

FRAGMENTATION IN ARCHAEOLOGY

People, places and broken objects
in the prehistory of south-eastern Europe

John Chapman



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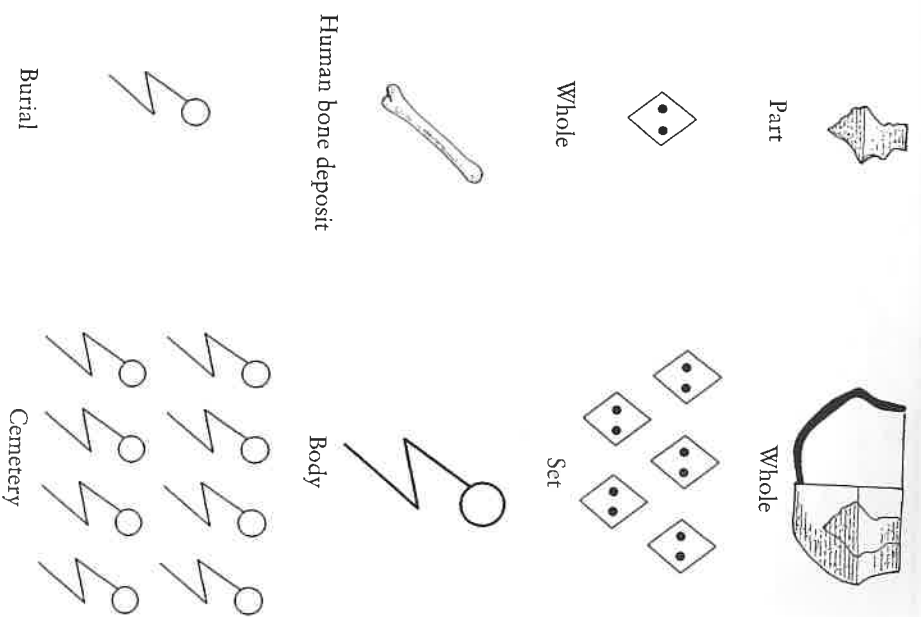


Figure 1.4 Relationship between parts and wholes, and constituent parts and sets

TWO WAYS OF RELATING

Enchainment and accumulation

One of the key characteristics of Balkan Neolithic and Chalcolithic artefacts is that, when we discover them, they are not only broken but incomplete. There are, of course, instances when the excavator finds a complete, undamaged object. And on far more occasions, a complete object is fragmented owing to later human activity, soil pressure and/or other post-depositional processes and activities. In the case of a complete pot in a grave which is found in many fragments, restoration produces a complete vessel. While damage to a complete object during excavation can occur, this type of damage can be identified and discounted. There are also many post-depositional processes of attrition, especially in biologically active soil conditions, which damage or destroy complete objects and render them partial. The signs of such attrition and erosion are usually recognisable on such artefacts.

I am referring to another phenomenon – the case of a broken object which cannot be restored to completeness because it was never deposited as a complete item. Many such broken objects possess old breaks, which can be relatively unworn, or abraded to a greater or lesser extent, depending upon pre-depositional use. How to account for the presence of broken, incomplete items in archaeological contexts?

Five explanations have been offered for this surprisingly widespread phenomenon: (1) objects are broken accidentally or through use; (2) objects are buried because they are broken; (3) objects are ritually 'killed' and deposited, either complete or in pieces; (4) objects are broken to disperse fertility throughout the settlement and beyond; and (5) objects are broken deliberately, used in relations of enchainment and then buried.

One obvious reason for the incorporation of broken artefacts into contexts of preservation is that they are broken during use or accidentally. There is a distinction between fired clay objects which may break if they fall to the ground and those of stone and bone which are not so easily broken by accident. However, there are relatively few surfaces in a NCA settlement which would be hard enough to break anything but a ceramic container. The majority of everyday tools such as polished stone axes and bone awls

which are worn or incomplete have suffered breakage or wear through use. A good example is the deposition of polished stone tools, which generally takes one of two forms: (1) broken or heavily used complete forms, either as stray finds in presumably arable land or as deliberate discard of old household objects in settlement contexts; and (2) complete objects in mint condition, found in either the relatively small number of known hoards or the mortuary domain. The first depositional category is well illustrated by the large sample of ground stone tools excavated from the Starčevo (Phase I) and Late Vinča (Phase II) occupations at Divostin, where the majority of the tools were either badly damaged through use or broken during use (Prinz 1988; for further details, see below, pp. 93–4).

The breakage or damage leading to the decision to discard objects is, however, but the first stage of the discard chain. The next decision is where to discard the damaged or broken object. If a particularly ornate trichrome painted ware vessel accidentally falls to the ground and shatters, the breakage may be accidental but the deposition of the sherds is usually anything but accidental. This is the link between breakage and (un)structured deposition (Chapman, *in press a*). Nonetheless, it is undeniable that many thousands of objects have been damaged and/or broken in use.

The second explanation of object breakage has been advanced by Meillassoux for a wide variety of special-purpose objects (Meillassoux 1968) and refined by Garfinkel (1994) in the context of so-called 'ritual burial' of cult objects in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic of the Near East. Meillassoux argues that the very existence of special-purpose artefacts, whose distribution must lie outside the 'normal' sphere(s) of circulation, would be threatened if they were introduced into general economic transactions. Hence, 'once the particular relations they express are at an end', they must be removed from circulation and 'the destruction of these artefacts dissolves the basic problem' (Meillassoux 1968). Garfinkel limits this idea to ritual objects and asks the question, 'Are items broken for burial or buried because they are broken?' Garfinkel chooses the latter (1994: 178–9): 'the formal burial of cultic objects is a solution to a theological problem: what should be done with ritual and sacred objects after they grow old, wear out and become unsuitable for ritual practices?'

This approach is buttressed by the Talmudic principle (1994: 179) that, once something becomes holy, it can no longer be turned into an object of daily use. In brief, broken ritual objects constitute 'a ritual institution for the disposal of cultic items' (1994: 180).

There are several problems with Garfinkel's explanation, beginning with the sharp distinction he makes between ritual and profane objects. Much recent archaeological theorising about ritual objects recognises that the boundary between these two categories is not so clear-cut and that there are indeed many cases where the same object can serve profane purposes in one context and ritual purposes in another (Barrett 1991, among many chapters

in the 'Sacred and profane' volume: Garwood *et al.* 1991). This objection also applies to Meillassoux's distinction between special-purpose and generalised exchange spheres, which is clearly not applicable to NCA figurines, whose contexts of deposition range across all types of site context. Second, many special finds in the Balkans were not discarded as worn out or damaged objects but were deposited soon after they were broken. Third, many figurines have been manufactured in ways which enable fragmentation to occur simply and without difficulties, suggesting that the expectation is that they will be broken during their use-life, not at its end. Finally, there are instances where figurines are broken in ways so difficult to achieve that it seems likely that they would not be 'killed off' in this way but broken in a simpler way. While it is unwise to exclude Garfinkel's explanation in principle, there are clearly many instances in which it is not the simplest explanation.

The third explanation is that there are times and places when it is necessary to 'kill' artefacts deliberately and one of the most obvious ways is to break the objects prior to deposition. In a wide-ranging work combining archaeology and ethnography, Grinsell (1960) discusses many cases of such 'killed' artefacts and lists ten reasons for this practice, including fear of pollution, repugnance at reuse and a desire to avoid association with the property of the deceased (Grinsell 1960: 476–8; see also Grinsell 1973). Similar practices are recorded for the Aegean Bronze Age by Hamilakis (1998), who discusses many examples of artefacts being 'killed' by being broken before deposition, e.g., drinking cups smashed in front of tombs. Hamilakis presents no evidence that the dead objects can be wholly restored from the deposited fragments. Grinsell mentions only a few exceptions to the general rule that the 'killed' objects can be restored to completeness: arrowhead fragments in Neolithic long barrows (1960: 485–6; 1973: 113), Bronze Age barrows in Britain with sherds deposited with the burial (1960: 486) and a fragment of a metal axe in a Bronze Age barrow (1960: 487). The same is true of Hamilakis. However, one characteristic of 'killed' artefacts is that all the parts are found together in the same deposit. When the parts are found together and can make a total object, it would be possible to interpret the practice as the killing of the object, but this is clearly not the case with large numbers of deposited fragments.

The fourth explanation derives from research on Japanese Jomon figurines which began in the last century and continues to thrive today (for a recent summary in English, see Bausch 1994).¹ Figurine research in Japan made great strides in the Meiji-period (1868–1912), especially in the writings of Tsuboi Shogoro, who was the first to recognise intentional breakage of figurines in the 1890s. Tsuboi Shogoro proposed that figurines were central to community rituals, at the end of which they lost their magic power and were discarded, often on rubbish heaps. This explanation was refined in the 1970s through the integration of the discard notion with Gimbutas'

concepts of the great goddess and female fertility. Thus, Masayoshi (1974) argued that the community rituals were summaries of the female life cycle, and the figurines, with their symbolic load of fertility, were broken and dispersed around the village, where discard in different places brought renewed life to the earth. Although supported by the very high percentage of female figurines and their deposition with places with strong female associations, this idea was criticised by Ono Miyoko as over-specific speculation but with no attempt to replace it with another explanation (in Yoneda Konosuke 1987).

The idea of the incorporation of deliberately broken objects into ritual contexts was also advanced for the Balkan Neolithic by Höckmann (1965; 1968) and by Makkay (1975; 1983). Höckmann noted that the consistency of the clay and the firing temperature of Linearbandkeramik figurines, the vast majority of which were deposited as fragments, made it extremely improbable that such breakage was accidental (1965: 4). Later, the notion of *Scherbennachen* was introduced to explain the incorporation of sherds of varying sizes into structured deposits. Makkay described this as 'a ritual breaking of vessels', which was but one type of bloodless sacrifice found in the Balkan NCA (1983: 160). However, neither author attempted to explain the meaning of such fragmentation of pottery and figurines.

Support for the pattern of deliberate breakage of figurines and their dispersal within as well as between settlements is found in Bausch's (1994) contextual analysis of the Middle Jomon figurines from the almost totally excavated Shakado complex. In the largest known sample of Middle Jomon figurines yet excavated, only one complete figurine was discovered and only fifteen refittings could be made. An important observation is that two leg fragments could be refitted from separate settlement areas (termed separate 'villages') located 230 m apart (Bausch 1994: 92). Since the Shakado complex was intensively excavated, Bausch argues against the remainder of the figurines being deposited in unexcavated parts of the site and posits instead the transfer of figurine fragments to other villages (1994: 108). She also points to other categories of ritual finds which are always or usually deposited as broken, e.g., ceramic pedestals, ceramic rim heads, pots with pierced rims and the miniature vessels (1994: 37-41).

This explanation has the merit of explaining not only intentional breakage of objects but also their dispersal in many contexts. However, the specific linkage between goddesses, fertility and figurine fragmentation does weaken the overall hypothesis, which fails to account for the breakage of other objects not so evidently or closely connected with females. But the notion of the dispersal of symbolic meaning through deposition after use is an important point which contributes to an overall explanation of broken objects.

A fifth explanation is that many NCA objects have been deliberately broken some way through their use-life, as well as near the end of their

use-life, because of the essential contribution which object fragmentation makes to social practices more widespread and less specific than the Jomon case. Before scrutinising the evidence for deliberate object fragmentation, we shall turn to an exploration of the relationships between people and objects and the potential this brings for an understanding of object fragmentation. This exploration will lead us into the key concepts of 'enchantment' and 'accumulation'.

Fragmentation and social relations

We begin with personal identity and notions of the 'individual person'. Just as the western concept of 'sex' radically changed after the Enlightenment, so the notion of the person as a distinct 'individual' is not a universal, immanent category but rather grounded in historical change. Bourdieu (1985: 12-13; 1988: 18) repudiates the universal subject as ahistorical and lacking in content. In her analysis of women's time, Davies (1990) argues that individual identity is linked to a temporal consciousness and structure which is linear and calculable. She quotes Holter's (1976) study of north European families in which she concludes that individual identity emerged historically with the establishment of modern bourgeois society, a development itself linked to the increasing importance of private property, the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries AD and the establishment of clock time (Merchant 1980). I am not claiming that these historical changes mean that there were no societies pre-1700 in which individual identity was not recognised, emphasised and valued. However, this contextualisation should prompt us to problematise the notion of the 'individual subject' in the past.

There is a commonsense assumption, widespread in archaeology and anthropology, that the physically discrete nature of the body is evidence for the unity of the person. But a central paradox of the human life cycle is the contrast between the physical identity and social changes which occur and the 'fact' that they occur to/in the 'same' person. While babies are born into a social and cultural context (as members of a clan, a lineage, a household, etc.), they are minimally differentiated one from another, inherent personality traits apart. Such babies' bodies take meaning rather than conferring it and continue so to do through socialisation. If bodies become human through the incorporation of the symbolic order, bodies can change in so far as the symbolic order changes. The very fact that identity is a social creation means that identities can and do change. But such incorporation takes time and experience – a process of active creation of personhood which is part of a set of discursive practices, material, practical and linguistic (Moore 1993). An example of creating the unity of the subject is Gullstad's (1993) discussion of the Norwegian experience of constructing the experience of a whole person and a whole family through the processes

of externalising and objectifying the idea of wholeness in the physical arrangements of the house – practices which may be more or less successful. This supports the notion that the individual subject's 'unity' is created in a capitalist context through his or her life cycle in discursive practices. However, if a different, non-capitalist, view of objects is taken as the context for the development of personhood, an alternative account may be produced.

A key starting-point is M. Strathern's (1988) outline of personhood among the Mount Hagen people of New Guinea, in which the identity of 'persons' is intimately connected to the material world in which they live – a world dominated by inalienable objects rather than possessions. In the Hagen case (1988: 14–15), social life is acted out as a gendered move between different types of sociality – a unitary individual or that unity split or paired to someone else. Hence, 'persons' become an artefact of the way in which relationships are handled through the possession and manipulation of things, especially things conceptualised as wealth or exchange (Strathern 1987: 298). In so far as objects become attached to and constitutive of persons, the main mechanism for this attachment is gender symbolisation (1987: 299). The 'gender of the gift' is Strathern's major rearticulation of Mauss's notion of gift exchange, in which gift exchange is related to personal domination in gift societies. Here the notions of inalienability and enchantment are important. For the Hagen, 'inalienability' denotes the absence of a property relationship, so they do not have alienable things at their disposal. They can only dispose of items by enchanting themselves in relations with others. Hence, enchantment is 'a condition of all relations based on the gift' (1988: 161) and is thus the means by which persons are multiply constituted. As Weiner puts it (1992: 11), inalienable things are the representations of how social identities are reconstituted through time. Such a notion of the multiple, ever-changing constitution of persons offers a challenge to the unity of the person by focusing on the relationships between people and objects.

R. Wagner (1991) has captured the essence of this alternative view in his term 'fractal person'. Wagner defines fractality in opposition to singularity and plurality – as an entity with a relationship integrally implied, a person aspiring to being individual and corporate at once (1991: 162–3). If any system of relational field identities is fractal, then kinship relations are inherently fractal; indeed, Wagner describes genealogy as an enchantment of people (1991: 162). Like Strathern (1991), Wagner extends the human-ness of persons to their exchange items, which, because they carry with them a sense of their essential unity with the body and the life-process, are 'implicated in the congruence that underlies the remaking of human form, feeling and relationship' (1991: 165).

It is arguable that the notion of the integral 'individual' is a recent concept due to capitalism, and we should be prepared to consider in prehistory the alternative of the 'fractal self' or 'dividual self' – a self at the same time

individual and collective, connected to other people through the extension of artefacts. How does the concept of fractality apply to artefacts? Before we can discuss this question, we need to outline a framework for the relationships between objects and persons.

Objectification and personification

If it was Bourdieu (1977, 1981 and many other works) who defined objectification as the institution of the social in things, it was D. Miller (1987) who developed a theory of culture founded upon objectification. Basing parts of his theory on insights from Hegel, Marx, Simmel and Munn, Miller characterises objectification as the dual process whereby a subject externalises itself in a creative act of differentiation and in turn reappropriates this externalisation through sublation (1987: 28). This productive differentiation builds upon itself, leading to the development of both the subject and culture itself through a mutually constitutive process. Importantly, Miller identifies the element of self-alienation from the subject which cultural production inevitably brings but stresses that the new form in which externalisation is returned bears the essence of the exchange relationship by which the subject develops (1987: 33, 62). He stresses too that material objects are the principal means of objectifying the sense of the past, in turn validating claims of self-development and self-created change (1987: 125). Miller also reminds us (1987: 71) of Simmel's insight that, if objectification is a precondition for culture and therefore society, then it is mediated by exchange. Finally, the case is made out for the importance of the constitution of objects, often through recontextualisation, in the construction of individual and group identities (1987: 175).

One of the strengths of this approach to humans and objects is the recognition that the two entities are distinct yet dialectically related. But, despite the increasing empirical support for Gregory's (1982: 45) contention that, in gift-economies, things are anthropomorphised, this insight does not account for the relationship between humans and objects. Wagner (1975) goes to the nub of the matter in his claim that 'in learning how to use tools, we are secretly learning how to use ourselves' (1975: 77). He quotes Rilke's dictum that tools 'use' human beings, just as toys 'play' with children. For Wagner, tool use is about the objectification of our skills as the controls which tools place on the relationship between humans and the environment. This takes us close to Bourdieu's dialectical relationship between embodiment and objectification: the embodiment of skills is inseparable from the objectification of tool manufacture – comparable to Miller's externalisation and sublation. But Wagner takes this embodiment further: he sees humans as mediators of things, as a kind of 'universal catalyst' (1975: 138); permeable to things, humans have the capability to 'become' the things around them, to make them a part of their knowing, acting being. If things are so

important, it is logical to expect humans to confer value on them. Wagner argues that all things with cultural value are 'invested' with life: they partake of the self and also create it (1975: 77). This, then, is the link between objectification and personification: valuable items take on part of the qualities of their makers, just as their makers embody qualities of skill and resourcefulness in the manufacturing process.

This blurring of the human-object boundary has important consequences for our conceptualisation of production, for, just as the value pertaining to the object is validated communally, so the life qualities invested in the object are regarded as part of the creativity of the maker in relation to a wider value-laden world. Hence, producers cannot be regarded simply as agents in a technological process but rather – to use Rowlands' (1993: 148) term – 'facilitators' in larger processes of natural reproduction. Strathern has proposed that, far from personifications in wealth objects being set up against objectifications, rather personification is one way of producing objectification, for 'objects are not created in contradistinction to persons but *out of persons*' (1988: 171–2, 176; my emphasis). Strathern's use of such terms as 'creation' and 'out of persons' betokens the reproduction of objects rather than their manufacture, touched upon earlier. If so, it is a reproduction which includes the inculcation of value into objects as the basis of objectification (Strathern 1988: 176).

If objectification is concerned with the inculcation of value in persons and things, the question arises of which values are to be construed. Amongst the enormous variability of uses to which artefacts are put, three general attributes may be distinguished which lead to the attribution of value to objects: presencing, grounding and categorisation.

Prown (1993) has argued that artefacts constitute the only class of historical events that occurred in the past but survive into the present. As authentic, primary, historical material, objects can be re-experienced, and it is in this re-experiencing that the world of the Other – other people, other objects, other values – is brought into contact with the present. It is in this sense that Weiner (1985: 210) submits that 'the object acts as a vehicle for bringing past time into the present', as a visual substitute for history, the ancestors and the immortality of human life (1985: 224). Inalienable objects have the power to define one's historical self-identity just as they confirm for the living the powerful connections between the group and the ancestors and deities (Weiner 1985: 210; 1992: 3, 11). Rawson (1993: 79) throws down a challenge to archaeologists and anthropologists alike: 'All objects have an ancestry that is as important to an understanding of their roles as are their current use and function. If we do not know its ancestry, we cannot read the history from a thing.' These examples of the multiple ways in which objects can presence the Other demonstrate why value is enshrined into material culture. In those social contexts which lack strong institutions for the permanent objectification of material and symbolic

capital, the continuous re-creation of such capital is a necessary task for social agents (Bourdieu 1990: 130) – hence, the often large quantities of objects in use and the major investment in time and effort devoted to such re-creation. While presencing is concerned with bringing the absent into focus in a particular context, the notion of 'grounding' is in some ways complementary to it. It refers to the formation of links through social action between particular artefact categories and specific contexts of social practices. Grounding is one way of adding to the place-value of a particular place (for others, see Chapman 1998), through the incorporation of the referents of symbolic meaning of presenced objects into a fixed place. In this sense, grounding is reflexive – the artefacts grounded in a place take on the symbolic attributes of the place as much as the place is enhanced by the associations of the artefacts.

If the institution of the past in things is an evident accomplishment of objects, the incorporation of present modes of categorisation is another. Once again, it is to the work of Miller (1985) that I turn for insight into the basic principles of this argument. Positing that material forms are part of the central order of cultural construction, Miller argues that, in their manifold variability as studied through style, artefacts embody the principles of human categorisation processes. While deferring discussion of the methodologies applied to particular classes of objects, I shall focus here on the distinction which Miller (1985: 10) makes between 'categorisation' and 'classification'. While the latter is considered as pertaining to the secondary level of evidence – for instance to a number of classes, as defined by producers, which are nonetheless derived from categories – the former concerns the order imposed on the world by the creation of cultural order, and is hence valuable in the study of social and material relations. In this sense, artefacts are characterised as 'simultaneously a form of natural materials whose nature we experience through practice and the form through which we continually experience the particular nature of our cultural order' (1987: 105). The embodiment of categorisation processes in objects is an important link between the world of objects and the relationships defining individuals and groups in fields of practice as objectified history.

A final aspect of the institution of the social in things concerns the question of the alienability or inalienability of goods, rephrased recently by Weiner (1985; cf. also 1992) as 'keeping-while-giving'. Weiner (1992) perceives the dynamic of exchange to reside in the challenge to exchange partners to capture someone else's inalienable possessions, thus embracing their ancestors, magic and power and transferring part of them to their own next generation. This reinforces Bourdieu's point that each exchange act is pregnant with the whole history of these persons and their relationship (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 124). In this reading of exchange, which is fundamentally opposed to acts of reciprocity, cultural reproduction is achieved through the ability to reproduce more of one's self and one's group

through time by asserting difference while defining an unchanging past. It is the success of institutionalising difference through exchanges that demonstrates an individual's ability to keep-while-giving and thereby expand one's social identity into forms of rank and hierarchy (1992: 48). Far from disguising difference, acts of reciprocity actually proclaim it! (1992: 64). This means that the processes of keeping-while-giving project political potential on to every essential exchange, with major implications for female and male producers as much as female and male exchange partners (1992: 152).

Inalienable goods of the kind which typifies enchaind social relations – keeping-while-giving (Weiner 1992) – may be contrasted with alienable goods or commodities, which lose any personal values or symbolism (Gregory 1982). Wagner elaborates Gregory's distinction into the difference between fractal and representational objects. If those exchange items are separated from the life-process which created them out of persons, they lose their fractal integrity and become 'merely wealth objects', a commodification of human values through utility (Wagner 1991: 165). It is proposed here that an alternative kind of social relationship was predicated upon those complete objects which were bartered across exchange networks beyond the local or regional context. Here, the social and physical distance between producers and consumers led to a loss of inalienability. Humphrey (1992) defines barter as a long-term strategy for the transformation of the 'meaning' of objects as they pass from one culture to another within a single barter system. In this transformation, the objects are themselves alienated from their owners but they remain recognisable as coming from a particular community. N. Thomas (1992) usefully discusses the way that barter can help solve the conceptual problem of the assimilation of an exotic innovation into a local culture by the incorporation of novel artefacts into persistently autonomous local strategies and domains. However, once the exotic is locally 'tamed', it can begin a new phase of its biography, which can incorporate a further set of more local inalienable knowledge.

The transformation of the 'meanings' of exotic objects upon entering a different social network is a problem of 'translation'. In the words of the Polish author Eva Hoffman (1991), there is always something that is 'lost in translation'; just how much is lost depends upon the 'translator'. Just as Helms (1988) has proposed the category of the long-distance specialist, who can voyage out into exotic regions and return, if not unchanged, at least unscathed, so we may also envisage individuals who act as 'translators', with the appropriate linguistic skills as well as mediating and bargaining talents. These are the persons who create successful interfaces at the edge of network distributions and on whose skills continuing exchange relations depend. The status of translators will depend on the importance of exotic objects to local social reproduction; it is certain that this changed dramatically in the course of the Balkan MNCA. It will also depend upon the variety of locally available raw materials in comparison with the total

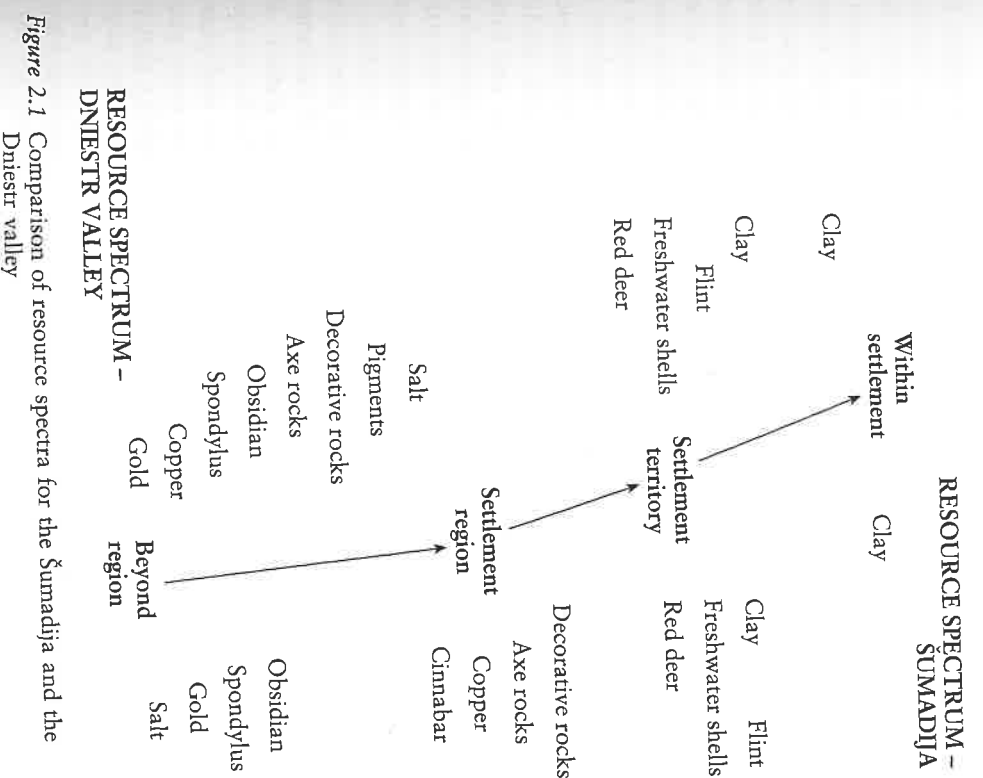


Figure 2.1 Comparison of resource spectra for the Šumadija and the Dniestr valley

raw material base utilised by local communities. In practice, there is no objection to the definition of a resource spectrum for any well-defined region. The examples shown here (Fig. 2.1) show the range of resources used by an important Neolithic settlement such as Selevac and the degree to which these raw materials were locally available in the Šumadija (Tringham and Krsić 1990a), in comparison with those used by the occupants of an important Neolithic settlement in the Dniestr valley (Tsvetk 1996). These data indicate the relative paucity of rocks and minerals in the settlement territory of a site such as Vesely Kut, in contrast to the relatively well-provided settlement territory of Selevac.

The size and complexity of the wider exchange networks in which local communities are embedded is also an important factor for translators. The

vast majority of the social networks of the Balkan MNCA fall within the spatial limits of archaeological 'cultures' as defined by D. Clarke: 'regional settlement clusters within a radius of 30–300 km' (Clarke 1978: 313). But exceptions such as the widely distributed Criş and Vinča groups illustrate the potential for network growth even in the Neolithic. Traditional theory held that 'cultures' were defined by relatively homogeneous social practices within the group which differed sharply from the social practices of other networks (Clarke 1978: 299–327). However, one of the greatest weaknesses of the traditional concept of 'cultures' is that internal variability is often as great as external differences and that aspects of internal variability were often closely paralleled in other groups. One such measure of variability is the extent to which exotic materials were widely available throughout a network. Comparison of the distribution of Vinča dark burnished ceramics with the distributions of various raw materials, available both within the network and from outside it, indicates a striking variability and little overlap in the availability of raw materials. Hence the most appropriate archaeological definition of networks is the spatial distribution of any particular class of object or raw material, followed by structured comparison of the finds from each network to assess the degree of auto-correlation.

It is assumed, *pace* Renfrew (1978a), that there is a spatial dimension to kinship relations in most NCA social networks. Hence, local exchange networks are dominated by exchange between kinsfolk. The pattern of artefact distributions in the Balkan NCA gives little support for the notion of closed marriage networks, since exchange of exotic pottery and often lithics and other materials can be documented between almost every pair of neighbouring networks. There is, therefore, a high probability that it is the overlapping marriage networks which channel access to wider, non-kinship-based exchange networks. The typical pattern in small-scale networks is a high degree of kinship exchange, supplemented by as much non-kin exchange of exotica as is required for social reproduction.

The general pattern of network change comprises three mechanisms: network densification, network linkage and a combination of the two. Densification of a network implies a sustained population growth, in which the higher population densities allow for a smaller marriage network (Fig. 2.2). Exploitation of the same suite of raw material resources in the denser networks implies one of two possibilities: a wider set of non-kin-based barter networks or an expanded suite of kin-based enchainment relations. It is probable that the complexities of enchainment across long distances may well result in a collapse of the exchange network or, at the very least, a partial reduction in size and/or complexity with a switch to non-kin-based networks.

The process of network linkage refers to the convergent development of two dissimilar social networks into a single expanded network with greater internal variation but also greater internal homogeneity than in the earlier

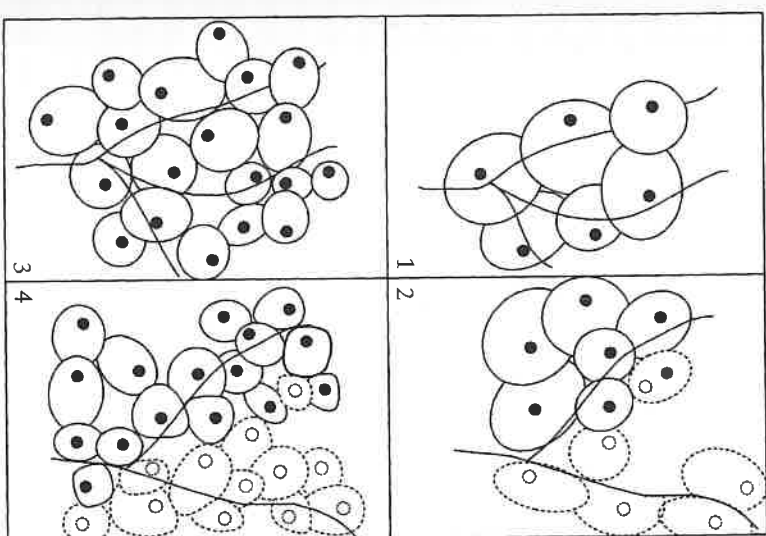


Figure 2.2 Network densification

separate networks (Fig. 2.3). A good example of this is the expansion of the Earlier Copper Age Tiszapolgár–Bodrogkeresztúr ceramic network in north Hungary to Transylvania, north Serbia, Slovakia and even southern Poland (e.g. the Malice group of the Polgár cycle: Kadrow 1990). People living in settlements with material culture differences within 100 km have one perspective on exchange relationships and the meaning of the concept 'exotic'. But if no settlement within 200 or more km is using radically different material cultural assemblages, the inhabitants will have a rather different notion of what is meant by the 'exotic'. Three changes are likely to result: (1) a restructuring of the same material culture to allow for increasing possibilities for self-definition involving exclusion (whether at the individual, household or lineage level); (2) the creation of new roles for translators, who become especially important on the newly defined edge of networks and who lose their status in the middle of the linked network; and (3) because of the size of the network, a wider range of already 'translated' exotic as well as local objects and raw materials becoming available

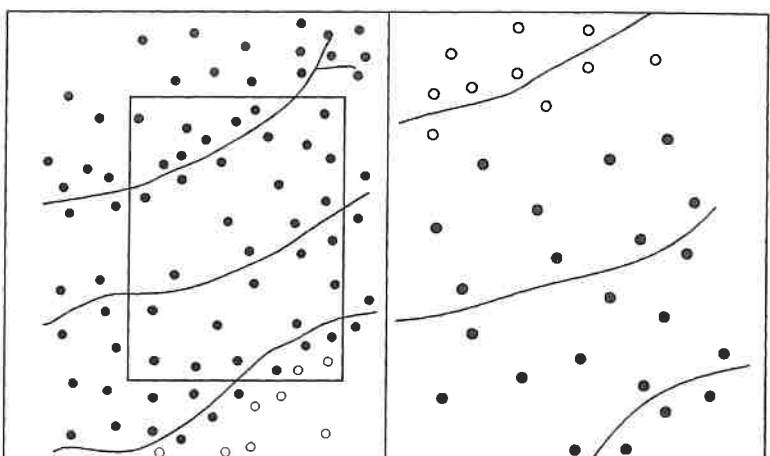


Figure 2.3 Network linkage

across the network, increasingly from non-kinsfolk who nonetheless use similar material culture.

The combination of both network densification and network linkage is both rare and significant, representing the combination of both smaller marriage networks and improved access to very large, predominantly non-kin-based exchange networks. A good example is the Karanovo V-VII/Gumelnitsa-Kodjadermen network (Price 1993), which replaces several distinct Late Neolithic regional networks in an expansion which covers a large part of the east Balkans. Again, the prediction would be that the availability of a much wider range of 'translated' exotic and local goods and raw materials would lead to increased differentiation in categorisation of humans and objects, leading to more exclusionary social practices. The expansion of exchange networks to bring much larger groups of people into contact leads to the posing of new questions about personal and social identity, which may be partially solved through the use of material culture, as well as by new strategies of inhabiting ancestral places.

It is proposed that changes in the scale and density of social networks in the Balkan NCA would have had a major impact on the circulation patterns of raw materials and objects, not least in the ways in which perceptions about the 'local' and the 'exotic' were changed. It may well be imagined that such changed perceptions would also lead to new ways of defining both self and others in relation to the flux of new social networks and the interaction of once remote communities. The role of the translators in bringing together different communities and individuals would have changed, too, with the changing networks altering the balance of local and 'translated' goods.

In the light of these formulations, what difference does the institution of the social in things make to social life? Simply put, the world of objects creates the social world as much as the converse. This mutual constitution creates an interdependence between people and things, such that the social value of the producer can never be entirely absent from an item in its local biographical voyage. However, long-distance objects obtained through barter maintain the fame of their exotic origins without such clear personal attachments, only to begin a new phase of their biography once they are incorporated into a new local cultural context. As Weiner states (1985), the life cycle of humans and the life-trajectory of things play a key organisational role in the reproduction of human communities, through the embodiment of the social in the body and the objectification of the social in things.

From enchained people to fragmented objects

The two notions outlined above – the use and deposition of deliberately fragmented objects and the enchained social relationships between persons – are not necessarily a logical consequence of each other. If an interpretative linkage between these two ideas can be demonstrated, it would help to provide an explanation of the deposition of such large quantities of incomplete NCA objects of notable social significance – an as yet unsolved, not to say scarcely recognised, problem in NCA archaeology.

It is not hard to see that social practices of enchainment using complete objects could be extended to enchainment using parts of objects. Indeed, the symbolism of *pars pro toto*, claimed to lie at the heart of prehistoric ideology (Nifu 1969: 42), is a very physical extension of enchainment, in which each part of a fragmented object stands for not only the rest of the artefact but both persons concerned with the exchange. But is there any evidence from later periods for this social practice?

The notion of tokens given for hospitality is enshrined in the Greek custom of *symbolon* as well as the Roman custom of *tessera hospitalis*, in which the two halves of a single object were kept by two parties to an agreement or a commitment. A possible Etruscan antecedent of this custom is illustrated by the surviving left half of an ivory lion, sawn in half longitudinally

and deposited in a votive deposit in S. Omobono in Rome, together with over 300 prestige goods dating to the seventh–sixth centuries BC (Cristofano 1990: 21, 129–30 and Fig. 6).² The inner face of the half lion bears the inscription of a personal name in Etruscan, linking the object to the *spurius* gens. Talalay (1987: 164–5) mentions that initiates in early mystery religions recognised each other by fitting two fragments from the same pot. An even earlier instance of deliberate fragmentation is attested in the neopalatial period on Minoan Crete by the smashing of stone vessels, especially bull's head rhyta (Rehak 1994).

Clanchy provides a later perspective on fragmentation and enchainment with his discussion of changes in legal practices in Medieval Britain (Clanchy 1993). In the Early Medieval period, it was common to exchange two parts of an object – often a knife – between two parties to a legal agreement. As written records of legal transactions grew more widespread in the mid to late Saxon period, the broken parts of the knife were attached to the two copies of the document. It was only later, when charters became more common, that objects were no longer attached to the documents. Another, more versatile kind of document was the 'chirograph', in which two copies of the same agreement were cut in half, usually in a unique, zigzag manner so as to eliminate suspicion of the legality of the document. The zigzag, or indented, line gave the term 'indenture' to such fragmented documents, which became very common in the latter Middle Ages.³ Interestingly, Clanchy notes (1988: 87–8) that it is unusual for more than one of the original parts to survive to the present day!

The breaking of an agreement in the Medieval period was also subject to material demonstration, as in the case of the breaking of straws or staffs to symbolise the rending of the feudal bond – fragmentation whose force relied upon a public ceremony (Cherry 1992: 25). An even more drastic cancellation of objects through breakage was at the death of an individual, whether a King of England or a commoner. Cherry discusses numerous examples of the cancelling of metal seals and the reuse or deposition of their fragments.

The issue of fragmentation was also a major theological debate in the Medieval period, when the significance of parts of Christ's body, fragmentary bones from saints' bodies and indeed parts of ordinary humans' bodies was discussed in terms of the Last Judgment when all partial bodies would be made whole (Bynum 1991, esp. ch. VII). The version of the Byzantine Last Judgment in which human bodies are reassembled at the end of time to form whole entities is interpreted by Bynum (1991: 26) as 'the human determination to assert wholeness in the face of inevitable decay and fragmentation'.

Laurie Talalay, the first archaeologist to attempt an ethno-archaeological explanation of figurine fragmentation, has documented a wide variety of ethnographic practices in which figurines are used and then deposited

(Talalay 1987; 1994). Figurines are used by the Bantu and the Bemba during lengthy initiation rites and then destroyed, buried or kept by an initiate. Figurines are buried with the owners after use in fertility rites among the Senufo, while zoomorphic figurines are thrown out with household refuse after increase ceremonies for Zuni herds. However, Talalay cites no ethnographic example of fragmentation and enchainment using figurines. The only example known to the author is the New Hebridean practice of the division of large wooden sculptures, or *malangan*, into two parts for safe keeping by two parties to a land transaction (Küchler 1988; 1994; 1997). This is the closest ethnographic evidence for the use of broken figurines as tokens of economic or social transactions.

There is a body of historical and a modicum of ethnographic evidence for object fragmentation as a social practice guaranteeing the validity of an agreement or a transaction. However, there is no evidence for enchainment using parts of artefacts, possibly because enchainment relations were no longer dominant in the historical period. Nonetheless, the notion that fragments of objects transmit not only the symbolism of their complete, once-intact form but also the enchainment, or fractal, connotations of past makers and owners would account for a wide variety of fragmentation behaviour. The inalienability of valued objects (Weiner 1992) would then be extended to that of fragments of objects. There is, then, a direct analogy between the way that persons' relationships are extended through the inalienability of their valued objects and the fragmentation of material objects and the transmission of fragments to different individuals in different contexts. And, as we have already seen in Chapter 1, the evidence from structured deposition demonstrates fragmentation not only in artefacts but also with human bodies.

For the remainder of the book, I shall explore the implications of the notion that enchainment is combined with object fragmentation as one of the most significant social practices in the NCA. As the data from a plethora of sites will show (see next chapter), there is much empirical support for this notion. Before turning to this, I wish to introduce a model for the origins and growth of, first, enchainment and, then, accumulation.

Foraging practices and the origins of enchainment and fragmentation

What we know of early hominid technology is effectively continuous with lithic technology and subsistence practices. Each of these areas of expertise suggests a point of origin for fragmentation and enchainment. One important consideration in the study of fragmentation is the distinction between reductive and additive technologies – a distinction which is soon blurred by combination tools and practices of fragmentation. In the beginning, however, reductive technologies used raw materials of a certain size,

which the manufacturer reduced in size to yield an end-product. Dividing the flakes from a single flint core between two or more persons is one of the simplest forms of fragmentation that can be imagined. The personal stamp of the knapper on the tool ensured that s/he would travel wherever the tool journeyed.

The other point of origin for fragmentation concerns the food quest. Ever since the butchering of dead animals, whether killed by human or by animal predators, became a common Palaeolithic practice, it is possible to argue that the fragmentation of the carcass could have acted as an analogy for the enchainment of human relations at an early stage of human development. The division of the carcass of a hunted animal provides an archetypal instance of a fractal resource, where each portion carries its own value as well as the symbolic value of the whole animal and that of the successful hunt. Depending upon the level and sophistication of the technology of food preservation, exchange of the portions of large animals, and indeed large fish such as carp and catfish, would be an important means of incorporating exchange partners into an ongoing network, which can be maintained only through constant reiteration of food exchange. Identification of such food exchanges as are suggested from anthropological data (Woodburn 1982) depends upon sophisticated faunal research. The diagnostic zone approach of animal bone analysis (Watson 1979) is more helpful for identifying such social practices than the Minimum Number of Species or the Bone Numbers approaches, as it is close to the construction of a fragmentation chain. The use of refitting techniques developed initially for lithic materials on animal bones has produced valuable indications of intra-site movement of meat portions but the application of this method is, as yet, very limited (e.g., Pincevent: Enlène and David 1992).

An important contribution to a general understanding of reductive technologies is the *chaînes opératoires* method of André Leroi-Gourhan, who defined, for each technological process, a number of stages of production, each with distinctive waste products (Leroi-Gourhan 1964). However, reduction chains are reversed by the introduction of composite tools, now known from as early as the Middle Palaeolithic (Petekín *et al.* 1993). Composite tools have two advantages: a technological advantage of replacing any part of the tool which is damaged rather than the whole artefact; and a social advantage of allowing the possibility of different persons contributing to a single tool by providing different elements. This means that an important, and often neglected, part of the operational chain is the combination or recombination of elements each made in a separate way.

In the context of forager mobility, there is an obvious motivation for such kinds of social practice – rites of departure and arrival, occasions which are built into the very fabric of hunter-gatherer social reproduction. The practice may well have become established as a rite of institution, a term used in preference to van Gennepe's (1960) term 'rites of passage'.

Criticising the latter because it ignores the social function of rites and the implied separation of those crossing the dividing line, Bourdieu (1991: 117–27) emphasises that institution concerns the sanctioning/sanctification of an established order through the integration of those on each side of the dividing line. The practice of depositing lithics and animal bones, sometimes after feasting, at the moment of departure from a seasonally occupied site offers a wider range of opportunities for classification of the persons involved in separation or travelling together, in the sense that each kind of lithic artefact and animal bone deposited is negotiable and negotiated by the living according to cultural constraints. Similarly, a return to a previously occupied site or to a place near to a place of known settlement (cf. Küchler 1994) generates a collection of cultural memories in relation to both people and places related to previous occupations. Deposition of lithics and bones which have associations with such people or are grounded in particular places could have objectified the social relations between past and present, between those on each side of the dividing line.

Additive technologies and the growth of fragmentation

The reverse direction of reduction and agglomeration is found in additive technologies, of which the main three concern textiles, fired clay and metals. It was Childe (1950) who recognised the significance of producing science in the Neolithic and the transformational qualities of producing pottery from mud, clothing from plant fibres and solid, hard metal from rocks. The additive equivalent of the operational chain is Feinman's 'production step' method, in which each successive stage of production of a pot was quantified in terms of manufacturing effort and incremental value (Feinman *et al.* 1981; cf. also Lemonnier 1993). This method provides an excellent way of analysing the value added to an artefact during multi-stage manufacture. But, like the operational chain, which stops at the smallest unit of manufacture, the production step index stops at the largest unit of manufacture – the complete artefact. What is needed in addition is a method for the analysis of the breakdown of the complete object into constituent parts. There are clearly different routes for the three main materials – ceramics, metals and textiles. For each different raw material, it will be helpful to develop a fragmentation chain to complement the operational chain.

Without disputing the enormous significance of fired clay objects when in a complete state, it could nevertheless be argued that cumulative fragmentation is one of the most useful social characteristics of fired clay – providing a material means whereby social relations can transcend time and space through presencing (Ray 1987). If we make the assumption that so-called 'domestic' NCA pottery is mostly made in the community for the community, it is likely that much pottery carried the symbolism of the household,

with its multiple aspects of cooking, eating, drinking, storing, caring and sharing (cf. Hodder 1990). It is generally accepted that the Neolithic heralded a major shift towards increasingly sedentary settlement, interrelated to a strong reliance in most sites on a restricted range of important domesticated plants and animals. In this sense, it may be thought that social practices involving the use of pottery in rites of institution tied to mobile settlement strategies may well have declined with the onset of mixed farming. However, there is a growing body of evidence that, outside the tell settlements of Macedonia and Bulgaria, Early Neolithic sedentism was often rather limited and that, in contrast, a degree of mobility perhaps not so far removed from the Late Mesolithic as had been once believed was fairly general (e.g., for instance, Whittle 1996). There are few examples of First Temperate Neolithic (FTN) non-tell houses which are as substantial, as well built and as so obviously constructed to endure as on Bulgarian FTN tells (Nikolov 1989). Therefore, we cannot rule out the likelihood that rites of institution at times of settlement abandonment and reoccupation continued to be a major source for the deposition of broken sherds well into the Early Neolithic. These constraints upon sedentism may well have also limited the emergence of institutions such as the household or the local lineage, which were perhaps more likely to have developed in conditions of greater sedentism. Bourdieu (1990) has made the point that, in the absence of institutions or in cases where they are weakly developed, the only alternative to maintaining social reproduction lies through repetitive social practices, even at considerable cost in things. It seems probable that those less sedentary FTN communities would have relied more upon repetitive social practices, including those involving pot smashing, than in more sedentary sites.

However, this is clearly not the case, given the presence of, if anything, still larger quantities of sherds on tells and stable non-tell settlements such as Drenovac, in the Middle Morava valley, Serbia (Vetnić 1974). At these more long-lived sites, there is a presumption of more complex social relations based on the transmission of local land, houses and ritual resources – a cumulative process in which longer-term expectations were interrelated to more stable social practices. The emergence of more permanent institutions – in particular the lineage and/or the household – would have been underpinned by a new combination of practices, perhaps differing in character from those in less sedentary communities. However, the heightened complexity of the new social relations would have led to greater tensions and contradictions in the more sedentary communities, probably leading to a more varied range of transactions between persons, as well as a new range of inter-personal strategies of domination and resistance.

Whether in the case of problems of continuing mobility or those of greater sedentism, the medium of pottery proved reliable and effective – not only for holding persons and groups together through the objectification of common traditions, often reinforced by symbolic decoration, but also for

providing a mechanism for the symbolism of fission and rupture. For just as complete pots may have represented integration, wholeness, group solidarity and its successful constitution, so smashed pots may have symbolised rupture and cleavage, friction leading to dissolution. In this reading, pottery would be a symbol for the fragility of human relations – sherds are as fractal as persons. The decision to keep pots whole through daily use and reuse is a metaphor for the maintenance of social relations through continual renegotiation. Just as the associations of its various uses bring an added value to a vessel, so the enchainment of fractal persons to a ramifying group of kin brings such people fame and reputation. Conversely, the rupture of those social relations characterising a less sedentary community would have elicited the response of the fragmentation of much valued pottery. But the even more striking collapse of social relations in a seemingly more stable sedentary community may well have led to the large-scale fragmentation of one of that community's important symbolic resources – pottery.

The combination of Miller's (1985) notion of pots as categories and the idea of fragmentation in pots as in persons leads to an interesting possibility – namely that different social practices involving the fragmentation of pottery and other artefact types may represent another order of cultural categorisation processes – one related to modes of integration and dissolution. Just as the accumulation of large stores of complete artefacts has important implications for social power, domination and resistance, so the scale of artefact destruction is expected to be related to different outcomes of social power struggles.

I propose that, in the FTN, the framework for understanding pottery fragmentation is tied to three interrelated factors: (1) the extent to which more or less permanent institutions have emerged; (2) the degree of sedentism in the settlement network; and (3) the extent to which successful transactions are concluded. The implications of continued mobility in the FTN can be visualised in the social practice of smashing whole pots and depositing parts of those pots in structured but extremely repetitive ways. The contradictions of increased sedentism may be seen in other kinds of social practices, through which perhaps even greater numbers of pots are broken and the sherds deposited. The context of deposition of artefacts divided up on the successful completion of a transaction requires further study. Cross-cutting these practices is the mortuary domain, in which structured deposition of whole vessels, as well as sherds, constitutes a further range of important social practices.

Metal objects, sets and accumulation

But a very different situation exists with metal objects. The key point about metal artefacts is that, unlike the vast majority of objects made of

fired clay, they were not readily broken. It is clearly not impossible to break a thin metal object, such as an awl, pin or ring, into two or more pieces; it is, however, significantly harder to break a cast axe or hammer-axe. Recycling of copper items requires not fracture but remelting followed by recasting – quite a different technological sequence from fired clay fragmentation. By contrast, gold offers different possibilities for fragmentation. Sheet gold items can be cut into pieces but only at the cost of damaging the fragments. The manufacture of a multiplicity of small gold items for combination and recombination into a variety of 'complete' ornament sets allows the continuation of relations based upon part-whole symbolism, akin to the shell ornaments of the Neolithic and Eneolithic and quite different from fired clay fragmentation. It is my contention that metal artefacts introduced a new and different kind of perspective upon the relations between part and whole by constituting new classes of whole objects, exotic because originating from beyond the settlement, intrinsically valuable because of their material (Renfrew 1986), manufactured in different ways from different raw materials and probably introduced into settlement and mortuary contexts through a different set of social practices from those responsible for fired clay artefacts.

In so far as the differentiation of artefact categories which typifies the Copper Age of south-east Europe betokens a more complex social reality than ever before, with new or emergent cross-cutting relationships which went beyond the traditional household, lineage and village ties, the increasing importance of non-enchainment social relationships becomes ever more likely. Growing occupational specialisation and the rise of inter-regional as well as regional and local exchange and ritual networks meant a wider range of ties between individuals still deeply embedded in household and ancestral relations. It is a well-known sociological process that increased social differentiation creates problems of integration (Slaughter 1984). The development of wider-ranging relations than before could remain rooted in enchainment exchange and genealogy for only so long before the complexities of the expanded relationships created serious tensions for the participants. It is argued here that the principal alternative to enchainment was the accumulation of barter objects whose exotic sources and intrinsic value underpinned their significance. It is hard to imagine that artefacts or raw materials heavily implicated in, if not bearing the full weight of, the traditional network of enchainment ties could assume a new role in symbolising integrated, complete social relations. This may perhaps explain the significance of the expanded use of an old metal – copper – and the discovery of a new metal – gold – in the Copper Age.

It has been argued that, throughout the Neolithic and Copper Age, the dominant form of social relations was constituted by relations of enchainment – whether through genealogies or exchange networks – which were underpinned by analogous social practices involving artefact fragmentation.

But, the potential for other forms of relations was always present, based upon the control and use of complete artefacts. It is in this sense that the difference in fragmentation properties between metals and fired clay items takes on an added significance. I have already cited (see above, p. 32) the distinction which Wagner makes between fractal and representational objects. If those exchange items are separated from the life-process which created them out of persons, they lose their fractal integrity and become 'merely wealth objects' (Wagner 1991: 165). It is proposed here that one of the many occasions on which this fundamental transformation in human categorisation processes occurred was the result of the increased use of copper and gold in Copper Age society. If this notion is correct, then it equates with Renfrew's new kind of prestige – a non-fractal form of prestige which was by no means dominant in all social domains even in the Late Copper Age but which opened up new possibilities for the development and control of social relationships.

What, then, of the complete objects found in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic? If the incompleteness of an object is claimed to represent the enchainment relationships of genealogy and exchange, one may expect the completeness of an object to represent different social values. If one kind of social relations in the Neolithic and Copper Age was based upon relations of enchainment – whether through genealogies or exchange networks – I suggest that they were underpinned by analogous social practices involving artefact fragmentation and that these relationships of enchainment worked at the local and possibly regional level. The use of complete objects in local enchainment relations symbolised social integration – a perhaps idealised state of harmony and/or complementarity between fractally related persons. The deposition of locally produced complete objects would signify a place/time in which it was important to emphasise integration rather than social fragmentation; this would explain why the majority of complete items were deposited in graves or special hoard locations.

The structure of hoards

It has been traditional, in NCA archaeology, to denote all finds of precious metal and all large collections of special objects by the single undifferentiated term 'hoard' (Vulpe 1975; Todorova 1981; Lichardus-Itten 1991). Although hoards manifestly dating to the Copper Age have been known from the nineteenth century (Pulitzky 1881), the hoards of the Balkan NCA are by no means as common as those constituting a huge artifactual component of the European Bronze Age (Bradley 1990). It is no surprise, therefore, that there has been a strong influence of studies of Bronze Age hoards and hoarding on NCA finds. Three concepts have been transferred into studies of NCA hoards: (1) the undifferentiated use of the term 'hoard' for a great variety of finds associations; (2) the formal-functional classification

of hoards by type of constituent object as the main research method; and (3) the tendency until recently to treat hoards as a finds class separate from other classes. It will be seen that there are objections to each of these mainstays of research into hoards.

As regards the use of this umbrella term, it seems curious to lump together in a single category the two gold discs found at Csáford (Korck 1960) and the 444 items found in a Tripolye A2 pot at Karbuna (Sergeev 1963). The issue is complicated by the notion – now accepted for later periods – that even a single object of extremely high value, such as an early La Tène gold coin, can constitute a hoard. The two common factors in all hoards are (1) the intentional deposition of (2) objects of value. *Contia* Lichardus-Ippen (1991: 757–8), who claims Neolithic hoards are primarily ritual, this principle applies as much to Neolithic hoards, such as the Čoka hoards (Banner 1960; Chapman 1983; Raczky 1994) as it does to Copper Age hoards. The identification of structured deposition as a common social practice throughout the Balkan NCA narrows the gap between hoards and other kinds of intentional deposits, necessitating the comparative analysis of hoards with other deposits, whether mortuary or domestic. The division of hoards into many formal-functional types (as in, e.g., Lichardus-Ippen 1991) may ultimately be of value but such classification overlooks the relationship between hoards and the practice of fragmentation. My aim here is to unpack the different strands of meaning of hoards and hoarding to discover their origins and growth in the Balkan NCA.

Initially, three relevant classes of object completeness can be recognised: complete objects, incomplete objects and sets of objects. Sets may be characterised as integrally related groups of individual elements, as in the examples of flints forming a composite lithic tool or beads comprising a necklace. It is apparent that the relationship between a set and its constituent parts is analogous to that between a complete object and its fragments (Fig. 1.4). The two logical relations between parts and wholes exist on two different levels but nevertheless the set can operate as an extension of the principle of the whole object. There is one obvious difference between fragments of a whole object and the elements of a set – the concept of expansion. Whereas the whole object cannot be expanded, there is evident scope for the expansion of the elements of a set. This issue relates back to the definition of a set in terms of integrally related elements. It is proposed that the concept of integral relationship is not violated in three frequent circumstances: (1) the elements are linked through similar or regularly contrasting raw materials (e.g., necklaces of alternating shell and stone beads); (2) the elements denote a formal-functional relationship (e.g., the copper tools interpreted as a woodworker's toolkit at Varna (Lichardus 1991b)); and (3) apparently disparate elements are linked in a symbolic chain of contrasts and opposites. The third category appears most problematic, since it may be difficult to exclude any collection of objects on this ground

through the claim of latent symbolic significance. However, this claim can be assessed with the help of the contextual rules governing symbolic relations in the whole community or group (cf. Tilley's interpretation of the structural principles governing the combination of rock-art motifs at Námsofen: Tilley 1991).

There are two other recurrent circumstances where objects are associated. The combination of two or more sets in a single deposit may be considered as a 'complex set'. If, on the other hand, a collection of objects does not readily fit any category of integration, but appears to represent an associated grouping of objects with less clear internal structure, then the term 'collection' would apply. Each of these terms – set, complex set and collection – comprises a particular type of hoard, each with its own characteristics and links to other social practices. The general argument is that objects made of particular raw materials in which fragmentation is less apt for enchainment relations are likely to be used and, ultimately, deposited as sets, complex sets or collections. Hence, enchainment of elements of a set is the alternative to enchainment of fragments of objects with certain kinds of raw material. Whether it was anticipated that the by-product of enchainment of sets was the possibility of holding complete objects cannot be decided. But this by-product allowed a different kind of activity – accumulation of sets of complete artefacts – in which an alternative to enchainment was the emergence of valuation of the complete objects themselves. In enchainment, value was assigned as much through the personal relationship by which the objects circulated as by the worth of the object. With accumulation, the value of the object or set of objects became more significant than the relationship of circulation. It is this alternative possibility that could be increasingly actualised through the emergence of two new kinds of materials – cast copper forms and golden ornaments.

Summary

Two ways of relating – enchainment and accumulation – were both present from the earliest farming period, when complete exotic items were of considerable importance and social ceramics were fragmented on a regular basis. The tension between personal or household accumulation and corporate kinship relations remained throughout the Neolithic and Copper Age, with one set of social practices dominant in some regions and the other important in other areas. There are many examples in ethnography of so-called 'levelling mechanisms' which control the extent of accumulation of wealth objects. It is proposed that one of the principal mechanisms in the Balkan Neolithic and Copper Age was the maintenance of social practices emphasising horizontal, corporate kin relations through enchainment.

In contrast, accumulation led to the strengthening of a new type of relationship between persons and objects which was in tension with traditional,

BROKEN AND COMPLETE OBJECTS

enchained relationships. This was constituted by the loss of the direct relationship between person and object, in which objects were created out of persons, in favour of a representation of an abstract value, such as wealth, by the object now devoid of its most intimate personal connotations. While the traditional kind of relationship between person and object, characterised by artefact fragmentation and inalienability, continued for many if not most fired clay objects, any increase in the prominence of non-fractal metal items would signal a shift in the balance between alienable and inalienable objects. The evolution of twin tracks for the deposition of complete and incomplete objects – 'representational' and 'fractal' in Wagner's terms, alienable and inalienable in Weiner's terms – led to a significantly more diverse and complex range of social practices, with specific tendencies in the mortuary domain and particular practices in the domestic arena. It is my contention that the tensions generated between traditional and emergent ways of relating had significant consequences for the development of wealthy groups and individuals in the climax Copper Age and may well have had important implications for the decline in the climax Copper Age societies of south-east Europe. In the following three chapters, the practices of fragmentation and accumulation will be explored in the realms of objects (Chapter 3), sets (Chapter 4) and the human body (Chapter 5).

In the previous chapter, five explanations were presented for the widespread occurrence of fragmented objects in Balkan NCA sites, in addition to a model for the origins of hoarding which contrasted accumulation with enchainment. Within the basic practice of enchainment, a variety of possible reasons were explored to account for object fragmentation. Although there was no way of ruling out the discard of a large number of objects after being broken through use or after completing their use-lives, the manner in which the pieces of these accidentally broken objects were discarded often indicated some form of structured deposition. This observation was buttressed by a critique of the belief that much of the archaeological 'record' is constituted by 'rubbish' and led to the development of an alternative way of seeing the material remains as still part of the nexus of social relations in which they were produced, distributed, consumed and deposited. It may be helpful to think of much discarded material as analogous to the buried bone remains of dead ancestors – as part of the common past of the living, closely connected to the living though discarded and, for the most part, unseen. An initial stage in the discussion of fragmentation is the identification of contexts of structured deposition in which object fragmentation is clearly not an accidental occurrence.

Fragments in contexts of structured deposition

In the earlier discussion of structured deposition, a recurrent feature was the inclusion of incomplete objects in these finds contexts. Perhaps the most striking examples are the four graves and two pits from Traian (H. Dumitrescu 1957, 1958), where broken sherds are associated with human burials, disarticulated human bones and animal bones. Similar deposition of sherds took place in the Lengyel pit at Bakonyzsics (parts of > 7 vessels: Regénye 1994) and the Ludanice pit at Szegszentmiklós-Vismutletp (parts of > 9 vessels: Virág 1992). It is inconceivable that the incorporation of sherds was accidental, whatever the circumstances of their breakage. In Grave I/1952 at Traian, sherds were found in five different contexts