and coherent account of that discipline than I have of archaeology, where my account of history, theory and method has been most full for periods when archaeology has been most dependent on its sister subject. My stress on the relatedness of archaeology and anthropology has made for a book with considerable historical emphasis. Part I contains the historical material. The last three chapters concern the present scene and this is contained in Part II.

My interest in writing this book has arisen from my personal history and the result has, of course, been shaped by what I do or don't know. I am currently teaching in the joint archaeology and anthropology degree at Oxford, which is set up to explore the relationship between the two disciplines rather than give an exclusive grounding in either one. Therefore the issues I will be exploring in the book are those foremost in my mind whilst teaching. In my work to date I have attempted to combine archaeological and anthropological approaches. My doctoral work was on pottery trade in central Europe during the Iron Age, where I used anthropological information on exchange to interpret archaeological evidence. I have worked for the last ten years in Papua New Guinea, where I excavated a series of sites but also collected genealogies, oral histories and information on changing forms of exchange and ritual. Through this work I have become particularly interested in the history of colonialism and colonial contact in the Pacific and elsewhere. This experience in the field has made me aware both of the links between the two disciplines, but also their differences, which centre around long- and short-term timescales. Anthropology, for example, can look at structures of meaning as they exist in the present; archaeology can provide a long-term perspective on the development of systems of meaning and the general conditions through which human meanings can be generated. Consequently, it is both similarities and differences between the two disciplines that I would like to explore in this book.

I would not have written this book had I not been teaching in the joint archaeology and anthropology degree at Oxford and I am very thankful to all my colleagues. A number of people have particularly influenced my views and these include Marcus Banks, Jeremy Coote, Elizabeth Edwards, Howard Morphy and Andrew Sherratt. Peter Rivière read all of the historical section and made important suggestions on overall directions and corrected some errors of fact. He also suggested the example with which I start chapter 1. Mike O'Hanlon, David Wengerow and Peter White read differing amounts of the manuscript and made important comments. Lynn Meskell has been very helpful in discussions on gender and globalism, as was Stephanie Moser on professionalisation. Patrick Blackman has read the whole thing and made many changes in expression and content. I wrote the first half of the book whilst a Visiting Fellow in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University between January and September 1997. I am very grateful to John Chappell, then head of department of Archaeology and Natural History, for his support and to Wal

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1 Anthropological archaeology and archaeological anthropology

'Stone Age tribe flees bushfires in Brazil' was a headline carried by a number of British newspapers in March 1998. During this month bushfires raged through the savannah and rainforest of Roraima Province of northwest Brazil, due to a drought said to be caused by El Niño. What does the newspapers' use of the term 'Stone Age' mean? Stone Age evokes echoes of the land that time forgot; portions of the globe and groups of people by-passed by the major currents of history; the survival of the past in the present. In a different age, the journalists might have used the word 'primitive' more freely, as this is partly what they meant: Stone Age tribes represent a prior stage of human history, superseded elsewhere, but still preserved by the isolating wilderness of the Amazonian rainforest.

The reports, in fact, referred to a number of rainforest groups, the best known to the western world being the Yanomami, documented through the writing and films of Napoleon Chagnon (1997). This area of Brazil has a long and complex history, both of colonialism and pre-colonial times (Rivière 1995). It is ironic that one of the most famous scenes from Chagnon's films, shows an axe fight, in which metal axes are used. Metal tools were introduced centuries ago and complex interactions have taken place between all sorts of different groups leading to the exchange of material culture and ways of life. The Yanomami and their neighbours are not Stone Age in a literal sense: they do not use stone tools. But neither are they Stone Age in a metaphorical sense, being as fully a part of the modern world as the inhabitants of New York or Tokyo. They have been propelled into the modern world through creating a history as complex, dynamic and varied as anywhere else. Theirs is not an isolated culture, but one with multiple links to rainforest and savannah groups.

However, the inaccuracy of the statement is not its interesting aspect, but rather that it was made at all. How is the phrase 'Stone Age tribe' immediately understood by people reading the news at their breakfast tables in Britain? All these readers would know that they do not live in the Stone Age. The same newspapers tell them that they live in the age of the Internet and the jumbo jet. They are not modern, but post-modern. On the other hand, they know Stonehenge originated in the Stone Age, a phase of life long past in Britain and many

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other places. Stone Age tribes in Brazil are made doubly distant, inhabiting a remote part of South America and a period of prehistory simultaneously.

The term 'Stone Age' succeeds in evoking such images because of several centuries of writing about the distant past and the distant present. Much of this writing is now carried out by archaeologists and anthropologists, although this academic work builds on a longer tradition of accounts by explorers and antiquarians (Pratt 1992). The immediacy of the phrase is partly a success story for archaeology and anthropology: our concepts are in general use. It is obviously also part of our failure, if such a progressivist view of world history still has common currency. But concepts such as the Stone Age are elements of the joint histories of archaeology and anthropology. An important route to understanding the distant past and the distant present by those of European descent has been to make constant metaphorical links from one to the other. Prehistory was constructed through extended analogies with people living in the present. For instance, tribal people who made and used stone tools in the Americas were models for understanding the phases of European prehistory before the use of metal. As we have seen, intellectual recycling can now take the analogy back to its American point of origin, but with overtones of European prehistory attached.

There has been a complicated trade of concepts and discoveries between archaeology and anthropology over the last five centuries, such that the history of one would have been totally different without the other. Archaeology and anthropology can be seen as a double helix with their histories linked, but distinct. In this book I hope to explore the reasons for this joint heritage and separate identities, and the implications this heritage has for pursuing both subjects in the present.

Anthropological archaeology

'Archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing', is a statement with which many archaeologists would strongly agree. As a statement of disciplinary identity, it is odd, contradictory and not at all straightforward. It seems somewhat unusual to define one discipline in terms of another. As far as I know, no one has ever said anthropology is archaeology or it is nothing. Not to define archaeology in its own terms appears intellectually lazy, bad academic politics and lacking in disciplinary self-confidence. However, people who take this view are not giving up their disciplinary identity. Instead we are indicating that archaeology is part of a broad field of study, composed of archaeology, social/cultural anthropology, physical anthropology and linguistics. This larger field is often known as anthropology, which is taken to be the study of all aspects of human life, past and present. Within anthropology, conceived broadly, social/cultural anthropology studies the people of the present, originally concentrating on so-called small-scale societies but increasingly focusing on the structures of life in the west as well. Social/cultural anthropology uses the method of participant observation, which

involves immersing oneself in the life of the group being studied, learning their language (if necessary) and producing some sort of synthetic account of the experience. This is something very different to the excavation and analysis of archaeological evidence, or the study of language as such, or the bodily aspects of human existence and evolution. This book is about the relationship between archaeology and social/cultural anthropology, within the broader field of anthropology.

When I started this book, I thought it was a hopeless task, but now I know I was being optimistic. Part of my optimism was wanting to include an account of physical anthropology, although I was realistic enough to know that I could only mention linguistics in passing. My sin of omission in leaving out physical anthropology came about when I realised the magnitude of the task and it would take another book to explore the three-way relations between archaeology, social and cultural anthropology and physical anthropology. I have taken the dishonourable route of leaving out any systematic discussion of physical anthropology at all.

It also needs mentioning that social/cultural anthropology is very varied, as already implied by my joint designation. For reasons I hope will become clear as the book proceeds, there have been shifting definitions of anthropology over time. Some people have stressed the social structure provided by kinship as being the key element of life to be studied: these were self-proclaimed social anthropologists. For others, the crucial factor is culture, which ranges between the material objects that people make and use, to their sets of beliefs and views of the world. Today it is probably true to say that culture is in the ascendant, although there is much overlap and many sensibly decline to waste too much effort defining any dividing line too closely, as it is impossible to decide where society stops and culture starts or to give relative weight to each. Nevertheless both terms are in common use to designate slightly different forms of anthropology and this needs acknowledging. Other terms of importance are 'ethnography' and 'ethnology', which tend to refer to the observable aspects of a society encountered by the anthropologist in the field, the basic data observed (to use a scientific metaphor). Ethnographic data are synthesised back home and combined with theory to produce a rounded anthropology. Ethnography was often seen as the equivalent of excavation and therefore somewhat looked down on as basic toil, whereas the really worthwhile activity was the synthetic and comparative work of anthropology carried out on the data. Today, with a greater emphasis on material culture and practical action in general, ethnography is less of a second-class activity and there is some overlap between cultural anthropology and ethnography.

In a some ways it makes no sense to attempt to look at the relationship between archaeology and anthropology, as neither are single entities. There is much internal variety, with archaeologists defining themselves as scientific, ecological, historical as well as anthropological. Also, there are differences in the meaning of anthropological archaeology in different times and varying places. In order to give a sketch of this variety I shall look at

the divergent meanings given to the term 'anthropological archaeology' on the two sides of the Atlantic and how usages in north America and Britain have changed over time. This will be a limited history covering the last forty years, the period in which current positions and debates have been defined; the longer-term history of the last 150 years is considered later in chapters 2 to 5.

Anthropological archaeology in North America

It was Willey and Phillips (1958: 2) who wrote that 'American archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing.' It is worth noting that they limited the statement to America and it would not have been true in any sense to say the same of British archaeology at the time. This statement had been true since the time of Boas at the end of previous century, who emphasised the combination of social anthropology and archaeology needed to uncover the culture history of local areas (see chap. 5). However, Willey and Phillips wrote when a contrasting view to that of Boas was emerging within a new evolutionary synthesis. 'Anthropology is fundamentally a generalizing and comparative discipline' (Willey and Sabloff 1980: 1), whose ultimate aim was to understand and explain the processes underlying culture change. It is no coincidence that the article seen as the starting point for the New Archaeology was entitled 'Archaeology as anthropology' (Binford 1962).

This article, written in Binford's impenetrable style, said that archaeology could and should participate in the study of the evolution of human culture. Given that anthropologists have only a small range of variability to study in the shape of extant cultural systems, archaeology would, in fact, have the major part to play and was the only discipline that could look at really long-term change and come out with broadly based generalisations about human behaviour. His view of archaeology was as an holistic discipline, which could look at the whole of human culture. Such a view was in contradiction to the oft-expressed criticism that 'you cannot dig up a kinship system'. While Binford agreed that this was true and thus archaeologists were never going to be the same as anthropologists, he did feel they could identify all aspects of past change as well as the fact that changes happened for different reasons and at varying rates in specific elements of the cultural system. Artefacts and features have a systematic relationship to the total extinct cultural system and this relationship can, potentially, be understood. Following Leslie White he divided these elements of the cultural system into three types: the technomic, sociotechnic and idiotechnic. The first of these was technology, the extensions of the human body by which people extracted energy from the environment and processed it. The sociotechnic was to do with people's social identity within the group and the manner in which groups were given cohesion in such a manner as to use their technology efficiently. Ideotechnic artefacts created a symbolic milieu in which people were acculturated. It is necessary for archaeologists to establish relations between

these different sets of artefacts, which should be expressed in statistical terms. The relationships could be expressed ultimately against the background of exceptionless generalisations or laws.

Binford felt that the ultimate aim of archaeology is to generate and apply laws of human behaviour through combining the evolutionary theory of White with the systematic study of archaeological materials. Thus although the theory came from anthropology the major contribution in data would come from the archaeologist, the only discipline with the evidence from which to generalise about long-term change and long-distance relationships. These optimistic hopes left unprobed the tricky question of the relationship between past and present forms of life and of understanding the past through analogy with the present. Binford (1972: 18) acknowledged that most ideas about the organisation of culture in the past have come from the study of human variability in the present. This obviously was not good enough if that past was truly different from the present, as interpretation based on observation in the present could only render the past in the shape of the contemporary world. The way out of this which was consistent with the philosophy of science employed at the time was to use analogies from the present as hypotheses to be tested against remains from the past (Binford 1967: 1), presumably with the possibility that quite a number of such hypotheses would be proved wrong. The more limited and specific the analogies were, the less chance they had of being pertinent. To build strong and rounded analogies 'Archaeologists must be trained comparative ethnographers' (Binford 1972: 18). This was a sentiment echoed by Richard Lee, a social anthropologist, one of a number brought in to comment on the work of the archaeologists: 'if every African prehistorian spent a field season working with the Kalahari Bushmen (or the Australian Aborigines), this experience would immeasurably enrich his understanding of all levels of African prehistory' (Lee 1968b: 345).

Binford took his own advice to heart and carried out intensive studies with the Nunamiut, an Alaskan Inuit group (Binford 1978, 1980) and less intensive studies elsewhere. He hoped to use specific observations on butchery of carcasses or behaviour around a hearth to interpret Palaeolithic remains, making the assumption that in all cases people would behave in a functionally efficient manner and not be influenced, for instance, by culturally specific attitudes to dirt in depositing their rubbish round a hearth. By positing an emphasis on efficient function Binford hoped to come up with a series of cross-cultural generalisations which could allow an understanding of the specifics of the past. But in making these observations, he became rather more bound up in testing and verification of his hypotheses than he did in building theory (Shennan 1989). On a larger scale, Binford developed the global hunter-gatherer model, which looked at how such things as technology, storage and sedentism amongst hunter-gatherers today varied with latitude, finding that those at highest latitudes in cold environments had to be most efficient in their technology and storage (Binford 1980, Lee 1968b). He used such observations to understand Palaeolithic evidence and this is a line of work that has been extended by others (Kelly 1995).

Anthropological archaeology of this type is still current in North America. Writing the first editorial to the journal *Anthropological Archaeology* in 1982 Whallon emphasised the generalising theoretical purpose of anthropological archaeology. He defined 'Anthropological archaeology as the study of organizational and evolutionary process in human cultural systems' (Whallon 1982: 2) and hoped that 'we ultimately may see the development of a systematic and rigorous understanding, on both short-term and long-term timescales, of human cultural organization and evolution' (Whallon 1982: 1). Many of the articles that have appeared in the journal subsequently have followed these lines, essentially those laid down by Binford twenty-five years ago. It seems fair to say that the majority of prehistoric archaeologists in North America would still see themselves as anthropological archaeologists within a functionalist and generally evolutionary framework (although the same would not be true for historical archaeologists). However, social/cultural anthropology has moved a long way from Leslie White, as we shall see in the course of the book. This means that there is little in common between prehistoric archaeology and anthropology so that there is a wider gap between the two disciplines now than at any time over the last 150 years.

Anthropological archaeology in Britain

Rather the opposite is the case in Britain. Since the demise of the evolutionary synthesis in the late nineteenth century (chaps 2 and 3) there has been little contact between prehistoric archaeology and anthropology. In the recent period David Clarke in *Analytical Archaeology* asserted that 'archaeology, is archaeology, is archaeology' (Clarke 1968: 13). Shennan (1989: 833) sees this work as an attempt to combine the end of the Childean culture tradition and a new cultural archaeology, which was looking at the birth, growth and death of archaeological entities, such as artefact assemblages. Such an archaeology comes out of work on seriation, battleship curves and the like and was contained within the framework of the Three Age system, rather than the evolutionary framework of White, which could immediately link it into the anthropological concerns of the time.

An anthropological archaeology was something of a novelty in Britain and, unsurprisingly, owed a lot to influences from across the Atlantic. These came either in the form of the New Archaeology itself or through the influence of evolutionary anthropologists, such as Sahlins (1958, 1963) and Service (1962, 1971). The social archaeology of Renfrew (1973a, 1973b, 1975, 1984) was an attempt to chart the movement from band, to tribe, to chiefdom to state in the archaeological evidence using the evidence of trade, or the distribution of monuments. Even though anthropological models were used, for looking at social hierarchy or forms of trade and exchange, there was never a sense that archaeology and anthropology were part of the same general study of humanity. Renfrew made efforts to distinguish social archaeology and social anthropology: anthropologists are reliant upon

learning language and from there go on to kinship and the general structure of society. For social anthropologists many things were obvious, such as the size of the social unit, its political organisation, roles and statuses, which were at the top of the social archaeologist's list of things to find out (Renfrew 1984: 9–10). Archaeologists also stressed material culture, which social anthropologists had become less interested in since the decline of ethnography (Renfrew 1984: 10). This was an accurate depiction of British social anthropology at the time, which was going through a structuralist and symbolic phase.

It is interesting to contrast the reactions of anthropologists on either side of the Atlantic to new moves within archaeology. The anthropological commentators on the Binfords' *New Perspective in Archaeology* (who included Lee, Devore, Fried and Harris) were generally very positive towards the aims of the New Archaeology, which accorded with their own evolutionary anthropology. Leach, who was one of the main importers of French structuralism into British anthropology, made notorious comments on a collection of New Archaeology papers put together by Renfrew (Leach 1973), which set back relations between the disciplines considerably. Leach stressed the fragmentary nature of the archaeological evidence on the one hand, and the infinite variety of human cultures on the other. He concluded that ethnographic analogies and parallels were very hard to use with any confidence in archaeology. When Renfrew talked about Neolithic chiefdoms in southern Britain on the basis of the distribution of monuments 'social anthropologists in this audience were quite unimpressed . . . ethnographic parallels suggest at least half a dozen alternative possibilities and none of them need be right' (Leach 1973: 767). He concluded that: 'It seems to be that the wise archaeologist should steer away from trying to do the kind of social anthropology which the professional social anthropologist knows to be quite impossible' (Leach 1973: 768). So much for anthropological archaeology!

In Britain in the 1960s and 1970s the position of anthropological archaeology was complicated. There were many who wanted nothing to do with anthropology, either for Clarke's well-argued reasons or because many practitioners of archaeology had always felt more allegiance to history and had local, rather than generalising concerns. Anthropological archaeologists had common aims with anthropologists in North America, but found few at home sympathetic to an evolutionary view of human culture. Also, the stress on theory within anthropological archaeology cut it off from some areas of the discipline, so that Classical archaeologists, for instance, were sceptical of the jargon and abstractness of those who espoused a generalising, anthropologically oriented approach (Morris 1994, Renfrew 1980). This situation has changed considerably over the last twenty years, when moves in both archaeology and anthropology have brought convergence. Post-processual archaeology has embraced a social theory essentially the same as that of any anthropologists. Anthropology (or parts of it) has moved away from the abstract structuralist analyses carried out by Leach and others towards material culture, the body, art, technology and landscape. Pretty well all anthropologists acknowledge the decline in the belief in the 'ethnographic

present' and the need to integrate history into their analyses. In many parts of the world without long written records, rounded and long-term histories can only be created through the use of archaeology. The result of these moves within archaeology and anthropology is an unprecedented unity in some parts of the two disciplines, in terms of teaching and research, as alluded to in the Preface.

For instance, Chris Tilley's (1996) *An Ethnography of the Neolithic*, which interestingly makes many of the same points Leach did (cross-cultural generalisations are impossible, life is about signification), is a sophisticated account of the uses that archaeologists can make of anthropology. He addresses the paradox that if life was undoubtedly different in the past from anything that exists at present, how far can we use anthropological ideas drawn from the present to enter the strangeness and difference of the Neolithic? Tilley uses notions like personification and exchange, mainly drawn from Melanesian ethnography, as means to think his way into the world of Neolithic Sweden and Denmark and to use these as props which he can discard once he has gained entry into the past. Of course, he is not entirely successful in this and his Neolithic has a distinctly Melanesian feel to it, but the strength of his account (like the strength of archaeology as a whole) is to concentrate on the long-term uses of artefacts and monuments to construct and transform social relations.

In Britain there is currently a closeness between archaeology and anthropology which has not been seen since the late nineteenth century when the two disciplines were one, within an overall evolutionary framework (chaps 2 and 3). This is reflected in Ingold's final editorial in *Man* where he sees social/cultural anthropology, biological anthropology and archaeology as 'forming a necessary unity' (Ingold 1992: 694). 'Thus anthropology *needs* archaeology if it is to substantiate its claim to be a genuinely historical science' (Ingold 1992: 694). The contrast with Leach's comments twenty years earlier could not be greater. In North America, by and large, the opposite has happened, especially as far as prehistoric archaeology is concerned. Much prehistoric archaeology is of a rather dogged processual type, still pursuing many of the themes laid down in the early 1960s. Anthropology has moved a great distance from the evolutionary framework, with the rise in the importance of the study of cultural forms and a reflexive approach to the subject (chaps 3 and 4). There is very little common language to create communication between the two subjects, although things are very different in the area of historical and colonial archaeology where themes of politics, power and material culture allow considerable overlap between archaeology and anthropology. In South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, where archaeology grew up in the post-war period within a processualist milieu, there is a suspicion that models drawn from anthropology will overwhelm the scantness of the archaeological evidence, making it impossible to think about the different nature of the past (White with O'Connell 1982: 215). The state of relations between archaeology and anthropology is currently very interesting world-wide and well worth exploring and it is now necessary to state what my approach to these issues will be.

My approach to the special relationship

To start from a negative point of view: I find specific analogies between present and past dubious, whether this is at the level of the individual artefact, economic formations or the shape of society as a whole. The old synthesis of evolution, whether that of the nineteenth century or the mid-twentieth is inherently progressivist and laden with ethnographic assumptions. I feel that ethnoarchaeology is immoral, in that we have no justification for using the present of one society simply to interpret the past of another, especially as the present is often seen as a latter-day survival of stage passed elsewhere in the world, for instance where hunter-gatherer groups from Africa or Australia are used to throw light on the European Palaeolithic. Societies ought to be studied as interesting in their own right or not at all.

Having got these negative points out of the way, I see many justifications for looking at the relationship between archaeology and anthropology. The first is that they have linked histories and the development of one has always influenced changes in the other. Second, archaeology and anthropology have overlapping subject matter, so that ideas and evidence from one can feed into the other.

In order to appreciate the linked histories of the two subjects, try the following thought experiment. Imagine what archaeology would look like if there had never been any writing on gift exchange, kinship, symbolism, gender or a host of other subjects, from an anthropological point of view. It is impossible to see what our interpretations of the Neolithic of Europe or the Middle Woodland period in North America would look like in the absence of any anthropological writing. Anthropological thought is infused into all strands of archaeology, way beyond those who would style themselves as anthropological archaeologists. Archaeology would not be impossible in the absence of anthropology, but it would be so radically reconfigured that it is impossible to know what it would look like. Slightly more surprisingly, the converse would also be true. Without archaeology we would still be working with a short chronology, a version of the biblical timescale for Europeans and the time depth of oral or written history for other parts of the world. There would no notion of human evolution and no knowledge of the Mayas, Mesopotamians or prehistoric Marquesans. Long timescales and complex prehistories are an implicit part of any anthropology, even if they get no explicit mention by those supposedly only interested in the here and now. It is fascinating to see how many references there are to the prehistoric past in the ethnographies of Papua New Guinea, for instance, even though the majority of the anthropologists working there have no real knowledge of the prehistory of the country.

Looking at the mutual influence of the two disciplines, it is tempting to say that it is frameworks of thought developed in anthropology which are important to archaeology, whereas it is the results of archaeology which have made the most impact on anthropology. However, once the joint history of the two disciplines is considered in more detail we can see

that this is not true, as there has been a subtle process of mutual definition over the last century or more, with sometimes positive and at other times negative influences. These complex mutual histories are explored in the first section of the book, comprising chapters 2 to 5.

The second justification for looking at the relationship between archaeology and anthropology is that they are part of the same endeavour. This is not to say that archaeology and anthropology are part of a grand generalising discipline of anthropology which can make statements about all of human life, past and present, as was said by the new archaeologists. Instead I feel that the two disciplines are mutually entangled in a complex manner and the full complexity will only come out in the body of the book itself, specifically in Part II, looking at the present relationship. A few of the broader themes can be introduced here. First of all there is the political context of the two subjects. The most important element of this context is that both subjects are the products of colonialism. Over the last 500 years a mass of observations of other parts of the world have been made by soldiers, missionaries, colonial officers and traders, which were complemented by more systematic observations by professionals over the last 100 years. The context in which these observations were made were colonial encounters and the people observed were seen to be natives, with all the intellectual baggage inherent in this term. This may seem straightforwardly so for anthropology, but is this true of archaeology? Part of my argument is that knowledge of parts of the world hitherto unknown, especially the Americas which were not discussed in classical sources or the Bible, opened up the possibility of prehistory which was quite different to anything known from the Romans onwards. The best way to think of this difference was by extended analogy with the newly discovered natives, and prehistory had inherent within it the prejudices of colonial observations. Added to this was the social scene of intellectuals from at least the sixteenth century onwards, in which the same people would discuss the discoveries of the Americas and observations at Stonehenge without making great discrimination between them.

However, recently much has changed and these changes have run through both disciplines equally. Up until the last thirty years, both archaeology and anthropology were unselfconsciously the study of the rest by the west. Anthropologists saw themselves as going off to small, distant and isolated communities in order to document primitive societies, which were of interest primarily because they were different from our own. Now it is seen that we live in a global culture, in which all groups are linked into transnational structures. Anthropology has come home and can study shopping centres in north London or television soap operas in north America, just as well as kinship or ritual in Africa or South America. The difference of the Other can derive from an exoticising frame of mind and a stress on the quaint peculiarities of other cultures. These and other changes have led to a reassessment of what anthropology is about and one of the most profound elements of change is a shift in the type of knowledge produced, from a systematic, scientific set of generalisations about other

cultures to a profound reflection that our own ways of life and habits of thought are unusual in a world context. Not only may liberal, humanist thought not be all that helpful for understanding other cultures, it might be unhealthy in our attempts to live in our own. Archaeology also partakes of this cultural unease and the long duration of 4,000,000 years of human evolution does more than anything else to throw present ways of life into perspective. By concentrating on other forms of life and thought, both archaeology and anthropology can help to unpick our own.

These changes have come about within the context of a new rise to confidence and political activity by indigenous peoples. In many parts of the world it is unthinkable (not to mention illegal) to excavate sites without getting permission from local communities first. Part of the process of getting permission is an assurance that the work will be carried out in manner sensitive to local concerns which may well involve land claims, based on a continuing attachment to land. Archaeology can be seen, legitimately or not depending on your point of view, to provide evidence for a group's occupation of the landscape over the long term. It is not just anthropologists who now have to take notice of the concerns of the present and, as these concerns will be expressed in local cultural idioms, archaeologists have to be sensitive to cultural constructions of the world and the past, areas traditionally the domain of the anthropologist. Added to which not all study is by academic outsiders, with local people recording their own oral histories or sacred sites, so that there is increasing debate between western-trained academics and those with different cultural routes to the past or views of the present.

Examples of the entanglement of archaeology and anthropology to the point where they are inextricably bound together could be multiplied and will be as the book progresses. However, one last area is of vital importance and that is the need to locate the present situation within a sequence of longer-term change. Anthropologists are increasingly aware that the traditional eighteen months of fieldwork provides a snapshot of society, which it is difficult to understand in isolation. The need for historical context is especially acute in areas of the world with short written histories. For instance, in Papua New Guinea oral histories or early explorers accounts only cover the last 500 years at most out of at least 40,000 years of human occupation. The changes brought about by colonialism are impossible to understand without this longer time perspective, which only archaeology can supply. Thus there is a growing need for an archaeological anthropology and with it a framework within which dialogue between the two disciplines is possible.

One of the main aims of the book is to outline the possibilities for such a dialogue, but, in keeping with my overall historical approach, we have to set the present in a longer time perspective and this includes times when the two disciplines have ignored each other or talked different languages as well as periods of *détente*. It is to this longer-term history that I now turn.

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