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A Companion to Gender Prehistory

Edited by Diane Bolger

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A Companion to Gender Prehistory

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Edited by
Diane Bolger

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In memory of Elizabeth Brumfiel and Janet Spector,
inspiring feminists and pioneers of gender prehistory

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that follow. Sadly, two of these scholars, Elizabeth Brumfiel and Janet Spector, passed away during the final stages of the book's production. Their contributions to the archaeology of gender cannot be understated, and as colleagues and friends they will be sorely missed.

Diane Bolger
Edinburgh
June 26, 2012

Introduction: Gender Prehistory – The Story So Far

Diane Bolger

The production of this book has coincided quite fortuitously with the twentieth anniversary of the landmark volume *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory* (Gero and Conkey 1991), a collaborative project of prehistorians who gathered at the Wedge Plantation in April 1988 to examine their respective sub-disciplines from the perspective of feminist social theory. While valuable research on gender and prehistoric archaeology had been published during the 1980s (e.g., Conkey and Spector 1984; Bertelsen et al. 1987; Ehrenberg 1989), it was Gero and Conkey's edited volume that gave rise to gender prehistory on a larger scale by broadening its scope and expanding its theoretical and methodological frameworks. Today *Engendering Archaeology* continues to provide a rich mine of ideas and information about gender in societies of the remote past. On a less positive note, the book's continued relevance can to some extent be attributed as well to the inability – or refusal – of the archaeological "mainstream" to incorporate gender and feminist theory into research and teaching agendas; this has resulted in the persistence of essentialist narratives of the past that fail to recognize the dynamic nature of gender constructs through time and space.

The present volume, which is intended in part as a tribute to *Engendering Archaeology*'s ground-breaking achievements, provides an opportunity to survey the changing landscape of gender prehistory, to explore some of its current themes and directions, and to speculate on fruitful areas for future research. In doing so it will be useful to consider some of the major theoretical and methodological developments in gender prehistory during the last several decades, to address some of its shared concerns, and to explore some of the tensions and debates which at times seem to divide its practitioners into intractable, opposing "camps." As I hope to demonstrate, such

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debates need not be divisive, and in fact can be productive and enriching since they often generate a healthy dialogue on areas of common concern and interest and therefore serve as useful platforms for further scholarly investigation. First, however, I will briefly summarize some of the fundamental changes that have taken place within the field of prehistoric archaeology as a whole during the last 20 to 30 years. While in some respects these changes have had only a limited impact on the degree to which gender and feminist perspectives have been incorporated into teaching and research agendas in prehistoric studies, they have helped to establish gender studies as an important area of archaeological investigation and have contributed to a research climate which in recent years has become increasingly concerned with social interpretations of the past. While this is sometimes attributed to the shift from "processual" to "postprocessual" approaches in archaeology, it can equally be associated with recent developments in three important domains of archaeological analysis – diversity, scale, and context – all of which have had a significant impact on research in gender prehistory.

Recent Approaches in Prehistoric Archaeology: Diversity, Scale, and Context

Over the last few decades prehistoric archaeology has moved beyond the systems-oriented models that dominated research during the 1970s and 1980s to a diversity of perspectives that reflect a greater degree of concern with individuals, social groups, and social theory. Finer-grained methods of fieldwork, with more sophisticated means of recovering, recording, and analyzing data, have contributed significantly to this more complex view of the past, as have the multitude of specialist investigations generating detailed interpretations of landscape, environment, technology, diet, material culture, and many other aspects of social, political, and economic life. Dating methods have also been refined and improved, so that the chronological relationships between sites are more clearly understood. The range and depth of these activities have undermined the ability of broad analytical categories (such as band, tribe, chiefdom, and state, derived from social anthropology) to account for the variability of social organization in the past, and have encouraged the development of new research agendas based on social and cultural difference. Similarly, the diversity of evidence for the emergence of complex society has encouraged archaeologists to move beyond broad, generic schemes based on unilinear trajectories to more nuanced approaches that suggest alternative pathways to socio-economic complexity.

The shift in focus from general to specific and from similarity to difference underscores the importance of scale in recent archaeological research. As numerous studies over the last few decades demonstrate, greater attention to the micro-scale is crucial for looking at society from the "bottom up" rather than the "top down" (e.g., Renfrew 1984; Renfrew and Bahn 2000:chap. 5); for constructing alternative models to account for the development of wealth, power, and social inequality (e.g., McGuire 1983; Bender 1989; Price and Feinman 1995); and for understanding the variable processes by which societies developed through time (e.g., Rowlands 1989; Stein and Rothman 1994; Bolger 2008). Consequently, archaeological research has become more nuanced through its concern with particular individuals, groups, and

communities, and with the relationships between them, rather than limiting its focus to broad, monolithic categories like "society" or "culture."

Research on the micro-scale can be approached by a variety of methods. These include looking at the ways in which various sectors or groups within society functioned or changed over time (Stein and Rothman 1994); investigating the social practices of day-to-day existence (Bourdieu's *habitus*; see Bourdieu 1977); examining evidence for individuals or persons in prehistory (e.g., Knapp and Meskell 1997; Gillespie 2001; Meskell 2002; Meskell and Joyce 2003; Fowler 2004); interpreting stratigraphic evidence for gradual changes in the built environment (Tringham 1991, 2000; Papaconstantinou 2002, 2006); and tracing changes in status or identity associated with various stages of the life course (e.g., Morbeck et al. 1997; Gilchrist 1999:88–100, 2004; Bolger 2004:109–119, 2008). These and other related studies regard the seemingly mundane activities of daily life as essential for understanding the relationships between individuals, groups, and the material world, and underscore the need to draw upon theories of social change that regard people as active agents rather than passive adapters to extrinsic environmental and economic forces.

The interpretation of archaeological evidence at different scales is closely related to questions of archaeological context. The view that archaeologists should interpret the past within particular historical frameworks (see Hodder 1986:chap. 7) is now widely accepted, and contextual approaches have proved to be one of the most successful means of overcoming the limitations of broad evolutionary models of social change referred to above. While "context" in archaeology occurs in a range of dimensions, including temporal, spatial, typological, and depositional (Hodder 1986:125), it also includes the broader cultural and theoretical frameworks used by archaeologists to interpret the past. The recognition of archaeological inquiry as a reflexive process involving an interactive or dialectical relationship between the archaeologist and the evidence lies at the heart of many current research programs, and marks a radical departure from traditional "deductive" methods of archaeological inference based on empirical evidence (e.g., Hodder 1987; Papaconstantinou 2006).

Interpreting prehistoric communities within broader cultural and theoretical frameworks demands that we engage in a "comprehensive internal study of archaeological cultures" (Trigger 1989:350) in order to give greater emphasis to the social context of culture change (Price and Feinman 1995:9). The recognition that individuals and groups can bring about transformations in social organization, for example, reveals the limitations of processual models, which regard the environment as a "prime mover," compelling people to change in particular ways in order to ensure their survival. While it is important to acknowledge the constraints placed on individuals and groups by environmental, economic, and demographic forces, the greater role of social factors in current archaeological research enables us to appreciate the complexity and indivisibility of human experience, and to recognize the variety of meanings that can result by interpreting evidence within multiple contextual frameworks.

A different kind of archaeology has emerged from the focus on diversity, scale, and context outlined above. This new way of looking at the past, which includes but is not limited to postprocessual interpretations, has been applied to research on individuals, personal relations, kinship relations, social interactions, and social identities; it considers questions of status, age, gender, cognition, social memory, *habitus*, performativity, the body, and sexuality; it adopts a "bottom up" rather than a "top down"

perspective; it emphasizes temporal and spatial differences within and between communities; and it advocates a phenomenological approach centered on the active engagement of people with their surroundings. All of these perspectives fall within the general rubric of "social archaeology" since they are the direct result of human behavior and social interaction. Why then does gender-based research continue to be pursued by only a small proportion of prehistorians? Why, 20 years after its publication, is there still a need to evoke many of the challenges to the discipline so strongly evinced in *Engendering Archaeology*?

Gender Prehistory: Then and Now

With the emergence in recent years of a research climate more favorable to concerns with agency, identity, and gender, it seems perplexing and frustrating that gender and feminism are under-represented in much of the current research in prehistoric archaeology. To some degree this may be due to the influence of sociobiological interpretations, which continue to inform much of the research on early humans in paleoanthropology, archaeology, evolutionary biology, and evolutionary psychology (see Bolger 2006; Gilchrist 2009:1033–1034; Zihlman this volume). The refusal or inability within these disciplines to move beyond biologically determined perspectives naturalizes sex and gender, and continues to result in a narrative of the past that is static, timeless, and androcentric. In fact, the concept of fundamental, innate differences between males and females is a relatively recent phenomenon, the product of Western Enlightenment thinking; it is not widely attested cross-culturally (Laqueur 1990; Wright 1991), nor is it supported biologically (Fausto-Sterling 2000).[1] As indicated by the numerous papers in the current volume that raise this as an issue of central concern, the uncritical acceptance of sex and gender as natural and unchanging phenomena continues to shape much of the research in prehistoric archaeology today. Twenty years after *Engendering Archaeology*, biological differences between males and females are still widely regarded (implicitly or otherwise) as fundamental determinants of gendered behavior, both in the past and in the present.

A second factor restricting the acceptance of gendered perspectives in prehistoric archaeology lies in the persistent inequality between men and women in the archaeological workplace, the result of gender discrimination on a global scale over the course of many generations (Nelson et al. 1994). Unfortunately, this situation is unlikely to change without profound revisions to the structure of the discipline itself, which involve not only a radical reassessment of teaching and research strategies, but the adoption of more equitable policies of hiring and promotion within universities and other academic institutions worldwide (see Moser 2007 and Bolger 2008:chap. 10 for recent in-depth treatments of this topic).

Despite these obstacles, gender and feminist perspectives in archaeology have continued to challenge essentialist assumptions about human behavior; to formulate more nuanced interpretations of the past that focus on spatial and temporal differences of sex and gender constructs; and, more recently, to investigate the dynamic relationships between sex, gender, and social identity. The term "gender" itself has been given more nuanced and complex definitions in recent years that focus increasingly on its intersections with other aspects of social identity, and

stress the differences as well as the similarities between gender groups (Brumfiel 2006). Some of these developments are outlined in the following sections.

The feminist roots of gender prehistory (ca. 1978–1990)

The earliest phase of research in gender prehistory, which began in the late 1970s, was strongly influenced by feminist theory and politics associated with the Women's Movement, and by feminist research in anthropology, which had been initiated somewhat earlier (e.g., Strathern 1972; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Friedl 1975; Reiter 1975; Rohrlich-Leavitt 1975; Slocum 1975; Tanner and Zihlman 1976; Leacock 1977; Quinn 1977). Feminist archaeology at this time aimed to give greater visibility to women's roles in past societies by challenging static, essentialist assumptions about gender roles and relations, and by investigating the roots of female oppression; it was also concerned with male-female power relations within the modern archaeological workplace, citing gender inequality in the present as a major factor contributing to the marginalization of women's roles in the past. In other words, feminist scholars engaged in research on women's roles in past societies felt a direct, palpable connection between their academic endeavors and their personal experiences within the androcentric culture of their own discipline.

The first high-profile conference on women in prehistory (entitled *Were They All Men?*) took place in Norway in 1979 (Bertelsen et al. 1987). Its main aims were to establish a better understanding of the individual in prehistoric society; to move beyond male-oriented views of the past; to acknowledge the important roles of women in past societies "beyond scraping skins and stirring porridge"; and to examine the roles in prehistory of children, who, like women, have been marginalized in archaeological research (for further details, see Sørensen this volume). While the theoretical focus of gender prehistory has since moved beyond these limited aims, there is still a need to investigate the roles and relationships between men, women, and children in a way that is free from gender bias; to account for changes in the gendered divisions of labor and economic production over time; and to contest the view still held by many archaeologists that males dominated economic and political life in the past as they do in the present (particularly in later phases of prehistory with the emergence of greater social complexity). In this sense the aims and results of *Were They All Men?* and of the succession of conferences that followed (e.g., Gero and Conkey 1991; Walde and Willows 1991; Claassen 1992; du Cros and Smith 1993) continue to be relevant to research on gender prehistory today.

Equally important at this time was a critical essay by Margaret Conkey and Janet Spector, "Archaeology and the Study of Gender," which posed a powerful set of challenges to traditional archaeological interpretations of the past (1984). In it they argued that androcentric bias and Western ethnocentrism have continually distorted our understanding of men's and women's roles and have resulted in static views that fail to acknowledge temporal and spatial variations in gender constructs. Only by placing gender and feminist perspectives at the center of archaeological interpretation, they maintained, is it possible to formulate theories about past gender relations that avoid unmediated, essentialist assumptions. Given the fact that many of these concerns persist in much of the research in prehistoric archaeology today, Conkey and

Spector's arguments for explicitly incorporating feminist theory into archaeological interpretation remain fundamentally important to current archaeological research on gender.

In terms of theory, the most important contribution made to gender prehistory during this early phase of feminist research was its distinction between sex and gender, a division intended to distinguish the physical characteristics of men and women (regarded as static and biologically based) from their social, economic, and political roles (regarded as variable and culturally constructed). Through archaeological investigation variations in gender roles could be analyzed over lengthy temporal spans. Central topics of concern for gender archaeologists at this time were the recognition of women's central contributions in past societies; the investigation of women's status relative to men; and the effects of social complexity and patriarchy on women's roles in early states. The focus of much of this research was directed at making women visible in the remote past, as well as critiquing and revising previous scholarship which had undervalued women's roles. Differences between women, including those of ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, and religion, did not figure largely in these discussions; nor was there a great deal of concern with the possible existence of ambiguous or multiple genders. As we shall soon see, these topics became focal points of research during the 1990s.

Recent approaches in gender prehistory (ca. 1990–present)

Gender prehistory since the early 1990s has addressed a broad range of themes and issues through a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. Like earlier feminists, gender archaeologists today recognize the importance of "deep time" for documenting long-term trajectories of social change, and stress the value of context for revealing the dynamic nature of gender in the past. One of the main concerns of Third Wave feminism is the connection between gender and other aspects of social identity, as can be observed in the various means by which past cultures constructed gender differences, not only between men and women, but among women of various classes, ages, religions, and ethnicities.[2] A second major focus of Third Wave research has been an attempt to move beyond binary gender categories and to consider evidence for ambiguous and multiple genders.

Certainly one of the most important research strands in gender archaeology in recent years has been its focus on the gendered body. Much of this research reflects the influence of social theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu (1977), whose concept of *habitus* fits well with the small-scale focus of current archaeological research; Michel Foucault, whose three-volume work on sexuality (1981) explored the graphic and often violent ways in which human bodies have been subject to social manipulation and physical violence in various historical circumstances; and especially Judith Butler, whose ground-breaking work on sex, gender, and bodily experience (1990, 1993) has generated a radical re-evaluation of earlier approaches to gender, including, most importantly perhaps, a rejection of the sex/gender dichotomy. While most current approaches in gender prehistory maintain a social constructionist perspective with regard to gender, the earlier view of sex as a fixed and stable category has been fundamentally challenged. Butler's concept of sex as a volatile social construct has generated considerable research on gender ambiguity, multiple genders, sexuality, and queer identities, topics which were rarely investigated by gender archaeologists in earlier

decades. Queer theory has emerged during the last decade as one of the most interesting and socio-politically informed aspects of gender prehistory, providing an important means of investigating the conceptual links between gender, sexuality, and other aspects of social identity in past societies (e.g., Dowson 2000; Voss 2000, 2008; Alberti this volume).

Despite the wide range of approaches adopted by gender archaeologists in recent years, no single theory or "school of thought" has risen to a position of pre-eminence. On the contrary, as Conkey and Gero noted in their introduction to *Engendering Archaeology*, "feminist reasoning insists on the relevance and importance of multiple perspectives" (1991:22); this view has since been echoed by other gender archaeologists (e.g., Wright 1996:15; Conkey 2003:873; Nelson 2006; Gero 2007; Wylie 2007; Bolger 2008:352–355) and is linked to the anti-hierarchical nature of feminist research and its tolerance and promotion of dissenting viewpoints. In addition, as argued earlier in this chapter, considerations of diversity, scale, and context, which give greater emphasis to differences within and between prehistoric communities, have become central concerns in archaeological research in recent years and are embedded in the views expressed by many of the authors in the present volume.

This more positive climate helps to account for the extensive breadth and number of publications on gender archaeology since the early 1990s. While it has arguably not succeeded in issuing gender studies fully into the mainstream of archaeological research, it has served to re-frame traditional interpretations of early human societies along more gender-sensitive lines, both in publications and in university teaching curricula (Wright 1996:chaps. 7–9; Bolger 2008). Most prehistorians today make some attempt to avoid the distorting "lenses of gender" (androcentrism, gender polarization, and biological essentialism, as defined by Bem 1993), and gender archaeologists are continuing to develop new methods for investigating the ways in which past societies defined gender roles, constructed gender identities, and naturalized or legitimized gender differences; much of this research is being conducted within the framework of postmodern feminist theory.

What then remains of earlier archaeological research on gender, which was grounded in feminist theory and active political engagement? Have "postmodern" gender archaeologists lost the vital connecting thread offered by earlier feminist approaches in the attempt to construct a more diverse and all-embracing discipline of gender prehistory? Have they sacrificed more critical and political "outsider perspectives" for the safer avenues of academic legitimacy and institutional acceptance, as some have argued (e.g., Engelstad 2007)? And is there any way for the diverse currents of thought embodied in present debates about gender versus feminism to find a common ground?

Gender and feminism: Another binary division?

In this section I explore some of the tensions between Second Wave and Third Wave approaches in gender prehistory as they have emerged in recent years on various theoretical, methodological, and political fronts.[3] I also consider the degree to which the original aims of gender archaeology, with its close association to feminist social theory and its strong commitment to feminist political engagement, have been affected by the emergence of postmodern feminist theory. Finally, I attempt to identify areas of

common interest to all archaeologists currently engaged in gender research in an attempt to bridge what is regarded by some as an ever-widening gap between Second and Third Wave perspectives in gender archaeology.

In a recent account of the development and decline of K.A.N., the association of women archaeologists founded in Norway in the late 1970s and recently dissolved, Liv Helga Dommasnes expresses deep regret at the transformation of "women's studies" into "gender studies" during the 1990s (2009:5). Her concerns, which are aimed not only at gender archaeology in Norway but across Europe and America as well, raise several important issues with regard to the current state of gender prehistory: first, whether Third Wave approaches are intended as replacements for or additions to "traditional" feminist approaches; second, whether Third Wave approaches have lost the "cutting edge" of their Second Wave feminist predecessors; and finally, whether the aims and methods of "gender archaeology" and "feminist archaeology" have diverged to the extent that they no longer share a common goal. While Dommasnes maintains that she is not opposed in principle to new approaches in gender archaeology, she firmly believes that the critical impact of feminist research is substantially diminished when gender is regarded as only one of many analytical categories of social analysis, and she advocates an archaeology of gender that is more fully engaged with feminist thought (2009:9).

More critical still of postmodernist approaches in gender archaeology is Ericka Engelstad, who, like Dommasnes, believes that gender studies should be situated exclusively within the framework of feminist theory (2007). She cites British gender archaeologists in particular for polarizing Second Wave and Third Wave perspectives and for ranking the latter above the former. Moreover, she attributes what she considers to be the postmodernist rejection of Second Wave feminism to its fear of marginality, its aversion to political engagement, and its abandonment of feminist values (2007:223–226). For Engelstad the postmodern desire to "mainstream" gender stems from the need to conform to "androcentric, establishment norms" while "the political and intellectual foundation of engendered archaeology lies in doing archaeology as a feminist" (2007:229–230).

While the questions raised by Dommasnes and Engelstad are important, their extremely critical attitudes toward Third Wave approaches in gender archaeology represent a minority viewpoint. Another, larger group of feminist archaeologists shares Dommasnes' and Engelstad's concern with what they perceive to be a lack of feminist political engagement in gender archaeology today (e.g., Conkey and Gero 1997; Wylie 2007), but they are more positively disposed to Third Wave perspectives and have concertedly aimed to locate areas of common ground. This less divisive stance takes a broader view of the aims and goals of gender prehistory and firmly advocates the concept of "multivocality" referred to earlier; in addition, it suggests that gender archaeology as a whole may not be as polarized as it sometimes seems. But what about the political dimension of gender research? Are Engelstad's and Dommasnes' opinions concerning the lack of political engagement among postmodern feminists justified? Has gender archaeology become a safe, mainstream establishment enterprise? Or have archaeologists engaged in Third Wave research shifted the goalposts by engaging in new forms of political struggle?

Since much of the recent research in gender prehistory has moved beyond critiques of gender bias and androcentrism and is no longer as concerned with issues of female

visibility in past societies, it is probably true to state that Third Wave perspectives are not as deeply focused on women per se. Concerns with women's visibility in the past and equity in the modern workplace are still of considerable importance to all feminist and gender archaeologists; however, issues of gay and lesbian rights and challenges to heterosexist orthodoxy have emerged as major issues in gender research (Voss 2006:389–390). For many Third Wave feminists, the concept of sex as a volatile social construct serves as an important vehicle for challenging heterosexist bias in much the same way that earlier Second Wave research challenged androcentric bias (e.g., Dowson 2000; Voss 2000, 2008; Geller 2009; Alberti this volume). This suggests that although the current political aims of gender archaeologists may have shifted, their level of political engagement has not diminished.[4]

While some feminist archaeologists continue to be highly critical of Third Wave approaches on the grounds that their concern with complex and multiple identities obscures or undermines the original aims of gender research, the conceptualization of gender in much Second Wave research has itself been criticized for failing to distinguish between women of different classes, ages, religions, and ethnic backgrounds, who, it is argued, are as likely to have experienced gender differently in the past as they do today (e.g., Gilchrist 1999, 2004; Meskell 2001; Díaz-Andreu et al. 2005).[5] The belief that a narrow feminist agenda by itself may not be sufficient for understanding the complexity of gender as a social category or for charting its variability through time and space, is a view that has been expressed by a number of archaeologists in recent years (e.g., Brumfiel 1992; Gilchrist 1999, 2004, 2009; Meskell 2001; Pyburn 2004; Joyce 2008; Bolger 2008; Sørensen this volume). While drawing upon the ground-breaking contributions of feminist research during the 1970s and 1980s, and acknowledging the fact that Second Wave feminism created the conditions under which Third Wave approaches could emerge, they maintain that the initial focus on androcentrism and women's visibility has been productively expanded in recent years by more nuanced and complex approaches to gender which focus on difference. For many gender archaeologists today, "doing research as a feminist" means not only making women visible and rejecting essentialist narratives of the past, but investigating other aspects of identity that overlap with gender in order to reveal its richness and complexity.

In a recent article, Alison Wylie outlines some of the shared concerns of those currently engaged in gender research in the social sciences by citing four common objectives: (1) to address questions of women and others oppressed by gender inequality; (2) to ground research in the situated experience of women and those marginalized by conventional sex/gender structures; (3) to abide by ethical approaches which are accountable to research subjects and to implement "egalitarian forms of collaboration of knowledge production" in order to contest the hierarchical tendencies in most social science research; and (4) to acknowledge the importance of reflexivity, contingency, and context in research methodologies (2007:211). These objectives apply equally to Second Wave and Third Wave perspectives and thus furnish a substantial degree of common ground for all scholars engaged in archaeological research on gender today.

As stated earlier, one of the most important areas of common concern is feminism's commitment to non-hierarchical modes of research and a long-standing belief in

multivocality, both of which address the form as well as the content of gender research. In addition, debates concerning archaeology's "ownership" of the past (e.g., Silberman 2003) challenge traditional, hierarchical structures of fieldwork in which the director of a field project (normally a white European or American male holding a prominent position at a university or other academic organization) becomes the sole authority for the interpretation of excavated remains. While many of the traditional structures of the discipline are beginning to change, the modern academic establishment continues to pose significant obstacles to the promotion of women and other minorities: clearly the struggle for equity in the archaeological workplace still has a long way to go.

Other areas of common interest that have emerged in recent years involve the spatial, temporal, and contextual variables discussed earlier in this chapter (see also Gilchrist 1999, 2004; Sørensen 2000; Joyce 2008; Bolger 2008, 2010). As Joyce observes, "By insisting that the specific spatial and historical context of the traces of past human lives matters, we will continue to avoid generalizing local lives as uniform human life. By pursuing all the kinds of evidence that can be developed from even the most unprepossessing sites we will build up a scrupulously detailed image of material constraints and possibilities experienced by people at different points in time" (2008:130). The view of gender as a dynamic social category that varies through time and space is perhaps the most important contribution that can be made to gender studies by prehistoric archaeology since it demonstrates that modern Western gender constructs are not the inevitable result of social practices and/or biological differences occurring in the remote past (Meskell 2001; Joyce 2008:13–14; Bolger 2010:523–524). In this sense Sørensen's statement that "archaeology should not simply borrow its understanding of gender from another discipline [...] it must explore and develop how it, as a distinct discipline [...] understands gender" (2000:40) is extremely relevant.[6] Regardless of their particular theoretical or methodological approaches, it is important that prehistoric archaeologists continue to acknowledge the need to promote and develop new research agendas that draw upon the strengths and evidence of their own discipline.

Intersectional analysis: A "third way" for gender prehistory?

In the preceding pages I have argued that the breadth of research being undertaken by gender archaeologists today cannot be ascribed simplistically to divergent "schools" or "camps." In fact, there is a great deal more common ground than would initially appear to be the case. With this in mind, I conclude this section by suggesting a viable means for furthering links between Second and Third Wave research in gender prehistory: intersectional analysis.

Intersectional analysis (or intersectionality as it is sometimes referred to) has emerged over the last ten years as a major focal point of research among feminists from a wide range of disciplines (e.g., McCall 2005; Phoenix and Pattynama 2006; Davis 2008).[7] It aims to explore the connections between "gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power" (Davis 2008:68). While few of its key components are new to gender archaeology, it provides a practical means of linking the traditional feminist focus on women and the postmodern concern with difference, diversity, and complex identities.

According to Davis, the current success of intersectionality is due to its ability to convince feminists that a focus on difference will not make feminist theory obsolete or superfluous (2008:72). Whether or not the "mainstreaming" of difference in feminist theory is sufficient to satisfy all feminist critics of Third Wave approaches in archaeology remains to be seen, but at the very least it offers an alternative path for those not wishing to be pigeonholed into sharply polarized research agendas, and for those who seek common ground with other archaeologists interested in the interfaces between gender and other aspects of social identity. While the term "intersectionality" has not explicitly been adopted by the contributors to this volume, its underlying concepts are consistent with the approaches adopted in many chapters, suggesting that it already forms the basis for current interpretive frameworks and that it is likely to serve as a productive platform for research in the years to come.

A Companion to Gender Prehistory

A Companion to Gender Prehistory aims to provide students, scholars, and the interested public with a comprehensive and accessible overview of the major theoretical developments, methodological approaches, and political debates in the field of gender prehistory from its beginnings in the late 1970s up to the present day. Contributors have been chosen specifically for their expertise in the particular topics or regions they have been invited to address. Each chapter is intended to furnish a compressive and concise overview of research in a particular region or theme; to provide a critical analysis of those developments; and to outline fruitful directions for future research.

The book's specific focus on prehistoric archaeology is a deliberate choice resulting from a variety of considerations. First, the lack or limited existence of written records from prehistoric contexts imposes particular constraints upon our methodological approaches; while some would argue that the lack of written sources severely hampers our ability to understand the past, others believe that it imposes fewer restrictions or distortions on the evidence, particularly as writing in early societies was a prerogative of upper-class elite groups and therefore sheds little light on the lives of the majority of the population. Either way, the lack or limited existence of written sources compels archaeologists to consider indirect and multiple lines of evidence when attempting to make inferences about gender in the past. Second, a concern with gender in prehistoric contexts, with its focus on long-term social developments, is important for demonstrating the volatility of sex and gender during the earliest periods of human occupation. As a result, gender fluidity thus becomes the norm rather than the exception – in sharp contrast to the more rigid gender ideologies of the modern industrialized West. Acknowledgement of the temporal and spatial variability of gender in "deep time" provides a powerful argument against the inevitability of the androcentric and heterosexist norms of the present. Finally, a focus on prehistory facilitates our understanding of gender constructs within and between different regions and landscapes in prehistory, enabling readers to more readily compare and contrast the various interfaces between gender and other aspects of social identity in different parts of the globe at a time that antedates the emergence of modern nation states. This encourages research on gender in a more objective climate, free from constraints of modern political and national agendas.

Structure and contents of this volume

As indicated in the table of contents, the book is divided into two parts (Thematic Perspectives and Regional Perspectives), each of which comprises three sections. The chapters in Section 1 address areas of current scholarly interest in gender prehistory: gender and human evolution (Zihlman); gender, complexity and power (Hutson, Hanks, and Pyburn); the archaeology of embodiment (Bulger and Joyce); queer prehistory (Alberti); and the future of gender in prehistoric archaeology (Conkey). The chapters in Section 2 address the connections between gender and various types of prehistoric material culture: rock art (Hays-Gilpin); lithics (Finlay); ceramics (Bolger); and textiles (Costin) while those in Section 3 focus on gender identities and the gendered body: gender and personhood (Marshall); bioarchaeological approaches to the gendered body (Sofaer); figurines, corporeality, and gender (Bailey); and goddesses in prehistory (Goodison and Morris). Sections 4–6 offer critical reviews of major developments in gender prehistory within particular world regions. The chapters in Section 4 provide overviews of gender in the prehistory of Africa and Asia: North Africa (Barich); Sub-Saharan Africa (Wadley); Coastal East Asia (Nelson); East Asia and Eurasia (Linduff and Rubinson); and Southwest Asia (Bolger and Wright). Those in Section 5 examine gender in European prehistory: Northern Europe (Sørensen); Eastern Europe (Chapman and Palincaş); Southwest Europe (Díaz-Andreu and Montón-Subías); Great Britain (Edwards and Pope); the Central Mediterranean (Whitehouse); and Greece and the Aegean (Hitchcock and Nikolaidou). Finally, the chapters in Section 6 focus on gender in the prehistory of the Americas and the South Pacific: the Eastern United States (Claassen); Western North America (Kehoe); Mesoamerica (Brumfiel); South America (Vogel and Cutright); and Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the South Pacific (De Leiuen).

While the scope of the volume is extensive, allowing for broad thematic and geographical coverage, a few regions have not been included (e.g., South Asia and Central Europe; see Sinopoli (2006) and Whitehouse (2006), for recent summaries of gender archaeology in these regions). In addition, there are several thematic topics which do not appear as dedicated chapters. These include: (1) gender and subsistence, which are difficult to discuss in general terms and are therefore given separate treatment in each of the regional chapters of Sections 4–6; (2) gender in the disciplinary culture of archaeology (but see Hutson 2002; Smith and O'Donnell 2006; Moser 2007; Bolger 2008:chap. 10; and relevant sections of Conkey, De Leiuen, Díaz-Andreu and Montón-Subías, and Sørensen in this volume for recent coverage of this topic in various regional and temporal frameworks); (3) the treatment of gender roles in archaeological museum exhibitions (for a recent consideration, see relevant chapters in Levin 2010); (4) gendered perspectives in the classroom (for treatment elsewhere, see Conkey and Tringham 1996; Romanowicz and Wright 1996; and Hendon 2005); and (5) gender prehistory in the popular media and visual arts (e.g., films, television, websites, popular magazines; see Hurcombe 1997 for a critical overview). While topics 3–5 have not been covered in any depth, either here or elsewhere, they are important for assessing the ways in which gender roles and identities in prehistoric contexts are interpreted and portrayed in the public domain and offer particularly fertile ground for future research.

Current directions in gender prehistory

A close reading of the chapters that follow reveals a number of common themes and areas of concern which are worth highlighting here. First, and possibly foremost, since it is echoed in just about every chapter of the book, is the need for archaeologists to confront a number of false assumptions concerning gender, in the present as well as in the past. Of particular concern is the continued widespread – and unsubstantiated – belief in the temporal and spatial universality of binary divisions of labor, both in terms of subsistence strategies (e.g., male = hunter, female = gatherer) and just about every aspect of material culture (lithics, pottery, textiles, etc.). Traditional interpretations of settlement evidence (particularly the interfaces between gender and domestic space) also pose considerable problems for those wishing to interpret the past without recourse to essentialist assumptions, leading some authors (e.g., Edwards and Pope this volume) to avoid a consideration of settlement evidence entirely. These concerns indicate that the long-standing critique of androcentric bias in archaeology, initiated during the 1980s and early 1990s (e.g., Conkey and Spector 1984; Gero and Conkey 1991) cannot be dismissed as a "done deal," even by those primarily engaged in Third Wave approaches.

A second important area of common interest evident in many chapters of the present volume is their adoption of a "bottom up" rather than a "top down" approach that treats evidence for gender constructs contextually, on a case-by-case basis. This has resulted in more nuanced interpretations of gender that highlight regional and temporal differences in gender roles and relations, and that challenge unilineal models linking increased levels of socio-economic complexity to a decline in women's status. The limitations of earlier, processual models in archaeology, which tended to focus on large-scale cultural systems, are underscored by many authors in this volume; while some are also sceptical of postprocessualism's relationship to feminist research, there is a general agreement that postprocessual approaches have fostered the growth and development of gender archaeology during the last few decades and have facilitated its greater acceptance in academic circles.

A third area of common concern, and one which is related to the critique of binary modes of gender analysis mentioned above, is a recognition of the existence and importance of multiple genders in prehistory. Although this aspect of gender research is considered to be of central importance by many of the authors in the present volume, it is also cited by authors in Part II as the most under-developed area of research in just about every world region. This may be due in part to the difficulty of recognizing third gender individuals in prehistoric contexts that lack written evidence; but it also demonstrates the reluctance of many prehistorians to move beyond the binary categories of male/female with which they are more familiar. One strategy for circumventing the binary straightjacket, and one which has been adopted by several authors in the volume (e.g., Alberti, Bulger and Joyce, Marshall) is a consideration of gender from the perspectives of embodied subjectivity, personhood, and lived experience – not an easy task for prehistorians, but one which has met with a considerable degree of success elsewhere (e.g., Meskell 2002; Meskell and Joyce 2003; Joyce 2004).

A final area of concern expressed in a number of chapters is the need for archaeologists to base their interpretations of gender in mortuary contexts on skeletal material that has been sexed by osteoarchaeological analysis rather than through associated

grave goods. As most excavation reports in earlier decades (i.e., before ca. 1950), and even some in more recent decades, did not regularly include the scientific study of human remains, there is a pressing need to re-examine existing collections of human remains in order to place the current study of gender, the body, and mortuary ritual on a more secure footing. Equally important in current research programmes is the use of DNA, stable isotope analysis, and other types of scientific investigation in order to bring the study of the gendered body and the analysis of mortuary remains fully into the twenty-first century.

In addition to demonstrating areas of common concern, the chapters in this volume contain a number of theoretical and methodological differences. One notable example concerns the use of ethnographic evidence as an analogy for past behavior. In general there is greater reliance on ethnographic data in regions where some degree of cultural continuity has been maintained between past and present societies (e.g., parts of Africa, East Asia, and the Americas). In reference to gender archaeology in the western sector of North America, for example, Kehoe states that "ethnographies are our prime source of interpretive models and our final recourse" (chap. 26:545). Ethnographic evidence also tends to play a more significant interpretive role in cases where archaeological evidence is extremely limited, as in studies of gender in early human populations pre-dating the manufacture and use of stone tools (e.g., Zihlman this volume). However, a more critical attitude toward the use of ethnographic analogy in archaeological interpretation is expressed by the majority of contributors. Brumfiel, for example, maintains that archaeological evidence reveals greater variability of gender relations than ethnohistorical or twentieth-century ethnography since it reveals both diachronic and synchronic variations (chap. 27:577); Bolger maintains that "archaeological research, when based unreflectively on broad ethnographic analogies, serves to distort rather than clarify gendered patterns of task differentiation" (chap. 8:165); and Hays-Gilpin, quoting Helskog (2001:248), observes that "analogies do not explain specific prehistoric traditions and processes or how the phenomena came about" (chap. 6:125). Scepticism among prehistorians with regard to use of ethnographic data, even when applied judiciously, has increased significantly over the last decade, as a concern with contextual analysis has increased. While ethnographic evidence will no doubt continue to play a role in gender prehistory in the coming years, recent concerns with variability and context in archaeological interpretation are likely to diminish that role to some extent.

Methodological differences, such as the use of ethnographic evidence, and theoretical debates concerning gender and feminism referred to earlier in this chapter, need not be divisive and in fact can help to generate lively and healthy debates; they can also suggest new directions for future research. Most significantly in this regard, the contributions by the authors in this volume reveal the absence of a single or dominant "school of thought" in archaeological research on gender, highlighting once again an adherence to feminist principles of non-authoritarianism. They also reflect the more complex, nuanced approaches currently being adopted in current research programmes as gender prehistory, and archaeological research in general, engage more fully in the social aspects of the past. By drawing upon the richness and variability of the prehistoric record, and by interpreting archaeological evidence contextually "from the ground up," archaeologists are effectively challenging modern Western narratives of the past that regard gender constructs as static, eternal, and rooted in deep time.

In doing so they demonstrate the ability of gender prehistory to construct a past in which "inequality on the basis of sex was not inevitable, and thus is not a natural and unavoidable feature of contemporary life" (Joyce 2008:130).

NOTES

1 Wylie's assertion 20 years ago that "the centrality of essentialist assumptions to archaeological theorizing is clearly one reason why archaeologists have not taken any strong initiative in developing the resources necessary for studying gender" (1991:34) remains a valid observation today.
2 One of the first to do so was Elizabeth Brumfiel, whose article "Breaking and Entering the Ecosystem: Gender, Class and Faction Steal the Show" (1992) was the subject of her Distinguished Lecture to the American Anthropological Association in 1991.
3 I use the "wave" paradigm here with some reluctance as it tends to polarize feminist perspectives on gender rather than view them as part of an interrelated spectrum (see Nelson 2006:157–158; Wylie 2006; Engelstad 2007:223–24). While the terms "Second Wave" and "Third Wave" can be useful for characterizing the general trajectory of gendered approaches in prehistoric archaeology from the 1970s to the present, such categories are highly abstract – in fact, very few gender archaeologists would wish to be pigeonholed into either of them.
4 As Gilchrist has recently observed, "In common with research on sex and gender in all disciplines, archaeology retains the political responsibility to challenge narratives that present gender as universal, timeless and inevitable" (Gilchrist 2009:1044).
5 For a theoretical critique of this issue from a non-archaeological perspective, see Stanley and Wise (2000).
6 For similar views on the need for archaeology to establish its own methodologies for investigating gender, see Conkey and Spector 1984:13 (who refer to the "tyranny" of the ethnographic record); Roberts 1993; Conkey and Gero 1997:423; Meskell 2001:189, 192; and Joyce 2008:chap. 1.
7 The term was introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) to address the particular experiences and struggles of black women whose complex identities were not sufficiently addressed by either feminist or anti-racist discourse.

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PART I Thematic Perspectives in Gender Prehistory

SECTION 1

Current Themes and Debates

CHAPTER 1

Engendering Human Evolution

Adrienne Zihlman

Prior to the 1960s there was little discussion about social life in prehistoric times, much less an examination of women's roles. Up to this point the cultural ideals of the 1950s prevailed in the wider society and were unquestioned within anthropology: women as stay-at-home moms with men bringing home the bacon, a sexual division of labor, and the nuclear family were all regarded as "natural" and part of an ancient pattern. During the 1960s advances in several areas of research revolutionized our understanding of human origins. This evidence and a growing social awareness of women's roles influenced anthropologists to reconsider the evolution of human behavior and where women fit into the picture. Hence, the 1960s and 1970s gave rise to an altered view of human evolution that focused on female primates, women cross-culturally, and women's roles in the evolutionary past.

The 1970s saw a scientific as well as popular flowering of articles and books about women that shifted the default setting away from men. "Woman the Gatherer" became the counter to "Man the Hunter" and identified women as central in anthropological theory. The discussion of gender continued and expanded in several fields during the 1980s and 1990s through research, conferences, and publications. At the same time, counter forces challenged, undermined, and ignored evidence that gave balance to women's roles. Darwin's ideas on sexual selection resurfaced with female choice of mates although he, along with later researchers, maintained an emphasis on male dominance. Sexual selection and male-male competition became centerpieces for the then new field of sociobiology, which narrowed evolution to "reproductive strategies."

Sometime in the 1990s, "feminism" developed into a pejorative term, especially among women scientists, and researchers in their publications shied away from mentioning gender and connecting women to any interpretations of activities during human evolution. References to gender diminished so that the behavior of ancient hominids became "genderless," and ultimately retained males in the central position.

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As we go forward, a wealth of research emerging in the twenty-first century and a life history framework hold renewed potential for incorporating gender into evolutionary reconstructions. An appreciation of the history and limitations of the fossil and archaeological records can help steer clear of androcentrism and untenable assumptions about the past. Recognition of the complexity of human and nonhuman primate societies is replacing one-dimensional explanations of past societies. Membership then and now consists of all ages, both sexes, and more than two generations. When human biology goes beyond reproductive function and addresses the intersections with sociality and cultural practices, a less simplistic and more balanced approach to gender and human evolution becomes possible.

Historical Background: Evidence for Reconstructing the Past

The human lineage originated about 5–6 million years ago and diversified into many species that represented different stages of anatomical and behavioral development through time. As other species died out, *Homo sapiens* came to dominate during the last 50,000 years. In the 1960s, however, studies of human evolution focused on the origin and early fossil species belonging to the australopithecines. Several lines of evidence contributed to these evolutionary issues and questions and became part of the support for reconstructing gender roles in the past.

Molecular data and primate field research

The application of molecular data to questions about human origins extended into anthropology through the comparative study of proteins and amino acids in different species. Sarich and Wilson (1967) demonstrated unequivocally that the African apes, chimpanzees, and gorillas are most closely related to humans. These data provided an unexpected time frame, namely, that the three lineages (gorillas, chimpanzees, and humans) are so closely related that their separation occurred as recently as 5 million years ago, which contradicted the view accepted at the time about human origins of a separation 15 million years ago.

These molecular data added significance to discoveries from field studies on the natural history of African and Asian monkeys and apes. The highly popularized research of Jane Goodall (1968) initiated in 1960 documented the lives of chimpanzees, particularly the matriarch Flo and her offspring. A detailed film record brought to public attention chimpanzee mother–infant interactions, skills in tool using and making, gestures and social communication, and the ability to catch and eat monkeys. These and other behaviors seemed to narrow the gap between apes and humans and highlighted the social centrality of females.

Ethnographic evidence

Hunter-gatherer societies have been of particular interest for prehistory because a nomadic foraging way of life persisted throughout evolution until about 15,000 years ago, like yesterday in evolutionary time (Thomas 1959; Marshall 1976). During the 1960s, research by Richard Lee on the Kalahari Bushmen, the !Kung San, elaborated

the reality of women's lives through detailed documentation of work effort and energy output in collecting and sharing many types of plants, in walking long distances while carrying infants and food items, and in using tools to acquire food (Lee 1968a, 1968b, 1979). He also showed that women fashion, transport, and use digging sticks with a fire-hardened point, along with a stone for sharpening it. This all-purpose tool is effective for unearthing underground roots and tubers hidden from view and deeply buried. Finding and extracting them requires knowledge, skill, and strength. Women as active problem solvers, who shared food and contributed to the social fabric of the group, provided a model for reconstructing women's multiple roles in the ancient past.

Record of the past

Until the 1960s the only evidence for an early stage in human evolution consisted of fossil bones from South African caves of unknown age. When Louis and Mary Leakey announced their exciting discoveries from Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, they captivated the anthropological world. They uncovered associations of animal bones, stone tools, and the remains of hominids in contexts of ancient lake and river margins. Breakthroughs in radiometric dating methods verified the time depth of almost 2 million years – a time frame that doubled the previous estimates of the extent of human evolution (Morell 1995).

These eastern African discoveries of known age lent support to the antiquity of the cave findings in South Africa first discovered in 1925 by Raymond Dart, with later findings by Robert Broom and John Robinson from the 1930s to 1950s. At that time there was no geological method that could establish the age of these cave deposits. Furthermore, there was little agreement on how the animal and hominid bones had accumulated in South African caves, initially maintained by Dart to be the result of human hunting activities. C. K. (Bob) Brain undertook the challenge and demonstrated that the bones were due to carnivore activity and that the hominids, rather than the animals, were often the victims (Brain 1970, 1981).

During the 1970s a wealth of fossils, including footprints preserved in volcanic ash in Tanzania, extended the evidence of human evolution to more than 3.5 million years. In Ethiopia a partial skeleton of the famous fossil dubbed "Lucy" raised questions about sexual dimorphism in this species of australopithecines. In Kenya numerous fossils representing more than one species were excavated along with stone tools and animal bones. According to their pelvic morphology, these early hominids were bipedal, but they had chimpanzee-size brains one third the size of *Homo sapiens*, as well as large and well worn molar teeth.

Evolutionary theory

In the realm of evolutionary theory, Darwin's *Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871) gained renewed interest in anthropology from Bernard Campbell's edited volume *Sexual Selection and the Descent of Man 1871–1971* (1972). After publishing his ideas about evolution by natural selection to explain the appearance of new species, Darwin shifted his attention to variation within a species and formulated the concept of sexual selection. Mating behavior, he surmised, is a mechanism that shapes female and male differences within a species and consists of two components leading

to sexual dimorphism: male–male competition and female choice. Reproductive success is at the center of the concept, and though Darwin primarily highlighted males, female choice presented a new framework for field primatologists and evolutionary theorists. Robert Trivers (1972) connected mate choice with parental investment, the notion that the sex investing the most in its offspring likewise invests more heavily in the choice of mates. Because female primates put more time and energy than males into reproductive effort, sexual selection points to female primates as the principal choosers.

These lines of evidence, singly and in combination, gave a clearer picture of the when and where of human origins, and at the same time provided a basis for challenging traditional views about gender and the evolution of human behavior.

Man the Hunter and Woman the Gatherer

Research on the evolution of social behavior was initiated during the late 1950s by anthropologist Sherwood Washburn, first in a paper with Virginia Avis (1958), and later in a conference on social life (1961). A joint paper with his student Irven DeVore (Washburn and DeVore 1961) contrasted baboon life with that of pre-agricultural humans to highlight the behavioral gap and the uniqueness of human social life. For the first time, a specific species, savanna baboons, was used for comparison with early hominids, another savanna species.

Early human evolution came to be summed up in the "Hunting hypothesis," which was based on the premise that, like the baboon, our ape ancestors were strict vegetarians and that meat was the "new" component of the diet. As part of this dietary shift, a configuration of behaviors emerged in which men acquired meat through hunting and shared it with their pair-bonded mates and nuclear families back at the home base. Thus men assumed the primary role in foraging, food sharing, tool using, and tool making. Furthermore, male aggression, bonding, and warfare, along with the nuclear family and the sexual division of labor, came to be explained as "natural" outcomes of evolution (e.g., Tiger 1969).

When Richard Lee returned from his research on the Kalahari hunter-gatherers, he and Irven DeVore organized a conference in 1966, later published as *Man the Hunter* (1968). A paper in this volume by Sherwood Washburn and Chet Lancaster (1968) on the evolution of hunting helped seal "Man the hunter" as an icon in human evolution. Ironically, Lee's introduction to the volume pointed up the bias in the material record of women's activities. In an archaeological context, he noted that important organic objects, such as women's digging sticks and skin bags (karosses), leave no trace whereas stone tools and animal bones, traditionally associated with male activities, do. Consequently, one important component of women's activities is no longer visible. Additionally, Lee (1968a, 1968b) found that women contributed a majority of the family's daily calories through gathering and sharing activities. But these points did little to offset the emphasis on hunting in that volume or in the wider context.

Richard Lee's fieldwork, however, sparked interest in taking a deeper look at the role of women in evolution. Picking up on the active dimensions of women's lives as portrayed by Lee, Sally Linton's landmark paper, "Woman the Gatherer: Male Bias in

Anthropology," presented at the 1970 annual meetings in San Diego of the American Anthropological Association, offered a counter to the mainline hunting thesis. Initially circulated on blue-ink dittoed paper, it was subsequently published in 1971 (and again in 1975 under Sally Slocum). Soon the phrase "Woman the gatherer" caught on as a counter to "Man the hunter" and drew attention to women by narrowing, and in a way stereotyping, economic roles for both genders.

Confronting issues about hunting and gathering from the comparative perspective of diet, Harding and Teleki (1980:3) challenged the idea that hunting and eating meat were new in human evolution. They reviewed historical reasons for the preoccupation with hunting: glacial periods in Europe projected back in time; tools as weapons (Darwin); and meat-eating of early hominid hunters (the broken bones in South African caves). Research papers in the volume provided "hard data that have been lacking" from primate field studies and from cultural studies on several populations of hunter-gatherers. Although not directly focused on gender, the data presented challenged the assumption of a vegetarian ancestor that needed meat in order to become human, although the idea about diet and the primacy of meat persists to the present time.

Expanding Women's Roles

During the 1960s and 1970s research in Africa provided new data for formulating an alternative: field studies of African apes; ethnographies of the Kalahari hunter-gatherer way of life; discoveries of fossil and archeological sites from South Africa; Tanzania's Olduvai Gorge; Kenya's Koobi Fora, and later, the Hadar region of Ethiopia; developments in methodologies for dating volcanic geological deposits (potassium argon) that extended human origins back in time to nearly 4 million years ago; new excavation methods applied to archaeological sites that established context of bone and stone assemblages; and comparative anatomy and molecular data to establish evolutionary relationships – all provided a rich context.

Within this context Nancy Tanner and I began to develop new hypotheses about the similarities between a chimpanzee-like ape ancestor and early humans, and about differences that arose in the divergence of the two lineages and the transformation of early humans some 3 to 5 million years ago. Interpreting this early stage of human evolution, we incorporated discoveries of chimpanzee behavior, fossil hominids that were bipedal with small brains, and ethnographies documenting human activities. Combining social anthropology and its "people focus" with an evolutionary framework integrated socio-cultural and physical anthropology. Rather than an exclusive focus on human differences, we emphasized continuity between chimpanzee and human biology and behavior, and at the same time proposed new patterns that might have emerged in the transition from ape ancestors to early hominids.

Our approach was as important as the data we gained from different lines of evidence. Washburn (1951) emphasized the use of all the available evidence from both fossils and living species as a basis for testing hypotheses. To understand the transition to a human way of life in eastern Africa, he argued it was necessary to take into account the social behavior of primates and hunter-gatherers (Washburn and Avis 1958; Washburn and Lancaster 1968). Our conclusions differed from Washburn's.

He later insisted to me that he had always acknowledged the importance of gathering, but emphasized hunting as the fundamental new element in human evolution. We agreed to disagree.

Drawing on available research, Nancy and I used the molecular discovery of a recent ape–human divergence to support our choice of chimpanzee behavior to represent the transitional population of apes, rather than using baboon, carnivore, or a grab-bag of behaviors from several species that were proposed at the time. The fossil record is limited because behavior does not fossilize; consequently, we relied on observations of behavior in present-day societies. Chimpanzees are omnivores, not strictly vegetarians as is often assumed, use tools, share food, and carry offspring for several years. Similarly, women in foraging societies are omnivorous, adept tool users, carry their young, and are part of social networks. We concluded that these attributes were selected for in early hominid females. As the first hominids moved into the savanna environment away from the forests some 4–5 million years ago, innovations involving tools for gathering food and walking long distances increased effective exploitation of resources. These behaviors contributed to survival and reproduction more than did a shift to meat and hunting. Digging sticks and carrying bags were new inventions that would have left no trace in the archaeological record, as Lee pointed out. The earliest evidence of the hominids themselves predate the appearance of stone tools by almost two 2 million years (see Table 1.1). Given chimpanzee talents, we maintained that early hominids would have been just as intelligent in inventing and using tools, even if the tools themselves were not preserved in the record. Because we emphasized social flexibility in individuals and in groups, we maintained that a pair bond or nuclear family did not reflect chimpanzee mating behavior and was too narrow and rigid to be used as a model for the patterns present in human societies.

Chimpanzees and hunter-gatherers live in social communities with both sexes and all ages and therefore offer a broad view of interconnected facets of society, that is, what

Table 1.1 Timeline of selected events in human evolution.

Time estimate	*Event*
60,000 years	*Homo sapiens* expands out of Africa to Australia, Asia, Europe
150–200,000 years	Origin and population evolution of *Homo sapiens* in Africa *Homo neanderthalensis* in Europe
600,000 years	Estimated time of divergence of lineages leading to Neanderthal in Europe and to modern *Homo sapiens* in Africa
1 mya	Wide geographic distribution of several species of the genus *Homo* in Africa, Asia, and Europe
2 mya	Evidence of another hominid, *Homo* in eastern and southern Africa; recognizable stone tools in context; increase in brain size
2–4 mya	Australopithecine fossils widespread: Ethiopia, Chad, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa including fossil footprints and much of a skeleton (known as "Lucy")
4 mya	Fossils in Africa, showing bipedal anatomy and small brains (Australopithecines)
5–6 mya	Estimated time of separation of human and chimpanzee lineages
5–7 mya	Fossils of uncertain status, though claimed to be hominid

Note. mya = millions of years ago.

individuals do day-to-day in getting food, avoiding danger, and raising offspring. The range of interactions that individuals have with each other within their environment reveals the dimensions and challenges faced in everyday survival. We argued that this perspective formed a more realistic basis for reconstructing past ways than the reliance on a fragmentary fossil record or on modern human society. At the same time, we recognized that chimpanzee and hunter-gatherer societies are not replicas of human societies some 2–4 million years ago. Rather, we attempted to address the interrelationships of behaviors (a sort of "whole package" approach) and from this suggested innovations that led to diverging paths of apes and early hominids (Tanner and Zihlman 1976a).

We elaborated the gathering hypothesis and argued that hunting emerged much later and developed out of a foundation in gathering (Zihlman and Tanner 1978). We discussed human communication, details of early human social life, the chimpanzee model (Tanner and Zihlman 1976b; Tanner 1981), the role of women in a later stage of evolution with the origin of the genus *Homo* (Zihlman 1978), and the ways in which gender shaped the course of human evolution, including the idea of male assistance in caring for the younger generation (Zihlman 1981). In more recent papers I have analyzed the resistance in mainstream physical anthropology to the importance of women and gathering (Zihlman 1987, 1995, 1997).

Other Early Research on Sex and Gender (1970s to Early 1980s)

The climate of the 1970s encouraged and stimulated thinking about gender. Interpretations of women in evolutionary time joined the expanding literature that shared common questions about gender, and explored new realms of scholarship (e.g., Gale 1970; Martin and Voorhies 1975). Shelly Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere recognized deficiencies in ethnographic accounts and attempted to rectify this problem in their edited volume *Woman, Culture and Society* (1974). Their sentiment resonated widely: "our conceptions of human social life will be broadened when they *address women's lives* and strategies along with those of men" (1974:iv, my emphasis). Reiter's edited volume *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (1975) included Sally Slocum's key paper (mentioned above) and Patricia Draper's paper (1975) on the sexual division of labor. Based on her research among the !Kung hunter-gatherers, Draper noted that in the shift from the traditional nomadic foraging way of life, to one of settled life in villages, the work load of women and girls increased and they lost their traditional autonomy. This study demonstrated how environmental circumstances, rather than strictly biological imperatives, influenced gender roles, and should have been a caution against a rigid portrayal of a sexual division of labor.

Others also noticed the neglect of women's activities, and this led to convening conferences in the 1970s, some organized by men, with the intention to focus on women's roles. In 1974 Lionel Tiger acknowledged the disproportionate attention given to males in human and other social systems, and the conference on female hierarchies was intended as a corrective (Tiger and Fowler 1978). In 1979 Glynn Isaac and Richard Leakey organized a public symposium in New York entitled "Men and Women in Prehistory" with contributions on gathering and women's activities along with discussions about hunting, scavenging and the archaeological record. Isaac's

interest in dietary adaptations in prehistory led to an emphasis on early hominid subsistence as a mixed economy that included both gathering and hunting that is still widely accepted today, though little discussed (Isaac 1978).

Influenced by a statement in *Man the Hunter* that "early woman would not have remained idle during the Pleistocene" (Lee and Devore 1968:7), and intent on countering that book's exclusive focus on men, Frances Dahlberg brought together articles about females and women in primatology, human evolution, and ethnography to highlight the intersection of women and evolution in a landmark volume, *Woman the Gatherer* (1981). In her introduction, Dahlberg concluded that the evidence from the many dimensions of female lives demonstrates flexibility, diversity, and interdependent cooperation between the sexes, and leads to a complex story (1981:27). Her points were borne out as new findings presented alternative ways to view gender as a component of reproduction, work, and social relationships.

Recent Research on Gender and Evolution

Research on gender and evolution gained momentum and flourished into the 1980s and 1990s. New ideas were forthcoming from primatology and ethnography, and groundbreaking conferences and monographs covered a wide range of topics that spoke to gender issues. These are summarized in the following sections.

Primatology

Based on years of fieldwork on baboons in Kenya, Jeanne Altmann (1980) documented the extensive physical investment and behavioral alterations of females in producing and caring for their offspring. Her innovative formulation of time-energy budgets, the costs of reproduction, and social relations of baboon females shaped the way primatology would come to study foraging effort, energetics, and all phases of reproduction.

Combining her own research on macaques with that from long-term studies on free-ranging populations of baboons and chimpanzees, Linda Fedigan (1982) challenged the sex-stereotypes of male aggression, dominance, and alliance, as contrasted with female passivity, and documented the variation in female-male relationships in primate societies. Moreover, sociobiological theories interpret behavior in terms of selection on males, while female "strategies for reproductive success," when considered at all, are viewed as unsuccessful. Language has power, Fedigan maintains, in describing differences between the sexes, and too often research terminology encourages the perception of females as passive or inferior to males.

Building upon Thelma Rowell's field research on the structure of baboon troops and concepts of social dominance, Barbara Smuts (1985) and Shirley Strum (1987) have offered alternatives to the stereotypes of the aggressive dominating male baboons at the center of social life. Smuts' discussions about friendships formed between adult females and males reflect a more textured picture of relationships between the sexes. Strum emphasizes that social skills rather than fighting ability secure a male's position in a new social group. Thelma Rowell (1988a, 1988b) has further challenged stereotypes of males by closely analyzing male-male relationships and their ways of communicating in the presence of sexually receptive females.

Documenting life histories of female chimpanzees, Goodall (1986) has demonstrated the breadth of female participation in daily social life and species survival. She has also shown how male chimpanzees vary in personality and behavior from highly aggressive, dominance-seeking individuals to those who are more laid-back or relatively solitary.

Ethnography

Ethnographies of hunter-gatherer populations published during the 1970s and 1980s provided rich descriptions of foraging peoples across cultures, and ethnoarchaeological studies added another dimension to understanding past societies. Some of this research has contributed new perspectives on gender and on the relationship between women's subsistence, nutrition and work, and reproduction. Shostak, for example, has dramatized women's lives through the personal portrait of one woman, Nisa, who narrates a rich emotional and social life; growing up, getting married, having children, getting divorced (1981). Such revelations alone are sufficient to negate stereotypic or simplistic notions about relationships between women and men in this society and probably also in prehistoric ones. Anne Vincent's innovative study among the Hadza documented the abundance of tubers in a savanna environment, their prominence in the diet, and women's effort in digging and carrying them (1985).

Other ethnographic studies have focused on the relationships between women's work effort and conception, pregnancy, and lactation (e.g., Bentley 1985; Peacock 1985; Panter-Brick 1989). Women, even those with children, hunt quite effectively in some cultures, and men gather food, further challenging what was touted as strictly a female or male domain and a rigid sexual division of labor (Estioko-Griffin and Griffin 1981; Estioko-Griffin 1985). These and other studies convey the dimensions of women's lives and activities and underscore the need to recognize the role of gender when discussing early human social life.

Conferences and Publications

During the 1980s and early 1990s, conferences and publications reflected interest in gender within all areas of anthropology as well as the reach of these ideas into other arenas, including primatology and archaeology (e.g., Small 1984; Morgan 1989; Gero and Conkey 1991; Walde and Willows 1991).

A Wenner-Gren conference in 1987 convened researchers in all the four anthropological sub-disciplines; it focused on gender and hierarchies across the discipline and recognized the commonalities and linkages as well as the contrasts and complexities (Miller 1993). Additionally, *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge; Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (di Leonardo 1991) introduced new debates within each subfield as a way to share the wealth of new research and theoretical analyses with a wide audience. In rethinking the sexual division of labor, biological anthropologist Nadine Peacock (1991) drew on direct observations of *individual* women's and men's lives based on her fieldwork among the Efe forest people of central Africa (author's emphasis). She placed breastfeeding, childcare, and carrying infants and heavy loads into a social and ecological context and documented how women negotiate, cooperate, and compete with other women as well as with men.

Lori Hager's *Women in Human Evolution* grew out of her course at Stanford in 1990 and like the goals of the course, the essays focused on "females in prehistory as agents of evolutionary change" and on the contribution of women as researchers in paleoanthropology (1997:x). Topics explore reproduction, biology and culture, gender and ideology; although written only by women, the essays do not represent one voice. Taking life history as its framework, a 1990 conference *The Evolving Female: A Life-History Perspective* moved away from simplistic approaches to female biology and their lives by recognizing the many layers of complexity of organisms and their worlds (Morbeck et al. 1997). Evolutionary continuities exist in the shared biology of female mammals, primates, and humans (internal gestation, lactation, and weaning), and while they build on a common foundation, species differ from each other in the timing and duration of their life stages, and in humans, in their cultural practices (Zihlman and Bolter 2004; Trevathan 2010). Reproductive "success" or, more accurately, reproductive "outcome" is not an abstraction; it involves more than simply finding a mate, and must be measured over a lifetime in order to ground interpretations of natural selection and evolutionary theories.

Continuing Theories of Male Domination

While theoretical frameworks and feminist scholarship infused research on gender and the evolution of social behavior, other accounts continued to press for male dominance, meat-eating, hunting, and male provisioning and parental investment, while either directly or indirectly eliminating any gender balance.

A chimpanzee model

Evolutionary psychologists have generally dismissed the gathering hypothesis as a "feminist track." Tooby and DeVore (1987), for example, criticize it because it is based on chimpanzee, rather than baboon behavior (DeVore's study species). They maintain that chimpanzees "are preferred by feminists," not because they are more closely related than baboons as the molecular data show, or that chimpanzees are skillful tool users and communicators, but because "male dominance is less popular as a research perspective than the putatively more peaceful chimpanzees" (1987:222). Apparently, the authors assume that male dominance and hunting are givens and therefore cannot/should not be questioned, even though molecular data and comparative behavior make a compelling counter-argument for chimpanzees as a baseline.

Meat as a significant dietary item

As a counter to the importance of plant foods proposed in the gathering hypothesis, the emphasis on hunting in the 1960s and 1970s expanded to include scavenging of meat from carnivore kills. From hominid sites in eastern Africa dated between 1 and 2 million years ago, a few animal bones showed cut and percussion marks, presumably made with the associated stone tools of hominids. The finds fostered speculation on whether the hominids were scavengers, butchers, hunters, or some combination.

However procured, meat is widely presumed to be a major dietary item and a hallmark of human behavior (Stanford 1999).

Since the 1990s, meat as a major dietary item has been invoked as the basis for the increase in brain size during the last 2 million years. Bunn summarizes this view as follows: "The direct evidence of early hominid diet allows us to dismiss models of human evolution which do not incorporate meat-eating as a significant component of early hominid behavior" (1981:577). This argument is based on the assumption that meat supplied critical nutrition for "feeding the brain" and therefore made it possible for hominids to grow a large, energetically expensive brain that is three times the size of chimpanzee brains (e.g., Aiello and Wheeler 1995).

This predominant focus on meat glosses over the omnivorous diets of chimpanzees and other primates (e.g., Harding and Teleki 1980), and although human foragers hunt, meat is not usually a significant dietary component (e.g., Milton 2000). The preoccupation with meat, scavenging, and hunting obscures the breadth of foods consumed, and can perhaps be regarded as an ethnocentric projection of the Western overconsumption of meat.

Bipedal locomotion

Bipedal locomotion in the earliest hominids has long been recognized as a defining feature, distinct from the quadrupedal behavior of apes (Washburn 1951). A hallmark of mammalian evolutionary success is that females carry young internally during gestation, retain their mobility during this phase of reproduction, and therefore can survive and reproduce in extreme environments. Female primates added on to this pattern by carrying their dependent young for months and years after birth, and the infants' grasping hands and feet enable them to hang on for dear life while sailing across the open tree canopy. This locomotor/reproductive combination gave primate societies considerable flexibility because females during foraging could keep up with the group and maintain social relationships during all phases of reproduction. Women in foraging cultures continue this primate mobility by carrying their infants with them while they engage in subsistence and other activities. Yet, male-centered hypotheses about the origin and evolution of bipedal locomotion – to provision females, to run long distances, to fight effectively – have gained wide coverage, though they are narrowly conceived and necessarily ignore the reality of the stages of reproduction. According to these views, females could not possibly have evolved because locomotion and reproductive demands would be at odds.

In a leading article in *Science*, Owen Lovejoy (1981) proposed a new hypothesis for the origin of bipedal locomotion: it allowed males to range widely to collect food to provision their mates and biological offspring. According to this model, females became tied to a home base, exercised less mobility, and had more closely spaced offspring, thereby reproducing more frequently. To ensure that a male did not spend effort caring for someone else's offspring, a pair bond developed to guarantee paternity. This highly unusual monogamous mating system, Lovejoy maintained, called for epigamic characters not seen in other primates: permanent breasts and large penises. Lovejoy's hypothesis reinforced the traditional pair bond as an ancient pattern. But rather than provide meat from hunting, hominid males shared plant foods. In this way Lovejoy co-opted gathering. Tooby and DeVore (1987) praised

Lovejoy for his conclusions about monogamy and male parental investment, as well as a sexual division of labor, but maintained that hunting behavior best explains what they believe to be human hallmarks.

Lovejoy presented no evidence that mobility equates with infant mortality in primates or humans and ignored the evidence for compatibility of locomotor mobility and reproduction obvious in female monkeys, apes, and hunter-gatherers (Goodall 1968; Lee 1972; Howell 1979). Due to the slow growth and long dependency in apes and humans, intervals between births in chimpanzees and humans are most often spaced three to five years apart. During human evolution, and with the shift in subsistence activities from foraging to food production in the last 10–15,000 years, populations increased and births could be more closely spaced together (Lee 1972).

The proposal that endurance running shaped human musculature and body form is another variation on the locomotor theme (Bramble and Lieberman 2004). In an article published in *Nature* with a naked running man on the cover, the authors argue that running long distances may have contributed to exploitation of meat and marrow by enabling the hominids to arrive more quickly at animal carcasses and so successfully compete with carnivore scavengers or to get close to prey for effective hunting. This hypothesis also connects fat and protein with large bodies, small guts, big brains, and small teeth of the genus *Homo*.

It is the case that endurance running is a recreational sport for women as well as men. However, women who excel have a narrow pelvis and relatively low body fat. This type of body works for men, but for women, a broad pelvis and sufficient body fat are necessary for success during all phases of reproduction – ovulation, conception, pregnancy, and lactation. Women foragers are endurance walkers while carrying infants, tools, and heavy loads. One cannot account for women's bodies based on endurance running; by this account only the male half of the species would have evolved.

My last example also relies on sexual selection and male-male competition. In what is presented as a "new view" of the evolution of bipedal locomotion and social behavior, Lovejoy (2009) elaborates on, though only slightly modifies, his 1981 article. The basis for this new rendition is *Ardipithecus ramidus*, 4.4 million-year-old fossils, first named 15 years ago though only recently reconstructed and presented in a cover issue of *Science* (October 2009). Lovejoy's argument relies on a small sample of the *Ardipithecus* canine teeth, described as "feminized" canines of males. These teeth are the basis for Lovejoy's conclusion that early hominid males lost what had been the "norm" of large canine teeth of ancestral ape males who aggressively competed for females. The smaller canine teeth and reduced aggression combined with the males' ability to carry food to form pair bonds, and so increased their parental investment.

The changes in dentition and locomotor anatomy, Lovejoy maintains, meant that a male would target a female, supply her with high fat, high protein foods – no longer just vegetables! – and in return would gain exclusive sexual favors that ensured the children he was providing for were his own. Lovejoy concludes that this combination resulted in "a breakthrough adaptation … for early hominids *and for all their later descendants including ourselves*" (2009:74, my emphasis). This more elaborate, though unsubstantiated statement that a mating pattern has persisted for over 4 million years into the present time is outdated and harks back to the progressive, goal-oriented evolution of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This erroneous notion of

directed evolution fell by the wayside when evolution by natural selection was more fully understood (Bowler 1992).

Lovejoy's "new" account of human evolution incorporates no new evidence from primatology or ethnography, and the genetic and evolutionary closeness of chimpanzees and humans is rejected. It does, however, continue the typical though very questionable tradition in paleoanthropology of freely assigning male or female sex to fragmentary bones and teeth, estimating body mass, and extending it to declare the degree of difference in female and male body size and mass, or sexual dimorphism. The reality of the fossil record of between 5 and 1 million years ago is that the vast majority of fossils are fragmentary. Jaws, crania, limb bones are rarely complete or sufficient in association to reveal information about just one whole individual, much less about a group or population. What actually can be said about a specific fossil or a collection is limited, and it is impossible to draw valid conclusions about mating patterns or a division of labor.

Three examples cited here derived from articles and cover stories from *Science* (1981, 2009) and *Nature* (2004), the leading science journals in the world, and the findings are picked up in the popular media. One might ask why such one-sided, androcentric articles on human evolution are given prominence.

Sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and sexual selection

Darwin emphasized the role of males and minimized the contribution of females, and this version of sexual selection is still widely applied. Campbell's edited book (1972) gave enough attention to female choice to counter the common assumption of female passivity, but this was a brief window. With the publication of *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (1975) Edward Wilson, an expert on social insects, put the "socio" into the "biology" and made sexual selection a centerpiece. As a theoretical framework, sociobiology perpetuates and expands the male role in reproduction (in acquiring mates and in copulating successfully) and in a male's, but not a female's, investment in the survival of "his" offspring. Unlike Darwin's emphasis on the organism, sociobiology, and its morph, evolutionary psychology, lose sight of the individual and reduce organisms to collections of genes and traits (for insightful, in-depth discussions on gender, sociobiology, and evolutionary psychology, see Bolger 2006:468–480 and Rose and Rose 2010).

Another incarnation of sexual selection – infant-killing by males as a reproductive strategy – derives from observations in primatology, initially on langur monkeys in India. Researchers noted that when a male aggressively takes over of a group of females and chases out the resident male, the in-coming male sometimes attacks and kills young infants, brings their mother into estrus, and mates with her, presumably producing his own infants (Hrdy 1977; Hausfater and Hrdy 1984). This interpretation demonstrates how sociobiologists privilege paternity and view male behavior in terms of male competition for access to and fertilization of females. Females are portrayed as passive victims of male aggression, having "counterstrategies" in response to male "strategies." Male infanticide has now become a dominating paradigm to account for the composition of primate social groups; with males around all the time, it is claimed that females reduce the risk that their infants will be killed by strange males (Van Schaik and Kappeler 1997). The only support for this hypothesis, however, appears to be an abundance of negative evidence.

While a lot of ink has been spilled debating the validity of sexual selection, there is only a paucity of data that addresses key questions of whether male-male fighting or killing infants actually affects that male's reproductive outcome over a lifetime. On the other hand, female choice of males has been well documented in a number of long-term studies, though what females are choosing and whether their choices of mates actually affect their reproductive capacity over the life course remain questions for research and discussion (Small 1993). In an alternative assessment, Michael Huffman (1992) concludes that lifetime reproductive outcome of Japanese macaque males is a result of a long life (i.e., more opportunities to sire offspring) and female choice (see also Fedigan 1997).

Sociobiological debates on reproduction are parallel to those on monogamy as an evolutionary anchor in most reconstructions of early human society, implying male control of female sexuality for the purpose of ensuring biology paternity (Zihlman 1995). By grounding arguments in the pair bond and in the ancient sexual division of labor, Lovejoy and others indicate that in the last analysis the real issue is male demand for certainty of offspring: paternity must be guaranteed so that males will not waste time and energy provisioning offspring who are not their biological kin. Underpinning these contemporary views of gathering and hunting is a refusal to acknowledge female choice and female investment in reproduction as important factors in human evolution, as they challenge the ideal of the nuclear family and male control of female sexuality.

New Information, New Possibilities

I have come to appreciate the limitations of drawing conclusions about the distant past, particularly in assigning gender to fossil hominids millions of years old. On the other hand, the richness of recent data from primatology, archaeology, ethnography, and a life history framework presents new possibilities for incorporating gender into reconstructions of behavior at different stages of human evolution. The solution is not to eliminate discussions of gendered activities – which by default promote male centrality and render women invisible in evolutionary reconstructions – but to engage the debate. A major challenge in theorizing about the evolution of human behavior is to approach reproduction as part of whole lives and entire social groups, recognize flexibility, and avoid gender stereotyping.

Life history theory

A life history framework applied to gender and evolution offers a multi-layered approach to survival and reproduction, recognizes the variables that contribute to reproductive outcome, and shows appreciation for life's complexities. Life history theory follows the main framework of evolution by the process of natural selection over time, which, as Darwin noted, operates on the whole organism at all life stages from survival through maturity. An individual primate follows a developmental program as it passes from fetus to infant and juvenile, and finally reaches reproductive age. Life history approaches recognize the dependency of infants, the divergent behavior of female and male juveniles, and the dimensions involved in female and male reproduction over lifetimes (Morbeck et al. 1997). The average timing of each

stage, such as gestation length, age at weaning, age at first reproduction, or life span, constitutes a species profile, and these patterns can be compared across species.

Some life stages are associated with physical markers (e.g., dental eruption and bone fusion), so that comparative studies of growth and development of apes and humans can be extended to estimating life stages in fossil hominids (e.g., Bolter and Zihlman 2011; Kelley and Bolter in press). Shifts that occur in the life stages during the course of evolution (for example, in the length of infancy, which is intimately connected with female reproduction and life history), will have an impact on the social dynamics of the entire group. Therefore, attempts to reconstruct changes in life history, in timing of maturity, or in life span (to determine generational lengths), provide a perspective on gender and social bonds and interactions among all members. Examples of this are provided by recent studies of the emergence of a childhood or adolescent stage (e.g., Bogin 2006; Howell 2010); children's independence and involvement in subsistence (e.g., Crittenden et al. in press); the contribution of mother-child interactions in the evolution of language (Falk 2009); or with an extended life span the possible role of grandmothers as nurturers and teachers of younger members of the social group (e.g., Hawkes et al. 1998). Applying principles of life history encourages thinking in terms of timing and length of life stages, the connections between growth and development and female reproduction, adult survival while reproducing, and communities that consist of highly social individuals, not just a pair bond isolated from other members of the society.

Chimpanzee biology, behavior, and ecology

The excitement generated by Jane Goodall's initial studies during the 1960s has not diminished in the intervening decades. On the contrary, new discoveries continue to amaze and challenge our preconceptions about chimpanzee capabilities, and here I present a few examples. Comparisons based on DNA firmly establish chimpanzees as our closest living relatives. We shared a common ancestor about 5 million years ago; gorillas split off about 7 million years ago and are distantly related to both (Kumar et al. 2005). Long-term field studies on chimpanzee populations from Tanzania, Uganda, the Congo, the Ivory Coast, and Senegal cover a variety of ecologies and report behaviors not previously seen. Tool use and manufacture, hunting, reproduction, and social behavior are grist for the mill of theories about gender in early hominids.

When Goodall showed the first films of Gombe chimpanzees fashioning stems and twigs to probe for termites, anthropologists had to reevaluate what had been assumed to be uniquely human. To Goodall it seemed that females with their offspring spent more time at the termite mounds than did males, and her impression turned out to be the case. Adult females engage in tool using activities more frequently than males, and in processing hard shells, adult females reach the highest level of skill, measured in hits per nut and nuts processed per minute (Boesch and Boesch-Achermann 2000). Social dimensions seem to be the difference: females are less distracted while cracking nuts than are males. At Gombe a developmental study of termiting showed that young females pay closer attention to their mothers' tool-using techniques than do males (Lonsdorf et al. 2004). Females are the carriers of traditions through time and space. Females but not males leave their natal community and transfer into another group taking their skills with them (Matsuzawa

2003). And, as models for the young to learn by observation, females pass on tool traditions to the next generation through their offspring.

Males more often than females have been observed killing and eating monkeys and other mammals. However, at the Fongoli site in Senegal, females, to a much greater extent than males, were observed fashioning twigs into little spears with sharp points to stab small bush babies that sleep in the hollows of trees (Pruetz and Bertolani 2007); a similar behavior was observed in a female chimpanzee at Mahale in Tanzania (Huffman and Kalunde 1993). At Lui Kotale in Congo females are active and successful hunters, catching and eating monkeys and other prey items (Hohmann and Fruth 2007; Surbeck and Hohmann 2008). In a savanna region of Tanzania, chimpanzees have left evidence of tools used to dig up roots, but without direct observations it is not established whether females or males or both were responsible. The authors, however, do note that exploitation of similar resources could have been within the ability of our earliest ancestors (Hernandez-Aguilar et al. 2007). This is one example that shows the renewed interest in roots and tubers in human diet which have implications for reconstructing diets in the past (e.g., Laden and Wrangham 2004; Eisenstein 2010).

In individual personality and in social relationships there is no single pattern. Goodall's observations on male personalities highlighted variation: some strived for alpha male status and were willing to fight; others avoided conflict with other males, and were satisfied with middle rank and being preferred as mating partners; and still others were reclusive or relatively unsocial. Adult females also vary: in some populations they are more gregarious, in others, less so. The two species of chimpanzees share much in common, but differ in male behavior. A *Pan paniscus* male stays close to his mother until she dies and does not bond with other males until later in life, whereas *Pan troglodytes* males bond, patrol their territorial boundaries, and sometimes kill their neighbors (Goodall 1986; Kano 1992).

Archaeology

Recent archaeological discoveries broaden our conceptions about hominid diets and associated activities in the ancient past. New excavations at Koobi Fora in Kenya dated to nearly 2 million years ago challenge the traditional focus on eating meat of terrestrial mammals estimated from animal bones in association with stone tools (Braun et al. 2010). The findings reveal a broader range of food items than previously appreciated. Early members of the genus *Homo* incorporated various aquatic animals into the diet, including turtle, crocodiles, and fish, as well as terrestrial mammals. Shellfish and marine resources uncovered at coastal sites in Africa may have been crucial for the survival of early *Homo sapiens* populations more than 160,000 years ago as they expanded their home ranges along the coasts of Africa, out of Africa, along the Indian coasts and into Australia by 50,000 years ago (Wells 2002; Marean 2010).

Shellfish may have been an important dietary item for tens of thousands of years for people living near the sea. Along the northern coast of Australia shellfish constitute a major portion of the diet and is contributed by women. They collect after the tide is out to expose the beds, thereby safely taking their small children with them (Meehan 1977a, 1977b).

Renewed interest in looking for evidence of plant foods in the archaeological record indicates that the diet of Neanderthals included more than just animals (Henry 2011).

Starch grains from wild plants on the surfaces of grinding tools show that hominids in Europe 30,000 years ago were processing vegetal foods, and possibly producing flour (Revedin et al. 2010). The association among contemporary women with seafood and plant foods, combined with remains from archaeological sites, provides a means for bringing gender into discussions about survival of these populations and the contributions made by women.

Finally, the Kalahari hunter-gatherers continue to be a focus of study (Howell 2010). Their DNA reveals them to be the oldest *Homo sapiens* lineage in Africa, which has been confirmed by analysis of their click language (Tishkoff et al. 2007). The traditional way of life that Thomas (2006) describes as "the Old Way" provides a glimpse into the past, going back more than 150,000 years.

Closing Comments

My research on gender in human evolution focuses on the early stage of evolution, when hominids were bipedal but retained small chimpanzee-sized brains and before stone tools were preserved in an archaeological context. At this stage chimpanzee abilities can act as a benchmark for assessing the presumably smarter hominids. Later stages of human evolution yield artifacts and other evidence of human activities, along with the physical remains of the individuals with brain size two-thirds of *Homo sapiens* but with fewer guideposts to assess behavior. In thinking about past lives and ways of life, we must keep in mind that numerous species of hominids lived and expanded throughout the globe. Behavioral studies on primates and people, along with archaeological evidence, demonstrate the adaptability and innovative nature of the human lineage. Although we can only speculate about gender roles in the past, we establish continuities through time and across space. Ancient human societies of whatever species, time period, or environment, consisted of both sexes and all ages and more than likely survived for more than two generations. Our challenge is to think beyond our own culture, utilize the information on traditions and cultural variation, and at the same time keep gender at the forefront of the discussion of ancient human societies.

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CHAPTER 2

Gender, Complexity, and Power in Prehistory

Scott R. Hutson, Bryan K. Hanks, and K. Anne Pyburn

> Feminist reexamination of the western analytical tradition has not produced comfortable conclusions. But that is the point, for the study of gender explodes order, and restores ambiguity, contradiction, diversity, and possibilities to the center of social process.
>
> Silverblatt 1988:454

Studies of the relation between women, power, and early states contributed to the emergence of feminism in anthropology in the 1970s. Although this research (Sacks 1974, 1976; Ortner 1976; Rapp 1977; Leacock 1978; Nash 1978; Gailey 1980) was not archaeological, it explicitly recognized that understanding women's role in history required an understanding of ancient history. Thus, the entanglement of gender and political complexity has a deeper pedigree than perhaps any other line of research now part of what has been called engendered archaeology.

Yet this entanglement runs deeper than the 1970s. Feminist anthropologists of that era were in fact responding to an ambitious hypothesis proposed by Friedrich Engels in his 1884 book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. Arguing against the notion that patriarchal families represented the apogee of domestic organization and the inevitable result of the evolutionary march toward civilization, Engels posited that patriarchy in the Victorian age represented a nadir of female bondage (Silverblatt 1988:430). He saw matriarchal organization as much more just. Furthermore, Engels foreshadowed the feminist view that contemporary institutions that disempower women are neither natural nor irreversible, and that other cultures, past and present, provide models of more equitable gender relations.

While Engels got many things wrong (e.g., he presumed that a gendered division of labor was natural), the issue he highlighted has generated useful inquiries along a

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number of related and more subtle lines. Archaeologists eventually joined the debate over women and states with landmark publications such as those by Sharisse and Geoffrey McCafferty (1988) and Elizabeth Brumfiel (1991), both of which focus on how the rise of the Aztec Empire affected women. More recently, the book *Ungendering Civilization*, edited by Anne Pyburn, shows how heavily the analogical tools – ethnographies and ethnohistories – that archaeologists use to interpret gender in the past are themselves distorted by unexamined and misguided assumptions about gender relations. Rosemary Joyce phrases this issue well in her book *Gender and Power in Prehispanic Mesoamerica*:

> If we take as our goal the aim of making pre-Columbian Mesoamerica more intelligible … then we ensure that we will come to understand these societies as different versions of the same thing, lesser or distorted mirror images of Europe. Our alternative could rather be to make pre-Columbian Mesoamerica more distinct, to push at the limits of its strangeness from the Europe that absorbed and reformulated it over half a millennium. [2000:3]

Following the opening quote from Silverblatt, such pushing at the limits does not produce comfortable conclusions. Gender has proved resistant to a generation of evolutionary attempts to reduce, condense, linearize, and essentialize it (Rapp 1977:309). Rather than seeking comfort in fixed categories or binary frameworks, we accept the ambiguity and diversity that feminist archaeology brings to the study of gender and power (e.g., Pyburn 2008a:115). Indeed, we stress that we have no choice but to accept this ambiguity because even the terms "women" and "state" around which the discussion first stabilized have since been exploded from both within and beyond archaeology.

Entire volumes have critiqued the state. We only have room to mention here that the neo-evolutionary heritage of the concept (e.g., Service 1962) has hindered a focus on what early complex polities actually do to maintain their power, discouraged recognition of the tremendous amount of variability within them, and concealed the inappropriateness of analogies to territorially bound contemporary examples (Smith 2003; Trigger 2003; Yoffee 2005). Moreover, war, trade, and colonization processes linked to state expansion and territoriality stimulate settings of dynamic contact and change among individuals and groups, particularly those situated within frontier and boundary zones. Such trajectories of change present an important arena of study for examining the collapse of traditional patterns of social practice and the emergence of new forms of identity, power, and agency. Such ambiguity presents a significant challenge to understanding the role of "women" and "gender" and how these social constructs contribute to and are impacted by large-scale historical processes (Wolf 1982).

In this paper we focus on transformations of gender coincident with processes of political centralization and the expansion of ancient states. The case studies we discuss below – predominantly from Mesoamerica, the Andes, and the Eurasian Steppe – focus on important issues of status, identity, and power and how they become intertwined with the social constitution of gendered meanings within state-like settings. Traditional approaches to gender and early states focus on the status of women. We will take this as a starting point, but we move from there to argue that the diversity of women's experience and the multiple ways in which gender is embedded in other

aspects of identity prevent any easy statements about women's status (Silverblatt 1988:442). Furthermore, since day-to-day activities shape larger-scale processes (Conkey and Gero 1991), we argue that women shape political centralization as much as political centralization has been said to shape women (Brumfiel 2006; Pyburn 2008a). A recent appreciation of the complexity and variability in what actors did in the ancient past (McAnany and Plank 2001; Brumfiel and Robin 2008) suggests ways to proceed. Following the perspective that gender results from the multiple aspects of social organization negotiated in the specific, localized actions of everyday life, we consider how household-scale case studies of activity areas have been used to identify the social relations engendered in these activities (Spector 1983; Gero and Scattolin 2002; Levy 2006:225). We also examine mortuary contexts, particularly those considered to represent Amazon warriors in Eurasia, in order to observe dynamic processes of identity formation at the frontiers of state expansion. In addition to the contextual treatment of such case studies, new approaches to the study of human remains, when such evidence is available, can provide a more detailed understanding of the "osteobiographies" of individuals and residual physical patterns of activity, diet, health, and biological affinity (Saul and Saul 1989; Robb 2002).

First Impressions on Political Complexity and Women's Status

Several archaeologists gauge the gendered effects of increasing political complexity by assessing the status of women. For example, Nelson and Rosen-Ayalon provide tentative clues to women's status in Hongshan China (4000–2500 B.C.E.) at the sites of Dongshanzui and Niuheliang, where elites attempted to "lay claim to power" (2002:74). Nelson suggests that women had high status because of an abundance of female images and the presence of female-associated *yin* symbolism in the Hongshan period, as well as hints from much later Chinese writings of the existence of goddesses. In the New World, archaeologists have pointed to women's roles as queens, priestesses, and warriors as evidence of the importance and status of women within complex societies such as the Maya, the Moche, and the Aztec (McCafferty and McCafferty 1999:121; Sweely 1999; Ayala Falcón 2002; Alcalde 2004) (see Figure 2.1 for New World sites and regions mentioned in the text). These studies fit the first and second of three steps identified by Conkey and Spector (1984) for engendering archaeology: (1) combating androcentric assumptions about the past; (2) finding women and examining their lives, power, and roles; and (3) challenging underlying assumptions about gender and difference (see also Conkey and Gero 1991:5). Whereas previous scholars ignored women, the authors cited above bring women into the spotlight and challenge the assumption, dating back to Engels, that women lose status when centralization increases.

However, studying status and gender often raises difficulties that encourage a shift to Gero and Conkey's third step. The latter involves criticizing categories such as male and female or even considering that some actors may be neither men nor women, and that gender may be irrelevant or negotiable even in contexts of social and political importance. Before taking this third step, we present an extended case study of gender and status in order to reveal some of the issues that push us toward Gero and Conkey's third step. The case study uses ancient Maya mortuary and bioarchaeological data to

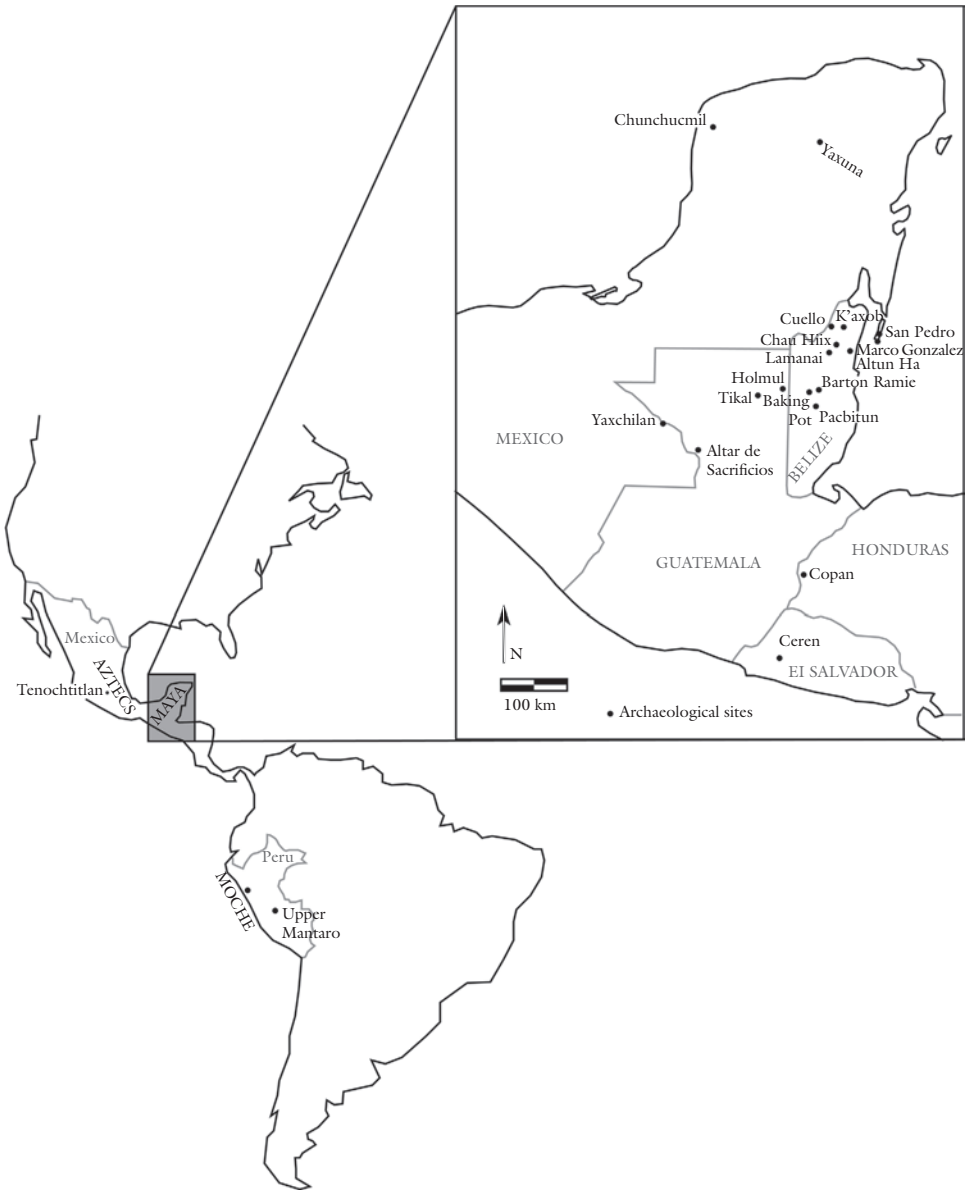


Figure 2.1 Map showing New World locations mentioned in text (produced by the authors).

explore the relation between socio-political complexity and gender inequality. We return to other lines of data, such as iconography and daily activities, later in the paper.

William Haviland (1967, 1997) has used burial offerings, the location and construction of tombs, and nutritional data to argue that ancient Maya men enjoyed higher status than women and that "the rise of sexual inequality at Tikal is directly tied to the emergence of the centralized state" (1997:10). Pyburn (2004) has criticized the first two lines of evidence by calling attention to the fact that a larger sample size shows that the age of the deceased probably structured burial practices more forcefully than

gender. With regard to nutrition, Haviland's data on the stature of 19 females and 36 males at the major center of Tikal, located in the Guatemalan lowlands, suggested a large degree of sexual dimorphism, perhaps resulting from the consequences of men getting better food than women. We should keep in mind that modern medical ideas about what constitutes a good diet – much less a healthy skeleton – are not necessarily consonant with status in either the past or the present.

Numerous recent studies focusing on carbon and nitrogen isotopes in human bone, as well as dental and skeletal pathologies, allow for new assessments of differences in male and female nutrition (the issue has not yet been reframed to account for iconographic suggestions of the existence more than two sexes or genders; e.g., Looper 2002). Assuming that maize consumption indicates high status, White compared the results of isotope analyses of bone collagen and bone apatite from human skeletons at six sites in Belize to assess sex-based differences in maize consumption. She concludes that her data support the "mosaic quality of gendered status and power where control of food and its consumption are complex variables in the expression of social authority, autonomy and control" (2005:371–372; see also Joyce 2000:162). However, White concludes on the same page that men ate more maize, which reflects their higher status. The ratio of carbon isotopes in bone collagen was higher for men than women at three sites (Marco Gonzalez, Pacbitun, and Altun Ha) but nearly equal between men and women at the other three sites (San Pedro, Lamani, and Cuello). Furthermore, ratios of apatite, which reflects the broadest part of the diet (proteins, lipids, carbohydrates), are nearly identical between males and females at three of the six sites (Marco Gonzalez, Cuello, and San Pedro) and are higher in females than males at Lamanai. Other studies from Belize (Barton Ramie, Baking Pot, Chau Hiix) and beyond (Yaxuna, Copan, Altar de Sacrificios, Holmul) reveal that there were no significant differences in maize consumption between men and women (Gerry and Chesson 2000; Mansell et al. 2006; Metcalfe et al. 2009). Further reinforcing this point, Metcalfe et al. (2009) found that the rulers of three nearby communities in Belize (Chau Hiix, Lamanai, and Altun Ha) showed different dietary patterns. At Altun Ha, which had the poorest agricultural land of the three communities, the man buried in the most elite tomb ate mostly corn. At Lamanai, the most populous site with probably the least hunting territory, the ruler's diet emphasized game. At Chau Hiix, the furthest of the three sites from coastal routes, the ruler was eating marine fish. Thus, at most sites where isotopes have been measured the issue of status as inferred from nutrition remains unclear. It seems likely that a variety of factors were involved in determining an elite diet, nutrition being at best epiphenomenal.

With regard to the relationship between women's nutrition and socio-political complexity, the picture is also unclear. The hypothesis that increases in socio-political complexity correlate with a drop in status for women leads us to predict that at those sites with the greatest socio-political complexity, women should have poorer nutrition. Of the sites mentioned thus far, Copan, Lamanai, Holmul, and Yaxuna have the largest populations and the largest temples, factors often used as proxy measures for increased socio-political complexity. However, at none of these sites did men have greater access to maize. In fact, at Lamanai carbon isotope ratios suggest that women consumed more maize than men. At Copan, men ate more meat than women, but among commoners men and women had the same amount of nutritional pathologies, such as porotic hyperostosis, infectious lesions on bones, and enamel hypoplasia

(Storey 1999). Men had fewer caries than women, but this pathology most likely reflects not poor nutrition for women but rather a gendered division of labor in which women had more opportunity for snacking (Whittington 1999).

Another way to assess the relation between socio-political complexity and women's nutrition is to observe changes in diet at single sites over time as socio-political complexity waxed and waned. At Chau Hiix, Belize, isotope data indicate that men and women ate the same proportions of the same foods throughout a 2,000 year history of centralization and decentralization (Metcalfe et al. 2009); and at Altun Ha women consumed more maize than men in the Preclassic period (White et al. 2001). Later, during the Classic period, a time of greater centralization at Altun Ha, this pattern shifted: men ate more maize than women. If we continue to accept the notion that people of higher status ate more maize, the Altun Ha data appear to support the hypothesis of women losing ground in more complex polities. However, while this same hypothesis predicts a return to Preclassic conditions after the collapse of complex polities, the trend in fact continues to move in the opposite direction, with men eating increasingly more foods that follow the C4 photosynthetic pathway (i.e., maize, which does not discriminate heavily against ^{13}C) than women.

In sum, many factors complicate the connection between gender inequality and centralization: age and social class can take on greater importance than gender; patterns found at some sites do not hold at others; and phenomena that must themselves be explained, such as the division of labor, explain away what appear to be differences in status. Moving to Conkey and Spector's third step for engendering archaeology – theorizing gender – helps address these difficulties.

Theorizing Gender

Theorizing gender may begin by asking whether the claim that women had high status, be it in Hongshan China, Mayan Central America, or elsewhere, applies to all women in that particular society, regardless of age, occupation, ethnicity, or caste. Claims of across-the-board status for women flirt with essentialism. In other words, they risk presuming that there is an essence to womanhood that determines experience or status. Deconstructing gender – the third step advocated by Gero, Conkey, and others – helps prevent essentialism by questioning the stability of categories such as "women." For Conkey and Gero, deconstructing gender means defining it not as a thing but as a set of practices "embedded within other cultural and historical social institutions and ideologies such as status, class, ethnicity and race" (1991:9). To ignore all of these other aspects of identity and reduce an actor to biological sex would be to suggest an essential similarity between two women whose life experiences might be vastly different, such as an African American slave and a white aristocrat, a point to which Sojourner Truth gave such a resounding voice in her 1854 speech "Ain't I a Woman?" (quoted in Silverblatt 1988:427; see also Meskell 1996).

Gender, then, means neither women nor men, but the ongoing practices, negotiated and situated within distinct class, racial, regional, and other contexts that give a modicum of stability to the fleeting categories of sex (Butler 1990, 1993). This third step, theorizing gender, leads not to an archaeology of men or women – an "archaeology of gender" – but to an inquiry into how these categories are constructed – a "gender

archaeology" (Conkey and Gero 1997:423). In other words, gender archaeology does not "add women and stir." Rather, it shatters the glassware and the conceptual categories that once contained the brew. In practice, this means recognizing that multiple aspects of difference crosscut gender. In our examination of power relations and early political centralization, these aspects of difference may include kin groups, ancestry, residential units, wealth, age, and more. Because one's identity is shaped not just by gender but by all of these other aspects of identity, we can expect the experience of having a sexed body to be quite variable between individuals and over the lifecycle of individuals. In some cases, the fleeting categories – male, female, androgynous, other – established by gendered practices may be unimportant compared with other kinds of difference (Brumfiel and Robin 2008).

We will now flesh out what a gender archaeology – a deconstructive analysis that, following Silverblatt's opening quote, "explodes order" – means for the study of gender, power, and early states. We begin by returning to the notion of status. Gero and Scattolin claim that "We are on the wrong track to collapse the many gendered activities and gendered spaces represented in specific archaeological instances into such variables as status, determining whether women's status is higher or lower than men's" (2002:162). We are on the wrong track for many reasons, the first of which is that status, just like gender, is an active process, not just something that someone "is." In other words, status itself structures bodily experience. For example, among the ancient Maya higher status people lived in vaulted stone buildings on high platforms, whereas lower status people lived lower to the ground in buildings made of perishable materials. This contributed to different sensitivities about space and the material world. In many complex societies sumptuary rules or unequal access to exotic resources led to different kinds of adornment and garb for people of different status. These differences result in diverse ways of carrying the body and divergent sets of dispositions based on status.

Status is also a process because it is subject to contestation. Elizabeth Brumfiel's study of Aztec representations of women clarifies this point. Brumfiel (1996) examines the possibility that the Aztec state subordinated women as part of a strategy to control households. Following Rodríguez (1988), Brumfiel suggests that a state-disseminated ideological apparatus aided in the subordination of women. Evidence for such an ideology consists of official art in Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital (modern Mexico City), such as the Coyolxauhqui stone, which represents a mutilated woman, and figurines that depict women (but usually not men) in modest, kneeling positions. Examination of portrayals of women beyond the Aztec capital suggests that popular art resisted this ideology of male domination: mutilation and kneeling poses are rare or non-existent. Thus, the status of women was contested. Parenthetically, the issue of whether the Coyolxauhqui stone represents male dominance can also be contested. To say that Coyolxauhqui's mutilation represents violence toward women presumes that gender was the most important aspect of Coyolxauhqui's complex personhood. On the other hand, in the much more common representations of flayed men and accounts of dismembered male captives, analysts tend not to reduce their focus to the detail that the victims were men. In other words, when the kind of violence that visited Coyolxauhqui also visited men, such violence is not seen as a degradation of manhood. The double standard here is that women continue to be gendered, the marked category, not men (cf. Knapp 1998). Furthermore, the dismemberment of

a mythological entity may have many metaphorical meanings, including some that suggest female power (e.g., the ability to regenerate with the change of seasons, etc.).

Comparing men's and women's status can also be perilous because status is multidimensional. With specific regard to gender, Ortner (1996:chap. 6) breaks status down into three components – prestige, autonomy, and control over others – that do not always align (see also Hegmon et al. 2000). For instance, a person can have prestige without having much autonomy. The case of complementarity and tribute among the Aztec, Inca, and Classic Maya illustrates this point. In all three cases scholars have argued for the existence of an ideology of gender complementarity (Silverblatt 1987; Joyce 1993; but see Brumfiel this volume). For example, McCafferty and McCafferty (1988) assert that gender relations in Aztec society involved a dialectical body of complementary roles making up a structural whole. This means that important gods exhibited aspects of both genders. Also, whereas male infants were given the tools of warfare at birth, female infants were given the complementary tools of weaving. Moreover, a woman's death in childbirth was equal in prestige to a man's death in warfare/sacrifice. Also pertinent is the well-known phenomenon in other cultures of women filling important positions when men were off to war or drafted for other services (Rapp 1977:312). Such male "out-migration" practices can disrupt the structure of communities and contribute to new forms of social organization (Mortensen 2004; Pyburn 2004, 2008a).

In this rather general sense, women can be said to have been prestigious because ideologies of complementarity, themselves subject to contestation, hold that women were indispensable to the reproduction of society. But there is an elephant in the room: the same states and empires said to have fostered ideologies of gender complementarity demanded massive tribute and/or labor service. Women's subjection to extractive states likely undercut whatever prestige they derived from ideologies of complementarity. Despite the fact that textiles were prestigious and that weaving was seen as a feminine ideal (McCafferty and McCafferty 1991), the burden of paying cloth tribute to the Aztec empire soured the deal for many women in Aztec Mexico. In fact, Brumfiel (2006:868) argues that the abundance of plain as opposed to decorated spindle whorls represents resistance to the task. In Xuaxa, in the upper Mantaro valley of Peru, women supported feasts sponsored by the Inca by preparing maize beer, but isotopic analysis suggests that they did not enjoy the privilege of drinking it (Hastorf 1991). Among the Classic Maya, women's provision of prestigious foods and textiles propelled the political strategies of the ruling class, yet ideologies of complementarity did not always ensure female access to public roles and resources (Joyce 1996). Due to these and other considerations (e.g., the existence of third genders) the notion of gender complementarity oversimplifies the situation (for a similar view, see Brumfiel this volume). Actors have complementary relations with some people, hierarchical relations with others, and, sometimes, both kinds of relations with the same people depending on the context (Gero and Scattolin 2002).

It seems clear that assessments of prestige must be balanced with assessments of autonomy, but the issue is even more complex. We miss the mark in two ways if we simply say that women lost autonomy in the face of tribute-hungry states. First, it was not so much women as it was households and kin groups that lost autonomy. Second, such groups (and the women within them) lost only some autonomy. Starting with the second point, households retain some autonomy in the face of extractive political

economies. Brumfiel argues forcefully that "Mexican women were not passive victims of emerging political power. They participated in the definition of its limits and they devised strategies to deal with the changing circumstances it created" (1991:246). Such strategies range from entering market economies to labor-saving innovations in the kitchen, such as preparing stews, which require less supervision when cooking, thus freeing up cooks to attend to other tasks. Furthermore, states affect households as much as households affect states. In Aztec Mexico, successful households were the condition for the possibility of states given that expert management of household economies enabled the population growth that was essential to the rise of state-level polities in the first place.

In sum, actors, female or otherwise, do not act independently. No man is an island, but neither is any woman. Rather, networks of people, objects, and landscapes shape them into subjects, and they exercise their agency by drawing upon those networks (Hutson 2010). Even when they act singly as opposed to in concert, their ability to act intelligibly depends on having been subjected to, and made into subjects by, rules and resources. This is one of the ways in which power is relational. In the examples discussed thus far, acting in concert is central: Aztec tribute burdens affected both men and women, not as individuals but as parts of households. In the earlier central Mexican site of Teotihuacan, multi-household apartment compounds were an important corporate unit. In examining burials from within these compounds, De Lucia (2008) finds that residential compound affiliation had a greater impact on grave offerings than did biological sex. Thus, group affiliation superseded individual identity.

Analyses from the Maya area provide cases in which perceived autonomy or subordination of women might be better explained as examples of women's agency being subsumed under the interests of kinship and class groups. For instance, stone carvings from Yaxchilan, an important Classic period Maya center located on the Mexican side of the border with Guatemala, show that royal women exercised some independent agency in royal court life and played critical roles in political ritual (McAnany and Plank 2001). Furthermore, texts on these carvings indicate that Lady Xok, wife of King Itsamnah Balam, clearly possessed a building (structure 23) referred to as being at the very center of, and central to, Yaxchilan. The glyphs also indicate that Lady Xok's house was understood to be within the domain of Itsamnah Balam. Yet the fact that the king's domain encompassed that of Lady Xok should not lead us to presume that the king himself was an arch-agent of unbounded power. Maya kings were strongly conditioned by the longer-lasting dynastic houses that authorized them (Gillespie 2001). Thus, Lady Xok (and her husband) wielded considerable influence under the auspices of, and as part of, the corporate goals of the dynasty. In summary, men and women act as parts of groups (households, apartment compounds, dynasties), and struggles between such groups, particularly the struggle between the ruling class and kin groups, often affect the portrayal of gender relations (Rapp 1977:313; Joyce 1996).

Heterarchy and Gender

In a review of the concept of heterarchy, Brumfiel (1995) points out that that the idea is useful because it clarifies the relationship between certain cultural variables and calls other relationships into question. In the study of gender, heterarchy has served to

bring gendered assumptions about the past into view, and to suggest a means of questioning the primordial nature of male domination without throwing out the baby of cultural complexity with the bathwater of cultural evolutionism.

In its simplest form, the concept of heterarchy allows that some facets of human experience are unranked, at least under certain conditions, and that there are multiple and sometimes competing types of ranking in a given society which may not all pertain simultaneously in a particular situation. So, for example, the hierarchy among men in a household where women are absent may be altered or undermined when women return; or men may have no say about certain ritual practices controlled by priestesses even in a patriarchal society.

The classical construction of cultural complexity as a result of the evolution of political structures intimately related to control of specialist producers is challenged by the idea that producers may be involved in more than one system of political or economic control. For example, Potter and King (1995) have argued that the distribution of utilitarian pottery and tools in the Maya area was not elite controlled while the distribution of polychromes and jades was elite controlled, suggesting that it may be productive to see these as two separable and somewhat autonomous economic systems. The role of gender may be different in the two systems. Levy (2006) has argued that elite position in Bronze Age chiefdoms was predicated on cosmology and ritual control rather than on control of production by men, suggesting multiple sources of power and authority that might not be parallel and could relate to gender differences and equivalences.

The problem with these uses of a heterarchical model to solve the shortcomings of unilinear reasoning is the proposition that elite status is still treated as a single sort of ranking based solely on production or cosmology or some combination of the two. Production is characterized as either elite controlled or not; in reality production within a given society can be controlled by elites sometimes and not others, not simply depending on whether what is produced is itself an "elite" item (e.g., jade). Control of production in preindustrial societies, as well as in industrial societies, is expensive often to the point of being prohibitive (Graham 2002). In fact, production is probably very rarely elite controlled; what non-producers often do try to control, which would reinforce some degree of elite status, is consumption, which they manipulate through control of transport systems and commodification. How gender figures in commodification, display, delivery, and marketing is yet to be well researched in ancient contexts, but contemporary examples suggest significations of sexuality, and the social statuses of gender are commonly and successfully purveyed within many cultures by multiple actors. Recent discussion of the murals at Calakmul depicting women selling prepared food in a market (Feinman and Garraty 2010) emphasize the likelihood that gender and commodification figured in multiple ways in economic life before the modern world system.

To a certain extent, the concept of heterarchy is similar to multilinear evolutionism as a model of social development. It is possible to identify most things people do within an evolutionary or a hierarchical context, and actors certainly often do this themselves. There are demonstrably unranked alternatives and different or competing hierarchies that individuals use, but this merely provides a descriptive vocabulary and provides only limited insights into how opportunities and restrictions are navigated. In the final analysis, the idea of heterarchy is a heuristic device to remind analysts and

theorists that complex systems in the past were complicated. The use of heterarchical models to describe ancient gender systems has had the salutary effect of reminding theorists that patriarchy, patrilineality, patrilocality, and other male-dominated hierarchical systems are neither comprehensive nor rigid. But feminist scholars have argued that the use of hierarchical models is itself an artifact of patriarchal reasoning, and heterarchy merely naturalizes systems of inequality to multiple dimensions.

As Brumfiel (1995) pointed out, the systems under discussion as heterarchies were not well understood, and some assumptions inherent in the models were probably wrong. A particularly key assumption for heterarchy (as with hierarchy) has been that the rise of fulltime specialists is part of the definition of social complexity, cities, or states. This is probably wrong (Pyburn 2008b). Nineteenth-century China, arguably as socially and culturally complex as any place in the world, had communities with no fulltime specialists (Skinner 1977) of the sort expected by archaeologists (Earle 2003).

While it is possible to define social complexity in terms of the details of an individual's daily activities, it is also possible to look for evidence of a reliable supply of goods and services flowing across cultural and geographic boundaries to identify a complex society. Ultimately these descriptive models are useful for clarifying the way we think about the past and make our implicit assumptions explicit, whether we call the organizational structures we seek to identify heterarchies, hierarchies, complex societies, states, or archaeological cultures.

Space, Power, and Identity

We favor looking at gender not as a stable, taken for granted version of biological sex, but as an emergent property, constantly produced and reproduced from daily activities and their material contexts (see Conkey and Gero 1997:418). Getting at these activities and contexts means "concentrating on local manifestations of prehistoric gender, disentangling the various ways that gender organizes social life" (Gero and Scattolin 2002:162). Several studies on the specific spatial contexts of work, play, ceremony, etc. have appeared, many of which discuss the relation between gender and increasing social complexity. For example, Susan Kent (1990) used ethnographic materials to conclude that in societies with greater levels of hierarchy, stratification, and specialization, domestic spaces have more pronounced segmentation and more functionally discrete loci of activities. Within archaeology, fine-grained case studies of specific households can provide a closer look at the topic, given that households are often the nexus between politics and production in the ancient world (Hendon 2006). Hastorf (1991) has noted that in Wanka III period (1460–1532 C.E.) households of the Upper Mantaro river valley in Peru, crop processing was restricted to a smaller space than in the previous Wanka II period (1300–1460 C.E.), suggesting a constraint on women's activities. Since the Inca conquest of the Upper Mantaro valley marked the transition from Wanka II to Wanka III, it appears that incorporation into the Inca empire and its high tribute burdens led to the restriction of space. Data from noble households at the Maya site of Copan, Honduras during the Classic period suggest a different pattern: men and women used the same spaces (often the same room) for multiple tasks (making shell ornaments, working with bone and obsidian, preparing food, and spinning thread (Hendon 1997).

Once data are available on the specific locations of activities, it is possible to analyze the relationships established and distinctions made through these activities (Moore 1996:125). Deploying a method not unlike Spector's task differentiation approach (1983), we would identify these distinctions by asking several questions about the kind of experiences that spatial relations permitted (see also Robin 2004). Not only would we ask whether men and women shared space, but we would also ask about their age and rank. How could lack of contact between people and place create inequalities of access and information? What kinds of sensual contact did these spatial relations permit? What buildings or landmarks could be seen or not seen from task locales? Attending to these questions generates a nuanced understanding of social differences and how these differences form and reform in relation to changes in spatial arrangements.

As an example, we observe gendered activities and spatial transformations among the 'Aak household at the Classic period Maya urban center of Chunchucmil, located in northwestern Yucatan, Mexico. In the middle stage of its three stages of occupation, the 'Aak household consisted of a patio measuring 15m by 15m (Figure 2.2:a). At least three structures faced onto this patio (an elaborate stone residence to the north, a food preparation and thread spinning facility to the south, and a shrine to the east where household ancestors were buried). This arrangement made the patio the focal point of the household, the place where the 'Aak group inhabitants socialized, entertained visitors, used obsidian tools to cut fibers, and observed ceremonies at their shrine. Spinning thread and preparing food were women's activities among the Classic period Maya, and performing these activities in a structure that opened onto the patio gave easy access to the flow of life within the household. However, demographic growth resulted in the construction, during the third stage, of a new house where the food preparation area once stood; as a result, the 'Aak inhabitants built a new food preparation area to the north of the elaborate residence in a spot that no longer permitted access to the patio (Figure 2.2:b).

Superficially, this spatial transformation affected women's relations negatively. The shift in the location of the food preparation area reduced women's sphere of relations: while cooking they no longer had contact with the patio, thus losing access to knowledge of group affairs occurring therein and separating them from the ancestral shrine, the source of the group's identity and strength. If power grows from knowledge and relations, shifting women away from the patio appears to have precipitated a loss of power. But this transformation must also be seen in another light. The movement of the food preparation area expanded women's spheres of interaction in other ways. While grinding corn on the grinding stones located next to the new food preparation structure, women could observe several activities nearby: gardening, tool maintenance, processing of materials brought from further away, pigment preparation, dumping of debris, and entrances and departures from the houselot. They could also observe and interact with neighbors beyond the houselot walls and with passersby on the path that borders the 'Aak houselot. Getting nearer to these people and activities would have enabled various relationships and facilitated forms of social integration as wide or wider than those available earlier when women prepared food on the south side of the patio (see also Robin 2002).

The actual degree of communication between people would have depended on the timing of their respective activities (Robin 2002:28). At some times of day and year, men and women would have been working near each other. At other times work

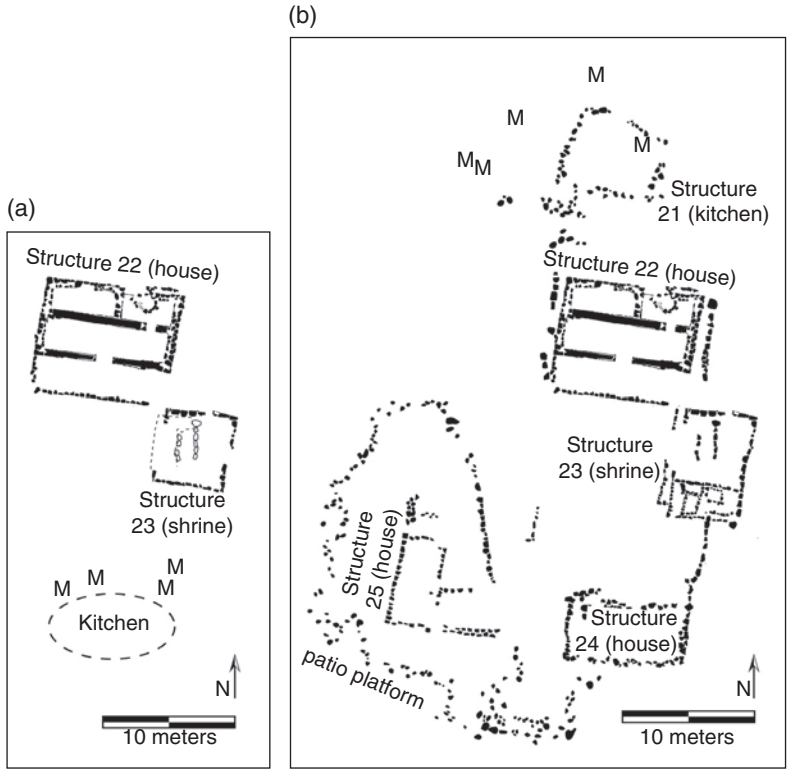


Figure 2.2 Plan view of 'Aak household buildings from the final two chronological stages (a, b). Grinding stones (*metates*) are represented by the letter M. Chunchcumil, Yucatan, Mexico. (produced by Scott Hutson).

would have separated people by gender and age. The gendering of space would have been fluid, subject to change at different times of day. The type of company kept while grinding, sometimes exclusively with other women, sometimes in the vicinity of both men and women, serves as the basis for the elaboration of gendered identities.

Gender is of course crosscut by other forms of difference (Meskell 1999). The specific configuration of the five different grinding stones (*metates*) at the stage three food preparation area (Figure 2.2:b) sheds light on these forms of difference. Hutson's recent analysis of the positioning of these *metates* draws inspiration from Sweely's analysis (1998) of the positioning of six *metates* at Dwelling 1 and Structure 10 of Joya de Ceren, a village in the Zapotitan Valley of El Salvador (Hutson 2010). There were at least three nuclear families living at the 'Aak group in its final stage, allowing for at least three women who could have used these grinding stones. During preparation for feasts and ceremonies, when women would have had to prepare massive quantities of food, it is likely that most of the *metates* were used at the same moment. One of them is located within the actual food preparation structure; a second is a few meters north of the structure, beyond the structure's northern entrance; and the remaining three are a few meters to the west of the structure. The woman using the *metate* within the structure would not have been able to see most of the activities going on outside of the structure, and had a view of only one of the other four

metates: the one beyond the north entrance. The woman at the *metate* by the entrance would have had the most commanding position: this *metate* alone affords a view of the people working at all the other *metates*, and it permitted a view of more of the outdoor activities of the houselot than what was visible from the three *metates* to the west of the structure. The placement of the five *metates* therefore creates multiple perspectives: one from which little could be seen, one from which much could be seen, and those with intermediate visibility. Considering sound as opposed to vision makes possible a less hierarchical, more embodied interpretation: it may have been possible for each of the five women to hear each other, mitigating to some degree the seclusion of the woman inside the structure.

Identity based on unequal family status, seniority or other concerns may have determined who was able to occupy which *metate*. The notion of unequal family status resides in the idea that not all families or persons within each houselot were equal (McAnany 1995). In all Chunchucmil houselots that received substantial excavation, including ʻAak, some families resided in houses that were larger and better built than others. Moreover, a person who was a servant (e.g., Hendon 1997) may have been set apart from the others, perhaps to be watched. As for seniority, enhanced knowledge accrues from a longer lifetime of experience. Older women in the multi-family household prepared food and spun thread both before and after the food preparation area was relocated. These women would have possessed a richer body of knowledge of the houselot than younger women, who did not experience the shift in the location of the food preparation area. Finally, separations between women while preparing food may have arisen from feuds or poor relations between people, some of whom may have married into the houselot.

Rights and duties of household members clearly determine the authority and autonomy of any particular member. Since a household is an economic unit rather than a family or a house, the success of the unit is not determined by a rigid structure of relationships or roles (see Netting 1993). Faced with the death of a female caregiver, a household can add a new female caregiver, farm the children out to their grandparents, press an older child or older children into childcare, or simply leave the children to fend for themselves. Tamales can be made within a household, but they can also be bartered or purchased from neighbors or be replaced by *pozole* (soup). In short, the economic viability of any particular household need not depend on any particular gendered role; all are malleable and all can be replaced by alternative strategies.

Dynamic Frontiers and State Expansion

Another important aspect to consider more carefully is the nature of gender and social identity as part of large-scale processes linked to state expansion and colonization. Such points of contact between states and indigenous societies may be seen as highly dynamic zones of social, cultural, and political change. Ferguson and Whitehead (1992) have stressed that these settings lead to "tribalization" and "ethnogenesis" with the emergence of groups that increasingly took on newly forming ethno-cultural identities. Contributing importantly to such processes, as indigenous societies and states become increasingly entangled, are new forms of violence and conflict, new material conditions stemming from trade, and "push–pull" factors that separate

individuals from their local communities. These processes have been an important historical factor in the growth and development of states and empires around the world, and issues of gender connected with these developments must be more effectively addressed.

One particularly interesting case study from the ancient world is connected with Greek city-state colonization in the Black Sea and the rise of what has been considered a powerful pastoralist state (the Scythians) in the steppe lands that stretch to the north. Immortalized by Herodotus (1921), the pastoralist populations within this region were greatly affected by the establishment of Greek coastal colonies and the emergence of new trade dynamics that increasingly drew on hinterland resources, such as slaves, timber, furs, and honey (Taylor 1994). Large barrow (*kurgan*) mortuary complexes appeared at this time, such as Ulski Aul and Kostromskaya in the Kuban River region (in modern Russia), and Solokha and Tolstaya Mogila along the Dnepr River (in modern Ukraine). Excavations at these sites produced human remains, sacrificed horses, and other animals, as well as beautifully produced artifacts that reflect a "Graeco-Scythian" or "Mixed Hellenic" style (Treister 2005:56). Such objects indicate new consumptive traditions connected with indigenous Scythian elites and their contact with Greek colonies. Elaborately produced jewelry and drinking vessels made of gold and other valuable materials represent new levels of prestige and status that surrounded both the obtainment and use of such exotica within local regional contexts. These material conditions portray a sharp rise in status and wealth among indigenous groups and the negotiation of social identity through the use of local and non-local material referents and practices. The effect that such developments had on social organization, lineages of power and authority, and the articulation of individual identity, connect importantly with our interpretations of engendered practices at the interface of Greek colonies and indigenous populations in the steppe grasslands.

Herodotus' fifth-century B.C.E. accounts of this region and, importantly, his description of female warriors known as Amazons, have become a consistent element in feminist interpretations of women warriors in the ancient world as well as among archaeologists writing about these early (agro)pastoralist societies (Davis-Kimball 2002). This widespread fascination with Amazon warriors has overshadowed more nuanced understandings of males and females within these early societies and the ways in which gender shifted as part of complex negotiations of social power and identity – especially in terms of its connection with the larger-scale processes outlined above.

In considering early pastoralist societies, it must be noted that gender practices among these groups were used specifically by Engels (1902[1884]) to emphasize a crucial shift in women's roles in prehistory as part of the transition from sedentary agriculture to a lifeway of mobility and dependency on herd animals. In fact, following Engels' early thoughts on this, it has been suggested by some scholars that the emergence of pastoral nomadism led to a new form of oppression over women as women became more important in the context of producing children (particularly sons) than they were as gatherers and producers of food for the community (Mies et al. 1988; see discussion by Taylor 1994: 394–395). Similar ideas were suggested by Marija Gimbutas through her numerous publications on the so-called Kurgan Culture in the western steppe zone and its migratory waves of penetration into "peaceful" Neolithic Europe. Gimbutas saw the nomadic pastoralist Kurgan Culture groups as

patriarchal and the farming societies of Neolithic Europe as matriarchal and goddess worshipping (Gimbutas 1973). Gimbutas' views largely held sway within the archaeological scholarship on steppe pastoralist societies until the 1980s but were increasingly challenged in the 1990s after the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe (see Chapman and Palincaş this volume).

It is interesting to note that such interpretations, stemming from Engels' original thoughts, stand in total contrast to Herodotus' discussion of the Amazons and more recent thoughts on early women warriors in Eurasia (Linduff and Rubinson 2008 and this volume), which have highlighted the agency of women and their role within pastoralist societies. It should seem obvious that more critical evaluations of engendering practices, social power, and identity among these early societies are needed. Fortunately, several recent publications are beginning to force the door open on this issue and have re-evaluated the archaeological evidence for Iron Age female warriors in the North Pontic steppe zone (Hanks 2008a; Taylor 2010). Moreover, a much greater diversity of literature has appeared in recent years, which provides a more holistic treatment of early "warriors" and the dynamic social practices linked to such individuals within societies and how their identities and statuses are conditioned through conflict and violence (Arnold 1995; Shepard 1999; Arnold 2005; Hanks 2008a, 2008b; Taylor 2010).

In particular, Bettina Arnold's focus on important "push–pull" factors that led male warriors and traders to leave their Iron Age "Celtic" communities and pursue opportunities in southern Europe, the Mediterranean, and southwest Asia has highlighted one aspect of the important processes that occur between states and the "tribal" zones at their periphery. By looking closely at the rise of elite female burials in temperate Europe, such as the "Princess of Vix," Arnold argues that Iron Age women in these regions began to fill a vacancy of power within lineages as men were caught up in warfare and other "male out-migration" processes (Arnold 1991, 2005). Importantly, she has examined this through the nature of continental Iron Age burial practices wherein the signaling of individual, family, and community statuses and identities can be (re) constituted and potentially renegotiated (Chapman 2000; Parker Pearson 1993). It is within this arena of social practice that the use of material referents (e.g., feasting and drinking equipment and other non-local prestige items) may be highly charged.

A similar situation has been documented amongst the Norse people living in Scandinavia between the eighth and eleventh centuries C.E. Famous as traders, warriors, merchants, and pirates, the Vikings lost heroically in foreign lands were commemorated on steles (runestones) scattered across their homeland. These commemorative monuments were frequently paid for by women, who were left at home (most of the time) to handle the family farms and finances (Mortensen 2004). Circumstances suggest that these women had prestige, autonomy, and control over others.

"Amazon" burials in the western steppe region that contain accompanying warrior equipment (swords and/or archery sets, lances, armor, etc.), therefore reflect an import set of mortuary practices and a shift in the nature of gendered identity (Guliaev 2003). Is such evidence a clear reflection of the function of female individuals holding the role of a warrior, or is it also indicative of women exercising greater levels of authority and social power within these societies? If the latter is true, then the placement of martial equipment with women, men, and children may be as likely to symbolize local status and power as it is to signal an individual who specialized in

interpersonal combat. Other female burials in the region have also been interpreted as "priestesses," with accompanying artifact inventories such as bronze mirrors, carved stone and clay "sacrificial altars," and colored pigments and ores (Davis-Kimball 1998:142). Such evidence indicates that various forms of material culture were used as important components of display in the construction of identity and social status. Scholars have strongly debated the clarity of such evidence, and (agro)pastoralist groups within the region were undoubtedly affected in a multitude of ways as the result of contact with the Greek world.

History is replete with evidence for warrior queens, so the capacity for violence does not appear to be gendered. Women warriors are unusual in most societies, although the tendency to sex burials according to gendered categorizations of mortuary furnishings has certainly made them appear less frequent than they actually were. Until quite recently archaeologists have assumed that any interment with weapons was male while any with weaving or potting equipment was female. Incidents in recent history, such as Japanese Samurai women, cross-dressing women who sneaked into various armies, the female warriors of the powerful West African state of Dahomey in the early nineteenth century, and the Soviet air force "Night Witches" of World War II do not suggest easy generalizations about women in warfare, however. Several accounts of women leading battles, such as the one in the Annals of the Cakchiqueles (a sixteenth-century manuscript describing Cakchiquel history and legends in highland Guatemala), permit the inference that women's participation in warfare was a result of some family insult. It also appears to be the case that when women are allowed to profit from war, in terms of either prestige or material wealth, they are more likely to participate.

Conclusion

We have intentionally not defined the term "state" because this is where gender research may have the most to contribute to our understanding of the past. Not only has the idea of gender been defined in relation to an androcentric state concept, but it has also been used to reinforce and naturalize colonial ideas about cultural evolution. The appellation "state" determines what evidence of gender roles archaeologists seek when we try to reconstruct the lives of women and men from the deep past, but where gender data contradict the model, the response is typically that the group had not yet reached a "state-level." Inadequate patriarchy is a sign of a lack of political centralization, so the Indus Valley, where there is little straightforward evidence of gender distinctions or hierarchy, the Maya, where dispersed settlement originally looked to archaeologists like kin-based organization, and Central Asian societies where women might ride and shoot alongside men have helped us define "state" by being "non-states." Engels' respect for matriarchy notwithstanding, in the prevailing models of the "rise of the state" patriarchy is regarded as an achievement, a cultural triumph over simplicity.

Pyburn has proposed that the relationship between states and gender domination is largely, though not completely, historical (2004). Returning to Engels, perhaps what he, together with Marx, did get right is that certain types of hegemonic economies foster or even require the commodification of people. Women may be commodified for

their reproductive capacities, but all people can be commodified for their productive capacities. In none of these early societies are all women commodities any more than all people are slaves. What ancient states have in common with each other and with modern nations is that they depend on enslavement. This is why in "the rise of social complexity" we see also the rise of at least some priestesses and queens.

In "The Art of Not Being Governed" James Scott (2009) poses a critique of our understanding of the rise of political centers. He proposes that what are regarded as interstitial zones are actually places of resistance that do not fail to form states, but instead succeed in not forming or succumbing to states. These interstices may motivate state formation at the same time as they develop complex strategies to resist enslavement. Scott mainly addresses his analysis to Southeast Asia, but there are important parallels with Central Asia, certain parts of the Maya Lowlands, and some non-Inca societies, as well as countless "simple" and "non-state" societies around the world.

Rather than arguing that gender roles are an unchanging heritage from the deep past, we suggest that the strategies of domination and resistance to states, and by the same token patriarchy, enslavement, and commodification, are very old, not simply the result of industrialization or the modern world system. By insisting that these institutions have a history and a legacy of resistance, we denaturalize the rise of states, the rise of slavery, and the domination of women. Moreover, we become able to see that these institutions are not the foregone conclusions of human nature but the products of agency in the past – and consequently susceptible to agency in the present.

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CHAPTER 3

Archaeology of Embodied Subjectivities

Teresa Dujnic Bulger and Rosemary A. Joyce

Questions of the body – its physical bounds, the social discourses which define it, and experiences of bodily practices – have been the focus of archaeological approaches to the interpretation of past lives now for decades. The subject of the body is a concern for all researchers investigating the past because the body plays an essential role in the process of identification, as well as serving as the primary instrument of experience. Just how researchers choose to think about the body, however, depends on the theoretical tradition with which they align.

The dominant tradition in archaeology still favors treating the body as a product of discourse. More recently, archaeologists have begun to treat the body as the phenomenological center of experience. In the first tradition, researchers pursue a view of the body as a "scene of display" where social meanings are inscribed and power relations negotiated (Meskell 2000:15). In the second tradition, phenomenological approaches resist this focus on discourse and turn instead to the body as part of the material world, framing the body as an artifact. Some archaeologists have begun to ask questions about lived experience and the embodiment of social and cultural ideals in everyday life, approaches which seek a middle ground between these two primary strands while embracing theoretical innovations introduced by feminist anthropologists (Meskell and Joyce 2003:17).

This chapter outlines past trends in research on the body in archaeology but focuses on those approaches to embodiment which bridge the gap between meaning and materiality, discourse and phenomenology, representations of the body, and bodily experience. These analyses are concerned with the materiality of everyday life, stages in the life-course, the instability of identity categories, and the multitude of ways that

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societal ideals are embraced, altered, and rejected through bodily practices. Interpreting past experiences of embodiment requires a foundational understanding of phenomenological analyses of the world but also demands an understanding of various modes of viewing the body and its relationship to society.

We begin with a discussion of the dominant views of the body in contemporary archaeological analysis and review the critiques of these analyses offered by archaeologists seeking to carry out an archaeology of embodied subjectivity in archaeological research settings. Archaeologists have found the ideas of feminist scholars useful in conceptualizing embodiment and the performance of identity in the past. Scholars including Butler (1990, 1993), Grosz (1994, 1995), and Moore (1994) have inspired archaeologists to consider the variability of experience, the instability of the subject, the political nature of all identities, and a variety of other issues that demand an examination of embodied experience. While embodiment is not solely a project of identification, our experiences of subjectivity might be seen as one way of momentarily stabilizing identity. Material traces of this process of subjective, embodied identification compose the data set of archaeologists who study embodied subjectivity. We will discuss a variety of case studies where phenomenological approaches have been used to address past lived experiences, and offer our own perspective on the most appropriate bridging of phenomenological, discourse analysis, and feminist theories of the body to understand past embodiments.

The Body as a Scene of Display

Archaeological analyses that have taken the body as a scene of display have relied heavily on the early work of Michel Foucault (Meskell 1999; Meskell 2000:15). This approach is distinguished by a preoccupation with the "inscription" of power on the individual, an emphasis on the social construction of the body, and the central role of power in the negotiation of the meaning of the body. Rather than focusing on the materiality of the body itself, these interpretations propose a body constructed through discourse, a vehicle for articulating social norms. It is, of course, critical to note that the reception of Foucault in archaeology in no way exhausts the potential of his work for archaeology. Indeed, we would argue that the understanding of subjectivity that Foucault offered in his early work, however influential on studies of antiquity, "carries with it assumptions about the original, ubiquitous, and inevitable primacy of masculine subject formation, of women's subjection and submission" (duBois 1998:85) that are deeply problematic for archaeology.

Much of the early archaeological research which falls into this tradition was based on the physical remains of burials and human representations. In these contexts, the body was interpreted as an "artifact," unproblematically reflecting the ideals of society (Fisher and Loren 2003:226). These studies paid close attention to dress and body modification according to what might be termed an "information transmission model" (Joyce 2005:143; for examples, see Yates 1993; Treherne 1995). This model of interpretation assumed an unambiguous relationship between the body or bodily adornment and the expression of particular identities.

One important contribution to research on the body as an inscribable surface is Tim Yates's analysis of figural rock art in Sweden (Yates 1993). Yates undertook an

analysis of the body as culturally constructed, and proposed that identity is tied to these cultural concepts (1993:48–51). He argued that the body is a "plain over which the grid [of culture] is laid in order to mark certain points of focus and intensity" (1993:59). In his model of the body it is a material to which meaning is applied through a process of inflection – certain "features" taking on more significance than others in culturally specific ways through their selective representation as inscription, in this case in stone.

A focus on "the body" as a culturally constructed product of discourse has continued to be a dominant approach in archaeology (Winter 1996; Kehoe 2000; McNiven 2000; Pollock and Bernbeck 2000; Roth 2000; Bazelmans 2002; Tarlow 2002). Critics of this approach point out that these interpretations deal with abstract ideals which don't actually represent the "lived experience" of individuals in a social and cultural context (Fisher and Loren 2003:227). The move toward lived experience and a theory of the body that stresses embodiment will be explored further below.

The Body as Artifact

In an important early commentary on the study of the body, Meskell (2000) used the term "body as artifact" to describe the intellectual projects of archaeologists who embraced phenomenological approaches which focus on experience and the materiality of the body (e.g., Shanks and Tilley 1982; Thomas 1993; Tilley 1994, 2004, 2008, 2010; McGowan 2006). Still, she remained critical of the early forays into this area, arguing that for these researchers the body was "described in relationship to its landscape or as spatially experiencing the phenomenon of monuments … without reference to corporeal, lived, or individual identity" (2000:16). Reflecting a reliance on structuration theory (Giddens 1984), the body was treated as a normative entity rather than a subject capable of experiencing a variety of different social positions.

An influential essay which embraced this type of phenomenology and helped to launch archaeological investigations along these lines was Julian Thomas's "The Hermeneutics of Megalithic Space" (1993). Thomas suggested that bodily movement in the past and present is responsible for the subject's interpretation of the world. Using Neolithic megaliths as a case study, Thomas demonstrated how physical sites can act to tie symbolic meanings in particular locales – a process which both influences the movements of persons through the landscape and creates a connection between people who experience the same physical space. More recently, this approach has been elaborated upon in a variety of analyses of rock carvings and monuments. These studies focus on how the body is implicated in perception and experience of the material landscape (Tilley 2004, 2008; Nesbitt and Tolia-Kelly 2009). Drawing on Merleau-Ponty (1989 [1962]) and Gell (1998), Tilley proposes a "phenomenological semiotics" that integrates interpretation of the social significance of representations with a more traditional phenomenological approach by asking how the body is involved in meaning-making (Tilley 2008:47). In a recent experimental archaeological project on the embodiment of ritual postures, McGowan has suggested that "ancient action can be experienced and drawn into modern corpo*reality*" (2006:32, emphasis in original). She addresses this by investigating the ways that ritual postures like those represented in archaeological media produce altered states of consciousness

in the present, and could have done the same in the past. Importantly, these projects problematize the embodied experiences of past subjects. However, past experiences are equated with embodied experiences in the present, which risks an over-reliance on the concept of a "universal" subject who transcends space and time.

The concept of body-as-artifact has more recently been appropriated in osteoarchaeological approaches that focus on the embodiment of categorical identities throughout the life-cycle and their effects on the actual corporeal body (Sofaer Derevenski 2000; Sofaer 2006). Sofaer (2006) calls for archaeologists to reconsider the implications of theorizing the body as an object, a project she offers as a balance to what she perceives is a trend toward considering material objects as extensions of persons and imbued with agency. Sofaer's work elaborates on some of the insights of Marcel Mauss in his groundbreaking essay "Techniques of the Body" (2006[1935]) where he developed the idea that our physical movements (how we walk, swim, give birth, etc.) are in no way "natural" but take on a specific form based on our cultural context. Sofaer's attention to the modes through which everyday movements literally become incorporated into the body in bones and flesh is a welcome perspective which argues for the "skeletal expression of gender" as well as other categories of identification, while also emphasizing the plasticity of the physical body (Sofaer 2006:105). This kind of research could be further enhanced by an exploration of the experiences of subjectivity that embodied identities would engender, and a destabilization of the category of "sex" that is treated unproblematically by most bioarchaeologists (but see Perry 2004; Geller 2005, 2008, 2009).

Embodiment and Embodied Subjectivity

In theoretical and methodological approaches focused on embodied subjectivity, archaeologists consider the materiality of the body throughout the life course in such a way that dissolves the distinction between subject and object by focusing on experience. Many of the studies discussed above use the term "embodiment" to describe their intellectual projects. The term has become broadly applicable to all research that is concerned with the ways the material world has a bearing on the perception, experience, or representation of the body. Nevertheless, while many studies question the ways the body was represented and imbued with meaning in the past, or how the material body is implicated in one's perception and interpretation of the world, they do not always address the formation of the subject and subjectivities through experience of the material world.

Attention to embodiment in this sense requires a phenomenological approach which *also* seeks to explain the variability and instability of the subject. Rather than see the body as a reflective mechanism for communicating information, or simply as a tool for perceiving the world, we follow Csordas in seeking a theory of embodiment where the body is constitutive of our social world, where it is "the existential ground of culture and self" (Csordas 1994:6). Framing embodiment in this way demands consideration of the sensual experiences of the person as well as the ways materiality is fundamental to a collective understanding of culture and history (1994:4). Our interest in embodiment focuses specifically on embodied subjectivity – the relational experience of subject position (intersubjectivity) via bodily materiality (intercorporeality).

With the formation of the subject as a central question, research in archaeology has drawn on theories developed by cultural anthropologists and sociologists, as well as feminist theorists who question the assumption of a prediscursive, universal body (Butler 1990, 1993; Csordas 1990, 1994; Moore 1994; Grosz 1995). From these analyses, a concept of the body has emerged that is not a stable physical entity but rather a material reality defined through normative social discourse and the physical actions that create and reiterate norms. This model of the body implicates the material world in the creation and reproduction of the subject and subjectivity, thus creating an imperative need for archaeologists to locate traces of past experiences and their provisional stabilization in embodied subjectivities through material remains.

The concept of subjectivity sits at the center of our understanding of past experiences and, following Ortner, we might understand this concept as "the view of the subject as existentially complex, a being who feels and thinks and reflects, who makes and seeks meaning" (Ortner 2005:33). The "subject" might be understood as an unstable, relational position of experience, a *place* from which interpretations about the world are made. Exploring the subject and subjectivity this way builds on the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty in *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1989[1962]) and on the explication of the destabilized subject in works like Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993).

The research of cultural anthropologists and ethnographers working in contemporary contexts has been a source of inspiration for some archaeologists seeking to study embodiment, and has the potential to suggest new directions of archaeological research. Thomas Csordas (1990) has demonstrated several ways in which the concept of embodiment is fundamental to many bodies of anthropological theory, and has the capacity to draw connections between disparate theoretical orientations. He uses examples from the research of Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu to demonstrate how embodiment is a necessary concept which is often taken for granted, but which nonetheless undergirds their theories. In his discussion of Merleau-Ponty's theory of perception, Csordas argues that the instability of the "preobjective" – the state before perception – is overcome by the collapse of the subject–object dichotomy through the embodied act of observing and objectification (1990:8–10). Similarly, the tension between structure and agency in Bourdieu's (1989[1977]) theory of practice is reconciled through *habitus*, but the subject must embody *habitus* through practice to break down this dichotomy (Csordas 1990:10–12). Perception and practice become important because the subject is formed through social and physical interaction with others and through reflection on one's positionality with respect to others.

While embodiment is clearly an important concept for mobilizing the theories of Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu, other researchers have noted that their theories of the subject are problematic. Merleau-Ponty has been criticized for presenting a normative, and presumably male, subject experiencing the world (Grosz 1994), while Bourdieu has been questioned for proposing subjects without subjectivity or agency (Ortner 2005). Clearly, the recognition that embodiment is a productive methodological starting point for anthropological analysis does not mean that theories which rely on embodiment will necessarily address the complexities of embodied subjectivity (see Moore 1994).

Cultural anthropologists who have explored embodiment have begun to address some of the problems raised related to agency, consciousness, and the boundedness of

the physical body (Warnier 2001, 2009; Rouse 2004; Van Wolputte 2004). Van Wolputte (2004) has noted the growing consensus that anthropologists cannot take for granted that the body, self, and individual are necessarily coincident. He suggests that instead of talking about bodies, subjects, and selves we might theorize experience in terms of the "body-self" and its formation through embodiment (Van Wolputte 2004:261). The body-self might be characterized as "incarnate subjectivity," which is influenced by bodily experience, cultural context, and *habitus* (Van Wolputte 2004:261). He also addresses important disciplinary moves toward framing embodiment as fundamental to concepts of intersubjectivity and intercorporeality – concepts which emphasize the relational nature not only of our conceptions of our social selves, but of our very physical bodies.

Intersubjectivity takes into account the fact that one's experience of social positions and context-specific feelings and emotions will always be based on one's awareness of and interactions with others. Similarly, intercorporeality acknowledges that our bodily experiences are mediated by physical relationships with other bodies and material objects. Discussing Weiss (1999), Van Wolputte sees the interaction implied by intercorporeality as "vested in the inherent multiplicity and indeterminacy of the body we have and are" (2004:259).

Other cultural anthropologists challenge the traditional limitations of the bounded individual as the locus of agency. For example, in her analysis of individuals otherwise deprived of subjectivity (as in a comatose patient) Rouse (2004) uses the term "embodiment-by-proxy" to describe the relational nature of agency. Conceiving of agency as distributed among individuals and objects, she suggests that the actions of some individuals can work to define the subjectivity of others. She uses the example of the parents of a comatose child who make interpretations about her physical state to imbue her with "intelligence, communicative competence, and family membership" (2004:523). Thus, while the child as a subject could not act, her subjectivity was defined by those around her.

Archaeologists drawing on Warnier (2001, 2009) also question locating agency in a bounded individual. Warnier's work has been embraced by some archaeologists (e.g., Hendon 2010) perhaps because of his attention not only to theorizing embodiment but also to theorizing the extension of the body through material culture. He begins with Mauss's "techniques of the body," but he asks how these become elaborated by the use of objects, thus blurring the line between subjects and objects in a "bodily synthesis" which merges the two (Warnier 2001:7). In a similar vein, other archaeologists have found inspiration in the work of Bruno Latour (2005) and actor-network-theory, which also problematizes the boundedness of the body and the division between subject and objects (e.g., Knappett 2005; Knappett and Malafouris 2008).

Perhaps the most influential body of theory in archaeology that questions the concept of a normative subject and a physically bounded individual has been feminist writing originating from anthropology and sociology. Archaeologists have embraced these approaches in their analyses of embodied subjectivity because they focus on material traces produced through repetitive actions. Feminist theorists portray the subject as in flux, emerging, and becoming – a perspective that emphasizes the variability of the subject and the variability of physical bodies. Gender performance theory allows for archaeologists to address differences in bodily experience that are elided by

many phenomenological approaches. Elizabeth Grosz (1994) has criticized the work of Merleau-Ponty, for example, for theorizing the subject as universally male. She suggests, however, that with suitable attention to decentering the presumed universal body, feminist researchers may find Merleau-Ponty useful because of his "integration of mind/body duality and his attempts to accord perception a primacy in psychical and biological life" (Grosz 1994:109). His insights can be used by feminists to "think a radical notion of sexual difference" as a means of "rethink[ing] the body outside of dualism" (Grosz 1994:109).

Feminist anthropologists such as Henrietta Moore have offered important critiques of the universal anthropological subject based on the variability of individual experience and the politics of representation. Moore (1994) has suggested that the concepts of embodied subjectivity and corporeal femininity are useful when one is attempting to bridge the gap between the distinct concepts of sexed subjects and gendered persons. In her view, the gendered person is a categorical role defined by dominant social discourses while the sexed subject is a culturally and historically situated position of experience. It should be obvious that her definition of these two concepts corresponds to the two main strands of archaeological research on the body identified by Meskell (2000).

In Moore's view, the gap between these concepts can be overcome by recognizing the importance of discourse for the constitution of the subject. Moore draws on Lacan's work on psychoanalysis and the formation of the subject, emphasizing that the subject "is not self-contained and autonomous, but is intersubjective and depends on its relations with the other" within a system of meaning (Moore 1994:43). Other people become points of reference for evaluating one's own social position and physical existence, as in the concept of intercorporeality discussed above. Embodying subject positions requires *practical activities* which reinforce positions that otherwise only exist in discourse (Moore 1994:47). Moore argues that "it is in terms of these [subject] positions, even if in contradiction to them, that we construct a sense of ourselves as selves, as individuals, and as persons" (1994:48).

Thus, in order to embody personhood, one must have a sense of socially and historically situated subject positions. It is the emphasis on practical activities that engage the material world and the necessity of defining past subject positions that archaeologists focus on when searching for material traces of past processes of identification.

Researchers investigating embodied subjectivity and embodied personhood ask different questions of what is often the same material. "Embodied subjectivity" can refer to the physical and social experience of a subject position, as in approaches influenced by Foucault and Merleau-Ponty, or to a culturally and historically situated consciousness (Ortner 2005). Defining one's subject position involves reflecting on the intersubjective relationships one has with other individuals, groups, and institutions.

"Embodied personhood" refers to the ways the body is involved in carrying out the activities expected of a certain aspect of personhood or socially recognized roles (Clark and Wilkie 2006). To connect these notions of embodiment with the material world that archaeologists study, many researchers have embraced the work of Judith Butler, who theorizes the formation of the subject, political routes to social change, and the place of the material world in these processes. Her theories have become central to the project of theorizing embodied subjectivity in archaeology, and so a more extensive explication of her work is warranted.

Judith Butler's Influence on Archaeologies of Embodiment

In her interrogation of the process of subject formation, Judith Butler asks questions about the relationship between the regulatory power of norms and the possibility of subverting and changing those norms (Butler 1990, 1993). The process of subject formation is entrenched in discourse, but it is also expressly material and involves the everyday practices and experiences of people interacting with each other and with the world around them. Because it is related both to discourse and the material world, archaeology is in a position to utilize Butler's theories to reframe how we understand past subjects and embodied subjectivity.

Much of Butler's work is specifically concerned with destabilizing the concept of a "core" gender identity in favor of a view that gender as an illusion or "effect" performed by and constitutive of a subject, an effect which must be constantly reiterated in order to appear stable. Concepts such as performance, performatives, citational precedents, and subversion underwrite how subject formation is tied to everyday words and practices. Butler's theories are useful for thinking about identity broadly, connecting material patterns with processes of identification, and asking questions about the efficacy of agency in creating change.

Butler introduced the concept of "performativity" in *Gender Trouble* (1990) where she argued against the idea that "sex" was a "natural" and immutable identity. Instead, she suggested it be understood as a mechanism for the regulation of identities within the social world. In constructing her argument, she drew on the philosophical concept of the performative. A "performative" in the broadest sense is something that creates what it names, or "functions to produce that which it declares" (Butler 1993:107). Gender is performative because it produces an effect of a core, static, stable center through the behaviors, speech acts, and gestures that reference it (Butler 1990:174). The announcement "It's a girl!" reproduces the idea that there is a stable identity of "girl" that one can "be."

It is important to note that performances are not equivalent to performatives. Performatives are concepts, such as gender, which are temporarily stabilized through performances. It is not only speech acts that reinforce performatives: other acts, such as the physical alteration of ambiguous genitals to conform with a two-sex model, or the gift of feminine clothing to the parents of a new baby, work the same way, producing what they declare already exists. Performative identities are reinforced throughout performances in everyday life, and thus from an archaeological point of view the question isn't *whether* we can see evidence of them – it is how we have *avoided* seeing them.

In *Bodies That Matter* (1993) Butler revisited these ideas and expanded on her exploration of performativity, introducing the concept of "citational precedents." This term refers to those previously established disciplinary norms which are repeatedly cited (reiterated in action) by subjects in order to define and reinforce their subject position. The actions, gestures, and words that constitute the performative have the power to do so only based on these precedents for citation. Butler uses the example of a judge citing a law to reach a verdict. She argues that "binding power is found neither in the subject of the judge nor in his will, but in the *citational legacy* by which a contemporary 'act' emerges in the context of a chain of binding convention" (1993:225, emphasis ours).

For archaeologists, imagining past subjects citing social "laws" or everyday precedents by repeating these in action has potential material implications. Because of the repetition required to maintain the illusion of identity and the necessarily public nature of at least some of these citations (Butler 1990), we should expect to see traces of the citation of precedents in performance. Public displays may leave material traces in the form of personal adornment objects or household objects used in semi-public contexts. These then can be viewed as part of the apparatus through which subjectivities are reiterated and partially stabilized over time, both the time span of the individual life and the time span of a social history.

One potential restriction of Butler's framework is the tendency for repeated citations to reproduce the norms that they cite, whether they intend to or not – a situation that leaves little room for change to the system. In common with other theories of subjectivity, intentionality and the degree to which individuals can exercise agency may be seen as limited (Joyce and Lopiparo 2005). Butler often talks about disciplinary ideals as compulsory and limiting. In one example, she stresses that "femininity is … not the product of choice, but the forcible citation of a norm, one whose complex historicity is indissociable from relations of discipline, regulation, punishment" (Butler 1993:232). Here she argues that not only is the norm reproduced, but the power structure and system of inequality is reproduced as well.

Importantly, however, the process of citation *can* result in failure. Because the norms cited are not *themselves* essential or objective, their citation or iteration can never perfectly reproduce the original. The person citing the precedent is always aware of the difference between it and his or her own performance. Butler argues that "the resignification of norms is thus a function of their *inefficacy*, and so the question of subversion, of *working the weakness in the norm*, becomes a matter of inhabiting the practices of its rearticulation" (Butler 1993:237, emphasis in original). While Butler holds that even seemingly subversive practices (such as dressing in drag) can reinforce heterosexual norms, citation is a realm not only of constraint but also of potential change.

Changing normative ideals is a slow process, but it is still possible to achieve change within a social network. Butler (2001) suggests that subjects may be excluded from some opportunities and social positions, but by using the logic of dominant culture in new ways and in new contexts they can create a space for previously unheard-of or seemingly dangerous voices. In archaeology one might see parallels of this in such things as subordinate groups repurposing objects from mainstream culture to take on new meanings in new contexts. This creates a place where change to the original power structure might be produced. Butler terms this process "radical resignification" (2001:335).

Joyce has argued that "Butler's focus on the social mechanisms through which gender is produced, performed, and regulated shifts attention from presumptions of innate biological identity toward an emphasis on the fluidity of gender difference" (Joyce 2006:50). Archaeology is particularly suited to addressing processes of identification because, as mentioned above, these processes, as intersubjective performances rather than innate essences, take place in public spaces and through repetitive action – arenas which are conducive to the creation of recognizable material traces.

Perry and Joyce (2001:115) discuss the applicability of theories of performativity to archaeological analysis and argue that archaeology can reconcile the "apparent

idealism and potential erasure of the physical experience of difference" that has been offered as a critique of Butler's theories. Archaeology can do this by demonstrating time depth and materiality of the "regulatory modes" of gender production. Perry and Joyce look specifically at the ways in which ceremonial and everyday life overlap to identify the mechanisms of gender regulation, the production of a sense of naturalism in gender categories, and the boundaries of sanctioned gender performance (2001:115–119). They are most interested in how archaeologists are challenged by Butler's theories, proposing that "the confrontation with issues concerning the stability of identity and its relationships to materiality … is critical" to the field (Perry and Joyce 2001:113). In addition to the concept of gender performance, Perry and Joyce are interested in how abjection, as the divergence from gender ideals, might be seen in the archaeological record.

On the basis of Butler's theories of performativity and the creation of the subject, we might move toward an understanding of identity as an "effect" (following Butler's 1990 characterization of gender as an "effect"). With the recognition that the creation of subjectivities is situated, iterative, and fluid, we cannot conceive of a static notion of "identity" nor can we think about identification in terms of categorical and divisible aspects of the self (Joyce 2004:86). Identity, if conceived of as the *perception* of stability, can be seen as fluid, flexible, intersectional, and intersubjective at the same time. For this reason, pessimism about the possibilities of making meaningful interpretations of identity and identification (Casella and Fowler 2004) should perhaps be reconsidered.

Archaeologies of Embodied Subjectivity

Archaeologies of embodied subjectivity and the performativity of identity rooted in the kind of theoretical work discussed above take into consideration the feminist critiques of theories of the body and subject which have been offered by Grosz, Moore, and Butler. Numerous examples now exist, most dating (unsurprisingly) from the past decade (e.g., Joyce 1998, 2000, 2006, 2008; Bachand et al. 2003; Fisher and Loren 2003; Meskell and Joyce 2003; Gilchrist 2004; Hendon 2010). Archaeology's contribution to the literature on embodied experience in the past is a perspective informed by great time depth and explicit engagement with the material world. Archaeology can contribute attention to the sensory landscapes of the past while also asking questions about how the senses were involved in the historically situated experience of embodied subjectivities.

Early archaeological research that gestured toward questions of embodied subjectivity began with recognition of the interwoven emotional and physical experiences of the past subjects. A call for an archaeology of "sensuous experience" came from Kus, who suggested that we must pay attention to the "context and content" of symbolic activities which constitute the sensuous experience of the body and soul (Kus 1992:173). With the benefit of existential context we can begin to tease out the central social and cultural symbols which underwrite how people may have seen and been a part of the world (1992:174). Physical, emotional, and intellectual worlds are implicated in the formation of the subject, and attention to these dimensions of experience led many archaeologists to consider performance theory to address embodied subjectivity.

The performative nature of gender and identity has been considered in Joyce's interpretation of Aztec and Formative Period processes of socialization in Mesoamerica (2000). Drawing on Butler, she framed the process of socialization/subject production as rooted in the "repeated *performance* of particular ways of being that are represented in a society as *citational precedents*" (Joyce 2000:474, emphasis in original). In order to create proper Aztec adults, children had to be molded from their status as "raw material" through repeated practices which referenced cultural precedents for adult behavior and appearance. Material culture such as earspools and figurines became involved in the embodied experiences of individuals through transitional rituals. These rituals served to introduce adult life practices and created a venue for the citation of these precedents through body modification, costume, and hairstyle. This study demonstrated the performative nature of cultural ideas about the body, the role of material culture in these performances, and the ways that the materiality of the body was central to the experience of the lifecycle.

Archaeological approaches that merge an attention to discourse with a consideration of phenomenology have frequently focused on finding traces of the performance of identity (although others focus on mortuary practices, experiences of violence, etc. in their explorations of embodiment). Fisher and Loren (2003) have argued that personal adornment and body modification are material traces that can shed light on past embodied experiences of subject positions. They integrate interpretive approaches which lend attention to both discourse and materiality when they suggest that "bodily praxis is situated in a discourse of appropriate bodily action and bodily experience [and] is given meaning through that discourse" (2003:227–228).

The ways that identity is created through processes of embodiment has been a central question for researchers investigating ancient Mesoamerican and Egyptian contexts. For example, in an analysis of Mesoamerican sculptural traditions, Bachand et al. (2003:245) demonstrate that "body knowledge" is seated not only in the traditional bounds of the physical body but also in the objects and spaces on the landscape. They found that the public and residential space at a Late Classic Maya site was populated by sculptural representations of ancestors which acted as precedents for appropriate behaviors and affected the experience of embodied subjectivity. Moreover, they argue that Olmec monumental sculptures could have been involved in similar processes, and that these processes of subject reproduction represent a long-term tradition in Mesoamerica.

In a research project focusing on a smaller physical scale, Joyce (2003:259) has proposed that figurines from the Middle Formative period Honduran site of Playa de Los Muertos reflect a diversity of embodied experiences and may have been important to the creation of new embodied subjects when crafted, held, or worn. The details of the figurines' hairstyles and ornamentation marked different life stages, and the objects would have been involved in household ritual. However, the minute detail of the figurines suggests that the individual specificity of the figurines could only truly be appreciated by their makers. Thus they were at once part of the marking not only of standardized personhoods but of a diversity of personal subjectivities through performances (Joyce 2003). The Playa de Los Muertos figurines underscore a need to pay attention to both the public discourse on the body and the individual experience and interaction with the material world.

In a unique example of comparative archaeological analysis, Meskell and Joyce (2003) explore the ways that embodied personhood was created and reproduced

through the material world in ancient Egypt and Mesoamerica. Personhood in ancient Egypt was at once dividual and individual, with an intense emphasis on social connectedness through kin, rank, and other associations, as well as an emphasis on the individual and the biography of the self (Meskell and Joyce 2003). Personhood among the ancient Maya was created and affirmed through reference to publicly recognized ideals and "the body" was constituted by a variety of material and immaterial substances which were integrated into the person through everyday practices. In both of these contexts, the concepts of performance and citational precedents create an understanding of past embodied experiences of personhood.

The variability of past bodily ideals and bounds of the person can be seen by looking at the practices of New Kingdom Egyptians. Meskell and Joyce (2003) detail the ways the Egyptian notions of the body did not conform to modern Western conventions. For example, New Kingdom Egyptians did not construct the self according to a mind/body duality but rather conceived of multiple aspects of the self, some of which survived bodily death (2003:67–74). In addition, Egyptian persons were not necessarily seen as bounded by the physical body. This can be seen especially in the imagining of deities where the bodies of humans and animals are intermixed (2003:79). In some ways, however, the materiality of Egyptian identities was embodied in similar ways as seen in other cultures. The treatment of bodies in death represented the embodiment of masculinity and femininity through dress, treatment of hair and skin, body modification, and jewelry (2003:53–66). Through both an analysis of Egyptian texts and the material objects associated with New Kingdom domestic and mortuary sites, Meskell and Joyce (2003) access the sensual lives of past Egyptian peoples.

In Hendon's (2010) discussion of household life in prehispanic Mesoamerica, embodiment is an important concept linking theories of practice and personhood. Drawing on theorists such as Mauss and Warnier, she traces the ways repetitive bodily activities which engage material objects are involved in redefining the bounds of the person and the experience of a variety of subjectivities. The practices that are part of this analysis involve the development of skills, require a community of practice, and have life-course (or at least diachronic) implications as skill levels change. Thus they were specific actions with social significance which changed over time. Hendon examines cooking, the making of pottery and paper, weaving, and the working of shell as specific examples. For each of these activities she discusses the objects found archaeologically which would have been associated with them. Hendon's approach sets up a framework for understanding the diachronic construction of subjectivities through the activities associated with communities of practices.

In addition to imagining the embodied experiences of everyday practices and skilled activities, Hendon emphasizes the importance of memory in the creation and reproduction of subjectivities. She suggests that the interaction of people and objects in repetitive skilled tasks becomes a "locus of memory that perpetuates their craft and allows the possibility of its continuation" (2010:145). Hendon's work demonstrates one of the directions embodiment research can take to explore the diversity of past subjectivities and the material and social contexts that contribute to them.

Hendon demonstrates that embodiment can be fruitfully integrated with theories of material agency and memory. This coupling of embodiment with other theories is also seen in Hutson's (2010) work on the analysis of domestic contexts at the Classic Maya site, Chunchucmil. Hutson (2010:5) draws together theories of practice,

performativity, and embodiment under the concept of "dwelling," arguing that this concept "refers to situated practices that produce social beings" (2010:5). He investigates the materiality of practices that create and reiterate relationships between people by looking at food preparation and its implications for the construction of relationships of difference along axes of gender, status, and age. His focus on embodied dwelling also leads him to consider the process of objectification and the implication of objects in the creation of difference through an analysis of material culture related to domestic space, mortuary practices, and food preparation. Embodiment, in Hutson's analysis, is a key concept for understanding the "scattering [of] subjectivity across manifold relations among objects and people" (2010:7).

All of the preceding researchers adopt a feminist critique of the stable subject and incorporate an attention to phenomenology as an entrée into a discussion of embodied subjectivity and identity. This approach, however, does not represent the only way of merging the divergent archaeological traditions of bodily research that focus on discourse *or* phenomenology. Hamilakis et al. (2002:10), for example, suggest that both cultural discourses on the body and material experiences contribute to our understanding of past embodied experience but that our focus should begin in the body, with the senses.

Hamilakis (2002:124) proposes that one avenue to an archaeology of embodied experience is through an analysis of commensality – the exchange of food, memory, and sensory experience through eating together. His analysis focuses on intercorporeality and the concept that bodily memories "accumulate" though shared experiences (Hamilakis 2002:129). This stands in contrast to an approach which looks at the ways that concepts of the relational self might be based on discourses on the body as well as bodily practices. Hamilakis (1999, 2002) suggests that a greater emphasis on the ways that senses are historically situated (including an analysis of our understanding of senses in the present day) would allow researchers to more fully approximate an interpretation of the embodied experience of past subjects. Implicit here is an understanding that the *sensorium*, the technical term for the suite of the bodily senses, is to a certain extent universal, raising the same kinds of concerns that feminist scholars express about phenomenological studies that treat the body as a uniform thing.

In an analysis of the ways that certain foods might be mechanisms for the creation of embodied personhood, Hamilakis (1999) argues that in Bronze Age Crete social relations were dependent on shared embodied experiences of feasts. He suggests that the negotiation of power and the securing of specific social positions would have been underwritten by "the sensory feelings and emotions generated and exchanged in contexts such as funerary feasts," and he sees these contexts of experience as the basis for "power dynamics, competition, and negotiation of social roles" (1999:49). This approach to embodiment, while resembling some of the goals of researchers in the body-as-artifact tradition, pays closer attention to both to the materiality of bodily experiences and the historically situated meaning of those experiences.

Archaeology and Embodiment: Some Final Thoughts

Archaeological analyses of the body have taken a variety of forms. Special attention to representations and personal adornment in mortuary contexts inspired early

researchers to embrace Foucault and other theorists who framed the body as a platform for the projection of society's ideals. This approach continues to produce research that demonstrates the variability of conceptions about the body across cultures even if it does not address the material experience of the body or difference in embodied experiences. Materiality and the body in the physical landscape have been the focus of researchers bringing a phenomenological perspective to interpreting past experiences of embodiment. The subject, who is modeled in these approaches as an adult male, uses his own body to move around, sense, and interpret the physical world. Without an understanding of the ways that culturally specific discourse on the body colors this physical experience, however, these approaches can only ask a limited range of questions of past embodiment.

The integration of both of these traditions requires a balance of the strengths of each. If we are to approach an understanding of embodied experience in the past, it must be through a well-grounded concept of embodied subjectivity. Archaeologists who take this task seriously see the root of this project as challenging the idea of the universal subject. The work of feminist theorists has inspired archaeology to search for variability of experience in the past. These theorists also offer methods for conceptualizing the process of subject formation in the past and how this process implicates the material world.

Archaeologies of embodied subjectivity rely on feminist critiques of the subject. Those approaches which do not engage with this literature risk imposing a universal subject on the past, or downplaying the importance of discourse and historical context in the shaping of experience. Because a feminist perspective insists on the historically specific nature of embodiment, some of the best work of this kind takes the form of detailed studies of specific times and places. This approach promises to produce new understandings of past subjectivities while also shedding light on the situated and unstable nature of our contemporary selves.

Where written records are not available, archaeologists have additional challenges in addressing embodied subjectivity. Without written records we do not have direct access to linguistic discourses on the body – its contextually defined ideals for care, form, movement, and meaning. We argue that these challenges are not insurmountable. Where the human form is represented in a variety of media and physically presented in the excavation of burials, archaeologists can use these visual and pragmatic materials as evidence of discourses. In fact, we argue that it is those ideals that are not explicitly stated, but which are so naturalized as to become "background" to the efforts of the artist or author that can be most revealing of bodily ideals, giving archaeologists working without or against textual discourses a powerful advantage.

Examination of the way the body is represented materially in everyday life or treated in death can reveal ideals about gendered bodies in the past that were referenced, approximated, or rejected by past people. We need to continue to ask questions about past experience in order to both humanize the past and denaturalize our understanding of the body in the present. Archaeological analysis of embodied subjectivity contributes to gender archaeology by calling attention to the ways that gender is imbricated with other dimensions of identity in the process of embodiment, whether that process is or is not mediated by texts, images, or objects used in bodily practices.

Archaeology is well suited to ask questions about past embodiment because of its long time depth and attention to materiality. We argue that archaeologists need to

think about time depth and materiality from a feminist perspective in order to make interpretations about the multiplicity and complexity of embodied bodies that avoid creating a homogenized interpretation of past experience.

A feminist perspective highlights variability over time and across materialities. Attention to change over time creates an opportunity for archaeologists to ask how societal ideals of the body and personhood are altered by historical circumstances. These social ideals are important for understanding the process of embodiment – where one's physical existence is experienced with reference to cultural and social precedents. Attention to materiality in archaeology allows researchers to address the recognized importance of the physical body in lived experience, which takes into account other intersecting differences, such as age, gender, sexuality, race, and class. These are crucial to interpreting different past subjectivities, which we now can see are entirely embodied, if always embodied in historically specific circumstances.

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CHAPTER 4

Queer Prehistory: Bodies, Performativity, and Matter

Benjamin Alberti

> Queer is a continuing moment, movement, motive-recurrent, eddying, *troublant.* … Keenly, it is relational and strange.
>
> Sedgwick 1993:xii

> The minute you say "queer" … you are necessarily calling into question exactly what you mean when you say it.
>
> Giffney 2009:7

Introduction

The explicit aim of the organizers of the Chacmool conference in 2004, *Quer(y)ing Archaeology*, was to re-energize gender archaeology by getting back its critical edge (Voss 2009). Has queer taken the place of feminism in archaeology – the "f" switched for the "q" word – to shake up gender? The response to the call was not encouraging; there were few papers that engaged with a queer approach (Geller 2009a:67). Indeed, the literature that explicitly incorporates queer is scant, and much of what exists seems diluted of the more radical implications of the critique. Has the move to radicalize gender archaeology via queer had the reverse effect of normalizing queer, making it simply a "special case of gender" (Dowson 2009a)?

Chacmool illustrates a central issue in queer archaeology. The danger, as Yvonne Marshall (2000) has noted, is that queer's critical potential is easily displaced by trying to define it as a nice, neat concept. There is no denying that queer has become a field,

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an object spoken about and evaluated (Giffney 2009:19). It must therefore face the tension that is created when a fixed academic subject is based on theories and objects of study that are, by the definition of most practitioners, unstable and unfixable. That tension is at the heart of queer as a presence in archaeology at all scales, institutional, personal, textual, and intratextual. It is recursively present in this paper, which attempts to adopt a queer stance in relation to a metatheoretical commentary that reflexively recognizes its own contingencies. The question of the status of queer in archaeology – radical critique or another set of norms – is not incidental, and mirrors a recurring apprehension in the literature on queer. Rather than see this paradox as a problem that needs to be resolved, however, I argue that the resulting dynamic is the heart of queer. The tension between fixed position and radical critique is productive and necessary because queer is precisely about "contingent foundations" (Butler 1993).

Attempts to write a history of queer are paradoxical (Butler 1993:22; Jagose 2009:158), and the overview threatens to fix a normative narrative, to cement contingent foundations. The contingent position I argue from and from where I read the history of queer prehistory reveals a number of apparently contradictory relationships that queer seems forever to throw up. I agree, then, that queer prehistory has produced its own kind of orthodoxy or norms (Cobb 2006), an oxymoronic "stable queer subject," that queer can appear as merely synonymous with critical, and that a shorthand version passes for queer in some archaeology. Queer itself, however, can't be used as a fixed position from which to critique other positions, a standard against which things can be measured as more or less queer. If, as Butler claims, "[p]erformativity is a process that implies being acted on in ways we do not always fully understand" (2009:xii), we cannot control for every element of our production, much of which can be critiqued endlessly, paranoiacally (Sedgwick 2003). Instead, we can ask after the performative effect of queer knowledge (Sedgwick 2003).

In this chapter I provisionally adopt a definition of "queer" with which to diffract the queer work that has been done in prehistory. The emergence of queer critique in archaeology is placed in relation to feminism and studies of sexuality. Even though disciplinary strategies would appear to encourage the normalization of queer and a disciplining of feminism, they also open up spaces for new issues to be addressed. Queer in prehistory has produced both critique of heteronormative assumptions and the application of queer theory to many areas of archaeological concern, especially bodies and identities. The result has been the production of strange stabilities, new foundations that themselves are now open to critique. A clear example of the productive tension of queer is provided by Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. I trace the genealogy of the theory as it has been used to operationalize queer theoretical insights in archaeology, most often in the guise of a theory of "gender performance." Taking my cue from Thomas Dowson (2009a), I argue that one powerful future for queer is through a critique of materiality. Consequently, I develop Butler's insight that performativity is a profoundly ontological concept as developed in the queer materialism of Karen Barad.

Definitions, Foundations, and Spaces

The epigraphs to this paper make it clear that to talk about "queer" is to talk in apparently contradictory ways. Almost as soon as the term "queer theory" was

introduced by Teresa de Lauretis (1991) it produced tension and contradiction (Butler 1997a; Jagose 2009). It is a remarkably elusive term, leading some, including de Lauretis (1994) herself, to dispense with it entirely, or to forever claim its "death" (Jagose 2009). Queer emerged from political activism to complicate the complicity of sexual identities with the labeling projects of Western medical discourse and the dissonance this produced between body and identity (de Lauretis 1991; Voss 2008:328). The term was meant to be as inclusive and non-definitional as possible to capture the complexity of identity formation, to "transgress and transcend" the "fine distinctions" in discursive protocol among people who did not conform (de Lauretis 1991:v; see also Dowson 2000a:13; Marshall 2000:222). Queer has come to mean a counter-hegemonic position in relation to the normative or dominant, one that challenges the authority of norms to fully describe or contain (Halperin 1995; Voss 2008). Contemporary society is characterized by a rigid heteronormativity that demands conformity among sex, gender, and desire and saturates the institutions of social, political, and economic life (Rich 1980; Warner 1991; Butler 1993; Ingraham 1994).

It is no accident that queer is so hard to pin down. It contains an apparent internal contradiction, the product of a simultaneous refusal to fix any kind of category that can be colonized by contemporary language and economic structures and the need to provide a foundation for other ways of life. As Giffney maintains, queer is about fluidity, historical contingency, and messiness, and is resistant to any form of easy categorization (2009:9; see also Voss 2005:60). But this has led to many searching questions, such as whether queer is effective in identity politics (Gamson 1995) given its tendency to undermine all fixed positions, or what the proper object of queer analysis should be (Butler 1997a).

The definitional problems are actually informative of what queer does. Giffney (2009:17) argues that the strategic usefulness of queer lies precisely in its ability to elude definition. Jagose (2009:159) adds that queer has always had "an explicit stake in its own indefinability" in order to keep political ends open to potentiality. This she describes as queer's "strategically open-ended relational character" (Jagose 2009:159; see also Giffney and Hird 2008:5). I argue that the tension in attempting to pin down the inherently transient is productive, not inhibitive. So I do present a definition (however slippery), one which I hope "pushes discursive boundaries" (Giffney 2009:17). Again, the "attractive inaccuracy" (Giffney 2009:17) of the term is key, but only as a presupposition, not an ongoing condition. My deployment of the term, then, fixes queer in order to provoke a reaction, a particular effect. The space opened by that effect is occupied by a non-queer moment, the establishing of a foundation via a new object, materiality. If, as Giffney and Hird argue, any definition of queer necessarily becomes altered in the process of "denaturalizing its subject" (2008:4), the "queer" I define is not expected to survive its deployment within this text; it is a kind of "conceptual reagent," all used up by the process. My contingent definition of queer is as an internal, contradictory tension between two positions – the critical and continually in flux and the stable and categorical around which the former must turn.

Jagose (2009) argues that there have been two differing responses to queer scholarship and its claims to radically undermine conventional categories in academia. On one side are approaches such as Halperin's (1995:62; see also Dowson 2000a), which claim that the horizon of possibilities for the applicability of queer cannot be predefined. On the other side are those who argue that queer theoretical practice "reproduces the exclusionary effects" it claims to counter (Jagose 2009:158). I argue

that both occur in archaeology, creating a form of disciplinary orthodoxy around the use of queer and a space in which new questions may be raised.

One can see two genealogies of queer work in archaeology: as a companion to feminist archaeology and as a work with roots in studies of sexuality. These relationships challenge authorial allegiances and present problems for linear disciplinary histories. Jagose (2009) reminds us that many of the central critiques showcased as typically queer have deep histories in feminist thought. Questions of decentered subjectivity, unstable identities, and an "anti-foundationalist impulse" had been tackled by feminists (e.g., Fuss 1989). Voss (2000, 2009) echoes Jagose when she writes that queer owes much to feminism, which was its enabling condition (see Geller 2009a:71; Marshall 2000). Voss traces queer's lineage from feminism via sexuality studies. Even if studies of sexuality and queer do not always coincide, she locates queer archaeology within the study of sexualities (Voss 2008:328). Dowson (2006:90) explicitly argues that while feminism was in some way responsible for the space that produced queer scholarship, it tended to stereotype male identity and sexuality, producing a "straw man," a foil for feminist critique (2006:90). He also cites feminist silence on questions such as the heteronormative assumptions of the family as a reason to turn to queer theory. It has been argued that feminism also failed to incorporate sexuality fully, leaving it with a shadowy existence as a secondary effect of gender (Dowson 2006; Voss 2009:31).

Voss's statement, however, that, "Just as feminist theories address not women or men, but gender, so too does queer theory seek to understand the social production of gender and sexuality in its totality" (2009:32) can also be seen as a form of temporal disciplining of feminism from a current vantage point (Jagose 2009:159–160; see also Marshall 2000). Others see a more intimate relationship with feminism. Geller (2005, 2009a) situates queer within feminism, arguing that there is no meaningful way to distinguish them. In fact, emblematic queer theorists such as Butler were incorporated into archaeological writing before they were explicitly identified as "queer" writers in archaeology (Joyce 2000; Alberti 2001). We could ask, naively, "Why did queer archaeology emerge at all?" But instead of understanding the relationship as temporally linear and hierarchical, it might be more useful to understand feminism as both the historical source of inspiration and the present-day interlocutor of queer (Jagose 2009:160). While Geller (2005) is right to remind us of the debt of one field to the other, they should not be collapsed into one another, nor should one claim some kind of "ancestor" status due to chronological precedence. Marshall (2000:223), for instance, works at the point of engagement between the two fields rather than staking out a position. What is interesting and useful is the continued movement back and forth on key questions and the productive potential of their interlocutions and the different effects each "field" can provoke. Moreover, Jagose's point is not solely to set the record straight but to point to ways in which non-linear temporalities are part and parcel of queer (Dowson 2001; Halberstam 2005). It is not about proprietorship of an idea or body of material, but about critical genealogies that enable and are productive of particular types of scholarship. Queer, then, is as much a strategic intervention and the opening of a space as it is an identifier of a particular body of work.

The Subjects and Objects of Queer Prehistory

In a discussion of "proper objects," Butler contested strongly the tendency to isolate sexuality and gender respectively as the domains, or objects, of queer and feminist approaches

(1997a; see also Marshall 2000). Queer modes of analysis are antithetical to such boundary drawing exercises (Butler 1990, 1993). Eng and colleagues argue that there is no "subject *of* or object *for* the field" (2005:3). Similarly, Giffney and Hird state that, "As a proper object queer perversely challenge[s] the very epistemological ground – shaky though it may be – on which it uncomfortably rests" (2008:4). Whereas lesbian and gay, for instance, still appear as empirical categories, queer identities defy categorization (Sedgwick 1993:9). Queer, then, is more a positionality or a mode of analysis than a proper object.

Sedgwick (1993:9) has written that it matters who is using the label queer and in what direction. When used about oneself queer "signals a performative act of self-experimentation" (Sedgwick 1993:9). By this account, it is questionable whether much work in archaeology is itself "queer," other than importing theoretical models from queer theory, with some important exceptions (She 2000; Dowson 2009b). There is a clear difference, for example, between the performatively queer subjectivity of Dowson and the more interpretive use of queer in work that uses Butler's theory of gender performativity (e.g., Joyce 2000; Alberti 2002). The former enacts a destabilizing queer effect at the level of the text and what it demands of readers, whether questioning epistemological privilege or laying bare the role of sexuality in the production of archaeologists. The second approach need not be particularly queer: interesting new ways to understand bodies or regional archaeological histories don't necessarily challenge the stability of the subjects produced.

Archaeologists have largely not risked their theoretical positions in adopting a queer critique or work that is identified as queer. Tellingly, Voss (2000) has observed that queer appears most often in introductions to volumes, framing the debate. There are few queer case studies (Croucher 2005; exceptions exist in historical archaeologies of sexuality, such as Casella 2000). Such "framings" are examples of queer normativity insofar as queer would not simply frame but challenge and reconfigure a project. The greatest impact has been new interpretations of existing data rather than new ways to interrogate what we mean by, say, data (see Croucher 2005). Geller (2008) exemplifies this position when she argues that osteoarchaeologists ought to incorporate recent theorizing from feminism and queer theory at the interpretive end of their work.

Queer in prehistory follows a dual trajectory: it provides a critique of heteronormativity, and queer theoretical insights are used to provide new perspectives on such topics as identity, bodies, art, and representation. Queer work can be grouped into three areas: first, "redemptive" (Sedgwick 2003) counter-narratives and socio-political critique, where the focus is most often on queer subjects and histories. Second, "queer statements" (Giffney 2009) that provoke a spinning out (Sedgwick 1993) from queer subjects; the exciting critical power of queer advances a general critique of normative categories (Voss 2005:72). Queer statements build from the insight that the normative relies on a "constitutive outside," or process of abjection (Butler 1993:2; Kristeva 1982). Third, authors who examine bodies and identities, especially those inspired by Butler's theory of performativity. These three areas of queer in prehistory are explored in the following sections.

Heteronormativity and narratives of redemption

If queer has a principle, it is the counter-hegemonic position that challenges and resists dominant cultural forms (de Lauretis 1991:ii; Jagose 2009:157). More than

critique, it is an active attempt to disrupt taken-for-granteds; a search for ways in which lives considered the source of abjection can somehow be made "livable" (Butler 2004). Many queer projects, then, are concerned with reclaiming histories and developing counter-hegemonic redemptive narratives that bring to light previously invisible histories of sexuality.

Dowson is clear that, "The past is *always already heterosexual*" (2009a:286, emphasis in original). One goal of queer archaeology has been to resist dominant discourses by challenging exclusionary norms and heterosexual hegemonies. Voss (2009:34) claims that a "truly queer archaeology" will challenge contemporary political identities and "seek to develop archaeological methodologies that do not depend on these problematic sexual taxonomies." The naturalization of heterosexual institutions through their "retrojection" into the past is of central concern, leading to critiques of the cultural history of the family and the role of reproduction (e.g., Dowson 2001). Similarly, a naturalized, heteronormative division of labor in reproduction, marriage, and family has also been a target (Dowson 2001, 2006; Cobb 2005; Geller 2005). Cobb (2005:634), for instance, explores the heterosexism of hunter-gatherer studies, arguing instead that the Mesolithic populations of Western Scotland "constructed their understandings … of gender, sexuality and bodies" in a fluid, contextual way. Another element of this work is corrective, remediating blatantly inaccurate, heterosexist accounts of the past (e.g., Reeder 2000; Back Danielsson 2007). One such example is provided by Greg Reeder (2000), who carefully explores the iconographic code used in ancient Egyptian funerary depictions of the Fifth Dynasty to suggest that the standard interpretation of the intimate portrayal of the royal manicurists Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep as biological twins whitewashes alternatives better supported by the evidence. The "twin" thesis, while plausible, does not account for the conventional coding of intimacy reserved for husband and wife found in the manicurists' joint tomb. According to Reeder (2000:200), one cannot ignore the deliberate positioning of the men in the artwork as conjugal and the simultaneous sidelining of their wives, including the deliberate erasure of Niankhkhnum's wife, Khentikaus, from one frieze. The tinderbox of such imagery for contemporary identity politics is illustrated by the pointed exchange between established archaeologists Meskell (2002) and Dowson (2008).

Queer enables sexualities to be explored beyond the confines of normative histories. Gender ambiguity, fluid sexual identities, and alternative sex/gender systems are ways in which queer has opened up identity to exploration (Croucher 2005; Hollimon 2006). Schmidt (2002), for instance, defends the importance of queer anthropology – variability in contemporary practices opens our eyes to the possibility of past variability. Thus, evidence that was conventionally interpreted in ways that accorded with presumptions of heterosexuality and binary genders can now stand for empirically distinct categories (Hollimon 2000; Schmidt 2000).

Voss (2009:33) is explicit that archaeology can address the need for critical prehistories and a "queer heritage" for contemporary identity projects, as "the past is being used as a blunt, devastating rhetorical weapon" to control sexual identities (Voss 2008:328–329). To ask explicitly for an archaeology of queer subjects, however, risks producing corrective readings of the archaeological record that, while clearly important, find the non-normative but immediately reinscribe it as deviant. One of the unsettling effects of the institutionalization of queer in archaeology is that

the study of past sexualities can have the perversely queer effect of becoming a (pre)history of deviants or "gender benders" (Back Danielsson 2007:28; Dowson 2009a; Voss 2009). The political effect is noted by Sedgwick (1993:5), who describes the anger of straight students when they discovered that the class they had enrolled in was designed with five or six gay students in mind. She interprets their response as a sense of entitlement to a parade of gay and deviant identities made intelligible for them without having to "slow down the Mercedes to read the historical markers on the battlefield." Queer in prehistory is decidedly not about a "prehistory for deviants" (Dowson 2009a) or a parade of "queers, freaks, and hookers" (Voss 2009:32). Following Sedgwick (2003), it is important that such redemptive moves become "reparative" – the sources of new modes of life.

The politics of queer in the profession is taken up forcefully by Dowson (2006, 2009a), who argues that queer content and critique are intimately linked. The experience of queer practitioners and the likelihood of their knowledge claims gaining legitimacy are related to the lack of importance given to the study of sexualities or queer in archaeology. Dowson (2006) recognizes this as a form of epistemological privilege – being "out" reduces one's claim to an authoritative reading. Moreover, the content is intimately connected: straight men produce straight pasts (Dowson 2006:96).

Queer reveals that sexuality does not stay within neat bounds but explodes into all elements of life; it is thus best understood as part of a totality (Voss 2009:32; see also Joyce 2000; Schmidt and Voss 2000; Meskell 2002; Eng et al. 2005). Explicitly or not, queer critique brings sexuality with it to the heart of fundamental questions about society. Performative acts of authorship make this relationship clear (e.g., She 2000; Dowson 2009b). Recognizing heterosexuality as the default that does not require explanation (Dowson 2009a) has led to calls for an archaeology of heterosexuality and masculinity (Voss 2008:330; Wilkie 2010). If sexuality can travel (Eng et al. 2005), though, the opposite is also true: it may not always be a meaningful category of experience or analysis. Sexuality may not have existed prior to its naming and medicalization in twentieth-century Euro-American discourse (Voss 2008:319). It may not, therefore, be the right starting point or focus for archaeological studies of "pre-sexuality" (Meskell 2002:283).

Queer statements

The relationship between queer and sexuality is tellingly elusive. The big moment for many queer theorists – the strength and source of the endless possibilities of queer critique – is to spin out from questions of sexuality (Sedgwick 1993). Halperin's declaration that "queer is by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers*" has been particularly influential in archaeology (1995:62, emphasis in the original; see also Dowson 2000a:163). As Dowson (2000a:164, 2000b, 2009a) has repeatedly argued, to limit queer to sexuality runs counter to a queer agenda; there is no specific area or subject matter to be queered. And as Judith Halberstam (Halberstam and Povinelli 2007) ironically remarks, queer subjects are not necessarily the most interesting thing going on. Even so, there is a certain anxiety about leaving questions of sexuality behind. Voss (2005:72) reminds us that theories of sexual identity are useful starting points for a queer archaeology, but we must also interrogate those

same theories for alternatives. In line with queer's dislike for stable identities, perhaps its "object" ought not to be an identity itself but rather practices and ways of life that are susceptible to a queer mode of analysis.

Queer as a positionality or stance in opposition to the norm has resulted in the widespread acknowledgment in archaeology that both "the normative and oppositional" are the objects of study (Voss 2009:32; see also Dowson 2000a; Joyce 2000; Strassburg 2000; Voss 2000:184; Back Danielsson 2007; Ardren 2008). Voss (2008:330) claims that "Queer theory was developed to better understand the ways that normative social structures are promulgated and reproduced," so it may provide the "conceptual tools" for a general methodology to tackle heterosexual institutions. It is telling that conference sessions and papers have often oriented themselves around the theme of normative/non-normative as a way to engage archaeology generally in queer debate.[1] The reversal enacted by this position is important: the abject, or non-normative, foundation of normativity becomes key to the definition or constitution of the normative identity. As Voss notes, "Thus it is 'deviance' that is foundational and the 'normative' that is unstable" (2000:184), an important move for queer archaeology as not all "sexual and gendered differences [were] stigmatized in all past societies" (Voss 2008:329). At this level of analysis, it is important not to confuse statistical variance from the norm with cultural variance (Voss 2005:66–67). Voss (2005) references Hollimon's (2000) work among the Chumash of coastal southern California to make this point: two-spirits are recognized by the normative archaeological method of variation from norm, but that does not mean 'Aqi are culturally non-normative. That is, we ought not to confuse "our" abject with "their" subject.

Prehistoric archaeologies challenge the normative in various ways. Examples include work on shamanism (Schmidt 2000; Strassburg 2000; Wallis 2000), normative archaeological methodologies (Strassburg 2000; Dowson 2001; Croucher 2005), rock art (Dowson 2000b; Hays-Gilpin 2004), and maritime archaeology (Ransley 2005). Queer, as such, is part of "a package of approaches" that are critically oriented (Croucher 2005:611). In a rigorous exploration of burial practices and shamanism in prehistoric northern Europe, Strassburg states that his "queer materialist" goal is to investigate "historically created existing and past 'otherness' of all sorts" (2000:24). Methodologically, Dowson (2001) has critiqued the heteronormative underpinnings of chronocentrism, arguing that it is manifestly phallocentric and de-authorizes material such as rock art that cannot be dated. Similarly, a number of archaeologists have challenged the naturalization of heterosexual family structures in accounts of prehistory (Schmidt 2002; Cobb 2005; Dowson 2006). It has become common to talk about queer being able to address any concern of the marginalized. This opens up the field considerably, as it means that "queer studies … would not be overly concerned with looking for evidence of nonheterosexuality but instead would be focused on ways in which the normative and deviant have been defined … in all social structures in which there is a center and a periphery (in other words, everywhere)" (Ardren 2008:19). Dowson (2000a), for example, argues that rock art studies (e.g., Hays-Gilpin 2004), shamanism, and the archaeology of Greenham Common are all examples of marginal communities that are largely ignored or sidelined by dominant archaeological discourses and can therefore be addressed by queer even if "queer subjects" are not present.

While archaeologists and queer theorists advocate following queer's exciting disruptive effects beyond a narrow focus on sexual subjects, the question remains as to what is distinctive about queer if sexuality is absent (Eng et al. 2005). In addition, the nature of academia means that active strategies of journal or conference paper solicitation can produce opportunistic work.

Wallis (2000:253) has made this connection clear in relation to Halperin's warning that queer's lack of precise definition means that it can become divorced from the social and political experiences that give the terms its power: "What makes 'queer' potentially so treacherous as a label is that its lack of definitional content renders it all too readily available for appropriation by those who do not experience the unique political disabilities and forms of social disqualification from which lesbians and gay men routinely suffer in virtue of our sexuality" (Halperin 1995, as cited in Wallis 2000:253).

Sedgwick warns that to displace same-sex sexual relations from the terms "definitional center … dematerializes any possibility of queer itself" (1993:8). This may be a clue as to why some queer theorists in archaeology are skeptical of general references to queer in archaeology, uses that may be normalizing its effects. As Marshall observes in reference to a glossary entry on queer, it can easily become normative if presented normatively (2000:224). Dowson has also signaled his concern that "in archaeology 'queer' is little more than a harmless addition to gender archaeology" (2009a:291). Queer may be mobile but it is never neutral – it hurts, affects, marks, liberates, and troubles. It derives its force from a repeated invocation linked to accusation, pathologization, and insult (Butler 1993; Giffney 2009:9). The process of abjection delimits subjects through the stigmatization of others as "dangerous and unnatural" (Voss 2009:33). Thus, force, asymmetry, and power are central to queer and sexuality (Grosz 2005:185–195). Losing sex may risk losing the force of the term.

Bodies and identities

A mixed queer/feminist genealogy has had a large impact on the archaeology of identities and bodies, strongly influenced by the work of Judith Butler. Given Butler's emphasis on gender/sex as corporeal practice, it is easy to see how archaeology's emphasis on materiality fits in. The archaeological interpretation of Butler's concept of "performativity" illustrates both the potential of a critical queer approach and its potential neutralization. Here I outline two ways in which queer bodies and identities have impacted archaeology: first, in relation to the "social construction" of sexed differences; and second, in conceptualizing identities as fluid and contextually specific. Material culture, whether in the form of personal adornments, tools, figurines, or buildings and structures, as well as its effect on embodiment through repeated practices, is understood in this approach as internal to identity creation and not simply a backdrop. That is, bodies, identities, and material culture are seen as co-constituted. Thus, prehistoric identities do not rely on the notion of a core, stable self that remains unchanged throughout the life-course (Dowson 2000a:163). Instead, identity is context-dependent and enacted or "embodied" in ways that capture the "lived experiences" of past peoples (Meskell and Joyce 2003; Joyce 2008).

Butler's work has become known in archaeology as a theory of gender performance (Perry and Joyce 2005; Voss 2005). Johnson, in attempting to explain performativity for a general archaeological audience, writes, "what it means to be a man or woman is only partly determined by biology … It is also determined, at least in part, by the daily performances men and women put on" (2010:140). Performance recalls backdrops, plays, dressing up, ornaments, and bodily modifications and is reminiscent of practice (Bourdieu 1977) and dramaturgical theories (Goffman 1959). As "performance theory," then, the conceptual content is readily accessible to many people.[2] Butler's texts have gained currency in work on bodies and general theoretical texts (e.g., Meskell 1996; Fowler 2000; Joyce 2000; Sørensen 2000; Alberti 2001; Thomas 2004; Johnson 2010; see also overviews in Perry and Joyce 2005; Voss 2008). In relation to prehistory, her work has inspired interpretations of identity, sexuality, and long-terms patterns in gendered and corporeal performances among the Maya and Azteca (Joyce 2000); an analysis of the representation of sex and gender in the artwork of Bronze Age Crete (Alberti 2002, 2005); exploration of non-normative identities in the northern European Bronze and Iron ages (Strassburg 2000); and masking practices in the Scandinavian Iron Age (Back Danielsson 2007).

Butler (1990, 1993, 2004) understands gender as complicit in the processes of establishing and maintaining the ontological integrity of the categories male and female which, in turn, naturalize gender. The mechanism of that complicity is revealed through understanding gender as performative. Her more recent work recognizes this as a general process that constitutes the human as well (Butler 2004). Butler understands performativity as "*that aspect of discourse that has the capacity to produce what it names*" (1994:33, emphasis in original). Sedgwick explains performatives as "utterances that do not merely describe, but actually perform the actions they name," such as "I thee wed" or "I dare you" (1993:11). The force or authority of the performative is derived from its reiteration, or citation, of a prior set of practices. Butler gives the example of a judge who cites the law that she applies: the citation gives her performative enunciation its power, but it is also by the "invocation of convention" that the prior authority – "the figure of the judge's 'will'" – is established (1993:225). The effect of a performative is to hide the mechanism whereby it both draws from conventions and constitutes those conventions.

Gender, Butler argues (e.g., 1990), is a very material, visible process. A gendered identity and a sexed body are produced by processes that occur on the surface of the body. The repeated stylizations of the body – everyday acts and gestures – are themselves performatives, producing the gendered identity of which they are thought to be the expressions. Through that repetition the acts of gender congeal over time and give the appearance of a substance – of ontological integrity – to gendered identities. The material aspect of these norms, repeated and taken up in cycles, lends authority to the naturalized identities.

Archaeologists have access to the material results of this regulation of gender over the long term; as Voss points out, Butler's theory has most commonly been used for the "diachronic study of identity formation" (2008:328). For example, Joyce (2000) and Meskell (Meskell and Joyce 2003) have developed interpretations of long-term corporeal regimes and the interrelationships among material culture practices and bodily identities among the Classic Maya and the Egyptian New Kingdom, respectively. They show how the performances of gender – gestures, acts, codes, norms – produce

accepted corporeal regulatory regimes that are observable to archaeologists through material remains. Joyce's (2000) work among the Aztec and Maya provides the most thorough long-term approach to gender as performance and the naturalization of particular views of bodies over the long term. Her interpretation of Butler stresses the fact that gender is not an aspect of identity, rather it is "an activity, something one does"; in addition she observes that, "As performance, gender is a way of being in the world, a way of dressing, of using the body, of revealing, concealing, modifying, and presenting the physical self" (Joyce 2000:7). Joyce's work demonstrates that any form of categorization is an act of power and a performance that does not match up with a natural body or essential identity but enforces them. Long-term iterations of accepted norms of bodily presentation are in tense relation with the incredible variability in individual bodies and individual embodied experiences (Joyce 2008). Material culture mediates that relation, enabling domination, resistance, processes of naturalization, and ways of performing identities.

Queer and feminist texts have questioned the rigidity of many binary structures, including the gender/sex model (Butler 1990; Giffney and Hird 2008:3). Butler's work supports the notion that "a body" per se does not exist: all we have is access to bodies through their positioning in one or other discourse (Butler 1993; Thomas 2004:215). Butler's work has thus been cited widely in support of the idea that sex as well as gender undergoes a form of construction (e.g., Meskell 1996; Alberti 2005; Geller 2008). According to Geller (2008), it is the historical context that needs to be examined to understand what counts most as a marker of sex on the skeletal body, such as how cranial measurements were superseded by the pelvic structure as sex determinates. In her view, "the specific criteria that skeletal analysts have privileged in their sexing practices of ancient remains demonstrate how 'truth' and its attached social meanings can shift over time" (2008:121).

Likewise, fixed categories of bodies such as male and female are no longer assumed as safe grounds for analysis; bodies can be understood as fluid, their boundaries amorphous or permeable. Strassburg, for example, rescues part of the original idea of sex, understanding it as "psychosomatically structured by the limits and possibilities of the materiality of bodies" (2000:43). He keeps gender apart, as the means by which normative sexual practices are disciplined, but wants sex to be about "the fearsome mix of order and chaos present in the morphology of human bodies" (2000:42). Other authors think hard before admitting the category of sex into their analysis at all. In her study of Late Iron Age Scandinavian bodily representations, Back Danielsson (2007) wants to understand bodies that escape easy categorization into male/female. She concludes that representational practices around bodies – whether human or animal skeletal remains, masking practices, miniatures, or gold foil figures – and the circulation of body parts in metaphorical associations (bones, semen, flour) are all to do with the fundamental Late Iron Age unificatory theme of transformation. Here we see themes common to queer: the dismemberment (quite literally) of fixed identity categories, an emphasis on flow and fluidity, contextual identifications rather than essential identities, and a stress on practices. Methodologically, Back Danielsson is willing to jettison the categories of sex and gender altogether in the face of ambiguous evidence. She substitutes woman, man, male, and female with specific, contextual discussions of the osteological and material features usually assigned to one category or the other (2007:49–50). Arguments that sexual dimorphism is the rule

(e.g., Sofaer 2006:92) straightjacket this Iron Age skeletal material, which can only be "safely" sexed 20 to 30 percent of the time (Back Danielsson 2007:65). Therefore, bidding "good riddance" to sex actually broadens Back Danielsson's interpretive horizons.

In previous work (e.g., Alberti 2002, 2005), I have challenged the primacy of genitality to identity when interpreting artworks from Bronze Age Knossos. Just as Back Danielsson (2007:76) detects a certain edginess in the writings of archaeologists unable to ascertain clearly the sex of Iron Age gold foil figurines but who feel a duty nonetheless to do so, Aegean archaeologists demonstrate anxiety when faced with sex/gender ambiguity in Bronze Age Knossos (see Alberti 2002). Louise Hitchcock (2000) has offered a thoughtful solution, arguing on the basis of comparison with Bronze Age Near Eastern and Egyptian data, that gender ambiguity played a sanctioned role in Minoan society. She focuses on the heavily reconstructed "Priest-King" relief fresco from Knossos (Figure 4.1), which defies conventional archaeological categorization in its association of a male physique, white body color, loin cloth, lily crown, and griffin – a confusion of male and female iconographic elements. Hitchcock suggests that rather than try to explain away these associations, we should recognize that the Minoans chose to "privilege certain images as different and distinct from their own cultural norm" (2000:83). The Priest-King may be evidence of multiple gender categories, a Priestess-Queen even, utilizing the sanctioned play of ambiguity in the service of power by taking on and mixing male and female signs.

I have argued that the problem with interpretations of gender in Minoan art is the assumption of a strict male/female binary (Alberti 2002). Physical markers of sex are rarely present, however, so images are usually gendered on the basis of color (white for female, red for male), clothing style, and activity. Inconsistencies in assigning a clear gender identity or sex to the figures led me to argue that gender was represented in the imagery from palatial Bronze Age Knossos without recourse to contemporary Western binary categories. For example, the famous bull-leaper frescos depict white and red figures engaged in the same "male" activity wearing conventionally understood "male" dress (Figure 4.2). In interpreting this imagery I identified recurring visual codes without presuming that binary sex was paramount or that genitalia are central to the identities depicted. The most striking thing about the images is the consistency with which the body is depicted, not the differences: a single, hour-glass body shape dominates. Figures are distinguished by clothing, activity, and body position. In fact, body and clothing are inseparable in the images; as such, "meaning is derived from a complete image, not a juxtaposition of natural body and cultural clothing" (Alberti 2002:110). Clearly identifiable sex markers in the images (breasts) only appear accompanied by a certain style of clothing; a naked, sexed body as we understand it does not exist. "Sex" as we understand it was a "cultural" marker: our nature/culture formulation is reversed. A naturally sexed body versus a culturally gendered body is not present. Thus, an alternative to "privileging difference" (Hitchcock 2000) is that sexual difference in the artworks is always conceptualized in a non-binary fashion.

Sexuality may in fact be questioned as foundational to the organization of bodies and identities. As Voss (2009) argues, prehistoric societies are "pre-sexuality." Third sexes, such as two-spirits, are often used as alternative ways of thinking on body, sex, and gender (e.g., Prine 2000; Voss 2005:60; Hollimon 2006; Joyce 2008). Hollimon (2000) demonstrates in the case of the Chumash that activity, profession, and practice

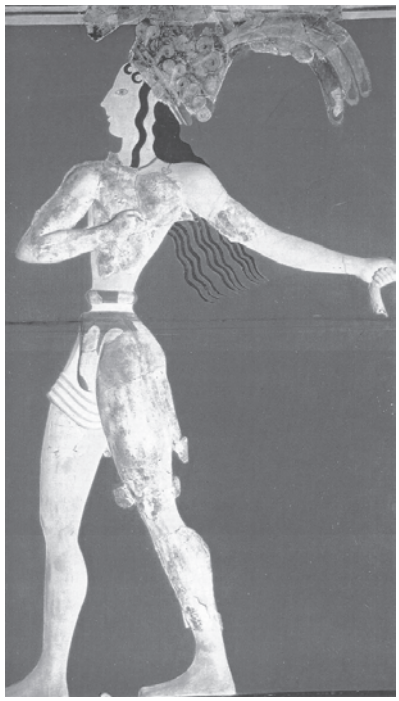


Figure 4.1 Priest-King relief fresco from Late Bronze Age palace at Knossos, Crete (from Sakellarakis 1995:119).

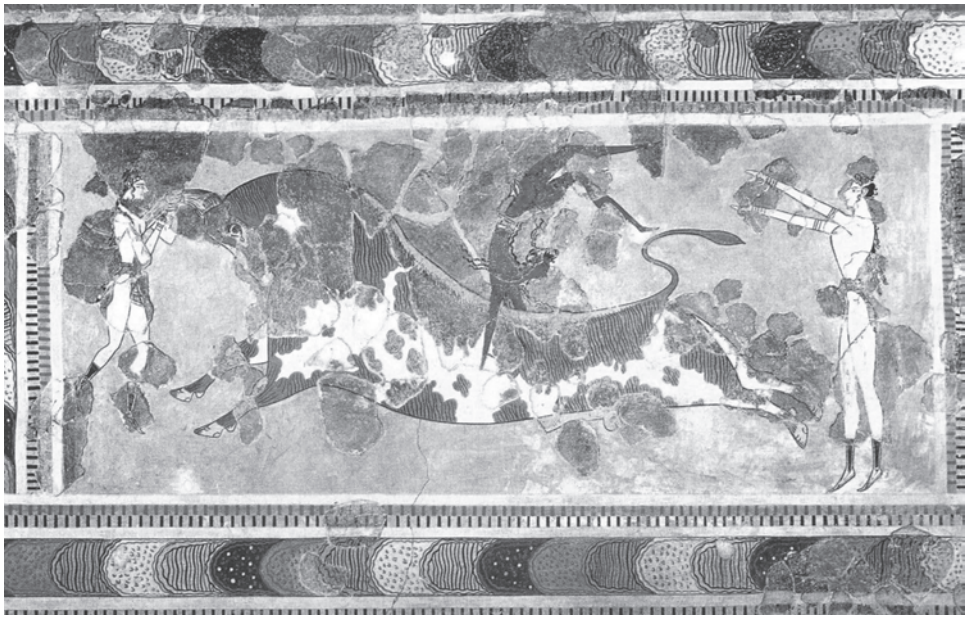


Figure 4.2 Bull-leapers fresco from Late Bronze Age palace at Knossos, Crete (from Sakellarakis 1995:121).

were contextually significant markers of identity, not some assumed fixed biological structure. One implication of Hollimon's work is that fleeting identities may be more significant than essential identities that endure. This is very much in keeping with queer notions of identities as contingent and changing, conceptualized as empty placeholders for an identity always in progress (Halperin 1995:112–113; Giffney and Hird 2008:3; Jagose 2009:159). Rather than set up another identity category (e.g., third sex/gender) to add to the existing dominant categories, queer identities challenge the idea of stable identity "types" in the first instance.

The normalizing moment in the body of work influenced by Butler rests on the difference between the meanings of "performative" and "performance." The difference, I argue, is between a concept that alludes to a fundamental, ontological constitution of subjects and things and a voluntaristic notion that presupposes an acting subject. Emphasizing the "performance" elements of Butler's theory can obscure her insight that the sex/gender relationship is ontologically constitutional and not merely a gloss on an underlying material reality. Butler understands matter as "*a process of materialisation that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter*" (1993:9, emphasis in the original). By playing with the double significance of "matter" Butler is pointing at the non-trivial sense in which materialization is both an ontological and epistemological or ethical concern. It is this dual significance that is potentially lost when performativity is understood as performance (Perry and Joyce 2005). Performance, Butler argues (1994:33, 2009), presumes a subject, whereas performativity contests the very notion of a subject; "performance" as a bounded act is distinguishable from performativity because the latter involves the citation and repetition of norms which precede and constrain the "performer." An overly voluntaristic notion of gender performance coupled with queer's "total deconstruction" of categories of identity (Boellstorff 2007:25) can presume a neoliberal model of the individual, the perfect consumer for late capitalism. Performativity, unlike performance, does not originate from a person's "will," but rather is the enabling condition of a "subject" and "will" in the first place (Butler 1993:230–234).

Queer Materiality

In her broad-ranging survey of gender and rock art, Hays-Gilpin is probably echoing the sentiments of many when she writes, "unlike sociocultural anthropologists, we cannot directly observe or engage with embodied individuals" (2004:41); prehistory must therefore rely on biological evidence rather than "extreme constructivism," by which she means theories like Butler's. The disciplinary pathos for empirical adequacy means that trust is placed in material, physical things. Discursive-style interpretations are looked at with suspicion. I argue that queer challenges the basis for both the claim that matter is trustworthy because it is material and that discourse is untrustworthy when it is given the power to invest matter with meaning. Archaeology's specific production of queer and its way of understanding the materialization of identity drives almost inevitably toward a reformulation of the relationship between matter and identity in prehistory. That is, if "queer" arose due to bodies, desires, power, sex, and identity that do not align or stay put, then prehistory's particular foundational relationships among material, norms, bodies, and practices become similarly contingent.

Here I return to Butler's (1993:50) claim that matter should be the object and not the ground of enquiry. Indeed, there is a notable move back to matter and materials in archaeology, matched by a rethinking of the excesses of cultural construction as the dominant model in the social science and humanities (Ingold 2007; Coole and Frost 2010; Olsen 2010; Hodder 2011). To illustrate some possible queer outcomes, I examine briefly the underlying concepts of bodies and sex in the work of Rosemary Joyce (2008), an advocate of performativity, and Joanna Sofaer (2006), who is resistant to the "discursive excesses" of Butler's formulation. What both authors stress is the importance of giving due weight to the physical, material facts of corporeal difference. Moving between the two, Pamela Geller (2008) can be read as pushing us towards a queer materialism. What becomes clear is that even theories that incorporate the agentive capacity of material do not necessarily challenge the ontological basis of bodies and sex, something that a queer approach to materiality demands.

It is probably no accident that osteoarchaeologists are those pushing the barriers of what materials can tell us. Sofaer's influential book, *The Body as Material Culture*, draws on work in the social sciences and anthropology to argue for a rapprochement between the hard and soft sciences (2006). Sofaer marries theories of ontogenetic development with theories of materiality to argue that the body can be conceptualized as material culture, where characteristics such as those of gender become inscribed in the body on the basis of its plasticity and through the repeated enactment of the norms of society. Her fear is that discursive approaches dissolve the materiality of the body behind an illusion. This echoes the larger debate on the dangers of "queer nihilism" – does the body simply disappear into discourse (Voss 2000:186)? Thus, while admitting to their plasticity, Sofaer argues emphatically that sex and age are inherent in the biology of the body. Even though biological variability exists, social groups not individuals are archaeology's population. Sex, then, is a statistically relevant universal marker of dimorphic bodily difference (Sofaer 2006:96).

Joyce (2008) believes that it is precisely on account of the body's plasticity that we cannot assume a universal categorization into two sexes. What stands out about Joyce's work is her reliance on contemporary science to support the idea that bodies are not what limit identity (e.g., Fausto-Sterling 2000). Rather than try to prove that scientific truth varies historically, what interests Joyce is how sexual variation is quite natural. Scientific data supports her view that bodies are naturally sexually highly diverse so lend themselves to various means of categorization and processual understandings (Joyce 2008). People's bodily experiences, moreover, are never fully constrained by institutionalized categories; variability is never fully erased by discourse.

Geller (2005, 2008) appears to move between these two positions, arguing strongly for the incorporation of feminism (and hence queer theory) into osteoarchaeology. The dangers of unreflective assumptions in osteoarchaeological studies are signaled by Geller as particularly problematic, turning osteoarchaeologists into inadvertent advocates of biological determinism (Geller 2009a:68). Geller brings recent scientific findings to bear on that argument, stressing that some "biological indicators of sex are mutable" (2008:25). Osteoarchaeologists clearly fail to conceptualize bodies beyond narrow dualisms and timeless structures, but discursive theorists such as Butler and Merleau-Ponty overlook the material dimensions and impact of bodies. While Geller agrees with Sofaer that sex differences are not in dispute, she argues that to recognize difference we must let go of a rigid definition of sex as dichotomous and unchanging. We need diversity

over a simple duality; privileging a population approach, as Sofaer does, may actually obscure some "important idiosyncrasies" within the larger group (Geller 2008:125).

I suggest we listen to Sofaer's concern. The matter of bodies, while essential to Butler's theory of performativity, and certainly not dependent on discourse, is nonetheless inadequately historicized (Thomas 2004:215–216; Barad 2007). Despite Butler's strong leaning toward materiality, materialization, and the very real body involved in any processes of identification, hers is still a language of material constraints (Barad 2007). I argue that Joyce, Sofaer, and Geller share the same problem. Joyce sees sex as a more flexible and naturally varying category than modern binary categories allow; Sofaer recognizes that variation is there and that the body is defined by plasticity; and Geller insists it is a measurable fact but not always the most salient one. Ultimately, however, Geller's mutable sex differences (2008) are none other than Sofaer's plasticity. They all operate at the level of a distinction between representation and some deeper material reality. For Sofaer, measurable body parts are signs of a deeper, unchanging reality, inherent in the body (sex); for Joyce, norms press down on us and our genuine experiences as embodied, living beings; for Geller (2009b), "bodyscapes" are idealities that promote certain experiences through serial representations that overlay a deeper, "true" body.

The ontology of the body has been expanded but has not actually been challenged. Materials and bodies remain inactive, only acting on people through the animating power of time or culture. A performative reading of materiality can provide a different way of conceptualizing the body-matter problem. A shared concern of the "new materialisms" (Coole and Frost 2010) is understanding the physicality of the world in ways that do not simply relegate it to the dustbin of determinism (e.g., Alberti and Marshall 2009; Olsen 2010). The interest in ontology is due to a general sense that materialism as mechanical determinism does not accurately describe the world. Feminist and queer theorists have responded by re-engaging with natural and physical sciences long characterized as their intellectual enemies (Alaimo and Hekman 2008; Giffney and Hird 2008). The possible alliances between queer approaches and these forms of materialism include the focus on questions of "becoming" over static being, and the ultimate relationality of existence. An interesting parallel is drawn by Halberstam (Halberstam and Povinelli 2007) when she suggests that queer is an "anti-ontology" because it is fully relational and not an essential kind of thing, thinking which dovetails with the relational ontologies emerging in new materialisms.

Much queer theory is implicitly humanocentric (Giffney and Hird 2008). It has often presumed a sexualized subject whose human, bodily contours are fixed in advance (Giffney and Hird 2008). Jeffrey Cohen asks what would happen if the sexual was lodged "firmly in the non-human" (2010). That is, queer theory need not stop at the limits of biological life (Giffney and Hird 2008). As Haraway observes, "Queering has the job of undoing 'normal' categories, and none is more critical than the human/non-human sorting operation" (2008:xxiv). It is the conditions that produce the human as a material-discursive fact that are of interest to queer materialism. For example, physicist Karen Barad (2003, 2007; see also Alberti and Marshall 2009) draws out the ontological implications of Butler's work. She diffracts performative theories of power and subject creation through quantum physicist Niels Bohr's theories of indeterminacy. Her reading is actively relational, moving with the image of the diffraction of waves that combine to form something new, neither one the ground

from which the other can be critiqued (Barad 2007:71–74). The consequence is a relational ontology in which all matter is performatively produced, including the human. The limits of what counts as human cannot be known in advance and in fact are constituted by the acts and practices of knowing. To queer materiality, then, is to make performativity not just a theory of the subject, of how genders and identities come to take on the appearance of natural facts, but to understand matter itself to be ontologically determined by ongoing acts. Marcus Brittain (2007), in a detailed examination of the materials and practices incorporated into Welsh Bronze Age barrows, argues that the barrows do not matter. In the contemporary context they are buried below layers of representation. Drawing on Barad's ontological diffraction of Butler's dictum that "to be material means to materialize," Brittain demonstrates that the materiality of barrows comes to matter (ethically and materially) through the practices and materials that constitute it (2007:154). That is, what counts as agent, practice or significance cannot be presumed ahead of the practices in which "mattering" itself "acquires meaning and form" (Barad 2003:817; Brittain 2007:154).

Barad's work provides an answer to worries about where to find "sex." The central issue is how to argue that biological variability means that categories are never absolute, and that the plasticity of the body means that organisms are not faithful reproductions of a blueprint, while at the same time reassuring us that sex nonetheless is a measurable fact. That problem disappears when reformulated by Barad: sex is a measurable and iterative performative category. That is, it is both materially stable and recognizably a product of our measuring practices. In the labor of excavating, cleaning, measuring with calipers, referring to standard tables, and publishing, the sex of the bone/skeleton is brought into being as both a specific phenomenon and as a general category. The fact that we can repeat those measurements, often reliably, makes that act a fairly stable one; but it does not mean the category exists prior to its measurement or is an inherent property of the bone. Sex, rather, is the property of the relations in which it is embedded – the "phenomenon," to use Barad's language (Alberti and Marshall 2009). Osteological sexing of skeletons is perfectly possible, but this does not mean sex is essential; likewise, to argue that sex is a product of the encounter between material and measuring apparatuses does not mean it cannot be accurately and repeatedly measured.

Conclusion

De Lauretis's (1994:297) refusal to use the term "queer" merely three years after inaugurating it should be embraced as central to its meaning. Queer is not a new orthodoxy. Queer "anything" runs the risk of paradox: histories of queer establish normative accounts; queer identities threaten to stabilize what is posited as inherently unstable; and queer archaeology establishes a legitimate subfield out of something that is anti-foundational. In addition, if this chapter has anything to do with its content, then it must be an example of what it purports to explain rather than a simple telling of a disciplinary narrative. That is, it is performative: at once establishing its own contingent foundations and attempting to dissolve them.

Some things are remarkably straight about queer archaeology. Theories of performativity, as my case in point, can normalize as performance theory. But I have

also argued that this is not really a problem. Just as there is "no gender without [the] reproduction of the norms that risks undoing or redoing the norm in unexpected ways," there is no queer without queer norms, thus "opening up the possibility of a remaking of gendered reality," or, in this account, any kind of material reality (Butler 2009:i). It's the internal tension between norms and queer statements that are the "condition for action" (Riley, cited in Jagose 2009:161) of queer critique. I also agree with Halberstam (Halberstam and Povinelli 2007) that "queerness" does not come from the object of study but from the mode of analysis required to understand it. Rather than a search for "cool queer subjects" (Halberstam and Povinelli 2007), queer prehistory as a mode of analysis traces the genealogy of queer socialities and how it is that alternative forms of family, kinship, and bodies can come to exist. Part of that mode is an emphasis on surprise, on something new and previously unthought. Dowson maintains that queer archaeology's potential lies in "reinventing its capacity to startle, to surprise, to help us think what has not yet been thought" (2009a:290). Giffney encourages us to think of queer as the practice of "invention to the brink of unintelligibility" (2009:20), which challenges and provokes the reader to further effort and thinking. Can archaeology produce creatively queer effects by documenting the previously invisible and, as importantly, by challenging archaeological fundamentals "for the possibility of becoming other to ourselves" (Giffney 2009:20)?

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NOTES

1 For example, "Feminist, masculinist, and queer visions of the past" at the European Archaeological Association's annual meeting, 2010; or "Stone Walls and Queer Sites" at Theoretical Archaeology Group New York, 2008.

2 Goffman (1959) admits that his usage of performance is ultimately metaphorical. While acknowledging the similarity between her theory and Bourdieu's, Butler's emphasis on the embodied performativity of speech acts and the *habitus* itself distinguishes her work from Bourdieu's, who assumes a conservative notion of previously established norms rather than a constant reinvention of context (Butler 1999:192, 1997b:142).

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CHAPTER 5

The Future of Gender in Prehistoric Archaeology

Margaret W. Conkey

In this chapter I will explore the possible further directions that an archaeology of prehistory concerned with gender might go.[1] To think one can write about the future of gender in prehistory is not only ambitious but also presumptuous. To try to do so is an example of the vision of the editor of this volume and attests that I rather unwittingly accepted her suggestion! Nonetheless, it has been instructive, if not a real challenge, to try to do so with the hope that it might be more than speculation and perhaps even be suggestive to future scholars. Two issues emerged immediately in this task.

On Histories

First, one might suggest that to consider the future, one should first establish the recent past and present state, as the way that the future rolls out before us is partially structured by the past and present. However, over the decades (and it is exciting indeed to say this has been a viable topic in our field for decades, in the plural!) there have been a number of "taking stock" articles, book chapters, and handbooks on the field overall or on certain major themes of research such as archaeology and the body or the archaeology of sexuality (e.g., Conkey and Spector 1984; Dommasnes 1992; Conkey and Gero 1997; Hays-Gilpin 2000; Sørenson 2000; Conkey 2003; Joyce 2005; Nelson 2006; Wylie 2007; Voss 2008; Spencer-Wood and Smith 2011; Tomášková 2011). It is not particularly revelatory to present yet another summary. But two points are worth noting. The first, as Wylie so articulately pointed out in assessing the state of feminist scholarship in anthropology in terms of the prevalent

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metaphor of "waves" of changing approaches, is that the histories do matter: "Historical amnesia obscures the conditions that so persistently undermine the fragile alliances through which our waves of mobilization have taken shape" (Wylie 2006:175). She continues to note that for a future to move us forward, it would be "relationalism" (following Jakobsen 1998:150) more than a false universalism that should provide the foundation for working alliances.

As part of thinking about our histories, however, I find it interesting that archaeology has not followed the developments (including the so-called first, second, and third waves) that have been said to characterize the history and trajectory of feminist theory and research (e.g., Wylie 2006). In fact, the tension or debate about the place and role of feminist theory in archaeology has been an issue from as early as the analyses of the 1989 Chacmool gender archaeology conference (Hanen and Kelley 1992; Wylie 1997) where little explicit feminist theory was in evidence. This suggests either that archaeology has resisted the feminist domain of scholarship, as some have noted, and/or that archaeologists have recognized that there are certain features of archaeological inquiry and data that cannot readily fit into that feminist trajectory of interests and understandings. Not surprisingly, I am not going to jettison feminist thinking and theoretical infusions, but I suggest, given some of the relatively new directions in which contemporary archaeology is going, that we need to think more about how to use feminist thinking to inform our specifically archaeological inquiries.

For example, since it is widely established that feminist theorizing is deeply rooted in Western intellectual traditions – no matter how much it also attempts to challenge them – the unquestioning "use" of such theories in our archaeological inquiries into the past gender systems and engendered lifeways of prehistory that are almost always "not Western" should raise serious concerns. Increasingly as well, archaeologists have been more attentive to and respectful of their responsibilities to and with local communities, including indigenous communities, for whom Western-derived concepts and practices may not be at all appropriate or "fit." For example, have we archaeologists yet to engage seriously with how our now prolific gender-specific and gender-sensitive studies actually *affect* indigenous communities, both socially and politically as well as in the construction, deconstruction, amendment, creation, or production of knowledge (see Blau 2000), even if we recognize that there are overlaps with indigenous feminisms (e.g., Smith 1999; Mihesuah 2000; Conkey 2005)?

A Checklist?

The second issue that emerged in thinking about how to proceed with this essay has to do with what a "futurist" project would look like and whether it requires us to move from a critique of what's missing and a checklist of what to do now. We can always ask what can be learned from retroactive and "where are we now?" kinds of assessments. It was troubling, for example, to read what feminist sociologists Judith Stacey and Barrie Thorne concluded in their assessment of the impact of their classic 1985 article "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology." In the reassessment, "Is Sociology Still Missing Its Feminist Revolution?" (1996), they chided themselves for having attempted a kind of "report card" approach in 1985, giving high or low marks to different disciplines or sub-disciplines. By 1996, they felt that they had

reached too far and too soon. They recognized that feminist work in sociology has had an impact yet did not, as they had advocated in 1985, initiate a revolution, transforming their discipline. Do we archaeologists think, as did Stacey and Thorne in 1996, that to hope for a revolution is naïve and unrealistic? In a commentary on their article by a colleague who challenges Stacey and Thorne's pessimism as a "jaded disquisition" Burawoy (1996) envisions that feminism moves forward on two legs: one leg is the glamorous and public transdisciplinary discourse and the other leg is the less visible and arduous androcentric everyday world of the disciplines. And while a "flight" of disciplinary-based feminists into transdisciplinary domains (such as critical race theory, postcolonial studies, and identity politics) may allow feminist sociologists to be more comfortable, he argues that most real work has to stay within the everyday world of the disciplines.[2]

Yet this work within disciplinary parameters can be a double-edged sword, as was pointed out when Hegmon (2003) suggested that gender research in archaeology represented a kind of "processual-plus"; that is, an extension of – not a challenge to, much less a transformation of – the everyday practice of processual archaeology, a genre of archaeology with which apparently most researchers in the discipline feel comfortable. If this is indeed the case, and everyone can feel comfortable with "no more theory wars" (Hegmon 2005), then feminists can rightly endorse at least two crucial comments made by Madonna Moss in response to Hegmon. First:

> [By] lumping various theoretical positions under "processual-plus" we not only lose the genealogy of varied and sometimes conflicting theoretical positions, we fail to acknowledge that some schools of archaeological thinking really do aspire to social change both within and outside the archaeological profession. [Moss 2005:583]

And second:

> [Yet] many feminist archaeologists maintain allegiance to the larger social goals of feminism (e.g., Conkey 2003:874). Lumping their work in a "processual-plus" category fails to acknowledge political agendas that admittedly cause discomfort to some people both inside and outside the profession. Those brave enough to attempt to incorporate queer theory into archaeological discourse to challenge the hetero-sexism in our field are even further "beyond the margin." [Moss 2005:583]

Despite the debates and differences in histories and scope, I continue to advocate a serious engagement with much of what feminist theory has brought to the table if archaeology is to destabilize entrenched accounts and practices and make the most of archaeological information. Yet many continue to ask what a feminist archaeology could possibly be. Does the "report card" approach of Stacey and Thorne have any value? Or perhaps more constructively, can there be something of a checklist for what might be our own feminist guidelines for an archaeological inquiry, ones that might have emerged out of some 30 years of a recognition and attention to gender as a viable subject domain for archaeology? At present, there are few attempts at a checklist, which is probably a good thing in some ways. But if we had to start somewhere, I would still recommend that everyone engage with the "theoretical virtues" of a feminist practice that emerged out of a wonderful dialogue between philosophers of science Alison Wylie (1995) and Helen Longino (1994). This was almost two decades

ago, but Longino's "theoretical virtues" for the practice of epistemology still hold enormous power as reference points for doing archaeology as a feminist. Wylie (2006) summarizes some of these in her assessment of a recent volume edited by Geller and Stockett (2006), but the full discussion in the original articles by Longino and Wylie bears a serious reading. From these one can come away with an understanding of what key features of "doing" archaeology could be. These range from a respect for "empirical adequacy," "novelty,""ontological heterogeneity," "complexity of relationship," "applicability to current human needs," and "diffusion of power" with a bottom line maxim that these theoretical virtues are feminist to the extent that they "prevent gender from being disappeared" (Longino 1994). Additionally, these virtues call for ongoing reflexivity and, to use an epistemologist's own terms, "epistemic provisionalism."

Yet while the Longino-Wylie hallmarks of theoretical virtues for doing archaeology as a feminist are inspiring and mobilizing, I hesitate to advocate them as "the" checklist. To assess or evaluate work only along these lines would itself perhaps lead to a somewhat constraining program despite their value and strong appeal as a key starting point for evaluation. I would add as well that one should always take seriously the points raised by Gero (2007) in her eloquent assessment of what tends to constrain our archaeological practice that likely contributes to "disappearing gender" and to the disciplining of the discipline; namely, an overcommitment to "certainty" and an aversion to accepting "ambiguity." In what follows, I want to try to add feminist inspirations and guidelines to the theoretical virtues and to the articulate statements of three decades of archaeological work in gender.

On Curiosity and Surprise

As a possible roadmap for the future of archaeology, gender, and prehistory, I want to promote two concepts developed by feminist Cynthia Enloe: "being curious" and being able to "be surprised." Reaching beyond where many archaeologists might go, I have followed some of the feminist and anthropological discourse about the militarization in and of contemporary life (e.g., Enloe 2004; Lutz 2001, 2009). This is something of a parallel discourse to my own concerns as a Paleolithic archaeologist with the ever-pervasive myths of the "Caveman" and also as a parallel discourse with that notion still very much with us of "Man the Hunter" – which in some ways provided an initial "kick" by the early 1970s to thinking about gender in archaeology (Slocum 1975; Zihlman 1978) and which has, believe it or not, still not gone away! These complementary notions – Caveman and Man the Hunter – have hardly lost their pull on much of archaeology and on the public, and the implications of such notions have fed right into contemporary militarization, masculinity projects, and approaches by evolutionary behaviorists to such serious contemporary practices as violence and even rape (e.g., Thornhill and Palmer 2000; for a critique of this perpetuation as the male version of Friedan's famous "feminine mystique" (1963), see McCaughey's (2007) *The Caveman Mystique*).

As part of her ongoing critique of not just the militarization of global politics (e.g., Enloe 1980) but the impact of this on women's labor (e.g., Enloe 1988), Enloe's (2004) book *The Curious Feminist* makes some important points regarding

the process and the mandate for being explicitly and continuously curious. I want to discuss this at some length here, borrowing heavily from Enloe's points but simultaneously urging you to read her book (and her other works). This "deep curiosity" has to be the future of gender research in prehistory.

In this book Enloe explores her curiosity about our *lack* of feminist curiosity, challenging us to be more actively curious about a lot of things and in deeply probing ways. We have been, she suggests, only superficially curious in ways that reveal the grip that patriarchy has on us. I think we have to ask ourselves as archaeologists of gender, as mobilized by feminist thinking, just how successful all this work of ours on gender has been in a *realpolitik* of destabilizing and, ideally, changing our worlds. To what extent have we, too, been only superficially curious? "Being curious," Enloe says, "takes energy" (2004:1). So much of what we think and consider actually avoid the energy that being curious takes and requires. For the general public – and for scholars, even – this is why such assumptions as "it is natural for men to be aggressive" are so seductive: they don't take energy and we don't then have much to investigate. It is the same conundrum, Enloe maintains, with many other phrases that we use, even in our gendered analyses in archaeology, such as "tradition." Often if something is "traditional" it is "almost immune to bothersome questioning" (Enloe 2004:2). Enloe continues that "a close cousin of 'traditional'" – and I think we know this one well – is "always": "women have always been the primary care-taker of children; (real) shamans are always men." Often we see gender-sensitive archaeologists (mis)using the "always" in order to secure their gendered accounts, such as "women are always the weavers." But to Enloe – and we would all agree – such statements shut down an awkward discussion on other possibilities. She asks: "what has created our lack of curiosity?" This is a lack that we see often even in underpinning gender research; it is often manifest in such uncomplicated assertions as "it's natural," "it's traditional," and "always." Her key point here is that many power structures are dependent upon a continuing lack of curiosity (2004:3).

I think that many archaeologists working on issues of gender and feminist theory – as represented in this and other volumes – do recognize that these phrases ("natural," "traditional," "always," etc.) imply and reinforce legitimacy, timelessness, and inevitability, and that they serve as "cultural pillars" (Enloe 2004:3) to prop up and sustain all sorts of power structures from the individual and local to the global. This much we have learned, and certainly developments like queer theory have been good examples of needed interventions.

Despite the discussion and the critique about a feminist archaeology and an archaeology of gender being "only" or "just" about women, Enloe would remind us why that is not the real critique. Rather, she asserts that as curious feminists we *are* curious about "the women," not just because it is women alone that we are interested in (or who, some feel, are still left out of the picture, marginalized, stereotyped negatively, etc.) but because in a deeply pervasive culture of patriarchy, we will, she says, *always* learn something new, something about strictures and structures of patriarchy that underpin, even gird, the entire enterprise of archaeological research and interpretation; from how it is practiced and by whom (see Conkey and Wylie 2007) to the very questions that are deemed important, the very evidence that is considered to be acceptable, and the very interpretive scenarios that are proposed and instantiated as "the way things were." This is the case even if we are interested in masculinity,

alternative genders, or the intersections of gender with other dimensions of social life. Thus, our task at hand is to develop and specify what a genuinely feminist curiosity would be, in and for archaeology. To ask, for example, as Voss and Casella ask in their edited volume (2011), what were the *effects* on sexuality of varied instances of colonialism, is to be genuinely and creatively curious. In their volume, the contributors have moved beyond the concept of "finding" sexuality in the archaeological record (and not because that cannot be done) and have generated a question that certainly derives from a feminist curiosity and is, in fact, actually much more substantive about the nature, practices, and dynamics of sexuality in the past than were the "finding sexuality" efforts of our first engagements with the archaeologies of sexuality. Such a reframing takes "sexuality" not as a concept but as a variable; the authors note that the "structure of feelings" (after R. Williams) they are probing bring an emotional addition to Bourdieu's *habitus*. This work has signaled a future trajectory for many kinds of feminist informed studies.

Another important and underdeveloped, even underappreciated, part of feminist research and practice has to do with what Enloe (2004:13–18) deems an undervalued attribute of feminist work, namely, the capacity to be surprised and to be able to admit it! Of course, we should be able to be surprised and to engage with it because, among other reasons, we expect our own work to be surprising, if not also to destabilize. And yet when we surprise or are surprised, it is often about having one's current explanatory notions (and predictive assumptions) "thrown into confusion" (Enloe 2004:13). We are very likely to have been socialized to deny surprise as it somehow threatens our credibility. Enloe suggests that being open to surprise and being ready to acknowledge surprise may be among the most useful attitudes to adopt. This would be in contrast to our all too frequent observation of certain strategies or scenarios about the past as being along the lines of "oh well, I am not surprised" (that so-and-so behaves like that; that they are still talking as if stone tools are the only or most important data; that they are still claiming that all shamans are male; and so forth).

If we are surprised at someone's behavioral/archaeological practice or at some interpretive move, we have to ask ourselves the "why?" question. Why would we be surprised if a conference were to invite only male archaeologists? Why are we (not) surprised that female theorists in archaeology are selected for theory readers primarily if the selected work is about gender or identity (see Conkey 2007)? Why are we surprised to learn that there is evidence in Paleolithic sites for consumption of vegetal materials or for butchering tools that ethnographically are associated with women? What does this new information do to our earlier assumed understandings, analyses, or assumptions?

For example, one could recount here the rather infamous panel on contemporary archaeological theory at a annual archaeology meeting that featured only one woman (and one not at all engaged or even interested in feminist theory) at which Joan Gero (an explicitly feminist archaeologist) asked from the audience so boldly: "Why is there no feminist theory on this panel and why is there only one female archaeologist in the group?" There were multiple surprises here. For some, they were surprised at the question because they had not noticed either phenomenon; they thought Joan was being confrontational if not just controversial. But it was the answer that really surprised, and perhaps revealed (as Enloe might argue) even more about the sociopolitical power structure of archaeology that might never have been revealed without

Gero's question (and that question itself might have been dismissed and not even asked with an "oh well, it's not surprising that there is no feminist theorist or only one woman"). The answer to Joan from one of the session's organizers was: "Well, we did ask Alison Wylie but she couldn't come." This is tantamount to saying that there is only one possible person (even though she could readily be everyone's first choice) to "satisfy" both having a feminist theorist and being a second woman all in one – as if by this time (2006) there were no other female theory practitioners in general or feminist theorists. Despite the probability that the recognition of female theorists in archaeology (especially if doing other than gender/feminist theory) is still well below the actual number of contributing theorists (Conkey 2007), the very idea that there was only one possible other panelist is more than surprising: it was shocking! Do such self-proclaimed archaeological theorists really believe there is only one (albeit extraordinarily articulate and knowledgeable) spokesperson for feminist theory, and that if she could not participate, the entire subject domain can be ignored while at least two competing versions of hermeneutics can be accommodated on the panel? Is this an example of another compelling Enloe concept, "the politics of casual forgetting" – a masculinist forgetfulness that "let[s] gender slip off their collective agendas" (Enloe 2007:183)?

Enloe would remind us that seeing this patriarchy, even misogyny, is not enough; we need to know in each instance how it works and whether it has been contested (Brava! to Joan Gero). We need not just to say "here we go again" but to probe and make explicit what *produces* these surprises (Enloe 2004:18). We all learned something because Joan Gero did not let her surprise be just a cynical knowing. And so "we need to stand ready to be surprised – to admit surprise and to build on it" (Enloe 2004:18). There are other surprises to be pursued even within our community of gender scholars. For example, a number of archaeological/feminist scholars (e.g., Wylie 2007) have expressed surprise, if not also an understandable dismay, at Sørenson's dismissal (2000) of feminist thought in archaeology as something "only" political, to be closed off and rejected. Why should this surprise us? What do we learn by expressing and then probing that which is surprising? In this case, do we learn that perhaps we do not have a shared understanding of what "feminism" is or of how archaeology is already deeply rooted in politics?

In my own research field, I was recently surprised in two very different ways at the innovative work by a group of archaeology scholars of the Paleolithic. First, the subtitle to their project *The Magdalenian Household* is "unraveling domesticity" (Zubrow et al. 2010). The term "domesticity" has a very complicated history in Anglo-American historical and feminist scholarship, to the extent that its application without critical reflection to lives of the late Ice Age nearly collapsed some 12,000 years of variable social and gender arrangements by using a term with such historically specific (and, yes, a quite Western and problematical) reference. Yet, once one sets aside the history and use of the term "domesticity," it was refreshing and provocative indeed to see the authors and the contributors to their edited volume take seriously that a more diversified population was doing a range of things at the key site of focus, Verberie, in what is today the Paris Basin occupied by reindeer hunters. The authors stepped back from the assumed account that this was a male hunting site to consider the evidence for children and women at the site as well.

On the other hand, I was surprised that the authors still felt compelled to locate a "key" of gender attribution to make their case for an expanded population. The actual

analysis, as they framed it, depends on one of the universalist assumptions, albeit presented in rich ethnographic detail, of women as hide-processors, that itself says more about the continued reliance on a methodological crutch, an ethnographic (over) generalization, one of those "women always …," "women traditionally …" phrases. Despite nearly 30 years of work, this is a reminder that many of us in the "gender business" are still all too readily held captive by empiricist handcuffs and gender attributions. Yet in dozens of other analyses and more "traditional" (or even speculative and not provable) interpretations, these gender attributions are not so tightly required or employed. One example would be the proposition that Acheulean handaxes were integral to successful male sexual selection; the ancient males purportedly used the handaxes and the presumed craftsmanship they displayed to attract mates some half million years ago or more (Kohn and Mithen 1999; but see Nowell and Chang (2009) who demonstrate that even using the theoretical principles invoked for a sexual selectionist model, this is a scenario that cannot be "proved" and for which the needed evidence can never be obtained).

This same empiricist handcuff and dependence still marks some of the more innovative work on, if not challenges to, the master narratives of gendered imagery of Upper Paleolithic Europe. The linchpin of the superb research by Soffer, Adovasio, and Czech colleagues (e.g., Soffer et al. 2000) is that it is the women who were primarily responsible for the complex weaving identified on female statuettes, for the probable woven floor mats, and possible nets for gathering and net-hunting. This is work that can stand on its own to bring into focus the rich and diverse activities at the site of Dolní Věstonice (Czech Republic) 26,000 years ago that included, in addition to this textile manufacturing, baked clay and fire-treated figurines that attest to probable intentional destruction. Do we really *need* the "gender attribution" to say that we have learned something new that substantially changes our empirical repertoire of Upper Paleolithic life? Can we not probe all of what this analysis and interpretation brings out as "surprising" without the methodological crutch of a gender attribution based on a notion of "women are almost always …" – in this case, the weavers?

Metaphors: Voices and Sight

This brings me to a theme that Antoinette Burton referred to a decade ago as "optical illusions," which she used in her review of the practice of women's history up to that date (2000:21–22) as being primarily a practice of "recuperation": finding and recuperating the women. She was especially concerned to scrutinize the metaphors that we use to underwrite our work, a task that has yet to be done explicitly for archaeology. But there may be some lessons here; in women's history, Burton suggests, the dominant metaphors are primarily those of voice and sight. In fact, it would be easy to note that "voice" has become a trope in archaeology and other fields of gender research. When it is said that we are giving "voice" to previously muted social practices and identities, this is often framed as a more democratic and even emancipatory archaeology, a human past in which actors and subjects participated equally if differently. These are concepts indelibly rooted in the "Western" civil rights and feminist movements of the 1960s where "voice" is "a marker of political representation" (Burton 2000:21).

In archaeology, perhaps visibility or seeing was/has been used more often, although voice may be more prevalent in historical archaeology through texts. Vision-visibility-seeing has perhaps a deeper history in "the West," going back to the Enlightenment (e.g., Foucault on surveillance, Martin Jay (1993) on "sight," and others on the metaphors of visibility that have come to be equated with understanding, knowledge, comprehension: "seeing is believing," "I see"). Visibility is often an indicator of representation or recognition: "The capacity to be seen is nothing less than a central feature of modern identity … If something or someone cannot be seen, its legitimacy as a historical subject, and indeed its very claim to existence, has traditionally (sic) been thrown into question" (Burton 2000:22).

For archaeology, the "being seen" issue is almost always in contention; who, after all, has ever "seen" such key phenomena (for much of archaeology) as "subsistence systems" or "social complexity"? For archaeology, we have to admit that the project to "make women visible" is itself a project of the Enlightenment, often one of sympathy, rescue, or salvation. The claim is that this "making visible" is automatically beneficial. But Burton, using the example of abolitionists in the nineteenth century who "emancipated" and "made visible" slaves, asks, made visible into what? Into hegemonic social norms of white middle-class practices, including those gendered ones? The question we need to answer is what are contemporary and future archaeologies of gender "making visible" and what is the "voice" that is being given to women and the gendered subjects of "the past"? Are our archaeological subjects being made visible in ways that evoke certain emotions, values, structures, strictures, and trajectories of progress that are "our" emotions, values, structures, and hoped for trajectories of progress, accomplishment, standing, and taken-for-granteds? That is, are we primarily creating optical illusions?

The women, genders, sexualities, and bodies of the past are now – and increasingly – visible. These topics, subjects, concepts are on the proverbial table: at least for some of us at professional meetings, in (some) journals, and are admissible dimensions of research projects and professional identities. But we must – to go back to Enloe's curiosity and surprise – probe the visions, the visible, and the *making* visible, to ask if what we are creating are more optical illusions than any approximations of reality. Are we any closer to an honest comprehension of how gender and sexuality, for example, are materially constituted and entered into variable social contexts, in surprising ways that should make us, as we learn from certain characters in *Alice in Wonderland*, "curiouser and curiouser"?

Some Concluding Thoughts

To consider gender in archaeology and prehistory is not "just" a highly focused, delimited search for evidence of "gender," assuming we can even agree on (1) what "gender" is and might have been, and (2) what that evidence would be and how it can be linked to "gender," despite the observation that this describes a practice that has been what most scholars have been doing, albeit with productive and occasionally revelatory results. Rather, to even consider "gender" in archaeology should be as much about issues in the present, because as archaeologists have increasingly come to realize the past is relevant and worth pursuing not just because it informs on the

present but, from a critical (including feminist) standpoint, the past can challenge the present (Blau 2000), and often, we would hope, in surprising ways.

If a feminist-motivated engagement with gender in prehistory is indeed a "reflexive storytelling" (after Joyce 2002; Joyce and Tringham 2007), then it can indeed bring "inherent political action" to archaeology. As Cynthia Enloe has noted, "The rewards flowing from remembering to ask feminist questions about the workings of femininity and masculinity *no matter what the topic being explored*" (emphasis mine) are both "analytical subtlety and political accuracy." By this she means "politically realistic" intellectual efforts such that they "interestingly facilitate and create spaces for new theoretical and empirical insights" (Enloe 2007:184). Thus, the future of gender prehistory and a so-called gender archaeology is not limited to or defined by producing descriptive accounts of who did what in prehistory. The present and future is to be able to do just what Enloe advocates: "interestingly facilitate and create spaces for new theoretical and empirical insights."

To return again to gender attribution and its inherent but troubling appeal, there is still a problem to be resolved because, as Rosemary Joyce once put it (personal communication), many "cannot see" (sic!) "past the categories that shape modern perceptions of gender." I agree with Joyce, who would argue that we must move past an "uniformed and static gender attribution" to "produce a history in which gender is not isolated" (and may not even be featured as a concept or category). As noted above, a forward-looking effort in this regard is the recent edited volume by Voss and Casella (2011) that situates a particular dimension of feminist concern, namely sexualities, in a dynamic, varying yet historically specific set of contexts of colonialism that do not, however, reify the concept and category of sexuality, but complicate and historicize it. One of their goals was to bring one set of research and literatures (on colonialism) into dialogue with the literature and research on sexualities, yielding a hybrid vigor for both arenas of inquiry.

After more than 25 years of an explicit, heightened, and always evolving engagement with gender in archaeology, at last expanding to include masculinity, queer theory, and more engagement with feminist theory (itself always changing and being internally challenged), there is little doubt that "voice" has been given to previously mute subjects of the human past, and "visibility" of not just other actors but of other subject identities has been made manifest. After all this time and work, there is little doubt that we have been surprised now and then and that some have pushed their curiosities. But after all this research and this evolving arena of theory, method, and sense of problem, I would nonetheless suggest that we cannot rest on our laurels. We must continue to surprise, to admit to surprise, and simultaneously probe why anything does or does not surprise. We must guard against our optical illusions and we must not tolerate a lack of curiosity: we must become ever more relentlessly curious, scrutinize our metaphors, challenge the masculinist "politics of casual forgetfulness" (Enloe 2007), and engage in radical revisionism and exhaustive reflexivity.

NOTES

1 Some of the ideas in this paper were presented at the 16th annual meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists in The Hague, Netherlands (September 2010) in a paper

entitled "Optical Illusions or Seeing Clearly?" The session was organized by Marga Díaz-Andreu, Ericka Engelstad, and Will Meyer, and I am grateful for their invitation to participate.

2 Burawoy (1996) makes an intriguing analysis as to why the perpetuation of Marxism in sociology has appeared to be more successful than feminism but notes importantly that this Marxism has "lost its critical edge." Further, he presents 11 theses about feminism that account for why feminism is more threatening and more irrepressible than Marxism.

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SECTION 2

Gender and Prehistoric Material Culture

CHAPTER 6 Gender and Prehistoric Rock Art

Kelley Hays-Gilpin

What can the study of prehistoric rock art – paintings and engravings on cliffs, boulders, and cave walls – tell us about gendered lives in prehistory? This chapter explores depictions of sexed and gendered bodies in rock art, ethnography about making images on stone, and discussions about gender in rock art research.[1]

Rock art research is progressing from remedial efforts to expunge gender stereotypes from earlier research, what we might call "de-gendering" rock art, to "re-gendering" rock art with appropriate methods and theories (Díaz-Andreu 1998; Dowson 2001; Engelstad 2001; Hays-Gilpin 2004; Bevan 2006). Early rock art studies were burdened by gender stereotypes about masculine artists and hunters, and fanciful stories about fertility goddesses and male sexual desires. By the 1950s, most archaeologists thought art and religion were largely inaccessible to inquiry. The "New Archaeology" of the 1960s and 1970s emphatically rejected rock art as idiosyncratic, irrelevant, and – most important – undatable. Responding to archaeologists' obsession with accurate dating, Tim Yates (1993) labeled chronocentrism a form of phallocentrism and challenged researchers to develop inquiries that do not rely on dates. Dating methods are improving, however, and scientifically rigorous rock art research now contributes to prehistory. Two formerly marginalized studies, rock art and gender, coincide in interesting discussions about sex, gender, cognition, religion, archaeological practice, epistemology, and, of course, "art."

Before accepting rock art as a productive line of evidence together with pottery, stone tools, architecture, and so forth, archaeologists had to show that rock art, too, was produced in cultural contexts that are strongly patterned in time and space. This has been amply demonstrated in most parts of the world where rock art occurs (see Whitley 2001:361–823). If rock art were mere "doodling," we would not find strong patterns in imagery, techniques, and distribution. We would have to dismiss ethnography that describes making rock art in ritual contexts, as well as for secular purposes

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such as marking trails, commemorating events, and, indeed, doodling and graffiti.[2] Rock art (like graffiti) is a way of socializing landscape – making marks to make places socially meaningful. Unlike graffiti, rock often has a religious dimension (but not always: see Layton 2001:311–312). Ethnographic evidence, supported by contextual evidence from prehistoric as well as historic rock art sites, shows that most of what I will call rock art here was produced in ritual contexts, broadly defined. It has to do with enduring acts of communication between humans and powers or beings that reside in the Earth or in realms of non-ordinary reality. Even secular rock art, such as pictures drawn by herders to pass the time, or by warriors to record battles, is embedded in cultural values. Though we cannot access the meanings of the images in all their original cultural and cognitive dimensions, we can still learn as much about past lives – lives that were gendered – from rock art as we can from pottery and food processing tools.

Methods and Theories

Long the purview of avocational "rock art enthusiasts," rock art studies were until recently undertaken by few scientifically trained archaeologists. Rock art studies are growing among archaeologists, art historians, heritage managers, and others. Researchers in France have long set high standards for recording, conserving, and dating rock art, especially Paleolithic cave paintings and engravings (e.g., Bégouën and Breuil 1999). Research there still provides excellent models for the rest of the world. Pioneering studies of the gendered dimensions of rock art began there and in Scandinavia (e.g., Gibbs 1987). Scientific rock art research now takes place all over the world, and archaeologists can tap resources provided by networks such as IFRAO (International Federation of Rock Art Organizations).

Recording

The first rule of rock art research is detailed, objective recording of what *is* there, not what observers think *should* be there. Every gesture, every peck mark, every bit of spattered paint, might be significant. In southern African San paintings, for example, ethnography suggests that tiny details like flecks of white paint signify supernatural potency. Therefore, research done in this area by the University of the Witwatersrand's Rock Art Research Institute (www.rockart.wits.ac.za) has set high standards for excruciatingly detailed drawings, tracings, and analysis of high-resolution photographs with digital enhancement.

Paint colors may be meaningful, as in Mediterranean mural paintings where women are painted with light skin and men with red or brown skin. Natural features of rock textures and colors are often incorporated into petroglyphs in meaningful ways, as when a stalactite becomes a penis, or a rock crevice becomes a vagina. What may look like damage to the uninitiated viewer may be a clue to the past meanings of a rock art image. For example, a large petroglyph of a birthing woman at Baird's Chevelon Steps in northern Arizona has deeply pecked cupules in her torso, suggesting (based on Pueblo ethnography recorded about 500 years after the image was made) that the site was revisited, possibly to procure rock powder for medicinal use in pregnancy and childbirth (Figure 6.1). All such marks must be recorded.



Figure 6.1 Birthing figure from Chevelon Steps, Arizona, with pecked cupules in the body suggesting repeated visitation for ritual activities (photo courtesy of Jane Kolber).

Formal and informed methods

Rock art research methods usefully can be divided into formal methods, informed methods, and analogy (Taçon and Chippindale 1998). Formal methods are those most familiar to prehistorians: documentation; classification based on formal attributes; quantification and measurement; analysis of materials and techniques; detailed mapping and study of spatial distributions and landscape contexts; comparison of imagery across different media (such as pottery and textiles); and temporal ordering with stratigraphy, seriation, and direct dating methods. Sometimes we can recognize what a picture was likely meant to depict based on its shape, but use of formal methods cannot yield interpretations or meanings. This should not be viewed as a shortcoming (consider archaeological analysis of prehistoric ceramics aimed at understanding technology, social and economic interaction, communities of practice, and relative chronologies). Rock art can provide a line of evidence for these and other kinds of questions. It is particularly amenable to landscape archaeology because rock art (by the definition adopted here) stays where it was placed. That said, most rock art research aimed at understanding gender dynamics in

the past – gendered landscapes and activity areas, gender identities, ritual and rites of passage, for example – relies on informed methods.

Informed methods include historic and ethnographic records about who made, used, or interpreted rock art sites from "insider" perspectives, taken together with archaeological evidence. Although few active rock art-making traditions survive today, we have reliable ethnography for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from Australia, Africa, some Pacific islands, and the Americas. We can augment archaeological evidence with ethnography about people making rock art, commenting on the meanings of rock art images, or about associated gendered activities. For example, archaeological evidence of shell debris and fishhooks in Great Mackerel shelter fit with ethnographic accounts of Aboriginal women's fishing and shellfish gathering activities in the Sydney area. Handprint sizes (compared with modern Aboriginal populations) suggest women's and children's stencils, and a set of larger prints associated with a boomerang stencil (a man's tool) suggests the presence of men in the shelter as well (McDonald 1992, 1995). Such questions about group size and composition, activities, and technology are among prehistorians' routine concerns, and rock art can play a supporting role in making such inferences.

As recently as the early twentieth century, Hopi men made petroglyphs at a pilgrimage shrine in northern Arizona and interpreted them as clan symbols (Bernardini 2009). Similar sets of images are found throughout the region, often clustered near earlier settlements; oral traditions identify some of these sites as ancestral places of migrating clans who occupied other territories in the past. Because the petroglyphs were made by men to communicate clan identities that were inherited matrilineally, the petroglyphs can be said to have a gendered dimension that is useful in reconstructing prehistoric migrations, ethnogenesis, and cultural affiliation. These are issues that concern museum professionals and indigenous communities working on land claims and repatriation of funerary and ceremonial items.

Analogy

Formal and informed methods can be linked through the careful use of analogy. One must specify exactly how ethnography causally links image-making (and, if possible, intangible aspects of meaning, metaphor, and worldview) to material aspects of ritual behavior and imagery that can be discerned in archaeological as well as ethnographic contexts. Ethnographic analogies are difficult. At best, "the interpretation of the past is a prediction based upon some general understanding of social behavior which assumes similarity between cultures or cultural phenomena, given types of similar conditions and contexts, irrespective of time and place," but "alternatively, culture and cultural phenomena are a product of non-predictable arbitrary events and social behavior" and "analogies do not explain specific prehistoric traditions and processes, or how the phenomena came about" (Helskog 2001:247–248; see also Wylie 1985).

In cases where we understand historical relationships between ancestors and descendents, we may bridge this gap to some extent, with due attention to cultural changes as well as continuities. To return to the Hopi example, some petroglyphs in the ancestral Hopi region fit the ethnographically derived model of clan symbols – footprints of the ancestors, in their own terms – but others do not fit, such as the many painted styles found in the region. Available ethnography only tells part of the

story, as we should expect in a region that has been occupied for over 10,000 years by foragers as well as ever-changing, linguistically diverse maize agriculturalists.

The neuropsychological model and its critics

An influential example of articulating ethnography, archaeology, and biological evidence is the neuropsychological model developed by David Lewis-Williams (1981, 1998) to explain the paintings of southern African foragers. This model is applied widely in southern Africa, and by analogical extension to other times and places. I will outline the basic argument before discussing the roles of gender in this model and in critiques of it.

Most early rock art researchers in southern Africa assumed that detailed paintings in rock shelters depicted scenes of daily life of the San foragers who inhabited the region until displaced by Bantu pastoralists and European colonists. Lewis-Williams proposed a new model based on multiple lines of evidence, and called it the neurospsychological model. He argues that San ritual practitioners whom he labels "shamans" made the paintings to commemorate or fix in place imagery perceived in altered states of consciousness. Both men and women served their communities as shamans; their activities included control of weather and game animals, healing, and directing group-oriented trance dances and initiation ceremonies. Experience of altered states of consciousness shape and are shaped by multisensory hallucinations including sensations of flying, falling, drowning, and bodily distortions. Visions begin with shimmering geometric "form constants" such as dots and wavy lines, and often progressed to iconic images of non-ordinary reality that were shaped by cultural expectations of seeing certain animals or mythical beings. All humans (and perhaps all mammals) are biologically endowed with the capacity to experience a spectrum of consciousness including similar hallucinatory imagery and sensations. These and other experiences are ineffable, but they can be expressed metaphorically. Specific metaphors, as well as the construal of particular hallucinated images such as human/animal combinations, are culturally specific.

In the San case, little ethnography is available for those who made the paintings, or for their direct descendants, but a great deal is available for their linguistic relatives to the north, who do not paint. By comparing imagery in the southern paintings and oral traditions of living San in the north, Lewis-Williams and his colleagues have discerned trance metaphors and other evidence of shamanic experience in the imagery and context of the paintings. Ethnography and the form, content, and location of the paintings are consistent with a shamanistic worldview of a tiered cosmos comprising this world and a spirit world that can be accessed at points of contact between the two, including waterholes and the walls of rock shelters. By accessing supernatural potency, shamans can control weather and the movements of animals, cure illness, and provide other benefits – or harm – to the inhabitants of this world. The paintings, then, commemorate shamans' experiences and deeds, and also enhance reservoirs of supernatural power in particular places.

Application of the neuropsychological model to San rock art rests on culturally specific metaphors and meanings that link ethnography, imagery, and landscape contexts, such as the prevalence of eland (large antelope) images and half human/half eland beings; particular postures assumed in the Trance Dance and Bull Eland Dance;

and key symbols and practices in boys' and girls' puberty rites (see Power and Watts 1997; Jolly 2002; Eastwood 2006). The model has been applied not only in several regions of southern Africa among San and other ethnic groups but also cross-culturally, where specific ethnographies again provide insights into meanings and metaphors (e.g., Whitley 1994, 2000 in the western United States; Wallis 2002 in Micronesia). It has also been applied to the distant past (Lewis-Williams and Dowson 1988; Clottes and Lewis-Williams 1998) in Upper Paleolithic caves in France and Spain, where researchers rely on neurologically 'hard-wired' sensory experience and cross-cultural analogy.

Gender has little role in the neuropsychological model itself, which accepts biological evidence that male and female human brains are wired for the same spectrum of consciousness, and thus experience altered states in similar ways. Gender is nonetheless very important to its cultural components, such as the significance of the male eland as a key symbol in San shamans' rain-making activities, and both girls' and boys' rites of passage. Fat and spiritual potency are related, so the fact that male elands have more fat than females, said to be opposite of the norm for humans and other antelope species, is especially significant in San ritual. The importance of gender in San worldview is the basis for some of the critiques of the neuropsychological model (Solomon 1994, 1998; Stevenson 2000). Anne Solomon decries the lack of attention to gender in the original model, and points to paintings of what appear to be female puberty rites, female "mythical beings" bearing weapons, and other gendered images. She argues that instead of scenes of ritual practice, such as the trance dance, the paintings depict myths. This ritual/myth debate about San rock art has lasted over a decade with little movement on either side (Solomon 1999, 2006; Lewis-Williams 2006; see also Olivier 2004), but alternatives have also been proposed (e.g., Power and Watts 1997; Dowson 2007).

Extension of the neurospsychological model beyond southern African hunter-gatherer rock art depends on the importance in other cultures of ritual specialists who manipulate altered states of consciousness, in a word, shamans.[3] The identities and practices of those persons many anthropologists call shamans, including rock art production and imagery, are culturally rich and varied, and often strongly gendered. World ethnography shows that the gender of shamans varies by cultural tradition. Paiute and Shoshone shamans were nearly all men, and their masculinity was an important aspect of their identities and practices (Whitley 1994) whereas Korean shamans were nearly all women (Nelson 1993:306–307), and their access to ancestral spirits was partly due to their gender.

More important than assigning gender labels to shamans is what gender meant in their respective communities. Ethnographic evidence suggests that in many cultural traditions, shamans' gender identities are unstable (Balzer 1996; Ouzman 1997). In Siberia, on the North American Plains, and elsewhere, shamans often took on the clothing and other attributes of their opposite gender. Sometimes individuals who did not conform to prevailing gender norms were encouraged to become shamans. Rock art imagery and ethnology of southern Africa suggest that gender ambiguity/ambivalence (*sensu* Green 1997) and fluidity/conflation of male/female, animal/human, time/space dimensions are the norm (Ouzman 1997; Power and Watts 1997; Jolly 2002). This may be true in shamanistic worldviews generally, or in any society that emphasizes a relational epistemology (*sensu* Bird-David 1999) rather than dual

oppositions; gender is therefore an important if unstable aspect of social and spiritual identity and practice. Details are flexible, often deliberately so, and culturally specific. Likewise, gender is important in *all* human communities, not only in terms of kinship, social organization, and the organization of labor and reproduction, but also as a source of metaphors that crosscut these domains and help describe ineffable experiences. Some such metaphors are expressed visually.

As Dowson (2007) has demonstrated, the neuropsychological model and the explanations of many of its critics rest on Cartesian dualisms about material and spirit worlds, masculine/feminine gender dichotomies (whether deployed as hierarchical or complementary), shamans/non-shamans, human/animals, body/spirit, nature/culture. San do not think this way, but rather are concerned with circulation of life force in a world that is alive and sentient. In this way of thinking, humans are not the only relevant actors, and relationships, not categories, count. This relational epistemology, or animistic worldview, is not restricted to the San or to foragers (Bird-David 1999); it characterizes most native North American worldviews as well, and probably is very widespread, though I am reluctant to pose a "West versus the Rest" dichotomy.

How does relational epistemology affect the study of rock art and gender? Consider the gender versus shamanism debate about San rock art; relationships between hunting and sex; and depictions of hunting, sexual intercourse, and part human/part animal beings. Lewis-Williams emphasizes key metaphors explained in San ethnography, particularly the work of Megan Biesele, whose book *Women Like Meat* (1993) playfully captures the metaphorical identification of women with prey animals and sexual intercourse with hunting. These metaphors are inverted in the contexts of puberty rites in which the menstruating pubescent girl is said to be a hunter who has "killed an eland" and therefore can handle men's weapons (normally prohibited) to impart her potency to them. Conversely, the pubescent boy is conflated with the prey animal, weak and bleeding, in his "first kill" ceremony. In the neuropsychological model, it is the experience of the participants in accompanying trance dances, as well as the metaphors themselves, that are key to understanding the rock art. For Solomon, myths charter the rituals, and the paintings depict the initial creation when humans and animals were the same; only later did the creator deity differentiate between food and marriage partners, thereby setting down rules for proper human behavior. In contrast, in an animistic view, the *relationship* between sexual partners and hunter/prey is important: as Dowson observes, "Both activities could be thought of as rites of regeneration" (2007:56). Whether myth or ritual "comes first" is not a salient question here, and "metaphors" reduce experience to once-removed symbols. So "first menstruation" is not *like* "killing an eland": both experiences enact the *same* regenerative relationship.

Recognizing, Classifying, and Contextualizing Sexed/Gendered Images

In using the term "sex" here, I am referring to depictions of attributes of bodies that can be assumed to signify male, female, or intersex individuals. The distribution of attributes like penises, testicles, vaginas, breasts, and body fat is fairly regular among adult humans and other mammals, but not so much in rock art images. In most world

rock art traditions, the majority of images that are recognizable as pictures of humans or human-like beings lack distinguishing sex attributes, many have ambiguous attributes, and a few have attributes of male and female bodies; more than a few combine animal and even plant features with those of human bodies.

Recognizing and classifying images of humans and animals as sexed is rarely straightforward. One begins with detailed, accurate recording and proceeds to looking for patterns, and not only the patterns one expects to find. You know what a penis looks like, but did you know that some lizard penises are bifurcated? Detailed observations of animal behavior meant life and death to foragers in search of food, but as Lévi-Strauss pointed out, animals are good to think as well as good to eat. The prolonged copulation of the lizard with the double-hooked penis must have suggested something significant to Baja California foragers who depicted ambiguous human-lizard figures with bifurcated penises in rock art (Gutiérrez 2007). In this case, the sex of the figure is male, but the conflation of human and animal features suggests a metaphor that refers to relationships between humans and animals, males and females.

In rock art traditions that regularly depict sexed bodies there are numerous conventions for indicating sex. A line between the legs could signify a penis, but it could also represent the tail of an animal, the root of a plant, or an article of clothing. The penis becomes a more probable interpretation when a knob is added to the end, or two dots for testicles. Female genitals can be indicated by a dot or cupule between the legs, two short lines, three short lines, a triangle (bisected or not), or some combination of these. Many rock art images have something fancy between the legs that does not fit any of these conventions. Deliberate ambiguity is symbolically useful (Green 1997). How many ambiguous images represent intersex bodies or third gender identities? How many represent human/animal combinations, or supernatural beings? In prehistoric rock art, it's rarely possible to know. If one accepts that some human-shaped rock art images do not depict ordinary, earthly humans, but transforming shamans, spirit helpers, ancestral beings, deities, the spiritual essences of animals and plants, or other-than-human persons, we should not expect them to have conventional indicators of biological sex. Rather, how such images are gendered is more important. If we take gender performance to involve public, repetitive actions of movement, gesture, posture, dress, labor, production, interaction with objects, and the manipulation of space (Perry and Joyce 2001:65, after Butler 1990), then rock art of many times and places should be gendered due to what it may depict and to the performances involved in producing it.

Recognizing gender requires a combination of formal and informed methods. In some cases, we can recognize the sex of the subject depicted and look for regular patterns of associating with other attributes, such as hair and clothing styles, tools and weapons, colors, or postures, to infer gender categories. One of the reasons many social scientists still make the sex/gender distinction is that although most human bodies can be classified as male and female, gender is a social and cultural construct that may or may not be binary. Gender intersects in such important ways with age, socioeconomic status, work roles, sexuality, and other factors, that cultures almost always have, in practice, more than two gender categories. In imagery that does not include sex attributes, we do not recognize markers of gender (hair styles, clothing) without other lines of evidence, usually ethnographic, but sometimes artifacts

deposited with sexed burials, such as weapons and ornaments, correlate with skeletal sex. Similar patterns of attributes in rock art images might suggest that different kinds of people are depicted, but whether they represented gender, age, ethnic, or status differences, we may never know for certain.

Attention to gender in rock art studies, as in archaeology more broadly, should not be limited to what kinds of people were depicted or who made the images. Recognizing gendered contexts is likewise not straightforward, and need not be based on depictions. Normative gender roles learned in introductory anthropology courses associate women with food preparation and men with ritual, so it's not uncommon for archaeologists to attempt "gender by association." They might ask, for example, if petroglyphs associated with grinding slicks were produced by women engaged in food-processing activities, or by men preparing paint for ritual purposes (only two alternatives). Who made the petroglyphs and why are fair questions, but they lack strong and appropriate ethnography; attributing gender to places or activities is guessing (at best) or projecting stereotypes into the past (at worst).

Josephine Flood makes a reasonable inference, typical of 1980s research, about fairly recent (due to little or no repatination) engravings in the Pilbara region of Western Australia (Figure 6.2):

> Elegant figures are shown in bold silhouette and dramatic compositions – running, dancing, fighting, love-making. The many humans include strange anthropomorphs – human-type figures. These male figures have forked hands instead of fingers, gigantic genitals, protruding muzzles and long "antennae" waving from their heads. The Woodstock petroglyphs were not kept secret, for they are often placed on tiers high on pyramidal piles of huge boulders, where they look out, as if from the walls of a gigantic picture gallery, across the featureless sand plains. … Not only could these sites be seen by women and children as well as by men, but some may also have been the work of women, for many are close to a waterhole and usually within a few metres of oval patches of rock worn smooth from seed grinding. Often, the upper millstone is still left on the milling floor, and debris consistent with grass seeds has been found in the cracks of some of the ground surfaces. Grinding of seeds to be mixed with water and made into dough was traditionally a woman's activity in Aboriginal Australia. There is a consistently close association between seed-grinding patches and engravings. The virile Woodstock men seem likely to be women's art, in the same way that voluptuous female figures have been painted as "love magic" by male Aboriginal artists elsewhere. [Flood 1983:275–276]

Ethnography can mislead if applied outside its relevant time/space context, however. Disembodied oval and triangular shapes that remind researchers of female genitals are very common in rock art in many parts of the world. Were such vulvaforms made and used by women, men, or both? Are they about fertility, danger, or both? We can draw upon ethnography to support any of these meanings. On Easter Island, male ritual leaders carved "portraits" of the genitals of female initiates at a shrine called Orongo (Lee 1992). At certain Pueblo shrines, women carved cupules, grooves, and vulva/bird track shapes in the course of prayers for pregnancy and safe childbirth (Stevenson 1904:294–295). Malevolent Paiute shamans apparently carved vulva images to direct the dangerous power of female genitals and orgasms to harm their intended victims (Whitley 2000). So what did the vulvaforms carved in Upper Paleolithic caves of France and Spain mean? What evidence is there really that men

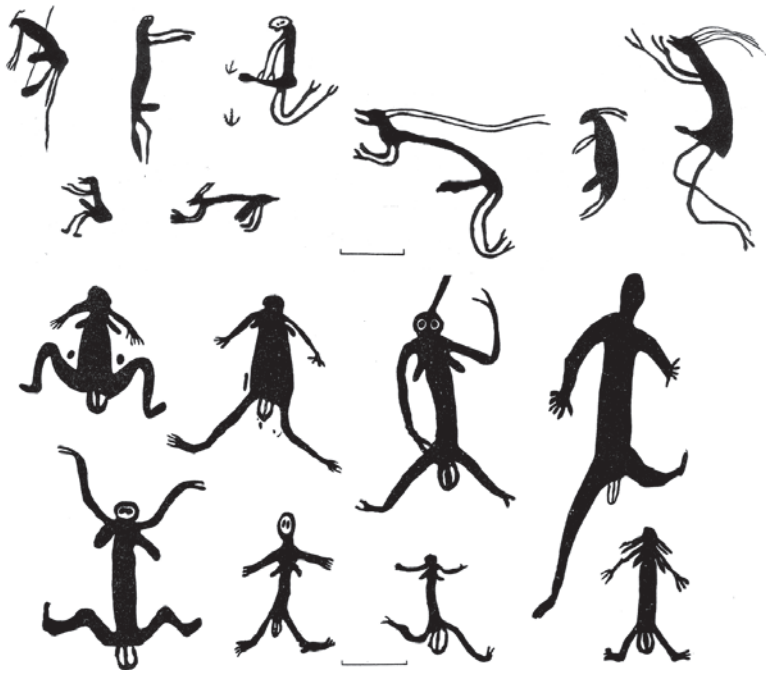


Figure 6.2 Male and female figures and engravings in the Upper Yule River area, Pilbara, northwestern Australia (after Wright 1968:figures 50–64, 142–156; scale = 1 foot).

carved them in rituals aimed at human and animal fertility, as early rock art researchers would have it? Some would question how many, if any, of these images should be labeled vulvaforms in the first place (Bahn 1986).

Without ethnography, the results of formal analysis of rock art and its spatial configuration and associations with other kinds of archaeological evidence are necessarily limited. In previous research on prehistoric ancestral Puebloan rock art in northern Arizona, 1300 years removed from ethnographic records, I suggested that the west half of Broken Flute Cave was feminine space, with pit houses, storage bins, pottery vessels, and pottery and textile artifacts decorated with patterns of repeated rectilinear geometric units, and that the east half of the cave was masculine space, with an unroofed ritual structure and rock art that included masks and depictions of processions of phallic figures (Hays-Gilpin 2000). I meant "feminine/masculine space" in the sense that an unreconstructed structuralist divides everything into universal binary categories – a highly questionable assumption, but one with a venerable history in rock art studies (see Conkey 2001). In retrospect, I don't think this particular interpretation tells us much about what life was like at that particular time and place. More interesting insights about the role of gender in changing scales and configurations of social organization, such as the emergence of matrilineal households in farming villages, came about later, with diachronic, regional perspectives and more nuanced cross-media comparisons (Robins and Hays-Gilpin 2000). These insights, like most archaeological statements about social identities and meanings, are nevertheless more like literary interpretations than scientifically testable hypotheses.

What Do We Know?

Cautionary tales aside, and ambiguities and lack of certainty firmly embraced, what do we know about gendered lives that we would not know had rock art been ignored, per archaeological business as usual?

Body gestures

Rock art as defined here can only be produced by the touch of human hands or hand-held tools on rock surfaces. Traces of human gestures remain in each groove, scratch, abrasion, and peck mark, in each finger dot or smear of paint. Bodies themselves leave their imprints in painted handprints and stencils, and sometimes in footprints left in soft clay in the floors of painted caves. Images in stone often show traces of repecking, touching, smearing, repainting, and rubbing, suggesting continued contact with human bodies. In addition, rock art was often placed where people would view it over and over as they moved through and paused in landscapes.

We can take as a universal that human bodies were socially gendered, minimally by age and sex. When we have skeletal remains in the archaeological record, we do not hesitate to assign sex and age using measurements that we can compare with statistical probabilities based on known populations. Can we then use size and shape of hand and footprints to infer what kinds of bodies left their marks in and near rock art? Sexing handprints and stencils in rock art has been tried in several parts of the world. Results show that this is a potentially productive line of research that will be well worth the work needed to refine methods and theories. Determining that a set of handprints is likely to have been made by both males and females would suggest two genders, but it cannot tell us what those gender identities were, and would miss cases of non-normative genders, as can be the case with ritual specialists of the sort many call shamans. Nor can identifying age and sex categories of those who made handprints and stencils tell us the meanings of the marks or of the acts of making the marks. The gesture of making the mark may well have been more important than the mark itself.

Over the last decade or two, rock art researchers have explored the possibility of determining the age and sex of the individuals who left footprints in soft clay inside painted Paleolithic caves such as Chauvet, which were closed up in the remote past and not opened until discovery by recent researchers, who preserved the floor traces intact for archaeological recording (Garcia 1999). Results of metric studies of footprints show that sizes are varied, and juveniles as young as age six were present, as were adult males. Thus far, it is not possible to sort out age *and* sex for the considerable number of footprints in the middle of the size distribution. The footprint data do not show that women were present, but neither do they show that women were *not* present.

Footprint data show who was present in painted caves, but not when; we do not know if those who left large and small footprints made nearby paintings and engravings. Studies of handprints and hand stencils involve deliberate placement of paint on a rock surface, so were made by individuals presumably engaged in a meaningful activity, not bystanders. By ethnographic analogy, they might have been marking territory, communicating prayer to spirit beings in or behind the rock surface, commemorating

initiation into a ritual society, adding their own mark to marks already there to signal belonging to a social group or to a particular place – or all of these and more.

Handprints are one of the most frequent elements in the dry rock shelters inhabited by early agriculturalists in the high deserts of the American Southwest. Handprints are not randomly distributed, and their strong association with storage bins in the shallow caves of Canyon del Muerto, in Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona, suggests their placement was meaningful, and perhaps gendered. Lawrence Loendorf noted this pattern of association and the relatively small size of many of the handprints (Loendorf 2010:44–46). He calls for more research on hand size and shape before drawing any conclusions about the gender and age of their makers, but uses ethnographic analogy to suggest that women might have comprised most of the painters in this case. Among Pueblo descendants of the Canyon de Chelly people, women are responsible for storage of seeds and crops, and for food processing. They built, maintained, and owned most houses and storerooms, and were responsible for plastering them. It is possible, then, that among Pueblo ancestors two thousand years ago, when small farming communities still moved seasonally, women built, opened, and closed storage cists, and marked them with their own handprints to signify ownership, protection, or prayers. The important point here is that the size and contexts of handprints suggest that rock art of this time and place includes the meaningful gestures of women. Whether the handprints are those of women is a testable hypothesis, as research in other parts of the world has shown.

Using handprints and stencils from Paleolithic caves in Europe, and a comparative sample of prints and stencils made by modern Europeans, Dean Snow (2006) has demonstrated that, with some qualifications, it is possible to determine the sex and age of the makers. First, analysis of handprints and stencils has to be done with reference to a related living population. Second, one cannot tell adult female from juvenile male handprints based on size alone; a second stage of analysis using ratio of index and ring finger lengths is necessary, and even then there is still some overlap. Snow evaluated DNA evidence to support the assumption that most Europeans are part of the same genetic population as those living there in the Upper Paleolithic period, and showed that digit length ratios do tend to correlate with sex in modern Europeans (but not in all populations). He then developed a formula that correctly predicts the sex of adult handprints (made experimentally) 79 percent of the time when hand size and digit lengths are measured, but does not discriminate between adult females and adolescent males. A second stage of analysis using only digit length ratio (see also Nelson et al. 2006) can distinguish similarly sized males from females, but with a lower success rate (59 percent). Applying these methods to six hand stencils in French Paleolithic caves, including Pech Merle and Les Combarelles, Snow identified four female, one adult male, and one adolescent male handprint. Although we currently have no more than 80 percent certainty of identifying the sex of the maker using these methods, results suggest that both women and men, adults and adolescents, left their marks in the dark zones of caves in Upper Paleolithic times. While the results cannot tell us who painted and engraved images of animals, naked females, male and female genitals, and geometric "signs," or male human/animal combinations like Trois Frères' Sorcerer, they do not rule out female painters and engravers.

A good example of linking formal methods of handprint sexing (biometrics) with informed methods (ethnographic accounts) is Steve Freers' (2001) study of handprints

at southern California sites that are only a few hundred years old. San Luis Rey-style sites have handprints and geometric patterns executed in red paint. Ethnographic accounts of Luiseño female puberty rites suggest that after several months of instruction, ceremonies, and face-painting, rites culminated in a race to a rock where initiates made handprints in red paint, and painted the spirit helpers they had acquired (usually rattlesnakes, represented by diamond chains, parallel zigzag lines, and reticulate patterns). In at least one account, the chief's wife is said to have made the paintings on behalf of the initiates (Steward 1929; Whitley 2000). If these ethnographic accounts accurately describe the contexts in which San Luis Rey-style paintings were made, then handprints at sites with rattlesnake-like designs should be those of adolescent females, and perhaps adult females. Alternatively, adult male ritual leaders might have directed girls' puberty ceremonies or other rites that resulted in a similar rock art repertoire. Freers' metric studies concluded that most of the handprint sizes were consistent with adolescents, but he was unable to obtain precise enough measurements on finger length ratios to determine sex (Freers 2001:331).

Gendering bodies

What is important about the fixing of individual Luiseño girls' body gestures in the form of handprints and the "making visible" of spirit helpers experienced up to that point only in states of non-ordinary reality (visions) is that in making the marks on the rock, the gestures and all their accompanying cultural practices were an integral component of making girls into women. This was done by deploying symbols of the opposite gender, the rattlesnake, which is culturally coded masculine (regardless of the existence of two snake sexes). In this and many other places around the world, making images on stone is necessary for making gender, or at least for culturally assigning gender to the bodies of a community's individual members. Rock art does not just reflect gender in such cases, but is an active participant in the cultural constitution of gender. A few interesting examples are provided in the following paragraphs (see also Hays-Gilpin 2004:107–126).

On the Columbia Plateau, both boys and girls make rock art images of spirit helpers following instruction by elders and puberty seclusion. In addition, anyone of any age or gender who seeks and obtains a vision may depict the result of that quest in the form of a painting or engraving. Rock art in this region can help archaeologists identify puberty seclusion sites. The gender of the initiate is indicated by depictions of tasks, tally marks for tracking tasks, and kind of spirit helper appropriate for males and females (York et al. 1993; Marucci 1999).

As noted above, Anne Solomon (1994) has identified some San paintings as depictions of female puberty rites, notably one in the Drakensberg that clearly shows a Bull Eland Dance in which women with bared buttocks dance around the initiate, who is isolated inside a hut and wrapped in an animal skin robe called a kaross. Men wielding bows and arrows dance around the outside of the painting. Each of these details has multivalent symbolic connections among men and women, adults and juveniles, animals and humans, and myth and ritual in complex, often inverted relationships. More recent research in southern Africa has explored puberty rites and symbology among related ethnic groups (Power and Watts 1997; Namono and Eastwood 2005; Eastwood 2006). Particularly noteworthy is Anderson's (1997)

study of rock art associated with Khoe female initiation rites, which argues that the rock art was not only part of the process of making girls into women, but was also a component of women's resistance to colonialism.

In most of southern Africa, ethnography and rock art evidence suggests puberty rites for boys and girls, sometimes using the same sites, sometimes separate, but usually with different rock art imagery. Authorship does not always correlate with the gender of the initiates. Namono and Eastwood (2005) cite ethnographic accounts of elder Sotho men instructing female initiates, and these men may have made the paintings that seem to depict the concerns of women and girls, such as distinctive gendered items of clothing called "back aprons" (also made by men for women) recorded in a rock shelter in the Limpopo region. In this case, it apparently takes collaborative intersections of age, sex, and gender (as well as painting) to make girls into women.

One of the most comprehensive interpretations of a particular site as the locus of puberty initiations is Leslie Zubieta's (2006, 2009) work on painted rock shelters in Malawi. In the Mwana wa Chentcherere II shelter, red paintings attributed to hunter-gatherer occupations are overlain by two styles of white paintings attributed to Bantu-speaking Chewa farmers. According to ethnographic evidence the style known as the White Zoomorphic tradition is associated with male initiation, and the White Spread-eagle tradition is associated with female initiation (Smith 1995; Zubieta 2009). In an interview with Chewa female ritual specialists about the Chinamwali girls' initiation ceremonies, which are still practiced today, though in the village rather than in remote rock shelters, Zubieta reports, "The ceremony deals with a girl's body and the role that her body plays within society; creating an understanding by that girl of her body" (2006:53). Imagery created in song, dance, story-telling, figurines, and formerly in rock paintings, was used to instruct girls about proper clothing, sexual behavior, hygiene, pregnancy, birth, childrearing, kinship obligations, and so forth. By interviewing older women who remembered the meanings of some of the images in the rock shelter, and by combing ethnographic records for the Chewa and their neighbors, Zubieta was able to identify the metaphorical meanings of many of the animal images in the paintings.

In a few parts of the world, rock art might be part of making alternative genders. Some late prehistoric and early historic petroglyphs in the North American Great Plains depict bison, hoofprints, and vulva shapes, together with grooves apparently made by sharpening bone awls. Dakota men were responsible for hunting large game such as bison while women were responsible for working and decorating bison hides. Some Dakota women did not marry and bear children (a role symbolized by the female bison); some became craft specialists after dreaming of Double Woman, a supernatural personage who offered both men and women alternative gender roles and identities. Based on a combination of ethnography, imagery, and landscape placement, Linea Sundstrom suggests that some petroglyph sites were created by Double Woman dreamers. In this case, sharpening awls in particular places was not just about making effective tools, but about creating and sacralizing alternate gender roles (Sundstrom 2002a, 2002b).

Many (but not all) cultures practice rites of passage that transform children into adults, usually gendered adults, sometimes in particular localities. Puberty seclusion and/or initiation sites might be sheltered places, away from large settlements or

trails, the remains of which contain only partial evidence for the stuff of daily life, ritual deposits, and rock art (see Marucci 1999). Can we recognize initiation sites and imagery without historical and ethnographic records? Not with certainty, and the task of sorting out boys' and girls' puberty sites, adult women's menstruation seclusion sites, warriors' seclusion sites, and vision-questing sites would be difficult. Ethnography of puberty rites has nevertheless has been extended by analogy to interpret prehistoric sites, including Paleolithic painted and engraved caves (Pfeiffer 1982) and an Iron Age mountaintop petroglyph site in Europe (Barfield and Chippindale 1997).

Depicting gendered bodies

By studying depictions of bodies and activities we can attempt to infer past gender categories, roles, and values. As noted above, this is precarious because age, sex, and other factors intersect in gender, and genders are not limited to masculine/feminine binary oppositions. When we have relevant ethnography, recognizing gender categories may be possible, as in the case of Pueblo "maidens," who can be recognized by their distinctive butterfly hair whorls in rock art of the southwest United States (Hays-Gilpin 2004:127–146). This hairstyle first appears in rock art around 250 C.E., with and without depiction of female genitalia or distinctive feminine clothing styles. Butterfly hair whorls are still worn today on ceremonial occasions by young women who have undergone a puberty ceremony but are not yet married; images of "maidens" as symbols of reproductive potential and anticipated harvests are still important in Pueblo songs and visual arts.

A number of studies have remarked on the dramatic association between masculinity and weapons in rock art of prehistoric Europe, Scandinavia (Yates 1993; Helskog 2001), France (Barfield and Chippindale 1997), and Italy (Robb 1997; Bevan 2006). Often these petroglyphs can be dated by identifying the particular shapes of daggers and other weapons with actual weapons found in other archaeological contexts. Bevan identifies significant changes in gendered depictions and associations that can be tracked from the Bronze Age through Iron Age in northern Italy, but argues that the decrease in depictions of female figures does not necessarily mean a loss of status for women (Bevan 2006). It may instead attest to an increase in competition between men and the emergence of a warrior class, or to differences in status based on weapons and war honors. The question for Yates (1993) is not one of identifying depictions of men and women, but warriors and non-warriors.

In looking for pictures of gendered bodies to illustrate this chapter, I was struck by the contrast between highly stylized, abstracted depictions in many parts of the world, including most of the Americas, Australia, and Europe, and some of the more naturalistic styles found in parts of Africa and Asia. In the case of southern Africa, recent research has undermined the hypothesis that naturalistic paintings of humans and animals represent "scenes of daily life," but some examples of Mesolithic hunter-gatherer rock art in India are still plausibly interpreted as depictions of men hunting and going to war, and women interacting, preparing meals, taking care of children, and giving birth (Pandey 1992). These would seem to be untapped resources for discussion of prehistoric gender roles and values, kinship, and even technology. On the other hand, they may not be so simple. For example, Ouzman

(1997) has demonstrated, through the careful recording and analysis of bored stones and rock art depictions of humans wielding weighted digging sticks in southern Africa, that bored stones and digging sticks are not uncomplicated symbols of feminine gender (or indicators of gender roles) as archaeologists once assumed. Yet in reference to paintings of animals, vulvaforms, and human activities in shallow caves in the Xinjiang area of Chinese Turkestan, one still reads naïve statements like the following: "Based on the subject matter, the paintings are believed to have been made by a matriarchal society, at least 5,000 years ago" (Chen 2001:762). In this case, the passive voice may attempt to disguise a politically inspired nineteenth-century evolutionary framework.

Rock art as evidence for long-term change

Instead of looking for evidence for evolutionary progress, archaeologists now look at long-term change in more nuanced and critical ways. Here, too, rock art makes contributions. Some powerful examples that use rock art as evidence for long-term change in gender arrangements include Bevan's (2006) Bronze to Iron Age studies in northern Italy and Jacobson's Neolithic to historic tracing of images of animals, humans, and shamans and their paraphernalia in Siberia (Jacobson 1993; see also Hays-Gilpin 2004:187–207). David Whitley (1994) explores images of animals and shamans in the Great Basin and relates them to changes in subsistence in which the importance of men's hunting decreased, women's plant gathering activities became more important, and – paradoxically – animal imagery became more frequent in rock art, signaling a shift in men's status competition to ritual activities, such as weather control. In this case, the subsistence shift in prehistory is visible in archaeological evidence for plant and animal use, but the cultural meaning of the mountain sheep as rain shamans' spirit helpers could only be known through informed methods – in this case, ethnography.

Concluding Thoughts

Respect for cultural diversity and ongoing connections with descendant communities demand that we not use rock art like ink blots on which to project our own obsessions and interpretations. Due to its frequent ambiguity of imagery and imprecise chronology, rock art has been especially vulnerable to projection of sex and gender stereotypes (Bahn 1986). The best rock art research, like the best archaeology, begins with detailed, accurate fieldwork, and proceeds through multiple working hypotheses, multiple lines of evidence, and careful use of analogies to arrive at the best explanation. Following this trajectory, recent research has demonstrated that both men and women made rock art in the past, and that rock art often played important ritual roles, including the transformation of gender identities in puberty rites. Rock art can thus provide a means for investigating long-term changes in gender arrangements. As more researchers acknowledge the value of using rock art evidence as a valuable means of understanding societies of the remote past, we can expect to see more detailed cross-media comparisons, more sophisticated spatial analyses of rock art imagery, and more attention to gendered landscapes and cosmologies.

NOTES

1 "Rock art" and equivalent terms, such as "arte rupestre" in Spanish, are tolerated by most prehistorians. The term "art" is used in diverse ways in scholarship and popular culture and so can be problematic. Many prefer other terms, such as images on stone, rock paintings and engravings, pictographs and petroglyphs, or rock-art with a hyphen. Indigenous communities with historic ties to rock art traditions often prefer their own terms and translations, such as storied rocks, footprint marks, or names of specific beings depicted.
2 "Graffiti," defined here as meaningful marks made outside of culturally sanctioned places, can also provide insights into negotiation of territory, and social categories such as age, gender, and sexuality.
3 Whether or not this Siberian-derived term is an appropriate word to use outside the circumpolar region and the Americas has been debated by Kehoe (2000) and others.

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CHAPTER 7

Gender and Lithic Studies in Prehistoric Archaeology

Nyree Finlay

Chipped stone tools are the most enduring and ubiquitous artifacts in the archaeological record. From the first flakes and chopping tools of our earliest ancestors and those of our distant primate cousins, this practical engagement with, and need for, stone has spanned millennia and continents. Lithic technology is reductive, the trace of each removal evident on the worked core left behind; each detachment reveals technical features of the sequence and each is potentially capable of being refitted like a complex jigsaw puzzle to the original. Actions realized in less than a minute endure for millennia. Since stone lasts, landscapes are littered with the products and debris from prehistoric knapping – the process of chipping off usable pieces of flint or other siliceous stone. Knapping creates an array of products: tested pebbles, cores, flakes, blades, and other debitage ranging from splinters and chunks to minute waste. Such knapping events generate simple, sharp pieces with effective cutting and working edges, items that were needed, used, and immediately discarded. Other pieces had more protracted and distinctive biographies, being hafted and kept, and some experienced more elaborate subsequent modifications of form. It is these latter items that archaeologists overwhelmingly recognize as former tools and term arrowheads, scrapers, and knives – often irrespective of their actual uses. Since lithic use was purposeful and central in daily life, this durable aspect of past technological practice can be used to address a range of wider range of issues, such as mobility, scheduling, subsistence practices, and social organization. For all these reasons and more, lithic technology is core to the archaeological project. It has defined prehistory through terms such as Stone Age and its stone using eras Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic, and to a certain extent it has even defined our very humanity through constructs like "Man-the-Toolmaker."

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An engagement with worked stone is unquestionably critical to knowing more about our collective pasts. Yet current narratives, analytical methodologies, and interpretive frameworks still promote a predominantly androcentric view of lithic technology. The opinion persists that making stone tools was a male endeavor in the past, as it continues to be among the overwhelmingly male replicative knapping and archaeological community today. Such a perspective not only underplays and actively negates the contribution of women as active toolmakers in prehistory but continues to permeate contemporary scholarship (Weedman Arthur 2010). It is the goal of this chapter to chart some of the legacy of this bias and explore salient themes which characterize the shifting terrain of archaeological approaches in relation to lithic studies.

Throughout this chapter gender is understood to be the social construction of biological sex. Within the archaeological literature, such distinctions are often conflated in discussions of the sexual division of labor. Just as our theoretical approaches to gender should be multiple, fluid, and contingent, we also have to acknowledge the fundamental nature of the archaeological project regarding prehistory. That past includes our non-anatomically modern ancestors and other distant relations. Not only were the various hominin species like Neanderthals and *Homo heidelbergensis* physically distinct from us, but their social relations and very ways of being create challenges in relation to conceptualizing sex and gender distinctions. Over such a broad spatial and temporal canvas spanning millions of years to ca. 4,000 years ago, prehistory presents profound epistemological challenges for archaeological engagements with gender. Consequently, the approach advocated here acknowledges how much this needs to be negotiated and dealt with on a case by case basis while recognizing the influence of regional traditions and temporally specific research trends and concerns. Most of all, we need to resist projecting overarching, universal, and essentialist models if we are going to fully explore and benefit productively from a gendered discourse in relation to lithic technology.

Such a survey also necessitates consideration of the inherent tensions within archaeological studies of gender, both in relation to gender attribution and to changing configurations and understandings of gendered identities and their wider implications for material culture studies. The extent to which our perspectives on the past are reinforced by the contemporary practices of lithic analysis as an archaeological specialism is the focus of the second part of this chapter. Here the concern is with the subjects and structures of analysis and the products and interpretations of that process. Despite almost three decades of feminist critique within archaeology, resistance to the idea of women as lithic toolmakers continues and reinforces the continued urgency and necessity of feminist scholarship in this field. An integral element is the way ethnohistorical and ethnographic evidence has been used equally to refute and redress understandings of women's stonecraft, and this has proved instrumental for model building, especially for prehistoric hunter-gatherers. As our engagement with gender matures, the interplay between theoretical stances and methodological approaches becomes more apparent and in some ways more urgent. The third and final part of the chapter identifies diverse configurations of gender that offer other ways of acknowledging the social dynamic in stoneworking by moving beyond simple gender attribution and recurring tropes. Here I consider some of the ways in which lithic studies can respond to these issues and look at how the methodological and theoretical terrain needs to shift in order to accommodate such a revised agenda.

The Legacy of the Past

The explosion of a gender critique within archaeology that began in the mid 1980s brought with it a period of re-evaluation and also reflection, primarily by feminist and female archaeologists (e.g., Conkey and Spector 1984). The research that ensued was characterized by studies explicitly focused on finding women and redressing the inherent biases in the uncritical acceptance of stereotyped attitudes regarding the sexual division of labor and Western gender ideologies that had dominated earlier approaches. During this period many feminist scholars sought to chart and identify the parameters and tenacity of androcentric bias. The visibility of women and their representation in text, as well as in archaeological reconstruction drawings, museum displays, and dioramas, has been explored by Gifford-Gonzales (1993). In these media prehistoric women are rarely seen as stoneworkers, and these studies highlight the portrayal of women as passive, inactive agents defined solely by their reproductive capacity, and bound to the confines of the camp by child-bearing and domestic drudgery. In contrast to the omnipresent active and mobile male, women had to be found within the archaeological record and made visible. It was argued by some that the gendered attribution of artifacts via a task-differentiation model offered one of the most productive and tangible ways to identify and explore past women's actions (Conkey and Spector 1984). A task-differentiation model examines the scheduling and spatial location of activities and the composition of the social group or individuals undertaking such tasks, as well as documenting the associated material and artifactual remains. Originally developed by Janet Spector (1983), task-differentiation was applied to ethnographic and historic material but was seen as having much wider archaeological potential. It is a useful model for thinking about the components and interactions around an activity and for forcing a more holistic engagement with scheduling, time, agency, and action. One of its strengths is the emphasis placed on skills, processes, and the timing of events that govern tool use rather than a focus on the product or artifact as the outcome. It is the weakness of the relational analogies and the imposition of gender stereotypes allocated to tasks that often remain stumbling blocks for archaeological applications.

While gender attribution continues to be a salient research strategy for some, there is a self-evident circularity in the arguments surrounding the attribution of gender to artifacts that reinforces inherent androcentric and gynocentric biases (Dobres 1995). It also negates the potential for gender relations in the past to be constituted in any way other than the dominant binary system of the present. This highlights the fundamental distinctions between the identification of tool, task, and gendered interpretations. Gender attribution emerged from this Second-wave engagement where tasks and their associated artifacts could be used to identify and consider male/female domains. The difficulty for lithic analysis, as with other artifactual studies, lies in the way task-differentiation and gender attribution have tended to be conflated rather than treated as two distinct arenas of inference. Gender is a social construct. A stone has no sex and is genderless. It is only through its context, association, and cultural identification that it may embrace a particular set of meanings and become identified with a range of social signifiers of which gender may be only one variable. There is nothing intrinsic in lithic technology that restricts it to one sex: the organization of activities involving lithic elements is a negotiated social choice, not one set in stone.

A key issue here is the assumed stability of tool function integral to the allocation of an archaeological artifact to a task and then by inference to gender. The function and use of particular artifact classes are assumed to be constant, thus enabling the links in the inferential chain. But tool use is inherently unstable, and while there is often conservatism in design, technological practices, and traditions across generations, the need for tools is ultimately responsive and functionally adaptive. These attributes may not be fixed within the form or even within the biography of a given implement but are rather fluid, contingent (upon task and action), and culturally variable. It is increasingly evident from numerous use–wear studies that the form of similar lithic artifacts – even within the same site, time period, or region – cannot be used to infer identical tool use-lives (Odell 2004; van Gijn 2010).

Task-differentiation and gender attribution of artifacts are heavily reliant on the ethnographic record and as such have found particular resonance in North America and other regions where some forms of indigenous cultural continuity have been maintained. In other areas researchers have often uncritically mined global analogies, irrespective of their appropriateness; one example of this is the use of gendered stone tool distinctions from Aboriginal Australia applied to the Cypriot Neolithic (see McCartney 2002 for a critique). Inferences are weaker for the deep past and tend to endorse the "Man-the-Hunter" model widely promoted after the 1960s anthropological symposium of that name (Lee and DeVore 1969). This effectively set the tone for attitudes about the sexual division of labor for an entire generation of scholars. It also created prehistoric templates for diverse contemporary hunter-gatherers, irrespective of the historical contingencies, enforced marginality, and modern conditions of their lives.

The coalescence of ideas around the sexual division of labor among hunter-gatherers that took place during the 1960s resulted in a gender asymmetry that served to perpetuate essentialist perspectives on the values attributed to male and female roles across the Man the Hunter/Woman the Gatherer divide. Another key factor was comparative data from the *Ethnographic Atlas* regarding allocation of task activity by sex (Murdock and Provost 1973). This evidence is still used uncritically by researchers, despite its obvious biases and flawed calculations, as justification for interpretations of male stoneworking on account of its exclusive identification with men in 67 societies and as a male/female activity in only six. This has had a number of consequences for the treatment of stone tools and in particular for their subsistence and task associations, reifying the sexual division of labor and reinforcing universal models of behavior. Implicit, too, is the identification of women with gathering, plant resources, and "soft" technologies, such as hideworking, the production of clothing, textiles, cords, lines, and (for later prehistory) ceramics (see Bolger this volume). This contrasts with the inherent "hard" and more valued technologies of stone associated with masculine endeavors, including large game hunting.

For earlier scholars and in particular for antiquarian researchers, the gender bias attributed to lithic working is seen in more practical terms as an inclusive craft activity. For example, Smith (1894) discusses and depicts women knapping in *Man the Primeval Savage*: here people of all ages, sexes, and ability occur in the narrative. Similarly, other earlier accounts are more aware of the plurality of possible functional interpretations for certain lithic artifact types than those entertained in more modern studies, particularly from the 1960s onward when prevailing attitudes can be seen

to change. Here lithics take on a particular resonance with regard to what I have previously termed "boys and arrows" narratives in which hunting and projectile functions become paramount (Finlay 1997).

Genderlithics Revisited

As Joan Gero has stated in her seminar paper, Genderlithics: Women's Roles in Stone Tool Production, "There are no compelling biological, historical, sociological, ethnographic, ethnohistorical, or experimental reasons why women could not have made – and good reason to think they probably *did* make – all kinds of stone tools, in all kinds of lithic materials, for a variety of uses and contexts" (1991:176, emphasis in the original). This was the first explicit and extended piece to review the treatment of gender issues in lithic analysis. It can be taken as a significant benchmark with which to measure past and present developments, and to consider the subsequent legacy of the initial feminist critique and its wider impact on gendered approaches within lithic studies. In addition to the assumption of female passivity was a catalogue of other feminine attributes that were presumed to deny or limit women's participation in stonecraft: insufficient body strength, an innate absence of knapping ability, and the lack of need or opportunity to undertake such work. Limited female mobility to acquire desirable stone for making tools and issues arising from scheduling conflicts, in particular the apparent incompatibility of knapping stone when pregnant or with small children, were prevalent in traditional accounts and were employed in the broader defense of the sexist models surrounding lithic production. All of these dimensions were effectively critiqued and deconstructed by Gero. She also explored the socio-politics of archaeological practice with regard to lithic replication and the lower visibility of female researchers participating in lithic research (see also Gero 2000). As well as providing a critique of androcentric bias, Gero presented a case study based on lithic raw material types and tool preparation at Huaricoto, Peru, a Formative period temple site.

In general, it is the potency of her critique and three predications regarding the identification of female stonecraft that have proved most influential (Gero 1991:176). The first is an explicit focus on the "domestic," the spaces where women are more likely to be visible in the archaeological record, namely in dwellings and around habitation surfaces and areas where routine maintenance tasks should be identifiable. The second examines local lithic raw materials to obviate against differential male/female mobility in procurement strategies. The third investigates expedient tools, which are more likely to be the product of women's labor. Gero's analysis also necessitates the redefinition of what constitutes a "tool," an issue that was central to her wider arguments since she drew attention to the disparity between the treatment of different artifact types in lithic studies and the greater attention and significance that has traditionally been attributed by archaeologists to modified or retouched pieces. Large bifacial projectile points and scrapers are often regarded as archaeologically more significant because of their greater macroscopic visibility as tools, and because chronological changes in their form are central to the construction of typological and cultural sequences. It is no coincidence that such tool types, especially the retouched bifaces and projectile points, are commonly associated with male prestige

activity, especially large game hunting. In North America in particular it has been argued that "time-space systematics in archaeology are largely based on continuity and change in the design of tools used by men" (Sassaman 1992:251), a phenomenon which contrasts with archaeology's reliance in later prehistory on evidence of ceramics (a technology cross-culturally attributed to women). It is also noteworthy that these bifacial forms are among the most valued, complex, and technically demanding pressure flaked implements; they are regarded as prized archaeological specimens and constitute principal focal points for modern experimental replication. This focus has clearly been detrimental to the study of Paleoindian societies more generally (Gero 2000, 2002).

In contrast, simple unretouched flakes have traditionally been neglected because of their chronological ubiquity (and therefore perceived lack of value), and it has been widely assumed that such simple and expedient tools are likely to fall within a female domain of tool production and use. While there is clear value in refocusing attention on those pieces that constitute the mainstay of the archaeological record, such a strategy provides tacit acceptance of the gender-biased methods of stone tool attribution critiqued by Gero, and ultimately reinforces the notion of inherent universal binary distinctions. By the same token, it fails to acknowledge the totality of lithic use; even in cases where gendered domains occur, their potential impact on social practices for men and women, and for technological organization more generally, is rarely considered. It also raises issues of essentialism with regard to male identity by excluding men from the domestic realm and committing them to long-distance travel. To this is added the pressure of being the sole tool makers or expert knappers, forever making projectiles and pursuing game in segregated male-only hunting camps. Such simplistic, binary models have profound implications for constructs of masculinity in the past and have rarely been explored in depth in conventional lithic analyses.

Lithic Analysis as Practice

In this section, the practice of lithic analysis as a contemporary archaeological specialism is highlighted to explore socio-political issues, and to demonstrate how research agendas and publication outcomes promote particular engagements with lithic material. Here we must consider the contexts in which lithic analysis is conducted and how it conforms to expected conventions and definitions of the archaeological specialist and academic outputs.

A review of lithic publications over a 20-year period from 1990 to 2010, including key lithic studies textbooks and major review articles in international journals, reveals a general lack of attention to gender issues and to the social dimensions of tool production and use more generally. This pattern pertains to technical reports and specialist contributions as well as finds chapters and journal articles. The primary focus is descriptive rather than interpretive. Traditional gender bias and attribution is endemic, and an explicit and informed engagement with gender issues can only be identified in a small number of publications largely identified with female practitioners or gender-specific outputs. The prevalence of gender issues covered in conference presentations (particularly by students and early career researchers) as opposed to

those appearing in print is part of a wider picture of gender disparities in funding, publication, and citation within archaeology in general.

The processes of lithic study themselves are noteworthy in this regard, for they demonstrate the ways in which lithic analysis conforms to traditional expectations regarding report structures and modes of data presentation. A descriptive and statistical focus, involving the quantification of material, is an integral element, but this is often undertaken as a matter of tradition and rote. The lithics report primarily services other period experts and specialists, and its format of analysis often takes precedence over the constraints of a particular assemblage or socially driven research questions. The process of becoming a successful archaeological specialist lies with peer recognition and conformity of practice. While there is some reflexive engagement between academic concerns and the wider replication community (see, for example, Gero 2002; Whittaker 2004), there is clearly more to investigate about contemporary conditions and practices within lithic studies itself.

Lithic analysis has matured in the last few decades, and there is a growing recognition of the need to consider the totality of lithic resources, to move beyond "tools" and examine all stages and products of the reduction sequence. By now this should have yielded more gender aware methodologies since it directs attention to Gero's work on simple and immediate tools and debitage. But the growth of developer-funded and Cultural Resource Management archaeology has led to a focus on mass analysis recording weight and volume rather than traditional technological attribute analysis (see papers in Andrefsky 2001; Hall and Larson 2004). While this methodological trend constitutes a particular response to dealing with large assemblages and commercial realities, it also raises concerns since it serves to devalue the interpretive capacity of lithic evidence and discourages analysts within the profession from engaging in a wider range of analytical approaches. The mainstay of socially focused, feminist, and gender based lithic work is undertaken in an academic research context. Overall, this constitutes a small percentage of output within the profession, and even in this sector the constraints of established practice are readily identifiable.

Contemporary lithic studies is a diverse field that encompasses a range of specialist and technical sub-domains, including raw materials and geochemical provenance studies, lithic use–wear and residue analysis, macroscopic technological analysis, and typological studies accompanied by refitting and experimental replication. Space precludes a detailed review of all these areas, but a focus on experimental replication and use–wear studies highlights salient and continuing trends as discussed in the following sections.

Experimental replication

One area where gender tensions in lithic analysis are still most evident is the field of experimental lithic replication. Joan Gero has highlighted the macho and primal aspects of this research, in particular how "knapping is publicly male territory," thus reiterating "an elemental association of males with stone tool production and use" (1991:167). Lithic replication is also the interface between academic archaeologists, lithic analysts, and the wider public. This is particularly the case in North America where the modern recreation of ancient technology has a broader popular and non-archaeological appeal. There is competitiveness to the "knap-in" where talents are

on display and expertise is measured by each successful removal (Whittaker 2004). In Europe stone tool replication is more academically oriented as an archaeological activity and is less prominent and popular as a craft hobby among the general public. As a sub-discipline it remains an area in which women are notably still under-represented.

While a number of female archaeologists are highly competent and accomplished stoneworkers who draw on and publish their replicative knapping experiences, sexism is rife and the field promotes outputs and public demonstrations that are still overwhelmingly macho in character. This male identification with contemporary stonecraft results in a number of other significant biases that channel attention toward a restrictive range of research questions. The first is a bias toward the "biggest and the best," which can be seen in the re-creation of manufacturing techniques for a series of technically demanding and complex artifact types like Folsom ultrathin bifaces, Solutrean points, and Scandinavian flint daggers. The competency required for certain stages in the protracted and elaborate production sequences of these artifacts is accrued over decades, not months. It is these items, along with exceptionally large blades, that constitute the epitome of (modern) stonecraft. Among contemporary knappers these exceptional artifacts are seen as the ultimate signifiers of skill and innate talent. More simple, mundane, and routine products of prehistoric stonecraft do not receive comparable attention. Here the challenges attract less kudos, and the skill levels required are significantly lower and less exclusive. Yet many artifact types and knapping procedures would benefit from the same degree of interest and experimentation. The same is true for coarse stone and pebble implements, such as hammerstones, pounders, and pebble tools, which have also been neglected in terms of both analysis and experimental replication (Rowan and Ebeling 2008). There is much still to learn about the diversity of practices and variety of possible techniques used to fashion stone implements in the past. The inherent archaeological bias toward chipped stone and retouched pieces is strengthened by their original role as chronological markers and the cultural significance afforded to exceptional aesthetic and complex artifacts. The recreation of techniques to create these forms is often an abstract quest. These remain exclusive trophy objects (and latter-day projects) rather than pieces contextualized within wider technological regimes, particular products of often exceptional circumstance and social conditions.

Another consequence of the modern focus on experimental replication is the promotion of the individual lithic practitioner as a template for the artisan of the past. The communal and reciprocal character of stone tool manufacture and use, highlighted in a number of ethnographic accounts, tends to be denied as a result of the elevation of the importance of the solitary knapper. This perspective, which is reified in reconstruction drawings, overlooks how technology is an arena for creating and maintaining relations. This is significant for the identification of individuals archaeologically, and for the recognition of skill and equivalent levels of competency. Ultimately, however, it is the naturalization of acts and associations in the ensuing narratives generated from lithic replication that are the most significant for gendered accounts. The relationship with experimental replication is an iterative one. While replication offers a modern mediated understanding of stonecraft, it allows us also to glimpse some of the complexities and entanglements surrounding material, self, and technology.

Lithic use–wear analysis and residue studies

Since the 1980s, microwear studies have increasingly offered robust methodologies for investigating the actual function of stone tools beyond mere analogy. It is also an area of lithic research where female practitioners are better represented. Use-wear analysis uses different types of microscopes, magnifications, and light sources to compare the character of striations and the formation of micropolish and edge damage on stone tools with modern experimental replicas. Low-power techniques make it possible to identify the category of worked material as hard/soft, as well as the directionality and action of tool movement and use (cutting, drilling, etc.), enabling the analyst to examine large numbers of pieces with minimal sample preparation. In contrast, high-power techniques require more expensive equipment and careful pretreatment of pieces although they allow inferences to be made regarding the type and condition of materials being worked. The recognition of use traces and the descriptive criteria employed in microwear analysis have been the subjects of contentious debate, resulting in blind tests between analysts and refinement of analytical methodologies (Odell 2004). There are still outstanding questions regarding polish formation and the amount of contact needed to create diagnostic signatures, particularly regarding softer materials and plant use.

As with other domains of lithic technology, implicit gender bias can be seen in this work, with a focus on projectile uses and large animal hide processing functions determined largely by preconceptions of the prevailing subsistence base. As highlighted by Linda Owen (1995) in her research on gender representation in the European Upper Paleolithic, such biases are pervasive, and materials such as fish and bird skin, fibrous plant materials, bark, and roots have not received the same degree of attention. More significantly, there is a lack of emphasis given to the potential role of plants as raw materials for crafting activities (e.g., for fashioning mats, ropes, clothing, and containers) rather than solely for their subsistence uses. Recent studies highlight how problematic the identification of subsistence traces can be; use–wear analysis appears to provide more significant evidence for tasks associated with craft activities and for understanding the often complex biographies of individual pieces (van Gijn 2010).

Lithic use–wear analysis is still a highly specialist and technical procedure. It is expensive and time-consuming, and it is still a long way from being a routine component in assemblage analysis. Not all assemblages are suitable for microwear analysis; surface condition and post-depositional factors condition the visibility of wear traces, and high powered techniques are largely limited to fine-grained cryptocrystalline lithic raw materials. Another important and emergent area with the capacity to inform tool function is residue analysis. Technological advances have improved the efficiency of the identification of organic residues, from birch tar resins used as mastic to residual traces of starches and phytoliths from processing plants and tubers. Similarly, DNA analysis of blood residues has also witnessed significant advances and (methodological caveats notwithstanding) offers exciting prospects; but whether we will be able to draw female blood from stone remains to be seen. Such studies demonstrate that arguments concerning the (in)visibility of tasks cannot be sustained on the basis of an absence of evidence. While analytical procedures to investigate tool function and isolate tasks are available, it is the question of archaeological values, priorities, and theoretical orientations that remains paramount.

Technology and theory

Theoretical modeling in much of the literature on lithic analysis has focused on issues such as scheduling, mobility, efficient toolkit design, and technological organization, as can be seen in key subject textbooks (e.g., Andrefsky 1998). Explicit discussions of who makes and uses tools, as well as discussions of gender, are rare due to the implicit assumption that these are male spheres of technology. Exceptions do exist. Kenneth Sassaman (1992), for example, has argued for the need to recognize the role of gender in the shift from formal to more expedient lithic reduction strategies associated with the move from mobile to more sedentary hunter-gatherer lifeways. Whereas conventional models favored rationales such as risk avoidance and diminishing residential mobility, Sassaman has argued that we need to look more holistically at the issues, and that we need to consider the broader impact of gender on the character of technology, and in particular on female labor. Yet one of the challenges still remaining is how to move beyond the implicit assumptions and essentialism concerning the sexual division of labor to develop meaningful strategies for exploring gender variation in technological repertories.

A number of promising avenues have developed that enable a more constructive appreciation of issues pertaining to gender and the social dimensions of technology. There have been significant theoretical developments within archaeology and material culture studies generally for understanding materiality, object biographies, and artifact lifeways. One area with particular resonance for lithic analysis concerns developments in *chaîne opératoire* (operational sequence) studies. The *chaîne opératoire* is primarily used as a methodological construct to look at the transformation of materials into cultural products, like describing events and stages in transformation of a flint nodule into a blade tool. Importantly, it acknowledges action and bodily gestures in the sequential stages used to make, use, and sustain objects. Originating in France and developed from the work of Mauss and Leroi-Gourhan, it is now widely used, particularly in European lithic studies with a range of other artifact applications. More than simply a methodological device, for some it is a conceptual framework for "linking the tangible and intangible aspects of ancient embodied technological practice" (Dobres 2000:155). Of particular significance for gender is its focus on agency, scale, and process. The social conditions of technological practice are examined in the more intimate settings of everyday life where gender and other social relations are negotiated and manifest at various scales: within and between sites, across regions, and so on. The goal is not simply to infer who made or used an artifact but rather to acknowledge gender as a dynamic and thereby to engender methodological strategies and theoretical approaches.

The role of stone in the construction of social inequalities and the control of labor, as well as its role as a symbolic resource, has traditionally been acknowledged for later periods of prehistory, craft specialization, and workshop scale production. Yet an increasing number of studies in recent years have explored these themes and offered other understandings of how stone may have played a mediating role in individual and group affairs in a diverse range of prehistoric contexts. Stone has often been cast as a poor medium for social relations, but this negates the fact that it operates at intimate scales and is often immediate and integral to everyday tasks, negotiations, and actions that can be regarded as acts of normative acceptance or arenas for active resistance. It

is also ubiquitous and enables a longer-term perspective for exploring the relationship between technological processes and social reproduction.

With regard to the symbolic uses of stone, we need to ask the question, "When is a stone not just a stone?" An explicit focus on the properties of lithic raw materials, including their color, texture, and aesthetic properties, can generate new perspectives that highlight materiality and recognize stone as a transformative substance (e.g., Taçon 1991). By considering evidence for raw material variation and selection choices, we can move beyond perspectives grounded solely in economic rationales and mobility or efficiency models. And we can re-evaluate traditional approaches to questions of raw material choice and the use of local/non-local resources. A diversity of raw materials also demands more flexible and responsive forms of classification and analysis that often lead to disparities in recovery and reporting. We cannot ignore the humble flake, local materials, or simple techniques – not because they may be the product of women's labor but because a failure to do so misses the point about what lithic technology is.

In summary, the structures of contemporary lithic studies continue to promote particular forms of gender bias. The resulting assemblage studies and narratives are ones which tend to offer uncritical views of gendered stonecraft, and there needs to be a more rigorous and reflexive critique of both process and product. Once these issues are addressed, the theoretical and methodological developments outlined above hold many promises for exploring gender and other social issues in the past and for enhancing our knowledge of prehistoric lifeways.

Reconfiguring Perspectives Set in Stone

In this section, several themes are examined which highlight some of the ways gender is being recast within lithic studies. One major strand concerns ethnoarchaeology, which offers a series of rich contemporary studies and re-evaluations of women's contribution as toolmakers. The second reflects on more inclusive theoretical approaches to gender as it relates to personhood and the life course. Both have implications regarding the performative dimensions and place of lithic use within wider technological practices.

Alternative ethnographies

A suite of recent ethnographic studies and feminist re-evaluations of the ethnohistoric record offer alternative perspectives to the gender essentialism that has dominated many of the accounts previously used by archaeologists to justify the absence of women stoneworkers and to denigrate their experiences. These new studies challenge stereotypes about craft and subsistence practices and highlight the fluidity and cultural contingency of activities which have traditionally been attributed solely to men. The constraints, analogic caveats, and even "tyranny" of the ethnographic/ethnohistoric record with respect to gendered production are well rehearsed and need not be repeated in detail here. Rather it is worth considering new directions and seeing how we can best apply the insights from such studies to address archaeological concerns (for in-depth discussions of the ethnographic resource and for further references, see Gero 1991; Bird 1993; and Weedman Arthur 2010).

Stone tools made and used by women are known from a diverse range of ethnographic contexts. For example, there are accounts of women fashioning pressure-flaked projectiles among the Yamana, Tierra del Fuego and elsewhere in the Americas. Tiwi women on Melville and Bathurst Islands off the coast of Australia fashioned their own stone axes that they used for hunting, digging, and making other tools. Bottle-glass implements were made for shaving and scarification in the Andaman Islands. The latter is especially significant, for it shows that we need not always seek a subsistence rationale for prehistoric lithic use but can recognize the use of stone as a medium for the transformation of the body and its symbolic place in diverse life course events, ritual acts, and interventions. Equally significant is women's participation in the quarrying and the transport of exotic and valued raw materials, and in exchange networks, through which they gained personal prestige from trading goods and journeying to distant sources to procure favored stone. While some ethnographic accounts describe how ritual proscriptions exclude women from certain quarry locales, we need to be wary of extrapolating universals. Their contribution is often essential in providing other resources and transporting products.

Ethnoarchaeological research among African hideworkers in Ethiopia has generated a wealth of thought-provoking lithic studies as well as a film of female stone-working (see Weedman 2002; Brandt et al. 2006; Weedman Arthur 2010). This research highlights the variety of practices between individuals and lineage groups that operate in relation to the spatial organization of hideworking, the acquisition of lithic raw materials and different patterns of craft learning, and modes of inheritance. Contrasting modes of patrilineal descent and individual mobility can be traced in stone scraper morphology. One of the nuanced contributions of this work concerns how these skills are learned from female kin. Among the Konso it is often passed on to the second or third daughters. The form of stone scraper used by the Konso to clean the hides, as well as their tool maintenance strategies, also reflect life course stages. The less experienced (those within the first few years of learning their craft) and the elderly with less motor control produce a greater number of broken scrapers and scrapers with more pronounced spurs (Weedman 2002). Familial preferences in raw materials often result in traveling extensive distances to acquire specific high quality stone; some tools are even reworked on original Paleolithic implements. The status of the hideworker in African societies has changed as the demand for this trade and skill diminishes. The variation in social status and value associated with hideworking operates irrespective of gender. As both men and women are engaged in these tasks, within as well as between communities, there are no universal gender identifiers, only particular cultural values.

In more northern latitudes, ethnoarchaeological work is also offering further understandings of gender cooperation, reciprocity, and participation in subsistence tasks, and challenging established discourses concerning hunting (e.g., Jarvenpa and Brumbach 2006). Other studies reveal the social, symbolic, and spiritual aspects of processing of animal bodies (see papers in Frink and Weedman 2005). Archaeologically, there are more productive issues to explore with regard to these transformative encounters than suggested by the essentialist narratives that cast all prehistoric women as hideworkers (except in cases where hideworking was afforded higher status).

The significance of recent ethnohistorical and ethnoarchaeological work is that it offers new understandings of how gender relations articulate, and offers rich and

detailed accounts of women engaging with diverse technologies and materials. Overall, it highlights the need to de-gender tasks and to explore the effects of action and scheduling on individual and collective organization. In addition to chipped stone tools, a range of heavier types of implements, such as ground stone axeheads, pebble tools, and coarse stone implements are also documented. They point to a wide range of engagements with stone and offer important alternatives to traditional narratives that exclude women from tool making and use.

Stone, age, and personhood

The increasingly nuanced understandings of gender that emerged during the 1990s and continued into the first decades of the new millennium highlight diverse strategies to acknowledge the imbrication of personal and collective identities. Gender is no longer seen in isolation as a fixed category but is regarded as something more mutable and fluid, constituted along with other identity markers such as age, sexuality, status, ethnicity, and kinship. Third-wave feminism also highlights how gender is bound with class, race, social group affiliation, health, and other constructions of difference. All shape personal experience with wider social and political consequences. Explorations of sexuality and third-gender identities like the Hidatsa berdache or Chumash ‘aqi (Voss and Schmidt 2000), or the archaeological explorations of Melanesian constructs of partible personhood (Fowler 2004), question traditional binary two-sex/two-gender models and challenge archaeological artifact attribution. One of the strengths of an approach that highlights the properties of personhood is that it places gender at the intersection of shifting and myriad identities (Clark and Wilkie 2007).

Gender research has come of age in many ways, and an appreciation of how age itself transforms gendered identities throughout the life course offers further prospects for acknowledging these entangled subjectivities. Age also offers us a tangible route to examine some of these issues within lithic analysis through the identification of novices and episodes of “kid-knapping” where children are identified through their playful, unsystematic, and tentative encounters with stone. Recognition of the child archaeologically also highlights the necessity of a more flexible approach to gender. Along with women, children have been neglected as productive agents in the archaeological record (see Baxter 2005 for a review). An increasing number of lithic studies are beginning to focus on the visibility of the child and the identification of novice knappers and their products. This is a consequence of the recognition of a set of robust methodological criteria to identify differences in skill and technical ability. It also reflects wider theoretical interests in identity, craft learning, and cultural transmission.

The skills needed to successfully and consistently knap stone involve an interplay and combination of practical knowledge and knowledgeable practice. Practical knowledge involves hand-eye and motor coordination, muscle memory, and learning how to strike with effective intended results. Knowledgeable practice involves learning sequential routines, acquiring specific techniques, understanding fracture dynamics, and evaluating raw material quality. It is often difficult to isolate where one begins and the other ends. Practice as well as (some) natural aptitude makes for a good knapper, but while almost anyone can acquire basic functional skills, as in other areas of life, only a few truly excel. Some basics can be acquired in a matter of hours and techniques

refined within weeks; to become proficient in highly complex technically demanding procedures, however, can take a lifetime. Modern experimental studies demonstrate that students who begin to learn to knap bifaces and blade cores as adults produce a number of recurring errors that include hinge and step terminations, stacked step fractures on cores, and episodes of face battering (Shelley 1990).

Beginners make consistent and recurring errors that reflect limited understandings of the underlying conceptual schema, motor control, and ways of realizing object form, as well as the failure to anticipate knapping errors. Replication studies involving children aged six to ten also highlight short attention span. Among more advanced novices, a successful execution of sequences and the ability to correct mistakes and deal with flaws and variation in the raw material distinguishes their practice. While more experienced knappers may still make mistakes, these occur at lower frequencies and generally tend to have a different character. With experience comes an increasing ability to anticipate and correct mistakes. More experienced products rarely exhibit features like face battering caused by repeated and frustrated attempts at removal. Those errors, which are learned through personal experience and seen in the debris generated by modern beginners, can be identified in archaeological assemblages. Some of the most outstanding archaeological applications use a combination of refitting and technological analysis. At several sites complete sequences can be refitted and the presence of different individuals inferred. Of particular note is the seminal work undertaken at Etoilles and Pincevent, Upper Paleolithic Magdalenian sites in the Paris Basin (e.g., Pigeot 1990; Bodu 1996). Refitting and detailed technological study reveal how blade cores discarded by experienced knappers were reworked by less competent ones; several cores had errors that were subsequently corrected by more experienced individuals, suggesting contexts of assisted learning and even apprenticeship.

Similar approaches have led to the identification of different stoneworkers and conflicting skill levels at a number of other sites within a range of different chronological periods. Attention has also been focused on identifying the novice and child within Lower and Middle Paleolithic assemblages (e.g., Johansen and Stapert 2008). Later prehistory affords the opportunity to explore craft specialization and workshop scales of manufacture. Skill offers a way of connecting lithics with the life course and considering the transformation of personal status and ability within a wider social context.

Methodologically, evaluations of the level of competency and skill can be made on the basis of cores and technological attributes, as well as retouched pieces, and not only at sites where refitting is possible. Rather there is a developing understanding of the nuances and complexity of skill signatures and their technological and social variability. "Kid-knapped" products often defy satisfactory typological classification using established schema and as such are often technically poorly executed and crude in appearance. While overall shapes may be similar to the original, techniques are unconventional and often involve atypical strategies resulting from playful imitation. Whereas novices who have mastered the basic principles, routines, and control still make predictable errors, they also display a developing comprehension of the requisite gestures and routines. As skills are acquired they can also deteriorate, progressively through age or on a temporary basis through trauma. The effects of changes in vision and motor skills as a result of ageing can be seen among elderly Konso knappers (Weedman Arthur 2010).

A life course perspective on enskilment has implications for modeling male or female mobility, and for understanding assemblage variation at a landscape level; it also sheds light on the organization of technology and raw material selection and highlights individual agency and social access to materials and knowledge. It can be used to question assumptions about restrictions on female mobility and to investigate group composition at lithic sources and elsewhere. The effects of skill may be easier to identify at sites rich in raw materials, and thus have an impact on measures of expediency, but an absence of suitable rock for practice need not imply a lack of opportunity to gain direct hands-on experience. Different ways of supporting novice learning can lead to the conservation of scarce resources and take place far beyond quarry locales (for an overview of approaches and research on lithic skill, see Bamforth and Finlay 2008). A focus on skill offers us an opportunity to explore contexts for learning, and to question if we can really identify sex or gender-based distinctions in lithic production. Traditional explanations for the resulting range of poorly worked pieces that occur in many assemblages have focused on the constraints of poor quality raw materials and expediency rather than skill. These are the types of pieces that cause analysts much anxiety and are seldom selected for illustration and extended discussion. Yet it is precisely these anomalous pieces we need to focus on in more detail. Moving beyond typology to an explicit examination of the biographies of objects creates a context in which to consider the sociality of stonecraft and to document interventions by others.

In an early study, I drew attention to the androcentric narratives of archaeological "kid-knapping" that define all novices as boys learning from adult men, and I underscored the dangers of imposing modern educational and familial constructs onto the past (Finlay 1997). In these narratives, women are always excluded, cast as the external novice if credited at all with any knapping knowledge. As recently as 2008, an experienced female knapper, lithic specialist, and prehistorian actively rejected the likelihood of women as knappers in the archaeological past on the grounds that it is "not really plausible" (Johansen and Stapert 2008:26). Her conclusion is based primarily on the data in the *Ethnographic Atlas* (Murdock and Provost 1973) and on the assumption that ancient populations had divisions of labor similar to our own. Women are still seen by many in the profession as stone tool users, not makers, and this view is projected onto the distant past where all stoneworkers are male and where Neanderthal fathers teach their sons to knap. While we may now readily recognize children as stoneworkers, their future as females is not guaranteed.

Of actions, not artifacts

Lithic technology is a process with a purpose even if the products are used fleetingly. In this sense stone serves as a vehicle for exploring the wider relationships and constructs of self and society and can be used to address ontological concerns. It is here that the *chaîne opératoire* is useful as a means of appreciating the flow between person and substance and acknowledging the responsive and dynamic processes inherent in the working of often intractable materials. There is also a performative dimension to lithic technology that is readily witnessed in the detachment of pieces through deliberate techniques. Due to the way material is held and manipulated, action is often directly concealed from any observer: it is often heard in the sounds of

successful blows and, for the knapper, is felt rather than seen. Attention to these variable aspects resonates with the performative and embodied aspects of gender identity, which have been a focus of Third-wave feminist studies through the work of theorists like Judith Butler and Elizabeth Grosz. Gender and other dimensions of personhood are brought into being through craft, action, and embodied technology. As Dobres states, "Personhood, in all its multiple layers, is internalised through the experience of technical practice" (2000:151). Some of these embodied routines, technological tasks, and actions transcend generations, lasting in some cases for many millennia. Others are spontaneous innovations or are rediscovered, perhaps via the chance encounter with a much earlier piece; they may also be enduring repertoires overlain with the immediacy of particular forms of knowledge, experience, and circumstance.

Conclusions

Lithic studies offer unparalleled prospects for exploring aspects of past technologies and social relations over time; they also furnish robust methodologies with which to explore artifact and assemblage variation. It is the theoretical contextualization and interpretive framework of these studies that present the main challenges for a more engendered past. Many of the arguments posited against the view of women as stoneworkers reveal significantly more about contemporary Western gender ideologies and contemporary archaeological practice than they do about prehistoric realities. To deny half the population the capacity and ability to create and maintain their own tools in the past is untenable. Moreover, a substantial number of ethnographic and ethnohistoric accounts provide evidence of women as tool makers and users.

The arguments against the exclusion of women as tool makers and users in prehistory so eloquently outlined by Gero (1991) more than 20 years ago still have currency. The major shift in lithic studies since her critique has been an increasing awareness of the potential of stonecraft to elucidate the social aspects of lithic production and use. As we have seen, this has emerged from the reflexive relationship with experimental replication, and from increasing methodological attention to the totality of an assemblage. Theoretical interest in object life-histories and the emergence of lithic skill as a research area offer important means to foreground age and personhood; and wider concerns throughout the humanities with materiality offer new opportunities to explore issues of raw material properties, knapping choices, and context. Methodologically, we still need to turn our attention to developing new strategies to address the simpler platform and bipolar technologies, and fundamental issues concerning gender signifiers are still unfolding. While the desire for universal and general models still persists, it is at the microscale that these tangible engagements with gender need to be explored; we are more likely to realize our desire to identify the intimate scales of action through finely textured studies. One area of wider inspiration beyond archaeology lies within STS (science and technology studies), in particular its feminist understandings of the mutual shaping of gender relations and the materialities of (modern) technology.

The evidence supporting the existence of women as archaeological tool makers is clear and compelling. Why then are women still not routinely considered lithic toolmakers? Why do feminist archaeologists need to defend and justify their work and the

identification of women in the lithic record? Why are explicit engagements with gender denied and negated in the products of our archaeological endeavors? One salient challenge that arose from Second-wave studies still remains: how can women and children be written into our accounts without a traditional masculinist agenda?

The ultimate answer to these questions lies within the broader structures and traditions of contemporary archaeological practice and their expression within the sub-discipline of lithic studies. There is no uniform approach to exploring gender and neither should there be. Several options present themselves (and currently co-exist): to continue as before, uncritically accepting an androcentric agenda; to "find" women by means of gender attribution and task-differentiation; or to acknowledge the fundamental structural basis of gender and explore its variable conditions. For the latter, an embodied and life course perspective is useful to frame and highlight the shifting temporalities of age, status, identity, and the contingent circumstances of gender for all. And even within Second-wave studies there is ample scope to develop more reflexive engagements in order to examine themes such as masculinity and explore the symbolic significance of stone. Skill offers one subversive route into gender, identity, and archaeologies of personhood. It also offers us sophisticated methodological strategies and measurable attributes to identify novices and children, whether or not we use the presence of children to envisage women. Inferring skill (and therefore identity) is subjective and its expression contingent, and it is still not clear how we can use these insights to transform the structures and routinized practices of our analyses.

There are a number of ways we might reshape lithic studies to embrace a plurality of approaches to gender and to examine wider constructions of social difference in which lithics plays a part. For example, we might think about how different configurations of gender find expression in the form and character of individual artifacts and assemblages. How do certain artifacts and tasks become socially significant and how does sex/gender identification make them dominant cultural motifs resistant to change? The implications for lithic analysis are multiple and demand a realignment of the way we engage with assemblages. There is also the need for a shift in the structures and formats of technical reports to enable a more reflexive commentary. Archaeological texts frequently create narratives of exclusion that fail to highlight multiple ways of interpreting and reading the evidence. At the very least, offering more than one interpretive scenario (or inverting the dominant one) forces a more critical engagement with underlying assumptions and questions normative explanations.

There are signs that such a critical engagement is beginning to emerge. The significance of the domestic arena has begun to be recast, and increased attention is being paid to the childscape and its wider evolutionary implications (e.g., Gamble 2007). As the result of recent developments in social theory, there is now great potential for redirecting archaeological attention to the ways lithic technology contributes to the formation of identities and worldviews. In order to do this, however, we must constantly recognize the creativity and currency of archaeology as a contemporary practice. We must also devote significant attention to the ways in which archaeologists investigate, create, and represent narratives of prehistoric lives that involve lithic use. Ultimately, the challenge for creating more engendered research in prehistoric lithic analysis lies in the re-examination of long-standing perspectives that are still literally and metaphorically entrenched in stone.

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CHAPTER 8

Gender, Labor, and Pottery Production in Prehistory

Diane Bolger

On account of its durability and widespread occurrence, pottery provides archaeologists with some of the best evidence for investigating gender in the remote past. It is therefore surprising that so little has been written about this topic, particularly in light of the numerous ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological studies undertaken since the 1960s concerning its production, use, and distribution that furnish insights into the gendered division of labor in a variety of cultural and technological contexts. While it is not possible within the narrow scope of this chapter to remedy this situation to any great degree, I will attempt to demonstrate the value of applying gender theory to the study of prehistoric ceramics in order to challenge traditional models of the gendered division of labor in early pottery producing societies, which assume women to have been the principal makers and users of pottery vessels in small-scale, pre-industrial communities. Alternatively, I suggest possible avenues for future research based on models of cooperative rather than individual labor. Central to all of these discussions is the need to consider the interfaces between gender and pottery production on a specific, case by case basis, rather than relying on unmediated concepts of gender polarity. Equally important is the need to base arguments concerning gendered divisions of labor in the past on archaeological rather than ethnographic evidence. While the latter can shed important light on gender relations in modern potting communities, it is less useful for archaeological investigations of task allocation in prehistoric contexts. Moreover, archaeologists need to rethink traditional narratives regarding the origins of pottery making, which have been widely linked to the emergence of agriculture and sedentary lifestyles, and to a presumed division of male/female labor in which women's work became increasingly "domesticated." Recent evidence (including radiocarbon dating) shows that pottery making is much older than has

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previously been thought; that it pre-dated the emergence of agriculture in many parts of the world by millennia; and that to a large degree it followed its own developmental trajectory. Due to constraints of time and space, I will deal primarily with gender constructs associated with the production and use of pottery vessels rather than other types of ceramic objects, such as figurines or ornaments.

Ethnographic Models of Pottery Production: Limitations and Gender Bias

Archaeological research on pottery production has a long history that can be traced back to the early twentieth century and beyond (van der Leeuw 1984). Initially, the focus of this research was on ceramic typology, but this expanded during the 1950s to include the techniques of pre-wheel pottery manufacture and the identification of clays, glazes, and tempering materials by recourse to scientific analysis (e.g., Shepard 1954). While such technological investigations helped to situate the study of archaeological ceramics within a wider cultural and environmental context (e.g., Matson 1965), there was a growing interest in the 1970s and 1980s in new approaches that placed greater emphasis on the people behind the pots (e.g., Hodder 1982). This view was forcefully expressed in 1984 by the editors of an important conference volume, who drew attention to the significant gap in our knowledge concerning questions of human behavior, interaction, and decision making in pottery studies, and called for the adoption of more socially oriented perspectives (Pritchard and van der Leeuw 1984).

For many archaeologists, that gap could best be filled by drawing upon ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological research: by using the results of participant observation and other well-established methods of anthropological research on modern pottery producing societies, archaeologists could gain insights into the social organization of ancient societies. An ethnographic study of the sexual division of labor by Murdock and Provost (1973) provided the basis for much of the archaeological thinking regarding the division of labor in prehistory, including a close association between women and pottery production. As it has been widely cited in the archaeological literature, it is worth reviewing here.

Ethnography and the "ideology of separate spheres"

In an ethnographic study of the sexual division of labor in more than 100 societies around the globe, Murdock and Provost (1973) provided statistics on the sexual division of labor in pottery production. According to their results, pottery making was an exclusively male activity in 14 cases; an exclusively female activity in 74 cases; a predominantly male activity in 5 cases; a predominantly female activity in 6 cases; and a shared activity in 6 cases. Taken together, these results strongly suggest that cross-culturally the manufacture of pottery is predominantly a female activity; that in a few cases it is a male activity; and that it is rarely a task undertaken jointly by men and women.

As an explanation for this gendered pattern of behavior, Murdock and Provost cite the work of Judith Brown, who had argued several years earlier that "the degree to

which women participate in subsistence activities depends upon the compatibility of the latter with simultaneous child-care responsibilities. Women are most likely to make a substantial contribution when … [they are] not obliged to be far from home; the tasks are relatively monotonous and do not require rapt concentration; and the work is not dangerous, can be performed in spite of interruptions, and is easily resumed once interrupted" (Brown 1970:1074). According to Brown's scenario, activities that require daily attention and take place within a domestic sphere tend to fall to females, who, burdened with infants, are not able to undertake tasks such as hunting, fishing, or warfare, which require long periods of time away from home. In this sense pottery making was considered to be particularly well suited to female labor since it was judged to be highly compatible with women's daily schedule of domestic chores. Brown's view of women's labor as tedious and lacking in any sort of intellectual challenge may also help to explain the under-valuing of the potter's craft as one requiring little in the way of specialist skill or technological expertise.

The research of Murdock, Provost, Brown, and others typify what has been termed "the ideology of separate spheres," a concept which emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the West and had a tremendous impact on early archaeological interpretations of the past (Wright 1991:195). Given this long-standing ideological bias, as well as other forms of androcentric bias that have characterized ethnographic reporting over the years (such as its frequent neglect and under-valuing of female labor), it is important that archaeologists do not naively accept ethnographic accounts at face value, but that they use them judiciously by critically questioning the conceptual frameworks in which their purportedly "objective" findings have been recorded and analyzed. Unfortunately, most archaeologists do not engage in such a critical process, in part because they tend to assume that men's and women's roles have changed little over the millennia and hence do not warrant further investigation.

Men, women, and "scheduling conflicts"

The view that male/female divisions of labor can be correlated with dimorphic behaviors that are biologically based has been expounded in considerable detail by Dean Arnold, who devoted an entire chapter of *Ceramic Theory and Cultural Process* to what he termed "scheduling conflicts," practical circumstances that in his view serve as the basis for a division of labor along sexual lines (Arnold 1985:99–108). As Arnold's results have been widely cited and have had a profound impact on archaeological interpretations of the gendered division of labor, they are worth reviewing here.

According to Arnold (1985:100), the sex of potters in small-scale societies of the past, as today, is determined by three main factors: the degree of conflict between potting and subsistence activities due to seasonal constraints; the compatibility of pottery making with household tasks (a reference to female labor); and men's involvement in subsistence activities which demand significant amounts of time outside of the house. Arnold argues that pottery making in most cases "naturally" falls to women as it is a task compatible with their roles as mothers and housekeepers; moreover, he adds, " it is relatively monotonous and does not require great concentration, can be carried out in spite of interruptions and can be easily resumed" (1985:101). In response to ethnographic reports (e.g., Murdock and Provost 1973)

that characterize pottery making as a "swing" activity that can be undertaken by men or women (although most often by women), Arnold maintains that levels of social complexity had not been factored into those studies: men can indeed be potters, he states, when society advances to a higher level of socio-economic complexity and pottery making becomes a full-time professional activity undertaken for commercial profit (1985:106).

Arnold's views accorded well with anthropological research on sex roles and the division of labor at the time, which often relied on binary categories of analysis, such as male/female, outside/inside, culture/nature, etc. (e.g., Ortner 1974). Similar views were also being expressed by archaeologists concerned with the changes in social organization associated with the first pottery making cultures of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages of Europe and Southwest Asia (e.g., Matson 1965). The Secondary Products Revolution (SPR), which explored the profound changes in social behavior resulting from the initial use of traction animals during the Early Bronze Age, is a case in point since it is thought to have led to a decline in female status associated with the separation of male and female labor and the segregation of women within the domestic sphere (Sherratt 1983). While ethnographic reports on women's roles in small-scale agricultural societies have tended to support this scenario to a certain extent (see, for example, Boserup 1970; Lerner 1986; and Ehrenberg 1989:chap. 3), recent archaeological research on gender and subsistence challenges the essentialist assumptions embedded in the SPR with regard to men's and women's roles during the Bronze Age and caution against their general application (e.g., Crabtree 2006; Peterson 2006; Bolger 2010).

Ultimately, Arnold's conclusions about men, women, and pottery production in agricultural societies are grounded in two types of determinism: environmental (the seasonality of subsistence activities, which causes scheduling conflicts between males and females); and biological (the unmediated belief that women's "natural" roles as birth-givers and mothers restricted their activities to the domestic sphere). While the seasonality of agricultural production and the role of women in childbirth are facts that cannot be refuted, the proposition that women's roles as birth-givers and mothers bind them inextricably to the home, and that men's greater physical strength makes them better suited to subsistence activities in the out-of-doors, reflect normative patterns of gendered behavior in modern Western society and shed little, if any, light on gender relations in the prehistoric past. As I argue below, models of collaborative labor involving flexible arrangements of task allocation are likely to be more appropriate to the small-scale farming communities studied by prehistorians. First, however, I consider more specifically some of the assumptions about gender and pottery making in pre-industrial societies that have so heavily influenced archaeological interpretations of the gendered division of labor in the past.

Ethnographic Analogies: A Matter of Choice

Cross-cultural analyses of gender and labor in pottery production, such as the much-cited study by Murdock and Provost discussed earlier (1973), are often based on a hierarchy of values in which "simple" forms of pot making, involving hand-made technologies, part-time labor, and small-scale household production, are identified

with women's labor; male labor, on the other hand, is characterized by full-time "specialized" production associated with greater degrees of socio-economic complexity (such as intensive agriculture) and some form of commercial workshop-based production. Despite the important role of pottery in the "Neolithic revolution," archaeologists have tended to view pottery production in early societies as a low status activity, and have largely failed to acknowledge the technological achievement it must have represented to the earliest communities who made and used it (for opposing views, see Rice 1991 and Nelson this volume). While this may be due to the under-valuing of female labor generally in ethnographic and archaeological reports, essentialist assumptions are often employed even when the potter's craft is not under-valued, as can be seen in the following study of gender and pottery production in the American Southwest.

Gender and the spread of pottery technology in the American Southwest

In a study of the adoption and spread of pottery innovations during the Archaic-Woodland "transition" in the American Southwest, Kenneth Sassaman (1992) begins with an assumption found in many ethnographic reports on hunter-gatherer societies: "Within a forager mode of production, gender is the primary social variable of the labor process. The sexual division of labor among foragers is thus a baseline for interpreting variation in the design, production, and use of technical apparatus" (1992:72). He then makes the further assumption – again based on ethnographically derived generalities – that pottery production and shellfishing are "women's activities" (1992:73). In the Archaic period of the American Southwest, he argues, women's key roles in these areas, and hence in surplus economic labor, resulted in increased status and decision making powers for women, as well as an increase in their involvement in ceremonial activities: "The rapidity and pervasiveness with which pottery and direct-heat cooking were adopted on the coast is explicable because women (at least some women) were able to assert authority over the production, distribution, and consumption of a key food resource, in this case shellfish" (1992:73). By the same token, Sassaman attributes the resistance to the adoption of pottery technology in other regions to the increased participation of men in interregional exchanges: as men were involved in the trade of stone rather than pottery vessels, it was not in their interest to exchange pottery vessels or to adopt ceramic technology. As a result, "pottery was first developed for use at locations entirely remote from soapstone exchange networks" (1992:74).

In accordance with some of the biologically based assumptions outlined earlier in this chapter, Sassaman discounts women's participation in the long-distance exchange of soapstone vessels: on account of their need to remain at home, women were not able to influence the adoption of ceramic technology in areas outside of coastal regions where their role in shellfish gathering elevated their power. But rather than investigating the gendered relations involved in these activities, he assumes from the start that women and men had different economic roles, and ends by discovering only what he unreflectively asserted at the outset – that binary divisions of labor were a hallmark of Archaic societies in the region. This circular reasoning is a prime example of the way in which archaeological research, when based unreflectively on broad ethnographic analogies, serves to distort rather than clarify gendered patterns of task differentiation.

Investigating the gender of Lapita potters

A more careful and critical use of ethnographic evidence can be observed in an article on gender and pottery production among the Lapita Culture of the South Pacific (Marshall 1985). The Lapita Culture has been dated to the first and second millennia B.C.E. and was first identified in the early 1950s through excavations of a major site (Site 13) in New Caledonia; it is widely thought to represent the ancestral populations of modern Melanesia and Polynesia. Marshall attempts to reconstruct the gender of pottery production among the Lapita by comparing technical and formal aspects of Lapita pottery with ethnographic reports on pottery production in the same region. Rather than relying on information from the few island communities that still produce pottery, however, which she maintains are unlikely to represent the practices of ancestral Lapita potters, she draws upon ethnographic evidence from a wider region (including Papua New Guinea) where pottery making has continued to be practiced on a wider scale.

Marshall begins her analysis by considering recent evidence for male, female and shared potteries according to a range of criteria, including distribution, function, decoration, and trade. Female potteries are closely associated with coastal or island communities, whereas male and shared potteries tend to be found inland; female potteries produce a limited range of morphological types and employ a limited range of decorative techniques, whereas male and especially shared potteries show greater variation (including the production of elaborate, ceremonial vessels); due to their coastal and island locations, female potteries are strongly associated with extensive maritime trade networks, which are managed by men; male and shared potteries, in contrast, are less concerned with maritime trade, presumably on account of their more remote, inland locations.

By comparing these specific ethnographic features with the evidence of Lapita pottery production, Marshall argues that the latter are strongly correlated with modern female potteries. Lapita pottery was produced in coastal and island locations, and was traded extensively to remote places in the Pacific, often in round-trip voyages of more than 450 miles; much of the Lapita pottery has a limited range of utilitarian forms, and shows only limited evidence for ritual or ceremonial functions. The existence of more elaborate decoration in some areas, however, suggests that male and/or shared potteries are likely to have existed in the past as they do today; such divergent labor patterns, Marshall argues, are likely to have developed as Lapita pottery was transported from its original base and spread across the Pacific.

In the end, the use of ethnographic analogy by archaeologists varies extensively and is largely a matter of choice: whether (as Sassaman) to rely on broad, generic analogies that have not been rigorously scrutinized and tend to be based on normative views of male and female behavior; or whether (as Marshall) to make critical use of ethnographic data by developing specific analogical profiles that are more closely integrated with the archaeological evidence itself. The latter approach, in my view, while still somewhat contentious, is preferable since it overcomes the tendency toward over-simplification by looking in detail at similarities and differences between the ceramic practices of contemporary and past communities. Moreover, a more integrated approach such as Marshall's recognizes the dynamic nature of cultural practices, both in the past and the present, acknowledging spatial and temporal variations rather than conflating the present and the past into a single interpretive unit.

While many ethnographic studies report that women were the principal pot makers in pre-industrial societies, this is often not the case. Variable patterns in the division of labor have been recorded in such geographically diverse places as Chucuito, Peru, where household production is by males who work without wheels; at Ticul in the Yucatan, where men and women both make pots but a special group of men make certain cooking pots; and in parts of the Philippines, where women make small pots and men make larger vessels, but only women make cooking pots (Rice 1991). Such a great diversity of cross-cultural practices questions the very utility of ethnographic analogy for archaeological research and cautions archaeologists to draw upon this evidence in a more critical way than has often been the case. Prehistorians in particular must be mindful of the anachronism involved in using modern communities of potters as models for pottery production in the past (especially in regions where there is little cultural continuity between ancient and modern populations). As Rice reminds us, "It is not unreasonable to ask to what extent pottery making and changes in pottery making in the last several decades provide appropriate analogies for the social and economic conditions of the prehistoric past" (1991:441).

Gender and the Origins of Pottery Production

According to Rice (1991), it is the invention of the potter's wheel rather than pottery making generally that is usually associated with socio-economic change, and she questions the widely held view that wheel-made pottery is manufactured primarily by men. But even if wheel-made pottery today is largely the product of male labor, as many ethnographic reports suggest, how is it possible to know whether this was the case in the remote past? In a detailed examination of the origins of the potter's wheel, George Foster cites men's greater physical strength as a factor (1959:116–117), but as Rice observes, this is hardly sustained by evidence of women's ability to carry out other types of tasks involving considerable levels of physical labor (1991:438–439).

More importantly, perhaps, Foster points to the misuse of the term "wheel-made" by many archaeologists to refer to the technique by which much ancient pottery was made. He maintains that assumptions about the greater speed and efficiency of wheel made pottery "can be accepted only if the ultimate potential of the potter's wheel—the use of centrifugal force to throw vessels—was comprehended and exploited by early wheel-using potters." He argues that this was often not the case, concluding instead that "pottery making is most accurately thought of as a continuum from hand modeling to full exploitation of the wheel, with innumerable intermediate gradations" (1959:102). In this respect the traditional dichotomy of hand-made/wheel-made ceramics functions as a kind of binary template for models of ancient pottery production that is frequently used in tandem with polarized gender categories to formulate theories of male/female divisions of labor.

An even greater myth perpetrated by archaeological research, and one that is perhaps more important for gender than the myth of the potter's wheel, is the notion that pottery production first emerged as part of the Neolithic "package" of innovations associated with the emergence of agriculture; according to this view, pottery was invented by women as a practical means of protecting food supplies (from the elements, rodents, and the like), and for furnishing greater storage capacity among

increasingly sedentary communities. However, a considerable body of archaeological evidence has recently emerged that challenges this view and demonstrates the need to decouple the origins of pottery making with the emergence of farming (Jordan and Zvelebil 2009). On the basis of radiocarbon dates for early pottery making sites in Europe, East Asia, and Southwest Asia, this research shows conclusively that pottery making pre-dated agriculture by several millennia or more, thereby compelling us to dissociate its invention and early development from the advent of farming, sedentary lifestyles, and the sexual division of labor. It also calls for a re-evaluation of the potter's craft as an important technological achievement that transformed society through the exploitation of new raw materials, the adoption of new technological practices, and the creation of new social roles. In the remainder of this section I explore the ramifications of this recent research for gendered divisions of labor by considering evidence of early ceramics at three sites: Dolní Věstonice in the Czech Republic; the Franchthi Cave in Greece; and Tell Sabi Abyad in northern Syria (for a consideration of gender in early ceramic societies of East Asia, see Nelson this volume).

At present, the oldest known ceramic artifacts in the world are fragmentary clay figurines dating to ca. 26,000 B.P. from Dolní Věstonice, an Upper Paleolithic settlement located approximately 35 km south of Brno in the Czech Republic (Vandiver et al. 1989). The earliest vessels at the site appear about 14,000 years later (ca. 12,000 B.P.), at around the same time as the earliest known pottery in Japan and northern China (in contrast, the earliest known pottery in Southwest Asia is considerably later, ca. 8400 B.P.). The most compelling evidence for the early production of ceramics at Dolní Věstonice are the remains of two walled structures interpreted as kilns, containing thousands of figurine fragments and small irregular grey pellets of fired clay. A total of 6750 fragments have been found, and a further 3500 were discovered at the neighboring site of Pavlov.

The study of these clay fragments by Vandiver and her colleagues (1989), including materials analysis, microscopic examination, and experimental replication, indicates that their breakage was intentional and probably resulted from placing wet figurines into the fire, causing them to explode. This evidence suggests that potters at Dolní Věstonice were not trying to make complete figurines but that "the earliest use of ceramics may have been for their special and unique fire-related properties rather than for a function based on their visual appearance" (1989:1007). The authors propose a possible ceremonial function for this activity, which may have formed part of ritual performances. In addition, the location of the kilns near to, but away from, the settlement suggests to the authors that firing was controlled by a small group rather than by the entire community; hence the primary function of the earliest ceramic production at the site is likely to have been social rather than economic. The authors conclude that the overall significance of this early phase of pottery making is its focus on *process* rather than *product* (my emphasis). The concept of ceramics as utilitarian products emerged much later and is more closely associated with the production of pottery vessels rather than ceramics in general (see also Rice 1999).

Karen Vitelli's study of nearly a million pottery sherds from the Franchthi Cave in the southern Argolid region of Greece sheds further light on the possible ritual use of early pottery in Europe (Vitelli 1999). The site was occupied from the Upper Paleolithic (ca. 35,000 B.P.) to the end of the Neolithic period (ca. 5000 B.P.), with the production of the earliest ceramics dating to the Early Neolithic period. According to Vitelli, Early Neolithic pots at Franchthi were "labor intensive products"

characterized by a low scale of production (estimated at only 12–13 pots per year); there were no signs of burning of the surfaces of the vessels which might indicate cooking on a fire (1999:187–188). This evidence suggests to Vitelli that the traditional association of pottery with agriculture needs to be questioned. Instead she follows Vandiver and colleagues in theorizing that the earliest use of pottery in the region had a ritual, rather than an economic significance. Within the context of the Franchthi cave, she suggests that the earliest potters may have been spiritual leaders or ritual healers (shamans), with "the resulting pot … of less consequence than the drama of its production" (1999:191). On the basis of women's traditional involvement with plant foods, Vitelli proposes that female shamans are likely to have been the inventors and earliest users of pots (1999:190). She argues further that the small scale of production at this early stage suggests that only some women were shamans, and that they are likely to have enjoyed a high degree of social status. The association of women, shamans, clay, and social status in early stages of ceramic development has gained additional support in recent years by ground-breaking analyses of the so-called "Venus" figurines of Upper Paleolithic Europe (Soffer et al. 2000), which interpret incised decorations in particular areas of the bodies of certain female figurines as depictions of textiles; and by the discovery of textile impressions on early pottery fragments from Dolní Věstonice and Pavlov (Adovasio et al. 1996).

The later phases of the Neolithic at the Franchthi cave have yielded significantly greater outputs of pottery in a much wider morphological and decorative range, which Vitelli cites as evidence for changing gender roles: "The prestige of value of a pot was separated from that of its once-familiar maker, and the possessor could assign to a pot any variety of meanings and functions" and "as pots lost some of their social status so did their makers … now pottery making, instead of providing access to prestige and power, gave women one more chore in their already burdensome collection" (1999:198).

For the third and final example of the interfaces between gender and early pottery production we turn to the earliest pottery making cultures of Southwest Asia as represented at the site of Tell Sabi Abyad in northern Syria. Tell Sabi Abyad is a 5 ha site in the Balikh Valley close to the Iraqi border; it is one of the largest Neolithic sites in the region, comprising four different mounds that gradually merged over time. The earliest pottery at the site dates to between 6900 and 6200 B.C.E. and was found in the two small mounds comprising the western half of the site (Akkermans et al. 2006). The vast bulk of the pottery (ca. 95 percent) is characterized by coarse, vegetable tempered vessels with limited morphological and decorative features; one common vessel type, the so-called "husking tray," is thought to have been used to separate husks from grains, or perhaps as a portable bread oven. Other clay artifacts belonging to this early phase of the pottery Neolithic are clay beads, sling bolts, tokens, jar stoppers, spindle whorls, and figurine fragments (when identifiable, of animals rather than humans).

Buildings, pottery, and other types of material remains of the earliest pottery making communities at Tell Sabi Abyad attest to a great degree of continuity with the earlier, pre-ceramic phases at the site, and suggest a gradual transition to new ways of life during the seventh millennium. In their summary of the pottery evidence, the authors downplay the economic role of pottery during its initial stage of development:

> It remains to be seen … whether the invention of pottery initially made much difference in the Neolithic communities … in the beginning, pottery was probably little more than

> a useful type of container … It was not until seven or eight centuries after its first appearance … that ceramics may have received a wider significance and served in social networks as gifts or as emblems of local identity and allegiance. [Akkermans et al. 2006:152]

Although the research by Akkermans and his colleagues does not explicitly address questions of gender, it clearly demonstrates the need to re-evaluate the long-held belief among archaeologists in a relatively sudden and dramatic cultural and economic shift (Childe's "Neolithic revolution") at this time, and to reconsider the role of pottery vessels and pottery manufacture in general during the transition to agriculture. In terms of social roles, it also underscores the need to reconfigure the relationships between agriculture, ceramics, and the gendered division of labor during the Neolithic period about which so much has been written, and so much more assumed.

Challenging Essentialist Narratives

The failure of archaeological research to investigate the gendered aspects of pottery production on its own terms, together with its reliance on ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological generalities, has resulted in a static picture of the social organization of labor. The belief that patterns of gendered behavior in modern societies can be used as blueprints for social relations in the past undermines a fundamental and unique attribute of archaeological investigation – its ability to monitor changes in human behavior over considerable periods of time. Moreover, it fails to acknowledge the limitations of ethnographic research, which itself is prone to gender bias.

These and other criticisms are the subject of an important chapter by Rita Wright on the role of women in prehistoric pottery production in Gero and Conkey's groundbreaking volume, *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory* (Wright 1991). Since most archaeological research on this topic has been based on ethnographic evidence, Wright engages in a detailed examination of gender bias in the field of socio-cultural anthropology, in particular its widespread assumption of binary divisions of labor (1991:195). In addition, she argues that much ethnographic research has been influenced by Western assumptions about individualism and the organization of production and distribution, a position also adopted more recently by Crown (2007) and discussed in greater detail below.

Perhaps the most important issue raised in Wright's chapter, however, is the failure of anthropologists and archaeologists to define more precisely what they mean by "pottery production." As examples, she cites a classic study of Pakistani potters by Rye and Evans (1976), which attributes pottery making to men despite the fact that potters are normally assisted by family members or apprentices; and a study of Mexican potters by Rice (1987) that attributes pottery making to women although men assisted with peripheral tasks. The assertion that women (or men) are potters within a given society may actually refer only to individuals who formed the vessel, but tells us little about those involved in other stages of pottery production, from collecting and preparing the clay to decorating and firing the vessel. If we expand our definition of pottery making to include all of the stages of production (Lemonnier's *chaîne*

opératoire, discussed below), it becomes much more difficult to argue for a strict division of labor between males and females. We shall return to this point later in reference to models of collaborative labor.

Ceramics and the sexual division of labor in Neolithic Cyprus

One of the most frequently cited examples of women's roles in pottery production at the household level are the Kalinga potters of the Philippines, who were the subject of detailed ethnoarchaeological investigation by William Longacre in the 1960s and 1970s (Longacre 1970, 1974, 1981). Pottery making among the Kalinga is undertaken exclusively by women, and knowledge is passed on from mother to daughter through successive generations. By their late teens most daughters are sufficiently skilled to produce the pottery needed at the founding of a new household; as patrilocal exogamy is practiced, women take their knowledge and skills to their husbands' villages upon marriage. Longacre drew upon this evidence to formulate theories concerning the social organization of early agro-pastoral societies in the Americas. Similar work by James Deetz, J. N. Hill, and Robert Whallon substantiated his results and helped to promote the view that ceramics in early agro-pastoral societies were produced by individual households, and that women were the principal potters (for a detailed critique of Deetz' work, see Mitchell 1992). Soon many archaeologists, in the Old World as well as the New, began to adopt what came to be referred to as the Deetz-Longacre model of pottery production, a model that is still accepted by many prehistorians today. But to what degree can behavioral practices of modern pottery making communities serve as models for pottery making practices in the remote past?

With this question in mind, Joanne Clarke decided to test the applicability of the Deetz-Longacre model by focusing on one of its key assumptions – that the diffusion of ceramic techniques and stylistic attributes among neighboring villages can be associated with patrilocal residence practices involving the movement of women (Clarke 2002). Since the model assumes that women made pots, it follows logically that patrilocal residence patterns should result in higher degrees of stylistic homogeneity between neighboring sites. Conversely, matrilocal residence patterns should have the opposite effect by fostering greater homogeneity within a given village and limiting opportunities for stylistic interaction between villages.

Clarke compared painted motifs on pottery from three Late Neolithic sites in northern Cyprus (Philia Drakos A, Klepini-Troulli, and Ayios Epiktitos-Vrysi) and found that there was greater stylistic similarity between Vrysi and Philia, which are far away from one another, than between Vrysi and Troulli, which are less than 5 km apart. Ceramics from Vrysi and Philia also exhibit greater heterogeneity of painted motifs, which according to Deetz-Longacre should be indicative of patrilocal residence, whereas those from Troulli show greater homogeneity, which is presumed to indicate matrilocal residence. As Clarke observes, it is highly unlikely that two different residence patterns would exist simultaneously in neighboring villages of similar date; therefore, the Deetz-Longacre model does not succeed in explaining the differences in ceramic style observable on Late Neolithic Cypriot sites. Instead, it "highlights the theoretical inconsistencies of archaeological interpretation with regard to both gender based divisions of labor and socio-cultural interactive patterning" (Clarke 2002:253). Clarke's conclusion that exogamic marital practices are not likely to have been

responsible for the diffusion of stylistic elements in ceramic production on the island during its early phases underscores the need to consider alternative explanations for ceramic variation between sites that can be sustained by archaeological, rather than purely ethnographic, evidence. It also causes us to question the widespread belief that pottery making in prehistory was an exclusively female domain.

The Case for Cooperative Labor

Ethnographic reports on pottery production are often based on short visits to production sites undertaken on a single occasion. Since observation time is brief, these studies tend to lack detailed, systematic investigation and may focus only on a few stages of production; and if potters are observed on only one occasion, there is very little information on technological changes through time (Pritchard and van der Leeuw 1984:11–12). These limitations help to account for many of the over-simplified conclusions in ethnographic reports concerning the sex of potters and the degree of technological skill and experience required. Due to time constraints, observations are likely to focus on those individuals responsible for forming and/or decorating the vessel. In actual fact the practice of pottery making is much more flexible and often involves processes of social interaction. As Carol Kramer notes:

> A single vessel can be the work of more than one individual, who has not necessarily learned the craft from near kin. Both learning and production can occur in the context of potting "bees" whose participants are linked by residential bonds that for some purposes supersede those based on kinship. Where learning takes place along kin lines, it need not involve the mother-daughter (or, more rarely, father-son) dyad used in archaeological analogies. [1985:87]

Kramer's observations reveal not only the inconsistencies and inadequacies of ethnographic reports, but also Western biases regarding individualism in craft production. If, as suggested here, pottery production is to be defined as a series of tasks that embrace all aspects of its manufacture, the notion of the individual potter becomes difficult to sustain. Instead, the practice of cooperative labor involving men, women, and probably also children serves as a more appropriate model for pottery production in small-scale prehistoric societies.

Research on pottery production during the last 20 to 25 years has undergone a radical shift in thinking about the social context of pottery production, whether in terms of the socialization of children as apprentice learners (Lave and Wenger 1991; Crown 1999); collaborative and/or heterarchical forms of labor and task allocation (Wright 1991; Martelle 1999; Bolger n.d.a); or communities of practice (Wenger 1998; Crown 2007). These studies, which demonstrate the limitations of the concept of the "individual practitioner" and focus alternatively on the interactive processes involved in learning, developing, and transmitting pottery making skills, have become more prevalent in archaeological research with the shift to post-processual models, which regard technical knowledge as a socially embedded phenomenon. I address this topic in greater detail below in reference to gender and craft specialization after considering evidence for pottery production in the Indus Valley, which provides an example of collaborative labor in prehistory.

Gender and labor relations in Harappan pottery production

Research by Rita Wright on ceramics of the Harappan civilization on the border of India and Pakistan investigates the relationships between technology and social process and furnishes an important example of collaborative modes of pottery production in a prehistoric context (Wright 1991, 1993). Her results draw upon the work of David Keightley, who identified regional differences in pottery production in pre-Shang China (Keightley 1987). According to Keightley, pre-Shang potters of the east coast created a diversity of forms that involved considerable skill and experimentation; pottery production involved careful coordination and scheduling of labor, as well as a cooperative work force. In contrast, pre-Shang potters of the northwest produced a more restricted and unified set of forms demanding lower levels of innovation and involving a different set of social relations suggestive of production by individual potters. Wright compares Keightley's results to pottery traditions of the Harappan civilization of the Indus Valley, noting a similar mode of pottery production between Harappan potters and the pre-Shang potters of the east coast (Wright 1993).

In a lengthier, diachronic treatment of Harappan pottery (Wright 1991:204–213), Wright considers evidence from a number of different sites in the region (in particular, Mehrgarh, Mohenjo-daro, and Harappa) in order to trace long-term changes in the social context of production (ca. 6000–1800 B.C.E.). Detailed study of pottery technology of Harappan forms indicates that many pots were produced in separate pieces which were subsequently joined together. As Wright observes, this technique would have entailed cooperation in measuring and shaping vessel parts to consistent, standard sizes. It is also likely to have required the collaborative effort of several potters working together in the production sequence (Wright 1991:209). With regard to the social context of production, pottery in some cases appears to have been manufactured in small-scale workshop units (e.g., pre-urban Mehrgarh); elsewhere it was made in separate workshops within discrete craft quarters administered by a central authority (urban Mohenjo-daro) or in separate workshops organized and run by kinship groups (urban Harappa). Each of these contexts, she argues, is likely to have entailed the joint efforts of women and men (1991:213).

The patterns of cooperative labor seen in the Indus Valley during the sixth to third millennia B.C.E. serve as important testimony to the inadequacy of binary models of male/female labor to account for actual social practices. They also are important for revealing the limitations of traditional models linking household production and unspecialized knowledge to women, and workshop production with specialized labor to men. As Wright maintains, there is nothing to suggest that women were segregated or excluded from pottery and other types of craft production during any part of this lengthy period. While it is likely that women were the primary producers of pottery in the pre-urban phases of the Harappan civilization, they continued to be involved in pottery production during its later, urban phases when pottery was being exchanged and distributed for commercial profit.

Gender and time allocation: The role of experimental research

If we acknowledge that collaborative patterns of labor such as those observed by Wright for the Indus Valley are likely to have been practiced in early pottery making

societies cross-culturally, we still need to ask whether gender was a decisive factor in the allocation of specific tasks, such as the collection and processing of clays and tempers, or the forming, firing, and decoration of vessels. Is it possible to argue that some of these tasks are more likely to have been carried out by women rather than men?

In attempting to answer this question, Linda Hurcombe (2000) draws upon detailed information in Murdock and Provost's cross-cultural study on the sexual division of labor (1973) discussed earlier. Hurcombe addresses issues of the gendered division of labor in three types of craft production (basketry/textiles, pottery, and metallurgy) by focusing on detailed assessments of time and skill. Rather than measuring time in a linear fashion, however, as is customarily the case, she classifies time according to a range of non-metrical dimensions: "continuous time" (tasks that require significant periods of uninterrupted time); "intermittent time" (tasks that can be interrupted and returned to later); "partnered time" (activities best carried out by more than one person); and "doubled time" (tasks that can be carried out while doing other things). While metallurgy, she maintains, demands significant periods of continuous time, pottery and basketry/textile production require significantly higher degrees of intermittent and doubled time (Hurcombe 2000:figure 6.2–5). Pottery making is thus linked to female labor since, as she states, "It may have been more difficult, or simply not the best arrangement, for the biological sex responsible for children to conduct specialist craft activities that involved extended periods of continuous time" (Hurcombe 2000:106). The conclusion that non-metrical aspects of time can shed important light on processes of craft production is important for placing technological aspects of craft production within a social framework. Ultimately, however, Hurcombe's approach is based on traditional, biologically based assumptions about the sexual division of labor which conform to those of Arnold (1985) and others discussed earlier.

An alternative way of assessing task allocation, and one which attempts to avoid this type of gender bias, evaluates the degree of skill and experience involved in the successful performance of specific tasks rather than the time needed to complete them. Bolger (n.d.b) has used the results of experimental replication studies of fourth to third millennium B.C.E. pottery from Chalcolithic Cyprus undertaken at the Lemba Experimental Village (Paphos) during the 1990s to investigate gender roles (for further details on the pottery experiments, see Shiels 2003). She begins by outlining the various stages of Chalcolithic pottery production and assigning skill levels to particular tasks, from collecting clay, tempering materials, and wood for firing, which require knowledge and time but not much skill; to forming, decorating, and firing vessels, which require considerable knowledge and skill. As Chalcolithic pottery production required a lengthy series of operations, some of which were very time consuming, it is likely that most members of the community were involved in some stage of the process. Unskilled or "some skilled" tasks could have been carried out by most individuals within a community, including children and adolescents, whereas activities requiring greater skill would have been undertaken by those with capability and experience, who are likely to have been adults but not necessarily women.

In a detailed analysis of the Chalcolithic pottery that has been replicated in these experiments, Wallace (1995) provides evidence of increasing standardization of ceramic production during the Late Chalcolithic period (ca. 2800 B.C.E.), a practice that has been linked elsewhere to craft specialization (e.g., Feinman 1999; Longacre

1999). As a result of this and other similar research, it now appears likely that incipient levels of craft specialization were sometimes attained within the technological framework of hand-made wares and the social context of household production. The need to dissociate the social context of production from the practice or absence of craft specialization is essential for reframing questions of gender and pottery production in prehistoric societies. This topic, which has rarely been addressed in archaeological research to date, furnishes sound possibilities for future gender-based research.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have emphasized the need for archaeologists to develop new models of prehistoric pottery production based on evidence of their own discipline. In making this argument I do not dismiss the role of ethnographic analogy entirely. As Sinopoli states, "Generalizations derived from the present cannot, of course, be directly applied to the past, but they do provide frameworks for viewing past social systems that can be evaluated with archaeological data" (1991:169). However, in placing archaeological evidence more fully at the center of our investigations, we can gain important insights into the specific technological and social contexts of prehistoric pottery production, and their variable permutations across space and time. Archaeological evidence from a wide range of geographic and temporal contexts points to a high degree of flexibility and variability in the social organization of ceramic production, with the involvement of men, women, and children a likely scenario in many instances.

Research on pottery and other types of craft production during the last 20 years has become increasingly concerned with issues of social agency and technological choice as the result of important theoretical work by Pierre Lemonnier (1993) and Marcia-Anne Dobres (2000; see also Dobres and Robb 2000). Questions of agency and choice, which serve as focal points in this research, are highly relevant to the engendering of prehistoric ceramics, particularly if we are willing to acknowledge that craft specialization can occur in most social contexts of production. Consequently, traditional models that link women to household production and men to industrial production, and that fail to acknowledge the existence of craft specialization in pre-industrial household-based production, need to be challenged and revised.

In order to do this, archaeologists need to approach the evidence in a more critical fashion by integrating gender and feminist theory into interpretations of the division of labor in past societies. First and foremost, this entails moving beyond polarized categories such as male/female, household/industry, pre-state/state, simple/complex, and specialized/unspecialized and focusing instead upon the intermediary stages between these extremes (Martelle 1999). As suggested by Martelle and illustrated earlier in this chapter, current archaeological focus on middle range societies can foster new approaches to craft specialization based on flexible and cooperative models of labor and task differentiation. As a starting point for these investigations, ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological research can provide useful analogies but needs to be used judiciously and to be substantiated by archaeological data.

Secondly, archaeologists need to revise and expand earlier definitions of craft specialization, which are often restricted to commercial production in market-based economies by full-time pottery specialists working for profit; new terminology needs

to be proposed that allows for the possibility of specialized production in more egalitarian social settings (Martelle 1999). One such alternative is the recognition of standardized production, which has been linked ethnographically to craft specialization by Longacre and others (Longacre 1999; see also Kramer 1985 and Feinman 1999) and can readily be "field tested" by recourse to existing pottery collections. As we have seen earlier with Chalcolithic pottery from Cyprus, potters of the early third millennium B.C.E. improved upon earlier production techniques by standardizing fabrics through size and density of tempering materials and by learning to fire pots at higher temperatures in the absence of kiln technology. These innovations created more durable products that by reducing breakage allowed potters to meet increasing demands for storing, preparing, and serving food and other necessities.

Finally, in order to more positively evaluate the contributions made by potters to early prehistoric communities, archaeologists need to explore issues of ceramic craft specialization within the frameworks of agency, technological choice, and social action (e.g., Brumfiel 1991; Robb 2004; Marshall 2008). The notion that pottery making in pre-state communities was a simple operation that required very little technological expertise is now giving way to a new appreciation of the complexity of the potter's craft, one that antedated the emergence of social complexity at the socio-political and economic levels and that in some respects may have contributed to its emergence. In learning to appreciate the ways in which the phenomenon of craft specialization emerged and developed in prehistoric communities, we will also attain a better understanding of the various avenues to social complexity undertaken by the earliest pottery making communities around the world; and we will gain a more complex and nuanced picture of the social relations between men, women, and children that helped to shape the development of pottery manufacture within household, workshop, and other modes of production. Only then can we begin to understand pottery production in prehistory as embodied material practice – "a socially charged and materially grounded arena in which agents express and negotiate social relationships, establish and express value systems, and give meaning to the object world" (Dobres 2000:162).

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CHAPTER 9

Gender and Textile Production in Prehistory

Cathy Lynne Costin

Weiner and Schneider's influential volume *Cloth and Human Experience* (1989) focused anthropologists' attention on the importance of cloth in social and cultural life. An explosion of anthropological studies of textiles and their producers followed, supported in part by the feminist revolution in anthropology that focused interest in women's work and in part by the prominence of textiles in globalizing ethnic art markets. Textiles have been a pervasive and necessary part of human material culture for tens of thousands of years or more. But despite their ubiquity and antiquity, textiles have received less attention from archaeologists and prehistorians than most other material types. Why? In part, this is because archaeologists usually recover only scraps and bits of cloth and fiber. Moreover, the collection, conservation, and storage of textiles is specialized and expensive, and often doesn't fit within archaeological projects' budgets. Cassman (2000:253) suggests that archaeologists often undervalue or ignore textiles, particularly those in a fragmentary state, because they fail to appreciate the skill and labor invested in the production of even plain cloth. Hendon (2006:355) argues that cloth production is ignored because it doesn't meet definitions of "specialized" production because textiles are usually produced by people working intermittently in a domestic setting. And, finally, there is no shortage of textile scholars who wonder if textiles – like food – are undervalued as the objects of scholarly research because they are perceived to be the domain of women.

Yet we ignore textiles at great peril for our understanding of ancient lifeways, economies, polities, and social relations. Textiles are essential in most realms of human activity. Across time and space, cloth has protected people from the elements; signaled social identity; served as media of exchange and payment for services; was gifted to status-peers, followers, and superiors as signs of alliance, favor, and fealty; played a key

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role in public ceremonies; and was used in rites of passage and to mediate life crises in households rich and poor. As Elizabeth Barber (2007:173) notes, "Society has apparently used the fiber arts – both the products and their manufacture – for social as well as practical purposes almost from the start."

In this chapter, I focus on gender and the organization of cloth production because this theme facilitates exploration of a vast range of economic, social, and political issues, including domestic life, political economy, the distribution of power, and gender ideology. Textile production was likely one of the most labor intensive activities in which our ancestors engaged, and therefore was both affected by and in turn influenced scheduling of other activities. Textile production is so time consuming that organizational or technological changes were certain to have major social and political implications. Textile production was often associated with larger socio-economic and political developments, including the rise of social complexity and stratification, the transformation or expansion of exchange, urbanization, and hegemonic processes such as conquest and colonization.[1] As Kriger (2006:172) suggested recently, cloth production is particularly prone to influence from political, economic, and social factors because of the high cultural value placed on cloth. The organization and social relations of production have vast implications for understanding social and political processes as well as ideology; that gender is at the heart of the organization of textile production means that studies of cloth production will be particularly salient for our more general understanding of gender relations and gendered processes in ancient societies.

Investment in Textile Production

Because textiles are so rarely preserved in the archaeological record, archaeologists often fail to appreciate both the demand for cloth and the amount of labor invested in its production. Yet perishables made up the overwhelming bulk of ancient material culture (Adovasio and Hyland 2000), and pre-industrial cloth production likely required more hours of labor than food preparation and other crafting combined (Anawalt 2000; Kemp and Vogelsang-Eastwood 2001:434, 473). Regrettably, there are few time allocation studies or experimental studies documenting the amount of time invested in textile production, in large measure because most textile work is intermittent and/or pursued alongside other activities, making it difficult to quantify (Franquemont 1986; Hicks 1994:94).

Table 9.1 summarizes some of the data available on time required to produce various types of cloth using pre-industrial technology. The raw data are somewhat difficult to compare since they are not standardized in terms of the size or quality of the pieces reported, nor in terms of how much time a reported "day" or "week" represents. I standardized the data somewhat, and some striking consistencies emerge. Thirty to forty hours are needed to weave one square meter of medium quality cloth on a backstrap loom in Guatemala. It takes six to eight times as long to spin the thread (Barber 1994:87–88). Therefore, total labor investment is in the order of 200–300 hours per square meter, a figure comparable to the 225–260 hours needed to produce similar cloth in South America. The Mesopotamian weavers for whom we have data were "full-time" weavers, so the four to six days it took them to weave one square

Table 9.1 Estimates for time invested in textile production.

Location	*Item*	*Material*	*Tasks*	*Technology*	*Given size*	*Hours*	*Days*	*Weeks*	*Time to produce 1 m²*	*Citation*
Guatemala	composite: fine to average	cotton	all stages	backstrap loom	1 square yard		7–9		7–9 days	Hicks 1994
Guatemala	striped cloth	cotton	weaving only	backstrap loom	17 × 60 inches	25			38 hrs weaving only	Hicks 1994
Guatemala	cloth	cotton	weaving only	backstrap loom	3–4 × 17 inches	1			30 hrs weaving only	Dunn et al. 2003
Peru	poncho	wool	spinning and weaving	backstrap loom		508–524			250–260 hrs spinning and weaving	Bird 1968
Peru	rough sack	wool	all stages	backstrap loom	1 × 0.46 m	90			195 hrs all stages	Franquemont 1986
Peru	woman's shawl	wool	all stages	backstrap loom	1 square meter	225			225 hrs all stages	Franquemont 1986
Ecuador	blanket	wool	spinning and weaving	backstrap loom		240			70 hrs spinning and weaving	Musch 2011
Northern Europe	rough cloth	wool	spinning and weaving	warp weighted loom	1 × 0.7 m	72+			103 hrs spinning and weaving	Andersson 1999; Harrington 2007
Iceland	woolen sail	wool	all stages	warp weighted loom	16 square meters			30	2–3 days all stages	Andersson 2007
Mesopotamia	woolen sail	goat hair	all stages	warp weighted loom	15 square meters		40–50		3 days all stages	Waetzoldt 2007
Mesopotamia	medium cloth	wool	weaving only	warp weighted loom	25–33 cm		1		4–6 days weaving only	Van de Mieroop 1997
Mesopotamia	elaborate garment	wool	all stages	warp weighted loom			400			Van de Mieroop 1997

meter of medium cloth is comparable to the 30–38 hours spent weaving the equivalent amount of cloth in Guatemala. Rough cloth, not surprisingly, takes less time to produce, ranging 70–195 hours per square meter in the Americas. Old World figures are comparable, despite using a different type of loom. None of these estimates considers the labor invested in procuring the fiber materials used in textile production. Agricultural work to produce vegetal fibers and herding to produce animal fibers would have consumed much time. Also underestimated is the amount of knowledge and skill involved in textile manufacture. Spinning and weaving require manual dexterity, computational skills, patience, and no small amount of practice, taking years to master. Dyeing requires knowledge of complex technological processes. Such is the skill involved that some tasks – particularly warping the loom and dyeing thread and cloth – likely became "specialized" at a relatively early stage in the development of many textile industries.

Gendering Cloth Production

Gender is a key variable in the labor process, and the issue of gender and craft production has received attention from many archaeologists and anthropologists in recent years (e.g., Brumfiel 1991; Rice 1991; Wright 1991, 1996, 1998; Costin 1993, 1996a, 1998a; Kriger 1993; Mills 1995). Studies consistently demonstrate that craft production is highly gendered, and cloth production is no exception. Many archaeologists assume a priori that textile production is women's work, a conclusion largely supported by the classic study of the gendered division of labor by Murdock and Provost (1973) and many studies of ancient textile production (e.g., Barber 1994; Soffer et al. 2000; Adovasio et al. 2007). Textile work is one of the few arenas of social and economic life where women are highly visible, influencing how we conceptualize the gendered division of labor and women's work. Yet the situation is complex. Overall, textile production tends to be in women's hands, so to a large extent the stereotype holds. However, when we include the full range of tasks associated with textile manufacture in the analysis, we see that men (and children of both sexes) participate in textile production much more frequently than the common wisdom holds. Moreover, there is no universal pattern to how textile labor is gendered. Careful analysis of historical and ethnographical cases indicates that there is much cross-cultural variation in terms of which gender performs specific tasks. However, within most societies, specific tasks are the domain of one gender or another. Even when women and men appear to perform the same task in a particular society, it is most often the case that their work is differentiated in some way, often by using different technologies, producing different kinds of textiles, or producing for different consumers. Thus, we can conclude that while there is no universal gendered task allocation in textile production, within individual cultures a gendered division of labor almost always exists in principle, if not in practice. This phenomenon speaks strongly to the performance of gender and to gender ideology more generally, a point to which I will return later in this chapter.

There has been discussion in the literature about whether or not gender attribution is necessary for an engendered archaeology (e.g., Conkey and Gero 1991; Dobres

1995; Costin 1996a). I argue strongly that it is. Without reasonable gender attribution, we cannot substantiate that gender was even a factor in task allocation, even in cases where we have clear contexts and/or a plethora of implements used in cloth production. Without gender attribution, we cannot consider the consequences of participation in or exclusion from certain kinds of work based on gender. In some societies, craft workers are alienated from the products of their labor, and the craft production economy is a major context of exploitation and disempowerment. As Brumfiel notes, "the vulnerability of men and women to state coercion may differ because of differences in the location of their work or in the kinds of goods they produced" (1996:459). In other societies, however, skilled crafting and the production of socially and politically valuable goods were a means to acquire and maintain social and cultural capital (Costin 1998b; Inomata 2001). Without gender attribution, we will not know who benefited from specialized activities and their concomitant interpersonal relations, in terms of access to other economic resources, social networks, prestige, and power. In sum, without gender attribution, we cannot convincingly reflect on how participation in a particular sector of the economy – in this case, textile production – helped situate groups defined by gender in the social and political realms.

On what evidence, then, can we base claims about gendering in textile production? The tools associated with textile production – the most abundant form of evidence for cloth production in the archaeological record – are not inherently gendered, so we must look to other types of data. Archaeologists have four kinds of evidence useful for gender attribution: textual data, visual representations, mortuary data, and ethnographic analogies (Costin 1996a). Gender attributions derived from these analyses can be applied to datasets that are not intrinsically gendered so as to more fully explicate the organization of production and its broader socio-political and ideological implications.

Yet gendering activities when we cannot directly observe people in action remains tricky. Some forms of data, such as texts, visual representations, and mortuary contexts, are often normative, reflecting social values or an "ideological mandate" (Brumfiel 2006:870) rather than actual lived experience. Participation in daily activities may be somewhat flexible; thus, these data can mask diversity. Second, discussions of the division of labor rarely consider third genders; archaeologists utilizing binary systems can end up misinterpreting or misattributing activities (McCafferty and McCafferty 1994). Third, the over-reliance on more recent cultures for which there is an indigenous textual record, ethnohistoric documents, or ethnographic data for models and analogies can be problematic. The historical data indicate clearly that the division of labor in craft production (as in all things) can change over time (for good examples, see Webster 1997 and Kriger 2006). Fourth, although it is important, whenever possible, to use multiple data sets, different types of data might not yield a consistent picture of the organization of production. For example, only females are shown weaving or with tools in Maya art. Yet Maya women are rarely buried with spindle whorls or other weaving tools (Hendon 2006:366). Nevertheless, if we recognize that the data often are ambiguous or inform us more about ideology and idealized behaviors and that behavior and activities change over time, I believe with careful analysis and contextualization we can reach reasonable and plausible conclusions about past activities and their implications.

Using ethnographic analogy and direct historical analogy to engender textile production activities

Ethnographies and cross-cultural analyses emphasize the role of women in weaving today, contributing to our stereotypic view of textile production as women's work. Ethnographic data largely show us what is possible; they cannot be used in and of themselves to test hypotheses about the past. The primary flaw of studies using ethnographic analogy is that they often bridge hundreds – if not thousands – of years with little consideration of how much and how quickly things can change (cf. Graubart 2000). Nevertheless, archaeologists often cite the division of labor in the ethnographic present to engender their studies of ancient cloth production. Often, these are the only models available to us; rather than dismissing ethnographic data, they should be carefully contextualized and used with appropriate prudence.

Direct historical analogy has been widely accepted in studies of prehistoric textile production in the American Southwest, where evidence for weaving (especially loom holes and loom blocks) is often found in ritual structures called kivas. Using a direct historical analogy with the Hopi of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, archaeologists argue that in late prehistoric Puebloan societies only males wove in kiva contexts and therefore textile production was largely a masculine activity (Webster 1997; Hays-Gilpin 2000; Mills 2000). In contrast, spindle whorls are usually recovered archaeologically in domestic work areas and are therefore interpreted as women's tools (Teague 1998:170) in keeping with ethnographic observations of women spinning in their homes.

Using textual data to engender textile production activities

Textual evidence can be particularly rich, providing information beyond gender attribution, including the legal status of workers, elements of institutional control, administrative structures, and ideological corollaries of the organization of production, which are not discernible in other datasets, particularly the archaeological evidence alone. For example, textual evidence reveals that in Hellenistic Egypt, female weavers were paid one-third what male weavers were paid (Rowlandson 1998:247, 266), illustrating women's lower status and diminished access to economic autonomy. A similar pattern holds for Ur III male and female craftspeople laboring in the state-run economy (Wright 1996, 1998; Bolger and Wright this volume).

Written sources have their drawbacks, including poor decipherment, unfamiliar (technical) vocabulary, incompleteness, and limitations in coverage or emphasis. Writers might have misunderstood what they observed or omitted information that was obvious or trivial at the time. Ancient and colonial texts were almost always written by men and therefore reflect the experiences and interests of men. Textile production, in particular, often took place in domestic contexts, out of the view of men, particularly in colonial contexts.

The potential of textual evidence is illustrated by the Linear B tablets recovered from "palaces" in the Aegean region (Killen 1984, 2007; Burke 2010). Cloth production is the most frequently mentioned activity in the texts recovered from several late Bronze Age Mycenaean sites (Burke 2010:66). The tablets cover production from raw material procurement through distribution, although they deal only with the part of the textile economy pertaining to the palace, the political

economy. Nevertheless, this was a vast industry, and the tablets provide an almost unrivaled view of the division of labor in this industry. Mycenaean names were gendered, so we often know whether individuals were male or female. In other cases, descriptors indicate sex/gender. Highly placed male "collectors" were responsible for overseeing the supply of raw materials. Raw materials were delivered to palace work groups largely made up of women and children, who worked full-time and depended on the palace for rations. The names of the female workers often included non-local "ethnic" designations. Although their legal status is not explicitly noted, Burke (2010:100) has suggested they might have been captives or refugees. In either case, their tenuous legal status would have made them prime targets for exploitation.

Cloth and cloth producers are also well documented in textual sources from early Mesopotamia, although as with the Linear B tablets, the documents primarily concern textile production of interest to royal households and temples. Analyses indicate that Ur III textile workers were largely female semi-free workers without land, purchased slaves, war captives, or indentured servants. There is no indication that they were married, although some had children. Three categories of males also participated in textile production. These three exceptions to the norm that cloth production was women's work support principles of the division of labor discussed elsewhere in this chapter. The first (weavers' sons) were removed from the workshops before reaching puberty; no adult males wove. The second (supervisors) held a different status/role than the female workers. The third category performed distinct tasks and, in the case of the felters, produced distinct products. Wright's (1996, 1998) analyses suggests that female textile workers labored in poor conditions, and that they were compensated far less than male artisans.

In addition to indigenous texts, sometimes we have written records from "outside" observers and commentators. Examples using ethnohistoric data include Brumfiel's (1991, 1996) work on Aztec textile production and Costin's (1993, 1998a) investigations of cloth production in late Prehispanic Peru. Both use early Spanish colonial texts to engender spinning and then track changes in various characteristics of spindle whorls to gauge the effects of pre-Columbian empire formation and conquest on women's labor and status.

Using visual representations to engender textile production activities

Visual materials are used frequently as a source of information on ancient textiles, most often to reconstruct the appearance of ancient textiles or to identify their uses for purposes other than clothing. Visual representations are used less commonly to reconstruct the organization of production. As with all available data, visual representations have their benefits and drawbacks. In some cases, they reveal quite specific aspects of the textile economy. However, elaborate visual images were often created for a small segment of society and/or represent stereotypes or ideals. Artisans depicted what they knew, or what their patrons asked them to depict. Images of textile production in ancient art are not "photographic" representations, and are subject to abstraction or simplification. At times, we cannot be certain if images represent human activity or the supernatural world.

Nevertheless, two and three-dimensional representations of textile activities can prove useful in analyses of the organization and relations of production. For example,

ancient Egyptian painted tomb scenes and models reveal the detailed division of labor in workshop settings, in which both women and men participated, albeit usually performing different tasks (Kemp and Vogelsang-Eastwood 2001). Women performing a variety of tasks, including textile production, were commonly represented on late Ubaid period seals and sealings (Zagarell 1986:418). The presence of the latter images on administrative artifacts directly links these activities to the political rather than the domestic economy. Among the Prehispanic Maya, only females are represented weaving or with fiber and textile production tools (Corson 1976; Joyce 1993; Hendon 1999, 2006; Kerr n.d.:figures 2019, 2833, 6000, 6766). However, only men are shown receiving and distributing cloth, suggesting asymmetrical relations of production. A similar situation seems to hold for the Moche of Andean South America, where a few images illustrate women weaving (Costin 2004:figure 11.3), while far more images illustrate males displaying elaborate textiles (Millaire 2008:figure 13.6–8).

Cloth production is well represented on Greek figurative painted pottery. Women are shown preparing raw materials, spinning, and weaving (Williams 1983; Barber 1991:figures 2.36, 2.38, 3.13, 3.24, 3.28; Reeder 1995:211, 216; Burke 2010: figure 52), informing us about women's activities, the technologies used, and the contexts in which production occurred. Importantly, most of the ceramic vessels on which these activities are depicted were commissioned by men, often as gifts for women, and thus may reflect men's ideas about appropriate female behavior.

Using mortuary data to engender textile production activities

As a strong context for the direct association between artifacts and sexed individuals, burials are a potentially rich source of information about gender and textiles. Somewhat surprisingly, however, systematic studies of associations between sexed individuals and textile production tools are relatively rare in the published literature. Archaeologists often report that textile production tools are strongly associated with female tombs but rely on just a few examples to "confirm" a gender attribution. Moreover, the record is often ambiguous. For example, in her discussion of gender and textile production in the American Southwest, Webster (1997:251–252) describes a female buried with a basket containing unspun cotton, yucca thread, and a spindle shaft with a whorl holding cotton thread and a male buried with a spindle whorl and three miles of cotton thread. Other burials also contained implements and materials associated with thread or cloth manufacture, but they were either unsexed or contained just one or two items, rather than a more convincing panoply of tools and materials.

Mortuary contexts also have the potential to provide information about social norms, gender, status, power, and ideology. The preponderance of textile tools recovered at the Classic Maya site of Caracol in Belize were from prominent elite female burials (Chase et al. 2008), indicating that the highest ranking women at the site were at least symbolically associated with textile production. The fact that the textile tools recovered from non-burial contexts were also predominantly from elite contexts, as they are at other Classic Maya sites (see Hendon 1991, 1997, 1999), suggests that elite women were actually engaged in the production of prestige cloth.

Harrington's (2007) analysis of cloth production implements from Early Anglo-Saxon burials in East Kent is notable because data from several thousand burials

were encoded in a database with the objective of studying craft and gender. Harrington determined that textile production tools were the only utilitarian objects regularly placed in Early Anglo-Saxon graves and that they were found only in female graves. Spinning and weaving tools were almost never found in the same grave; Harrington suggests there may have been some specialization within the cloth production process. Importantly, a particular kind of weaving sword provides information about the ethnic origins of the interred and, when viewed in conjunction with the distribution of weapon swords in male burials, tells us something about the construction of gender identity among that population.

Nelson and his colleagues (Nelson et al. 2000) have taken a different approach, creating an "osteobiography" of a female skeleton from the site of San Jose de Moro in northern Peru. Various data indicate that this "elderly" woman was of relatively high status. Among the dozens of goods in her burial were several spindle whorls and chalk balls, which are used in spinning. Musculo-skeletal markers (MSMs) on her fingers and forearms are consistent with the actions used in spinning and/or working the shuttle of a loom. Such markers are the result of many years of repetitive activity, indicating that this woman spun and wove throughout her life. Similar MSMs were found on the hands of other female skeletons from Moro as well as other Andean sites. This study demonstrates the potential for determining actual participation in the activities suggested by burial goods or other indicators of task allocation.

The issue of men in pre-modern textile production

Although strongly associated with women worldwide, the evidence is clear that textile production is not an exclusively female task. Often the female contribution to social and economic life is "hidden" in pre-modern records and early ethnographic accounts, but in the case of textile production, it is the contribution of men that is under-reported. Yet male involvement in cloth production is documented throughout the world: in Anatolia and the Aegean (Burke 2010); Mesopotamia (Payne 2007); Egypt (Kemp and Vogelsang-Eastwood 2001); the Greco-Roman world (Rowlandson 1998; Gleba 2007); and the Andean region (Costin 1998a; Rowe 2007), although textile production is primarily gendered masculine in only a few places, including parts of the American Southwest (Webster 1997; Teague 1998; Mills 2000) and Africa (Kriger 2006). Even in places where it is usually reported that only women worked in textile production, in fact men carried out some textile tasks. For example, in late Prehispanic Mesoamerica, men spun maguey fiber into thread that women wove into utilitarian cloth (Hicks 1994:104 n. 1). More generally, in most parts of the world males of all ages participated in fiber production, raising and harvesting vegetal fibers, and herding and shearing wool-bearing animals (Costin 1998a; Barber 2007).

If the data indicate that we must question the stereotype of textile production as exclusively women's work in most parts of the world, the reverse is also true. Cloth production in Africa, particularly in West Africa, is often portrayed as a masculine activity (e.g., Murdock and Provost 1973:table 4). However, colonial and ethnographic data indicate a much more complex situation, underscoring the importance of women's work in textile production (Kriger 1993). The gendered division of labor varied from region to region but only one system was well described in the historical literature, leading to erroneous stereotypes.

What is perhaps even more interesting than the general recognition of men's contributions to textile production is how exhaustively a gendered division of labor is maintained within the textile economy, in principle if not in absolute practice. Gender distinctions are maintained in several ways. In some cases, different tasks within the production sequence are performed by different genders. For example, in royal textile workshops of eighteenth-century Benin, men spun and women wove (Kriger 2006:43). In Ur III Mesopotamia, most textile workers were female; male workers performed tasks (fulling and finishing) separate from the ones performed by women (Killen 2007:56). At times, the distinctions in gendered task assignments are so subtle they might be missed by the casual observer. For example, today in the Ayacucho region of highland Peru, women spin and men ply, using similar drop spindles but different size whorls (Bruhns 1991); a sixteenth-century drawing illustrating an Inka origin myth suggests this is an ancient practice (Guaman Poma de Ayala 1980[1615]:47).

When women and men ostensibly perform the "same" tasks, distinctions are maintained in technology, materials, type of product, and/or consumers. For example, in parts of West Africa, women and men use different kinds of looms and weave distinct types of cloth that are explicitly called "women's cloth" and "men's cloth" (Kent 1971; Kriger 2006). Among the Laymi of Bolivia, women weave traditional clothing on a backstrap loom, while men use a treadle loom to weave yardage used to make European-style clothing and household items (Harris 1978). In contemporary Guatemala, women and men use different fibers, tools, and techniques and largely make different kinds of products for different markets (Pancake 1999). In the prehistoric Southwest, women wove utilitarian cloth on backstrap looms, while men wove ritual and other special purpose items on upright looms (Webster 1997:620). Sometimes the distinctions are remarkably subtle: among the Kogi, a contemporary Amazonian group, both women and men spin, but they are taught to do so in opposite directions (Minar 2000:97–98).

There are several implications to these observations. First, we are likely to arrive at different impressions about the gendered division of labor if we use quantitative, cross-cultural data as opposed to surveys of unsystematically chosen individual cases. The latter cannot claim representativeness and might inadvertently over-emphasize the role of one gender or another in cloth manufacture. Nevertheless, we also know that some work, particularly intermittent household-based tasks and raw materials preparation, is rarely discussed or accounted for. While most of the time this "hidden" labor is that of women and children (Wright 1991; Mills 1995), in the case of textile work it is the contribution of men that is often ignored or underestimated. Most fundamentally, we must approach generalizations about the gendered division of labor somewhat skeptically, keeping in mind the disparity between norms and everyday lived practices. But it is also worth remembering that developing proficiency in the core tasks associated with textile manufacture – spinning and weaving – requires years of training and practice. These tasks are not likely to involve much ad hoc labor, and norms and ideals largely reflect who will be trained to perform them.

Second, even though task allocation is variable cross-culturally, work within a specific society is likely to be strongly gendered, with clear normative distinctions between masculine and feminine tasks, which will be marked in various ways. A reasonable conclusion is that the gendered division of labor often has an ideological

component, with social functions that go beyond the basic provisioning of goods. On a practical level for archaeologists, we should consider that within a particular society's textile economy, variability in materials, technologies, products, and consumers may correlate with a complex system of gendered task allocation.

Finally, what looks from our contemporary perspective to be a significant gendered division of labor might have carried other, perhaps more important, meanings. Brumfiel's recent analysis (2006) demonstrates this point. In comparing textile production in three Mesoamerican cultures, she argues that although women were the (primary) weavers in all three cases, among the Classic Maya textile production defined class and among the contemporary Maya weaving defines ethnicity. Only among the Aztec, she maintains, was weaving used to define gender. Brumfiel concludes, "Who they were, what they wove, why they wove, and how they felt about it were different in each case" (2006:871). Thus, we should be cautious not to ascribe deeper meanings to perceived gendered divisions of labor without corroborating evidence.

Explaining the gendered division of labor in textile production

If the role of men in prehistoric textile production has received little attention, the issue of why cloth production is strongly gendered, and is largely gendered feminine, has received even less consideration. Many scholars propose that women invented and then took responsibility for weaving as part of their primary roles as care-givers in deep antiquity (e.g., Gough 1971; Barber 1994; Soffer et al. 2000). Others argue that women take on textile production tasks because they are compatible with childcare. Barber (2007:175), for example, posits that Egyptian men were responsible for laundering newly finished cloth in the Nile River because crocodiles posed too great a danger to children who accompanied their mothers in this task.

In addition to childcare, other factors are proposed to systematically explain the gendered division of labor in textile production. General task scheduling is often cited. For example, in early China, raising and processing silkworms conflicted with agricultural activities, so this work was assigned to women (Bray 1997:185).[2] In middle range societies, individuals often produce their own ritual paraphernalia (Spielmann 2002). It has been suggested, for example, that men become more involved in cloth production in the American Southwest in the fourteenth century, when the *katsina* cult was widely adopted. At this time, evidence for weaving seems to shift from a domestic (and feminine) context to a ritual (and masculine) one (Webster 1997:511).

It is often asserted that many crafts are feminine endeavors when domestic, but are adopted by men when they are commercialized. The implication is that women produce cloth for their households and men produce cloth for "others." The first part of this assumption is largely correct, although men often participate in domestic cloth production in a variety of ways, from raw material production and processing through finishing. The second part of the assertion, that men produce cloth outside the home, is more problematic. The evidence suggests that when cloth production is intensified for either political or commercial ends, labor in fact remains overwhelmingly female. We find male *weavers* (often assisted by women and children) primarily in cases where commercial production is relatively small-scale and weavers are "independent"

producer-vendors and/or sell their wares directly to middlemen or distributors, largely maintaining control over the products of their labor. Examples include the Classical World (Thompson 1982), medieval Europe, Africa (Kriger 2006), and many contemporary ethnic arts markets (Salomon 1981; Stephen 1991).

In contrast, when production is intensified and the scale increases significantly, whether for commercial purposes or for use in the political economy, I suggest the primary factor determining the gender of textile workers is the mechanism used to conscript cheap labor, since in pre-industrial contexts output is increased by adding poorly remunerated labor rather than though mechanization. Where large-scale commercial textile production is accompanied by a legal system that supports slavery and/or forms of exploitation such as labor service and indentured servitude, males as well as females might staff large-scale textile workshops. Otherwise, proto-industrial commercial textile production is primarily women's work, because women (and the children who often accompany them into textile workshops) are, generally speaking, more exploitable as cheap labor.[3] In the political economy, state-run workshops were largely staffed by women (e.g., Killen 1984; Wright 1996; Costin 1998a, 2011; Burke 2010). There are a few exceptions to this latter generalization (e.g., the male *qompikamayoc* in the Inka empire), but we lack crucial information about the status and social identity of these artisans to fully understand the larger circumstances under which they were recruited.

Changes in the gendered division of labor often correlate with technological change. For example, women wove in ancient Egypt until the two-beam vertical loom and associated tapestry techniques were introduced in the mid-second millennium B.C.E. (Barber 2007:174). Cultural, social, political, and/or economic factors influence who has access to new technologies and/or adjustments in task scheduling. The introduction of the European treadle loom in the Americas in the sixteenth century C.E. was accompanied by new divisions of labor and task segmentation. Men often became weavers in colonial Peruvian and Mesoamerican workshops although women and girls were the primary cloth producers in precolonial times. These reassignments were in part logistic – based on the shift from domestic to extradomestic work contexts and the incompatibility of such arrangements with women's other responsibilities – and in part cultural since "industrial" weavers in medieval and Renaissance Europe were men and European overseers of colonial workshops expected male laborers (Webster 1997:42–46). The American Southwest presents an illustrative counter-example to this trend, because in pre-Columbian times men were the primary weavers, but after Spanish contact women began to weave more, as Spanish demands for tribute cloth led to scheduling conflicts between agricultural work and textile production, which had previously taken place in the agricultural off-season. This illustrates how the gender of producers in any one activity is linked to broader patterns of scheduling and task allocation.

We will likely never know the origins of any particular division of labor in the deep past. Investigations of historically and ethnographically documented cases reveal many factors that influence the division of labor, ranging from the practical to the ideological. In almost all cases, the specific division of labor is subject to myriad complex economic, social, and political circumstances. For example, Bray (1997) demonstrates how interrelated changes in demand, technology, government policy, and social mores resulted in a substantial shift in the gendered division of labor and the impoverishment

of masses of previously autonomous and self-sufficient peasants in thirteenth- to sixteenth-century C.E. China. Overall, while we might identify some systematic processes, the evidence suggests that historical factors provide the proximate explanation for the gendered division of labor in textile production in most cases.

Cloth, Gender, and Domestic Economy

Domestic production is rarely studied and is often underestimated, even though in most parts of the world most cloth production took place in a domestic context prior to the Industrial Revolution. The sheer amount of time required to produce cloth ensured that textile production would be an important part of the domestic economy. Failure to recognize the labor expended in domestic cloth production has contributed, I think, to the general undervaluing of women's labor and economic contribution as well as misunderstanding of how the domestic economy worked.

Textile production implements are often recovered in domestic contexts, both commoner and elite. The relative distributions of production tasks inform us about economic as well as political processes. Although our general notion is that domestic cloth production was an activity in which "all" households engaged to produce for their own use, uneven distributions of textile tasks among households indicate low levels of specialization in many places. When these tools are found differentially distributed in commoner and elite domestic contexts, they inform us not only about domestic production, but also the political economy.

Textile production was often the primary responsibility of adult married women in ancient societies. Among the Inka, married women aged roughly 25–50 were called *awakuq warmi*. The Spanish chronicler Guaman Poma de Ayala (1980[1615]:190) glossed this term as *texedora*, or "weaver." A more direct translation of the Quechua suggests it meant "married woman [of] common cloth" (Costin 1998a:130). Cloth production was the primary responsibility of an Athenian housewife no matter what her social class (Reeder 1995:200, 217). Even if she had slaves to assist her, she spent much of her time in the women's quarters, spinning and weaving.

Changes in domestic cloth production often had dramatic economic, social, and political ramifications. For example, when Early Bronze Age Mesopotamians shifted from flax to wool as the primary fiber used in textile production, agricultural land was freed up, leading households to shift their food production strategies. The division of labor within the household was likely transformed as relative labor investment in different activities changed and task scheduling was restructured. Women might have lost direct access to fiber for weaving because their ability to manage herds was constrained by conflicting demands of child-rearing, making them more dependent on their menfolk. These changes not only affected rural households, but also contributed to wholesale changes in wealth accumulation, land tenure, and ultimately the kin-based structure of society. Textual evidence indicates that girls and women were differentially impoverished and disempowered in the process (Zagarell 1986; McCorriston 1997).

In many societies, evidence for cloth production is more heavily concentrated in elite households than in commoner households, a form of specialization I have called "intensified household production" (Costin 1996b:211). Most often, evidence

genders this textile work as female. We usually assume that it was the resident elite women of the household who were engaged in this work, although it is also possible that elite household labor was augmented by labor mobilized through kin networks or patron-client relationships. Textile production might have been organized somewhat differently among commoner and elite households. For example, studies of floor assemblages from several Maya sites indicate that the various stages of textile production (spinning, weaving, and decoration) were spatially segregated from other (male) activities in elite contexts, but were less separate from other tasks in commoner households (Inomata et al. 2002; Robin 2004; Halperin 2008).

Cloth, Gender, and Political Economy

Beyond subsistence needs, massive amounts of cloth were produced, mobilized, and distributed to support the social, economic, and political ends of individuals who held disproportionate amounts of power in ancient societies. Morris's comment about cloth in the Inka empire could easily apply to many other pre-modern states: "They [textiles] were of such great political and economic importance that it is not a serious oversimplification to say that the state's potential to expand was proportional to the amount and quality of cloth it could mobilize" (1995:431). Textiles were so important in tribute systems that in many places, households that did not produce sufficient amounts of cloth themselves purchased it from others to meet their tax obligations (Hicks 1994; Bray 1997:186). Because cloth production was so often gendered female, women played a not inconsequential role in state expansion and political dynamics (cf. Gose 2000). Zagarell argues explicitly that female labor largely underwrote the development of early complex societies in the Near East, stating "While on the domestic level women's labor and reproductive power were important, on the public level they were revolutionary. The public exploitation of large numbers of women was critical in the original accumulation of wealth and power outside the control of the kin groups, giving rise to the unrivaled power of state officials" (1986:420).

It was often through cloth production that women articulated directly with the political economy. They did so in two ways. First, as already noted, elite women often produced the elaborate, luxury cloth used in feasts, gift exchanges, rituals, and other activities that underwrote and legitimized social stratification. Second, large quantities of more mundane forms of cloth were either produced domestically and mobilized through tribute/taxation or manufactured by non-elite workers in state-controlled workshops. Most of the workers in these contexts were women. In the first instance, tribute production was an extension of women's household production. In the latter configuration women more often staffed these facilities because, as discussed above, they were more easily recruited and/or exploited.

Although elite women often produced cloth for use in the political economy, there is some question as to the extent to which they participated in the political process and benefited from their labor. For example, Classic Maya elite women are frequently depicted producing cloth, but only men are depicted distributing or receiving this cloth in elaborate court scenes. As Halperin (2011) notes, this might represent the alienation of women's labor or it might reflect elite women's distinct role in the Maya

political economy and court activities. Costin (1993) and Gero (1992) have made similar points about the ambiguity of women's production of cloth in the political economies of ancient Andean societies.

Much cloth production for the political economy was carried out in a household context. Tribute records from Late Postclassic Morelos, for example, indicate that among the most important tribute categories were spinning and in-kind provision of cotton cloaks (Fauman-Fichman 1999:25–27; see also Brumfiel 1991, 1996); the same holds for the Inka empire of Andean South America (Murra 1989; Costin 1996b, 1998a). Textile production in ancient Mesopotamia is usually associated with large workshop settings, but in fact significant numbers of textile workers lived and worked in the countryside, where they had access both to the large amounts of water necessary for washing wool before spinning and to finished cloth before tailoring (Van de Mieroop 1997). Worldwide, these tribute obligations had complex social, economic, and political implications. Although unquestionably a burden on women's time and labor, this work also often reflected women's perceived contribution to the polity (cf. Bray 1997:6).

Many suggestions have been put forth to explain why some cloth for the political economy was produced in a domestic context, while in other cases workers were aggregated into supervised non-domestic workshops. Spinning, in particular, to meet tribute requirements was done in domestic settings because it could be carried out intermittently and could be combined with other tasks. In general, simple technology, flexible scheduling, and the ability to multitask facilitated production for the political economy in a household context, particularly when the cloth was relatively plain (Hicks 1994; Stark et al. 1998). Some argue that workshops were established to control the quality of the textiles produced (e.g., Murra 1980:71–72; Killen 2007:57) while others suggest it was to control labor (Zagarell 1986), intensify production, or control distribution of the finished cloth (Bray 1997; Costin 2011). Clearly, a major factor was the development of economic, social, and/or political conditions that allowed powerful individuals and institutions to intensify production with full-time, cheap labor. For example, most of the laborers working in the "temple sector" of the Mesopotamian economy were women who were "recruited" through debt slavery, purchase, capture in warfare, or as a result of their status as refugees (Zagarell 1986:417).

Textual evidence provides a glimpse of the size of the labor force producing cloth for the political economy. In societies where tribute was paid in cloth (such as the Inka, Aztec, and pre-Ming dynasty China), the workforce literally included the vast majority of the population. Even when cloth was produced by specialists, their numbers were huge. For example, ethnohistoric documents report that the Inka settled "1000" weavers in the community of Milliraya to meet local state needs (Spurling 1992). In the late third millennium B.C.E. more than 13,000 weavers worked in and around the city of Ur; other cities likely employed textile producing workforces of similar sizes (Van de Mieroop 1997:186). Texts from the Aegean and Mesopotamia indicate the size of specific work groups often numbered in the dozens of workers (Killen 2007; Burke 2010), and there were hundreds of these. The architectural remains of textile workshops associated with elite architecture also speak to the size of the workforce (Morris 1974; Burke 2010; Costin 2011, in press).

The burden that tribute demands placed on producers, women in particular, was likely enormous. Colonial documents from the Yucatan report that women worked

about 45 days a year spinning and weaving to meet tribute demands (Villanueva 1985:26). Hicks (1994) estimated it took about 120 days a year to meet Aztec tribute cloth demands. Brumfiel (1991) studied the effects of Aztec domination on women's lives, documenting an overall increase in spindle whorls, which she attributed to increased tribute demands, as well as regional changes in the amounts of whorls, reflecting different strategies for meeting tribute obligations. She concluded that overall women's workloads increased significantly, no matter which strategy they employed to meet tribute demands. Archaeological evidence indicates that the quantities of textile tools recovered in Central Andean households more than doubled after Inka conquest (Costin 1993). I estimate it took 120–150 hours to weave the amount of cloth the Inka demanded of conquered populations and an additional 700–900 hours to spin the thread. This was work above and beyond routine household subsistence activities and other labor service requirements, such as working in the state fields.

Not all women involved in textile production were exploited or undervalued. In some cases, women might be workshop owners or supervisors. For example, Inka *mamakuna* (elite and royal women) oversaw the state weaving workshops staffed by thousands of young girls recruited from defeated communities (Costin 1998a). A beautifully carved ebony statuette from the second millennium B.C.E. in Egypt depicts Lady Teye, whose title is inscribed "Chief of the Weavers" (Burke 2010:163). And women in wealthy Mesopotamian trading families oversaw the production of large quantities of cloth, which they included in trade caravans (Barber 1994). These examples are, however, the exception rather than the rule, and they reflect the degree to which class supersedes gender in determining life experiences in complex societies.

Cloth, Gender, Identity, and Ideology

Leaving aside issues of who actually engaged in textile production, we cannot overestimate the symbolic importance of gendered divisions of labor. Textile production was more than a chore in which women and girls, in particular, engaged. Not only did textile production serve to define social identity, it also served as trope and metaphor with which to communicate social mores, values, and expectations for those who were most closely associated with it.

Women's and girls' seemingly endless spinning and weaving (Murra 1989:281; Anawalt 2000:213; Gleba 2008:177) influenced how they were perceived by those around them; cloth production was a primary marker of female gender identity in many societies. Among the Aztec, girls were given miniature spinning and weaving tools soon after birth and a woman's weaving equipment accompanied her after death. One of a mother's primary responsibilities was to teach her daughter to spin and weave (Brumfiel 1991; Anawalt 2000). In China prior to the middle of the seventeenth century, textile production was considered women's work; an ancient proverb described men and women thus: "men till, women weave" (Bray 1997:183). There was a strong ideological component to this division of labor in China, as each gender was seen as providing one of the basic needs of people and society (both grain and cloth were produced for subsistence and for tax payments). Interestingly, in cases where men were the primary textile producers, this work does not appear to have been central to their gender identity.

Just as textile production activities marked identity for women and girls, so too did the tools used in these tasks and their final products. As Reeder has noted, "Textiles were regarded in Greek thought as, if not precisely a metaphor for a woman, then as an extension of her being" (1995:18). Among the ancient Maya, the loom was viewed as an extension of a woman's body (Hendon 2006), an idea which continues today among the Huichol (Schaefer 1993).

The presence of textile production implements, often made of precious materials, in Bronze and Iron Age female burials in Italy speaks to the importance of spinning and weaving as markers of female identity and status (Gleba 2007). Non-functional carved distaffs found in elite Roman-era houses have also been interpreted as symbols of women's roles and the connection between appropriate behavior and demeanor (Trinkl 2007:84–85). Representations of women weaving elaborate garments depict the weavers sitting on elaborate "thrones." These scenes actually appear on the decorated seats, which are indicators of the high status of their owners and users (Gleba 2007:72).

In many ancient societies, textile work symbolized appropriate character. Among the Aztec, poor weaving skills were considered a serious character flaw (McCafferty and McCafferty 1991). In ancient Greece, the symbolism associating textile work with correct feminine behavior was so strong that *hetairai* (courtesans) often had themselves depicted spinning or weaving on painted drinking cups, perhaps to reinforce their femininity, or to assert their "legitimacy" in Greek society (Williams 1983; Reeder 1995:211, 217). And long after elite Chinese families began purchasing cloth from commercial establishments, young girls were still taught to spin and weave to learn core values such as respect for hard work and frugality (Bray 1997:189).

In many societies, the association between feminine gender and cloth production extended to the mythical and supernatural realms, legitimizing the normative division of labor and extending the symbolic value of spinning and weaving. Both Aztec and Maya female deities were represented with raw fiber and spinning and weaving implements (Anawalt 1981:14, 2000; Hendon 2006:figure 3; Chase et al. 2008). According to Aztec creation myths, the first task commanded of women after their creation was weaving (Hicks 1994:94). Among the Sumerians, the patron goddess of weaving was Uttu, the spider goddess, for whom there was no male counterpart. The goddess Innana was also associated with spinning and weaving (McCormick n.d.). The Greek goddesses Aphrodite, Athena, and Artemis, who were also associated with female fertility and childbirth, were regularly depicted with spinning tools. The *Morai* (spinning goddesses) were strongly associated not only with human rites of passage, but with the concept of destiny more generally (Cottica 2007:222).

Conclusion

Perhaps the primary conclusion to be drawn from this survey of evidence for the relationship between gender and textile production in the pre-modern world is that we need to take care when making generalizations about cloth production in ancient societies. Although it strongly genders feminine, especially when we consider cultural norms and values, the evidence is clear that men, women, and children all contributed to cloth production, albeit often performing different tasks within the production

sequence, using different technologies, and/or producing different kinds of textiles. Textile production cannot be fully understood in a vacuum. The complexity of the division of labor when viewed cross-culturally reflects a myriad of economic, social, and political factors: scheduling; the intensity of production; scale of output; principles of access to raw materials, technology, and labor; control over the distribution of prestige and esoteric goods; cultural norms and values; and historical contingency. Explicating the gendered division of labor in textile production as well as the economic, social, political, and ideological ramifications of patterns of task allocation is contingent on identifying as many of these factors and their interconnections as possible.

One generalization that can be made is that cloth production was an enormous part of ancient domestic and political economies, undervalued in its labor investment and often under-appreciated for its utilitarian and prestige functions in culture and society. Given its time-consuming nature, textile production would have been part of the lived experience of large sectors of ancient societies, often defined by gender but at least secondarily by social, marital, and/or legal status, ethnicity, or some other aspect of social identity. The cross-cultural evidence suggests that although in many cases cloth production had ideological or symbolic value, routine engagement in cloth production was usually poorly compensated in economic terms and rarely brought prestige to its practitioners unless they had other claims to elite or ritual status, regardless of the value of the cloth itself. Given the labor-intensiveness of textile production, cloth production on a small (domestic) scale was sustained through the engagement of many household members, intermittent effort, and multitasking; on a large scale, it was maintained for the most part through the exploitation of vulnerable labor.

The variation and ambiguity surrounding textile production and textile producers in principle and in praxis has the potential to speak volumes about the dynamics of the societies in which they transpired. While archaeologically less visible than many other activities and their end products, textiles and textile production were inescapable in ancient societies across space and time. Cloth producers might have been exploited or unappreciated in their day; prehistorians and archaeologists should not repeat the folly by ignoring or underestimating the importance of textile production in the remote past. To do so begs wholesale misunderstanding of the economies, social and political processes, and life experiences of generations.

NOTES

1 Textile production was key to Europe's Industrial Revolution, which in turn sparked wholesale social and political change.
2 Although this does not explain why men did most of the farm work.
3 Mechanized textile factories today are largely staffed by low-paid women, a pattern evident since the Industrial Revolution in Europe and North America (Minturn 1996).

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SECTION 3

Gendered Bodies and Identities in Prehistory

CHAPTER 10

Personhood in Prehistory: A Feminist Archaeology in Ten Persons

Yvonne Marshall

Introduction

For feminists, personal experience is central to theorizing; the personal has, and continues, to be political. Feminist theories of the person grounded in situated, embodied experience take as their starting point the instability of identity. They acknowledge the power of gender, sex, sexuality, and sexual orientation in our efforts to build meaningful, liveable lives (Butler 2004), but they refuse any move to allow such identities to define us as persons. No person is reducible to their gender, sex, or preferred sexual practices. As Riki Anne Wilchins famously put it, "I'm not a transsexual, but I play one in real life" (1997:87). At the core of feminist theorizing is a sustained critique of reductive categories of identity and their adoption as proper objects of study – woman, masculinity, transsexual, gender, sex, bisexual, race, age, etc. (Butler 1990, 1993, 1997, 2004; de Beauvoir 1997; Riley 1998; Moi 1999; Alberti 2006). This critique has, among other outcomes, led to the emergence of queer theory (de Lauretis 1991; Braidotti with Butler 1997; Alberti this volume). To ask then, from a feminist perspective, what is a person or by what means we come into personhood, is to ask about the instabilities, transformations, and transitions in our journeys to becoming selves.

It is a truism to say we employ our bodies in the process of becoming persons. But as feminists have been at pains to establish, this does not mean there is any necessary or

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direct relationship linking a particular kind of body or body part with a particular form of person or personhood. There is a very extensive feminist literature on this topic in reference to Western societies (e.g., Martin 1987; Butler 1990, 1993; Grosz 1994, 1995; de Beauvoir 1997; Moi 1999; Braidotti 2002; Mol 2002), and there are also many ethnographic studies which challenge our Western preconceptions of body-person relations with the unexpectedness of their cross-cultural revelations. Here, for example, is Marilyn Strathern speaking about the Gimi people of New Guinea: "For Gimi, ultimately what differentiates the sexes is not things possessed. Sexual organs can appear androgynous, like the flutes/bamboo containers, at once breast and penis, both hollow and penetrant. They do not have a unitary character in themselves: such a character is determined by how they are used, caused, or completed by the opposite sex" (1988:129).

Before turning to cross-cultural and archaeological personhood I want to begin in the more familiar territory of Western society with Judith Butler's moving account of David Reimer and his struggle to create for himself a life and personhood. David Reimer was born genetically male, but in 1966 at the age of eight months he lost his penis in a surgical accident. Acting on advice from Dr John Money, of the Gender Identity Institute at Johns Hopkins University, David's testicles were surgically removed and he was raised as a girl named Brenda. This experiment, intended to demonstrate the social malleability of gendered identity, was nothing short of a disaster for David. His life became a continuous struggle to establish himself as a person of worth, a person who deserved to be loved, and above all a person who was not reducible to body parts, present or not present, between his legs (Butler 2004:71).

What emerges so strongly from Butler's narrative is the extraordinary pervasiveness and intrusiveness of the practices, actions, and surveillance brought to bear on David throughout his childhood and into his adult life. It was not so much the content of these regimes that formed the greatest barrier in his quest for a liveable life (e.g., the requirement to play with dolls, to sit when urinating, the prohibition on toy guns, coercion to simulate sexual intercourse with his sister) though these are troubling enough; nor was it the repeated surgical re-cutting of his genitalia and hormonal re-sculpting of his body. It was above all the relentless practice of intrusion, the endless observation, the constant scrutiny attuned to picking up the smallest flaw, the least fault, reinforcing his inability to accommodate and become one with the defined norm, his inability to measure up. It was these practices that corroded David's project, undermining his efforts to create a liveable life and to establish himself as a person defined in his own terms.

Bodies matter in personhood, and archaeologists have been alert to this. Considerable work has been done on bodies in archaeology, resulting in an extensive and growing literature on the body and embodiment in archaeology. Much of this literature speaks to questions of personhood (Hamilakis et al. 2002; Sofaer 2006; Gamble 2007; Boric and Robb 2009; Boric and Harris in press; Robb and Harris in press). But bodies do not define personhood. Similarly, while regulatory regimes impose norms and order on the unruliness of bodies and matter, each person exceeds, transcends, and to some extent refuses these strictures. Personhood emerges through a complex interweaving of bodies, practices, and regulatory regimes. Both bodies and regulatory norms are powerful forces shaping our persons and personhood, but they do not, as David Reimer's quest for personhood shows so poignantly, define us. In the final analysis it is our actions, our practices, and our experiences, or as Simone de

Beauvoir (1997) puts it, our projects, which create us as persons. It is in practice that we effect contingent moments of stability in the inherently unstable process of becoming. It is therefore on practice that I want to focus my attention in this paper.

In practice, objects and materials are integral to the becoming of personhood. To effect meaningful lives "we engage others in the process of our own becoming and these 'others' are not always flesh and blood but made of stone and clay" (Gamble 2004:85). It is not our propensity for manufacturing and using tools which marks us out as human – after all, we have known for some time that non-human primates also make and use tools. It is the way we take up objects to extend our social persons in time and space which is distinctively human. In our journey to becoming human we took up objects to facilitate a release from proximity, a release from the necessity for co-presence, for face-to-face engagement, in order to maintain a social network (Gamble 1998, 2007:211). Objects, understood as extensions of, parts of, or substitutes for persons, allow us to be simultaneously present, materially and socially, in many times and places. Both persons and objects can be distributed in time and place without surrendering their integrity as persons (Strathern 1988; Gell 1998). The ontologies of people and objects mingle in the everyday practices of becoming.

Consider, for example, the production and use of arrows by men of the Awá people, who live in Brazil's Amazonian rainforests. González-Ruibal and his team observed an extraordinary excess with respect to almost all aspects of Awá men's engagements with arrows. Men spent an inordinate amount of time making, repairing, carrying, and otherwise engaging with their arrows. They "carried with them a large amount of arrows in hunting expeditions, well in excess of what was actually needed" as in fact most game was actually obtained using a shotgun (González-Ruibal et al. 2011:4). In this process of engagement in the practice of men and arrows, the personhood of both arrows and men is performatively made and maintained.

The relation men/arrows is ontological, not symbolic, metaphorical, or analogical. This is vividly demonstrated in the practices and persons of several men who originate from outside the Awá group and whose social status is found wanting. Takanihi Cha'a makes arrows with inappropriately brightly colored feathers and bows that deviate from standard dimensions in a number of ways. On this basis he is judged to be losing his "Awá -ness" (González-Ruibal et al. 2011:10). Similarly, Iwarawi is judged to be non-Awá on the basis of his "strange, crooked, dirty and poorly feathered" arrows, not on the basis of his personal "appearance, speech or behaviour" (González-Ruibal et al. 2011:12). Then there is the moving plight of Aura and Aure. These two men live among the Awá but originate from another group exterminated in the 1980s. Aura and Aure have a house on the outskirts of the village where they spend their time largely alone making arrows, hundreds of them, in fact 1630 when counted in 2005. These arrows are tied together in bundles, forming drifts along the crossbeams of the house roof (González-Ruibal et al. 2011:14).

The engagement of people with artifacts, in this case men and arrows, is a technology of self out of which artifact and human persons emerge together. They are mutually constitutive, performative effects. While normally such practices would "lead to the well-being, self-awareness and a sense of order and orientation of the person in the world" (González-Ruibal et al. 2011:14), for some like Aura and Aure, and at times David Reimer also, they become desperate performatives of self-preservation pared down to only the most essential actions.

González-Ruibal et al.'s account of Awá men and arrows resonates closely with Janet Spector's narrative of a young Dakota women and her awl in *What This Awl Means* (Spector 1991, 1993). Spector's quest, to establish a methodology for gender archaeology, began with her proposed task differentiation framework. But it didn't work. Instead of enlivening the past with engendered persons, her attempts to allocate tasks to categories of persons generated "distanced, generic, and lifeless descriptions" (Spector 1991:393). Spector responded by abandoning the conventional, authoritative account typical of archaeological fieldwork reporting, choosing instead to write a multi-voiced account of the Little Rapids project, giving equal value to scientific analysis, fictional narrative, ethnography, and historic texts. Spector's imagined narrative describes the mutual constitution as persons of a young woman and an archaeologically recovered artifact, a decorated awl. As the young woman matures and accomplishes socially valued tasks, she marks her awl with notches and circles, building and shaping it as she builds and shapes herself. Although Spector does not phrase her argument in these terms, the relation she envisages between woman and awl is, like Awá men and their arrows, ontological rather than metaphoric or analogical. She describes for us a process of mutual performative practices and emergence into personhood.

Approaches to Personhood in Historical Archaeology

Historical archaeologists have in general taken a humanist approach to persons and personhood. They place at the center of their accounts human individuals who are specific, stable, self-defining, and clearly set apart from the non-human and inanimate world. In their recent review of gender and personhood in historical archaeology, Clark and Wilkie (2006:337) define the archaeology of personhood as "archaeology of a socially contextualized self" understood to encompass "the experiences, expectations, and rights a person derives from ascribed and achieved statuses or identities." This definition presumes the knowability of the subject person, understood as either a specific individual or a normative account of what constitutes a specific kind of person. To a greater or lesser degree the subject person is known in advance of archaeological analysis. Named persons and aspects of their lives might be identified from textual sources, as for example in much of North American plantation archaeology (e.g., Wilkie 2000, 2003). In addition, parameters of regulation, ideal forms of personhood, or the nature of approved social actors and roles may be drawn from texts, inscriptions, and other representations as, for example, in Voss's colorful narratives of emergent Californian identities and persons (Voss 2008a, 2008b) and in accounts of Egyptian or Mesoamerican persons and personhood (Meskell 1998, 2004; Joyce 2000; Gillespie 2001; Meskell and Joyce 2003).

Clark and Wilkie (2006), like Spector, highlight the close synergies between methodologies for establishing personhood and those employed in constructing biographical narratives. They argue for archaeobiography, "the consideration of a completely embodied person and their lived life," an approach which combines "a concern for a specific lived life (biography) and the remains associated with that life (archaeology)" (Clark and Wilkie 2006:338–339). Clearly this is an approach best suited, if not actually restricted, to textually informed archaeologies. Nevertheless, it does speak to

prehistorians in that an archaeobiographical approach shifts attention from totalizing frameworks and generalizing accounts to small-scale, specific embodied accounts, and moves analysis away from big frames of reference, such as women or men, to more diverse, finer-grained subject positions or roles such as mothering (Clark and Wilkie 2006:343).

Laurie Wilkie's *The Archaeology of Mothering*, for example, makes extensive use of written records to mark out, locate, and contextualize her central subject, Lucrecia Perryman. Lucrecia is an African-American woman who was born into slavery in 1836 but died a free woman, mother, and midwife in 1917. Wilkie (2003:219) explores Lucrecia's experiences of life, family, and personhood by "placing the notions of mothering, motherhood and motherwork" at the center of her study. Interestingly, it is the archaeological evidence more than the textual record which allows us insight into Lucrecia's personal sense of self and how she went about building a liveable life. Like David Reimer, she is forced to do so under less than benign circumstances, from a "position at the intersection of multiple oppressions – racism, sexism and poverty" (Wilkie 2003:219). It is through the archaeology that we are able to glimpse Lucrecia overcoming this legacy, purposefully working to establish herself as a person of worth and social standing.

Wilkie's study shows us how Lucrecia's passage in life and personhood is intertwined with objects. Objects are made, purchased, assembled, used, and displayed in complex performative practices which shift with the instabilities of life. Wilkie invites us to imagine Lucrecia struggling with the realities of Jim Crow life, yet as a free woman with a husband and six children living in their own home. We see her laying the table with matching crockery, leaving her perfect all-white porcelain set untouched on display, and pouring tea for guests from one of her two Rebecca-at-the-well teapots, potent symbols of white female domesticity (Wilkie 2003:113). Later, with the death of her husband, we see Lucrecia working as a midwife, making and supporting herself with the aid of new constitutive technologies: instruments, medicines, and ideas. Lucrecia's performative actions and the domestic objects of familial and midwifery practice she takes up and engages with make and remake anew both Lucrecia herself and her family.

European Approaches to Prehistoric Personhood

While historical archaeologists can begin with persons identified in documents and inscriptions, prehistorians seldom have this luxury. Occasionally, however, unusual recovery contexts make richer interpretations of specific people possible. A well-known example is the Iceman, whose extraordinarily preserved body, clothing, and tools provided such detailed person-specific information that he has become known to us in biographical terms which would normally be impossible (Hodder 1999). Similarly, results from detailed forensic analyses of materials recovered from the Early Bronze Age grave of the Amesbury Archer have painted a vivid portrait of a well traveled, highly regarded incomer to Britain (Fitzpatrick 2011). However, while the Iceman and Amesbury Archer offer us unexpectedly vivid portraits of two remarkable individuals, they are not explorations of what it might have meant to be a person, or how personhood might be established in a specific prehistoric place and time. To do this,

prehistorians must work in the opposite analytic direction, beginning with pieces, fragments, and events of practice, and building from them toward a more general account of societal norms and lived experience. Prehistorians recover fragments of practices from which persons were assembled, but they are seldom able to suggest how specific persons created and performed themselves in the way Janet Spector has done. This is not to say we can know nothing of personhood in prehistory, only that we must look for it in different ways – a contrast well illustrated in the collection of case studies brought together by Casella and Fowler (2004).

Chris Fowler's *The Archaeology of Personhood* (2004) has proved to be a watershed in the emerging field of personhood in prehistoric archaeology. It set out personhood as a proper object of archaeological investigation (cf. Butler 1997) and established it as a sub-field of interest within the wider discipline. Although archaeologists, including some gender archaeologists, were already exploring aspects of personhood, it was not named as a specific approach until Fowler's 2004 publication. A considerable and rapidly growing body of work focused on personhood in prehistoric Europe has since emerged (Chapman 2000; Gamble 2004, 2007; Chapman and Gaydarska 2007; Fowler 2010), with a particularly strong focus evident for Britain and Ireland (Fowler 2001, 2002, 2004; Jones 2002, 2005; Brück 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Conneller 2004). While this research is diverse in terms of period, region, and evidential focus, it is strongly united by its close grounding in the work of feminist anthropologists Marilyn Strathern (1988, 2004a, 2004b, 2008) and Janet Hoskins (1998). They are the cornerstones of this distinctively European approach to prehistoric personhood.

Prehistoric object biographies, informed by the work of Hoskins, are a very different kind of project to the archaeobiography of historical archaeology (Marshall and Gosden 1999; Joy 2009). Janet Hoskins' biographical objects form focal points around and through which people seek to assemble and articulate a narrative of their life and personhood. Her accounts "focus on the narrative creation of the self through the vehicle of an object" and highlight the ways in which objects "are used to reify characteristics of personhood that must then be narratively organised into an identity" (Hoskins 1998:24). We have seen this process at work in the creation of Awá men and arrows, and in the making of a young woman and her decorated awl at Little Rapids. A similar process of tracing and drawing together a biographical object, but in this case emerging from a twentieth-century European context, is Edmund de Waal's (2010) absorbing narrative of personal and collective family personhood framed by the lives of a collection of 264 Japanese *netsuke* – small carved figures designed to be held in the hand and experienced primarily by touch.

Joanna Brück's (2004b) account of Early Bronze Age identity formation in Britain and Ireland is deeply rooted in Hoskins. Her main data are burials, in particular the objects and animal parts interred with human bodies and the arrangement of these components within the grave. Hoskins' approach, with its emphasis on gathering a person's life and giving it a specific form materialized in and through one or more objects, offers an ideal analytical framework. Brück treats each grave both as a biographical object in itself and as a composite of objects, each of which is also biographical. In her view, "objects act as metaphors for the self, as pivots around which narratives of personhood can be constructed [Hoskins 1998]. They give material form to interpersonal relationships, allowing people to think through their place in the world" (Brück 2004b:313).

Brück rejects naïve interpretations that suggest burial goods were personal possessions directly drawn from life – for example, that a necklace was buried with the person who owned or wore it (Brück 2004b:314). Like Parker-Pearson (1999) she stresses that burials are biographical objects created by the living, by the mourners, not the deceased. A grave is what others make of us, not what we make of ourselves; "we need to consider the items deposited with the Early Bronze Age dead not as a reflection of intrinsic attributes of the self, but as an expression of the relational character of identity – it was relationships with friends, kinsfolk and neighbours, and with significant places, that made Early Bronze Age people who they were" (Brück 2004b:325).

Brück does not attempt to engender her burial subjects in any specific way or even to illuminate those interned as individual persons. This is a deliberate move on her part and one with which many feminists, including myself, are in full agreement (Brück 2004a; see also Rubin 1975, 1984; Moi 1999:112; Marshall 2000, 2008a). To open up our thinking about past gender it is necessary to begin by *not* beginning with men and women. Brück (2004a:150) puts forward a number of reasons for taking this position. The most important is that by using these terms to frame analysis we inevitably fill them and the past with our own perceptions of what such categories constitute. We foreclose potential difference before what it is can be thought (Marshall 2000, 2008a:27–28).

A casualty of refusing to begin analysis with predetermined gender or other identity categories is specificity. There tends to be a slide into generality. This is evident in much of the work on European prehistoric personhood and stands in dramatic contrast to the compelling particularity of Lucrecia Perryman's life or the story of a decorated bone awl from Little Rapids. For prehistorians the analytical process usually involves a move from the particular to the general. In this case, Brück starts with specific burials, bodies, objects, and their arrangement within a grave, then moves to a generalized account of the nature of personhood. What concerns me is the move from illuminating, even celebrating variety, diversity, and difference in the detailed accounts of specific graves and their contents, to a collapse of this specificity into a categorical account of a generalized, even normative, summation of the path to personhood. To overcome this problem there needs to be a return to specificity, a coming full circle in analysis. In Brück's study, for example, we could revisit specific graves and the practices gathered into them with a view to reinterpreting them in light of the conclusions reached concerning general processes of personhood creation.

The second cornerstone of the European approach is Marilyn Strathern's concept of relational personhood or, as it is more commonly referred to in the archaeological literature, "partible" or "dividual" personhood (see Boric with Strathern 2010). Central to the concept of dividual personhood is the idea that persons are "constructed as the plural and composite site of the relationships that produced them" (Strathern 1988:13). However, Strathern's argument is much more than a simple contrast between individual and dividual personhood. It is based in a comparative analysis of several Melanesian societies, and forms part of a wider comparative project which reads the similarities and differences of Melanesian societies through, with, and against characteristics of Western societies. A third comparative strand draws out analytical differences between anthropological and feminist scholarship. These three comparative projects are interwoven, informing and referring to each other, so that no one

strand can be fully understood without reference to the others. But herein lies a problem for prehistorians. In taking up Strathern's ideas to explore prehistoric personhood, they have top-sliced a thin concept of dividual/partible personhood from the deeper feminist and comparative roots of her argument – although it is not just archaeologists who stand accused of promulgating reductionist dividualism (Sahlins 2011:12–14).

To explain further, Strathern's theory of relational personhood is not only informed by comparative Melanesian ethnography and by contrasts drawn between Melanesian and Western societies, but also by her reading of the contrasting character of anthropological and feminist debate. Unlike anthropology, feminism does not strive for completion in the sense of seeking to resolve the conflicts which underpin debate in order to achieve unity. On the contrary, feminism shares "with other radicalisms the premise that completion is undesirable" (Strathern 1988:22). Feminism maintains a "pluralist vision" of itself, such that "all the positions in the debate comprise the theoretical base of any one" (1988:29). So the project or "person" which is feminism "lies in the debate itself" (1988:24). This proposition is reprised in a variety of forms throughout her 1988 book, as well as in subsequent writing, perhaps most explicitly in her article "One Man and Many Men" (Strathern 2008). Although Strathern never explicitly spells it out, the nature of feminist debate is implicitly located as a key space from which her understanding of relational personhood emerges. It is therefore central to understanding her work. However, it does not appear in the literature on prehistoric personhood. Some of the problems engendered by dividual top-slicing are illustrated in my second European example.

Chapman and Gaydarska's (2007) analysis of prehistoric figurines is a key voice in the fragmentation debate, a specific approach within the wider body of research on prehistoric personhood in Europe (Chapman 2000; Brittain and Harris 2010). Chapman and Gaydarska (2007) draw heavily on the work of Hoskins and Strathern, but unlike Brück their argument is not informed by feminist scholarship in a broader sense – and they do not claim it is. Chapman and Gaydarska aim to sketch out "a possible set of relationships between human consciousness, social practice and the material world" through the analysis and interpretation of several forms of artifact (2007:174). I will focus here on just one thread in this fascinating account, their analysis and interpretation of gender identity, and androgyny in particular, as read through Eastern European Neolithic ceramic figurines (2007:56–57). The primary data consists of the Hamangia figurines recovered from Late Neolithic and Early Copper Age Balkan settlements and cemeteries, and the figurines from Dolnoslav Tell, a Late Copper Age settlement.

Chapman and Gaydarska begin by defining five gendered categories of figurine and person: female, male, androgynous, ungendered, and unknown. All figurines, whether complete or fragmentary, are assigned to one of these categories according to the presence or absence of defining inscribed marks – inscribed in the sense of being written into the body of the figurine (cf. Grosz 1994; Marshall 2008b). A female figurine (part or whole) must have one or more of the following marks: breasts, pubic triangle, wide hips, and a large or pregnant belly. A male figurine is marked by a rod-head, and an androgynous figurine is marked by a combination of rod-head plus at least one of the female marks. A figurine which includes one or more body parts that could potentially be inscribed with a gender mark, but bears no gender mark

(for example, a pelvis, torso, or head) is classed as purposefully ungendered. A fragment that by definition cannot of itself bear the mark of gender (for example, a leg or arm) is classed as unknown. In the course of subsequent analysis these gendered figurine identities are mapped directly onto (and are understood to stand for or represent) similarly gendered, dividual and individual human persons (2007:69): "fragments could have been linked to past persons – to produce a metaphorical link between parts and wholes – that the part somehow stood for the whole object (representational logic) or that the fragment grew out of the whole object (dividual logic)" (2007:173–174). Viewed with a feminist lens, several problems are immediately evident in this approach to gender and personhood. Firstly, the initial attribution of gender to a figurine is based entirely on bodily inscription without reference to context or the lived experience of that figurine/person (cf. Marshall 2008b). A consideration of place of deposition, such as whether a figure was recovered from a grave or settlement, is an integral part of their analysis, but this interpretation of context is built upon already ascribed gender identities; context is not treated as part of the process by which gender is produced – context does not effect gender (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007:62–63).

A body (part or whole) is categorically gendered by the marks it does or does not bear, and the gender of those mark(s) pervades and defines the whole body. In itself this is analytically problematic (cf. Moi 1999:12), but the problems are compounded in the analysis of fragmentation. A complete figurine marked with a pubic triangle is completely female, including its legs and arms. A complete figure with a rod-head and pubic triangle is presumed fully androgynous in the bringing together of these two marks. In subsequent events of fragmentation figurines are in effect re-gendered according to where breaks occur and whether parts retain a defining mark. So our complete androgynous figurine when fragmented may become a male rod-head; an ungendered upper torso because it has no breasts; unknown arms unless they remain with the torso in which case they are ungendered; a female lower body since it is marked with a triangle; and the legs may be unknown or female depending on whether they remain attached to the marked lower torso. Since the majority of complete figurines are androgynous, this process of bodily fragmentation effects a progressive breaking apart and dissolution of gender, identity, and personhood (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007:64–65). However, their conclusion that the dissolution of gender is brought about through the bodily fragmentation of figurines is a result of the analytical process the authors have employed; it does not emerge in any necessary way from the material bodies of the figurines, as Chapman and Gaydarska imply.

Central to Chapman and Gaydarska's interpretation of personhood is their argument that the fragmentation process is purposeful and the placement of breaks is the outcome of deliberate choices. But the application of this insight is inconsistent. The creation of a fragment marked by gender is treated as more purposeful than the creation of an unmarked fragment, which is implicitly treated as less so, if at all. Presence is treated as purposeful and lack as derivative, an analytical move extensively critiqued and refused by feminists. Rather than valuing the outcomes of fragmentation in differential ways, an alternative approach might be to treat the doing or action of breakage as performative in itself, allowing all outcomes of all fragmentation events to be treated as equally purposeful. Analytical emphasis is in this way placed on the meaningfulness of practice rather than on the differentiation of products.

My final point returns to the unexamined assumption that the gender and identity of a figurine (part or whole) is body specific rather than contextual. A figurine or person is not transformed by lived engagement or social action, and a fragment is not afforded the possibility of retaining the gender of the complete body from which it originated, irrespective of its residual marking. The contexts in which a figurine may have lived, and the ways in which it might have been performatively engaged in action, are not accorded the power to transform, modify, or in any way effect the gender and personhood of that figurine/person. Neither the relationship of parts and fragments to each other or to complete bodies, nor the relationship of a body whole or fragmentary to a defining inscribed mark, is problematized. However, it is fundamental to Strathern's notion of relational personhood that the nature of a person, including their gender, is drawn out of their body in the course of engagement in the world (Strathern 1988:102–103). Gender specificity never precedes action, and it is never self-evident; it must be made known through engaged action. So "at different points of knowing, different origins and thus different identities are attached to the actor's sexual parts" (Strathern 1988:111) – and therefore also the inscribed marks of prehistoric figurines.

In a number of important respects Chapman and Gaydarska are employing Strathern's ideas in ways that run contrary to Strathern's formulation of relational personhood in particular, and to the feminist theories which more broadly underpin her work. For Strathern (1988:131–132) the capacities of a body must be revealed and its composition drawn out and made known in social action. Understood as fully relational, the nature of a person and a body cannot be known in advance of action or made fully stable through inscription (see the quotation from Strathern in the second paragraph of this chapter). As with feminist debate, bodies and persons are understood to be in a constant state of becoming. They are continually being effected. There is no expectation of, or even possibility for, completion. As Gamble puts it, "There can never be a complete artefact set since the concept of expansion always allows for growth. So too there can never be a complete artefact since it only exists in relation to other elements in the network of material culture and those relations are subject to growth and decay, reduction and addition … Social life is never finished" (2007:152). A feminist informed approach continually seeks to celebrate variation, difference, and diversity in personhood, refusing to reduce either gender or personhood to a generalized account of a normative process.

Beyond Europe

Outside of Europe a wide variety of approaches to personhood in prehistory are being explored. For example, Wynne-Jones (2007) offers an account of performed identities along the East Coast of Africa, Marshall (2008b) takes up the volatile bodies of Grosz (2004) to explore inscribed and lived pots and persons in Polynesian prehistory, and Weismantel (2004) reinterprets Moche pots sculpted with scenes of anal sex and masturbation as celebrating vital practices by which persons are produced and reproduced.

Within this diverse body of work a specifically ontological approach to personhood is beginning to coalesce. It draws inspiration from Strathern, mixing her ideas with a

variety of other theories of relational ontology. At present the most influential are theories of animism and in particular the perspectivist theories of Viveiros de Castro (1998, 2004). Not surprisingly, the Strathern/de Castro combination is very popular with anthropologists and archaeologists working in South America (Alberti 2007; Alberti and Bray 2009; Alberti and Marshall 2009; Blaser 2009; Haber 2009; González-Ruibal et al. 2011). But this is not exclusively the case (e.g., Henare et al. 2007; Holbraad 2009; Alberti et al. 2011). The case studies brought together in Henare et al. (2007), with their focus on object ontologies, are especially relevant for archaeologists. A second growing influence is a body of feminist thought known, rather problematically, as the "new materialism" (Grosz 1994, 2004; Mol 2002; Barad 2003, 2007; Hird 2004; Ahmed 2008; Davis 2009; Bennett 2010; Coole and Frost 2010).

Both perspectivism and the new materialism are linked to non-representationalist theories in human geography (Thrift 2008; Anderson and Harrison 2010) by their post-humanist stance, and by a common rejection of the social constructivist divide between world and meaning (e.g., sex and gender) in favor of an "approach to meaning and value as 'thought-in-action'" or more simply as practice (Anderson and Harrison 2010:6). These approaches question in the most fundamental way conventional archaeological assumptions about the primacy of human agency (contra Gell 1998), as well as the nature of relationships between humans, objects, animals, and other forms of matter. As González-Ruibal et al. explain, "The basic tenet is that human beings cannot be ontologically detached from other humans, animals, plants and things anymore than they can be from any of their limbs. Humans are constituted as persons through the manifold relations they keep and build with non-human actors to which they are intrinsically and intimately tied" (2011:2). In taking relational ontologies seriously by according them equal credibility with our own Western conception of self and being, we open up radical new ways of thinking about how persons and personhood are brought into being. To illustrate this I will briefly outline two examples from the Americas.

Ben Alberti (2007) is fascinated by the La Candelaria and San Francisco culture pots of Northwest Argentina. Drawing in particular on ideas from Viveiros de Castro's perspectivism, he tries to think through these pots in ways that do justice to their fantastic forms and extraordinary presence. These "body-pots," as Alberti calls them, "make reference to extra-human bodies and combinations of bodies," but they are "not static representations of a hybrid state" (2007:218–219); rather they are a "movement between states." Furthermore, they are "specific instances of intervening in the world" (2007:220) in the sense that they attempt to stabilize relations in a world where both matter and relations are inherently and chronically unstable – a world in which transformation is life and stability can only be fleeting and contingent.

This formulation moves us away from the "notion that ceramic styles represent clear-cut social groups" or archaeological cultures, and away from analyses which treat pots "as a vehicle for ethnic and political identity" (Alberti 2007:212). It also refuses any simplistic correlation between specific body-pot forms and human bodies, including any a priori link between the presence of inscribed marks, such as nipples or impressed grooves between the legs of a body-pot, and female persons (Alberti and Marshall 2009:352).

Similar propositions concerning the instability of worlds, bodies, and matter are made by Marshall (2000, 2008a). My inspiration comes more from the new materialists, particularly the early work of Elizabeth Grosz (1994, 1995) and her use of the Mobius strip as a conceptual tool for thinking bodily difference as volatile and dynamic (Marshall 2000:223). I am fascinated with the sculpted stone bodies recovered from prehistoric sites along the Pacific Northwest Coast of America. Like the Argentinean body-pots, the extraordinary presence, even power, of these stone forms emerges through their bringing together of things we would conventionally separate: female and male, style and function. Vividly sculpted female and male genitalia flow into one another to form the bodies of functional artifacts. As I have stated elsewhere, "the evocative power of these images lies in what they bring together, not what they hold apart. They do not define categories of person, they portray the potentialities of relationships formed between at least three entities: two depicted in the artefact's imagery and a third implied in the hand/body/person that grasps, uses, and thereby animates both the artefact itself and the relationships it makes material" (Marshall 2008a:31). If these artifacts speak to personhood, and surely they must, it is not in order to define normative gender roles or identities. As Alberti argues for the Argentinean pots and Weismantel (2004) suggests in her analysis of the Moche pots, these artifacts speak to processes and practices in the production and reproduction of worlds and persons. And in speaking they resonate with the dynamism of becoming, rather than acting to tie down meaning in representations of regulatory norms. They are not so much "thought-in-action" (Anderson and Harrison 2010) as becoming-in-action. There is, as in Strathern's characterization of feminist debate, no striving toward completion. Instead we are offered "the moment of closure, approached but never attained" (Marshall 2000:233).

Personhood and Mirrors in Iron Age Britain

For my last example I have chosen to circle back into Europe. Jody Joy's recently published study of 58 British Iron Age mirrors employs a biographical approach, also informed by Hoskins and Strathern, to understand the lives and personhood of another collection of extraordinary objects (Joy 2008, 2009, 2010). As in the previous two examples, Joy's focus is the personhood of objects in themselves rather than objects as representing or defining specific types or groups of human persons (cf. Henare et al. 2007). Gender is not among Joy's central concerns, but his innovative biographical approach opens up new possibilities in the way it directs attention to practice and away from conventional decontextualized frames of analysis (cf. Alberti 2007:211).

For some time archaeologists have uncritically associated Iron Age mirrors with women (Fox 1958:84; Joy 2010:3) based on the assumption that appropriate appearance is fundamental to being a woman, to establishing a feminine personhood – hence the desire for mirrors. The evidential basis, an association of mirrors with female burials, is thin. Thirty-one of Joy's mirrors come from graves; the other 27 come from settlements, watery locations, and unknown contexts. All of the five iron mirrors recovered from sites in Yorkshire are from graves, and four were associated with osteologically female skeletons, but three of these graves also contained

vehicles, artifacts which do not point to personal appearance as the most critical factor constituting the interned person (Joy 2010:59, pers. comm. 2012) (the numbers are slightly revised here compared to Joy's 2010 text). Of the other 25 mirrors recovered from graves, most are bronze and from unsexed cremation burials located in various parts of southern Britain. No mirror found outside of Yorkshire is definitely associated with a skeleton of either sex (Joy 2010:75). Many southern mirror burials include brooches and toilet instruments, presumed to suggest females and their preoccupation with appearance, but some also contain swords and other objects not obviously related to personal appearance (Eckardt 2008; Garrow 2008; Joy 2010).

From a feminist perspective these conventional interpretations of Iron Age mirrors, burials, gender, and personhood are clearly problematic. As discussed above in relation to Brück (2004b), there is no necessary correlation between the burial of an object with a specific human body and the use, meaning, or personhood of that object or human during their lifetime. Burial is performed by the living, not by the dead. If it is not the case that "these singular items are regarded as attached to singular owners" (Strathern 1988:104), who, Joy asks (2010:76), owned mirrors? His answer: Iron Age mirrors are exceptionally "complicated artefacts requiring the creation of a number of relationships in order to make them. It is these relationships that were critical to the formation of meanings and associations that these objects would carry into their future lives" (Joy 2010:23). The raw materials were excavated, transported, and smelted, the form of the mirror was planned, component parts constructed, the plate design was marked out and inscribed, and finally all of the elements were brought together to assemble the mirror (Joy 2009:545). Each process could have been carried out by one or many people located in any number of places, generating a wide field of potentially significant social and material and conceptual connections (Figure 10.1 and Figure 10.2). Thus a vast array of complexities and potentialities is uniquely condensed into each mirror. These may be selectively drawn out again as the mirror is repeatedly made and remade in social action.

To clarify how this might work, let us consider a contemporary example, Emma Roe's account of the relational or affective ethic of a fast food burger:

> before it reaches an eating event, numerous practices have brought it into being, from artificial insemination, to meat processing techniques, and the skills of the marketeers; together they have contributed to fashioning a burger with a repeatable positive eating experience and brand-recognizable qualities. All these practices have worked with the biochemical and biophysical processes of matter to generate from the animal flesh a meat which when cooked constitutes through taste, touch, sight and smell a materiality we recognize as an edible burger, and perhaps even a specific brand of burger. [Roe 2010:262]

When our burger eventually enters an eating event, a person not only engages the burger by consuming it, but also draws out and makes visible, meaningful, and significant selected qualities gathered into the body of the burger, perhaps its branding, its fat content, or the animal's back story as organic, free-range, or from a named farm. Such qualities are potentialities of the burger, but it is only within the context and practice of a specific eating event that a quality is made known, brought to significance, or made constitutive.

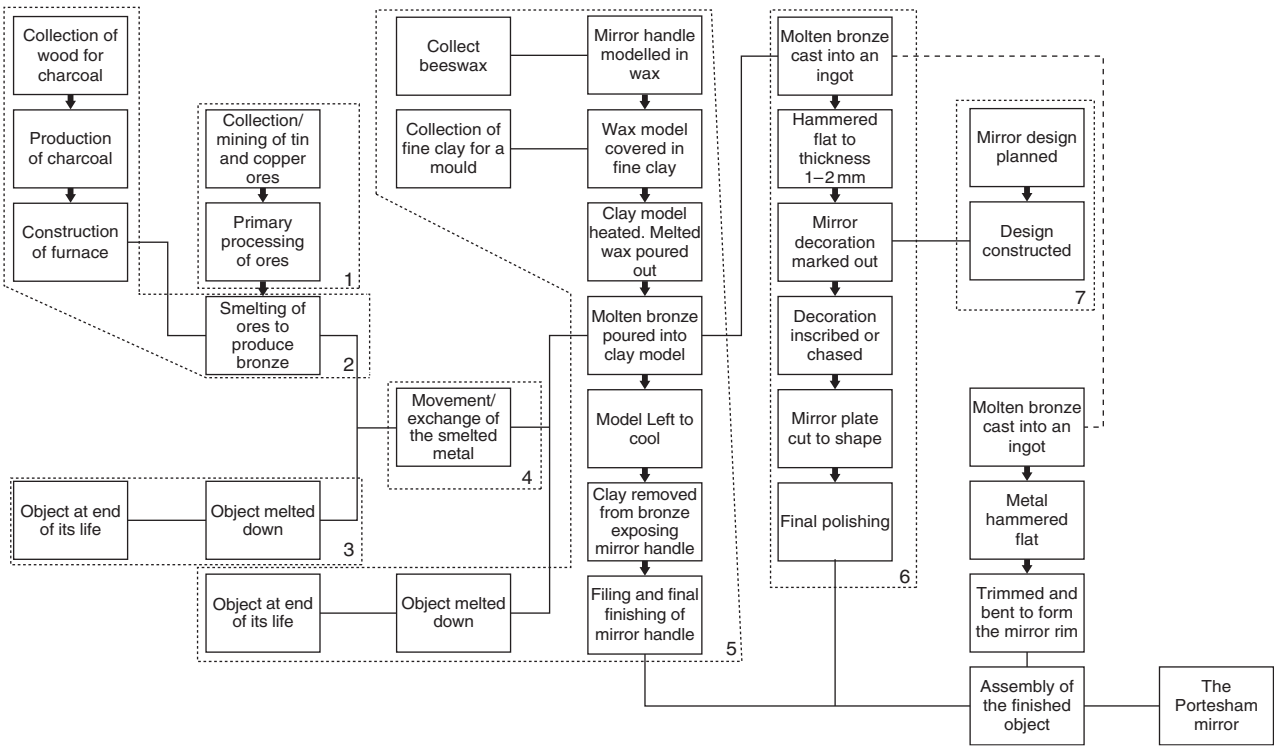


Figure 10.1 An outline of some processes involved in manufacturing an Iron Age mirror. In this example the manufacture of the highly decorated, bronze Portesham mirror is illustrated (drawing courtesy of Jody Joy).



Figure 10.2 Some of the relational elements of form and decoration which might be brought together in an Iron Age mirror. In this example the Desborough mirror is illustrated. It is similar in composition, form, and design to the Portesham mirror (drawing courtesy of Jody Joy).

Returning to the Iron Age, any element or capacity of a mirror or person can become a point of significance, but no quality is inherently or self-evidently so. It is the archaeologist's task to understand how and in what way connection was asserted; to elucidate the processes employed "to draw out of the body what it is capable of" (Strathern 1988:103); and thereby to establish the terms of engagement between mirror and human person/s within a specific action or event. This does not mean that a connection is asserted between a person understood as a complete and unitary entity and a mirror understood as a whole and complete object, or that any element of an object or person defines or comes to stand for that object or person. Practice selects from, draws out, and brings forward into the limelight of social action a constantly shifting selection from an object/person's potentialities. Context is constitutive.

It is therefore a fallacy to presume that mirrors, by virtue of occurring repeatedly in a particular context such as burials, or osteologically female burials, comprise an artifact set which is meaningful or even knowable to anyone other than an archaeologist.

"Mirror burials do not form a homogenous group which cross-cut localized burial traditions" (Joy 2010:76) because from a practice perspective it is possible that very few people, if any, ever saw more than one mirror or mirror burial during their lifetime. The presence of a mirror in a grave does not of necessity create any relationship with another grave containing a mirror. Such comparative assembling so beloved of archaeologists is, like the fragmented genders formed from broken figurine bodies, an effect of our analytical methods, not a quality intrinsic to objects.

Joy (2009) argues that we need to begin by understanding the production and practice of each mirror. To illustrate, he offers us a detailed biography of the Portesham mirror. He begins by drawing out the qualities and relationships gathered into the mirror during processes of manufacture (Figure 10.1). He then unpicks some of the relations embodied in its form and design: a close formal similarity between the handle and horse bits; the use of sheet metal for the plate as well as for other items; the binding around the mirror plate, which is echoed on caldrons and shields; and the swirling decorative motifs that may also adorn sword scabbards, horse gear, and pottery (Figure 10.2). Next he makes a close examination of the mirror. This reveals very little damage, suggesting careful curation; polish wear on the handle indicates that the mirror was held upright in the hand as an extension of the body. Joy then shifts his analysis to consider burial context, much as Brück (2004b) chose to do. The difference is that Joy moves his analysis of the Portesham mirror from the wider and more general contexts of mirror production and form, to the specificity of a particular burial context. In doing this he brings his analysis full circle from consideration of a wider pool possibilities for the generation of personhood, object, or human, to the specific depositional context of a particular mirror/burial/person.

The Portesham mirror lay over the chest of a crouched mature skeleton, possibly female (Figure 10.3). It had been wrapped and secured by a brooch pinned through the terminal loop of the handle (Joy 2009:550, 2010:79–80). In addition, two further brooches, two tweezers, an ear scoop, five pots, a knife, a bronze pan and strainer, and joints of lamb and pork had been placed in the grave. These objects speak to practices of grooming, and the preparation and consumption of food and drink (Joy 2009:551, 2010:81–82). In the context of local burial practices and British mirror burials generally, certain features stand out. First, because the Portesham mirror is exceptionally complex, its relational potentialities are especially rich. Second, it is central within its burial context: it is placed in the middle of the grave on the chest of the interned, in a sense creating a focal point for the performance of burial. Neither of these features is in any sense typical; they are features of this specific mirror and burial. Every mirror and each mirror burial is unique; each gathers components, features, and potentialities in specific ways within the unique performance of its particular burial event.

So while we might conclude that the Portesham mirror was through its burial constituted as a biographical object in the manner of those discussed by Hoskins – a central object which gathered up and constituted a singular personhood from many relational connections and possibilities – we would be wrong to presume that this was the general purpose of placing mirrors in graves. The possibility that the Portesham mirror was interred with an adult female emerges as one of many equally valued possible points of significance. The sex of the skeleton is not primary to analysis and does not precede and shape all other analytical possibilities. At every step Joy's approach celebrates and holds onto diversity, difference, and variation. While

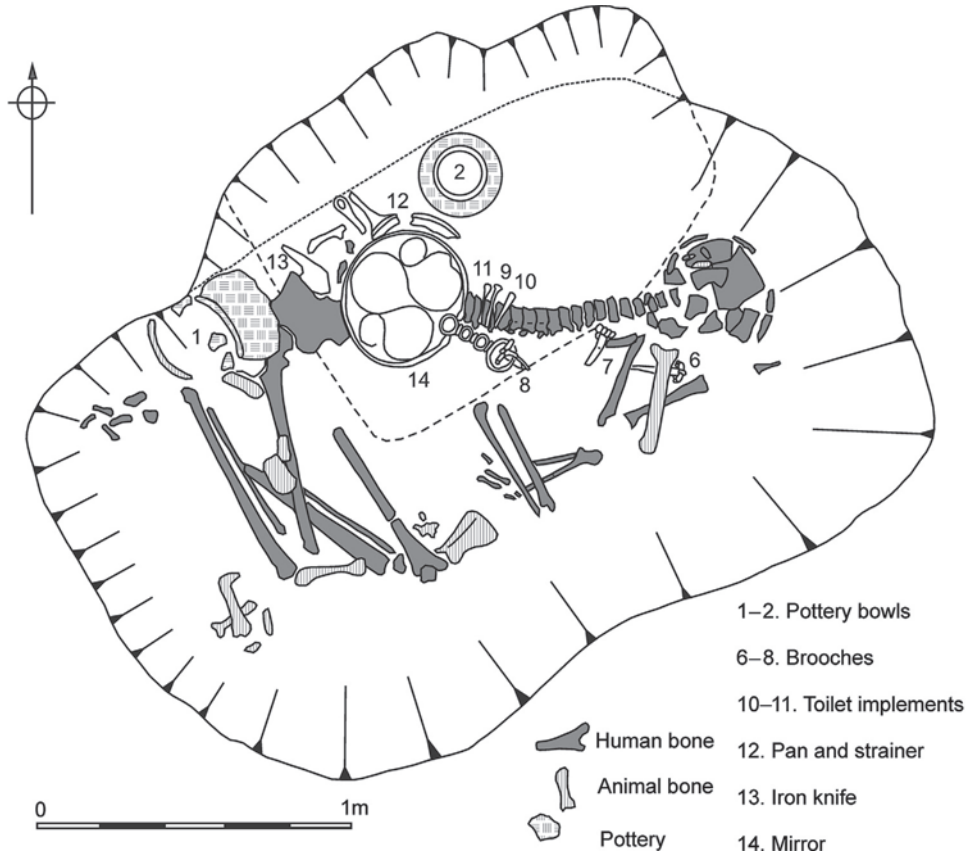


Figure 10.3 Plan view of the Iron Age Portesham burial containing a decorated bronze mirror (drawing courtesy of Jody Joy after Fitzpatrick 1997:figure 2).

pointing to particular interpretations, his analysis does not dismiss or preclude the possibility of others.

Conclusion: One and Many Persons

I have selected ten persons to form the body of this review. In doing so I have gathered many persons into the one that has become this piece of writing. But these are not whole persons. I have drawn out only selected capacities from each example and brought them into view in specific ways. Each example exceeds my characterization; each has many capacities beyond those I have drawn attention to and made significant. David Reimer, the Portesham mirror, ceramic figurines, Argentinean body-pots, Lucrecia Perryman, Northwest Coast stone bodies, Bronze Age burials, an engraved bone awl, Awá men and arrows: none of these persons are defined by or contained within my account of them. I have gathered only selected elements and brought them into relation with each other in order to pursue my project of taking a fresh feminist look at personhood in prehistory and how archaeology might seek to understand it.

Finally, I want to draw attention to the author as one of the persons constitutive of and constituted by this article. In Simone de Beauvoir's immortal phrase, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (de Beauvoir 1997:225). By this she means it is the projects we bring to becoming a person which frame what we make of ourselves as a woman (Moi 1999). This is also true of becoming archaeologists. Our writings are among our projects. In writing we produce not only our words and ideas but ourselves as archaeologists (Marshall et al. 2009). Artifact and archaeologist, object and human persons are mutually produced through our disciplinary practices.

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CHAPTER 11

Bioarchaeological Approaches to the Gendered Body

Joanna Sofaer

The bioarchaeological study of the body has a pivotal role in archaeologies of gender. As the human body is the most direct evidence of past people (Larsen 2002), archaeologists have long relied upon osteological determinations of sex in order to anchor interpretations of male and female graves (Sofaer 2006a). This traditional use of osteological data continues today although it is now complemented by a growing mass of research that focuses upon other aspects of the body itself as a means of generating interpretations about gender in the past. The bioarchaeological perspective, with its application of scientific techniques to study the physical remains of past people, offers the potential to study gender in ways that are not linked to pre-existing assumptions about the gender association of certain objects or those affecting the sex determination of skeletons (Sofaer and Sørensen in press). Furthermore, new theoretical and methodological discussions emerging from within bioarchaeology are moving the study of the body and gender in new directions.

Research Trajectories in the Bioarchaeological Study of the Gendered Body

From the start of systematic excavation the human body has been a focus for description and for the development of understandings of the past (Sofaer 2006a). The bioarchaeological study of gender emerged from a coalescence of research interests that brought together social studies of mortuary contexts with methodological developments in osteology. More specifically, the development of an Archaeology of Death in the early 1980s resulted in an emphasis on the categorization of the person

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in mortuary contexts that promoted the osteological study of the body, as sex and age became key variables that could be juxtaposed with inferences about rank or wealth derived from objects. This placed the body in a privileged position as a way of gaining insights into the past society to which it belonged (Sofaer 2006a). The Archaeology of Death therefore established a methodological use of the body which coincided with a surge in osteological methods for more accurate sexing and aging. This set the stage for the creation of early gender archaeology in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which slotted neatly into this methodological use of the body; biological sex could be determined by osteoarchaeologists and cultural gender could be examined through the distribution of socially gendered artifacts (see Sørensen 2000). Meanwhile, concern with the use of grave goods alone to infer gender based on ethnocentric associations began to lead to further emphasis on the osteological analysis of human skeletal remains as a means of lending security to interpretation.

This use of osteological data placed osteologists in the role of service providers to other archaeologists who were employing sex determinations in order to create gendered interpretations using artifacts (Sofaer 2006a). Only from the late 1990s did gender become an explicit focus of investigation for osteologists. The reasons for this were twofold. On one hand, a long-standing interest in the skeletal biology of sex differences and growing awareness of theoretical currents within archaeology as a whole led to frustration at the inappropriate use of the term "gender" in strictly biological contexts. Practitioners therefore began to insist on the distinction between sex as a biological phenomenon and gender as social, with specific discrimination between the terms (Grauer and Stuart-Macadam 1998; Walker and Cook 1998). On the other hand, interest in gender formed part of a more general trend related to the development of a biocultural approach within physical anthropology as part of the distinctive emergence of bioarchaeology that took place at the end of the twentieth century (Zuckerman and Armelagos 2011). A central theme in the biocultural approach is the interaction between biology and behavior (Larsen 1997; Walker and Cook 1998). It seeks to explore the effects of social relations – especially power relations, technologies, and ideologies – on human biology (Leatherman and Goodman 1997; Zuckerman and Armelagos 2011). The underlying principle of this approach is that human skeletal and dental tissues are durable and plastic; they are sensitive to events and lifeways and respond to these in ways that are biologically predictable by inhibiting or encouraging biological processes (Armelagos and Van Gerven 2003; Zuckerman and Armelagos 2011). Contrasts and similarities in human skeletal biology can therefore be traced over time and space to reconstruct past social processes (Knudson and Stojanowski 2008). Similarly, differential exposure to pathogens may show up as contrasts in the prevalence of disease between social groups or age cohorts. In the context of this kind of biocultural research, integration of the study of gender into bioarchaeology has a clear appeal for scholars seeking to "envision past populations as if they were alive today" (Larsen 1997:4). The explicit distinction between biological sex and culturally defined gender creates the possibility for utilizing both biological and cultural information. It forms part of an agenda that aims to move bioarchaeology beyond description and into a more analytical direction (Lovejoy et al. 1982; Armelagos and Van Gerven 2003; Stojanowski and Buikstra 2005; Hens and Godde 2008).

The last five years have seen increased concern with contextualizing human skeletal remains and the explicit integration of social theory into research, including feminist

perspectives and various kinds of body theory (Sofaer 2006a; Knudson and Stojanowski 2008; Lorentz 2008; Geller 2008, 2009; Hollimon 2011). Recent analyses of current and new directions in bioarchaeology have identified gender (and more generally the study of identity) as a key axis of investigation (Knudson and Stojanowski 2008; Zuckerman and Armelagos 2011). Today, osteological research into gender is very much "of the moment." Osteological approaches to gender are gradually repositioning bioarchaeology at the center of studies of past social identity, reflected in explicit recognition of the contribution of bioarchaeological work on gender to the discipline as a whole (see, for example, Joyce 2005; Ardren 2008) To date, however, apart from programmatic statements on the future of bioarchaeology (e.g., Knudson and Stojanowski 2008), many of the substantive publications on gender are within edited volumes or social archaeology journals rather than flagship physical anthropology or osteoarchaeology journals (Hollimon 2011).This may suggest that while bioarchaeological research on gender has gained ground within archaeology as a whole, it is still not fully integrated into more traditional biologically oriented aspects of the field. There remain many more references to sex rather than gender in osteological papers in a field where biological sex is seen as a fundamental parameter of study (Sofaer 2006b). Furthermore, although bioarchaeological approaches to gender have been implemented to some degree within prehistoric contexts, the majority of this kind of work has been carried out in historical settings where skeletal and documentary evidence can be used in tandem. Osteological studies of historic periods nevertheless frequently provide examples of the potential of bioarchaeology which can be used to inspire prehistoric investigations.

Method and Theory in Bioarchaeological Approaches to Gender and the Body

A traditional focus on sex as an axis of investigation raises a series of methodological issues for the ways that bioarchaeologists study gender. Although bioarchaeologists often draw a distinction between sex (the biological) and gender (the social), in practice analysis of the relationship between sex and gender is not always so clear-cut. This can result in tensions between method and theory in bioarchaeological approaches to the gendered body (Sofaer 2006a). In order to illustrate how these tensions arise, it is useful to trace briefly the stages of osteological analysis.

Typically, the first stage of analysis in bioarchaeological studies of gender is to divide skeletons into two groups, male and female, on the basis of sex determinations. Humans are sexually dimorphic (show differences in form between males and females). The extent of sexual dimorphism varies between populations but allows for assessment of sex on the basis of morphological characteristics of the skeleton, in particular the pelvis and skull. These are generally considered the most reliable areas for sex determination, the former reflecting functional differences between men and women related to childbirth (Mays and Cox 2000; Mays 2010). The next stage in the investigation of gender is typically to examine an aspect of skeletal biology that is understood to be culturally influenced, such as disease, musculoskeletal markers, or diet *in relation* to sex. In this method, sex acts as the key axis or reference point for interpretations, and gender is de facto mapped directly onto sex. Individuals who cannot be clearly sexed, including juveniles, are excluded from the analysis.

In this methodological paradigm it is seen to be necessary to establish the sex of individuals before moving on to investigate gender. Where bioarchaeologists make clear statements linking sex and gender, this practice is internally consistent. For example, Larsen states, "Human remains offer an important window into gender, largely owing to the fact that sex (a biological attribute) of an individual is nearly always revealing about their gender (a social attribute). Indeed, the jump from sex identification to social identity and behavioral inference is not a big one" (2002:145). However, where there is an insistence upon a distinction between sex and gender as meaningfully different concepts, it is not always clear why studies address gender rather than simply sex differences. Consequently, bioarchaeological method can result in tension between the apparent inferential simplicity of method and the complexity of gender theory; rather than acting as a counterfoil to the naturalization of sex differences, such a methodological approach to gender can run the risk of perpetuating them.

Some bioarchaeologists have pointed out (while not necessarily removing the possibility of a link between sex and gender) that an a priori division into male and female presupposes that sex is the most important analytical axis. They argue instead that archaeologists ought to investigate the relative importance of gender to societies by interrogating specific data patterns to see how they relate to sex, rather than assuming that they necessarily will (Agarwal n.d.). For example, osteoporosis (loss of bone mineral) has often been associated with older, post-menopausal women. In a recent study looking at the differences between urban and rural women in medieval England, Agarwal (2008) explored how different gendered expectations of behaviors for women in these two settings affected bone loss in contrasting ways; rural women showed much lower levels of osteoporosis than their urban counterparts as a result of high parity (number of births), extended breast-feeding, and engaging in physical labor. This study illustrates nicely how groups of women may differ from each other, and how gender can be used as an exploratory analytical tool rather than simply as a label (Sofaer 2006b). Other workers have argued that assuming a binary division into male and female excludes the possibility of accessing a gender spectrum, or third or fourth genders, as has been indicated for some native North American groups (Hollimon 1996, 2000, 2006).

Yet separating sex from gender in the bioarchaeological study of the body is not an easy, inevitable, or even desirable goal. Much depends on how the relationship between sex and gender is understood. This relationship is quite debated, suggesting that there could potentially be different methodological approaches to gender and the body depending on the theoretical stance of the investigator or the sample being studied. Some scholars have identified both sex and gender as culturally constructed. They are often inspired by the work of Judith Butler on gender and performance and argue for conflating sex and gender into a single concept of culturally constructed sex detached completely from the physical body (Sofaer 2006a, 2006b). Here sex is seen not as biology, but as a product of discourse that is brought into being over time through reiterative performances as people behave in particular ways (Butler 1990, 1993). Scholars in favor of this position argue against sex being fixed at birth and instead focus on the ways that people are able to manipulate and change the perception of their bodies by others. This perspective is further based on awareness of historical changes in perceptions of sex in the history of medicine (Laqueur 1990), and on the complexity of sex identity identified by reference to transsexuals,

transvestites, and historical or ethnographic accounts (e.g., Blackwood 1984; Herdt 1994; Roscoe 1998). Concern with sexuality as an aspect of individual sexed experience has also been emphasized in order to highlight that what people make of biological sex is not just reproductive (Nordbladh and Yates 1990; Gilchrist 1999; Hollimon 2000; Voss 2000; Meskell 2002). Arguments for sex as a cultural construction thus suggest that categorizing people as male or female on the basis of biological sex characteristics does not allow for potential fluidity and choice in the expression and experience of sex. Such a perspective clearly moves away from the deployment of osteological categories of male and female in a radical manner. It is therefore unsurprising that these challenges to a traditional binary view of gender and associated critiques of bioarchaeology's methodological approach to the gendered body have come primarily from outside the field, although there are also voices emerging within bioarchaeology itself. For example, Geller (2005, 2008, 2009) has argued for a feminist-inspired bioarchaeology, stating that osteologists' focus on the physical body means that they are in a unique position to enter the debate on the relationship between sex and gender.

Further critiques of bioarchaeological approaches to gender have emerged from discussions of the genotypic basis of sex, as well as of the ways that osteologists go about sexing skeletal material; these point to a range of variation in the expression of sex characteristics at both phenotypic and genotypic levels. It has been argued that sex cannot be comprehended through only two categories as there are chromosomal combinations other than the typical XX and XY (for example, individuals with XXY and XO chromosomal combinations). Molecular analysis therefore appears to support arguments about the existence of several sex categories or a sex spectrum because of a range of variation at the genotypic level. However, the total frequency of non-XX or XY genotypes in modern populations is estimated to average only 0.193 percent of live births (Blackless et al. 2000). Furthermore, past people did not see each other as genes but as bodies in the world, and the skeletal implications of chromosomal variation are unclear, so it is difficult to know how they might have been recognized (Mays and Cox 2000). With regard to the ways that bioarchaeologists sex human remains, critiques of the binary division of sex focus on the ways that they score skeletal material and biases in sexing. Both British and US guidelines to standards for recording sex recommend the use of five categories from which to choose when assessing the sex of a range of morphological features on the pelvis and skull (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Brickley and McKinley 2004). These categories are: definite male – probable male – unknown – probable female – definite female. It has been argued that this reflects a continuum of variation and that sex is therefore a spectrum (Nordbladh and Yates 1990; Yates 1993). Such comments, however, misconstrue the principles behind osteological scoring, which are not to do with the existence of a spectrum and correspondence between a recording scale and a range of sexes, but with the analyst's degree of certainty in estimating sex from any single morphological feature (Geller 2005; Sofaer 2006a). Osteological scoring methods explicitly recognize potential variation in the expression of sex, but in reality such variation is not evenly distributed along a spectrum existing within two categories that are termed "male" and "female" (Sofaer 2006a, 2006b). What is at stake here, therefore, is not whether sex exists but our ability to classify it (Sørensen 2000). Similarly, bias in sexing does not mean that biological sex does not exist but rather challenges osteologists to develop more

accurate sexing techniques (Walker 1995; Sofaer 2006a); the aim of osteology is to find ways of analyzing the variation that is already observed in the skeleton. At the eighteenth- to nineteenth-century site of Spitalfields in London, where coffin plates indicate the names, and hence the sex of individuals, Molleson and Cox (1993) tested the reliability of standard osteological sexing methods and reported that 98 percent of adult skeletons were successfully identified.

At present, the majority of bioarchaeological research favors an understanding of sex as a physical rather than culturally constructed feature and gender as the cultural elaboration of natural sex differences (Sofaer 2006a; Lorentz 2008). Although some commentators regard this as old-fashioned and symptomatic of bioarchaeologists' lack of engagement with social theory (Geller 2008), others see this perspective as linked to the material reality of sex and the implications of sex differences for aspects of skeletal biology that affect how social and cultural factors play out on the body (Armelagos 1998; Sofaer 2006a, 2006b). For example, in a study of gender differences in oral health in South Asia, Lukacs (2011) found that while the prevalence of dental caries in children was greater in males than in females, by adolescence and adulthood the pattern was reversed, with women displaying similar or greater prevalence of caries to men. This pattern can be explained by a range of cultural factors including differences between the treatment of boys and girls, the religious fasting of women, and the practice of "eating down" in pregnancy, which leads to a greater risk of caries later in life but is also the result of hormonal changes at menarche that lead to changes in oral ecology. Greater prevalence of dental caries in adult women than men is a widespread observation in skeletal samples from a range of contrasting contexts, so it cannot be due solely to cultural factors although in some contexts it also implicates them (Lukacs 2008).

Since these complex relationships between biological factors and the expression of gender on the body are increasingly being recognized, they demand theoretical frameworks through which sex and gender can be examined. One response to this concern is to understand the body as plastic with particular material properties. These properties are biological, but because bodies develop within social relations, there is no such thing as a neutral, purely biological body (Sofaer 2006a, 2006b). People can accept or reject different forms or levels of gendered action, and the body acknowledges the effects of such decisions. In other words, understanding the human body is a matter of how the skeleton is interpreted in terms of it being the product of social action and biology together. Such an approach aims to take account of the physicality of the body and the reality of sex, as well as accounting for the ways that gender is materially articulated in the skeleton as a result of social practice. In this perspective gender is not just a mental construction, and the body is itself a form of material culture (Sofaer 2006a).

Bioarchaeological Investigations of Gender

Bioarchaeological investigations of gender have explored a wide range of issues. In a recent survey of sex and gender in bioarchaeological research, Hollimon (2011) has identified six major research themes: mortuary analysis, activity reconstruction through studies of the division of labor and occupational specialization, health and

disease, stable isotope analysis of diet and human mobility, intentional body modification, and violence and warfare. To these might be added questions about gender and the life course (including human ontogeny), reproduction, childbirth and breastfeeding, and the origins of gender. Given the breadth of these research themes, it is not surprising that bioarchaeological studies have tended to explore gender in terms of a range of different and sometimes complementary characterizations, including gender identities, gender roles, and gender relations.

In mortuary analyses, the focus of bioarchaeological investigations of gender has typically been to provide sex determinations of skeletons in order to allow comparisons in patterns of the gendered treatment of the deceased through the sex associations of grave goods, body positioning, and orientation. Here the focus has been on the ways that differences between people are articulated, and whether and how their identities in life matter in death (Sofaer and Sørensen in press). The potential of osteological analyses to contribute to understanding the gendered identity of the deceased has been highlighted in discussions of non-binary genders where systematic discrepancies between biological sex and grave goods have been interpreted as third or fourth gender individuals (e.g., Claassen 1992; Hollimon 2006). Osteological analyses have also been influential in contributing to the interpretation of exceptional individual burials. One of the best-known examples of this is the interpretation of the Iron Age burial of the so-called "Princess of Vix" in France (Arnold 1991). The grave contained the bones of a female approximately 35 years old, as well as an unusual rich assemblage of imported objects, numerous pieces of "women's' jewelry," and a gold torc (usually associated with males). This led to an apparent conflict between expectations that such rich Iron Age graves were for males and the sexing of the skeleton. Since the excavation of the Vix burial in the 1950s, a range of interpretations have been proposed; some have argued for a unique social status, but others have attempted to argue for a male gender identity, either by suggesting this was the burial of a transvestite priest (Spindler 1983) or by referring to the person as an "honorary male" (Arnold 1991). Recent work has discussed the physical condition of the body, indicating that she had "a waddling gait and a wry-neck deformity" and that she was probably a person with ritual knowledge (Knüsel 2002:299).

Studies of gendered activity patterns have tended to focus on gender roles and the division of labor, an approach that owes much to Conkey and Spector's (1984) seminal article in which gender was presented in terms of the construction of identity through action. Exploration of gender roles also lends itself methodologically to bioarchaeological investigation through the study of activity-related skeletal modifications including degenerative joint changes, musculoskeletal markers, trauma, and tooth wear. At the Mesolithic and Neolithic site of Tell Abu Hureyra, Syria, Molleson (1989, 1994) found that female skeletons had metatarsal-phalangeal joint modifications and degenerative changes to the margins of joints in the first metatarsals of older individuals. Women are depicted grinding cereal in this posture in Assyrian and Dynastic tomb art (Molleson 1989), and she suggested that bone changes in women were the result of prolonged hyperdorsiflexion of the toes while kneeling. Nevertheless, it is frequently difficult to be specific about the exact nature of gendered activities in the past without accompanying iconographic or ethnographic evidence. There are therefore practical limitations to the precision with which osteoarchaeological work can be employed regarding gendered activity patterns, particularly in prehistoric

contexts (Knüsel 2000). It is more often possible to explore a general notion of gendered lifeways. Such an approach can be used to question assumptions about the division of labor and the nature of "women's work" and "men's work." For example, in a study of the transition to agriculture in the Levant, Peterson (2002) studied musculoskeletal stress markers (bone remodeling at muscle attachment sites arising from repetitive and stressful loading) to inform on changes in the division of labor from the hunter-gatherer Natufian period through to the mixed farming communities of the Early Bronze Age. The transition to agriculture has frequently been structured in terms of "what sex does what work," but in the absence of representational imagery many archaeological discussions had previously been somewhat ethnocentric (Nelson 2002). Peterson found that, in general, female activity patterns tended to be more stable through time while males experienced a more profound reorganization of activity (2002). Her study revealed that the first use of domestic plants and animals in the Levant was associated with a more physically demanding lifestyle which led to convergence in patterns and severity of musculoskeletal stress markers on male and female bodies. This suggests that many economic activities were widely shared and that the sex-based division of labor was not necessarily particularly strong for early extensive agriculture. Such a data-focused approach has the benefit of separating questions about the division of labor from discussions of gender asymmetry and inequality by refraining from the assignment of the relative value of men and women's work. It also points to the contextual specificity of the gendered division of labor.

Studies investigating the influence of gender on health and disease are frequently linked to understanding the gendered division of labor in terms of the differential exposure of men and women to pathogens or nutritional deficiency. They therefore also frequently (although not exclusively) focus on gender roles. For example, Martin (2000) examined patterns of health and disease linked to corn grinding and consumption patterns in prehispanic populations in the American Southwest. Other work has shown how sex differences in growth derive from gender-based feeding practices (Rousham 1999). In this case biology is the medium through which gender discrimination can be made visible, and gender roles have the power to shape biological outcomes. In other contexts and for other diseases, however, studies have found complex interplays between gender and other factors in the development of health risks that can challenge received wisdom. For example, recent work compared the health of a late Iron Age sample with one from the Romano-British period in England using a range of variables that reflect the general health of the population (Redfern and DeWitte 2010). The results showed that health was better and mortality was lower in the late Iron Age where no sex differences in mortality were present. After the Roman conquest mortality risk increased, particularly for men. This result contradicts presumptions regarding the benefits of incorporation into the Empire and the higher status of the male body in the Roman world. Redfern and DeWitte (2010) suggest that the consequences of urbanism, changes in diet, and increased population heterogeneity negatively impacted health to the extent that the enhanced cultural buffering of men did not outweigh underlying sex differences in biology, which otherwise tend to advantage women. Teasing out the relationship between biological sex differences and gendered behaviors poses a significant challenge for bioarchaeologists, who are increasingly realizing the complexity of interactions between biological and sociocultural factors that determine the experience of health and disease for men and

women. This is further complicated by the so-called "osteological paradox" (Wood et al. 1992), which suggests that the prevalence of lesions of a particular condition seen in a cemetery sample does not directly reflect its abundance in the living population. Rather, individuals have different experiences and susceptibility to health and illness, resulting in selective mortality. In other words, a skeleton without evident lesions need not represent a healthy person but could be a weak individual who had little resistance and perished at the first exposure to a pathogen (Wright and Yoder 2003).

The use of stable isotopes to examine diet and migration is one of the fastest growing areas of study in bioarchaeology (Stojanowski and Buikstra 2005). Stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen differ in different classes of foods, and these are reflected in skeletal tissues, making it possible to examine paleodiets. Isotopic ratios of strontium vary according to local geology, and oxygen isotopes in rainwater differ according to local climate. These are passed on to human tissues via foods and drinking water. Many isotope studies involve examining differences between men and women and have been used to shed light on gender relations. Indeed, some of the earliest applications of these new techniques were explicitly applied to investigations of gender. For example, Hastorf's (1991) investigation of shifts in the position of women in the Inka state included an examination of their access to particular foods through carbon and nitrogen stable isotopes. The results suggested that an enrichment of male diets through increased maize consumption was not matched by women, indicating differential consumption. More recent work has often combined the study of gender with other social variables. For instance, at the pre-Columbian site of Cahokia Mound 72 in North America, Ambrose et al. (2003) compared nitrogen and carbon isotope ratios in male and female individuals from high and low status graves and found that the consumption of animal protein and maize varied with both status and sex. Such work is providing exciting new insights into the range of ways that gender can be socially expressed and its effect on the body. However, interpretive difficulties can sometimes arise when ethnocentric assumptions regarding the relative value of different kinds of foodstuffs (such as the assumption that meat was a high status food and plant-based diets were low status) are imposed onto the past and used to create interpretations about the relative social status of men and women without additional evidence. Studies of human migration using strontium, carbon, and oxygen are based on the principle that, unlike bone, dental tissues do not remodel with age, so the isotopic signatures in teeth can be used to indicate the local or non-local origin of an individual by comparing values with a local control sample. In a study of mobility at the site of Khok Phanom Di in Thailand (ca. 2100–1500 B.C.E.), for example, Bentley et al. (2007) found a period of female migration to the site was followed by a shift to local strontium isotope values accompanied by an increase in the prestige of female burials. They suggested that this reflects a shift in the pattern of exogamy with a concomitant change in gender relations (see also Nelson this volume). In other contexts, isotope studies of migration have the potential to provoke reconsideration of previous conceptualizations of gender relations. For example, human mobility during the Bell Beaker phase in Central Europe has frequently been discussed in terms of female exogamy in marital residence (Brodie 1994; Price et al. 1998). Recent research has led to an increase in the corpus of isotopic data showing that men and women, as well as some children, were mobile (Price et al. 2004). In light of this work, a

rethinking of gender stereotypes toward more socially inclusive notions of migration may be required.

Investigations of violence and warfare have tended to examine sex differences in the prevalence of traumatic injury in specific contexts, as well as over time, often through the lens of gender relations. For example, in a diachronic study of human remains from prehistoric Italy, Robb (1997a) found that from the Bronze Age onward skeletal trauma was much more common in males. He suggested that this was due to the development of gender roles that prescribed violent behavior for males. Interestingly, despite some other studies revealing male violence (e.g., Walker 2001; Paine et al. 2007) and the development of a distinctive literature on masculinity both inside and outside archaeology (Alberti 2006), relatively little attention has so far been given to discussions of masculinity in bioarchaeology. Interpersonal violence in the past was not, however, confined to men. Hollimon (2011) points out that skeletal evidence for trauma has often been interpreted along androcentric lines; when found on males it is attributed to combat whereas on women it is ascribed to raids or domestic violence. New work is furthering more sophisticated understandings of the gendered nature of interpersonal violence, however, by exploring the role and motivations of women in violence. In their investigation of the Ancestral Pueblo human remains from the La Plata Valley, for example, Martin et al. (2010) found that there were two distinct groups of women: women who lacked cranial trauma and who had received a culturally appropriate burial; and women who had suffered cranial trauma (including non-lethal injuries), showed skeletal signs of having worked hard throughout their lives, and were thrown haphazardly into abandoned pits. The first group has been interpreted as local women who may have been attempting to reduce their own morbidity risks by both sanctioning and supporting the subordination of captive women obtained in raiding activities. The captive women (having been beaten and worked hard) benefited both the local men and women at La Plata. This study illustrates the complex ways in which structural violence operates, the potential for distinguishing functional differences in violent behaviors based on gender, and the ways that violence can become culturally normalized (Martin et al. 2010).

Work on bodily modification in bioarchaeology moves away from discussion of gender roles and relations toward the expression and deliberate manipulation of gendered identities, often in conjunction with examinations of ethnicity and status. It has focused on practices such as head binding, foot binding, the use of labrets, dental evulsion, or severing of fingers, all of which are intended to change the "look" of the body (e.g., Milner and Larsen 1991; Robb 1997b; Torres-Rouff and Yablonsky 2005; Lorentz 2008). In addition to documenting and describing a range of such cultural practices, bioarchaeological approaches to bodily modification have deployed sophisticated body theory, discussing gender in terms of the materialization of symbolic concepts and social relationships, and focusing in particular on the ways that bodily differences are used to create social difference. For example, in a study of head shaping in prehistoric Cyprus, Lorentz (2008) has argued that intentional modification of head shape through binding the heads of infants during the Late Bronze Age provided a form of gendered physical social capital. Here the gendered body was actively made in a gendered manner and used as a medium of cultural display.

Insights into gender have increasingly recognized its link to age (Sofaer 2004, 2006b, 2011). Since the human body changes over the life course through, for

example, the development of secondary sex characteristics or alterations to appearance in old age reflected in skeletal morphology, questions about gender and the life course (including human ontogeny) are fertile areas for osteoarchaeological investigation (Gowland 2006; Sofaer 2006b, 2011). The bioarchaeological study of social identity in relation to age is a relatively recent development. Nevertheless, studies of the ways that people lead their lives and how these materially shape their bodies from birth to death are beginning to be undertaken (Sofaer 2006a; Agarwal and Beauchesne 2011). These include investigations of gender as a process of "engendering" that takes place over the life course as the expectations and abilities of individuals develop and biological processes of body change take place, prompting some bioarchaeologists to view the body as a gendered project that is always "becoming" (Sofaer 2006a, 2006b; Lorentz 2008). In a recent study of old age in Bronze Age Central Europe, Appleby (2010) investigates social responses to aging by exploring the temporality of body changes and the effects that age and aging might have had on particular persons through a detailed study of individual skeletons in combination with an analysis of individual and community burial practices. Other studies have used a life course perspective to examine risk and social agency by looking at skeletal injuries in the context of life-long processes guided by culturally specific social relations (e.g., Glencross 2011).

Questions about reproduction, childbirth, and breastfeeding are related to the study of the life course and are inevitably linked to understandings of the female gendered body, not least because they have frequently been invoked to explain patterns of gendered divisions of labor and indeed the origins of gender. Bioarchaeology has been able to make substantial contributions to understanding these aspects of women's lives by investigating their traces on the body, including the study of demography and fertility rates (e.g., Bentley et al. 2001), a reconsideration of gendered models of pelvic anatomy in relation to childbirth (Stone and Walrath 2006), scars of parturition developed on the pelvis during childbirth (Cox 2000), the effects of lactation on human bone mass (Agarwal 2008), and risk factors for osteoporosis (Agarwal and Stuart-Macadam 2003). Such work increasingly aims not to naturalize gender roles but rather to explore the biological effects of women's experiences within specific cultural contexts. Here gender is identified as part of cultural practice in terms of how the arrangement of women's roles, relations to children, and relationships with others are negotiated and interpreted in specific social contexts (Sørensen 2000).

Discussions of the origins of gender differences are frequently set within considerations of the evolution of the human body (see Hager 1997; Zihlman this volume). Nevertheless, feminist bioarchaeologists dealing with anatomically modern humans have been skeptical of accounts that identify morphological sex differences in contemporary terms. They have been particularly critical of the androcentric political connotations of interpretations of women's reproduction and the mother–infant relationship that seem to locate the gendered division of labor since the Paleolithic in terms of men as hunters and women as passive stay-at-home child-carers. A number of archaeologists have emphasized the important economic and social contributions of women, as well as the specific contexts of their lives (e.g., Zihlman and Tanner 1978; Lancaster 1991; Hager 1997; Sørensen 2000; Stone and Walrath 2006).

Prospects for the Future of Osteological Approaches to the Gendered Body in Prehistory

Osteological approaches to gender have made enormous progress in the last 15 years. They are starting to both explore and challenge long-held understandings about the prehistoric past. To date, however, much of this has been based on expansion of the number of case studies and the application of new analytical techniques, such as those allowing insights into diet and migration, rather than radical shifts in methodological approach. The integration of novel methods into the study of gender looks set to continue as they are increasingly incorporated into the discipline as a whole. In particular, the analysis of DNA has been suggested as a profitable avenue of research to eliminate uncertainty of sex determination in conventional morphological methods, especially for immature skeletons (Brown 1998, 2000; Schmidt 2004; Brown and Brown 2011). However, DNA research also poses new challenges to our understandings of the constitution of sex and gender that have to do with the nature of the categorization of personal identity. Although DNA analysis seems to offer the unambiguous categorization of individuals, it does not necessarily tell us what people made of their bodies (Sofaer and Sørensen in press). Some scholars have expressed concerns that it may simply give us more data rather than socially informative answers (Joyce n.d.). The application of DNA research to the study of gender therefore requires further development and critical reflection (Sofaer and Sørensen in press).

Insights into the lived experience of the gendered body in prehistory are more likely to come from work combining bioarchaeological and ethnographic or historical information, which can be used as comparative data for prehistoric contexts. This is not to say that the experiences of living groups can simply be transposed onto the past, but that such work provides much needed baseline data revealing the aetiology of skeletal changes. It offers a deeper understanding of bone biology and provides analogies that are critical to interpreting human skeletons. Although there has been some work using historically and ethnographically documented skeletal samples (e.g., Merbs 1983; Molleson and Cox 1993; Sofaer Derevenski 2000; Brickley 2002; Buikstra and Beck 2006), the rarity of such skeletal collections and the advantages of being able to interview patients to record their lifeways mean that the main prospects for this kind of research currently lie in working with living people. Utilization of sophisticated measuring and imaging techniques such as DEXA (dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry) and CT (X-ray computed tomography) to examine bone density and bone geometry are playing an increasing role in this kind of research, as are analysis of hormones and other variables studied through soft tissue or blood samples (e.g., Cardoso 2006; Lukacs 2011).

Recent advances in the study of mortuary contexts using an approach known as "anthropologie de terrain" (Duday 2006) have great potential to further expand upon understandings of the gendered treatment of the body in prehistoric mortuary contexts. This approach seeks to analyze the taphonomy of burials by examining the position of the skeletal remains as they lie in the grave. It offers details regarding the pre- and post-depositional treatment of the body and hence allows for reconstruction of the acts that constituted the mortuary rituals. Although "anthropologie de terrain" has not yet been widely applied with the aim of understanding gender, its principles

have been used, for example, in an exploration of individual and community identity production through the deliberate articulation of similarities and differences between body treatments at the Mesolithic cemeteries of Vedbæk Bøgebakken, Skateholm I and II, and Zvejnieki (Nilsson Stutz 2003, 2010).

Alongside these analytical developments new voices within the field are injecting increasing theoretical sophistication into the bioarchaeological study of the gendered body. As a response to interpretive approaches applied by colleagues in other branches of archaeology, there is growing interest in understanding the body as a site of the lived experience of gender (Knudson and Stojanowksi 2008; Agarwal and Beauchesne 2011; Barrett and Blakey 2011). A focus on embodiment, sometimes in conjunction with queer theory, is moving studies of gender away from abstracted categories toward evidence of diverse experiences and the body as a site of embodied agency (Joyce 2005; Hollimon 2011; see also Alberti this volume; Bulger and Joyce this volume; Marshall this volume). An osteobiographical approach to the study of human remains, although not itself a new framework, holds much promise in this regard since it offers the possibility for detailed studies of individual lives in contrast to broader population level studies (Saul and Saul 1989; Robb 2002). Calls to understand gender in relation to other aspects of human identity (e.g., Meskell 2002; Joyce 2005; Sofaer 2006a; Geller 2008) are also finding fruitful ground. Rather than focusing on sex as the sole variable through which to investigate gender, bioarchaeological research is starting to consider the ways that gender identities may intersect with other aspects of identity, including status, age, ethnicity, religion and sexuality.

Existing and new bioarchaeological approaches have enormous potential for the study of gender in prehistory. In conjunction with these, practitioners are developing a greater awareness of the theoretical and interpretive possibilities (as well as pitfalls) in the study of human remains. This combination makes bioarchaeological approaches to the gendered body dynamic, provocative, and rewarding.

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CHAPTER 12

Figurines, Corporeality, and the Origins of the Gendered Body

Douglass W. Bailey

How do prehistoric figurines from the Neolithic (6500–3500 B.C.E.) of central and eastern Europe help us to understand gender constructs and gender roles at that time in that region, and what does a study of these objects reveal about subsequent constructions of gender and the rhetorical power that the body has had in gender construction? In this chapter I argue that figurines were potent elements in the construction of ideas about identities and of gendered bodies (indeed that they mark the origins of the gendered body as we know it today), and that their impact long outlasted their original contexts, chronology, and geography.

At a global scale, anthropomorphic figurines have drawn disproportionate attention among archaeologists, anthropologists, and art historians; the prehistory of central and eastern Europe is no exception. Discussions have ranged from the widely influential arguments of Marija Gimbutas and the Mother-Goddess community to more general discussions of cult, ritual, and ceremony, to proposals that figurines functioned as toys, as portraits of ancestors, as teaching devices, and on to more recent, less inflexible, debates over deeper levels of understanding that have examined the material and psychological conditions which powered figurines to function as they did.

I suggest that in all of these debates (including my own earlier work), we may have missed the most significant role that figurines played in the longer trajectory of human social development over the past 8000 years. I suggest that if we step back and take a deeper, broader look, then we will confront a significance of prehistoric figurines that dwarfs the proposals of Gimbutas, myself, and of the others who have dedicated thought to these objects.

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My contention is that Neolithic figurines are important to the study of gender (and indeed of anthropology, political science, feminism, masculinism, sexuality studies, art history, philosophy, and on and on across the humanities and social sciences) because they played a fundamental (though previously unrecognized) role in the elevation of the body as the basic concept of reference with which modern Western societies understand their worlds and frame their systems of understanding. In brief, the body is central to our modern bio-psycho-social reference for being because the body-form emerged as dominant through the creation, use, perception, and presence of anthropomorphic figurines during a 3000-year period starting at 6500 B.C.E. Gender and the power of its construction within society are consequences of the elevation of the body in Western philosophies of being (though it is only one of several similarly influential constructions that are layered onto the surface of the body – race, sex, formism – and which are central to constructed social realities).

To understand Neolithic European figurines as one of the key elements in the elevation of the body (and subsequently of gendered bodies) is to examine figurines as representations and to reveal the underlying (and unsupportable) assumptions at the centers of traditional reconstructions of Neolithic society as statically gendered and matriarchic. Critically, it is important to recognize the emergence of a lifestyle in which there developed a way of thinking that shaped the body as one of the core elements of being in the world.

Figurines and the Politics of Representation

Figurines are representations. Every act of representation is an interpretation of a reality or, more likely, every act is one element within many constructions of one of many realities. Every act of representation is a statement (intentional or casual, conscious or subconscious) that interprets a reality though the dimensions of a particular medium (e.g., word, song, poem, photograph, painting, sculpture, avatar). Every act of representation has the potential to affect a viewer (or handler, or listener, or taster) in a different, particular, and distinct way. The composition, content, and intensity of those effects depend both on the experiences and position (e.g., in society, in span of life) of the perceiver and on the particular conditions of the representation (i.e., some materials, shapes, combinations afford particular reactions, in Gibson's [1979] sense). Furthermore, the consequences for an individual perceiving a representation can be conscious, noted, and felt, but they can just as easily be subconscious, missed, not noted, and not felt.

As representations, therefore, prehistoric Neolithic European figurines are not direct reflections of a prehistoric Neolithic European reality for a community, for a household, for a village, or for a culture. Figurines do not provide a direct reflection of a society, or of a social structure, or of political relations. In this sense, Neolithic figurines do not present us with an objective picture of gender relations in Neolithic Europe. They do not enable us to read these communities as matriarchies or, for that matter, as patriarchies, or as any other single entity. Understanding figurines (as with any other image) rests on the realization that they are representations *for* (i.e., they are not representations *of*). By seeing that figurines are representations *for*, one recognizes that they have agency. Though it is possible that this agency follows from an

intention that a figurine maker may have had, it is much more likely (perhaps even unavoidable) that figurine agency is completely detached from any original intention. Figurines do. Figurines act. Figurines affect. Figurines afford. Most critically in the context of the study of gender, figurines construct.

False Assumptions

Understanding figurines as representations with agency irrevocably affects our perspective on existing interpretations of the Neolithic European material. Particularly affected are the current, dominant, long-accepted arguments made by many local and international archaeologists, art historians, and archaeomythologists about gender (im)balances in Neolithic European villages or cultures. Most critically affected are the claims for a matriarchal society in the Neolithic that are based on the categorization of figurines. These claims are unfounded as, indeed, would be unfounded claims for patriarchies or other claims based primarily on figurine (or other) representations or prehistoric activity (and in the later category I include the burial record).[1] The fact that the matriarchic reconstruction of Neolithic society has remained popular and is still accepted in some communities of scholars and many parts of the interested public derives from the acceptance of several important (though unsupportable) assumptions.

One of the most fundamental assumptions that remains (stubbornly) in academic currency holds that the majority of European Neolithic figurines are female and that male representations are few. This assumption is false. There is now incontrovertible evidence not only for the presence of figurines with penises and with beards (Figure 12.1 and Figure 12.2) but also for a large number of examples that are neither male nor female, but which merely take the shape of the human body (e.g., Meskell and Joyce 2003:95–127; Bailey 2005; Hardie 2007). In addition to these sexless or asexual figurines (perhaps they should be called corporeal figurines) there is also good evidence for figurines that appear to have both male and female body parts, the hermaphrodite or hybrid figurines (Whittle 1998, 2003).

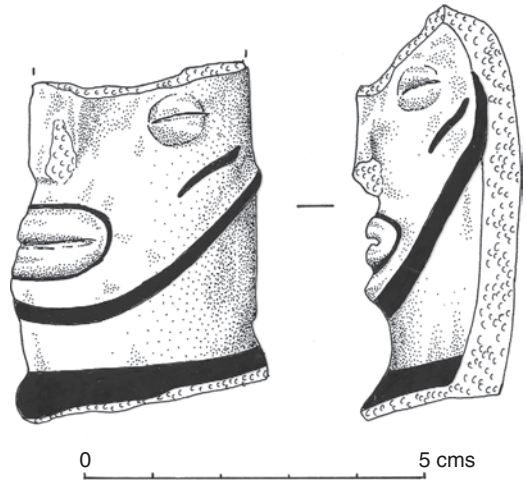


Figure 12.1 Bearded figurine from Achilleion, Greece (drawing courtesy of Howard Mason).

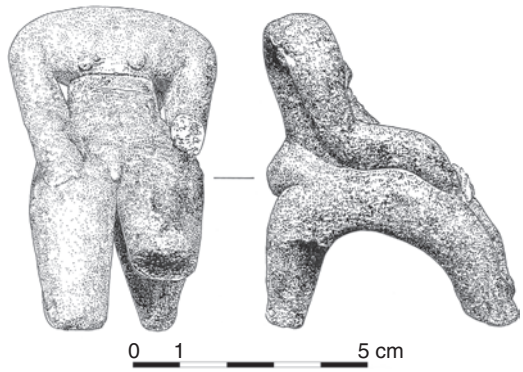


Figure 12.2 Figurine with penis from Koutsouro, Greece (drawing courtesy of Howard Mason).

What emerges from an accurate assessment of the presence and absence (and in some cases co-presence) of sexualized body parts is the recognition that the reality of the figurine population of Neolithic Europe in central and eastern Europe is much more varied than is commonly admitted in the standard syntheses, most of which conclude that female representation dominated. There is no question that the number (and weighted percentages) of figurines with female body parts or surface decoration is greater than those that can be identified as male. However, when played across the entire inventory of Neolithic European figurines, the majority of examples are sexless or asexual. If anything, the total population of figurines from this period and region speak not of male or female, but of the human body in a way that does not have a clearly sexed depiction.

A second assumption that has given authority to the standard interpretation of Neolithic Europe as matriarchic holds that the attribution of sex to a figurine is straightforward. This assumption is also false. Anyone who has worked with figurines in the flesh, who has been faced with boxes and boxes of figurines and (as is more often the case) of fragments of figurines, will have been faced with the simple (yet unavoidably annoying) realization that it is not always easy (or in many cases possible) to determine if a figurine (fragmentary or complete) is male or female. Unquestionably, there are figurines on which, for example, genitalia are clearly and conspicuously depicted (Figure 12.3) and, for such, identifications can be quickly made. More frequent, however, are the cases where the clarity and conspicuousness of features are substantially reduced. The classic questions of morphological typology emerge (e.g., when is a nipple female and when is it male? when are hips female and when are they male?) but are seldom addressed. The problem of "sexing" a fragment ("is this leg male or female?") is equally, if not more, problematic.[2]

Let us assume (even having just noted the danger or at least difficulty of doing so) that it is possible to sex individual figurines and figurine fragments. In doing so, we confront another assumption: that the concepts "male" and "female" were singular, unchanging, and shared within and across communities. Standard work on the Neolithic material has assumed that any definition of sexuality or gender (of male and female) that can be determined and read off from one assemblage, site, region, or culture, was static and homogeneous across geography and chronology. To a certain

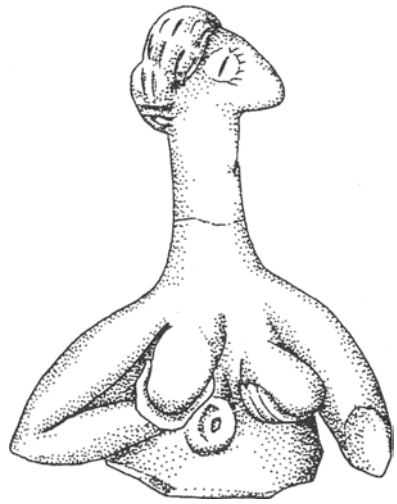


Figure 12.3 Figurine with displayed breasts from Achilleion (drawing courtesy of Howard Mason).

degree this assumption is useful as it allows synthetic interpretation across periods, regions, and even continents; its value is highest in the approaches of culture historians. However, in the light of what is now uncontroversial anthropological, sociological, and other social science research, the assumption that concepts such as male and female were static across time and space is unsupportable. Our error (and in my own earlier work, I was equally culpable) has been to oversimplify the ways in which people thought about identity and indeed about what it meant to be human in the Neolithic. We have been reducing prehistoric reality to fit within the limits of narrow (and now seen as unsophisticated) modern perceptions.

The problems of typologizing and sexing figurines and of conceptual stasis and homogeneity are less worrisome than originally it might seem because the very categories that are being defined and sought in standard assessments of a figurine are themselves unstable (and thus the sexual typologizing has little relevance). Their use rests on the acceptance of a third assumption: that there was something that was conceived of as "female" and another thing understood as "male" in the European Neolithic. This assumption is also false. Having recognized that the majority of figurines have neither male nor female body parts, but are asexual, sexless, or perhaps most accurately "corporeal," it is less easy to accept that there were clear and stable Neolithic concepts of male and female. Indeed, it is difficult to find evidence that the Neolithic understanding of human identity was restricted to any static concept. The recognition of an expanded set of sexual body definitions (i.e., male, female, sexless, and bisexual or hermaphroditic) suggests that the reduction of Neolithic society to two dimensions (male and female) is misguided. It seems much more likely that there were many more categories in play, and that such categories were much more flexible, permeable, and contested.

Another critical question emerges: of those we think we can identify in the Neolithic, are any concepts or beliefs universal for a person, a household, a village, a region, or a culture?[3] Are we justified in making statements that generalize so baldly about belief

and thought that we are comfortable to assign one meaning to a set of objects that most probably were used in different ways, for different purposes, and by different people through a single day in the prehistoric past? I suggest that the answer is no. As archaeologists of the prehistoric past, we have sought to provide answers and easily digested interpretations at a time when we should have known that in doing so we were practicing an unethical sleight-of-hand. Thus, just as we realize that in the modern world there is no longer support for essentialist claims for static definitions of person, sexuality, or gender, so also must we acknowledge that there is no support for them when we engage the prehistoric past.

Having noted these unsupportable assumptions and recognized that we cannot read figurines as a simple reflection of Neolithic society and gender dynamics (matriarchic or otherwise), there would seem to be little that could be learned from figurines about gender in the Neolithic or in a broader context. Following the argument that they are representations *for* (and not representations *of*), one might conclude that figurines have nothing at all to tell us about the Neolithic people who made, held, used, and discarded them. That is not the case. First, I suggest that figurines tell us what Neolithic people were thinking about. Second, I contend that figurines tell us how people constructed conceptions of themselves and of other people (gendered and otherwise). Finally, I argue that Neolithic European figurines reveal one of the ways in which our modern understanding of being human has become gendered and has been dominated by the body as the central frame of reference for understanding our place in the world.

The Paradox of Absence and Constructing Being

It is one of the paradoxes of Neolithic figurines that in their patterns of morphology and surface decoration, the elements that are depicted (the body shapes, body parts, and surface decorations) are of least importance to our interpretation of them (Bailey 2007). The making and decorating of a figurine were processes of selection and abstraction. No figurine depicts every aspect of a human body; some parts and features are selected for depiction and others are left out. Other features are applied in only the slightest recognizable form. Thus, many figurines do not have detailed facial features – the head is fashioned with the slightest protrusions of clay for a nose, shallow impressions for eyes, a slit for a mouth, nothing for ears; some have no arms, others no feet. Many of the earliest figurines bear the slightest of similarities with the human body, appearing as nothing more than a vaguely human shape. On the other hand, some figurines pay particular attention to the torso or the hips while others have faces that are full of living expression, eyes with eyelashes, or ears with holes for earrings. In all of this there is no overarching pattern that accommodates all of the different regional or chronological variations of figurines; indeed, there is considerable variation within any one phase or culture. The only constant is that no figurine fully depicts the biology of a human body; the creative process of selection and abstraction is present everywhere.

Understood in this sense of selection and abstraction, we can define figurines in terms of what is missing, of what is not depicted; in other words, we can define them in terms of absence. Absence is a potent phenomenon and has the power to play a

major role in the processes of constructing meaning, especially through the desire to rejoin and regain a seemingly lost sense of wholeness (Freud 1899; Lacan 1966, 1973; Fuery 1995). Absence is a powerful and central constituent of being, but it is also a paradox: that which is not present is more fundamental to understanding our existence and to our conceptions of reality than that which is present. To understand how this works requires an understanding of how our brains (and the brains of Neolithic people) react to the absence of information.

The psychologist Richard Gregory has investigated what happens when our brains are confronted with challenges to sensory perception, particularly when we see a recognizable image that has a part missing (Gregory 1977, 1980, 1997, 1998; Gregory and Harris 1975; Gregory and Heard 1979). The brain solves these types of problems by calling on its record of our previous experiences and then efficiently providing the missing information. In most situations this is not a problem, and our brains are so good at doing this that we don't even notice that it has happened. However, when a significant amount of information is missing, our brains struggle to fill in the gap(s). Our brains search our experiences for the missing information with increasing intensity. In the most extreme situations, when the amount or type of missing information is substantial enough, our brains fail to fill the vacuum.

Even in their failure, however, they continue to try, devoting more and more energy (literally more and more thought) to solve the problem. The search for the missing information takes on greater and greater significance in our minds as does the particular information that is missing and as does the context from which it is missing. In this way, what is not depicted becomes the focus of increasing amounts of our attention and thought. If what is missing is a part of the body, then that part of the body takes on heightened significance. None of this is to claim that the leaving out of a bodily feature was intentional or that the stimulus to thought was planned. The intentions of modeling and decorating are irrelevant; the effects (unintended) that they had on the person looking at and handling the figurine are what matter. The importance of a figurine is to be found in how it is perceived.

The absence of features of the bodies or faces of Neolithic figurines is important because their absence tells us what people are thinking about. Paradoxically, people are not thinking about those body parts that are depicted; they are thinking about those parts that are not present. At another level, the argument about the paradoxical importance of what is missing casts the shadow of another concern over the way that we understand clearly sexualized figurines: are the sexualized body parts of importance, or are they epiphenomena, and do they thus have little significance for the meaning of the artifact? The argument from absence suggests the latter. Gregory's conclusions about the intensity of the significance that is given (subconsciously) to the more substantial absences leads to the suggestion that those figurines with the least amount of bodily detail had the greatest role to play in emergent Neolithic negotiations of identity politics, including (though not limited to) the gendering of the body.

My argument is that the combination of presences and absences of body features (particularly sexual body parts and personal facial features) from Neolithic figurines is important because it tells us that when people were looking at and handling these objects, they were (probably subconsciously) wrestling with different ways that the human body could be or should be depicted. They were filling in the gaps and the blanks as they imagined that they should be filled. They were constructing the body,

and in doing so they were defining the corporeal definition of being in the world. What emerged was a particular corporeal definition of being in which different body parts took on unequal significances; this process created what we recognize as gendered bodies, sexualized bodies, racialized bodies, strong bodies, successful bodies, attractive bodies, clean bodies, dirty bodies, and all kinds of other bodies. Without doubt, this process was gradual and followed an uncharted and unplanned trajectory; many events and many engagements with many objects by many people over many centuries led to the gradual sedimentation of norms of perceptions based on the body and its shape and surface variation.

Touch and the Proximal Understanding of the Body

By thinking about Neolithic figurines with the suggestions presented by the paradox of absence, it is possible to begin to see figurines in a less secure, less static, and less fixed way. What one saw is not necessarily what one got: body parts that were depicted were less important than those that were absent. Critically, the thought processes that were stimulated by absence opened up complex, though not necessarily conclusive, conceptualizations of what were the important physical parts of being human. This argument could be applied to any representation of the human body: graphic, oral, written, three-dimensional and material, or of other media. Figurines, however, are not just any medium of representation; they are material and three-dimensional. These material conditions are vital; figurines were representations that afforded being touched and handled.

As a mechanism of engagement with the senses, touch is distinct from sight because it allows a particular type of relationship to knowing to emerge. Touch takes a person beyond mere physical connection and provokes a complex engagement which is unmediated and where an intimate proximity is reached (Levinas 1969, 1978, 1990). Touching invokes a relationship which extends beyond simplified and generalized knowledge of an object (or of a person); touching is intertwining, intersecting, and crossing-over (Merleau-Ponty 1968:138). Touch is intersubjective and transcendental (Derrida 2005:146–147). Following these understandings, touching a body (in the flesh or in mediation) raises questions in the mind. Where does one's being end and where does that of another being start? How am I distinct from an Other? What is the surface of my being and what separates that surface from the surfaces of Others? In fact, how does one define Other? At its most incisive, touching a body calls into question the surety of the entity that in the modern Western world we call person (and even body: somebody, anybody, nobody). In posing these questions, touching a body opens up understandings of the world that one inhabits in exciting and disturbing ways.

In critical work on the sense of touch among blind museum visitors, Kevin Hetherington has demonstrated that touch decenters the subject (Hetherington 2003). Hetherington's work with Sarah, a blind museum visitor, revealed Sarah's understanding that touch is a way of knowing that is distinct from the way of knowing that comes with vision (and with the other senses). Most critically, touch is a way of knowing that displaces Sarah from the assumed position that she is a singular, representing subject. In this sense, for her there is no one correct knowledge of a museum object or exhibit (such as that which is normally acquired by a single glance) nor one

authoritative viewer. Experience by touch opens perception to multiple impressions and knowledges obtained by many different perceivers.

Along with Hetherington, David Appelbaum (1995) has argued further that understanding by touch is distinct (particularly from vision) in that it is productive: vision consumes knowledge; touch makes and produces it. To engage an object (or a body or a figurine) through touch is to acquire proximal knowledge of it: an understanding that is context-specific, fragmentary, mundane, and performative, which allows for fluidity, uncertainly, incompletion, which is always partial and precarious, and which opens up interpretation and denies finality (Appelbaum 1995:239). Hetherington draws the distinction with distal knowledge: the provision of broad, detached understanding based on knowing at a distance, concerned with the big picture, focused on the object in a static and completed state, reliant on preconceptions, and illustrative of boundaries and separation, distinctness and clarity, hierarchy and order (Appelbaum 1995:239; Cooper and Law 1995; Josipovici 1996).

The critical relevance here is that because of its material three-dimensionality (of its small size) a figurine affords (demands even) a particular engagement with the person encountering it: touch promotes a set of understandings that have fundamental consequences for how that person thinks about the body and about being. These understandings, in a similar way to those provoked though engaging with the absence of body features, push that person away from thinking about bodies and people in a preconceived, static, closed, and predetermined way. Both processes (confronting absence and engaging via touch) provoke the person encountering the figurine to open up his or her conceptualizations of the role of the body in defining a person. Further, figurines become potent sites for contemplation about what it means to be human at a particular time and place.

Stereotypes and the Construction of Others

This reconsideration of touch raises important questions of the ways by which people understand (and question) how they are distinct from other people. In combination with the similar stimuli to question and conceptualize what it means to be human that came with encounters with the absence of body parts, our understanding of how Neolithic people thought about being, about the body, and about conceptualizations such as gender (but also race and sexuality) has started unraveling, and we are left in a position from which we resist (justifiably) making definite statements about identity or issues such as gender in the Neolithic (or for any other period for that matter). Relief from this discomfort comes from the very materials that originally stimulated those thoughts: the figurines themselves. One of the most powerful ways in which people started to answer these subconscious questions was by defining themselves as distinct from others, and I suggest that we can see this at work if we look at figurines in terms of stereotypes and the process of stereotyping (Bailey 2008). Thinking through the processes of stereotyping helps extend our understanding of how figurines worked within the gradual emergence of body-based identifications of people in constructed terms such as gender.

Stereotypes are conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified conceptions or images that propose a set of fixed, unvarying ways to understand the world around us

(McGarty et al. 2002:198). Founded on simplification, generalization, exaggeration, or distortion, stereotypes (re)present culturally constructed attributes as if they were natural essences. As simplified representations, they create fixed morphologies by smoothing otherwise naturally occurring irregularities. They are critical tools with which people make sense of the world around them. Stereotypes work with people's conceptions of what is normal or natural. They reduce complexity to artificial categories. They erase or hide ambivalences; they categorize people (Pickering 2001:43, 45). Critically, stereotypes are fictions and illusions; they are one of the most reliable materials with which people construct social groups and by which false senses of order are imposed on otherwise unordered worlds. Critically, stereotypes prevail when distinctions and order are otherwise unstable (Pickering 2001:43). Gender is one such stereotypic illusion, and figurines were an essential part of its creation.

Critically, stereotypes reveal very little (if any) information about the people or group who are the target of the stereotyping (Messick and Mackie 1989; Hamilton and Mackie 1993; Haslam et al. 1996a, 1996b). The perception constructed by a member of one group (i.e., the in-group) about another (i.e., the out-group) tells us much about the in-group but provides little information of merit about the out-group or about how other people might view that out-group. To study stereotypes is therefore to study the in-group, particularly the insecurities, fears, concerns, and worldviews of the in-group. As represented in the form of a stereotype, the out-group has no objective reality; it does not exist (or at least it does not exist as an entity that can be found in reality). The stereotype lives in the mind of the in-group and not in the flesh. Furthermore, the importance that comes from the study of stereotypes is the recognition that one of the main reasons that stereotypes work (i.e., they gain currency and authority over reality) is because they appear in multiple iterations; they are repeated over and over for public consumption.

For figurines, the significance of thinking through stereotyping is that we see more clearly that what is represented in figurine form may actually not depict any physical group of people or any individual. From the perspective of stereotyping, figurines are the products of the anxieties and insecurities of the figurine maker. The body/bodies of an Other are represented according to the particular perceptions of the person fashioning the clay and decorating the clay surface. The particular depictions selected are the products of the maker's mind (and of that person's conception of body, of similarity, but most especially of difference and distinction). Equally significant is the importance that iteration and multiples of stereotypes have for the success with which (or the failure by which) a version of the bodied human comes to prominence among representations: these are the rhetorical mechanics of how a stereotype gains authority over reality. The ubiquity of figurines throughout central and southeastern Europe during the Neolithic takes on an interpretive significance that goes well beyond statements of the dominance in number of female representations (or of sexless or hermaphroditic depiction). Gender is a fundamental stereotype of modern Western society, and I suggest that one of the critical moments (though it was a moment that lasted 3000 years) in its emergence as such was during the Neolithic; figurines are one of the most potent materials in the construction of gender and in its adhesion to body and body form.

How and Why Did Bodied Gender Emerge in the European Neolithic?

Why was it that bodied gender emerged at this time and in this region? Why had it not happened before (the earliest tradition of body imagery in Europe dates well before the Neolithic, to the so-called Venus figurines of the Upper Paleolithic, 20,000 to 26,000 years ago)? Furthermore, what is it that brings this moment to an end with the start of the Bronze Age (3000 B.C.E.) when fired clay figurines disappear from people's daily lives? The answer is that the Neolithic presented a conflux of social, political, technological, and linguistic-conceptual conditions in central and southeastern Europe that had not happened before or elsewhere. Though some of these individual conditions had been present in earlier millennia (and others were present afterwards), the significant combination of elements only developed from 6500 B.C.E. with the Neolithic.

What was missing from the Upper Paleolithic was the regular use of a ceramic pyrotechnology to create large numbers of highly durable tangible objects. Material culture, of course, is a fundamental part of being human (from our hominin ancestors through the present) and that is no different for pre-Neolithic (or better non-Neolithic) periods such as the Upper Paleolithic. The critical difference that distinguishes the Upper Paleolithic from what followed is that its material culture was almost exclusively created though subtractive processes in which a raw material was reduced through cutting, flaking, chopping, engraving, or other action. While one can refer to the presence of multi-part tools (and their significance in terms of cognition and functional efficiency) as an exception, there is no question of the greater position in daily life occupied by objects created by the reduction of unaltered natural materials such as stone, bone, flint, ivory, or wood.

In addition, the figurines that have survived from the Upper Paleolithic were constructed in fundamentally different ways from those of the Neolithic: the latter were shaped from a malleable material (soft clay) in an additive (literally constructive) process during which temper was added to produce an object that would survive being heated in a fire. The controlled application of heat, then, transformed what had been malleable into what became permanent and unchangeable. It is not a coincidence that the earliest experimentations in transforming soils (particularly loam) with water and then with heat (i.e., the early attempts to make fired clay objects), as has been documented at Dolní Věstonice 26,000 years ago, were made to construct the human form.

The fact that material culture created through ceramic pyrotechnology was not in use in non-Neolithic Europe is significant although the significance may be as much a technological (and preservative) advantage as a conceptual one: the capability (and desire) to create a material form that lasted. It is also significant that although Upper Paleolithic figurines were indeed of durable material (i.e., the ivory and stone has survived), they were made in far fewer numbers. Their paucity (compared to the numbers of Neolithic figurines) may be the result of preservational factors as well as the number of sites that have been excavated (and originally occupied). More important, however, is the realization that making fired clay objects in the Neolithic was a task that would have taken place frequently for other reasons (to produce containers and other vessels). Furthermore, the skill and experience required to carve and engrave an ivory Upper Paleolithic figure would have been a less commonly possessed technical ability across a community, at

least when compared to the skills required to model a clay figure: anyone could take a bit of clay, shape it, and place it in the fire of a pit-kiln, but not everyone had the experience and manual dexterity to handle a flint burin or point to a degree of skill required to carve a Venus. Clay afforded modeling by anyone; ivory and bone to only a few.

The consequence of these distinctions is that while material manifestations of the human spirit existed in the Upper Paleolithic, those figurines did not influence human conceptions of being (and the body) to the extent that figurines did in the Neolithic. More important, however, is the distinction in the wider context of significant developments in other daily activities and the consequences of the adaptations of these new technologies and coincident ways of thinking.

A series of vital background conditions made the Neolithic a world that was more conducive to the emergence of the material body as a fundamental element of people's understanding of what it meant to be human. One of these differences was the adaptation of plant-growing and animal-breeding technologies: the intentional transformation and manipulation of raw materials to produce food. Another difference was the adaptation of sturdy and enduring architecture to construct built environments: the transformation of naturally occurring materials such as trees, branches, stone, clay, dung, and vegetation into structures for shelter but also for activities, and perhaps with more significant consequences for the bringing together of people into groups (whether they should be called households, families, or something else is less relevant at the moment). Similarly important was the construction of larger physical entities (villages) by congregating individual boxes of built space in close proximity to each other.

All of these Neolithic developments share the same additive, constructive processes, and they all exploit otherwise naturally occurring raw materials. Together they form a set of conditions under which there occurred the regular construction (and reconstruction) of social and political entities: of collaborative kin-networks and labor-sharing cooperatives (as had existed elsewhere and at other times) but also of more exploitive alliances which were able to manage labor, investment, and return in the production of foodstuffs or in the construction of buildings or in the management of surplus and deficit. My argument is that within this emerging way of life (that we now term the Neolithic) there came into being a distinct way that people lived their lives and, critically, a distinct set of new contexts within which people interacted. Along with these processes (the creation of food, of buildings, or material culture) developed fundamentally new ways of understanding what it meant to be human, most particularly of new conceptions of the form that the human spirit should take. In their daily, serial, mundane repetition, each of these processes played an unscripted (and thus unintentional) role in constructing a distinct Neolithic understanding of the world. People came to see things in new ways, and fundamental to those new ways was the location of the human spirit within the vessel of the body.

Linguistic Change and the Body as a Frame of Reference

Important as were the changes in economy, technology, architecture, and material culture, I suggest that the most significant element that set the Neolithic apart has its basis in linguistics: the adaptation of Proto-Indo-European language. The introduction of Proto-Indo-European into Europe is not uncontroversial; the main debate is

whether it was introduced with the adoption of farming (i.e., at the start of the Neolithic) or whether it was introduced with the invasion of horse-riding warriors at the end of the Neolithic (i.e., at the start of the Bronze Age). In this debate I follow the work of Colin Renfrew (1987, 1999) and others who have argued that the appearance of Proto-Indo-European occurred with the Neolithic.[4]

Why are linguistics important to understanding gender, figurines and the emergence of a gendered body in European prehistory? There are two reasons. First, the traditional arguments that propose a matriarchic Neolithic place heavy emphasis on the introduction of Indo-European, horse-riding, male warriors at the beginning of the Bronze Age: a male-dominated world-view violently destroys and replaces the pre-existing peaceful matriarchic one. Thus, the date of the arrival of Indo-European is important for clarifying and, if necessary, readjusting that traditional argument. Second, linguistics is important, is more pressing, and brings new information to the debate, and, I contend, transforms our understanding of the Neolithic, of Neolithic figurines, and indeed of the role played by the body as a locus for gender in proto-historic, historic, and modern Western society. For the most part, the focus of research (such as the debate noted above) on the emergence of Proto-Indo-European language in central and southeastern Europe has highlighted issues of female- and male-dominated society and particular aspects of technology (such as the introduction of wheeled transport and the use of the horse) and of the chronology of invasions and migrations of language dynamics. Recent work by a team of linguists at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen (The Netherlands), led by Stephen Levinson, suggests another significance: that compared to other languages, Indo-European languages hold the body in a place of specific importance for the way that Indo-European speakers conceptualize the world that they live in and for the way that they locate themselves in that world (Levinson 2003:10, 14).

For many modern Western communities, the body is the central element in people's frame of reference. It is at the core of how they understand the world. Indeed the body has been essential to the last 500 years of thinking within the humanities and social sciences. The question that Levinson and his colleagues have raised is this: what if the body is not an essential, hard-wired part of human perception, present in all peoples' perceptions regardless of local culture or context? More specifically, what if the body was not central to a pre-Indo-European, non-Neolithic central and south-eastern Europe? If this were the case, then the consequences would be substantial for our understanding of the appearance of figurines in the archaeological record of the Neolithic (and of their relative absence in non-Neolithic contexts) and for the role that they played in elevating the body to a level of primary significance during this period. On a larger scale, the consequences would be significant for research and writing across prehistory (European and otherwise): we would have to rethink (and probably discard) all of the work that has assumed that the body was an essential element of human thinking throughout time and across cultures.

The Linguistic Body and Indo-European: Frames of Reference

In a linguistic work of fundamental significance for the humanities and social sciences, Levinson (2003) made the case for the non-essentiality of the body in human perception, and thus undercut the widely held assumption that the body is central to the

ways that all people think. Significantly, he has argued (and demonstrated) that the belief that the body is the primary frame of reference is not supportable across all languages (and thus communities), and that in fact it has its roots in the "linguistic prejudice of the Indo-European tongues" (Levinson 2003:10). He continues this argument as follows: "In the matter of frames of reference, the tradition in which the human body is the source of all our notions of orientation and direction is a major ethnocentric error. It is not only that there are languages that do not use the bodily coordinates to construct a relative frame of reference, but there are also many other aspects of such languages, and of the interaction and cognition of their speakers, that point to a fundamental demoting of the body as a source of spatial concepts" (Levinson 2003:14).

Levinson's work was initially focused on an investigation of spatial frames of reference, but the significance of his conclusions has much wider application. He demonstrated that there are three distinct frames of reference with which people understand the spatial relationships among objects in the world: relative (or viewer-centered), intrinsic (or object-centered), and absolute (or environment-centered) (Levinson 2003:32 after Carlson-Radvansky and Irwin 1993:224). With the intrinsic frame, people use the properties of an object (e.g., its shape, orientation, characteristic motion, use) in order to comprehend where that object is (1993:42). With the absolute frame, people use the object's orientation in the environment (e.g., cardinal directions, north/south, east/west, coastal/inland) (1993:47). With the relative frame, people use a system of references based on the viewer him/herself (e.g., up/down, back/front, left/right) (1993:43). Not all languages use all three frames of reference: some use one, some use two, and some use all three (1993:53). The intrinsic frame is nearly universal, although there are languages that only use it minimally (1993:81). In addition, because language is a system of public representation (i.e., it is shared frequently and overtly), a frame of reference that can be recognized in language will have a central place at the core community activity and perception (1993:113).

Of the three frames of reference, the relative is the one that takes the body as the primary measure of position, and as Levinson points out, this is the reference frame that one would assume is fundamental to all human beings. Levinson shows, however, that the body-based frame of reference is entirely dispensable. Many languages do not use it at all or only use it in ways that are marginal to one of the other two frames (1993:46). As an example, Levinson reviews in detail the linguistic frame of reference of Guugu Yimithirr (1993:114–118), a language spoken by an aboriginal group living over a 10,000 square kilometer area north of Cooktown, Northern Queensland, Australia. Spatial description in Guugu Yimithirr is more or less completely absolute (1993:115), and there are no relative (body-centric) terms. Thus, in order to tell someone where you left your tobacco, one might say "it is on the southern edge of the western table" (1993:114). Levinson goes on to show through an exhaustive study that these people have, as it were, a "mental compass" that operates constantly in the background of their minds. Their way of thinking about the world is something that must be "constructed during socialization and language learning" (1993:129). It is not some sort of essential capacity that is hard-wired into these people.

Levinson's work fits into a wider debate over the concept of "body." Across the Western social sciences, the assumption exists that the human body is a basic pre-linguistic source for conceptual structure. Many have claimed that all languages

have a term for body (Brown 1976; Andersen 1978; Wierzbicka 1996; Goddard 2001). However, linguistic reality is more complex than this. Thus, words that are used for bodily change over time often have many different fields of reference (e.g., to skin, to trunk, to person as well as to body) (Wilkins 1996; Evans and Wilkins 2001). Significantly, a major cross-linguistic study and comparison of the semantics of body vocabulary brings into question the assumption that all communities have a term for body (Enfield et al. 2006:146).

Fieldwork by Levinson's colleagues at the Max Planck Institute examined descriptions of body part terminology in a set of geographically, genetically, and typologically distinct languages: Jahai (Malaysia), Lao (Laos), Kuuk Thaayorre (Australia), Yélî Dnye (Papua New Guinea), Punjabi (Pakistan/India), Tiriyó (Brazil/Surinam), American Sign Language (USA), Lavulaleve (Solomon Islands), Tidore (Indonesia), and Savosavo (Solomon Islands). Of the ten languages studied, two did not have general terms for body: Kuuk Thaayorre and Tidore (Enfield et al. 2006:145).

Kuuk Thaayorre and Tidore

Kuuk Thaayorre is a Paman language spoken by about 350 aboriginal people living in the Aboriginal Community of Pormpuraaw of Cape York Peninsula, Australia (Gaby 2006:202). In her study of the Kuuk Thaayorre, Alice Gaby could not identify any Thaayorre term that referred to the thing that we think of as the body. The closest was true-man (or *pam-minj*), which refers to the specifically physical presence of a human, but also to non-corporeal components of a living person such as his or her voice (*kuuk*), shadow (*man-nganp*), or the tracks that a person leaves behind (Gaby 2006:206). Furthermore, in Kuuk Thaayorre it is not easy to distinguish between mind and body, and it is difficult (unlike in English and other Western languages) to clearly separate the physical from the non-physical elements of a human being (Gaby 2006:207).[5]

Of further interest are the Kuuk Thaayorre lexemes for shadow (*man-nganp*) and footfall (*thamr-rathr*); both are used in conversation to stand in for the whole person, and thus come closer to (though still remain distinct from) what we understand as that thing to which the word and concept body refer. Other Kuuk Thaayorre terms that come close to a Western reference to body, refer to body products: blood (*kam*), faeces (*kun*), sweat (*nhumurr*), semen (*pirp*), pus (*thangk*), urine (*thiiy*), snot (*koo-nhij*), and menstrual blood (*yin-kam*). With the use of these terms, a person's identity may be determined by his or her voice or footsteps (Gaby 2006:216) or by their excrement, urine, blood, or pus.[6] This idea of person or essence is fundamentally distinct from the one that we are most at ease with when thinking about ourselves and when we think and write about the prehistoric people we study and onto whose backs we load our notions of body. Gaby and her colleagues' work on Thaayorre is important because it forces us to question the standard assumption that all communities share our understanding of the concept that we call body.

Another language community that has a distinct and noteworthy lexical understanding of the body is Tidore, a Papuan language spoken by 40,000 people living on the island Tidore and on neighboring islands in the North Moluccas of Indonesia. In her examination of body and body part terms among the Tidore, Miriam van Staden found no Tidore term for body (van Standen 2006:330). Instead Tidore has a term

that refers to person or human (e.g., *mansia*) or child (*ngofa*); otherwise they use an Indonesian loan word (*badan*); its use itself is unusual, as loan words, though common in most parts of the language, are not usually used in relation to the body (van Standen 2006:332). Furthermore, Tidore speakers often use Malay words (or highly Malayified versions of Tidore words) when discussing ill health or similar subjects that are body-related (van Standen 2006:332).

In her discussion of Tidore body language, van Standen positions Tidore in the broader context of Austronesian and Papuan speakers in Eastern Indonesia; she notes the close relationships among the usage of terms for human body, the house, the boat, and the family (Jansen 1977; Platenkamp 1988, n.d.). For example, in Tidore, *yora* means spine in the human body, but it also means keel of the boat, ridge of the roof of the house, and a person's ancestors (van Standen 2006:341). Furthermore, van Standen describes how social and political relations are expressed in terms of parts of a boat, or in terms of people and their functions on a boat (2006:330–331). In her view these different models for social-political relationships are mapped onto each other. The body is the house is the boat is the unity of the family. In this multi-system process of mapping-on, one term works in different domains and one wonders how one connection (or even if one) is dominant or becomes dominant over the others.

In light of the Tidore example, we can begin to imagine that it is just as likely that we might now be talking and thinking about the human spirit in the terms that are used for the form of the house or of boat and not in the form (or using the terms) of the body. The critical question emerges: why and how is it that the body arrived (and remained) at the center of our thinking and of the thinking of most Europeans? What factors might have turned chance into long-term reality? I suggest that a significant factor was the durability of fired clay and the repeated creation of many anthropomorphic shapes in this medium.

Linguistics and the Neolithic

The relevance of Levinson and his colleagues' work is that all communities do not talk (and I suggest therefore think) about the world in terms that are based on the body.[7] Indeed, as Levinson shows, there are non-body-centric ways of thinking and talking about how people see themselves in their worlds. Furthermore, the way one thinks about the world is a frame of reference that is learned (and thus can be done and undone, constructed and reconstructed): it is plastic. Finally, such frames (when expressed in language) are a highly efficient way of sharing perceptions of the world across a community. The significance for European figurines, therefore, is that we are wrong (or should at least be cautioned) to assume that people of the non-Neolithic (or even the Neolithic) held the body to be an essential, central part to their understanding of the world around them.

Following from Levinson's connection of body-centric language (and thinking) with Indo-European languages (and from the conclusion that Proto-Indo-European speakers arrived in central and southeastern Europe with the Neolithic), I contend that body-centric conceptualizations developed during the Neolithic. Within this linguistic-conceptual context, there gradually emerged material manifestations of the concept of body as a new essence of being human: figurines were those manifestations and they occurred within the conflux of other conditions (e.g., development in burial

rites, construction of buildings, domestication of plants and animals). Furthermore, these figurines were layered with varying definitions of human characterization (or identity) and one of these was what we now call gender. The argument I am making is not that the body and thus figurines and thus gender arrived as items in a parcel called the Neolithic; rather I suggest that through a dynamic and long-running series of daily activities that took place within a particular set of conditions (material culture, pyrotechnology, the built environment, and linguistics) there emerged a sedimented understanding that it was appropriate to locate the human spirit within the human body, and that onto that body should be found forms and surface variations that had set and shared values and meanings within a community. Figurines are one of the records of that emergence, of that process of sedimentation, of that locating of being onto the body, of the layering onto the body of particular characteristics of identity, and of the origin of gender as a body-based institution. While the consequences of these developments are specific to European prehistory (and of proto-history and history in the region), these conclusions raise important questions for other regions and other periods. For example, what is the relationship (linguistic, cultural, chronological) with the fashioning of small human-shaped objects in the Near East and the emergence of body-based ways of thinking? What of more distant traditions of figurine making in central America? While there may be some general cross-cultural similarities, it seems most likely that the particular context-specific conditions of each region and period will have combined in specific and different ways to affect the prehistoric and subsequent historical location of the body within communities' conceptions and of the way that gendered bodies have been constructed and, in many cases, manipulated.

Conclusion

It is no longer valid to speak of the Neolithic of central and southeastern Europe in terms of a matriarchic society in which figurines provide an easily read, direct reflection of gender identity and politics. As representations, figurines were diverse, active, subjective constructions of Neolithic conceptions of the world and of the locus for the human spirit within that world. If there is a pattern among figurines, then it is that examples that lack depictions of sexual body parts are the most numerous. Even in this simple statement, however, uncertainty remains: the sexing of body parts (as depicted) is not a straightforward process: when is a breast male and when is it female? To make matters worse, there is little confidence that the concepts we recognize as male or female existed in the Neolithic. Even if they did, there is no reason to assume that such terms remained static over time in any one community, let alone that they meant the same thing in different communities at the same time or in different regions or through time in separate places.

The realization that the elements of the body that are depicted on a figurine (such as facial detail or genitalia) may be the least important component of their representation further disrupts our attempts to understand these artifacts, but it starts to open up a new perspective: that figurines were active (though subconscious) stimuli for people's thinking about the physical shape of being. In a similar way, by recognizing the specifics of the way in which one can comprehend a figurine (via touch), we begin

to understand figurines within the performative creation of new (Neolithic) ways of defining what it meant to be human, and we recognize the potential that these objects would have had in the construction of stereotypes of identity that were layered on the body, such as gender, but that also included other constructed definitions of person and groups.

Emerging from the disruption of the assumptions that underlie the standard interpretation of Neolithic figurines is a recognition of the importance that the body started to have after 6500 B.C.E. The process was an extended one without any individual moments of specific origin; Neolithic people's conceptualizations of being and the appropriateness of its location within the human body developed over a 3000-year period within the contexts of other significant social, economic, and political re-orientations of life. There was not a predetermined trajectory. It was just as likely that the appropriate location for the human spirit could have become the body of an animal or in the walls and roof of a building. Both zoomorphic and building figurines were made, handled and thought about (and with) in the Neolithic; both shared many of the affordances (e.g., to be held, to be modeled differently, to have surfaces decorated) that were inherent in body figurines. It is just as likely, therefore, that we might now be discussing the sedimenting of gender (and other stereotypical identity constructions) onto sheep or houses.

One of the contemporary conditions of the Neolithic developments that ran along with the making of figurines from 6500 to 3500 B.C.E. was a development in the ways that human bodies were manipulated and disposed of after death. At the beginning of the Neolithic little attention was paid to dead bodies (or at least we have little record of activities that left lasting traces and that took place on site). A few body parts were buried within the area of a settlement, usually the skull. With time, complete skeletons were inhumed, some with particularly selected grave goods (such as beads or flint tools or ceramic vessels). Local patterns in the association of specific grave goods with bodies of one sex or the other (or of one age range or another) began to emerge, so that by the end of the Neolithic (in the fourth millennium B.C.E.) large cemeteries were in use with extraordinary concentrations of exotic grave goods often associated with adult male burials, as at Varna on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

The pattern with graves, grave goods, and mortuary performances bears similarities to the creation and decoration of figurines; in both media (fired clay and social ceremony) the body emerged as the one entity (of the many that were available) in which to locate the human spirit and onto which to inscribe proposals of social and political differentiation and categorization. The gradual nature of these developments can be take even further with the recognition that already in the later phases of the Upper Paleolithic, at sites like those in the Danube Gorges (e.g., Lepenski Vir), people were working through new conceptualizations of body and representational art – the former though multiple inhumations among small timber and stone structures on the banks of the Danube, and the latter through boulder and pebble art with abstract, human, and fish depictions. These earlier, isolated experimentations accelerated within the contexts and conditions of the Neolithic.

By the end of the Neolithic, there had come to be established, with repeated and regular public, physical manifestations (i.e., figurines, though also through treatment of the deceased), one set of understandings of the appropriate form for the human spirit to take: the body. With this sedimenting of understanding also emerged an

acceptance that the form and surface appearance of the body were the appropriate (and most potent) media onto which definitions (and contestations) of identity were to be proposed, thought out, contested, and accepted. Among the fundamental categories that took residence on the body was gender.

NOTES

1 Burial is a political act that is no more an accurate reflection of society, politics, or economy, than are figurines a reflection of social demography.
2 Important work by John Chapman (2000) and Chapman and Gaydarska (2007) has investigated the potential significances and consequences of the fragmentation of artifacts, including Neolithic figurines, and has argued that people, places, and objects are linked through processes of breaking and depositing objects into the ground.
3 This itself assumes that the social political entity that we understand as "household" (or village or culture) had any conceptual traction among the people who made, held, discarded a figurine that we study. See Thomas Dowson (2000) for a discussion of the heteronormativity of the term "household" and the way that it is applied to archaeological reconstructions.
4 The literature is vast and the interested reader is referred to it: Mallory (1989, 1997); Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1990); Gray and Atkinson (2003); Anthony (2010).
5 There are other interesting linguistic things among the Thaayorre: they don't have a simple label for face (the closest is *koo-miing* or nose-daytime); anus is *kun-thaaw* (or bum-mouth); collar-bone is *man-werngr* (or throat boomerang); toe-nail is *thamr-rirkr* (foot-shell); sole of foot is *thamr-thip* (foot liver); heart is *man-ngeegk* (or throat-belly); heart beat is *punth-nherp* (arm-spirit); foot print is *thamr-kamp* (foot blood); and brain is *paant-thuur* (head marrow) (Gaby 2006:table 2).
6 There is, of course, a large literature on substances (e.g., Busby 1997).
7 The debate over whether speech determines thought or vice versa (i.e., the Worfian debate) is put to one side here, as for the purposes of this article, whether one determines the other is not of great importance; the significant thing is to question how and why people thought/spoke about being human in terms of the body.

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CHAPTER 13 Goddesses in Prehistory

Lucy Goodison and Christine Morris

Recently we received a letter from a well-known feminist historian who had just re-read our co-edited book *Ancient Goddesses: The Myths and the Evidence* (Goodison and Morris 1998). She expressed her dismay at our "rejection" of the existence of a prehistoric goddess religion, and felt that interpreting prehistoric figurines as toys or representations of human females was "reductive." She wondered where we were now in our consideration of the topic.

We revisited our book, asking ourselves whether we and our contributors had indeed rejected prehistoric goddesses. We found that the book discussed many such goddesses – some disputed, but many well-attested – over an area ranging from prehistoric Egypt, Israel, and the Near East to Minoan Crete and pre-Roman northwest Europe.

The book cover shows a "goddess with upraised arms," one of five impressive statuettes from Gazi in central Crete. Clear evidence indicates her divinity as part of a set of similar figures found across the island in the Late Minoan period. Apart from their distinctive arm gesture, their tiara decoration can include the well-known Minoan religious symbol known as the "horns of consecration" while snake, bird, and poppy symbols further suggest associations with the natural world. The figures are large; at some sites they are displayed on raised benches and at one site they are enthroned. The find contexts can confidently be identified as religious through recurring architectural features and special equipment, including "snake tubes," plaques, and double axes (Gesell 2004). In addition, from the closing stages of the Late Minoan period we have texts in Linear B which refer to offerings made to both male and female deities. There is little doubt that the Gazi figure on our book cover, and numerous other female representations from prehistoric Europe and the Near East, are goddesses. Strange as it may seem to us – since deity in our culture is not female – goddesses were an important part of religious systems in prehistory.

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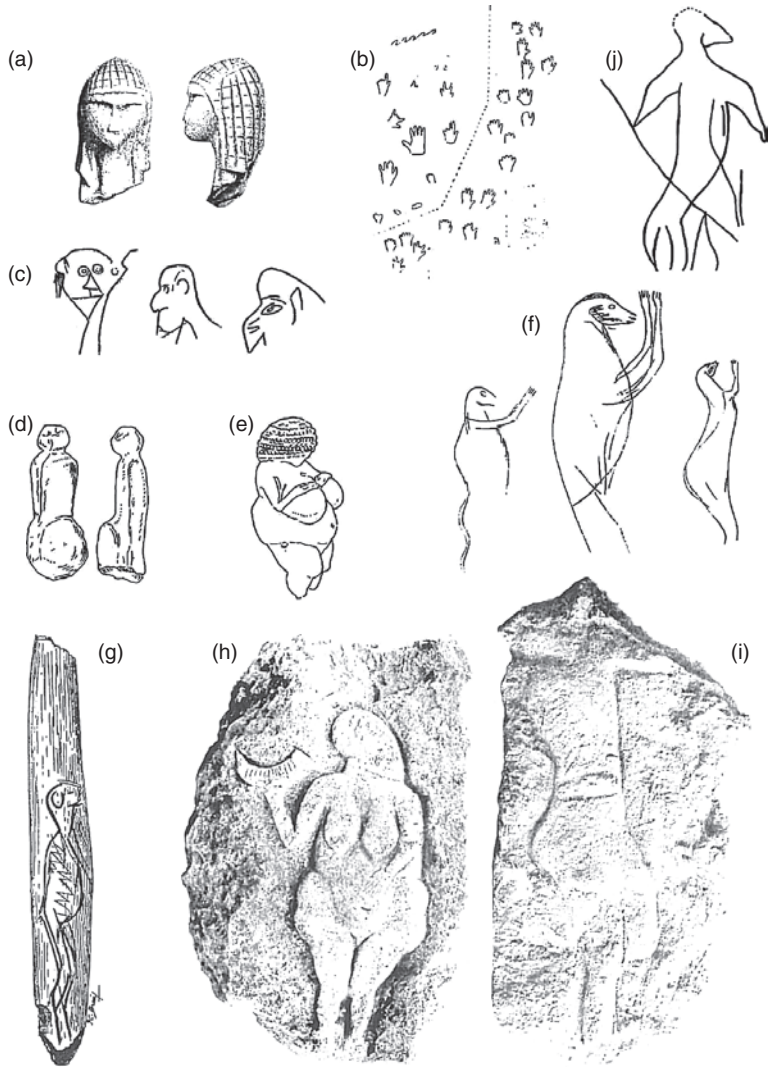


Figure 13.1 Diversity of anthropomorphic representations from the Upper Paleolithic. **(a)** Ivory figurine "à la capuche" (named after the hair style) from Brassempouy in the Landes. Ht: ca. 3.7 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:37, figure 48). **(b)** Sample of over 150 hand designs stencilled in black and red on wall of Gargas Cave near Montrejeau in Haute Garonne. The hands are life size (reproduced from *L'Anthropologie* 21(1910):133, figure 3). **(c)** Engravings of heads on wall of Marsoulas Cave in Haute Garonne. Ht (left to right): 15.6 cm, 11.6 cm, 12.4 cm (reproduced from *L'Anthropologie* 16(1905):437, figures 5–7). **(d)** Figurine of horn from the Trou Magrite, Pont-à-Lesse, Belgium. Ht: 3.9 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:30, figure 37). **(e)** Limestone figurine called "Venus of Willendorf" from deep in the loess at Willendorf near Krems in Lower Austria. Ht: ca.11 cm. (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:43, figure 54). **(f)** Figures with animal heads and arms upraised engraved on the great roof fresco of the Altamira cave near Santander in northwest Spain. Ht (left to right): 40 cm, 60 cm, 40 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:100, figure 131). **(g)** Reindeer rib with engraved figure from Cro-Magnon in the Dordogne. Ht: 10.5 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:67, figure 93). **(h)** Bas-relief of a female figure carved on a fallen piece of limestone

But that had evidently not satisfied our correspondent. This may be because the long shadow cast over gender archaeology is from not many but from one goddess. The issue is not whether there were goddesses in prehistory, as there clearly were. The question which for decades has burned fiercely at the heart of archaeology, feminism, and ancient history, and indeed contemporary social studies, psychotherapy, and anthropology, is whether there existed in prehistory a goddess religion which excluded or marginalized male deities, and which featured a single, primal female divine figure associated with motherhood, earth, and nature who universally embodied the earliest stage in humankind's conception of the divine and its place in society.

This question has for over a hundred years been the battleground for many other debates, for example about gender roles, what constitutes a good society, the trajectory of human development, morality, cosmology, the origins and the history of religion. Moreover, the effect of such pressing and conflicting claims to use the prehistoric evidence for current agendas has resulted in the distortion or eclipse of much of the material evidence and has impacted on gender archaeology. In the following section we focus on two iconic cases which exemplify the processes of past debate: the "Venus of Willendorff" and Marija Gimbutas's "Old Europe."[1]

The Prehistory of the Debate

Open any general book about the origins of art, society, or religion, and you are likely to find mention or illustration of the Upper Paleolithic "Venus of Willendorf" (Figure 13.1:e). Discovered in 1908, this limestone figurine became iconic as a divinity symbolic of erotic appeal, fertility, reproduction, and motherhood. Her reign endured. E. O. James, in his 1959 classic *The Cult of the Mother-Goddess*, writes of "the fashioning of human figures of the Venus variety with pendulous breasts, broad hips, rotund buttocks and excessive corpulency suggestive of pregnancy," referring to "the main purpose of the cultus having been the giving of life through the outward signs of maternal fecundity" (1959:13, 15). All such figurines are similarly linked by him to a fundamental cult related to fertility of humans and animals, which "must be one of the oldest and longest surviving religions of the ancient world" (1959:24). By association, corpulent figurines of later periods and other cultures were associated with the same cult, for example by Sir Arthur Evans in his work on Minoan Crete (Morris 2006).

Commentators have pointed out the vested interests implicated in such interpretations and have argued that "politics lies at the heart of the figurine debate" (Hamilton 1996:282). The male archaeologists and historians ascribing maternal qualities to early figurines (not carrying a child) can be seen in their historical/intellectual context as tracking and supporting late nineteenth and early twentieth-century social ideologies of motherhood (Morris 2006). Some have been attributed with issues of mother

Figure 13.1 (*cont'd*) sunk deeply into the floor deposit of a rock shelter near Laussel in the Dordogne. Ht: 46 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:plate V). **(i)** Bas-relief of a male figure carved on limestone, from near Laussel in the Dordogne. Ht: 40 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:plate VI). **(j)** Design showing possible anthropomorphic figure from the Altamira cave near Santander. Size not given (drawn by Lucy Goodison after *L'Anthropologie* 21(1910):147, figure 14).

fixation (Gere 2006:217), a cultural preoccupation reflected in the emergence of Freud's Oedipus theory in the early twentieth century.

Associated narratives of early matriarchy developing everywhere into patriarchy fitted theories of social evolution proposed by books like Lewis Morgan's 1877 *Ancient Society*. Antiquity was viewed as the childhood of humanity (Gere 2006:211, 214): early peoples started life with mother (the goddess) and then moved on to the grown-up world of father (God) as their societies developed. Such a primal mother goddess confirms "essentialist gender types" (Talalay 2005:130) and legitimizes contemporary male/female divisions. The elaboration of a romanticized female "nature" at the end of the nineteenth century has also been seen as a compensation for industrialization, urbanization, and the dominance of (male) science (Luhrmann 1993:220). Hutton (1997:92) describes the process of identification of women and goddesses not only with nature but also with earth, moon, and attendant qualities of wildness/intuition, qualities excluded from dominant male culture and projected onto women.

If we now shift our focus back to the figurine itself, it is clear that specific difficulties arise both from the way the "Venus" has been viewed and presented, and from the failure to locate her within the artistic/artifactual repertoire; thus her designation as the quintessential representation of primitive religion has stood as a barrier to understanding.

A complex coiffure belies the "primitive" label (see also Figure 13.1:a), and she was perhaps never intended to stand at all. Consistent with the "bounty-hunting" origins of archaeology, in pursuit of artifacts to be admired on shelves, the "Venus of Willendorf" has traditionally been presented divorced from her find context. Showing the human body in isolation as a single image in a museum or on a book page carries a strong and sometimes misleading message, often creating "icons." Further, showing a figurine upright, enlarged, or in pride of place tends implicitly to feed into deity interpretations. In fact, like many prehistoric figurines the "Venus" is small (11.1 cm in height) and unable to stand; she could thus function in very different, interactive, ways, suitable to be held in the hand and done *to* or *with*. The very name "Venus" suggests a spurious link to a known goddess in a different culture millennia later. It implies that her maker had formulated the concept of personified, anthropomorphic divinities; whereas theism is unproven in the Upper Paleolithic. Arguably only a nickname, its connotations nonetheless stick.

Recent writings have stressed how the fêting of this image distorts the material record. In the absence of clear independent evidence for the religion of the period, the connection with fertility and motherhood can be seen as a construct of the male gaze (Tringham and Conkey 1998:25–26). Margaret Ehrenberg comments that the "Venus" figurines "should … be considered as part of a much larger, and usually neglected, series of carved figures of Palaeolithic date": a series including females of more naturalistic proportions, males, and a majority which appear to be sexless (1989:68–69). Overall, the repertoire of anthropomorphic representations – in all media – shows great diversity (Figure 13.1), including animal-humans which have been taken to reflect "cognitive fluidity between thinking about animals and people" (Mithen 1996:188).

Some commentators have also acknowledged in the Upper Paleolithic figurine assemblage the "huge predominance" of animal representations as opposed to humans (Cauvin 2000:32), a predominance repeated in other media (Figure 13.2:a–h). Thus

there has been a substantive privileging by modern writers of representations of humans. This is a common tendency in archaeology, even when animal figurines are closely similar in typology and provenance (Goodison 2009:236). Recently there have been calls to challenge this "anthropocracy" (Gísli Pálsson in Bird-David 1999:S84) through which animals have been deemed less significant for the study of Upper Paleolithic religion.

A watershed in the goddess debate was Peter Ucko's monograph on prehistoric figurines of Egypt and Crete (1968), which offered radical and politicized rejections of the archaeological establishment's view (see Hutton 1998:97). Ucko highlighted the inconsistency of this past tendency of ascribing divinity to prehistoric female figurines while male and animal figurines from similar contexts were not so identified. Archaeologists withdrew from the mother goddess and began to turn to interpretations that looked more closely at context and at the rich variation within the figurine assemblages. She gained a new audience, however, through her adoption into feminist discourses on fundamental issues of religion, gender relations, and social structure in early history. Their inspiration – and claims to archaeological authenticity – came in large part from the work of Marija Gimbutas.

Gimbutas started as a well-reputed archaeologist in a specialist area: her early writings on her Neolithic excavations in the Balkans were accepted as authoritative. Her ideas later swept from that material toward a totalizing account of human origins: "The earliest civilizations of the world – in China, Tibet, Egypt, the Near East and Europe – were, in all probability, matristic 'Goddess civilizations'" (Gimbutas 1991:324). Many geographical miles and a 1000-year gap lie between the Upper Paleolithic female figurines (mostly from sites between southwest Europe and Siberia ca. 24,000–8000 B.C.E.) and the Neolithic figurines of the Mediterranean area and southeast Europe (ca. 7000–3500 B.C.E.), but Gimbutas took them as a continuous tradition of female power: "During the early agricultural period women reached the apex of their influence in farming, arts and crafts, and social functions. The matriclan with collectivist principles continued" (1991:324). With regard to religion, Gimbutas embraced the same attributes emphasized by the biological essentialism of post-Victorian scholars: "According to myriad images that have survived from the great span of human prehistory on the Eurasian continents, it was the sovereign mystery and creative power of the female as the source of life that developed into the earliest religious experiences" (1991:222).

Assuming a primal female divinity, Gimbutas identified almost every figurine from the Neolithic period as representing "the goddess" or an aspect of her. Male representations were defined as divine "partners, consorts, and brothers of goddesses" (1991:249). Representations of animals were also drawn into the schema, described as sacred to the Earth Mother; or, in the case of animal–human hybrids, identified as the "Hedgehog Goddess," the "Bird Goddess," and so on (1991:231–245) (Figure 13.2:i–o). Disregarding archaeological stringency, Gimbutas drew upon material from other periods and from other areas such as Malta and Crete. Describing the destruction of this civilization, she states, "The gentle agriculturalists … were easy prey to the warlike Kurgan horsemen," patriarchal and hierarchical Indo-European invaders "armed with cutting and thrusting weapons," who triggered the transition to "patrism and violence" (1991:352).

In the late twentieth century, Gimbutas's theories were championed by many feminists for whom they served a number of functions. The model of female power

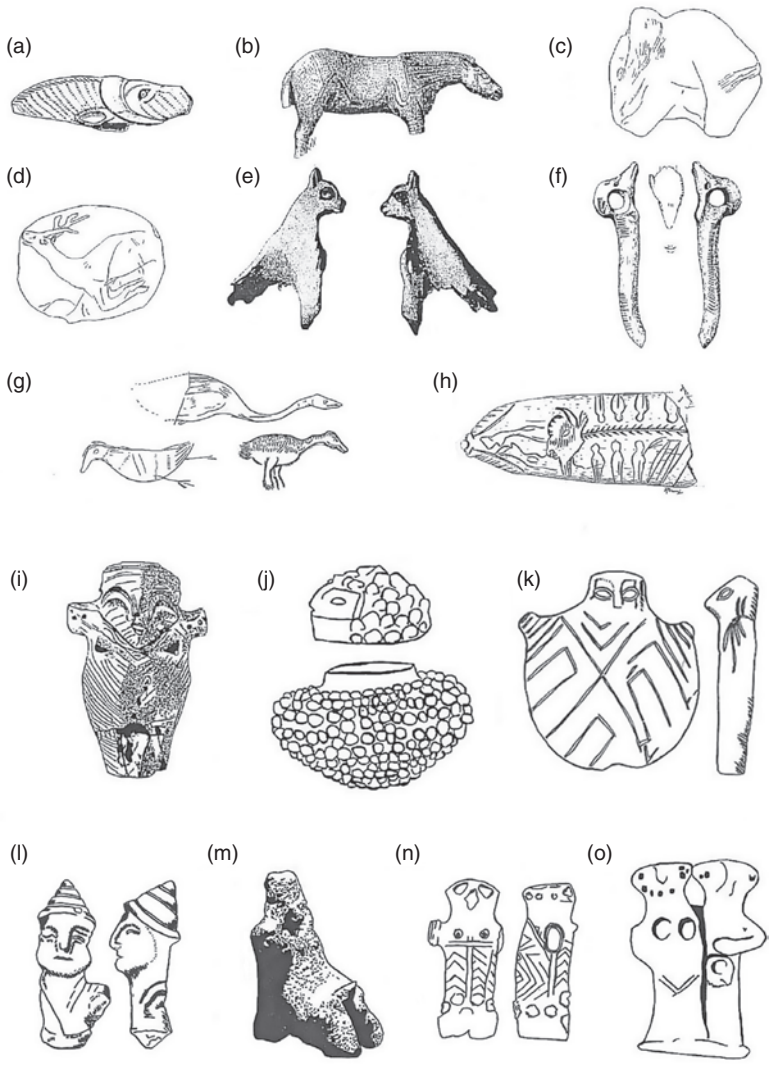


Figure 13.2 (a–h) Diversity of animal representations from the Upper Paleolithic. **(a)** Musk ox carved in bone from cave of Kesserloch near Thayngen, Switzerland. L: 6 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:23, figure 19). **(b)** Horse sculpted in ivory, the surface covered with engraved lines, from Lourdes in France. L: ca. 7.7 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:34, figure 43). **(c)** Ivory figurine of a mammoth from Předmost in Austria. Ht: ca.10 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:33, figure 42). **(d)** Stone engraved with "Dying Reindeer," from Gourdan. Size not given (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:56, figure 72). **(e)** Head and shoulders of wild cat cut from piece of shoulder blade from Arudy in the Pyrenees. Ht: ca. 5.5 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:24, figure 21). **(f)** Carving in the round in reindeer horn; end of baton carved in the shape of a fox's head, from Placard (Charente). Ht: ca. 35 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:29, figure 34). **(g)** Engravings of birds: swan from Gourdan (L: ca. 9 cm), duck on stone from Lourdes (L: ca. 7.5 cm), duck deeply incised on horn (L: ca. 6.3cm) (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:65, figure 89). **(h)** Flat piece of bone engraved with musk ox and possible human figures from Raymonden in the Dordogne. L: ca. 8.9 cm (reproduced from Parkyn 1915:57, figure 74). (i–o) Diversity of anthropomorphic

provided an inspiration for contemporary struggles. There was appeal in the contest of good vs. bad: peaceful goddess-worshiping women-focused societies were contrasted to subsequent "male" aggression (Hutton 1997:98). Conversely, the espousal of a dark, angry, death-bringing goddess (Kali, "the Crone," "witches," etc.) was seen as counteracting contemporary "good girl" socialization (Luhrmann 1993:226–231). Claims to past dominion over every aspect of life now controlled by male culture were an explicit response to contemporary inequalities and hunger for social justice. As Stone has observed, "Goddess spirituality has grown from our … feminist-consciousness-raising process … to the point where we can no longer ignore … the oppression of women as it has been instituted and maintained within the patrilineal, male-worshipping religions and the effect this has had on society" (1978:4).

While many archaeologists are simply dismissive of these ideas, scholars sympathetic to feminism have been "put between a rock and a hard place" (Ruether 2005:36) by the Gimbutas phenomenon. However, believing that a credible feminist practice involves asking new questions, not creating fictional pasts, they have challenged her theories. Tringham and Conkey (1998:22–45), for example, have remarked on her unevidenced assumptions and highlighted her neglect of figurine find contexts, which show their breakage and disposal under houses or in "rubbish" pits – inconsistent with our concept of divinity. Others have pointed to inconsistencies (e.g., Meskell 1995) and inaccuracies (Hutton 1997:98).

Where Do We Stand?

In writing this chapter, we face a dilemma. The adversarial structure – past and present – of the goddess debate mirrors the gender conflict of our contemporary

Figure 13.2 (*cont'd*) representations from the Neolithic. **(i)** Classical Vinča culture vase in the shape of a female figure wearing a pentagonal mask, captioned by Gimbutas as "Bird Goddess," from Central Balkans, early 5th millennium B.C.E. Ht: 32.5 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after photo by M. Djordjević; see also Gimbutas 1991:70, figure 3–21). **(j)** Karanovo-Gumelniţa culture large vase with human face on lid, captioned by Gimbutas (1991:245) as portrayal of "Hedgehog Goddess," from Căscioarele on the Lower Danube island, southern Romania, ca. 4500–4300 B.C.E. Lid ht: 6.1 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after Gimbutas 1999:32, figure 23a). **(k)** Vinča culture disc-shaped figurine marked with lines, captioned by Gimbutas as "figurine with a beaked (Bird Goddess) head," from the Central Balkans, ca. 5000 B.C.E. Ht: 12 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after Gimbutas 1991:315, figure 8–14(2)). **(l)** Vinča culture figurine wearing a conical cap, described by Gimbutas as masked, from the Central Balkans, ca. 5000–4500 B.C.E. Ht: ca. 7.7 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after Gimbutas 1991:273, figure 7–80(2)). **(m)** Terracotta figurine of seated figure with erect phallus and small breasts, captioned by Gimbutas as "Strong youthful god in ithyphallic posture," from Porodin, southern Yugoslavia, ca. 6000 B.C.E. Ht: 5.25 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after Gimbutas 1991:250, figure 7–43). **(n)** Mid-Vinča period figurine decorated with incised lines, described by Gimbutas (1999:314) as playing a role in "the symbolism surrounding certain aspects of the Goddess," from Gomolava, early 5th millennium B.C.E. Ht: 8.5 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after Gimbutas 1991:315, figure 8–15). **(o)** The "Gulmeniţa Lovers" figurine of the East Balkan Karanovo culture from Gulmeniţa in southern Romania, ca. 5000–4750 B.C.E. Ht: 6.8 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after Gimbutas 1999:18, figure 10).

society, constituting another way in which our culture has projected current issues back onto prehistoric material. We feel a need to move away from the either/or argument to allow a picture in which goddess interpretations are one possibility among many.

There is also an issue about the form our writing takes. Beyond the (now acknowledged as spurious) past claims of objective description, Pluciennik (1999) discusses how historical and archaeological writings echo specific literary genres, drawing on Hayden White's analysis of narrative forms including romance, tragedy, and satire. As an example he shows how heroic romance can be identified in the narrative that humanity has risen from primitive beginnings to its acme of civilization today. This could be applied to the social evolutionary "primal goddess" narratives of Victorian and post-Victorian scholarship, reflecting a cultural complacency about patriarchal "progress." A second example provided by Pluciennik involves the tragedy genre of history writing, which views the passing millennia as constituting a fall from grace. In this vein Gimbutas's work has promoted a moral fable in which humanity deteriorated from the innocence and peace of the Neolithic, a utopian society paralleling the biblical Garden of Eden, except that original sin now lay with men, who spoilt the party. Third, Pluciennik cites the genre of satire – using the contradictory or paradoxical to "reveal the ultimate inadequacy of the visions of the world" (1999:661) – as resonating with ironic postmodern commentaries. Thus some scholars regard the evidence from the past to be so inadequate and our readings so contaminated by bias that, in an equally totalizing vein, they dismiss all archaeological work as futile. Pluciennik also points out that, whatever the genre, readings of history often share a linearity of time/progression, with chronology/sequence as an organizing principle; a goal-oriented total view with causality, meaning, and moral closure; and an overarching narrative. Instead he argues for diversity of approaches, fresh metaphors, and tolerance of discontinuities and partial and temporary understandings.

In this vein, we have decided not to present an overarching narrative but to take three case histories, which are of different species from each other, hoping to show how diverse approaches can – and should – throw up different possibilities and insights. So we will consider an object, a site, and a theme. Each case history is a microcosm of current debates. The object is the "Ain Sakhri Lovers figurine," the site is Çatalhöyük in modern Turkey, and the topic is bodily experience.

The Ain Sakhri Figurine

Much of the goddess debate has centred on figurines. Here we consider a prehistoric figurine that despite its striking subject matter has been left outside of the fray. It highlights the selectivity of material discussed, and frames some different questions.

Though not securely provenanced, the "Ain Sakhri Lovers figurine" (Figure 13.3:a) is generally agreed to be from the Wadi Khareitoun Gorge in Judaea and attributable to the Natufian culture of the Mesolithic (Boyd and Cook 1993). It was carved an estimated 11,000 years ago from a small weathered calcite pebble, and shows two human figures crouched in sexual intercourse.

The first question this piece raises is why it is so little known to the public. In 2010 it was chosen as number seven in a high-profile British Museum/BBC Radio 4 series

"A History of the World in 100 Objects." Since it may be the earliest known representation of human love-making (Boyd and Cook 1993:404), one wonders at its absence from earlier works by writers like James and Gimbutas, from the "mother goddess" literature on figurines, and from the entire public debate on gender in history. It has never achieved the iconic status of the "Venuses" or the Neolithic ladies from Old Europe.

We might guess at reasons for this oversight. It is consistent with prehistoric archaeology's preoccupation with female forms; moreover, the equality/mutuality of the positions of the two figures contrasts sharply with the inequality implicit in the relations of mother/child or Goddess/"consort." Nor is it compatible with the idea of a lone goddess: it shows male and female blending rather than polarized by gender divisions as in Western culture and in most of the narratives constructed about prehistory.

The habit of thinking in dualities runs deep in modern Western society. The theory of a female-oriented religion at a primitive social stage thus concurs with the polarized Cartesian worldview, and has supported a series of binary oppositions along the lines of civilized/primitive, male/female, culture/nature, sky/earth, reason/passion, and knower/known, which have continued to allow dominant male culture to distance itself from less controllable and "inferior" aspects of human experience (Ortner 1974:87).

In addition to conceptual Cartesian dichotomies and "the war of the sexes," adversarial structures are embedded in so many Western social structures (including parliament, law, and sport) that it may be uncomfortable to contemplate a representation of what seems to be harmonious union. Commentators have noted that it is hard to disentangle the two bodies visually; is it challenging that the sculpture shows such a strong element of merging? Twinning and pairing, sexual or otherwise, in prehistoric art, perhaps symbolizing complementarity (Meskell 1998:50), have been relatively little explored.

Discomfort may also arise from the evident absorption of the figures in sex, which, despite talk of fertility and regeneration, is curiously invisible in traditional narratives about a prehistoric goddess. Primal experiences of birth and death in a world of childlike "primitive" people may be easier to contemplate than reciprocal adult sexual relationships. Feminist goddess narratives are also more voluble about procreation than about sexual love. "To me, the tenderness of the embracing figures certainly suggests not reproductive vigour, but love," noted British Museum Director Neil MacGregor in a radio commentary on the Ain Sakhri figurine (2010:42); perhaps the time has only just come when this could be said. Marcia-Anne Dobres is open to this idea, stating that "from its very origins, human sexual culture has never been focused simplistically on procreation … Rather, it has everywhere and always involved pleasure, pain, preference, prejudice and politics" (1997:1095). In the beginning was ... pleasure?

There has been some mention of the piece's possible symbolic meanings in relation to spiritual concepts (see Boyd and Cook 1993:404 and accompanying references). However, the figurine also suggests how its carver and perhaps others in the culture envisaged sex. This point has largely escaped scholarly attention. The survival of early prehistoric peoples confirms, if nothing else, that they ate and had sex. Is it a hangover of Victorian prudery that the latter has not been deemed worthy of consideration?

Commentators have observed that in addition to its representation of two entwined bodies, the figurine's overall shape is phallic while the two ends suggest, respectively, testes and penis tip (Boyd and Cook 1993:401) or breasts and vagina (Marc Quinn in

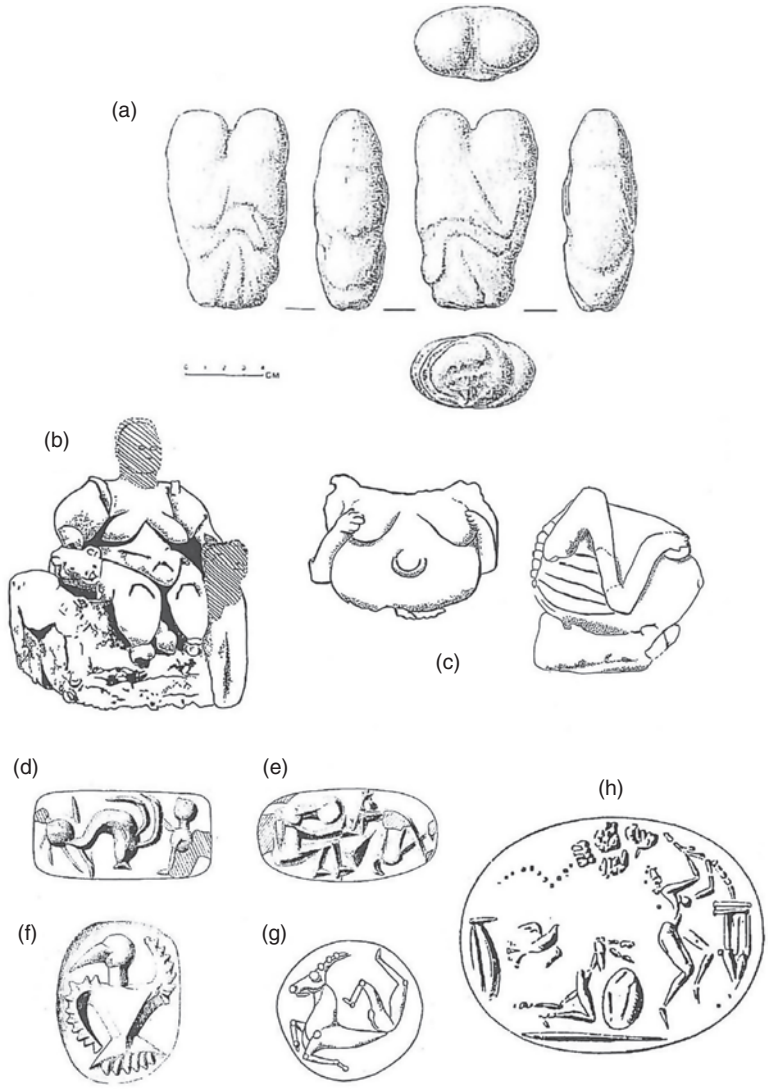


Figure 13.3 **(a)** The Ain Sakhri figurine. Figurine carved from calcite pebble, showing two humans in coitus, known as the "Ain Sakhri Lovers figurine." Thought to be from Wadi Khareitoun Gorge in Judaea, ca. 8000 B.C.E. Ht: 10.2 cm (drawing by Phil Dean after Boyd and Cook 1993:figure 1). (b–c) Figurines from Çatalhöyük. **(b)** The "Çatalhöyük Goddess," seated clay figure with arms resting on felines, perhaps leopards (the hatched areas are restored), 7th millennium B.C.E. Ht: 20 cm (drawn by Lucy Goodison after Meskell 1998:53, figure 13). **(c)** Recently excavated clay figurine from Çatalhöyük with fleshy front and skeletal back, front and side views (Cat. no. 12401.X7), 7th millennium B.C.E. Ht: 6.51 cm (drawings by Lucy Goodison after photographs/drawings in the Stanford Figurines Project Multimedia Repository: http://figurines.stanford.edu/repository/displayimage.php?album=3&pos=101 and http://figurines.stanford.edu/repository/displayimage.php?album=55&pos=14). (d–h) Some representations of bodily experience from the Aegean Bronze Age. **(d)** Design engraved on four-sided steatite prism seal showing standing male figure holding out arm to touch horns of goat. Cretan, said to be from Mallia, Middle Minoan period. L: 1.69 cm (reproduced from CMS III, 1 no. 239). **(e)** Design engraved on three-sided steatite prism

MacGregor 2010:39). Thus it is ambiguous and multisymbolic, like numerous other figurines of the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods (cf. Knapp and Meskell 1997). This not only challenges simple gender interpretations but also – with the implication of multiple applications/use from different angles – draws us away from the conception of an "artwork," an object in itself to be viewed or admired, and toward that of a tool to be handled for practical purposes, ritual or otherwise. Natufian figurative art includes decorated implements of a size to hold in the hand; this hand-sized figurine may also have been used for *doing* something. But if so, what? And what was experienced in the doing?

The figurine has not been taken as an obvious candidate for divinity. However, the labor involved in its making and its depiction of an intense, heightened human experience both suggest that it was "special" in the terms of Tringham and Conkey (1998:40–42) and "marked" to attract attention and grip the imagination in the terms of Keane (2010:196–200). The inadequacy of our categories "religious" and "secular" in attempts to consider its usage only serves to suggest how much of prehistoric experience eludes us.

The pebble sculpture was pulled into the BBC programme as an isolated artifact, so much more graspable than long-gone actions and processes. However, it was not fetishized or packaged with certainties: the script contextualized it within its sedentary, newly agricultural society and acknowledged the ambiguities surrounding it. In the British Museum room where it is displayed, we also found Paleolithic cutting tools for the public to handle. These are encouraging signs of new ways of thinking, including an awareness of context, a loosening of the barrier between "economic" and "symbolic," and a shift away from certainties toward fluidity.

Çatalhöyük

Çatalhöyük, a Neolithic site located on the Konya plain in Anatolia, captures many facets of the goddess debate. It is also unusual for the intensity of discussion and the variety of disciplinary viewpoints that have been brought to the interpretive table; these offer an intriguing window onto the way the debate over the goddess in prehistory continues to unfold in recent scholarship. This debate is fueled by various factors, most importantly by the growing body of evidence provided by the current excavations and by new interpretive frameworks.

Figure 13.3 (*cont'd*) seal showing seated male figure with head bowed and arm outstretched towards the horns of a quadruped with crossed legs said to be from Lassithi, Crete, Middle Minoan period. L: 2.15 cm (reproduced from CMS III, 1 no. 213). **(f)** Design engraved on three-sided steatite prism seal showing bird-like figure with one wing/arm raised and the other down. Chance find from Mallia, Crete, Middle Minoan period. L: 1.2 cm (reproduced from CMS II, 2 no. 243). **(g)** Man-bull or man-goat engraved on jasper lentoid seal, of unknown Cretan provenance. Diam: 1.55–1.60 cm (drawing by Lucy Goodison after CMS II, 3 no. 331). **(h)** Design engraved on gold ring showing a cult scene in which a bird flies towards two apparently naked figures touching a tree and a stone (*baetyl*) respectively. From Tombe dei Nobili Grave 11 at necropolis of Kalyvia, Crete, Late Minoan period. L: 1.65 cm (reproduced from Nilsson 1950[1927]:268, figure 133).

First excavated in the 1960s by the British archaeologist James Mellaart, the site has, since 1993, been the focus of renewed excavation under Ian Hodder. Mellaart famously characterized the site as "a supernova among the rather dim galaxy of contemporary peasant cultures" (1965:77) and described the buildings with wall-paintings and relief plaster sculptures as "shrines." Beyond this he set a religious agenda, declaring that "the supreme deity was the Great Goddess" (1964:49) and describing "the cult of the Mother Goddess as the basis of our civilisation" (1965:77); he thus inserted Neolithic Çatalhöyük into a larger narrative about the origins of Western culture. Mellaart's reading of the visual imagery from the site, particularly the wall-paintings, relief sculptures, and figurines, such as the "Çatalhöyük Goddess" (Figure 13.3:b), took its immediate cue from a long line of earlier writings, such as those of Arthur Evans and E. O. James where, as we have seen, a great or mother goddess was placed at the center of early religious belief. His ideas found renewed support from Marija Gimbutas and her followers from the 1970s onward.

Ian Hodder's recent investigations at Çatalhöyük have thrust the site firmly back into the limelight. An early and lively exchange of views on the question of the goddess at Çatalhöyük arose from Hodder's commitment to multivocality and to consideration of the different stakeholders who engage with the site alongside the archaeologists. Pertinent here, of course, are the Goddess feminists for whom Çatalhöyük has become a key site for pilgrimage and Goddess tours.

The archives of the Çatalhöyük website preserve an early discussion, conducted by email, between Hodder and Anita Louise, who visited the site as part of a visit to Turkey in 1998 "to pay homage to this land of ancient Goddess cultures" (see Discussions with the Goddess Community 1998). Their exchange is formulated as a series of questions from Anita Louise to Ian Hodder, which generated a genuinely interesting and wide-ranging discussion.[2]

At one level, the excavator's desire to enter into dialogue with different interest groups, his open invitation to the Goddess community to offer their own interpretations for display within the on-site centre, and the promised use of the web to make archaeological data quickly and widely available, represent significant shifts toward multivocality in archaeological practice. On the other hand, we can already observe the imprint of the familiar polarization: Hodder places "Mother Goddess" within quotation marks, Anita Louise does not. Like the choice between the written or printed forms Goddess or goddess (the latter sometimes regarded as denigrating the status of the Goddess in relation to God), such choices can be revealing of how the participants in the debate position or distance themselves. Even in the early days of the new excavations, we see glimpses of the interpretive framework that later took shape in publications addressing the wider symbolic and ritual world of Çatalhöyük (Hodder 2006, 2010). These studies, very properly, bring to the fore a much wider set of evidence, including male imagery and animal-human interaction, together with careful contextual analysis of the material. For example, the splayed "goddess" figures on the plaster reliefs have, in the light of new evidence, been reinterpreted as animals although the possible hybridity of the figures (since they have pronounced human-like navels) is also acknowledged.

The promise to incorporate a display presenting a "Goddess perspective" was realized in 2003 through the involvement of Kathryn Rountree, an anthropologist who had already explored the discourse between archaeologists and Goddess scholars

in relation to Neolithic Malta, another important node in the landscape of goddess-focused interpretations (Rountree 2003). During her time with the Çatalhöyük team, she undertook a wider study of the practice of multivocality and reflexivity at the site, bringing the goddess debate under the anthropologist's scrutiny. Rountree also describes a visit by a 40-strong Goddess group in 2005; they toured the site, planned the creation of a ritual space for Goddess worship in a nearby grove, and engaged in group discussions with some of the excavators.

However, Rountree describes how ownership of authoritative interpretation of the site was decisively asserted and retained by the archaeologists, and how by repeatedly linking the "Goddess" to the idea of a matriarchy (which the Goddess community had not done), they created a "straw goddess" which enabled them to discredit both ideas with one stroke (Rountree n.d.). In fact, both the archaeologists and the Goddess community posited an egalitarian society at the site; but by this time it had become clear that within the framework of multivocality some voices were more powerful than others. Pushed into a stereotypical conflict of "religion" and "science" that did justice to neither side, the point was reached in which both parties were "talking past each other" (Rountree 2007).

A new and different set of "conversations" about religion has since developed at Çatalhöyük. Between 2006 and 2008 Hodder brought a group of anthropologists of religion and theologians together with the archaeologists. The publication of this "interdisciplinary experiment" explores early religious ritual and spirituality using Çatalhöyük as a case study (Hodder 2010). The study provides much food for thought about how we frame and think about "religion" in early societies, highlighting it as a key element in the emergence of "civilization" at the town of Çatalhöyük. Of particular relevance to our discussion here is the decisive marginalization of the notion of a female deity.

Moreover, new figurine studies are said to "thoroughly undermine" the old narratives of female-centered symbolism (Hodder and Meskell 2010:15, 34). Although the so-called "Çatalhöyük goddess," a seated heavy-set female whose hands rest on felines, has long been the iconic image of the site (Figure 13.3:b), the current excavators prefer to stress that only a very small proportion of the figurine assemblage is explicitly female. They further argue that an emphasis on breasts, bellies, and buttocks relates not to fertility or reproduction but to maturity and abundance in the context of generational continuity and ancestors, a perspective which chimes well with burial evidence on the site (Meskell et al. 2008; Nakamura and Meskell 2009). A focus on the process of death and on ancestors, rather than supernatural deities, is suggested by the recent find of a curious figurine which combines a fleshy front with a skeletal back, a juxtaposition which is made tangible through handling and turning the figurine (Figure 13.3:c). A further striking feature of this figurine (and of others on the site) is that it had a separate, detachable head, emphasizing again the idea of handling and doing rather than passive display. A burial of a female who wears a leopard's claw and holds a male skull in her arms (Hodder 2010:22) attests to the physical reality of the removal and circulation of heads/skulls which may be being played out within the miniaturized world of the figurines.

These interpretive shifts at Çatalhöyük mirror some of the wider thinking about figurines and goddesses that has developed within archaeology over the past four decades. Associations with fertility have been questioned, and scholars have pointed

to the diversity within Neolithic figurine repertoires from particular sites, and to the high percentage of sexless or sexually indeterminate pieces (Talalay 1993). Haaland and Haaland have made the important suggestion that the question should not be what the figurines are *of*, but rather what they are *for* (1995). Some scholars have questioned the very gender divisions assumed in our culture, with emphasis on mixed sexual symbolism, ambiguity, and "third" or "other" genders (Knapp and Meskell 1997; Talalay 2005:131–137).

Most archaeologists now agree that figurines can represent and symbolize many things, from deities, ancestors, and human votaries to talismans, teaching devices, and toys, and could have served a variety of shifting uses, including initiation, healing, contractual devices, spirit guides, or communication tools. Several recent interpretations have been secular: Bailey has suggested seeing Neolithic figurines as, among other things, a subversion of reality, challenging social norms in the negotiation of social inequalities/conflict, and as an unconscious manifestation of the body shaping the human sense of identity (2005:181–204).

Such alternative suggestions have been experienced by goddess-oriented feminists as belittling, and there has been a standoff between them and the archaeological establishment. Generally, academics have preferred not to debate directly with non-specialists, but the tenacious lobby for the Goddess has influenced both public understandings of prehistory and scholarly reactions. The widespread appeal of goddess ideas, reflected in a stream of books, websites, and conferences, has kept her hovering in archaeologists' peripheral vision. Occasionally their response is to reaffirm her fully fledged (as in Cauvin 2000:69–72). At Çatalhöyük, by contrast, an increasingly active rejection of anything associated with goddess interpretations is coupled with a shift to emphasizing "phallocentrism" or "maleness as a prime cultural signifier" (Hodder and Meskell 2010:34). We seem here to be back to the either/or oppositional narrative discussed earlier in the chapter, and to a situation where, to some extent, archaeologists are still reacting to the voices of the "other side." In the struggle to dismiss goddess-driven narratives, archaeologists seem to be downplaying the representations of the female form which, though not a major part of the assemblage, still need consideration.

In the taking up of cause against the goddess, something is lost: crucial to archaeological interpretation is the integrity of the evidence and openness to revising theories and suggesting alternative approaches. A site like Çatalhöyük cries out for complex and flexible interpretations, yet there is a sense of rigidity on this score, combined with a creeping secularization and de-feminization of the material. The tendency – even among some feminist archaeologists – is to recreate a world that is to the taste of a contemporary male "scientific" outlook, but possibly anachronistic for the Neolithic era. In the urge to eliminate Gimbutas's Goddess, collateral damage is perhaps suffered by goddesses: specifically those well-attested goddesses of later prehistory, some of them linked with fertility, who may or may not have had older sisters playing some role in earlier religions. Whitehouse has pointed out how – in reaction to traditional biological determinism – feminist archaeology has developed a blind spot in the area of biology, reproduction, and "the 'M-word': motherhood," thus omitting a major aspect of human experience and narrowing our understanding of past lives (2007:34–35).

This narrowing of debate can be contrasted vividly with an exhibition "unearthed" held at the University of East Anglia in 2010. Juxtaposing Japanese Jomon figures

(*dogū*) and Balkan Neolithic figurines, the exhibition and the accompanying book provided a different kind of space for academic reflection on goddesses in prehistory in relation to the body of figurine material (Bailey et al. 2010). As a space it did not need to be adversarial or lay claim to the primacy of a single interpretation for figurines; therefore, competing or parallel readings of material (as well as thought-provoking, if sometimes sensationalizing, juxtapositions with modern objects and artistic creations) were presented side by side for the attention of the visitor/reader. The opening pages give pride of place to two quotes: one from Gimbutas and one from Ucko, thus acknowledging the history and point of conflict in the goddess debate. But in the text itself we see multivocality in operation between different voices: some espouse the idea of a goddess, but many more do not. By being presented with different views, the reader is given the full range of thinking about the figurines without closure of interpretation.

Bodily Experience

When modern eyes fall on a prehistoric representation of the human body, one of the first questions asked is whether it shows a divinity. There are, however, other questions that could be asked: for example, what is that human body experiencing? Instead of looking to identify an abstract deity, we can view it as a living body and ask what was happening to/in it. In eras where anthropomorphic divinities are not attested, that question may take us closer to understanding past religion without the limitations of our contemporary definitions and expectations.

In this section we consider some anthropomorphic representations from the Bronze Age Minoan culture whose implications, we suggest, have been overlooked, and look at possibilities for a shift of emphasis from viewing prehistoric objects toward finding a way into prehistoric actions. Such a shift is already discernible in Minoan archaeology. In a seminal paper, Peter Warren proposed that we should see Minoan religion as "ritual action" (1988); and recent studies have gone further, seeking the experience within those actions.

Prior to the Late Minoan period, the material record from Bronze Age Crete does not offer any undisputed representations of deities. However, it presents numerous examples of activities of an apparently ritual nature. Many of these are shown on small engraved seals, which had practical applications for sealing but, it is thought, also an amuletic significance. Examples from the Early and Middle phases of the Bronze Age tend to be more visually simple, as on the small engraved seals in Figure 13.3:d–f, while those from the Late Bronze Age include more complex scenes, sometimes on gold rings as in Figure 13.3:h. However, there are common themes throughout the Bronze Age, involving portrayal of extreme bodily states and of interaction or merging with elements of the natural world in a ritual context.

Thus Figure 13.3:d–f shows steatite prism seals: the design on Figure 13.3:d has been described as showing a naked male figure holding out a hand to the horns of a goat standing before him (CMS III, 1:406).[3] Figure 13.3:e is described as showing a seated naked male figure with a deeply bowed head and an arm outstretched toward a quadruped with crossed legs, perhaps a sacrifice (CMS III, 1:351). The details suggest non-ordinary, ritual situations; and their importance is shown by a series of other

such scenes of touching heads of quadrupeds alive and dead (Goodison 1989: figures 67, 118, 243; see also Goodison 2011a). Figure 13.3:f shows a bird-human figure with the suggestion of a skirt, a large beak, and arms in a posture of dance; again, such bird-humans recur (Goodison 1989:figures 98, 156–158; see also Goodison 2011b; Pini 2010:329–332, 338). In these scenes, physical experiences of touch and dance are closely related to creatures from the animal kingdom, and one case shows merging between human and bird.

Depictions of the Late Bronze Age period show similar and more complex scenes. Figure 13.3:g shows a man/stag hybrid. Figure 13.3:h is a scene engraved on a gold ring in which a naked female figure in a posture of energetic dance touches/shakes a tree while an apparently naked male figure leans in an extended, abandoned posture over a large boulder or *baetyl*. Other rings similarly show extreme physical postures associated with contacting elements of the natural world.

Space does not permit a review of the extensive archaeological discussion of such representations. Looking beyond the traditional designation of "ecstatic" vegetation cult (e.g., Persson 1942:34), we have been involved in new work exploring the anatomy and agency of these activities. Morris and Peatfield (2002) have investigated the use of physical stimuli and specific postures to enter trance states while Goodison (2009:236–239, revisiting Savignoni 1904:582–584) has proposed specific purposes of divination in the tree- and *baetyl*-touching imagery, possibly involving communication with spirits/the dead. Morris and Peatfield have drawn upon scientific studies of altered states of consciousness (ASC), as well as parallels with shamanic traditions, and stress the importance of considering the subjective processes involved (Morris and Peatfield 2002 and accompanying references; see also Morris 2004). Other recent work has discussed more widely the importance of corporeality in archaeology (e.g., Hamilakis et al. 2002); the significance of the performative element in ritual (e.g., Laderman and Roseman 1996); and the importance of developing scientific strategies to reconstruct the sensory experiences of ritual ceremonies (e.g., Marcus 2007).

Looking at ritual and action challenges the emphasis on religious belief and worship that has permeated many studies, including writings on Minoan religion, despite important work by scholars like Snell (1953) and Dodds (1951), suggesting that in the Aegean such processes of abstraction and interiorization developed in specific later historical contexts. Rethinking important earlier writings, Colin Renfrew has recently acknowledged that religious belief in prehistoric/traditional societies often develops secondary to ritual practices (2007). We suggest that complex, nuanced perceptions and intentionality can be present without religious belief in any abstract/immaterial entity.

This perspective leads us away from fitting the material to our cultural models of internalized devotion to "divinity," and toward a consideration of what happened in externalized ritual interactions between people and people, and between people and land/trees/animals. As depicted in Minoan culture, interactions variously involving nakedness, touch, gesture, and extreme movement would probably instigate an intense sense of engagement with those elements of the natural world that are being touched, shaken, held, or impersonated. Again, an experience of physical merging seems to be suggested. Nurit Bird-David has discussed forms of "personal relatedness" (1993:121) to ancestors, animals, and other elements of the natural world in some non-Western cultures. She uses the term "dividuality" (1999:S68) to identify experiences of mutual responsiveness that do not propagate the "individuality" prized

in Western culture, and discusses the implications of a relative lack of personal barriers, not only human to human but also between humans and animals/plants/landscape, in some non-Western cultures.

Relevant here is the "negation or denial" of the body prominent in Western culture, and its implicit definition as an unruly, disruptive "brute givenness which requires overcoming" (Grosz 1994:3–4); such attitudes militate against contemporary writers investigating bodily experience in prehistory, and indeed against their ability to engage open-mindedly with obese/sexualized anthropomorphic figurines. Concepts of the "Mother Goddess" and "fertility" might be seen as serving a distancing function. Would it be harder to accept the "Venus" figurines as representations of mortal women – breathing, sweating, sagging, smelly women? As such, would they be harder to embrace as inspirations and role models?

Distance from the animal body is even greater in Western culture, with its axiomatic conceptual divide between human and non-human. Human-animal hybrids have no place in Western religions, but there are resonances in anthropological studies of cultures that use a trance state to pair/merge with an animal (seen as another kind of "person") to enable healing, dialogue, hunting success, or other transactions (Bird-David 1993, 1999:S71). Interest in prehistoric resonances with the shamanic tradition, which involves animals, is growing (e.g., Aldhouse-Green and Aldhouse-Green 2005).

New areas of inquiry call for new tools. As intellectual workers, archaeologists – despite addressing material remains – have shown relatively little interest in physical experience. They have largely followed the contemporary model whereby abstraction, detachment, and objectification unleash a "disembodied, instrumental rationality" (Hornborg in Bird-David 1999:S81) to go about its business. But recent thinking has emphasized how humans learn through the body as well as through the brain, with sights, sounds, and movements becoming embedded in bodily memory, and sensory participation contributing to knowledge. The survival of prehistoric people relied on an intimate and experiential engagement with their environment. As a way of closing the distance between us and their physical lives, Pluciennik discusses the use of proxy experience with the rigorous yet imaginative evocation of possible orientations, understandings, and emotions, citing artistic installations and multisensory reconstructions as examples (1999:667). Talalay includes experimental archaeology as an avenue for future research, along with further investigation of the symbolic resonance of the human body (1993:85–86).

While traditional archaeology regarded academic work as the province of male/mind as "knower" in opposition to the female/body as "known," gender archaeology can challenge those dualities and, with a fuller sense of the human, develop a more nuanced understanding of human life in prehistory. Foregrounding the body does not negate the brain: to fetishize the senses/feeling/body knowledge as more authentic than the cerebral would only be to perpetuate those polarizations that have beset the mother goddess debate. But opportunities are there for archaeologists to use both in a blending of experiential and desk work.

Asking about a mother goddess is perhaps the wrong question; and, although actions have largely become invisible and artifacts are the most concrete evidence to hand, focusing on objects is perhaps not the only priority. It is possible that we could learn more about prehistoric religion if we were to stop thinking in terms of *nouns* and start thinking in terms of *verbs*.

Conclusions

Our three snapshots of the debate from different angles have shown how many varied stories can be told about prehistoric religion. Perhaps because our culture is accustomed to a monotheistic god, there has been a tendency in the literature to stifle imagination and awareness of this variety through the search for a privileged single story from which to universalize and construct a totalizing narrative. Thus within traditional studies of prehistoric figurines there has been a privileging of objects over their contexts; of objects over actions; of anthropomorphic objects over other types of representations; and, within the realm of human imagery, a predilection for separating out the female form as the basis for interpretation (cf. Conkey 1997:764). Amidst this preoccupation with the female form there has been a preoccupation with identifying mother figures, as well as a privileging of postulated relationships within the category of "belief." Thus our possible fields of inquiry have been successively and relentlessly narrowed. Moreover, as soon as that narrowed field of enquiry yielded a powerful narrative, the narrative of the mother goddess, that narrative was used to colonize other cultures, places, and times so that "one size fits all." As Rosemary Ruether has observed, the mother goddess narrative has furnished "a story of great mythic power" (2005:27), offering a single, reassuring key to unlock the entire "truth" about human development.

In this chapter we have been tracking that totalizing story and examining whose needs it has served. While there has recently been a shift to more diverse thinking about figurines, it has often been reactive and has tried to exclude goddesses from the debate. Those who champion that interpretation, which is now outmoded in archaeological circles, are likely to be denigrated. "Diversity" can sometimes mean juggling different possibilities without acknowledging that some are more important than others; in this way it can itself become reductionist.

Is it possible to decenter and recontextualize the goddess debate without excluding goddesses? Can we challenge past dogmatism and move beyond "Yes, but" to a vigorous alternative? Is it possible to question revisionist histories while still having the courage to assign value? There are trends which seem to suggest that this is possible, and which seem hopeful for the future study of goddesses in prehistory. With the movement away from a preoccupation with "grand narratives" in the past, there is now renewed interest in treating specific bodies of evidence very carefully and respectfully before moving on to comparisons. Peter Ucko has described his early, detailed catalogue of figurines as an effort to "let the archaeological material speak more for itself" (1996:301); Lynn Meskell has highlighted the trend toward particularity and emphasis on local variation and character (1998:47); and detailed use–wear analysis of a figurine assemblage from Chalcolithic Cyprus has enabled Elizabeth Goring to identify them not as goddesses but as birthing aids and educational tools (1991:39–60).

We would stress here the value of the particular – not simply by focusing on objects to study or regarding them as objects of worship, but by looking at their expressed relationships without prior assumptions. A focus on the particular can lead to new ways of listening to the past and increase our ability to see new things in the material. In terms of the goddess debate, this involves ongoing evaluation of possible goddesses, an uncomfortable process which resists the appeal of easy or existing categorization. It involves accepting that we may find different stories at different

places. And those stories may or may not point toward goddess/es, irrespective of contemporary agendas.

In a debate which has been taken out of context and found wings in the public sphere, this is what archaeologists and the archaeological viewpoint have to offer: work that is solid but not closed, and that focuses on the micro-scale. But is it possible to challenge totalizing narratives and focus on the particular while still keeping paths open to move between microcosm and macrocosm? We believe it is, because the upper level of theory cannot function without the particular; only by looking at each case on its own merits can one build up a bigger, more general picture. We can resist throwing everything into the same explanatory box while still daring to attempt interpretation. Despite the investment of value in misplaced ways during the history of the goddess debate, we do not have to give up on assigning value.

The step toward a bigger picture may not be to construct easy categories or an overarching narrative, but rather to trace irregular networks of connection. Broodbank (2000:10) cites Terrell's "reticulate" view of history writing as a positive model for encompassing the complex, organic, and unordered phenomena of past human lives (living is messy, and it does not lend itself to categories). According to the traditional paradigm, learning involves "breaking the known down into its parts in order to know it" (Bird-David 1999:S77); the model of networks allows rather for a tracing of dynamic relationships, responses, and connections, and for acknowledging the roles of "chaos, chance, and the unexpected" (Terrell 1988:654).

In Terrell's "entangled bank" there can be a tension between similarity and variation. That tension, as well as contradictions/uncertainties within the bigger picture, can be contained by the recognition of ambiguity. Ambiguity is different from polysemy, diversity, and doubt. Doubt sometimes implies that we cannot be sure about anything. Diversity acknowledges differences while sometimes dodging the issue of assigning value and offering partial pictures which do not satisfy. The polysemic can entail a cold, cerebral slicing into many small fragments of meaning. The beauty of ambiguity is that it can offer a rich, fluid view that allows for questions, and offers the possibility of holding one thing while including/embracing another – a process that may be inconclusive or apparently contradictory. Above all else, it involves a breadth of vision.

In this chapter we have hinted at the contrariness of some past scholarship, which has variously constructed a millennia-long mother goddess without a single image of mother-and-child; or has minimized the significance of female material and effectively lobbied against any earlier development or manifestation of well-attested goddesses in late prehistory. We understand the latter as a reaction against earlier asymmetrical fascination with the female form, an undue emphasis on anthropomorphic imagery, and the disproportionate focus on female divinities in prehistory when in fact both male and female deities played a role in the pantheons of protohistoric societies. Alternately exalted and marginalized, female elements have not easily received a realistic treatment in prehistoric – or in contemporary – narratives.

We have also questioned assumptions about what scholars in the field could be looking at, by pointing to new directions in the field; and we have drawn attention to a lack of emphasis in the past on the role of the natural world, especially animals, in early religion. In some places, thinking in terms of ancestors and the dead would serve to shift the goal-posts. We have also suggested that ritual and bodily experience might

in some cases furnish more fruitful starting points than the search for personified deities. Shifts in consciousness are sometimes a key factor. Traditions loosely described as shamanic could provide a back-story or early development path for some deities when they indisputably appear, which in some cases occurs relatively late in prehistoric sequences. In these respects the debate could be said to be moving in new directions.

But the contribution of feminism and gender studies is not about constructing new scenarios: it is about process. If we are indeed doing away with "the goddess," as our correspondent felt we were, we would wish to replace her not with new topics or interpretations ("what") but with new methods of investigation ("how"). In a vibrant and controversial area of scholarship we do not wish to be nihilistic or dismissive of goddesses and the female divine. Instead of subscribing to reassuring grand narratives and overarching themes, or taking sides in a locked debate, we feel that the insights of gender archaeology can offer an approach that is more challenging but ultimately sustaining. By focusing on the value of the particular, we may detect patterns that reveal messy networks. The broader picture that emerges may be tentative and fluid, but it will resonate with the beauty of ambiguity and reveal a more nuanced glimpse of human religious experience in prehistory.

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NOTES

1 In discussion of prehistoric material, the term "Goddess" is often used with the disclaimer that it is only a shorthand; however, due to its implication of monotheism, we mostly opt here for "goddess" and "goddesses."
2 http://www.catalhoyuk.com/library/goddess.html.
3 The same locus comments on the disproportionately large size of the animal's head and horns.

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PART II Regional Perspectives in Gender Prehistory

SECTION 4

Gender Prehistory in Africa and Asia

CHAPTER 14 Gender in North African Prehistory

Barbara E. Barich

Introduction

Some years ago, when addressing the issue of how gender and the division of men's and women's roles within society had been addressed in studies of African archaeology, I drew attention to the very limited amount of research on the subject. In my opinion, this was the consequence of a greater interest in other themes such as environment, typology, and chronology (Barich 1998a:105). While the situation has not changed substantially since then, at least with regard to North African archaeology, the emergence of postprocessual approaches has led to a notable interest in various aspects of human agency based on contextual analysis (Dobres 1988; Gero 1991; Gero and Conkey 1991; Claassen 1992; Claassen and Joyce 1997; Nelson 1998). In her introduction to *Gender in African Prehistory*, Susan Kent stated that if archaeologists in previous decades had been more engaged in studies of gender and sociopolitical organization, it would be possible today to draw upon a complex set of data that is much more important than our knowledge about the environment (1998). Archaeologists, driven by the urgency to reconstruct scenarios focused primarily on the environment, have long refrained from developing a corpus of theories adequate to represent the numerous aspects of the social sphere. While social and symbolic approaches in archaeology have been more frequently adopted during the last decade, most of this research has as its starting point the reconstruction of the environment.

The history of change in the mutual relationships between men and women in northern Africa during the Holocene can perhaps be better understood in the context of the transition from hunters/gatherers/fishers to herders/farmers/agro-pastoralists. One possible interpretive approach is to examine archaeological contexts for evidence of their characteristic forms of economic production. This would result, however, in an overly simplistic and linear sketch of the multiplicity of aspects associated with

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gender as a cultural construct, and would make it difficult to recognize the regional and temporal differences that a more nuanced interpretation of gender requires.

Archaeologists cannot rely on the issues normally used to justify their interpretations since archaeological data are rarely engendered per se. Therefore, in order to obtain engendered content archaeologists often make use of data from other fields, especially ethnography, which do not always prove to be reliable and can raise questions concerning the legitimacy of their suggested associations. Another difficulty stems from the fact that not all archaeologists agree on the definition of gender. Some maintain that it is biologically defined, while others have shown that it is a cultural construct (Kent 1998:12); moreover, shaping our concepts of gender on the basis of the current beliefs of modern society is likely to be misleading. These issues explain why gender recognition is such a difficult task for the archaeologist, who often proceeds on unsteady ground. Nevertheless, gender-based research furnishes important insights into societies of the remote past and can lead to a more meaningful and rigorous archaeology (see Nelson 2007; Gifford-Gonzales 1998:135).

Archaeological Context

The present chapter attempts to highlight how gender roles have been interpreted, or how they might be interpreted, in the studies of groups who inhabited the Sahara and the Nile Valley ca. 10,000–5000 B.P. (see Figure 14.1).[1] This period, which is a time of great interest in the archaeology of North Africa, underwent great changes in economic and social terms.

Since the middle of the last century, A. J. Arkell has led us to look at this area as a fairly homogeneous cultural and ecological context with broad structural similarities (1949, 1953). The fresh water resources supplied by the Nile had been exploited since ancient times, despite an almost total lack of evidence of equipment for fishing. Sites of the late Middle Paleolithic and Upper Paleolithic Upper Egypt and the Nubian Nile Valley have yielded abundant remains of *Clarias* (Gautier and Van Neer 1989). For some Kubbaniyan sites angling with weights was suggested. However, the number of identified species is generally too low to speak of a developed fishing technology. We should also consider that the substantial increase in the flow of the Nile waters in the early Holocene, the phase of the so-called "wild Nile," was a period of vacuum in the archaeological record. The two sites at Makhadma (Makhadma 2 and 4), dated to ca. 12,500 B.P., were located on high ground to escape the danger of flooding during periods of high Nile waters (Van Neer et al. 2000:273). This phenomenon is seen as a result of changes from arid to humid climate in the region of the Nile's springs at the end of the Pleistocene. The resuming of rainfall occurred in an arid environment, where the mantle of vegetation had not yet fully recovered and was not, therefore, able to counter the trend of violent floods. Occupations became relatively abundant only with the re-establishment of the normal course of the river around 10,000 years ago.

The cultures of the Upper Nile have revealed strong affinities with the Saharan societies linked to a moist climate. This explains Arkell's initial description of this cultural area as "Neolithic of Sudanese tradition," based on the similarity of motifs on pottery vessels in the Sahara and Sudan. In the absence of methods for direct absolute dating, Arkell proposed for the most ancient period (the so-called Khartoum Mesolithic) a

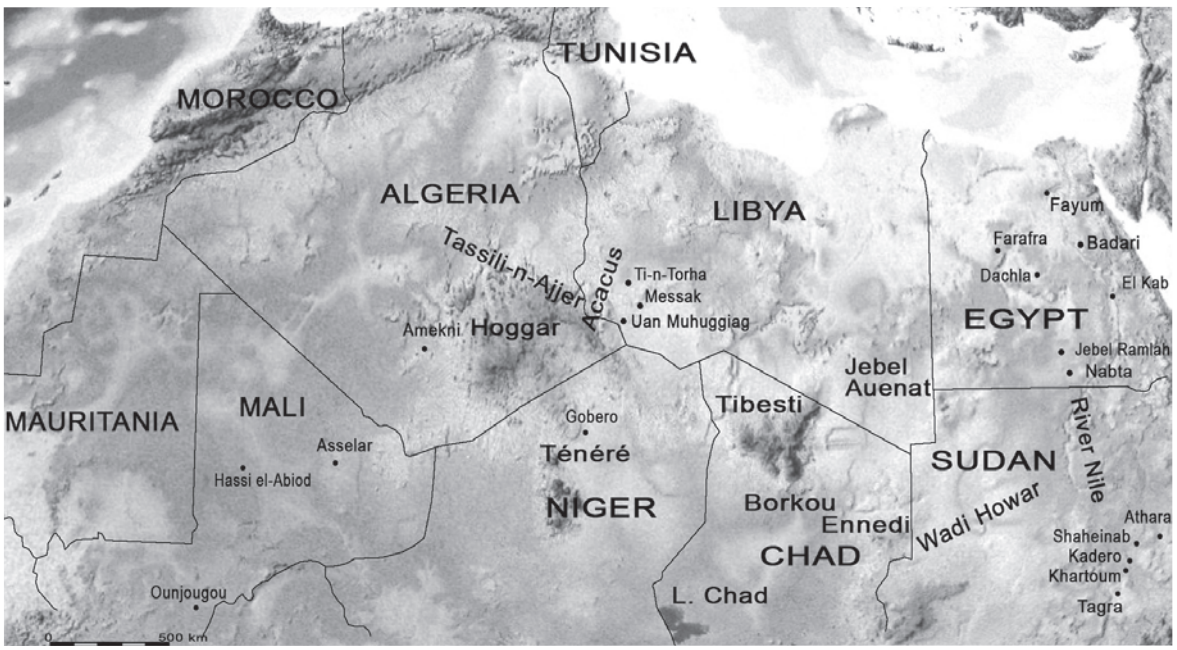


Figure 14.1 Map of the Sahara and the Nile Valley with main sites referred to in the text (produced by M. Pennacchioni using the US Geological Survey's Digital Chart of the World).

date of ca. 8000 B.P. Subsequently, however, the radiocarbon dates from Sarourab II (ca. 9300 B.P.) and Tagra (ca. 8300 B.P.; see Khabir 1987) revealed that the culture went back to the transition between the Pleistocene and the Holocene, a period which had seen the full resumption of the Nile floods.

In the Egyptian Western Desert the first reoccupation of Bir Kiseiba (known as the El Adam phase, dated 10,000–8200 B.P.) is important because there is evidence for oxen (dated 10,200–9460 B.P.) in an incipient phase of domestication (Gautier 1984). In the Libyan Sahara the first Holocene colonists exploited a large quantity of gathered plants from the millet family (Barich 1992, 1998b; Wasylikowa 1992, 2001; Garcea 2001). This has shown that the communities living there had begun a transformation process from the original acquisitive economy of "simple" hunter-gatherers and were heading toward a more complex and differentiated use of the surrounding environment (Barich 2010:185–190).[2] This condition was seen as a prerequisite and a preparatory phase for the development of the pastoral economy well established locally ca. 7500–4000 B.P. (Barich 1987; Di Lernia 2002). During the Middle Pastoral (ca. 6100–5000 B.P.) the practice of moving alternately between the flat areas of the depressions and the plateaus led to an intensive occupation of wide regions; large villages were built in the valleys near the lakes and transitional stations in the mountains (Di Lernia 2002) where in many cases they are associated with rock art documents. During the last phase of the pastoral development (5000–4000 B.P.) the Saharan shepherds utilized longer pathways, their routes passing along the edges of the Tibesti, Borkou, Auenat, and Ennedi and continuing through the Wadi Howar to the Nile (Kröpelin 1993; Jesse 2003).

Rediscovering the "Site"

In order to understand how ecological research was a starting point to reconstruct the composition and structure of society, it is useful to consider what such research has meant for the Sahara and the Nile Valley. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the emergence of the "siteless survey," as well as methods for the spatial investigation of a territory as a "bounded unity of space" (Dunnel and Dancey 1987:268). The main objectives of the survey (e.g., land-use, settlement patterns, ecological adaptation, resource utilization, etc.) could be achieved by recording distributions of artifacts, hearthplaces, and concentrations of stone tools over extensive areas. On account of the need to examine large territories, systematic excavations appeared impractical while the alternative of using surface data became more popular. However, since the early 1990s, research has focused mainly on stratigraphic investigations and the contextual study of settlements. Studied within its broader geomorphological and paleoenvironmental contexts, the "site" has come to the foreground as the focal point and unifying element of all information on landscape, economy, and lifeways and, not least, as a basis on which to assess the same demographic consistency. The survey and analysis of sites thus became the main methods for monitoring changes in the structure of society.

This change has primarily concerned the study of early Holocene Libya where hunter-gatherer societies were already familiar with pottery (Barich 1998b). A very rich collection of ceramics, as well as wild fauna, was found at Ti-n-Torha East in a

non-productive hunter-gatherer context. This pottery is among the oldest in the central Sahara, decorated with dotted wavy lines and associated with Later Stone Age, or Epipaleolithic, industry with a high component of blade and microblade tools (up to 90.7 percent). New data from the Malian site of Ounjougou (Huysecom et al. 2004), with dates a little older than those of the Libyan sites, provide new information about an original center of ceramic production in the Sahel region. However, there is no evidence to assert that ceramics may have been transferred to groups of Libyan hunters from women who had already become familiar with pottery, according to a scheme suggested by Gifford-Gonzales (1998:292). It seems more plausible to think of immigrant groups who practiced a broad-spectrum exploitation of the environment involving hunting, hunting-fishing, and the intensive harvesting of wild cereals.

Several recent research projects focusing on intra-site excavations have identified areas of specific human activity within a site, although this is a difficult task and there are conflicting interpretations. Where men and women are involved in different but mutually integrated activities, the space and objects they use tend to overlap due to the limited space available (Weedman 2006:266). This view is supported by Brumbach and Jarvenpa, whose work at the prehistoric Iñupiat site at Barrow, Alaska does not support the notion of a clear division of male and female space (2006:515–516). More generally, various authors (e.g., Draper 1975; Yellen 1977; Kent 1984) agree that small-scale hunter-gatherer societies do not segregate space or architecture by gender. Changes can be observed in better organized settlements such as those associated with agro-pastoral and pastoral societies (Weedman 2006:260). For example, Hodder (1987) noticed among the Ilchamus of Kenya the clear demarcation of gendered household space (right = female; left and front = male). On the other hand, Gifford-Gonzales notes (with regard to Dassanetch groups) that archaeologists would have to recognize places reserved for women through specific characteristics in the bone breakage after cooking, which would allow them to identify gender relationships within the social context (1993).

In some cases, intra-site survey may prove successful not only for allowing activities to be reconstructed more precisely but also for identifying male and female spaces within the settlement. For example, in the proto-Neolithic village of Hidden Valley in the Farafra Oasis of the Egyptian Western Desert, high concentrations of ostrich eggshell beads were found clustered in specific places on the ground (Sector A4, Layer IIa: ca. 6800 B.P.). These can be considered as places specifically designated for the production of these artifacts, which were obtained using special small drills designed for boring (Barich 2008; Barich et al. in press). Ethnographic studies have shown that ostrich eggshell bead manufacture tends to be associated with women (Kent 1998:14). For example, !Kung San women engage in the manufacture of these ornaments, which are made from eggshell fragments that are worked and handled through a long and elaborate process.[3] If, therefore, the manufacture of these products fell primarily within the domain of women's work, an intra-site survey would be useful not only to highlight alternative areas within the village, but also areas normally occupied by a precise component of the population. While objections have been raised to these interpretations (Kent 1998:65–66), and we must consider the possibility that men were also involved in bead-making in the past, it is nevertheless possible that the development of horizontal excavation techniques and

observation of a site's internal structuring may pave the way for improved understanding of gender relations.

A similar approach has been adopted in recent research at the Dachla Oasis in the Egyptian Western Desert (McDonald 2009), which has allowed archaeologists to identify signs of progressive socio-economic differentiation. This has been particularly true for the late Bashendi A phase, attested at several key sites (principally Site 270), where "prestige" technologies and variability in artifact distribution have been highlighted. The overall regional framework suggests a significant population growth that required "an entity to play managerial and mediating roles" (McDonald 2009:27). In the El Nabta Neolithic of southern Egypt (8100–7900 B.P.) a semi-permanent village, Nabta E-75–6, was discovered with aligned structures (hut bases, hearths, storage pits) similar in layout to Ti-n-Torha East mentioned above (Barich 1998b). Domestic cattle bones were still rare in site E-75–6 and, in contrast, sheep/goat appeared very late in the Nabta sequence. These were recorded at site E-75–8 and at Hidden Valley in the Farafra Oasis, with dates going back to ca. 7000 B.P., still among the oldest known in Africa for goat. All of the sites mentioned above are large settlements with well-defined structures, high-standard lithic industries, plentiful pottery (except for Farafra), and exotic resources, indicating an advanced form of socio-economic organization.

Settlement Patterns and Activity Organization

The exploitation of fish resources in early Holocene Egypt is documented at the site of El Kab (ca.10,000 B.P.), which provides an important example of riverine adaptation (Vermeersch 1978). Evidences from the site's deepest levels show that it had been inhabited since the final Pleistocene. The main occupation phase, however, took place during the Early-Late Holocene, ca. 8500–2000 B.P. Four sites have been identified within the settlement area (El Kab 1–4) and are located a few dozen meters away from each other (Vermeersch 1978). The faunal remains from these sites include numerous remains of gazelle, hippopotamus, and wild ox. It is conceivable that the Elkabian groups had begun experimenting with cattle "management" and had some sort of control over heads of these species.

Fish were certainly a very precious resource at El Kab, but shellfish were perhaps even more so. Evidence worldwide links the creation of coastal middens to activity by women (Klein 1999:143; but see Nelson 1998:292). We should recall the gender divisions known among the peoples of the mid-Atlantic coast of North America, where men tend to be mobile when hunting while women concentrate on individual locations, leading to a general belief that women were principally responsible for the collection of shellfish (Williams and Bendremer 1997:144; Rountree 1989:32). Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that under special circumstances men could also have collected shellfish, especially when daily hunting proved fruitless. Furthermore, Yellen (1977:135) has proposed that middens might also contain objects discarded by men: however, in cases where some of the middens had been formed over a long period of time, it would presumably contain objects used for various purposes by both men and women. Specialized tools designed for fishing appeared at Early Khartoum sites not earlier than 10,000–9000 B.P. Changes toward specialized fishing techniques are

indicated by increased quantities and greater varieties of species; eight genera are known in Early Khartoum and somewhat later in the Atbara sites.

Claims that women in hunter-gatherer societies are invisible because the objects associated with them are perishable (e.g., Kent 1984) have recently been challenged by a number of authors (e.g., Brumbach and Jarvenpa 2006, who argue that men and women were both hunters and used the same tools). Frink and Weedman (2005) have emphasized the role of women in hideworking and, therefore, in obtaining raw materials and tools used in scraping activities. While forager women have always been clearly associated with plant gathering, the domestication of plants in agricultural contexts has traditionally been associated with males as the result of Western ideologies concerning the male/female division of labor. As a result, women's roles in agricultural production have often been under-represented (Weedman 2006:260; see also Casey 1991).

Several authors challenge the binary male/female division of labor as recent constructs of modern industrial society (Margolis 2000) or religious ideology (Weedman 2006:268) that tell us very little about the past. Similarly, abstract models that engender landscapes (e.g., connecting women to the sea, summer, and marine life; and men to the land and wildlife) have been criticized as over-simplifying the evidence (Robin 2002). Recent research demonstrates the need to consider the evidence on a case-by-case basis with careful use of ethnographic evidence and stronger reliance on archaeological data.

Within the context of multi-spectral exploitation of the environment, such as that represented by the early Holocene Nilotic communities, a "circular" logistical arrangement for the use of the ecosystem can be observed.[4] In this case we can assume that there was a managerial organization of seasonal (or longer-term) movements (Barich 1998c), but it is difficult to determine how roles were organized. Ethnographic examples, such as Jarvenpa and Brumbach's (1999) work on the spatial organization of Chipewyan groups, suggest that the smallest sites were used for short stays and do not offer any indication to the archaeologist as to who frequented them. They also indicate that some forms of long-distance hunting were carried out by men, while women continued to trap and fish in areas close to a centralized settlement, or that mixed male/female partnerships were devoted to hunting small animals at short distances from seasonally occupied villages.

The situation at longer-term locations, where large quantities of waste accumulated and where partially sedentary customs developed, was probably very different. In Sudan, for example, a few larger sites, such as Tagra and Shabona in the extreme south and Khartoum Hospital and Saggai further north, would have been permanent settlements where fishing activities would have been intensively practiced during the winter months, despite river levels dropping to a minimum. Instead, during the flood period smaller sites, created by segments of the residential community at the edges of the desert, may have been seasonally inhabited on a hunting, gathering, and herding basis (Clark 1989). It is certainly tempting to associate such prehistoric situations with those of modern groups and to suggest that men were frequently in charge of transhumance. In contrast, at larger and more complex sites we might find more complete representations of a gendered division of labor, and might attempt to decipher the meaning of the multiple and different places within a settlement as discussed in the preceding section.

Agricultural vs. Pastoral Societies

The storage of resources is a practice which is frequently associated with the appearance of a semi-sedentary lifestyle. As a matter of fact, storage appeared in large and well-organized sites for which we can suggest a more organized division of labor. However, studies that have attempted to identify storage pits reserved for men, and others for women, have achieved questionable results (Jarvenpa and Brumbach 1999:112). In environments with seasonally available resources, movements throughout the year are on a short-term basis, and the practice of storage is a coping strategy for less favorable seasons. In contexts of this kind an increase in the use of plants can also be observed, which in some way anticipates situations characteristic of other, properly "Neolithic" sites based on agricultural organization.

It should also be noted that the nature of subsistence in pre-production contexts suggests that women and men cooperate in both hunting and harvesting, and that children also contribute to the latter (Crabtree 2006:579). In the early stages of the transition to food production, which utilize a wide range of strategies, it is likely that gender relations were on relatively equal terms (Crabtree 1991; Hassan 1998:276). Later, when this organization evolved into specialized pastoralism associated with horticulture and hunting-gathering, discrepancies between men and women began to emerge (Hassan 1998). However, we must guard against stereotypes that equate women's diminished contribution to food production with lower social status (Lyons 2006:601).

There is a clear opposition in the archaeological literature between social organization in village-based agricultural communities and the organization of shepherds, who are thought to pertain primarily to the male sphere. Archaeological reports commonly represent shepherds as males. According to this interpretation, men are the individuals who bring the transhumant flock to pasture, and male shepherds are those buried in megalithic tombs. In Sudan the first evidence of pastoral food production was offered by the "Khartoum Neolithic," defined by Arkell with reference to the site of Shaheinab (Arkell 1953).

More recent excavations in the region during the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Haaland 1987; Caneva 1988; Krzyżaniak 1991) show that the phenomenon was more complex. Haaland, for example, demonstrates that the successful achievement of pastoralism in Sudan occurred after 5000 B.P. and was caused by immigrant groups from the Sahara who owned cattle (1992). This period was preceded by a phase of mixed economy that combined fishing, hunting, and the earliest pastoralism (the so-called "broad-spectrum exploitation economy"). Meanwhile the Nabta Playa region in the north, via the Nile Valley, is one of the areas of origin for domesticated species (Barich 2002).

Regarding the attribution of gender roles in pastoral societies, some claim that the traditional narrative outlined above constitutes an "androcentric" viewpoint (e.g., Gifford-Gonzales 1998:118). The limited social weight that most of the studies attribute to women in these societies may be a reflection of gender bias in early ethnographic reports. More careful and objective observation of modern groups has shown instead that women actively participate in the system of production, distribution, and trade, leading their herds over long distances (Gifford-Gonzales 1998:120; see also Crabtree 2006).[5] Although men tended to portray themselves as the ones who controlled and provided the house, it was actually women who controlled the

domestic context. Through action women "were renegotiating their power or control which a woman lost when she married and entered the 'control' of another patrilineage" (Weedman 2006:266, citing Hodder 1987).

On the other hand, the model suggested for the Tadrart Acacus, based on a large sample of sites distributed between the mountain interior and the eastern valleys, may indicate a more complex organization (Di Lernia 2002). Movements become more frequent from the Middle Pastoral onward (6100–5000 B.P.) and would have promoted a division of roles between those individuals in charge of looking after the flocks in the mountains during the winter and the rest of the group, which stayed longer in the large villages in the valley.

On a symbolic level, one of the most striking aspects of the pastoral economy are the so-called "femmes ouvertes" engravings, which are extremely popular in the rock art of the Messak plateau of southern Libya (Le Quellec 1998). Several examples from Wadi Beddis associate "femmes ouvertes," cattle, and placental forms. Le Quellec interprets these scenes as clear metaphors for the symbolic relationships in the pastoral world between human and animal birth and fecundity (1998:381–385). Here the representation of women is part of a symbolic construction that combined the natural hollow, the "open" female sex, and cattle. Even in Predynastic, agro-pastoral Egypt, female figurines, palettes, cow, and bird imagery are associated with women, anticipating the religious ideology of Dynastic Egypt in which women were associated with cows and birds as symbols of transformation and rebirth (Hassan and Smith 2002).

Gender and Specialized Manufacture: Stone Technology and Pottery

Stone tool manufacture by groups in the Sahara and Nile valley reached a high standard of technology and style, particularly during the Neolithic. Traditional narratives of gender reveal gender bias toward "Man the toolmaker," while lighter and less demanding duties and crafts have traditionally been assigned to women (Weedman 2006:268). Ethnography helps us to correct these inappropriate ideas and instead reveals that these "lighter" classes of tools have an important economic role; moreover, it shows that craft items were used not only in the domestic sphere but also to mediate in socio-economic, political, and ritual contexts (Wadley 1987).

Gero (1991) effectively challenged the notion that stone tool manufacture requires special strength and, therefore, that it must have been an exclusively male activity. In fact, there are many examples of women stone tool makers (e.g., Tindale 1965; Gould 1977; Finlay this volume), and women also made and used stone tools for shaving hair, tattooing, making digging sticks, scraping hides, etc. The traditional view does not envision women creating formal tools, only expedient ones (i.e., blades or flakes with a few retouches), artifacts which are not often counted as "proper" tools since they are regarded as debitage in the *châine opératoire* of tool manufacture.

On the contrary, ethnographic evidence shows that women also use formal products such as large knives and hammerstones for butchering, grinding, and pulverizing carcasses (Brumbach and Jarvenpa 2006:513–514). Observations of the Konso and Gamo groups of southern Ethiopia allowed Weedman to propose that female production of tools for hideworking is indistinguishable from that of men. Among the Konso,

women procure high-quality raw materials over long distances in order to manufacture formal scraping tools. Both Gamo men and Konso women are hideworkers and belong to patrilineal and patrilocal farming societies. While Gamo men learn from their fathers and practice virilocal residence, Konso women learn from their mothers and move after marriage to their husband's village where separate hideworking areas do not occur unless there are clusters of related females (Weedman 2006:271).

As noted above, ceramic production appeared from the Early Holocene onward both in the Sahara and the Nile Valley, and may have been determined by the need to store grain obtained from gathering activities. Both might relate to the female world: pots are in fact the best solution for harvest and storage and, as has already been mentioned, women are related to the first forms of plant management. Again, however, there have been objections to the allocation of ceramic production to the female sphere only, and there have been numerous recent examples where males and/or children are involved (see Wright 1991; Bolger this volume).

Early ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological studies of ceramics (e.g., Deetz 1968; Longacre 1968) assigned ceramic production to women and associated cultural identity with style. In this research, style was thought to reflect female production, serving as a symbol of the relationships between genders. Hodder's work in Kenya among the various Nilo-Saharan communities (1982) showed that in patrilineal/virilocal societies where women are pot makers, gender differences are not manifested due to ideological pressures exerted on wives to adapt to the marital community. The same was shown by Herbich (1987) about the Luo of Kenya where a spouse's ability to meet the standard of senior co-wives is highly regarded. It therefore seems difficult to analyze degrees of gender fluidity on the basis of material that can be identified archaeologically, as argued by Arnold (2006:50). On the other hand, details closely related to the style of a particular female potter may be visible in her ceramics. Hodder, for example, has argued that the decoration on female calabashes of the Njemps of Kenya did not represent ethnic symbols but were influenced by social relations, expressing the attitudes of young women as opposed to old men (1982:68–69); and La Violette emphasizes women's roles as active agents made powerful by their ability to express their identity and restructure gender relations through pottery production (1995).

In other cases the protective function of pottery decoration against powerful spirits has been observed. In the Mandara region of Cameroon, for example, men conduct rituals, but women create the rare ceramic vessels and drawings used to communicate with the spirit world (David et al. 1988). Women's power lies in their control of ceramic decoration, and this serves to protect those who use the containers and their contents. Among the Nuba of Sudan, decorations on calabashes are classed as male or female depending on the type of scarification visible on men and women. Hodder has shown that "male" marks are used by men against the power of women, and by women against the power of men (1982).

Interpreting Gender Through Rock Art

Several authors have emphasized the particular importance and potential of rock art for understanding the organization of gender in society (Taçon and Chippindale 1998; Whitley 1998; Conkey 2001; Hays-Gilpin 2004, this volume). The "Round



Figure 14.2 Two details of the "Great God" panel in Sefar I "Round Head" style from Sefar, Tassili, Algeria (reproduced with permission of Umberto Sansoni from Sansoni 1994: figure 48).

Heads" paintings discovered in the Tassili (Algeria) and Tadrart Acacus (Libya) are some of the most popular depictions found in North African rock art (Figure 14.2). There is currently scholarly agreement that this art is associated with early Holocene "complex" hunter-gatherers (Sansoni 1994; Mori 1998; Barich in press), who experimented with the first forms of resource concentration, storage, and management of wild animals (Di Lernia 1998). These groups of hunter-gatherers were profoundly immersed in their natural environment (Ingold 2000). Kelley Hays-Gilpin (2000) provides examples of this embodiment of nature in her study of Acoma and Navajo groups, and a similar concept can help us to understand the inspiration of the oldest "Round Head" paintings of North Africa.

At the center of the most famous "Round Heads" images stands a large figure (the "great god") in relation to whom the rest of the scene is depicted, including clearly recognizable female figures, who are generally represented in a row in attitude of prayer and looking to the right (for this reason they are called "oranti" or praying women). The central figure with a bull's head rises up from the animal world (sometimes it has an antelope on its chest). Even the female figures are closely related to the antelopes and are joined through them to the great god (Figure 14.2).

It appears that the "great god" imagery goes beyond a comparison with the concept of "mother earth," so that associating specific deities to the landscape must be considered in a much more complex fashion that a simple male/female division, perhaps including multiple genders. Wendy Ashmore has shown that landscapes are often associated with gender in an inconsistent way (2006:202). In the Upper Nile valley, for example, the earth is made fertile by the rains, and by analogy with human reproduction the sky is seen as a male deity from which the rain descends to penetrate the earth mother, bringing about the birth of new life. Rain therefore plays a crucial role. On the other hand, in the Egyptian context the earth is directly made fertile by the Nile: the fertile soil that nourishes crops does not come from heaven but from earth; in this case, therefore, the deities that personify land and the flooding of the Nile are regarded as male (Roth 2000:195).

Umberto Sansoni (1993) makes important observations about male/female distinctions in the "Round Heads" paintings. Of the 2464 images from Tassili and the Tadrart Acacus inventoried by Sansoni, over 70 percent are anthropomorphic, demonstrating a decided interest in the representation of human, rather than zoomorphic, themes (the latter account for only 25 percent of the images). Among the human images, there is a clear prevalence (5:1 ratio) of male over female depictions, although in the phase referred to as "Archaic"[6] the numbers are roughly the same. Iconographic differences in the portrayal of men and women can also be seen; these mainly concern the treatment of silhouettes (rigid profiles for men, rounded bellies and breasts for women). Of particular interest are the differences in the decoration of male and female bodies with regard to scarification (Sansoni 1993:table 3). Linear patterns are reserved for males, and include appendages such as tongues, sticks, spears, and various geometrical shapes, while concentric semicircles and crescent-shaped appendages are reserved for women. Similar patterns can also be found in ceramic decoration, again highlighting the relationships between women and making pottery (Barich 1998a).

Compared to other rock art repertoires that incorporate explicit sexual features, there is a prudishness here in the depiction of sexual organs, perhaps as the result of a taboo. Female figures are almost never represented in a frontal position, a position always associated with the depiction of higher entities (e.g., the "great god"); they are therefore best be regarded as hieratic and symbolic images. Additionally, women are often represented praying with their arms pointing upward in an attitude of worship toward a "god" who resembles a man. It is difficult to understand the role of women in these scenes; while the scenes have an obviously ceremonial character, they cannot simply be reduced to a relationship of dependency between women/prayers and men/deities. Moreover, in later "Round Heads" phases, female figures seem to acquire greater autonomy, with static representations of "praying" replaced by more dynamic figures. In the final "Round Heads" phase, new subjects are represented, animals rarely appear in the scenes, and figures have a stunted and stiff form. Dance scenes and human figures are depicted with great dynamism and spindly limbs. With regard to gender, the world of men and women is represented as being ceremonially distinct and, at the same time, complementary, as shown in the painting from Anshal where a man and a woman hold hands (Sansoni 1994:figure 136) or from Tan Zaumaitak in which two figures face each other.

Other important scenes from Wadi Guirchi in the Ennedi mountains depict groups of several women, the so-called "beautiful ladies" (Simonis et al. 1994). Body decorations, already present in some of the Tassili figures, are even more pronounced. The body surface is densely decorated with carved geometric details that may suggest tattoos. This emphasis on carving human figures, as shown in the "beautiful ladies" design, could suggest that males developed a sense of self that was different from that of females. However, we should not imagine that these are intended as realistic portrayals of young women represented in their everyday occupations. The association with supernatural characters (representing nature) makes it likely that they are priestesses celebrating a ritual. A meaningful example is offered by the reading of the "white lady" of Aouanrhat (Tassili-n-Ajjer). This female figure is represented wearing a fringed dress and she is running; her body is decorated with a series of straight lines on the legs and small dots on the belly, and she wears cattle horns inside

which parallel lines and a cascade of white dots can be seen (Sansoni 1994:figure 123). The interpretation given by the author is that of a rain goddess who carries "clouds dripping water" (Sansoni 1994:181). The whole scene could be an invocation of the rain, which might suggest a deteriorating climate during the seventh millennium B.P. Nor can one ignore the reference to "mythic women" whose power is based on a combination of menstrual blood and amniotic fluid with the ability to carry water (Solomon 1992).

Gender and Funerary Ritual

At first glance, funerary remains appear to represent the best way to obtain information about buried individuals (Mitchell 2002:216). However, this is not always the case since the biological sex of the deceased can sometimes be in disagreement with his/her funerary goods. In fact, there are numerous cases where items considered to lie within the female sphere (e.g., grindstones, bored stones, pottery sherds, beads, etc.) are associated equally with men and women, suggesting that such features may reflect more about modern Western gender constructs than about gendered behavior in the past. In attempting to interpret these apparent anomalies, it can be argued that these examples are a clear confirmation of the dynamic nature of gender, or that in funerary contexts objects take on a meaning different from that associated with everyday life (Arnold and Wicker 2001).

The oldest tombs of Saharan hunter-gatherers are quite simple and do not provide any evidence about gender. Until a few decades ago only isolated graves were known, and consequently very little information about social order could be gained. The graves of Asselar in Mali, Ti-n-Hanakaten in Algeria, Uan Muhuggiag in Libya, however, have provided indications about an indisputable cult of the dead with an associated ritual (burial in a contracted position with the head oriented toward a particular direction), as well as the deposition, although rare, of grave goods. In the Fayum depression, between Qasr el-Sagha and Kom Oshim, the team headed by Wendorf and Schild unearthed human remains at Site E29G1, which belongs to a series of sites related to the Qarunian industry (ca. 8000 B.P.) (Wendorf and Schild 1976; Henneberg et al. 1989). The skeleton was discovered in a contracted position lying on its left side and seems to have been a 40-year-old woman; unfortunately the burial lacks grave goods. The suggested date of her death was approximately 8000 B.P. Another woman (of about 30 years old) was recovered from Amekni in Algeria (Camps 1969). While this burial too lacked grave goods, she was buried respectfully, placed in a flexed position on her left side and was accompanied by a pottery sherd.

Two cemeteries, Hassi el Abiod in Mali (Dutour 1989) and Gobero in Niger (Sereno et al. 2008), are unusually large for these early periods and can be compared with the cemetery of Jebel Sahaba 117 in Nubia. With regard to physical features, each of these contexts contained groups of Mechtoids, descendants from Mechta el Arbi, the *Homo sapiens* prototype (Dutour 1997). Apart from the particular cause of death that has been identified by the excavators for the adults and children of Jebel Sahaba – warfare for the possession of territory between rival tribes (Wendorf and Schild 2003) – the three cemeteries show a remarkable degree of similarity in the simple ritual that can be seen there.

Other cemeteries along the Nile are much smaller. Among the Sudanese examples the one from Khartoum Hospital contains 17 tombs dating to the eighth millennium B.P. From this we can begin to glimpse the first signs of social differentiation, since some graves had funerary objects (shells from the Nile) while others did not. This practice became dominant during the Holocene, indicating the transformation that gradually took place in the society with the onset of pastoral organization. In the Late Neolithic cemetery at Kadero (sixth millennium B.P.) over 50 graves clearly show social differentiation, since only a small number (14 percent) have grave goods (Krzyžaniak 1991). When there were grave goods, they were numerous and differentiated according to gender: mace heads, ceramics painted with ochre, bone necklaces, exotic stones, and bivalve shells were deposited with men while small pieces of amazonite and malachite for use as cosmetics were offered to women.

A great deal of attention has recently been paid to the discovery of a group of three cemeteries at Jebel Ramlah in the southern quarter of the Egyptian Western Desert. Found intact and meticulously investigated, they are the first cemeteries in the region that anticipate Predynastic traditions and have yielded an extraordinary amount of new information. Most importantly, they provide a new perspective on gender relations in the pastoralist/forager societies of the sixth millennium B.P. within a broad region extending from central Egypt in the north to the Khartoum territory in the south (Kobusiewicz et al. 2004, 2010). The cemeteries, which cover a relatively small area, have densely concentrated burials and appear to correspond to tribal groups of extended families. The ritual in the three cemeteries is uniform, leading the authors to conclude that they were used for a short span of time. Interments were in oval graves lined by matting or basketry, with the corpse lying in a flexed position on its right side, its head to the west, and its face turned toward the south.[7]

Most of the burials are multiple interments in which a woman with children (most common), or a woman, man, and children, can be identified. Fourteen burials contain only one individual, and of these only four are men (one is clearly an old man). The remaining ten are either adult females (20–25 years) or sub-adult females (12–14 years). Frequently two women of different ages (mother and daughter?) are buried together, but there are no examples of double male/female burials. Women are often buried with children (4–5 years), infants (a few months old), and even newborns. In one case, the newborn was placed near the head of the woman in the position that grave goods are normally found. The most common pattern is a female interment in association with a man and one or two children. The burial of a single adult male with a child never occurs.

Physical anthropological study has shown that this was an extraordinarily healthy group (Irish 2010). The higher frequency of women in the cemeteries compared to men (2:1 ratio) is considered to be the result of good nutrition, which is attested also by the age of some of the deceased (40–50 years), the low occurrence of infant mortality, and the healthy condition of the teeth. Only two cases show signs of paleopathology. The first was a female adult, who exhibited bilateral degenerative joint disease of the glenoid fossa (DJD), a form of arthritis that can be associated with the frequent use of grindstones; however, the same condition can also be caused by a prolonged extension of the arms for hide-scraping, as among Sadlermiut women in Canada (Irish 2010:201). The second case, an adult male, exhibited signs of the degeneration of a vertebra caused by "lifting heavy objects" (Irish 2010:201).

Women in the Jebel Ramlah burials have abundant grave goods, including containers, palettes, ivory and shell bracelets, bone and chert objects, Nile River bivalve shells, colorants (red and yellow ochre), needles, agates and chalcedony segments, caliciform beakers, and pottery sherds. While the repertoire of grave goods found in male burials is practically the same, two main differences can be observed: a particular stone tool type (the Helwan point) is found exclusively in male graves; while caliciform beakers, lumps of limonite, and possibly agate segments, are associated almost exclusively with females. The range of grave goods is generally more restricted in male graves, but we also need to take into account the difficulty in the face of multiple burials of defining precisely the associations of grave goods with particular individuals.

The more frequent occurrence of women in the Jebel Ramlah cemeteries has been attributed by the excavators to social organization, with detachments of young adult males tending flocks during the wet season (Kobusiewicz et al. 2010:256). Some men may have died during the long journey, which took them up as far as the Nile, if not further, and buried elsewhere. Evidence for long-distance exchanges can be found in the many "exotic" objects found in the tombs, as well as the discovery of so-called "symbolic" tombs which contained grave goods but were devoid of human bodies.

In conclusion, while the Jebel Ramlah burials attest to binary spheres of activity in which women were less mobile and were closely associated with newborns and infants, they also demonstrate the important position of women in mortuary contexts. Their importance can be seen in all three cemeteries and within a cultural context which, it should be remembered, belongs to groups of pastoralist-foragers of the Bunât and Asnâm Late Neolithic. As such this appears to contradict traditional narratives of women's roles in early pastoral settings, and demonstrates the need to consider questions of gender and status on a specific, case-by-case basis.

In fact, a very different scenario is suggested by the accurate survey of funerary tumuli in Niger, dating to the fifth/fourth millennium B.P., more than a millennium later than Jebel Ramlah (Paris 1997). The economy of the tumuli builders included herding, hunting, as well as collecting the abundant wild grasses that grew in the area. The use of *Brachiaria* and *Sorghum* can be seen in the impressions left on pottery. Research carried out by the same author on a large sample of these monuments provided new information about the composition of the Niger population in the Late Pastoral period. Both funerary tumuli with barrows and platforms, as well as the physical traits of the bodies, differed significantly from the local Sudanese type. Even the ceramic vessels found in the tombs (reddish in color with a conical base) are attributable to immigrants with a very different social structure from that of the local Tenerian population. Since there were generally few tumuli, which mostly appear to have been dedicated to men, Paris assumes that they were reserved for a few prestigious figures: aristocratic leaders within a chiefdom-type structure. In fact, women were more often than not buried in simple graves dug into the bare ground without any superstructure, and sometimes they also had some broken pottery vessels with them (Paris 1997:448–449).

In contrast to evidence from Jebel Ramlah, data from the latter study conform to the more traditional narrative of gender and pastoralism, which highlights the higher status of men. Attempting to explain how inequalities in male/female relations emerged and developed, Hassan has proposed a model for Neolithic and Predynastic Egypt in which

gender relations evolved from relatively egalitarian forms, with women perhaps in a somewhat more prominent position due to their presumed early roles in horticulture (1998:276). Later, with the emergence of complex forms of advanced pastoralism in which cattle represented the fundamental livestock and large herds were bred, droughts may have given rise to territorial demarcations, male/female divergences, and patrilineal social organization, leading to gender asymmetries and a decline in women's status. The two studies cited in this section may represent different stages of such a trajectory, but more evidence is needed from many more sites if we wish to propose theories regarding gender and status that test, rather than assume, unilineal patterns of development.

By the same token, it is worth remembering that while women may have enjoyed a similar status to men according to evidence from Predynastic and Dynastic Egyptian cemeteries (Lyons 2006:215), a closer, contextual study of the burials may challenge such a claim. In a careful analysis of tomb evidence from the 18th and 19th Dynasties at Deir el-Medina, for example, Meskell (1999) has demonstrated a decline in the status of women associated with the increase of wealth and power of the family. She argues that women and children are under-represented in the 19th Dynasty and that women are only mentioned in written texts in association with a male (her husband or father). Consequently, a woman's status seems to have been defined in relation to her male kin, with age, sex, and status acquiring more importance in the negotiation of social roles than gender per se (Meskell 1999).

Conclusion

The contextual study of sites has played an important role in North African archaeology since it has allowed investigations to move beyond an exclusive focus on the environment to a consideration of social issues, including gender. Only a methodology of this kind, which highlights the infrastructure of human groups, is capable of formulating useful conclusions about the distribution and development of gender roles in society. Ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological approaches have also been useful tools for enabling archaeologists to propose reasonable hypotheses in an area of research in which objective information is very limited. As I have suggested, however, this is also a difficult path to follow because the archaeological record is often elusive, and an over-reliance on external data can give rise to doubts about the legitimacy of the associations which are suggested. The limits of such methods have been highlighted by a number of authors (including several in this volume) and have also been mentioned in the course of the present work. They are a consequence not only of their geographical and chronological distance from modern situations, but also of the prejudices with which the first ethnographic studies were conducted.

In conclusion, archaeologists working in North Africa today should be encouraged to undertake a more careful reading of the spatial distribution of material culture within a regional context, and to link artifactual assemblages and economic information with activities carried out at different sites. Other important fields of study, such as rock art and funerary remains, can offer valuable information for reconstructing gender roles, although we must always take into account the presence of symbolic and ritual agents. Archaeological investigations of gender can provide important insights into social behavior in North African prehistory, and can certainly achieve

successful results, particularly if they are based on more detailed and careful methods of excavation and analysis that demonstrate regional and temporal differences in the ways gender was constructed.

NOTES

1 All dates in this chapter are uncalibrated C14 dates B.P.
2 This transformation was related to a "Late Acacus" phase 8900–7400 B.P., as opposed to the phase at the beginning of the Holocene, "Early Acacus" 9800–8900 B.P. (Di Lernia and Garcea 1997).
3 The eggshell is first reduced to fragments which are then drilled and strung on strings. The beads, which are still being prepared, are rounded with an antelope horn, and then, after being mounted on a rigid support, are smoothed by rubbing them against a limestone surface (Venir 2012).
4 Wadley (1987) has formulated a similar model indicating aggregation and dispersion sites.
5 I still remember how in southwest Libya the Tuareg girls were sent alone by their families to lead their flocks of goats several kilometers away from the camp.
6 In Sansoni's classification (1994:100–121).
7 The sex of individuals in three cemeteries, with a total of 33 graves and 66 individuals, has been determined as follows: 25 women, 8 possible women, 12 men, 4 possible men, 17 unidentifiable.

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CHAPTER 15

Gender in the Prehistory of Sub-Saharan Africa

Lyn Wadley

Introduction

Gender is but one aspect of identity, and investigating the intertwined suite of attributes seems a profitable field of research (Solomon 1997a). The archaeological examples supplied here are drawn from African sites at which farmer, herder, or hunter-gatherer traces have been recovered. Since the theme is gender, this chapter is not an all-inclusive narrative of sub-Saharan archaeology; I merely select convenient illustrations (see Figure 15.1 for countries and selected sites mentioned in the text). As with all archaeological enquiries, interpretive issues surrounding identity can be as taxing as the recognition of gender, and the economic subsets of farmer, herder, or hunter-gatherer are not unequivocal. For example, in southern Africa the origin and travel path of pastoralists are debated, so attempts to find gendered relationships in Khoekhoen society must be tempered with the understanding that their very identity can be difficult to detect. The proposed route of Khoekhoen migrations appears to coincide with a linear band of art, comprising geometric designs, that stretches from southern Angola/western Zambia to the southern Cape, South Africa (Smith 2006). Similar rock art motifs and body decorations were used by Khoekhoen groups, such as Nama and !Kora, in the late 1800s, and there is also a close correspondence with central African hunter-gatherer rock art (Smith 2006). However, Mitchell and Whitelaw (2005) are doubtful that the geometric art is exclusively of Khoekhoen origin because in some areas the art occurs in the absence of archaeological or historical evidence of an early herder presence. They recognize that the Limpopo Valley may be an exception because sheep are well represented in hunter-gatherer rock paintings here, and two kinds of pottery have possible herder associations.

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Figure 15.1 Map of sub-Saharan Africa showing countries and selected sites referred to in the text. 1. Great Zimbabwe. 2. Nalatale. 3. Schroda. 4. Danangombe. 5. Lydenburg heads. 6. K2. 7. Olifantspoort. 8. Nanda, KwaGandaganda, and Ndondondwane. 9. Melkhoutboom. 10. Pinnacle Point. 11. Chongoni Rock Art World Heritage site. 12. Thandwe. 13. Nderit. 14. Urewe. 15. Bandiagara Plateau. 16. Ife. 17. Kintampo (produced by the author).

Identity (in the form of ethnicity), place, age, and gender are linked in rites of passage as they are in many aspects of daily life. Thus, it is neither possible nor desirable to restrict this discussion to gender issues per se in the archaeology of sub-Saharan Africa. On reflection, most people would acknowledge that the concept of gender is a social construct infused with cultural mores. If, on further reflection, we decide that gender concepts are dependent on symbolism, then it is problematic to assume that early hominids had gender concepts (Conkey and Gero 1997). Not surprisingly, it is challenging for archaeologists to recognize the point of origin for the concept of gender.

Recent cognitive research implies that the evolution of some aspects of gendered behavior may have arisen from several cognitive differences between the sexes. Sex variation occurs in the relationship between white matter volumes in the brain and IQ tests; a positive correlation between frontal white matter and IQ is present in women, whereas temporal white matter volumes correlate positively with IQ in men (Schenker et al. 2005). Such differences might account for women having better visual memory and displaying greater unconscious processing of environmental stimuli than men. There are other differences: there is a sex-differentiated ability to reconstruct

short-term spatial positions amongst individuals, with males being more sensitive than females. Males outperform females in translating group affiliations into spatial positions, and spatial information is an important component of social information (Markovits and Benenson 2010). Whether or not such differences in ability predispose women and men to perform different tasks, or whether these can be translated into different gendered behaviors in the past, is debatable. The theme is one that might profitably form part of a future study. A few archaeologists believe that once gendered concepts were present, they may have driven ongoing evolution of aspects of human behavior. Watts (2009), for example, proposes that human speech may have arisen from the regular performance of costly displays such as those required for signaling to potential mates, and for the incorporation into the "ritual coalition" of, for instance, girls reaching reproductive age.

Before proceeding, I feel obliged to deal with a few sensitive gender issues. These include gender stereotypes of the division of labor and balance of power between the sexes, and blurred gender boundaries. Seeking gender attributions for tasks in the archaeological record is a problematical undertaking (Dobres 1995; Conkey and Gero 1997) that often leads to stereotyping. Gender stereotypes derived from ethnographic literature about hunter-gatherer social behavior have been imploded, for example, by egalitarian food sharing practices between the sexes, and I shall provide an example of this shortly. The Man the Hunter model has also been shown to be flawed because there are modern examples of women who hunt or in some way contribute to the meat quest, and I have previously suggested that women who lived in the Stone Age were likely to have been similarly involved (Wadley 1998; see also Zihlman this volume).

Another common gender stereotype is that African men command society unreservedly and that women are totally disempowered. It is true that there are plenty of examples of an unequal balance of power, but it is not correct to interpret women in the past as solely dependent on men. Such stereotypes are artificial constructs that do not take account of human adaptability to daily realities. Hereditary male leadership was (and is) usual among farming societies in southern Africa, and studies of settlement patterns, in particular the Central Cattle Pattern (CCP), imply that from their first arrival they were patrilineal (Whitelaw 2009). Nevertheless, through the spatial arrangement of CCP houses in Iron Age villages and through house decoration used during the Zimbabwe culture, it is possible to see that certain women held power in the past. The ritual sister's hut at the Iron Age site of Danangombe, Zimbabwe, was a high status one, and a decorated stone wall in front of her section contained the herringbone design that is associated with senior female status (Huffman 1996). Herringbone designs associated with senior female status were also found on the ritual sister's compartment on the east side of the palace at Nalatale, Zimbabwe (Huffman 1996:71). Similar designs, representing old and young male and female adult status, occur on divining dice that are still used in Zimbabwe today (Huffman 1996). A right/left male/female association is common in southern Bantu ethnography, and although a hut belongs to a married woman, the left side is female space and the right is male. The traditional Shona hut in Zimbabwe has a men's bench to the right of the doorway. However, the queen's residence at the archaeological site of Great Zimbabwe contained a room with a bench to the left (not the right) of the doorway, suggesting that the queen held audience in this room as befitted a high

status leader (Huffman 1996:66). This type of status accords with what is known of traditional Venda and Shona law: a Venda chief's half-sister became an important national advisor. She had to be kept informed of all discussions of the chief's council, and to agree to the council's decisions before they could be implemented; she was even instrumental in the appointment of a new chief, which meant that she was accorded similar respect to him. Other examples of women wielding power as political or ritual leaders include the Rain Queen of the Lovedu (Krige and Krige 1980) and *Nzinga*, the seventeenth-century queen of Angola (Herbert 1993). Old women are sometimes the keepers of intellectual property, as in Katangan (Democratic Republic of Congo) villages where they retain and transmit knowledge of copper working (Herbert 1993). The *Mazarira* (a special sister of the Zimbabwean ruler) was responsible for storing sacred medicines without which the king could not rule (Huffman 1996:64).

After 1700 C.E., in the Tswana settlement at Olifantspoort in northwestern South Africa, ceramics lost their previous stylistic complexity, and Hall (1998) suggests that women's power was reduced. However, control lost in one sphere may have been gained in another because Lane (1998) points out that the adoption of maize at this time gave women considerable economic muscle through their management of this new staple crop. Segobye (1998) adds that the tendency among archaeologists to study male-oriented activities in Iron Age communities (for example, herding or iron smelting) underplays women's important role in other areas and renders their influence invisible. Male-directed economies were enriched by the trade networks that flourished after the thirteenth century when the Great Zimbabwe Empire reached its peak, so there is a natural tendency for archaeologists to concentrate on these high-profile activities.

In a slightly different context, researchers studying early pastoralists traditionally assumed that men owned all the stock and that women consequently had lower status (Webley 1997:177). However, early records show that women as well as men inherited stock and even received a portion of bride-price. Since women milked stock, they were in charge of this important food resource, too. Women's authority is apparent in other circumstances. Gifford-Gonzalez (1998) suggests that Nderit ceramics in East African sites may have signified membership in the exchange networks of pastoralists. If this was the case and if (as is often assumed, but not investigated) the ceramics were made by women, this implies that women had considerable social influence over networking regions. Homogeneity of ceramic design across a wide region enables women to network widely so that they have access to a range of resources in times of need (Schoeman 1997). The decision of whether to create standardized designs was something that women could dictate.

An issue that is seldom addressed is that of blurred gender boundaries, yet the concept of "other" genders seems to have existed in the past (Solomon 1992). Parkington (1998) makes the point that in southern African San rock paintings, depictions of naked humans were intended to be read unambiguously as men or women. This begs the question of why figures of indeterminate sex were painted. The "asexual" paintings by San may well represent fluidity of gender constructions in hunter-gatherer society (Ouzman 1997). In a different context, the presence of artifacts from the domestic sphere (specifically, those that are today associated with hunter-gatherer women) as favored grave goods in burials of men, women, and children, from about

10,000 years ago in South Africa, suggests that death transformed people into a "new gender" that did not exist in the world of the living (Wadley 1997:132).

The issues mentioned briefly thus far demand that archaeological interpretations of gender proceed circumspectly, taking cognizance of the complexity of the African data. I suggest that a novel way of finding gendered concepts (without attempting task attribution) is through the interrogation of archaeological evidence for deliberate transformations, regardless of the form that these might take. Even technological transformations are likely to signal the capacity for concepts of gendered transformations, and I need to explain this connection. Transformative technologies bring together disparate raw materials and change them for all time, a process that requires executive functions of the brain to facilitate goal-directed actions, anticipation of problems, analogical reasoning, and planning over long distances or time (Coolidge and Wynn 2001). Such technologies are different from those that use technical expertise normally acquired through apprenticeship (Wynn and Coolidge 2007). Examples of the type of innovative and transforming technologies implied by executive functions include alloying metals, the production of kiln-fired ceramics (Wynn and Coolidge 2007), and the manufacture of compound adhesives, which were invented long before metal-working and ceramics (Wadley et al. 2009; Wadley 2010). Technical and social transformations can be metaphors for each other, as will shortly become apparent.

Transformations

Transformation is a theme that resonates through culture regardless of gender, ethnicity, or geographical place. One of the important things about transformation is its irreversible shaping of identities. In the context of gender, the transformation from girl or boy child to woman and man is permanent, and the social solemnity of this change is often marked by ceremony – a rite of passage – that may include symbolic behavior to mirror the altered status. It is symbolically appropriate that permanent bodily alterations are made to the initiate (though this does not happen in all societies), and these can include cicitration, circumcision, clitorodectomy, finger joint amputation, or dental modification. However, physical mutilation is not the only way in which the achievement of separate genders is commemorated in sub-Saharan Africa, and examples of culturally specific expressions of these identities will be provided. The remainder of this chapter deals principally with transformations, and most of these are rites of passage. First, I introduce rites of passage where it is not possible to distinguish males or females, perhaps because parts of these ceremonies were celebrated jointly. Secondly, I produce evidence for separate male and female initiation. Thirdly, I show how the final rite of passage, which provides entry to the realm of the ancestors, can be linked to concepts of gender. The fourth and final transformation theme is technological. The chapter concludes with a discussion of changing gender relationships, because looking at change through time is a special archaeological forte.

Rites of passage: Male and female initiation into adulthood

Most matrilineal and bilateral Bantu-speaking groups seem to have conducted highly structured initiation rites of passage for males and females, who may have come

together during certain phases of the rites (Prins and Hall 1994). Various icons were used to demonstrate different lessons in the initiation ceremonies (Prins and Hall 1994). Amongst these were ceramic figurines recovered from centrally located court midden areas. Such figurines are commonly broken, presumably deliberately, to mark changes in the status of individuals. At Schroda, the tenth-century Zhizo capital in northern Limpopo Province, South Africa, approximately 2000 figurine fragments were recovered (van Schalkwyk 2002:71), and these included anthropomorphic figures of men and women, some marked with possible scarification or obvious genitalia, and zoomorphic figures of domestic and wild animals. Representation of the human form is found during male and female initiation practices in several contemporary African societies. Genitalia are always present, and the figures, called *mokoto* by Sotho-speakers, are used during initiation rituals as aids in teaching sexual behavior (van Schalkwyk 2002). Even older female figurines with phalliform heads and exaggerated breasts and buttocks, but with vestigial arms, have been found in early farming sites in Nubia, perhaps pre-dating 3000 B.C.E. (Phillipson 1985:120), but it is not known whether they, like the figurines at Schroda, were props for rites of passage.

Some forms of physical mutilation to mark the passage to adulthood seem to have been used for men and women. Human remains from Nanda, South Africa, had the lower four and upper two central incisors removed, and the accompanying canines and remaining incisors were chipped (Mitchell and Whitelaw 2005). A Later Iron Age site in Malawi also yielded evidence for the chipping and removal of incisors (Morris 1993), and the practice may have been widespread in Africa because dental mutilation is an indication of adult status in some farming communities. The famous ceramic heads from Lydenburg, South Africa (Inskeep and Maggs 1975), thought to belong to the ninth or tenth century C.E., have been linked to rites of passage, and the markings on them provide clues to the way in which people may have advertised their adult status. Teeth on four of the heads look as though they have dental modification. The facial markings appear to be scarification of the kind that denotes adulthood. Much farther north, the magnificent terracotta heads from the early second millennium C.E. farming site at Ife, southern Nigeria (Phillipson 2005:281), were undoubtedly of ritual significance, and it seems likely that at least some of the heads were linked to rites of passage. These West African examples may have had an earlier origin in the Nok terracottas that were produced in Nigeria for several hundred years from the fifth century B.C.E. (Phillipson 2005:235).

An extreme form of physical marking, the amputation of finger joints (typically the tip of the little finger), historically had gender connotations amongst some farmers, herders, and hunter-gatherers in southern Africa; for example, males had their right-hand and females their left-hand finger joint removed (Mitchell and Plug 1997). Isolated finger joints, in the absence of other human bones, have been recovered from Later Stone Age sites, dating to more than 6000 years ago, and from Iron Age sites dating between 1200 and 120 years ago (Mitchell and Plug 1997:147), but it is not certain whether modern ethnographic analogies are appropriate for interpreting these finds.

Rites of passage: Transformation from boy to man

The evidence in this section is in the form of motifs found in different kinds of sub-Saharan art. Amongst these are the "Late White" paintings that are most often

executed with a finger or stick, using white or yellow-white paint although red, black, and yellow pigments occasionally occur. Schematic humans and animals, as well as abstract symbols and smears, are typical of these paintings, which occur from south-central to parts of southern Africa, and ethnographic records suggest that the artists were Bantu-speaking farmers (Prins and Hall 1994). First-millennium C.E. Iron Age sites are known all over Zambia where the "Late White" tradition occurs, but the art was probably executed during both the Early Iron Age and Later Iron Age (Prins and Hall 1994). To some extent, the motifs can be gendered. Certain rock paintings in eastern Zambia and central Malawi depict the masks of *nyau*, the secret men's association open to Chewa initiates only (Smith 2001). The *nyau* rock paintings are secret and are found in remote rock shelters, underscoring their intention as images for private consumption. In the past, every boy would have been expected to undergo *nyau* initiation in order to achieve manhood. Masks are essential *nyau* symbols, and the art represents them mainly as daubed white clay pigment motifs. Each *nyau* rock art site contains paintings depicting different masked characters that are man-made structures with the initiates inside them. One of the most commonly represented of these is *kasiyamaliro*, which when lifted for the initiate to enter, is womb-shaped, so that the initiate is reborn as a man when he comes out of the *kasiyamaliro* "womb." Smith (1997) believes that the power derived from *nyau* secrecy provides men with a counterbalance to the dominating position held by women in the matrilineal Chewa society.

Elsewhere, boys' initiation paintings include geometrics and crocodile or saurian motifs that serve an educational function. The geometrics incorporate U-shapes, T-shapes, H-shapes, zig-zags, meanders, and complex fusions of these forms. The "spread-eagle motif," which seems to be a crocodile, is a Northern Sotho male initiation image (Moodley 2008). Such designs are also found in Tanzania and Zambia (Smith 1997). In Mali, rock shelters are still used every few years for boys' circumcisions, and part of the ceremony involves renewing the circumcision motifs, which include crocodiles or saurian figures, on the shelter walls. Among the Lukuba of the Lake Victoria region, rectangular schematic finger paintings are believed to represent initiation symbols, and the motifs are repeated as tattoos on the bodies of male initiates (Masao 1991). Saurian motifs are additionally found on Early Iron Age ceramics (see, e.g., Loubser 1993).

Rites of passage: Transformation from girl to woman

Southeast Bantu-speakers make a conceptual link between a woman's reproductive capability and the fertility of the land, and between potting and procreation (Boeyens et al. 2009), so the life cycle of a ceramic pot is the ideal metaphor for transformations that characterize women's lives (Whitelaw 1993). For Karanga-speakers in Zimbabwe, pots symbolize women, especially the womb, and an unfired pot is a simile for a girl before puberty (Whitelaw 1993). Unfired pots are not yet transformed; once a pot is fired, no further change to it can be wrought other than perforating or breaking it. Many first-millennium C.E. sites, like Nanda in KwaZulu-Natal, contain pits in which pots with deliberately and carefully broken bases were set down (Whitelaw 1993). Pot perforations have been interpreted in several ways, some of which will be mentioned shortly. In the context of the Nanda pits, perforated pots may represent women's defloration, but it is not known whether the rite would have been associated with a

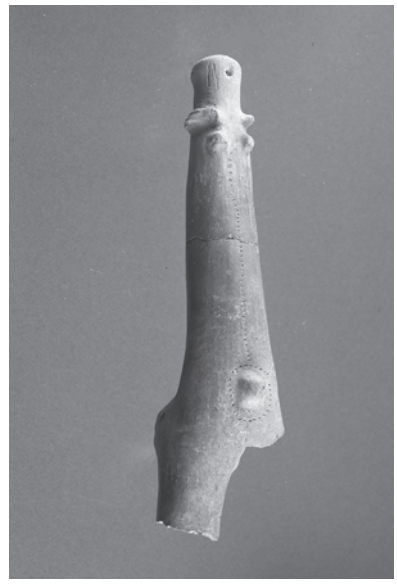


Figure 15.2 A broken female figurine from the Iron Age settlement at Schroda, South Africa. Note the phalliform head, the emphasized navel, and the bodily scarification (reproduced by permission of Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History, Pretoria).

puberty ceremony or with girls' initiation school rituals (Whitelaw 1993). One possibility is that the pit deposits denote female puberty rites, and that bottomless pots signify the capacity of fertile women to act as channels to the ancestral world for the purpose of giving birth (Mitchell and Whitelaw 2005).

The close symbolic link between wombs, mothers, pots, and houses means that houses, like pots, can be metaphors for adult women, their wombs, and their reproductive capacity (van Wyk 1998:52–67). Where female initiation is still carried out, the South Sotho (South African) initiate is dressed to symbolize the house. The girl's face is screened with a reed mask resembling the fence that forms a courtyard around the homestead. The initiate's body is smeared with clay, and scratched into the clay are designs that mimic those on painted houses (van Wyk 1998:52–67). Tswana pottery decorations are repeated on mural art and on the foreskirts of initiated and married women, wooden dishes, and drums (Hall 1998:252), so the iconography of transformation is repeated widely. Among the Bemba (in Zambia) *mbusa*, the sacred emblems shown to female initiates, are painted on floors and walls inside initiation huts (Prins and Hall 1994).

Venda mothers (in South Africa) give clay figurines of women to their daughters. One of the laws (*milayo*) of the clay figurines is that the head (and by implication her spirit) belongs to the father who conceived the girl (Wood 2002:84, 90). This explains the obviously phallic form of the figurine's head. Wives in all southern African Bantu-speaking communities are ambiguous because they represent their fathers and yet are integral components of their husbands' homesteads (Armstrong et al. 2008). The figurines are physical embodiments of this social ambiguity of wives. On marriage, the girl takes her figurine to her new home. At Schroda in Limpopo, South Africa, stylized female figurines with phalliform heads (Figure 15.2) were found in domestic contexts

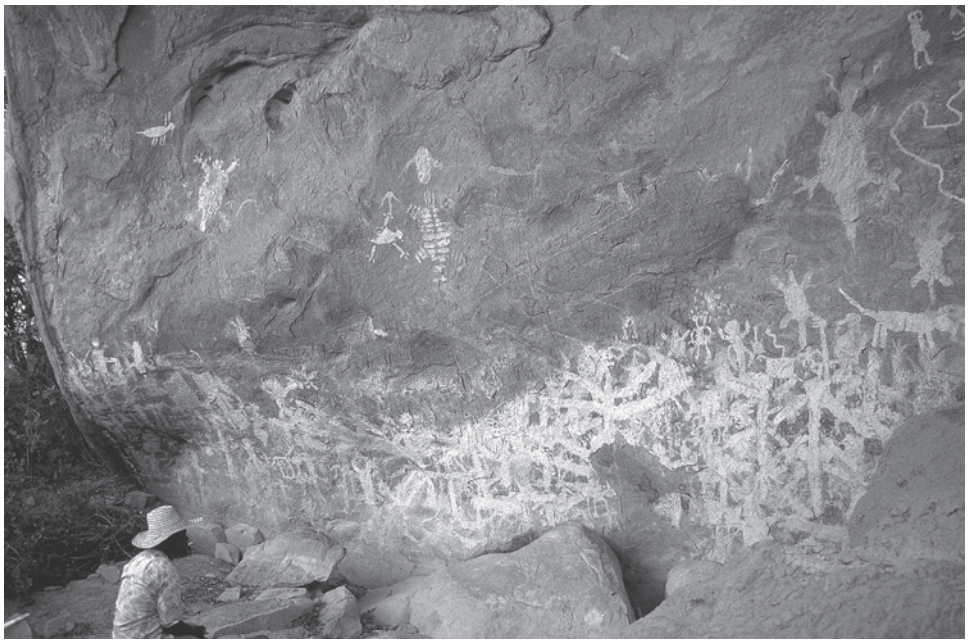


Figure 15.3 Chinamwali art depicting themes from Chewa girls' initiation in central Africa. The site is in the Chongoni Rock Art World Heritage site in Malawi (photograph courtesy of Dr Benjamin Smith, Rock Art Research Institute, University of the Witwatersrand).

(Wood 2002:92), suggesting that a form of *milayo* operated at least as far back as the tenth century in this region.

Paintings are often associated with female initiations. In Zambia, pictographs, which embody concepts of water and fertility, appear to have played a part in the instructive teachings carried out during the women's *chinamwali* ceremonies, which occur when a girl becomes a woman, and again on her first pregnancy, and painted shelters continue to be used for *chinamwali* ceremonies today (Smith 1997:26). White painted circles, filled circles, concentric circles, and grid forms encountered in Chewa Bantu-speakers' rock art in Malawi are associated with girls' initiation (Smith 1997) (Figure 15.3). The Ngoni inhabitants adjacent to the Thandwe shelter in Zambia informed Phillipson (1976:183) that the white paintings there were connected with Nsenga girls' puberty ceremonies. In northern Limpopo Province, South Africa, on the Makgabeng Plateau, white finger paintings include solid circles that are *ngwedi*, the moon, a symbol linked to the menstrual cycles of women. The geometric imagery includes motifs that appear to be women's and girls' back aprons, including a bark-string apron used in certain female rites (Namono and Eastwood 2005:82). Aprons and loincloths seem to be metaphors for women and men's adult status, respectively. There is presently no evidence that animal images appear in the women's art. In south-central and eastern Africa, as well as among the Venda of Limpopo, finger paintings similar to those found in rock shelters were painted on the inside walls of the initiation hut by female neophytes during their seclusion period (Prins and Hall 1994). In the southwestern Cape, handprints, finger dots, finger smears, and crayon

lines are believed to be part of menarche rites and are thought to be the work of Khoekhoen pastoralist females (Anderson 1997:59).

Female initiation seems to take precedence over male initiation in modern San society, and gender is central to the themes of female initiation and dangerous feminine potency in San rock art (Solomon 1992). Most of the large groupings of humans in San art are processional and depict naked people, who appear to be engaged in dances associated with initiation events for young men or first menstruation events for young women (Parkington 1998). The Eland Dance, held at the time of female initiation, is recorded from all known San groups (Solomon 1992). Here, women expose their buttocks, something considered improper except in ritual context (Marshall 1959), and some of the South African rock art seems to portray a similar rite. A Drakensberg image gives the impression of representing a girl initiate at her first menstruation, a time associated with dangerous potency that might threaten social unity and environmental stability (Lewis-Williams 1981). The link between rain and dangerous female potency is encompassed in other images, such as the one in the Maclear District, northeastern Eastern Cape Province, of a female puff adder giving birth (Mallen 2005). Snakes play an important role in initiation ceremonies and in rainmaking, and snake imagery is used not only by San, but also by Venda, Shona, Yao, Bemba, Nsenga, and Chewa in their female initiation ceremonies (Prins and Hall 1994).

Among Central San (Khwe), the kudu is linked to girls' puberty rites, and kudu are specifically depicted in the rock art of the Central Limpopo Basin (Eastwood 2006:30). Here, processions tend to comprise one girl in the company of mature women, wearing the front apron only so that their buttocks are exposed. Sometimes the women and girls in the processions have human heads and upper bodies, but antelope legs, and these motifs are suggestively associated with female kudu in the mating position (Eastwood 2006:33). About two-thirds of the female kudu in mating posture have genitals emphasized in red paint (Eastwood 2006:35). The Bugakhwe (a Khwe group in Botswana) have a kudu dance during puberty rites, and a new kudu hide kaross is given to a girl to mark her transformation (Eastwood 2006:35).

Zambian hunter-gatherer rock art is unlike San art known from southern Africa, belonging instead to the Central African Twa tradition (Smith 1997). The rock art traditions are completely different because the Central African art is finger painted and geometric, whereas the San art depicts animals and humans with fine brushwork (Smith 2006). In San art of the Western Cape, men are painted more often than women (Parkington 1998), suggesting that men's affairs may be the principal theme of this art, but in the Central African rainforests about 90 percent of the Batwa rock art comprises finger painted geometric designs that appear to be concerned with female issues (Smith 2005). *Elima* marks important women's occasions amongst the Mbuti, such as the coming of age ceremony, and the geometric motifs in Batwa rock art are symbols associated with the concerns of *elima*, which include rain as well as fertility (Smith 2005).

The final rites of passage: Transformation to the world of the ancestors

Death marks a change in concepts about gender roles in many, but not in all, societies. In Mali, dead women and men seem to take their gender identities to the grave. A Dogon woman's grave goods, placed at the base of a cliff below the burial cave,



Figure 15.4 Dogon women's grave goods, Bandiagara Plateau, Mali. Women's pots, the *sa tonyo*, which once contained body oil, are deposited in a cliff crevice together with women's calabashes (copyright Lyn Wadley).

always feature her pot that once contained body oil, the *sa tonyo* (Figure 15.4), and normally a hole is punched through its base (Lane 2008). The *sa tonyo* pot might represent the foetus, and its deposition and puncturing might be a symbol of lost reproductive capacity (Lane 2008). If a deceased Dogon man was a weaver during his lifetime, then his shuttle is deposited at the edge of the cemetery; the placing of the shuttle is a mark of respect and a symbolic recognition of his prowess in the craft (Lane 2008). Other male specialists, such as herdsmen, hunters, and soldiers, have their own distinct funeral rites, whereas those for women are always the same and involve depositing the oil pot together with the woman's spindle and calabash ladle (Figure 15.4) (Lane 2008). At one level, the different depositional acts for men and women reflect the sexual division of labor within the cloth production process: weaving is a specialized task in contrast to spinning, which is a generalized activity. At another level, the distinct burial practices recognize the individuality of the male specialists.

The example from Mali can be compared with some of the burial practices of Bantu-speaking farmers in South Africa. An important feature of the Central Cattle Pattern is the burial of men within the cattle byre, which is also the men's assembly area. However, in some Early Iron Age sites there are rare occasions when a woman, too, was buried in the byre, suggesting that some women achieved importance within the community (Whitelaw 1993). At K2, Limpopo Province, South Africa, juvenile burials were made in association with beakers in the domestic context of the house so

that the ritual action re-secured the reproductive status of the mothers (Hattingh and Hall 2009:313). Broken pots are sometimes found in the graves of children and can be interpreted using the symbolism, discussed above, that ties women and their fertility to pots (Mitchell and Whitelaw 2005). An infant pot burial in Melora Saddle, Waterberg, South Africa, is an early nineteenth-century example. This infant's remains were buried in a jar that had its base deliberately pierced before it was buried close to a house, perhaps under the eaves (Boeyens et al. 2009). The ritual danger of childbirth, and future child death, had to be averted to ensure the ongoing security of the affected family as well as that of the entire community. Ritual impurity, such as that brought about by a child's death, threatened both the social and the natural order, so that lack of fertility and drought might result. To restore social order and environmental stability, child burials were made in jars with their bases often deliberately perforated, a symbolic act to ensure that the woman would become pregnant again (Boeyens et al. 2009). Thus ethnic diversity in the meaning behind perforating pots in different parts of Africa does not detract from the underlying concepts of gender, transformation, and reproductive capacity.

In Zambia and central Malawi, Chewa link the concepts of *nyau*, the men's secret association, to the last transformation. The womb-shaped *kasiyamaliro* mask is even more important in the funerary process than in the initiation rites into manhood described earlier. The mask transports or accompanies the body from the village to the graveyard, and later returns to ensure the departure of the spirit from the village so that it cannot linger and become troublesome. The *kasiyamaliro* figure oversees the transformation of the dying man to spirit just as it oversees the transformation of boy to man (Smith 2001).

Farther north, in the Central African forests, Mbuti men's rituals are called *molimo*, and they take place in a clearing in the forest (Smith 2005). *Molimo* is often held after the death of an important member or in the case of a violent argument. Stylized animal depictions in rock art reflect the concerns of *molimo* (Smith 2005).

In the Later Stone Age of South Africa there is a striking uniformity among the classes of grave goods buried with men, women, children, and infants; it seems that in death there was a deliberate attempt to camouflage gender and age (Wadley 1997). From as early as 9000 years ago, red ochre, ostrich eggshell beads, and marine shells were used in burials of infants as well as adults (Wadley 1997). By the mid-Holocene, a wide range of grave goods appeared, and some burials were richly endowed with grave goods – some from domestic and others from symbolic realms. Therianthropic figures in rock art images from Lesotho have been interpreted as spirits of the dead (Solomon 1997b), based partly on verbal evidence from a young San man, Qing, interviewed at the painted sites by Orpen in the late nineteenth century. Qing's testament that the figures with rhebok heads at one site were "men who had died" (Orpen 1874:2) has elsewhere been interpreted as evidence for trancing shamans (Lewis-Williams 1981). Since trance and death are not entirely separate concepts in the minds of San (Katz 1982), it is difficult to adjudicate between the opposing interpretations.

Technological transformations

In Bantu-speaking Africa, the use of iron seems to have begun in the area around Lake Victoria during the last few centuries B.C.E. (Phillipson 1985:171); by the first

millennium C.E., it was widespread. The smelting of iron is a perfect example of transforming a product from the natural world. Not surprisingly, some aspects of behavior during metal production mirror behavior during human transformation ceremonies. Ethnographic records reveal that iron-smelting is normally conducted in seclusion, just as initiations are carried out secretly and at a distance from normal village life. Smelting is conducted by men. It is a ritually potent occasion that carries with it the kinds of dangers that accompany young women and men at their initiations into adulthood. The symbolism associated with furnaces makes it plain that important human transformations, particularly those that concern fertility, are uppermost in the minds of the artisans and their observers (Collett 1993). Some of the symbolism is subtle: in the Interlacustrine Early Iron Age, for example, decorative motifs used on furnace bricks made by men are the same as those on Urewe ceramics made by women (Maclean 1998:172). Other symbolism is more explicit, and the African iron-smelting furnace may have clay representations of breasts, vaginal openings, testicle-like bellows, and penis-like blow pipes (Schmidt 2009). Furnaces become culturally constructed human bodies and reproductive systems through the combining of female and male body parts and through ritual gestures and sounds (Schmidt 2009). Shona furnaces in Zimbabwe are female bodies replete with bodily scarifications (not unlike those on the figurine in Figure 15.2) that mark an adult, and with protective, beaded waistbands that women wear when they give birth (Schmidt 2009). However, according to Schmidt, the external appearances of furnaces are less important than their internal representations of transforming fluids, such as menstruation and semen. These particularly change the furnace barrel into a human uterus. The reproductive status of people, societies, and land is potentially always under threat from evil; hence herbal medicines must be fed to the furnace to intercept supernatural dangers and danger from enemies.

The production of ceramics represents another transformation of natural products – clay, tempering materials, and water – altered irreversibly through firing. Pots are made by women in a domestic context without the secrecy that accompanies metal-smelting. There are, however, some taboos concerning pot-making. Newly married Zulu women, for example, cannot make pots in their husbands' homesteads until they have given birth to their first child (Armstrong et al. 2008). In Africa, pots can represent people, and they can consequently embody socially significant messages when they are subsequently used in domestic, political, or ritual contexts (Armstrong et al. 2008). Ceramic production provides an opportunity to create enduring and highly visible reminders of people's social standing and of traditional values. Motifs can be used to define gender, age, and status. Armstrong et al. (2008) argue that a significant theme of the textured decoration on Zulu beer pots is the control of human reproductive and productive capacity. This is particularly the case for the richly decorated vessels that are used at beer and meat feasts where they also supposedly remind users of rules that serve to maintain social order (Armstrong et al. 2008). These few examples demonstrate the cognitive links between potting, metalworking, fertility, and gender.

Transformations are hard to find in Stone Age contexts, and "finding gender" is even more difficult. However, from a theoretical viewpoint the ability to effect permanent transformations on products from nature is circumstantial evidence that people were capable of thinking about transformations of all kinds, including social

ones like gender transformation. Compound adhesives were made in southern Africa at least 70,000 years ago for attaching stone tools to hafts (Wadley et al. 2009; Wadley 2010). The compound glues used were made from disparate ingredients, such as plant gums, fat, and powdered ochre. Experimental adhesive production through mixing *Acacia* gum and red ochre, and by heating and drying the glued tools, demonstrates that the final product is irreversibly altered. The steps required for compound adhesive manufacture demonstrate multitasking and the use of abstraction and recursion. Such advanced mental abilities attributable to people who lived 70,000 years ago would have provided them with the mental equipment to think symbolically about gender. Another good example of transformative technology, also at about 70,000 years ago, is the deliberate heat treatment of silcrete to improve its qualities for stone tool knapping through changing its crystalline structure. This process has been inferred for stone points made in the Still Bay Industry at Pinnacle Point, South Africa (Brown et al. 2009).

Changing Gender Roles

Changes are recognizable ethnographically and archaeologically even within relatively short periods; the reasons for change can be variable, and they might include environmental or political factors. For example, female initiation rites were still practiced in living memory by Namaqua pastoralists in the Richersveld, but male initiation rites disappeared by the end of the nineteenth century when large game hunting became impossible (Webley 1997:181–182), and migrant labor may have removed young men from traditional roles.

Modifications to gender roles took place in cloth production in west-central Ghana. Before the nineteenth century, cloth was primarily consumed within the household, and husbands grew cotton, wives indigo; husbands wove cotton that wives had previously cleaned, carded, and spun (Stahl and Cruz 1998:206). Excavations of sites dating to between 1300 and 1650 C.E. show that spindle whorls, which are the only surviving evidence of cloth production, were not universally present. This intimates that cloth production in the past may have been a specialist, not a household, gendered task (Stahl and Cruz 1998:222).

The spatial configurations of houses in a number of Iron Age villages in South Africa changed through time, suggesting concomitant changes in attitudes to gender. At Olifantspoort, the differences go beyond those of ceramic production and the change from decorated to undecorated pots that I mentioned earlier. In the first phase of Tswana occupation, male and female space is clearly demarcated, with men and women's artifacts on the right and left of the hut entrance, respectively (Hall 1998). Men's benches are built at the right of the hut. Phase Three houses displayed elaborate use of space, but huts may have been used only for sleeping because they lacked the structural arrangements of the Phase One huts. Discrete cooking, storage, and preparation areas for women were now either in a back courtyard, on a verandah, or in a separate enclosure to the side of the hut. Men's activities, such as metalworking and hide preparation, increased in discrete areas near the chief's court, implying a move toward centralization (Hall 1998). At the same time, increasingly compartmentalized gender roles may be represented.

Cattle byres can be found within Iron Age residential sites from at least the late sixth to early seventh centuries C.E. in South Africa. At KwaGandaganda in KwaZulu-Natal, the seventh-century cattle byres (which were men's assembly areas) or their surrounds contained figurines with scarification marks, as well as ironworking residues from smelting and forging (Whitelaw 1994). This evidence for initiation and iron smelting within the village where women and children lived suggests that there were different social rules from those recorded from other periods in Iron Age sites in sub-Saharan Africa. Initiation and iron smelting were generally conducted at some distance from villages because of the dangerous supernatural powers associated with these activities. KwaGandaganda is not an isolated example because furnace bases were found together with initiation residues in a central activity area at Ndondondwane (eighth and ninth centuries), as well as at Magogo, KwaZulu-Natal, while in Limpopo Province both Beauley and Schroda (tenth century) yielded smelting residues within villages (Mitchell and Whitelaw 2005).

Gender relationships may even have altered through time during the Stone Age. Deacon (1976) was able to show that at Melkhoutboom, South Africa, there was a change of hunting techniques to include the use of bow and arrow in the Holocene. The change in meat-getting techniques freed hunters from following herds of large migratory game hunted in the Pleistocene. This meant that people could schedule their movements to take advantage of plant seasonality. Deacon (1976:105) thought that southern and eastern Cape populations may have moved their camps to take advantage of *Watsonia* ecology. *Watsonia* corms are carbohydrate-rich and therefore ideal staple foods; thus plant food gatherers, who may have been women, may have controlled seasonal band movements in place of big-game hunters.

There are other potential changes (including changes in gender behavior) that could result from shifting hunting strategies in the Stone Age from spear hunting to bow and arrow hunting and the setting of snares. Spear hunting seems to require groups of ten or more people, with drivers of game in addition to spear operators. It is unlikely that this could have been accomplished by men alone because hunter-gatherer groups would seldom have been big enough to allow men to be both the drivers of game and the thrusters of spears. Thus, we should consider that spear hunts in the Stone Age may well have incorporated women, just as spear hunts among the Mbuti rely on women as beaters (Wadley 1998). Bow and arrow hunting, by contrast, relies on stealth, good tracking ability, and accurate aim, not on group cooperation. In one sense, arrow hunting and setting of snares privatizes the hunt and places meat ownership with an individual or the family. Snares can be set by children or men or women of any age, and they bring meat to the homestead rather than requiring people to go after the meat. Snares are empowering for the old, the very young, and for women, who may otherwise have been dependent on others for meat.

Dietary practices can sometimes be detected through the stable carbon isotope composition of human bone collagen. Marine and terrestrial foods have clearly distinguishable stable carbon and/or nitrogen isotope ratios. For example, marine foods have high $\delta^{13}C$ values, whereas leafy plant foods have much lower $\delta^{13}C$ values. Sealy studied 74 Western Cape skeletons and showed that more recently than 3000 years ago there was unequal access to resources based on gender (Sealy 2006). Male skeletons had more positive $\delta^{13}C$ values than women, implying that men's diets were enriched with marine foods, such as seal meat and fish. Men seem to have eaten meat

away from the home base without sharing it with women and children. Before 3000 years ago, the carbon isotope ratios of men and women were more even. This result demonstrates that there was social change through time, perhaps involving gender relationships. Interestingly, in the Western Cape along coastal rocky shorelines in the period 3000–2000 years ago one sees the development of very large shell middens containing low densities of artifacts and animal bones, and little evidence of domestic features (Parkington 1998). This convergence of evidence from the archaeological and archaeometric record seems to imply a higher marine intake, particularly by men (Parkington 1998).

With sedentism, broadened resource bases, and/or domestication, people gave increased attention to the immediate environment, and this resulted in technologies suitable for getting and processing local resources (Casey 1998:101). Expedient, informal stone tools thus became common at the expense of highly formal tool types normally associated with male activities of hunting and/or warfare (Casey 1998:83–84). The Kintampo Complex, a ceramic Later Stone Age complex in Ghana, West Africa, dating to around 3500 years ago, had a predominantly expedient stone tool assemblage together with rare, but characteristic, projectile points. The Kintampo projectiles seem to have transmitted social information, whereas less elaborate tools were used to perform most tasks (Casey 1998:99). A change in gender power relations may well have accompanied this technological shift.

Conclusion

Transformation is a concept particularly pertinent to the study of gender, and I have demonstrated that it can be recognized archaeologically in hunter-gatherer, pastoralist, and farmer sites in sub-Saharan Africa. In cultural contexts, transformative events, such as rites of passage, irreversibly shape identities, including those of gender. Technological transformation of natural products is a metaphor for the irretrievable nature of human transformations. Thus in the Stone Age milieu, technologies that make permanent changes to natural products, like heat-treatment of stone and compound glues, can be seen as proxies for ideas about human transformations. Circumstantial evidence for transformations is probably all that can be achieved with Stone Age data since using ethnographic analogy in the deep past is problematic. Furthermore, when looking at evidence from tens of thousands of years ago, we would do well to erase from our memories the many gender stereotypes entrenched in much of the literature about hunter-gatherers.

In Iron Age contexts the shaping, firing, and use of ceramics, as well as the smelting of metal from ore, are metaphorically linked to gendered roles in the reproduction, not only of individuals but of society as a whole. Material culture recovered from archaeological sites dating to the last thousand years or so includes figurines and masks with attributes, such as scarification and dental modification, that symbolize adult status in some communities. Male and female rites of passage can also be inferred through the art that occurs throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Central Africa provides a particularly rich source of imagery that can be linked to women's affairs.

Other sub-Saharan data imply that gender roles were either emphasized or underplayed in death, depending on cultural mores, and that "other genders" were also

recognized in the past. Importantly, archaeological data imply that even when gender roles seem to be deeply embedded in culture, they are not immutable. Substantive behavioral change through time is recorded in hunter-gatherer, pastoralist, and farmer sites.

Gender studies are sometimes perceived as isolated from other forms of archaeological research. This chapter demonstrates that such a conclusion is unfounded, and indeed that gender is integral to all archaeological research. I feel particularly optimistic about the potential for analyzing gender relationships in situations where social transformations can be identified in the past. In the African context the richest sources for detecting transformations in the future are predictably in the recent past where Iron Age and rock art sources are most likely to reward us.

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CHAPTER 16

Gender and Archaeology in Coastal East Asia

Sarah Milledge Nelson

Introduction

"Coastal East Asia" is a term invented for this chapter to describe a region that begins in the Russian Far East, proceeds southward through Korea, Japan, and the islands to and including Taiwan, then encompasses both mainland and island Southeast Asia. Although there are many differences among these cultures on the eastern edge of Asia, the archaeological discoveries pertaining to gender raise similar themes that allow several topics to be examined, even though research on gender in these regions is just beginning to be taken as an important endeavor. The main topics to be discussed in this chapter are the origins of pottery (a discussion which includes a few sites in China); matrilineality and the prevalence of women potters in the Neolithic; representations of women and men (figurines in Japan, rock art in Thailand, tomb murals in Korea); gender in belief systems such as animism, shamanism, and Buddhism, any of which may have goddesses; and the gender of rulership in ranked societies in Korea and Japan ranging in time from the Bronze Age to early states. These topics are not exhaustive of discussions of the archaeology of gender in coastal East Asia, but they are the most discussed. Other examples of research with gendered implications outside these themes will be included where they are most appropriate.

The topics listed above have been approached using additional types of data besides those arising from excavations; thus the discussions are varied, and conclusions from different studies are not always mutually supporting. Archaeologically, most of the relevant data come from burials, but some household excavations, as well as whole sites, have produced useful information. Specific artifacts or groups of artifacts are the focus of some speculations about gender in this region. Texts play an increasing role through

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time in interpretations of ancient societies, especially early states. The earliest texts pertaining to this era were recorded in Chinese histories, somewhat incidentally describing societies in the Korean Peninsula, the Japanese archipelago, and the Russian Far East. These documents pertain to times as early as the third century B.C.E., but other texts are useful from the Philippines to Vietnam. While these documents are tantalizingly sketchy, they can be usefully juxtaposed with the archaeological evidence (for a detailed example of this process, see Seyock 2004). Japanese texts are useful for early Japanese polities, and to some extent those of Korea are also relevant when used with caution and in relation to the archaeological record (e.g., Hong 1994; Piggott 1997, 1999).

This chapter is an initial attempt to link the topics pursued regionally with an understanding of gender on a large scale in ancient East Asia. This approach seems more productive than discussing projects and their results country by country for three reasons. First, these are topics that highlight the differences between the coastal areas of East Asia and the rest of Asia, especially China, which culturally contributed much to this region in historic times. Second, they are important topics that, by being isolated in this region, can illuminate the discussion of gender everywhere. This importance is evident from the origins of the earliest pottery in the world to the reigning queens of Korea and Japan while states were forming. Finally, the whole maritime edge of East Asia is stereotypically different from Europe and the Americas in terms of gender in the present. Gendered patterns range from a strong tendency to male dominance in countries historically dominated by Confucianism to something close to gender parity in parts of Southeast Asia (Spiro 1993). It is important to explore how far into the past these differences can be traced, and not assume they are eternal cultural patterns.

The Origin of Pottery Containers

Radiocarbon dates from caves in Kyushu in the early 1950s showed that the earliest known pottery containers in the world were made in Japan (Pearson 2006). More recent discoveries widen the distribution of early pottery to include the Russian Far East and sites in both northern and southern China (Pearson 2005). The new discoveries have succeeded in grabbing the attention of worldwide archaeology. While the earlier dating of pottery associated with hunter-gatherer societies in Japan should have thoroughly detached the production of containers made of clay from the beginnings of agriculture, it has taken discoveries of "hunter-gatherer" pottery containers in many other parts of the world to force an intensive theoretical discussion of this phenomenon (Jordan and Zvelebil 2009a).

The concept of a "Neolithic Revolution" (Childe 1942) has been imploding for a long time, with early weaving, permanent settlements, agriculture, and even ground stone tools each appearing independently outside of the Neolithic package, as well as pottery. However, the term "Neolithic" has come to mean the beginnings of pottery in Asia, while it is applied to early agriculture in Southwest Asia and Europe. Thus there can be pre-agricultural Neolithic (which has pottery) in Asia while there is pre-pottery Neolithic (which has agriculture) in Southwest Asia. As recently as 2008 a discussant at the World Archaeological Congress in Dublin, Ireland chastised authors

of Korean papers in an East Asia session for using the term "Neolithic" to apply to sites with pottery but no evidence of plant or animal domestication. This remains an unsettled issue.

But Asianists are having the last laugh (so far). A detailed new book (Jordan and Zvelebil 2009) draws together widespread evidence for the phenomenon of pottery-making occurring well before plant and animal domestication. The chapters range from East Asia to Northern Europe, and definitively show that the term Neolithic has become so fuzzy as to be meaningless. We might name this the Pottery Age (Nelson n.d.). While it has taken a long time for the new evidence to gain acceptance within world archaeology, and to understand how early pottery may have spread from East Asian "hunter-gatherers" to similar groups from Siberia to Scandinavia (or been independently invented), any gender implications have been largely ignored. However, clear data from Southeast Asia link women with pottery production in the Neolithic. Perhaps women should be given credit for being the first inventors of the cultural use of a chemical change, hardening wet clay through the application of fire (Childe 1939), which occurred in the Upper Paleolithic well before any application to containers (Adovasio et al. 2007). Whatever the gender of the potters, Richard Pearson (2005:819) perceives the social context as one of "collective rather than individual achievement," noting that Dean Saitta (1997:263) critiqued Hayden's aggrandizer theory (Hayden 1995) as gendering power-holders male. The sites of early pottery examined by Pearson appear to be sedentary, and rituals can be inferred from the burials, but status differences are not present. The earliest vessels, here as elsewhere in East Asia, are cooking vessels. Pearson (2006:826) agrees with Haaland that "pottery is associated with activities which become important with the advent of sedentism, activities centered around women and children and the hearth" (Haaland 1997:354).

To present the data on Late Pleistocene/Early Holocene pottery in a nutshell, the earliest pottery containers in the world, dating as early as 16,000 B.P., well before any evidence of domestication of plants and/or animals, have been widely found in East Asia, despite being thinly spread (Kaner 2009). Competing claims between Japan and China for the earliest pottery production have been discussed, but that debate is irrelevant for the purposes of this chapter. Here I want to reiterate that pottery, long believed to be a craft mostly participated in by women, especially before the invention of the rotary wheel, appears to be the earliest discovery of a transformative chemical process in the world. And yet, neither the possible gender ramifications of this discovery and its implications for social structure nor the fact that transforming clay to hard pottery is a major breakthrough in human technology has been much discussed (Nelson n.d.). Childe called pottery "the earliest conscious utilization … of a chemical change" and suggested that the invention of pottery was "embedded in the existing social relations and sexual divisions of labour" (1939:101). But what those social relations and sexual division of labor may consist of, Childe leaves us to guess (1939:101–105).

As noted above, the predecessor to pottery containers goes even farther back into the Paleolithic, where baked clay figurines were hardened in a kind of oven. Although creating containers and hardening clay by fire has been widely regarded as women's work, the implications for gender of this important breakthrough have not been examined by mainstream archaeology. The question of who made the pots is rarely

raised in Jordan and Zvelebil's (2009b) entire volume about early ceramics. The terms "social" and "division of labor" do appear in the index (although sparsely), but "gender" does not. The closest to ascribing the pottery creation to women is in their figure 1.4a, toward the bottom of which is the notation, "social reproduction, enhancement of (female?) labor and status." Many who work with pottery note the relationship with basketry, a skill ethnographically considered women's work, but again when coupling basketry and pottery, gender is rarely mentioned in archaeological contexts.

Early pottery containers in Japan go back at least 16,000 years. Although no specific function for these is suggested, traces of some boiled material were observed on their interiors (Kaner 2009:99). Cooking is implied but ungendered. Simon Kaner cites James Brown (1989) as bringing a gendered perspective to the pottery issue, noting that "in sedentary societies, pottery making could easily be subsumed into women's schedule of activities, based as it was around the house" (Brown 1989:210). In this article Brown argues in terms of time budgets and the supposedly greater amount of unutilized time at the home base that he assumes women have. The problem here is that his assumptions about women's work are based on a presumption of nuclear families, and are not supported by any sort of evidence.

Irina Zhuschchikhovskaya (2009) has meticulously analyzed the early pottery of the Russian Far East without any hint of the gender of the potters. But she is not unaware of gender, for she brings attention to a burial of an older woman in the center of a small cemetery in Boisman 2, Primorye (Zhuschchikhovskaya 2006). The questions being asked of the early pottery, and the type of analysis used so far, simply does not evoke gendered questions, or even social ones. Early pottery in China is found in both the northeast and southeast of the country. Although the earliest pottery found so far in Korea is later than that of Japan, China, and the Russian Far East, some early pottery nevertheless dates to before the Holocene rise in sea level (Cho and Ko 2009; Nelson n.d.). Since any Late Pleistocene pottery sites of the west coast of Korea are now under the Yellow Sea (Hewes 1947), it seems likely that experiments with making pottery occurred throughout East Asia, with exchange of ideas perhaps facilitated by boats and fishing (Aikens and Zhuschchikhovskaya 2009; Nelson 2009).

A productive approach to the gender of potters is to posit that "in almost all prehistoric settings we can expect strong relationships between prehistoric subsistence, specialized occupations, and kinship systems" (Bentley et al. 2007:301). These authors point out that "in island southeast Asia and Melanesia matriliny and matrilocality have been more common in the past" (2007:301, citing Hage and Marck 2003). Furthermore, "gene distributions suggest a history of matrilocality in parts of Thailand" (Bentley et al. 2005). Such observations, when they relate to specific archaeological sites, may provide a firmer foundation for the gender of at least some potters.

Kinship Systems

Matrilineality is still present in parts of Indonesia in spite of the influx of Islam. The largest matrilineal society in the world, the Minangkabau on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, continues to recognize a female head of household and other matrilineal practices although the men were converted to Islam several centuries ago (Sanday

1981, 2003). Other suggestions of the previous high status of women and possible women's leadership are found in various locations in Southeast Asia. In Lamphun, Thailand, for example, veneration of a female statue of a "queen" is still strong enough to coexist alongside the cult of the Buddha (Swearer and Premchit 2000). Generally in Southeast Asia, "Western observers … have been struck by the complementarity of men's and women's work and the relative lack of ritual or economic differentiation between men and women there" (Errington 1990, cited in Bacus 2002). Elisabeth Bacus (2002) describes equality of women in the Visayas, Philippines, even in the Spanish period. Although they do not seem to have been rulers, they performed all other public functions.

It is not only in Southeast Asia that matrilineality and prominent women in the past can be perceived. Michiko Aoki asserts that "the notion of a patrilineal family was foreign to most local residents before the introduction of Chinese institutions in the late seventh and early eighth centuries" (2010:70). In early Japan property was inherited matrilineally. "A community, or tribe, consisted of a number of such households whose members were generally related to each other matrilineally" (2010:70). Aoki mentions deep water diving as a woman's occupation in part of Japan. On the matrilineal island of Cheju, Korea, this was true even in the last century.

Whether the prevalence of matrilineality in coastal East Asia is related to the invention of pottery cannot be assessed with present data. However, an early sequence in Thailand that includes strong evidence of women as potters is useful both for the implications of matrilineality as well as for clear evidence of women as potters. The site of Khok Phanom Di, Thailand has been meticulously excavated, and lends itself well to the topic of pottery and shifting gender relations (Higham and Thosarat 1994, 1998; Higham 2002; Bentley et al. 2007). Charles Higham and Rachanee Thosarat describe a large burial site at 1600–1700 B.C.E. in which the richest burials (buried with both pots and potting equipment) were those of women potters. The high status ascribed to these women potters is inferred from the fact that an infant buried with one of the women merited the same degree of finery as the woman who was presumably her mother (Higham and Thosarat 1994, 1998). New work on isotope analysis of the bones of burials in the same site suggests an even more interesting pattern (Bentley et al. 2007). The isotope analysis shows that females were born elsewhere and had immigrated to this location before the shift to higher status female burials. High status burials were presumably associated with skills to make the high quality ceramics found in burials that the women brought with them. They may also have introduced rice agriculture at the same time (Bentley et al. 2005). Bentley et al. (2007) suggest that the tendency for Proto-oceanic societies to be matrilineal is relevant to this finding.

Gender in Bronze Age Thailand has been similarly studied (Bacus 2006). Focusing on the Bronze Age site of Non Nok Tha, Elisabeth Bacus (2007) examines burials through time. She suggests that, while gender is clearly marked by the direction of the burial in the Early Bronze Age of Ban Chiang, Non Nok Tha did not exhibit a gender dichotomy. Higher ranks are indicated in two female burials as well as one that is possibly male, thus ranking probably existed but may not have been related to gender. One woman had a sandstone mold and cast bronze implements, possibly implying her role in bronze casting. Joyce White (1995) has suggested that the prevalence of small localized cultures in Bronze Age Thailand indicates the presence of heterarchy rather than hierarchy.

Shamans

Scholars who currently write about shamanism can be divided into those who treat it as a phenomenon with a history (e.g., Thomas and Humphrey 1994; Kehoe 2000) and those who consider shamanism a product of the human mind, regardless of time or place (Eliade 1964). For discussing East Asia, I take the view that shamanisms as seen in current and recent times are historically related to shamanism in Northeast Asia (Nelson 2008). While there are many variants, the essence of coastal East Asian shamanism is the belief that spirits exist and that humans with special endowments can interact with them, either calling down spirits or flying up to them in a trance. The gender component of this is clear when (nearly) everyone who studies shamanism from Siberia to Taiwan concedes that the shamans are predominantly women (Balzer 1997; Tedlock 2005). The importance of understanding gender and shamanism is made clear when discussing shamanism and leadership (Nelson 2008). K. C. Chang (1983 and elsewhere) has made a strong case for shamans as leaders in China, although in a paper published posthumously he made what Balzer (1997:xii) calls "the usual gender mistake" by insisting that Chinese shamans had to be male (Chang 2005:129).

Current women shamans in Japan have been studied by Carmen Blacker (1975). She shows that they are related to figurines of shamans from the Kofun Period. Many of these shamans are female, as are most shamans in modern Japan. Korean shamanism is almost totally practiced by women, but they are considered to be low class. Those in the Seoul region are chosen by the spirits, which are manifested by *shin byong* (spirit sickness). Shamanism is widespread in Korea, and shamans can be visited for cures and for blessings by anyone, no matter how modern or what religion they practice (Kendall 1996). Elisabeth Bacus (2002:317) describes women as "most commonly the ritual specialists" in the pre-Hispanic period in the Visayas, Philippines.

Depictions of Gendered People

Rock art, pottery figurines, and tomb murals offer occasional glimpses of gendered people and their activities. These are found intermittently throughout the region, but each allows a glimpse into the gender of the time and place.

Rock Art along the Amur River has been interpreted as shamanic (Okladnikov 1981). The drawings are pecked into boulders and cliffs that may be covered by tides coming up the river. Many are only heads with heart-shaped faces and rays around their heads. Okladnikov sees a relationship between this rock art and shamanic objects collected ethnographically. He also perceives a stylistic connection between this art and some red-painted pottery from the third millennium B.C.E., which features heart-shaped faces.

The pecked rock art of Korea, assigned to the Bronze Age, features fishing scenes instead, with boats, fish, and even whales. Some whale bones have been found in coastal Neolithic sites in Korea. It is clear that fishing was important, but it is not known whether fishing was a gendered occupation.

Rasmi Shoocongdej (2002) discusses rock art in Thailand as of probable Neolithic date (4000–2000 B.P.) on the grounds that domesticated animals are depicted.

These images are approximately contemporaneous with Kok Phanom Di. Clothing is also depicted, and evidence of textiles occurs at sites such as Ban Chiang. Styles of painting showing gendered clothing and hairstyles are used to differentiate genders. The paintings depict possible ceremonial scenes with male and female participants. Larger figures have elaborate feathered headdresses and ornaments, suggesting status or leadership in the society. They include both women and men. Social distinctions are thus portrayed in the rock art, but they are based on characteristics other than gender. Furthermore, scenes show processions and dancing in which women, men, and children participated. Ceremonies thus involved the entire community (Shoocongdej 2002).

Clay figurines are common in Jomon Japan, but their distribution is uneven through time and space (Nagamine 1986). The earliest are simple plaques with scratched drawings of female breasts. Later figurines in the round are humanoid, often depicting breasts, but they seem to represent otherworldly creatures. Most are female, but a few are male or indeterminate (Ikawa-Smith and Habu 2002; Ikawa-Smith n.d.). Such figurines are most common in Middle Jomon (5000–3000 B.C.E.) when elaborate pottery with highly decorated rims were also prevalent. Ikawa-Smith interprets this phenomenon as indicating social networks. Naoko Matsumoto (2010) suggests that pregnant figurines are found in regions where plant food was more important in the diet of the group. Based on the fact that male–female pairs are not found in either clay representations or burials, she posits that kin relations or the household were more important than marriage in Jomon society. In a Late Jomon burial pit in Nakazuma Shell Mound containing more than 100 skeletons, DNA studies showed that many of the buried were related matrilineally. Addressing the question of a gendered division of labor, Matsumoto cites the Kiamura site, where both women and men were buried with very similar stone tools.

Women are also depicted on the walls of Koguryo tombs dated between the fourth and seventh centuries C.E. (Perrin 2010). Most tombs with murals were built either around the now-Chinese city of Jian, which was the Koguryo capital until the fourth century, and near the present city of Pyongyang in North Korea, a later capital of Koguryo. Koguryo painted tombs have been located in Jilin and Liaoning provinces, but the few that have been excavated are not yet published.

The Koguryo tomb paintings characteristically show women either as the wife of the major tomb occupant (in the case of double tombs; they were presumably also buried in the same tomb) or as servants, painted smaller than the tomb occupants, who are often depicted sitting on a dais under a canopy, richly dressed and usually painted of equal size (Perrin 2010).

Two interesting exceptions offer other possibilities. In Shijia Tomb 1, in Fushun, Liaoning, China, the main occupant is a woman alone. This is the only tomb in a cluster of more than 40 tombs that is painted, which suggests very high status for its occupant. The mural shows a procession of female figures turned toward a larger female – presumably the person buried in the tomb. The tomb at Anak 2 has a single chamber and only one raised block of stone for a coffin platform. Again there is a larger female figure. She stands alone, and a line of females plus two males appear to be her attendants.

In other tombs, servants both male and female bring food and drink to the couple in the tent. In one case the food bearers wear spotted dresses and boots. This dress is

also depicted on a line of males and females described as dancers. Late Koguryo tombs may also have female and male Buddhist angels flying in the ceiling. One painted tomb shows an unmistakable shaman, who is dressed just like shamans of present-day Korea. This mural is an important link between ancient shamans and current practitioners in South Korea, especially those in the Seoul area.

Spirits, Creation Myths, and Goddesses

Peggy Sanday (1981) has made a case for myths of the past as scripts for gender roles. If this hypothesis is accepted, then the gender script in early East Asia allows for women leaders. Not only do China, Korea, and Japan have traditions of foundational ancient goddesses, but there are also traditions of women leaders, stronger and more historical in Japan and Korea, but nevertheless existing in China (these are discussed further below; see also Linduff and Rubinson this volume). Thus, while queens and other women leaders reinforce Sanday's interpretation of myths as related to gender ideology, the early queens of ancient East Asia will be discussed in the next section. The oldest extant Korean document credits a son of Heaven named Tangun and his wife (who had been a bear) as the progenitors of all Koreans.

In Japan's earliest literature the goddess Amaterasu was the creator of the world. She was "the highest deity in the Japanese pantheon" (Aoki 2010:67). Many other spirits, called Kami, were worshiped in Japan. Female Kami represent the food crops of both the land and the sea (Aoki 2010:67). When music and dancing were required for a rite, most of the performers were women (Blacker 1975; Aoki 2010:68). Early records of Korea mention goddesses of mountains as the mother of an early queen (Nelson 1995). These are probably all manifestations of animistic spirits, who could be either male or female.

Priestesses

Some common roles for women in ancient Asia are found in more formal ritual settings. They are often described as priestesses, and are particularly notable in Japan, where such roles are still practiced. Aoki (2010:67) tells us that priestesses of the tutelary deities of Japanese tribes were believed to be clairvoyant. They were in charge of the weather and responsible for healing. In addition, "High ranking priestesses engaged in such affairs as war and actually went to the battlefield, both to lead soldiers into battle and to raise their fighting spirit" (Aoki 2010:69). Carmen Blacker (1975) writes of women attached to Shinto shrines in Japan, as well as women called Miko, who are believed to be able to foretell the future by going into a trance.

In the Ryukyu Islands a tradition of a hierarchy of hereditary princesses has survived to this day. They have roles to play in the government, and they officiate at national rites. A shrine for the resident Kami was for attendant females only, and women called Yuta had shamanic roles (Røkkum 1998). The chief priestess and her brother had dual roles that seem to be quite similar to those of early Japan (see below). Piggott relates the "paramount sacral queen" in the Ryukyus, who "exercised co-rulership with a male ruler," to the pattern of rulership in early Japan (1997:39).

The Gender of Leadership

In her introduction to *Ungendering Civilization*, Anne Pyburn (2004) makes a strong argument for reconsidering gender in theories about the origins of civilization. Her discussion builds on Eric Wolf's (1982) *Europe and the People Without History* in which Wolf contends that "the cross-cultural parallels found in the status and treatment of women are more the result of history than of human nature or of human biology" (Pyburn 2004:2). Pyburn suggests that similarly male colonizers of the world strongly affected gender relations wherever they encountered "unknown" cultures. On this basis she challenges the often-quoted aphorism by Engels (1884) that the state brought about the world-historical defeat of women, which linked the formation of states to a lowering of women's status. In Pyburn's view, interpretations of early civilizations have been flawed by the preconceived ideas about gender held by European male explorers, colonizers, adventurers, and missionaries. If these civilizations can be examined with fresh eyes, she suggests, different conclusions might be reached. Women are "people without history" as much as preliterate peoples are. "Ultimately, the belief that all early civilizations independently adopted the same division of labor has been an unexamined support for essentialist arguments about the role of women and men in the rise and functioning of the modern world" (Pyburn 2004:2).

Pyburn further asserts that "current models of civilization, complex society, and early states still contain implicit assumptions about the universality of the nuclear family, male dominance, and gendered labor divided by public and private worlds" (2004:5). While she didn't have a model of Korean and Japanese rulership before her eyes, these two historically related polities provide different models for the origin of complex society and early states. Not only did they have ruling queens during and after state formation, but gender was not the overriding characteristic for being chosen as a ruler. The rank and power of a corporate entity, with individuals related in various ways, is what tipped the balance. The archaeological evidence of rank and power is also well supported by documentary evidence from contemporary China and Japan. In exploring political rulership of large polities, we can assess leadership in Japan and Korea before Chinese influence, and the acceptance of Buddhism by ruling factions changed the political landscape to the disadvantage of women. We will see that although power did end up almost exclusively in the hands of men, it was a long, slow process. Moreover, families and females retained power in a number of instances. In order to view the gender of rulership from this perspective, slices of time in both the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago are relevant. The time period known as Yayoi in Japan, which is often equated with the Early Iron Age in Korea, is known from archaeology and a few texts. One of these is a text written only a few centuries after this period. Gina Barnes (2006) finds that in the Nihonshoki women are portrayed as having a variety of roles ("mates, mothers, mystics, militarists, maids, manufacturers, monarchs, messengers and managers"). This list demonstrates more attention to women than one would expect in a historical narrative if it were a male dominant society. But indeed, there are more roles for women in the Nihonshoki, including starring roles such as ruler, and women's leadership roles can be traced even earlier, both in documents and in archaeology.

Early chiefs in Japan

The earliest evidence of women rulers in Japan is attested by a Chinese document, the Wei Ji, which describes the political system of Kyushu, Japan in the third century C.E. (Piggott 1997, 1999; Seyock 2004). The document describes a female chief named Himiko, who ruled her own polity and 100 other "countries" on the island of Kyushu. The entire town was encircled by a strong wooden wall with watchtowers. Himiko dwelt in a walled palace from which she never emerged. Her younger brother fronted for her to collect tribute, manage markets, and engage in diplomacy. The trade was largely in iron, probably with polities in southern Korea. She even sent emissaries to the Han court. While the Chinese portrayed the queen as a kind of shaman, who lived behind high walls and "enchanted her people," they seem to have accepted Himiko as the ultimate authority who had been selected after a period of warfare. When Himiko died around 250 C.E., there was again a period of warfare, after which her niece Iyo was selected as the ruler.

The excavated site of Yoshinogari in Kyushu conforms to the description of Himiko's fortified town although the major burial, dated to around 100 C.E., is too early to be that of Himiko herself (Barnes and Hudson 1991). The site covers 36 hectares in inland Kyushu. The settlement lasted throughout the Yayoi period. It has an exterior wooden palisade thought to have been as much as 10 meters high. An inner palisade surrounded a hill on which buildings had been erected. Several large burial mounds were placed near the hill. Artifacts found in a large jar burial covered by one of these mounds, including tubular turquoise beads and a bronze sword of Korean type, demonstrate close connections with emerging polities on the Korean peninsula (Seyock 2004). This burial has been interpreted as that of the chief, and the beads seen as a kind of circlet or crown. Similar tubular blue or green stone beads on the Korean peninsula are also considered to be those of a chief, but they are reconstructed as a necklace with a curved bead in the center. This type of curved bead is called gogok in Korean and magatama in Japan. These curved beads dangled lavishly on Korean crowns. They also became one of the imperial symbols of Japan, along with the sword and mirror, both also of Korean derivation.

Archaeological evidence of queenly burials of the Kofun period is not likely to be found since these burial mounds have been declared to be those of the Emperor's forebears and are therefore off limits to archaeologists. However, Piggott mentions burials of dual gender pairs in a number of regions of Japan (1997:22) from the fourth through the sixth centuries. In the fifth century, she tells us, burials of female rulers prevailed in regions of western Honshu, as well as in Kyushu in the southwest and parts of eastern Japan.

The few keyhole-shaped tomb mounds that have been excavated are indeterminate about the identity of the person buried. Therefore we are left to "excavate" the early writings from Japan to learn about the queens of early Japan. Joan Piggott (1997, 1999) reveals evidence for ruling queens, as well as co-rulers, male and female, who might be wife and husband, or mother and son. In all, six female rulers reigned during 97 out of 179 years – more than half of the time. Although Piggott argues that this is an indigenous tradition, there is evidence that the pattern came from the Korean peninsula, where the best analogy can be found in the Silla kingdom of southeastern Korea (see below). Piggott further notes that, "despite advancing gender hierarchy

and the normalization of male leadership at the court of Yamato kings in the fifth century, the precedent of rulership by chieftain pairs continued to provide a font of legitimacy for female rulers" (1997:17).

Two of the rulers discussed by Piggott (1997, 1999) are Suiko (r. 592–628) and Jito (r. 690–697). Suiko reigned for 36 years. As ruler she was styled "Great King," and she was responsible for keeping records, among other duties. Some of her ancestors were Korean immigrants, especially members of the powerful Soga family. They had instituted the reign only of people who were "double royal" (descended from rulers through both mother and father), a practice resembling that of the Silla kingdom with its Bone Ranks (see below). Two male rulers born of Soga mothers had reigned before Suiko took the throne.

A partly excavated round mounded tomb known as Fujinoki dates from this era. Although it is incompletely published, it is striking how similar the burial goods were to those of contemporary Korean kingdoms; it even included a gold crown, an item which is otherwise rare in Yamato burials. It may be significant that this is a round mound rather than a keyhole-shaped mound. It is 48 meters in diameter, and like tombs of Paekche and Koguryo it has an entrance corridor. Influences from Korea are described in detail by J. E. Kidder (1987).

In the Kofun era Buddhism came into Japan through the Paekche kingdom of Korea (Hong 1994). The Buddhism practiced at that time was welcoming to women, and many wealthy women donated fortunes toward building Buddhist temples. During this time literacy was transmitted to Japan, and records began to be kept in the same way as Chinese dynastic records.

Jito was Suiko's granddaughter, descended from the Soga clan through her mother. Her husband had been king, but after his death she reigned with her son. She traveled widely, both to strengthen Buddhism and to promote the centrality of the court, while cementing ties with allies. She claimed Amaterasu the Sun Goddess as her own imperial ancestress, setting up the Ise Shrine (Piggott 1997:37).

Rulers in the early Korean kingdom of Silla

Given the close connections between polities in the Korean peninsula and the southern Japanese islands, it is not surprising that reigning queens were recorded in the Silla kingdom centered on Kyongju, Korea. Although the earliest extant histories of Korea were written in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is believed that they are based on records kept by the Three Kingdoms (Silla, Koguryo, and Paekche). Silla's recorded queens were Sondok (r. 632–647), Chindok (r. 647–654), and Chinsong (r. 887–894). They are called "female kings" in the king lists rather than queens. All of them ruled after literacy in Chinese, Buddhism, and Chinese notions of court organization had taken hold in Silla.

The social system of Silla was codified into endogamous ranks (Grayson 1976; Kim 1977). The highest was Holy Bone, which comprised those eligible to rule, followed by True Bone, nobles who could serve in the court. The next ranks were called Sixth Head rank, Fifth Head rank, and so forth. Sumptuary rules kept everyone from rising above their place. These included clothing, from boots to headgear, the size and splendor of dwellings, the number of horses, and the quality of horse trappings. A statistical test of Silla noble tombs showed that the tombs could be ranked

according to the quality and number of artifacts, as well as tomb size. One conclusion was that tombs presumed to belong to women were among those of high rank (Pearson et al. 1986). Rulers came from within the Holy Bone rank until that rank died out, after which they were chosen from the True Bone. Early on it appears that rulers were selected by a group of nobles from among those eligible, from the Pak, Sok, or Kim families. However, by the reign of King Michu in the fifth century the Kim family had secured the throne for itself, and patrilineal descent became the rule (Nelson 1991).

Korean kingdoms buried rulers and nobles in mounded tombs. As already noted, Koguryo followed Chinese trends by painting murals on the walls, thus leaving a legacy for archaeologists to discover. However, few artifacts were found in these tombs because they were built with an access corridor for future burials and for descendants to honor the dead on anniversaries. Thus the tombs provided easy pickings for tomb robbers. Paekche tombs were similar but simpler. One tomb escaped unlooted, that of King Munyong and his queen, whose names were inscribed on a plaque buried with them. This tomb contained gold crowns and some jewelry, but the couple were far less sumptuously attired than the Silla rulers whose tombs have been excavated (Kim and Pearson 1977). On the other hand, the tomb itself was unique for Korea, made of decorated bricks with a vaulted ceiling and flame-shaped niches. This architectural style must have been transmitted over the Silk Road.

Silla mounded tombs, on the other hand, were found intact due to the lack of an entrance corridor, and the fact that they were covered with many meters of large boulders and further thick layers of earth. The burial mounds resembled small hills and were impossible to loot. Excavation of the Silla tombs began in the 1930s when a tomb was being removed for construction of a railroad station. The gold crown and belt, as well as much other gold jewelry, glass beads, jades, and much else were previously unknown. Additional excavations have produced 10 other gold crowns and belts. Although the written record has lists of kings, the burials contained few inscribed artifacts, leaving the names of those buried and the sequence of the tombs dependent upon estimates based on stylistic change.

The largest of all the Silla tombs, Hwangnam Daejong, was excavated in 1971 (Kim and Lee 1975; Kim and Pearson 1977). It has two overlapping mounds (together 120 meters long and 23 meters high at the highest point), a type which appears in both Silla and Kaya and is always interpreted as a husband and wife. In this case the tomb of the male is earlier, with an arsenal of weaponry. To the disappointment of the excavators, his tomb lacked a tall gold crown, having instead short crowns of gilt bronze. The north mound, however, contained the trappings of rulership – the high crown of pure gold covered with gold leaves and curved jewels of jade and glass (Figure 16.1). The queen wore a lavish necklace of gold and blue gems, as well as other necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and rings on fingers and toes. There was even a gold belt inscribed "belt for milady." Altogether the gold buried with her amounted to almost four kilograms. It was inferred from the change in artifact styles that the queen had been buried several decades later than her husband.

This burial in the north mound of Hwangnam Daejong (Tomb 98) was obviously that of a queen. But no queen of the tomb mound period can be found in the king lists of the Samguk Sagi and the Samguk Yusa. One explanation may be that male and

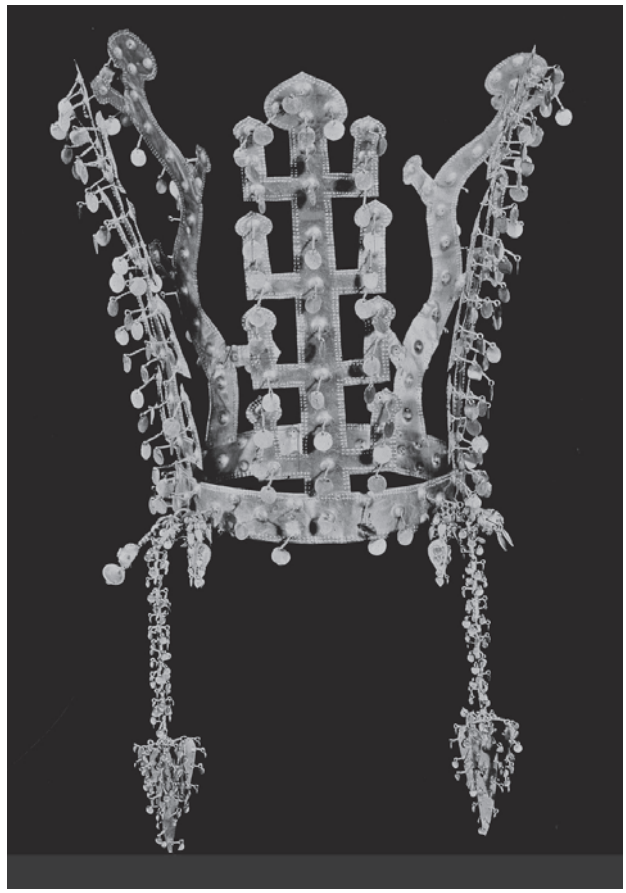


Figure 16.1 The queen's gold crown from the north mound of Tomb 98, Kyongju, Korea (photograph courtesy of the National Museum of Korea).

female co-rulers were common, as they were in the Kofun period of Japan (Nelson 1991, 1993, 2002). However, the Confucian author of the Samguk Sagi and the Buddhist author of the Samguk Yusa might both have been reluctant to include ruling queens. Although they do include many names of queens, they do not list them as co-rulers. The evidence of Tomb 98 implies that a queen not only outlived her husband by many decades, but was the real ruler. Looking at the genealogies of kings and queens of that period, we can see that the real succession seems to be female rather than male. Werner Sasse (2001) is one of those who has puzzled over the way kings became kings, based on written records about the Three Kingdoms. He believes that the authors did not deliberately falsify the records, but that they suppressed the roles of queens. He concludes that "there is strong evidence for gender complementarity in the early Silla" (Sasse 2001:229). The kings ranged among several families, but many of the queens were daughters of queens (Nelson 1991). Youngsook Pak (1988) further notes that similar crowns were found on the heads of women across the steppes of Central Asia, and the shape of the royal belts has also been connected to the steppes (Han 1976).

The queens of Japan, who were expected to be so closely in touch with spirits that they were called upon to protect the state from disasters (Piggott 1997), may provide a clue to interpreting the crowns and other paraphernalia of Korean queens. Silla crowns have been recognized as having shamanistic elements. The antler and tree-like shapes of the uprights echo ethnographically known shaman crowns from Central Asia (Hentze 1962). Furthermore, it is likely that shamans of early Korea were women rather than men. Not only are shamans in modern Korea predominantly women: this was also the case in ancient Korea, according to the Hou Han Shu, a contemporaneous document, and the Samguk Sagi attests that, "since … sorcerers [shamans] served the spirits and officiated in sacrificial ceremonies, the people honored [them] with the fear and respect due a high chief" (Ilyon 1972:52).

Summary

The archaeology of coastal Asia provides few theoretical discussions of gender, but the roles and status of women and men are often mentioned. In this chapter I have pushed interpretations and theory into a closer relationship. Early pottery is known to have existed in coastal East Asia, but more creative ways to discuss the gender of the potters need to be devised. In early East Asian coastal societies the work of women needs to be confronted with the question of whether or not there was a division of labor by gender, not with the assumption that there was such a division. In societies such as those of early Japan and Korea, both texts and archaeology show that labor was divided more by family and social class than by gender (Barnes 1987). Leadership could certainly have been female throughout coastal Asia, but more detailed study, especially of southeast Asia, would shed light on general processes of state formation. Ranked societies that treated genders equally are likely to have contributed to the continuation of female leadership, which appears in a number of forms in coastal Asia. The fact that females in general were believed to be more able to contact spirits, whether as shamans or state representatives (or both), no doubt also contributed to the high status of women. But in order to explore any of these issues in greater detail, coastal East Asia needs more careful excavations, closer reading of the texts, and more sophisticated theoretical models.

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CHAPTER 17

Gender Archaeology in East Asia and Eurasia

Katheryn M. Linduff and Karen S. Rubinson

Introduction

Until recently, the study of gender in Asia has been created from legends that characterized men's and women's roles in early societies as a reflection of the attitude of historians who served the state. These intellectual traditions have colored the study of gender across time and have, for some authors, seemingly already answered questions about the status and roles of men and women. The anthropological study of gender is new to most scholars in Asia and is posing questions about how to locate men and women in the archaeological record and how to understand their roles in society. As Sarah Nelson has suggested (2004:4–5), only after we discern men and women in the record can we begin to suggest ways of interpreting their gendered behavior. This first step is now underway in Eurasia and China.

Because the situations in China and parts of northern and western Eurasia have historically generated different cultural and intellectual traditions, the stories of the study of gender are not entirely the same. Even so, much of the area in the last century was investigated by scholars proposing a Marxist approach to the study of prehistory and later periods. Although central China has a written tradition dating back to the Bronze Age (ca. 1500 B.C.E.), written language came to most of the other regions discussed in this chapter significantly later. And although both Chinese and Greek authors described the lifeways of the pastoral peoples of the steppe, the Greek sources contained descriptions of warrior-women, a trope so compelling that it has been a driving force in considerations of gender over much of the territory west of China in the first millennium B.C.E.

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This chapter is divided into two parts: Early China and The Eurasian Setting. The northern and western parts of the landscape are continuous, but modern political boundaries place part of the steppe region within China (see Figure 17.1).

The Study of Gender in Early China

Chinese thinking about gender has been guided by Confucian and Daoist philosophies since at least the late first millennium B.C.E. Despite their early date, these "received" written records about life in the early dynasties have been taken as accurate accounts of the pre- and early imperial periods and as such have served as guides for understanding attitudes about gender throughout Chinese dynastic history. Underlying these beliefs is the assumption that, beyond biology, women and men possess essentially different capacities and functions, so that the perpetuation and even institutionalization of male and female differences with regard to behavioral expectations, position within the family, legal rights, public status, education, and types of work colored attitudes toward historical as well as modern scholarship in China.

In the case of Confucian thinking among the intellectual elite, for instance, the maintenance of appropriate positions and roles for men and women was necessary to provide for a harmonious society, one thought to be in accord with balance in the universe. The importance of this system and its impact on both political and social thinking and order, as well as all subsequent scholarship having to do with gender, should not be underestimated. Confucianism became the most pervasive doctrine to promote the belief in men and women's "natural place" in society. Confucius placed women at the lower end of the patriarchal family structure, and through the ages the assumption that men's and women's social places and expected behaviors were based on hierarchical precepts was reinforced by prescriptive advice manuals like *Lessons for Girls* or *Biographies of Exemplary Women* (列女传) (O'Hara 1971; Swann 2001). Written by the female historian Ban Zhao (班昭) in the Han dynasty (ca. 45–120 C.E.), *Lessons* became one of China's most durable sources of advice about female behavior – it tells women to "yield to others; let her put others first, herself last," for instance.

Likewise, the concept of gender difference underlies the male/female aspects of the Daoist *yin/yang* (阴 阳) ideal. The dark swirl within the Daoist symbol of *yin/yang* is the passive, yielding, feminine *yin*; the light swirl the active, aggressive, male *yang*. Neither principle is considered subordinate to the other; each complements the other and is capable of expressing both female and male characteristics. Such thinking may have been behind the image of a jade figure, male on one side and female on the other, found in the tomb of the second wife of the third king at Anyang, the last capital of the Shang dynasty that dates to about 1250 B.C.E. While there are no contemporary texts to guide an interpretation, the sexes are clearly set apart on the sculpture, so that its double-faced rendering foresees later Daoist efforts at balancing *yin* and *yang* forces in a single individual (Linduff 2003:61–63; see also Linduff 2002:figure 15.1).

Within Daoist practice, however, women were able to seek spiritual fulfillment beyond their family duties. Some, such as Ban Zhao, gathered with men to discuss philosophy and religion, and a few even became Daoist adepts. Ancient China's highest goddess, Xiwangmu (西王母) (Queen Mother of the West), also expresses aspects



Figure 17.1 Map of East Asia and Eurasia showing major regions and sites referred to in the text (produced by the authors).

of *yin/yang* beliefs. As *yin*, this goddess is compassionate, promising immortality; as *yang*, she is a force who has the power to disrupt the cosmic *yin/yang* harmony (Lullo 2004). This pervasive fear that women could bring chaos by upsetting the cosmic harmony was an obstacle for women who aspired to male political leadership. Those few who succeeded were accused of breaking one of nature's laws.

In the twentieth century the advent of systematic recovery of ancient materials from archaeological settings and the reconsideration of traditional Chinese history in light of new socialist principles of governing have revised views about the roles of men and women and have reformed the numbers of women in the workforce and in political positions. The limitations of archaeological materials collected with gender in mind, the few human osteological remains that have been scientifically studied, and the determination of sex of the deceased based on artifact remains (daggers = men; spindle whorls = women) have supported new interpretations. In addition, with Marxist ideology as the guiding light for the interpretation of archaeological materials, little has changed about the explanation of gender roles in the past (Shelach 2004). Perhaps because it is ancient history, most have continued to interpret the archaeological record according to assumptions of the Confucian and Daoist "rules" – men before women with little deviation from normative views found in the *Lessons* recorded during the Han period (2nd century B.C.E. to 2nd century C.E.) – or from the Marxist perspective on "primitive" society, suggesting evolution from matriarchy to patriarchy. Gender studies, therefore, have not been critiqued from the perspective of postprocessual social archaeological theory until recently in China; this is probably because most think that male and female roles in antiquity were and are already known.

During the past decade this situation has changed. The archaeological record is more abundant, some cemeteries have had the bones sexed, new ancient texts have been excavated, and several recent publications and conferences (Jilin University 2007; Nanjing University 2010) have begun to set another course. Several important new studies bring archaeological evidence to the fore and interpret it with the aid of anthropological social theory (Linduff and Sun 2004, 2006); allow the reinterpretation of received texts in light of newly excavated texts (Hinsch 2011) and mortuary evidence; or provide newly recovered epigraphic records that can be read in light of the documentation of social and political structuring (Li 2008; Khayutina in press). All of these studies are based on materials yielded from excavations in present-day China. These three types of study will be characterized here in review of the following: (1) the study of gender as recorded in inscriptional evidence; (2) the study of patterns of gendered identity as expressed in mortuary evidence; and (3) the study of gender relations and ideology and how these change to accommodate political realities.

The study of gender as recorded in inscriptional evidence

Through the study of inscriptions on excavated and dated bronze ritual vessels, Maria Khayutina has suggested that "marital alliances" were the major forces behind integration and stability in early China. She has sorted inscriptions cast into bronze ritual vessels from Western Zhou period (ca. 1050–771 B.C.E.) burials, and because they name individuals, refer to particular events in the period, and are mostly found in controlled excavations, they can be dated with certainty. Moreover, she can identify what she calls "female-related inscriptions" that allow her to identify three main forms

of "marital alliances" (婚購): within the Zhou royal clan; between Zhou royalty and non-Zhou peoples; and between non-Zhou lineages/states.

In her reading of the early Chinese terminology, for example, the males were all linked to females; they were sororal nephews, cross-cousins, brothers-in-law, or a son of a daughter (Khayutina in press). In female-related inscriptions, she shows that marriage created mutual obligations among members of participating lineages: males (related as *sheng* 甥) recognized their obligation to their affinal relatives. Bonds of marriage, she proposes, were peaceful means of forming the political network between Zhou lineages/states; between Zhou and non-Zhou lineages/states; and between non-Zhou lineages/states. Rather than an oath of fealty (as in medieval Europe) or acts of physical force, violence, or fear of punishment, marital alliances benefited from peaceful cooperation and should be recognized as major factors of integration and stability in early China. Moreover, she argues that parallel regional and interregional networks guaranteed relationships between Zhou and non-Zhou peoples rather than radial networking managed by the Zhou king, as has been proposed by others (e.g., Li 2008).

Khayutina concluded that "marital alliances" that crossed both short and long distances were responsible for political stability and integration of many groups under one rule in the Western Zhou. Interestingly, these alliances appear to have had a similar effect even as late as the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. In Yong Ying's explanation of the disparity in contents between the Jin state Dukes and Duchesses, she shows that the wealthy females from powerful families who were married in were more lavishly buried than their male counterparts when their natal state was more powerful than that of their husbands (Yong 2004).

Previous secondary literature, for instance Chang Kwang-chih, claimed that:

> The rulers of the upper strata accumulated wealth and power, and the means by which they did so were entirely political. One means was war, by which they aimed to conquer other states and seize possession of their wealth. Another was to expand the available labor power, by increasing either the numbers of the working population or the production output of the existing workforce … Another major means of boosting political power used by rulers was to monopolize shamanism, a characteristic unique to ancient Chinese civilization. [2005:139]

According to Khayutina and her careful reading of these new data, the proposition that the emergence of a society dominated by the physical, economic and/or spiritual power of males must be rethought. Although a more thorough use of the archaeological context would allow a deeper understanding of the patrons of these vessels and their identities, both male and female, the remarkable compendium and analyses of both oracle bone and bronze inscriptions compiled by Cao Zhaolan (2004), as well as Khayutina's paper, are a very good start, and furnish models of how to read these materials as well as provide insight on gender roles in the early dynastic periods.

The study of gendered identity as expressed in mortuary evidence

Statistical analysis of the location, amount, and distribution of mortuary evidence has also been an effective way for several scholars to tease out gendered roles and identities in early societies in East Asia. Many cemeteries for which there is no written

documentation have been excavated in what is now China, even from periods when writing was already in use elsewhere in the country. Mandy Jui-man Wu (2004) has looked at the 804 burials at the late Neolithic (ca. 1600 B.C.E.) cemetery at Dadianzi in Inner Mongolia, far north and east of the dynastic center. She found that different types of goods were buried in two locations in each grave and that the distribution was determined by the sex and social status of the deceased. Moreover, she has argued that the status of older females was tied to the status of males buried in proximity to them. All of this evidence has allowed her to confirm that burials at Dadianzi displayed hierarchically based attitudes toward gender and the emergence of societal inequality between sexes.

Xiaolong Wu studied the distribution of tombs and artifacts at a later cemetery at Maoqinggou in the Daihai Area of Inner Mongolia dating from the late fifth or fourth century B.C.E. in order to consider female and male status and cultural affiliation across the entire community (2004). The bones had been sexed, and the cemetery displayed overall an inconsistent pattern of burial orientation. From this he could extrapolate about gender, cultural identity, and status.

The cemetery is located in an area known as the Ordos, a region that was occupied by dynastic peoples affiliated with the Zhou (ca. 1050–221 B.C.E.), Qin (221–206 B.C.E.), and Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), as well as non-dynastic peoples, including ones thought by the Chinese historians to be pastoralists such as the Xiongnu. This mixing of populations appears to be documented in the cemetery at Maoqinggou. At the same time, two distinct burial patterns were documented there: an east–west orientation, usually associated with steppe-style burials and pastoral peoples; and a north–south orientation, the traditional orientation of tombs of the sedentary, agricultural dynastic elite of the Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han.

Those with east–west orientation exhibited differences between male and female tomb owners in age at death, tomb structure, plan size, grave goods (including animal sacrifice), distinctive regional pottery, steppe-style bronze weapons and belt ornaments, and necklaces. Wu suggests that the male tombs exhibited accumulated burial evidence of an achieved wealth system where their social status was derived from the economic or political achievements of the individual during his lifetime. On the contrary, he concludes that the females buried in east–west tombs at Maoqinggou were buried according to an ascribed system where they inherited wealth. The more limited accumulation of goods, as well as their lavish nature, together with the "foreign, or steppe-like" shape and orientation of these burials, allows him to argue that there were different ways of assessing and displaying wealth among males and females, suggesting perhaps that they were from different natal backgrounds.

In the north–south oriented tombs, larger grave size and "metropolitan-style" grave goods, such as hook-shaped belt fasteners and bronze ritual vessels, suggest that the deceased were affiliated to a cultural group different from those buried in the east-west tombs. Wu maintains that a wealth differentiation (achieved versus ascribed) existed between the genders, and ponders, but cannot answer, where these customs were borrowed from. Were they rooted in nomadic culture of the "northern *di*" (*beidi* 北狄) people mentioned in Chinese historical texts and thought to reside in this region? And, likewise, do the patrons of the north–south tombs bring with them the customs of the agriculturalists from the traditional Zhou states? These questions are still not answered since not enough is known about gender overall among the local or

dynastic peoples in this region. Wu's final suggestion is that these different cultural groups, represented by the orientation and content of the tombs, co-existed in the area, and that this contact zone showed mixing of traditions born out of co-mingling. This sort of peaceable co-existence has not been thought possible previously because of long-held ideas about the incompatibility of those who hail from steppe (pastoralists) and the sown (agriculturalists). This sort of analysis of entire archaeological contexts is yet another way of looking for information of societal status and gender.

The study of gender relations, ideology, and political reality

Yet a third type of study has been attempted, the analysis of visual images of women and men. Such imagery has typically been interpreted in Chinese scholarship with the benefit (or detriment) of "received" texts. But with the discovery of the late Neolithic ritual center at Niuheliang in Liaoning Province (ca. 3000 B.C.E.) in present-day northeast China, small clay female figurines not unlike Paleolithic figurines from central Europe were excavated. This and the Marxist orientation of Chinese archaeologists at the time led to the naming of the large architectural remains there the "Goddess Temple" (Guo 1995). More recently, the figurines have been studied in relation to diversity in the age and body types displayed in an effort simply to get what was visually recorded (Nelson 1991).

In another study of representational images, Sheri Lullo (2004) paid careful attention to the archaeological context as a means to calibrate the shift in imagery from the early to later Han period (ca. 2nd century B.C.E.–2nd century C.E.). She considers representations of male and female divinities in tomb reliefs, and monitors the change in presentation of the Queen Mother of the West from a single image of a powerful female deity to those in the later dynasty that pair her equally in size and position with images of the King Father of the East.

Lullo (2004) notes that past scholarship mentioned the Queen Mother's pairing with the King Father, but she has not considered in detail the implications this may have had beyond that of pictorial balance. In this case study, received literature, visual images, and the historical and archaeological contexts, taken together, offer a very different explanation. Early literary references to the Queen Mother of the West, for instance, described a frightening female deity who is the sole female figure among 13 notable males (*zhuangzi* 庄子). In texts such as the *Shanhaijing* (山海经), purportedly representing ideas and stories dating from the fourth century B.C.E., she was described as an outsider who lived in lands that were not culturally or politically Chinese. There she was a frightening woman pictured with a bestial tail, fangs, and disheveled hair. By the time her images appeared in early Han tombs and shrines, she was sinicized into a goddess appropriate to mainstream Chinese culture who abided by Confucian and Daoist principles. From the beginnings of her depiction in tombs and shrines (second and first centuries B.C.E.) she was represented as a benign and benevolent mother figure. Subsequently, in the Eastern Han period (8–220 C.E.), the Queen Mother of the West is paired with her new male counterpart, the King Father of the East. What Lullo proposes is that the Queen Mother herself was associated with an overabundance of female authority at court by the end of the Western Han period, or by the end of the first century B.C.E. According to Lullo, her power was diminished as a result of the promotion of ideals found documented in Confucian rhetoric about

ideal social structure. In this way, the pairing of the female and male deities sent visual messages of an idealized union (the Han Dynasty structure) in which female authority was controlled and domesticated.

In addition, the Daoist ideals of a balanced *yin* and *yang* were also being promulgated in the period. Lullo maintains that "Women before and into the Han enjoyed power and authority as both important wives and even military figures, as evidenced in lavishly furnished female tombs" (2004:282). But do these lavish tombs indicate an "overabundance of female authority" in an "achieved wealth system" (Lullo 2004)? Or are they perhaps evidence of inherited wealth that allowed too much power among female courtiers? The contemporary political system seemingly promoted a more expedient Daoist interpretation of the Queen and King that officially reined in mythological and perhaps actual female power.

The Eurasian Setting

In contrast to China, where a long written tradition has a role in the history of the study of gender, in the adjacent areas of Eurasia other factors were influential in interpretation of gender roles in the Bronze and Iron Ages. Although the tales of Amazons that Herodotus (ca. 484–425 B.C.E.) recorded in *The Histories* (4.110–117; 9.27) were, and remain, influential (Jones-Bley 2008), most of the area from which the archaeological materials discussed below were found became part of the Russian Empire beginning in the eighteenth century; later they were part of the Soviet Union and thus came under its interpretive framework for analysis of archaeological materials. Therefore, during much of the twentieth century, explanation was based largely on the work of Friedrich Engels, whose axiom saw a cultural sequence of matriarchy followed by patriarchy (Rudenko 1970:222, 227; Parker Pearson 2000:99–100; Smith 2005:235–238, 244–245).[1] Moreover, with political expansion into Siberia under Peter the Great, a growth of interest in archaeological and ethnographic evidence brought the study of modern nomadism to bear on the study of first millennium B.C.E. materials.[2] Peter ordered the collection of everything "that is ancient and unusual" (Mongait 1959:48–49). A broad synthetic publication in 1776–1780 surveyed the peoples of the Russian Empire, including those with nomadic and seminomadic lifeways (Basilov 1989:7–8), and ethnographic analogies to more recent nomadic populations are widespread in the literature (Mongait 1959:48–60; Rudenko 1970:217, 227; Berseneva 2008:132–133).

This section of the chapter is divided by chronological periods rather than methodological approaches, beginning with the Copper and Bronze Ages and continuing on to the Iron Age when research on gender is more extensive.

The Copper and Bronze Ages

In contrast to the West, little research has been done on gender in the eastern part of Eurasia on sites or materials earlier than the first millennium B.C.E. For this early period there are only a few groundbreaking studies. Sandra Olsen and Deborah G. Harding have analyzed archaeological evidence from Botai and Tersek in northern Kazakhstan dating to the Copper Age (ca. 3700–3100 B.C.E.) and reconstructed

women's clothing and the roles of women in religion and ritual. By examining carved horse phalanges (and sometimes phalanges from saiga, roe deer, and kulans), which resemble human torsos, they have recreated the clothing of women who presumably lived in the region. Research on the fiber impressions observed on pottery at the two sites suggests that the clothing was made from twined bast fiber cloth, or possibly hemp or nettle. The placement of these figurines in caches in small pits in house floors suggests a ritual use, perhaps to protect the domiciles. Other groups were found in extramural pits that also contained ceremonial offerings. The authors suggest a protective and/or fertility-bearing purpose for the objects (Olsen and Harding 2008).

Kungurova has studied mortuary materials dating from the mid to late fourth millennium B.C.E. from the Sayan-Altai highland (a period considered Neolithic in this region). She examined the burials of females of various ages from young girls to older women, including one who apparently died in childbirth, as well as the bone, shell, and animal tooth ornaments that had decorated their clothing. Kungurova determined that the clothing shared some ornamental features, but that there were distinctions based on the age of the deceased. For example, the adult females wore "what were probably belts" whereas the juveniles had decorative bands of ornaments on the lower areas of their thighs (Kungurova 2004).

Sophie Legrand (2008) has studied a set of 400 burials dating to the Karasuk culture of the Final Bronze Age (ca. 1400–1000 B.C.E.) in the Minusinsk Basin, Siberia. Excavated by Russian archaeologists during the second half of the nineteenth century, only some of the bones were sexed anthropologically. On the basis of mortuary evidence from 120 cemeteries, Legrand has analyzed the relationships and roles of men, women, and children. By examining such variables as size of funerary units and tombs, relationships of burial positions to one another, and elements of burial inventory, such as animal offerings, ceramics, bone combs, bronze elements of hairdressing, bronze knives, and argillite tools, Legrand has concluded that "the arrangements of burials in cemeteries show that kinship is the base of the Karasuk societal organization" and that lineage usually determined status (Legrand 2008:173). However, in one case that can be confirmed, a woman appears to have achieved elite status as an individual (Legrand 2008:174). This detailed study demonstrates the critical importance of context to the interpretation of grave goods. Bronze knives were found in burials of men, women, and children; those found near the faunal remains can be seen to have a ritual function, while those found near the waist or legs of the deceased are likely to have had social value indicating status (Legrand 2008:168).

The Iron Age

At around 1000 B.C.E., a new lifeway emerged in the Eurasian steppe, a distinctive, horse-riding mobile pastoralism. The first millennium B.C.E. coincides with the broad term "Iron Age" although that is not literally a correct designation; many terms have been applied to this time period (Koryakova and Epimakhov 2007:12–19, 200, 203, 221). In this section several case studies from the Iron Age are presented.

The Sargat culture The first case study reviews mortuary evidence of gender in a settled population known as the Sargat culture during the first millennium B.C.E. The

author, Natalia Berseneva, begins with references to Herodotus, Hippocrates, and Strabo since the Sargat spent at least some time on horseback and were in contact with neighboring nomadic groups (2008:131–133). Herodotus' tales of the Amazon women of the Eurasian steppe, particularly those describing their prowess in battle and virility in society, captured not only the ancient Greek imagination but also the interest of many generations of scholars (Jones-Bley 2008:38–43). These stories, along with those of other Greek authors, have, in fact, driven the research agenda on the roles of women in early pastoral cultures, and a substantial literature interrogating the interrelationship of the ancient texts and the archaeological data has developed. Many aspects of these lives have been studied, most notably in the context of gender studies on the role of women as warriors (Herodotus' Amazons). The material remains of these mobile steppe groups have been studied almost exclusively in mortuary contexts, so one challenge of this research is identifying a warrior from burial evidence. Archaeological field studies that have looked at habitation are only now beginning to consider gender as a research focus (e.g., Honeychurch 2004; Honeychurch and Amartuvshin 2006; Houle 2010).

Although Berseneva (2008) sets her study of families in the Sargat culture (sixth century B.C.E.–3rd/4th centuries C.E.) within the framework of the study of warriorhood and the role of women as stimulated by the Amazon stories (2008:131–133, 139–140), she analyzes the cemeteries of a population that lived in permanent settlements in the area of the eastern Urals and Western Siberia. The economic base of the economy was stockbreeding, and according to palaeoanthropological analysis much of the population spent time on horseback. Berseneva analyzed 410 burials that had been placed in 110 barrows and that contained 454 skeletons; of these 214 were anthropologically sexed and 313 were aged; her results show that women and children were underrepresented in comparison to males. Although the central burial in the mound sometimes contained only a female (12.3 percent of the examples), individual male burials constituted 35.7 percent, and two males or a male and female occurred about 30 percent of the time, so women in the principal burial are underrepresented compared to the overall population. There was no clear difference between males and females when it came to burial location within the mounds, and generally grave goods (including jewelry, ceramics, animal bones, mirrors, and spindle whorls) could be found with males, females, and children. Although less common in women's burials, bows and arrows, horse trappings, and daggers were found with both adult groups, and children were sometimes buried with weapons, but not with horse trappings. The only grave goods found exclusively with adult males were swords and armor. Half of the graves analyzed by Berseneva contained strictly gender-neutral grave goods (ceramic vessels with food offerings and animal bones, iron knives, individual glass beads, and small clothing ornaments). Of these gender-neutral burials, 50 percent were children, 13 percent were adult males, and 22 percent were adult females; she suggests that the social status of children was similar to that of women. Although weapons were found more often in male burials, women were "quite often" buried with weapons although these were mostly arrowheads. Berseneva postulates that the women buried in these burial mounds (a smaller number than males) were members of elite (and thus warrior) clans and that the arrowheads marked this affiliation. She also hypothesizes that a vertical social hierarchy existed among the sample group and that the presence of weapons in burials may be indicators of this social

division. Noting a few very rich burials of children, she concludes that social status was ascribed.

Like Legrand with the Karasuk, Berseneva was able to study the burials of men, women, and children with her dataset, as Jacobson also did in her broad, pioneering survey of the South Siberian area (1987). In most other contexts on the steppe where gender has been investigated, burials of children are almost absent or have not been studied, and thus issues of family and kinship are not often addressed. Instead, as discussed in the following section, the focus has been on the role of woman as warrior.

Warriors and Women Warriors "Amazons" crop up in literature beyond that focused on the Eurasian steppe. For example, Parker Pearson states, "Iron Age Amazons are much easier to identify in the funerary record" (2000:100–101). However, specialists in the archaeology of the steppe nomads are not so certain. Hanks has stated that:

> Despite recent theoretical trends that highlight the vibrant nature of material culture in funerary settings, scholarly discussions of steppe warriors continue to emphasize the functional notion that grave goods recovered from burial contexts were the property of the deceased and therefore directly represent the activities, tasks, and/or social role of those individuals. In other words, arrowheads, spearheads, swords and defensive items such as iron armor, not necessarily found together but also as individual deposits, can be directly linked to warrior individuals – be they male, female, adult or child. [2008:25]

Hanks notes that there can be other explanations for the inclusion of such materials in burials, and he states that it is important to also consider weapons as indicators of status and lifecycle phase as well as warriorhood. He further argues for more bioanthropological study of osteological remains to look for signs of horse-riding, trauma, and other remains of training for or living the life of a warrior in order to help untangle the meaning of these categories of grave goods (2008). That this is possible is shown by the fact that a few burials of females with wounds attributed to injuries by weapons have been identified among nomadic groups (Rolle 1989:88, 2006:175; Davis-Kimball 1997a:48). However, even in these cases it is possible that the wounds resulted from attacks on women in a non-warrior setting, as has been suggested for the woman (and a child) of the Pazyryk culture excavated in the Mongolian Altai (Jordana et al. 2009:1324–1325). A male from the same cemetery had multiple perimortem wounds and had been scalped, likely as the result of combat (Jordana et al. 2009:1323–1324, 1326).[3] As Hanks (2008) notes, the kind of study undertaken by Jordana and colleagues can expand our understanding of the role of violence among the nomads, and careful osteological study can result in the identification of possible warriors, such as the scalped male noted above, who also suffered several antemortem injuries, including a blow to the head (Jordana et al. 2009:1322–1323). One needs to consider the difficulty of sexing skeletons of women living a vigorous life, where amenorrhea can affect physical development. In fact, Taylor argues that for this reason women with warrior equipment may be underestimated (1996:202).

In contrast to Hanks (2008), Taylor accepts prima facie the burials identified as female warriors; he analyzes ancient texts and art in order to tease out behaviors that cannot be retrieved archaeologically while examining the Amazon phenomenon in

the context of social change, and suggests that women aspiring to increase their status took on a warrior role (2010). Taylor regards nomadic women as warriors if they are buried with weapons while Hanks explores other possible interpretations; Guliaev makes the same equation of women with weapons as warriors or "true Amazons" (2003:119–120). What roles hunting, herding, and self-defense might have played in life, as possibly reflected in the burial goods such as bows and arrows or daggers found in nomadic women's graves, needs to be considered (Rolle 1989:90–91; Hanks 2008). However, as Rolle notes, when heavy armor is found in the grave of a female, the likelihood of warrior-like behavior is convincing (Rolle 1989:88, 2006:175).

The Pazyryk culture In one region of Eurasia the male/female identification of deceased nomads is unambiguous: the Altai Mountains of Russia, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia where mummified bodies have often been preserved by permafrost (Rudenko 1970; Polosmak 1994, 1998, 2001;[4] Barkova 2007; Molodin and Polosmak 2007; Molodin, Parzinger, and Ceveendorž 2007; Samashev 2007). This culture is characterized by burials placed under mounds of stone and earth in grave pits containing a usually rectangular wooden structure in which the deceased was placed and around or above which horses were frequently also buried. They often contained both a male and a female although sometimes there are single burials of a male, a female, or a child; or double burials in combinations other than a male and a female. Of the larger burials at Pazyryk, there were no human remains preserved in Barrow 1; Barrows 2, 4, and 5 contained a male and a female, and Barrow 3 had only a male. The excavator, Sergei Rudenko (who excavated the site in 1929 and 1947–1949), noted the important role of women in ancient nomadic cultures, citing ancient texts, although he found that information to be at odds with the patriarchal society he presumed for these individuals based on Marxist theory. On account of this contradiction, Rudenko concluded that these women could only have been "junior wives" (1970:211–212). Jeannine Davis-Kimball suggests that because the women in Barrows 2 and 6 at Pazyryk had mirrors among the grave goods, they were probably priestesses (1997–1998:29–30, 1998:143–144). Her identification of all nomadic women buried with mirrors as priestesses has been questioned by others (Hanks 2000, 2008; Rubinson 2002), but it is possible that mirrors, if found together with other classes of objects, such as a drum and equipment for inhaling hemp-seed fumes as in Pazyryk Burial 2, indicate shamanic practice (Rubinson 2002:71). In the case of Pazyryk Burial 2, however, Rudenko has associated one of the two mirrors with the male and the other with the female (1970:114) while the other objects lay elsewhere in the burial chamber; so whether the woman, the man, or both were shamans cannot accurately be ascertained. Perhaps Polosmak's description of the role of the woman buried alone in another Pazyryk-type grave, Barrow 1 from Ak-Alakha 3, as someone who "possessed some special knowledge" (2000:163) should be considered for the women of the Pazyryk group. In the case of the Ak-Alakha female, the signifiers of the special status in Polosmak's view are the fact that she was buried alone, not just alone in the burial, but under an isolated barrow; that she was tattooed;[5] that she had no indications of having done any physical labor during her life; and that she was mummified. In addition, she was buried with coriander seeds, a mirror, a container with a koumiss-stirrer, and clothing that included a silk blouse and a tasseled belt.[6] Polosmak sees these as possible attributes of a

shaman or a healer (1998:163). Whether women's status at Pazyryk was achieved by virtue of such a position or ascribed on the basis of their relationship with others remains to be investigated. In fact, in a culturally related burial at Berel in Kazakhstan, it has been suggested that the male and female in Barrow 11 are genetically related, perhaps a mother and son buried at different times (Samashev n.d.:40). If this practice is properly identified, it provides another possible explanation for the personal relationships between individuals in multiple burials and thus possible other (or additional) social roles.

Evidence for another social role for women of the Pazyryk culture comes from Barrow 1 at Ak-Alakha-1 on the Ukok Plateau (Polosmak 1991, 1994, 2001). An "older" man of 45–50 years old, who suffered from widespread chronic arthritis (Polosmak 2001:275), was buried in the same barrow with a young woman aged 17, who was dressed in trousers and was found with a bow and arrows, an iron battle-pick, and an iron dagger – the same weapon set as the male in the tomb (Polosmak 1994:349–351). The reconstruction of this individual, based on relatively well-preserved organic remains, suggests that the young woman's outfit was quite similar to that of a young man buried in Verch-Kal'dzin 2 (Kurgan 3), also located on the Ukok plateau (cf. Polosmak 2001:figure 165 to Molodin and Polosmak 2007:figure 12), and she was 170 cm tall (Polosmak 2001:275). As Polosmak notes, this is the only certain case known among the Pazyryk-related burials in the Altai in which a fully armed and male-dressed female has been excavated. She suggests (2001:276) that there was a specific social and/or economic reason that the young woman had acquired this social role, if indeed she was dressed in death as she had been in life. Perhaps, as is known in ethnographic cases, she had been assigned a male role in lieu of an appropriate familial male (see Taylor 2010:146). There is certainly more to be learned from a problem-based study of gender and social roles among this group, given the new body of information from recent years of excavation.

Sauromatians and Sarmatians Although Polosmak has identified only one case of an armed women from the Pazyryk Culture, armed women occurred elsewhere on the steppe (2001:276), at least in graves, and she, like so many others, links these burials to the story of the Amazons. These burials belong to the Sauromatian and Early Sarmatian cultures, which were distributed in the steppe area between the Volga River and the Ural Mountains (Barbarunova 1995; Dvornichenko 1995a, 1995b; Moshkova 1995a, 1995b). As Mongait observes, "the credit for the planned and systematic investigation of … Sarmatian monuments … particularly in the steppes along the Volga, the Don and the Kuban, belongs solely to Soviet archaeologists," reflecting the history of research of this material up to the fall of the Soviet Union and beyond (1959:164). Mongait also notes that:

> In the Sarmatian (or Sauromatian) burial mounds in the Trans-Volga area, archaeologists found confirmation of the account by antique authors that there were strong survivals of the matriarchate among the Sarmatians. Thus, in many groups of burial mounds, the central place was occupied by burials of women – warriors and priestesses. Weapons and stone altars supported on legs in the shape of heads of animals have been found in these female burials. [1959:164; see also Jacobson 1987:17]

Extensive excavations in the Orenburg region of the Southern Urals have yielded much material for study of the Sauromatians and Sarmatians. From 1992 to 1995, excavations at Pokrovka were conducted as a collaborative American–Russian project under the direction of Davis-Kimball, Yablonsky, and Morunova (Davis-Kimball and Yablonsky 1995:21–22, 1995–1996:3–6; Malashev and Yablonsky 2004:259–262). The results of their excavations, including anthropologically sexed skeletons, paleozoological investigations, and other scientific studies (Yablonsky 1995; Davis-Kimball and Yablonsky 1995–1996), have yielded a dataset that Davis-Kimball has used to investigate the social roles ("statuses") of males and females in these nomadic groups since, as she observes, the possibility that women could have significant status in these societies had not been considered previously by most researchers (1997b:327). On the basis of selected groups of grave goods, Davis-Kimball has defined social roles for both men and women. Males were warriors, had no or almost no grave goods, or were buried with children, while women were "hearth women" (associated with femininity and wealth), priestesses, or warriors. According to her analysis of Pokrovka males, warriors who had armaments in their burials constituted 94 percent of the group. Three percent of the males had no or very few artifacts, and another 3 percent were buried with children. "Hearth women" comprised 75 percent of the females; their burials contained glass eye beads, blue biconical beads as anklets or bracelets, other types of beads, and earrings. According to Davis-Kimball, women needed to be buried with more than 50 beads or with beads of unusually high value in order to be regarded as "hearth women." Priestesses, who comprised 7 percent of the females, were buried with mirrors, sea shells, and stone-carved altars and bone spoons; they needed more than one of those items in order to qualify as a priestess. Female warriors made up 15 percent of the group; their graves contained armaments and amulets that were made of animal teeth or boar tusks. To be categorized a warrior, only one of the following objects was required in the tomb: a bronze or iron arrowhead; an iron sword or a dagger; or a quiver. These are termed "amulets which denote prowess" (Davis-Kimball 1997b, 1997–1998:7–9, 1998).

In reviews of Davis-Kimball's interpretation of statuses within the Sauromatian and Sarmatian setting, Hanks (2000, 2008) notes that while Davis-Kimball's methodology and approach (based on analysis of a limited number of data selected from mortuary contexts) is widely used, there are other factors that need to be considered: these include the role of the living in making decisions about how the dead are presented; the role of burial ritual and how it affects the remains in the grave; and the degree to which a particular cemetery reflects the society at large. For example, there are other Sauro-Sarmatian cemeteries where both male and female graves contained stone altars, pigments, sea shells, mirrors, and bone artifacts; thus Davis-Kimball's specific assignment of "priestess" status to the person in the grave containing these goods is open to question (Hanks 2008:24). Further problems exist in the application by Davis-Kimball of the statuses she developed for the Pokrovka material to many mobile pastoral groups without considering the entire cultural and mortuary setting (Davis-Kimball 1997–1998). As noted above in the discussion of Pazyryk Barrow 2 and the mirrors found there, a simple one-to-one correlation of a category of grave goods to specific status or social role can be problematical and can lead to conclusions that an investigation of the whole data set may not corroborate. Nevertheless, as Hanks observes, Davis-Kimball's research has clearly shown that

females within the Sauro-Sarmatian culture have a variety of social roles and "thus challenge[s] the long-standing androcentric bias that has characterized much of the previous archaeological interpretation of these early nomadic groups" (2000:23).

Tillya Tepe The final case study in this section comes from the site of Tillya Tepe near Shibargan in modern Afghanistan, a site not located on the steppe although the people buried there probably originally came from that region. Once again the evidence is mortuary, and while it dates to the first century C.E., the precise identity of these individuals (one man and five women) is unknown; it has been commonly suggested that they were descendants of pastoral groups originating from further east in Eurasia, possibly ancestors of the Kushans (Sarianidi 1985; Cambon 2006; Hiebert and Cambon 2008; Rubinson 2008). One of the women was buried with a pickaxe and two daggers. Davis-Kimball has analyzed the burials with the criteria she had previously established at Pokrovka, concluding that two of the five female burials were "warrior-priestesses" and that the other three were priestesses (2000:226–227, table 1). In addition, she identifies the male as a "eunuch warrior-priest," based on her belief that he was wearing a skirt and has what she describes as "eunuchs" illustrated on his boot buckles (2000:227, 228).

Systematic analysis of many categories of objects from the burials with an attention to context suggests that at least some of the materials are markers of cultural identity and not necessarily social roles. As Siân Jones and Paul Graves-Brown observe, people often "re-present" their group identities during periods of change (1996:1). Rubinson (2008:58–59) notes that three women have Chinese mirrors placed on their chests, as often occurs in Siberian burials but not usually in Chinese ones (when they are found in Chinese burials, the burials have often not been sexed). She suggests that the mirrors indicate the area of possible origin for these individuals as north and east of Central Asia. Plain, heavy gold torques, bracelets, and anklets, known also from Sargat elite burials and from burials of pastoralists in Kazakhstan, contrast starkly with the highly elaborate figural ornaments and jewelry which are abundant in these tombs. One of the women has an artificially flattened skull, the result of cranial modification that could only have occurred during infancy. This practice is associated with peoples who inhabited the steppes to the north and is also found in some Sargat burials (Rubinson 2008; see also Torres-Rouff and Yablonsky 2005:5–7; Berseneva 2008:141), as well as in a contemporary burial of a woman in Central Asia who shared the same past as the woman at Tillya Tepe (Rapin 2007:54). It is possible that the three women with the Chinese mirrors on their chests used those mirrors for some sort of ritual practice during their lifetimes, and that they were markers of a social role as well as a sign of cultural identity, but this suggestion needs further corroboration.

Davis-Kimball interprets the dagger in Burial 3 as the mark of a female warrior although the preserved dagger handle is less than 6 cm in length.[7] In fact, the excavator suggests that what is labeled a "dagger" in the catalogue is actually an iron handle from a toilet article (Sarianidi 1985:34), stating that there were "absolutely no weapons of any kind" in the grave (Sarianidi 1985:27).

The woman buried in Grave 2 is another matter. She is described as having a pickaxe and two Siberian daggers, objects found in a basket at her feet (Sarianidi 1985:23; 1989:56). She is very likely the oldest of the women buried at Tillya Tepe, and as Rubinson observes, "she is marked as different in some respect from all other Tillya

Tepe individuals" (2008:61): not even the male in this cemetery has a pickaxe. Rubinson posits that the weapons may mark her as a warrior, as perhaps were some of the other armed steppe women; alternatively they may connote the senior female, a status in some way relating to her place of origin (2008:61). It should be possible to say more about her identity and status once the weapons are published.

Davis-Kimball's suggestion that the male from Grave 4 at Tillya Tepe is a eunuch is a misinterpretation of the evidence. She begins by examining ancient orgiastic cults that she presumes should be associated with people she defines as "Indo-Iranian" (2000:224). Among the evidence she cites to confirm the identity of the male as a eunuch is the fact that such figures are found on his boot-buckles and that he was wearing a skirt (2000:227). As she notes, the excavator restored the male as wearing a skirt in his 1985 publication (Sarianidi 1985:246); however, in his 1989 excavation report, he describes and illustrates the individual wearing trousers (1989:88). In his re-evaluation of the costumes of all the individuals, Yatsenko also makes it clear that the individual in Grave 4 was dressed in trousers (2001:81–83, 87) although that article was published subsequent to Davis-Kimball's. Davis-Kimball interprets the images on the boot-buckles within the framework of ancient Near Eastern artistic convention: the man is beardless and thus a eunuch. However, even she notes that the figure has "decided Chinese characteristics in dress and eye stylization" (2000:227). Indeed, within Chinese tradition, most males are represented as beardless. The only exceptions are images of sages, Buddhist arhats, occasionally Emperors, and individuals identified as foreigners.

There is much yet to learn about the individuals buried at Tillya Tepe, and we eagerly await full publication of all of the excavated materials and technical studies of the rich gold ornaments (Linduff and Rubinson 2010; Hickman 2012). However, it does not seem that the statuses developed at Pokrovka can be transferred beyond that site; each site needs to be looked at in its own context and compared with what is known from other Eurasian sites. Although the landscape, as well as pastoral and nomadic lifeways, are shared across a vast distance, gender roles must be interpreted contextually in light of both the results of careful, scientific excavation and broad theoretical frameworks.

The Future of Gender Studies in Chinese and Eurasian Archaeology

Current studies of gender in Chinese and Eurasian archaeology take into account the many kinds of evidence now available: archaeological, epigraphic, textual, and visual. They reconstruct temporal circumstances and attempt to tease out the condition of men and women from the late Neolithic through the early centuries of the common era. It is hoped that recent publications, such as *Gender and Chinese Archaeology* (Linduff and Sun 2006, published in English and Chinese) and *Are All Warriors Male? Gender Roles on the Ancient Eurasian Steppe* (Linduff and Rubinson 2008), will provoke more widespread interest in the issue. All attempts in future will hopefully benefit from more focused archaeological investigation that includes the anthropological sexing of bones and the application of scientific methods of study in archaeology, such as DNA and strontium isotope testing, and

others (Hanks 2008). Such research is beginning to be undertaken in China and at some Bronze Age sites on the Eurasian steppe and could eventually add considerable confidence to interpretation. Because of the rich potential of these techniques to locate natal landscapes, they might lead to field studies on questions such as mobility of women. Moreover, once the socio-anthropological theory of gender, as well as studies from other parts of the ancient world where such theory has been applied, are more fully absorbed by students of China and Eurasia, comparable depth and sophistication are likely to emerge. As noted earlier in this chapter, there is even rich potential for gender-based study of older data sets if burials have been anthropologically sexed. Such data sets, collected when the complete excavation of cemeteries was standard practice, offer unique opportunities for studying entire populations – a situation that is rare in contemporary practice.

NOTES

1 For a detailed discussion of the history and trajectory of the study of Eurasian nomadism within the Soviet tradition, see Jacobson 1987:2–7.
2 Although a very popularly used word, "nomad" or "nomadism" is problematic as it can imply a variety of lifeways: agro-pastoralism, seminomadism, mobile pastoralism, transhumance, mobile warrior elites, and so forth. Our preferred term is "pastoral" unless we know more about the lifeway discussed; however, when referring to previous literature, the original usage is adopted.
3 Scalping, with or without other wounds, is a practice described by Herodotus. In the steppe context it is regarded as an indication of warriorhood when the scalped individual is found together with weapons (Murphy et al. 2002:4).
4 Polosmak mentions a second young female buried with arms from the Ukok plateau (Polosmak and Molodin 2000:84).
5 Recent research has determined that all the well-preserved mummies at the site of Pazyryk, the man and woman from Barrow 2 and the man and woman from Barrow 5, are tattooed (Barkova and Pankova 2005).
6 Although Polosmak says the blouse is made of Chinese silk (1998:141), the silk was from India (Molodin and Polosmak 2007:142).
7 Based on the measurements and photographs (Sarianidi 1985:figure 3.49, 242).

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CHAPTER 18 Gender in Southwest Asian Prehistory

Diane Bolger and Rita P. Wright

Introduction

Research on gender in Southwest Asian prehistory was almost non-existent before the 1990s, but it is now beginning to be undertaken on a more significant scale due to changes in archaeological interpretation during the last 20 years; these include the decline of unilinear evolutionary models of social development; a shift in focus from processual models to more socially based approaches that emphasize context as well as spatial and temporal variability; and a greater degree of engagement with social theory (Bolger and Maguire 2010). While factors such as environment, population, climate, and technology were no doubt instrumental to the origins of agriculture and the growth of social complexity in the region, they cannot by themselves explain how and why those changes occurred or shed light on shifts that occurred in social relations. Gendered approaches restore agency to archaeological inquiry by looking at the ways in which people structured their worlds; they also enable us to move beyond the static, one-dimensional narratives of the past that have been so prevalent in archaeological accounts of early human societies.

In this chapter we focus on some of the key areas of gender research in Southwest Asian archaeology that are beginning to reframe traditional interpretations. We also draw attention to some of the gaps in this research to date, particularly in terms of current theoretical approaches in gender, feminist, and queer theory. We conclude by offering our prospects for productive avenues of research on gender in the years to come. It is our contention that only by incorporating gendered and feminist perspectives into scholarly agendas can archaeologists begin to overcome the long-standing misrepresentations of men's and women's roles in the two most fundamental

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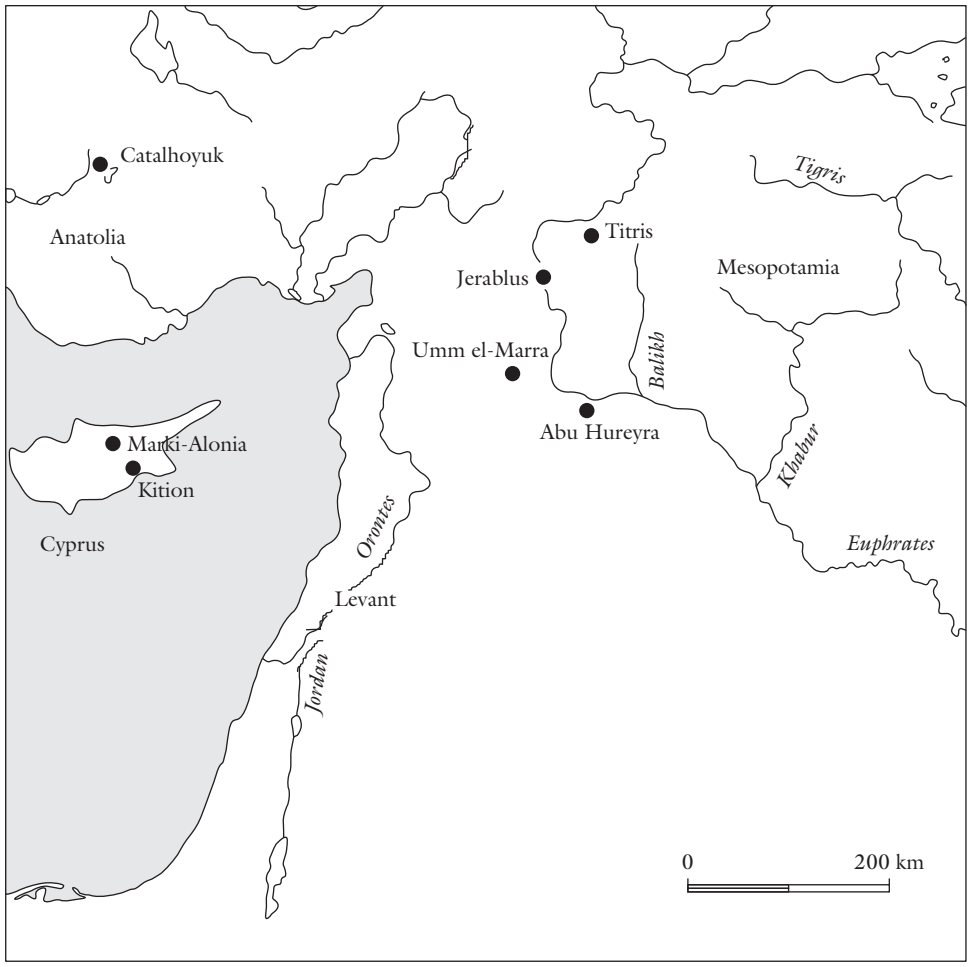


Figure 18.1 Map of Cyprus, Anatolia, the Levant, and northern Mesopotamia with locations of prehistoric and protohistoric sites referred to in the text (produced by Diane Bolger).

"revolutions" of prehistoric times – agriculture and urbanism – that began to emerge in Southwest Asia nearly 10,000 years ago and that continue to have a profound impact on our lives today.

The geographical regions included in this chapter are ancient Anatolia, the Levant, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia, which correspond to the territories of modern Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Israel, Palestine, Iraq, and Iran (see Figure 18.1 and Figure 18.2). We begin by looking at some of the recent research on gender in hunter-gatherer communities of the Epipaleolithic period and early farming communities of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods. This is followed by a discussion of gender in the more complex "protohistoric" societies of the Late Chalcolithic and Bronze Age societies, particularly in Mesopotamia, which witnessed the rise of the first urban centers and states, as well as the earliest known use of written records.

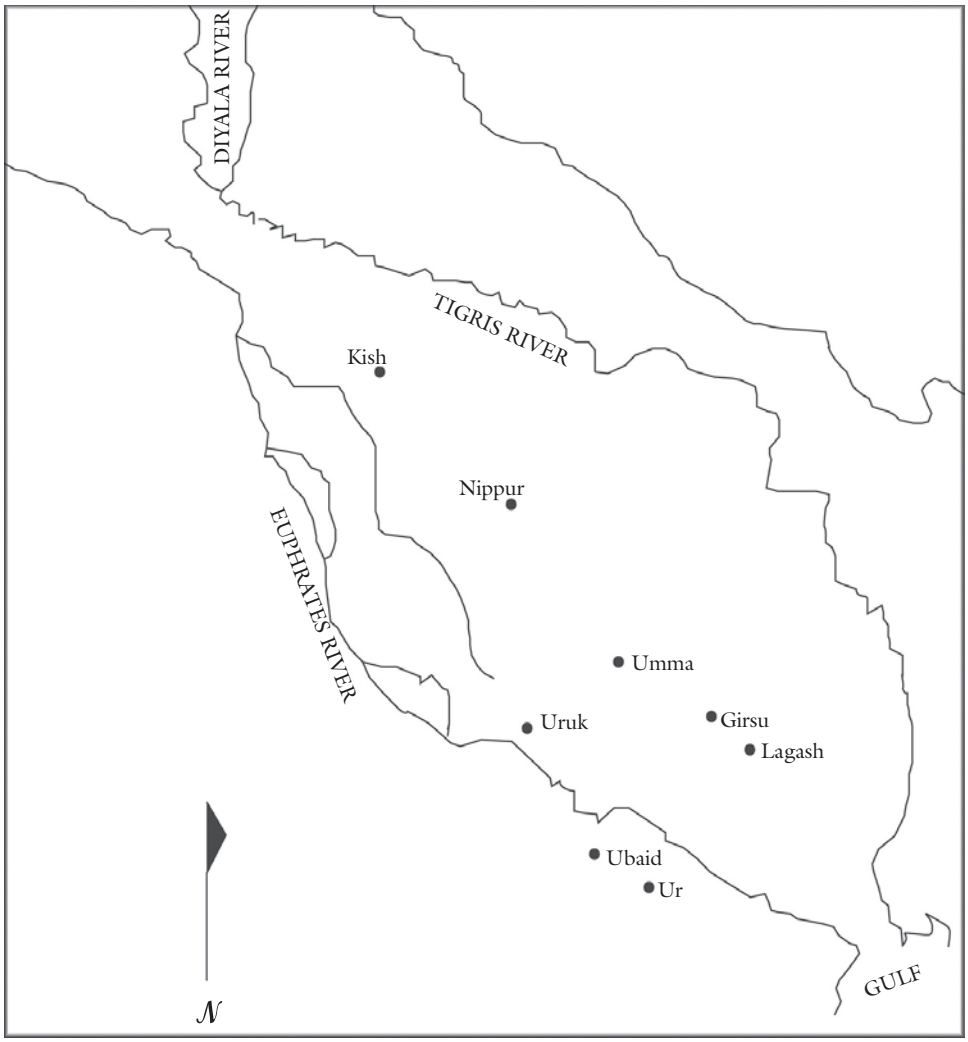


Figure 18.2 Map of southern Mesopotamia showing locations of later prehistoric and protohistoric sites referred to in the text (produced by Abigail Buffington).

Gender in Hunter-Gatherer and Early Farming Societies

In a critique of the various interpretations offered to explain the emergence of complex society in Southwest Asia, Patty Jo Watson has noted the absence of human agency in traditional accounts of early societal development in the region and has underscored the need for archaeologists "to accommodate intentional decision making and problem solving by human beings of all ages and both sexes" (1995:37; for similar arguments, see also Asouti 2006; Bruno 2009; and Denham 2009). Most archaeological accounts have not followed that path and continue to focus on external factors, such as environment, demography, and climate change; however, greater attention has been given during the last decade to more socially based approaches. Although gender issues have not figured widely in these discussions, they are beginning

Table 18.1 Chronological chart of early prehistoric periods in Southwest Asia referred to in the text.

Period	*Date*
Epipaleolithic	ca. 11,500–10,000 B.P.
Pre-Pottery Neolithic A	ca. 10,000–9000 B.P.
Pre-Pottery Neolithic B	ca. 9000–8000 B.P.
Late Pre-Pottery Neolithic	ca. 8000–7200 B.P.
Pottery Neolithic	ca. 7200–6000 B.P.

Note. B.P. "before present" signifies uncalibrated dates before the radiocarbon present, 1950 C.E.

to play a more central interpretive role. In this section we look at four key areas in which gendered perspectives on foraging and early farming communities have been addressed: subsistence and the division of labor; mortuary ritual and feasting; human imagery; and the built environment (Table 18.1). For other recent considerations of these issues, see Sinopoli 2006, Bolger 2008a, Bolger 2010, and Peterson 2010.

Gender and subsistence

Agriculture in Southwest Asia emerged initially among complex foraging groups, some of whom had begun to cultivate various wild species of plants and had adopted sedentary or semi-sedentary lifestyles prior to the Neolithic period (see Barker 2009 for a detailed overview). Consequently, traditional interpretations of the sexual division of labor have been based to a large extent on ethnographic evidence for gender roles among modern hunter-gatherer groups. This is a problem as ethnographic research is itself prone to gender bias, with the effect that binary narratives of the sexual division of labor have been extended back into the remote past. Today, the narrative of "Man the Hunter" has lost much of its earlier appeal, having been challenged over the last several decades by a number of feminist scholars (e.g., Conkey and Spector 1984; Crabtree 1991, 2006; Bolger 2006; Brumbach and Jarvenpa 2006; Zihlman 1997, this volume). Crabtree, for example, has observed that ethnographic reports tend to define the capture and killing of small game by women and children as "gathering"‘ rather than "hunting" activities, with the latter reserved exclusively for larger animals (1991:384). Brumbach and Jarvenpa argue further that "hunting should not be defined as simply killing animals, but should encompass all the strategies involved in their pursuit, transport, processing and storage. When the full range of activities is considered, it is arguable that men and women (and children too) worked interdependently at this goal" (2006:506).

The invention of agriculture and the shift from transient to sedentary lifestyles represent some of the most significant transformations in prehistory, and the material remains associated with the emergence of agriculture, including the manufacture of specialized stone tools for clearing and farming land during the Neolithic period, have been of particular interest to archaeologists concerned with processes of domestication, sedentarization, and socio-economic development. Some scholars argue that female labor was instrumental to the invention and spread of plant cultivation on account of women's

earlier roles as gatherers (e.g., Watson and Kennedy 1991), but this view remains untested and only serves to reinforce the binary models constructed by archaeologists for early foraging societies. Recent studies based on a wide range of actual data contradict the long-held view (e.g., Hodder 1990) that gender roles were clearly demarcated in early agricultural societies of Southwest Asia (e.g., Hodder 2006; Bolger 2010; Peterson 2010). Indeed, the notion that sharp divisions in male and female labor were in force among the relatively egalitarian hunter-gatherer and farming communities of the region appears increasingly unlikely, and it is now widely regarded as an unmediated reflection of the normative gender patterns of modern Western society (Bolger 2010).

The polarized model of male and female labor thought to exist among hunter-gatherers has traditionally been extended to later periods, and many archaeologists continue to assert that the transition to agriculture reinforced gender divisions. In actual fact there is no firm evidence to support this view on a broad scale. Most of the arguments for gender polarity, in areas such as food production, food processing, pottery and stone tool manufacture, and the use of domestic space are based almost entirely on biological differences between men and women, in particular men's greater physical upper body strength and women's roles in reproduction and child rearing, which are presumed to have restricted women's ability to participate in extra-domestic activities. The secondary products revolution, for example, which involved the exploitation of domesticated animals for wool, milk, traction, and transport during the fourth and third millennia B.C.E. (Sherratt 1983), has often been linked to the privatization of female labor and a decline of female status; however, recent research on gender challenges this view, arguing instead for flexibility of task allocation, seasonal variations of labor patterns, changes in social roles throughout the lifecycle, and the sharing of workloads by men, women, and children (Crabtree 2006; Peterson 2006, 2010; Bolger 2010). Clearly there is a need for further research in this area based on what people actually did rather than what they are presumed to have done. One particularly productive area of research which has done so is the scientific study of human skeletal remains.

Osteological evidence for male and female task differentiation

Traces of stress, deformity, and injury to the bodies of individuals can often be detected through osteological examination, and provide an important means for inferring the degree to which a gendered division of labor may have been practiced. The first significant research in this area was conducted by Theya Molleson on skeletal material from Abu Hureyra in northern Syria (Molleson 1994, 2000). Excavations at the site during the 1970s and 1980s yielded the remains of 162 individuals, 102 of whom were dated to the Epipaleolithic (the period of complex hunter-gatherers) and the early Neolithic (the period of the site's first farming communities). Molleson's study detected strain injury to various parts of the body, including the first metatarsals of the feet, which resulted in severe arthritis of the big toe; the majority of those affected were women. In Molleson's view this pattern is best explained as the result of a demanding activity such as grinding of grain on querns, many of which were found in the houses excavated at the site. Grinding with a saddle quern is done in a kneeling rather than a squatting position, and metatarsals are affected as the result of excessive pressure applied to the toe joint. She further argued that the extent of the arthritic damage can only have occurred if women were engaged in this activity regularly, for a

number of hours per day, suggesting that women spent a great portion of their time inside the house in food preparation tasks (2000:324).

Similar results have been obtained in a study of musculo-skeletal stress patterns among Natufian and Neolithic populations in the southern Levant (Eshed et al. 2004), but research by Jane Peterson (2002) on over 150 skeletons at 14 sites has yielded very different results. Peterson maintains that men and women were both engaged in strenuous workloads, but that female activity levels were more stable diachronically than those of males. The most significant dimorphic patterns occur during the Natufian, which Peterson attributes to hunting tasks by males (such as spear throwing), activities which result in asymmetrical development of arm muscles (2002:143). Peterson's main conclusion, that there is no strong evidence to support the notion of a sharp division of labor prior to the Bronze Age, causes us to question the universal notion of a sexual division of labor among the early farming communities of Southwest Asia. When compared with the results obtained by Molleson and Eshed, it seems likely that different localities or sub-regions engaged in different labor practices during the Epipaleolithic and Neolithic periods.

Gender, labor, and domestic space

Studies of domestic architecture at prehistoric sites in Southwest Asia have looked at the ways in which the growth and development of the built environment both reflected and influenced changes in social organization (e.g., Banning and Byrd 1987; Steadman 2000; Wright 2000; Asouti 2005; Cutting 2005). Few of these studies, however, have explicitly investigated the relationships between gender and domestic space. One important exception (Wright 2000) examines the possible effects of increasing levels of sedentism on gender relations during the Pre-Pottery Neolithic of the southern Levant. Following Byrd and Banning, Wright notes the ways in which storage bins, hearths, and other activity areas for processing and cooking food become increasingly privatized over time, developments which she attributes in part to growing restrictions on women's visibility in relation to the community during the period. While Wright's is an interesting hypothesis, it falls into the common "gender trap"' of uncritically linking female labor with domestic, interior space. Recent work at Çatalhöyük, in fact, has yielded no conclusive evidence of such an association (Molleson 2007); on the contrary, carbon residues found on the ribs of older adults, presumably contracted in smoke-filled houses, suggest that men as well as women spent considerable amounts of time indoors (Hodder 2006:210).

Archaeological evidence in most regions of Southwest Asia shows that domestic space became more complex during the early phases of the Bronze Age, a development that can be attributed to the need by expanding populations to carry out an unprecedented range of domestic tasks. The interfaces between this more complex use of space and gender roles have been the subject of several recent studies in Cypriot archaeology (Bolger 2003:chap. 2; Webb 2009). Webb has noted the increasing privatization of access to buildings, the transfer of storage and domestic facilities to interior locations, and the gradual isolation of households during the Bronze Ages, particularly at the Early/Middle Bronze Age site of Marki-Alonia near Nicosia, Cyprus which she and co-director Frankel excavated painstakingly over many seasons. According to Webb, the enclosure of the household is likely to have resulted in the

relegation of women and women's activities to the interior and to increasingly sharply defined gender identities within and beyond the domestic sphere (2009:264). By correlating the evidence of the built environment at Marki to evidence of modeled scenes on contemporary pottery vessels that show men and women engaged in different activities, Webb manages to demonstrate, rather than assume, that the activities assigned to women on these vessels (grinding, baking, kneading, etc.) took place in domestic "hearth rooms." But since hearth rooms at Marki also yielded evidence of other types of activities, such as ground stone tool production and flint knapping, it appears unlikely that female labor was spatially segregated at this time (2009:265).

Webb's study is an important example of the way in which careful excavation and the use of multiple lines of evidence can furnish important insights into the gendered division of labor without recourse to essentialist assumptions. While segregated patterns of labor may indeed have been the norm in some regions or periods of Southwest Asian prehistory, the example of Marki-Alonia demonstrates that this was not always the case. Clearly there is a need for similar research at other sites in the region in order to more fully appreciate the complex relationships between gender and the built environment and to establish the degree to which those relationships were subject to temporal and geographical variability.

Gender in rituals of life and death

The archaeological study of mortuary remains can furnish valuable insights into communal beliefs and practices regarding life and death; it can also shed light on the identities and status of the deceased and ways in which gender was negotiated in ritual contexts. Given the richness of funerary evidence in Southwest Asian prehistory, it is surprising that they have been so few detailed investigations of the gendered aspects of mortuary ritual (for exceptions see Bolger 2003:chap. 6; Hamilton 2005; and Croucher 2008). To some extent this is due to the lack of well preserved and reliably sexed skeletal material from many older excavations, but it also reveals the low priority traditionally accorded to gender by archaeologists working in the region.

Recent excavations by Hodder and his team at Çatalhöyük demonstrate how long-standing assumptions about male and female roles in the Neolithic can be overturned by looking closely at the evidence. Here and elsewhere, the practice at the site of burying people underneath the floors of buildings is thought to demonstrate the importance of social memory and ancestry for the construction of social identities. The fact that females as well as males at Çatalhöyük were interred in this fashion associates both sexes with the domestic sphere and suggests that ancestry could be claimed equally through maternal and paternal lines (Hodder 2006:209–211). Specialist analysis of grave goods in the burials at the site has thus far revealed no significant gender differences in the treatment of the dead, and points to a high degree of equality between men and women which contradicts earlier interpretations based on Mellaart's excavations at the site in the 1960s (Mellaart 1967; cf. Hamilton 2005; Hodder 2006:211).

As has been documented cross-culturally in numerous ethnographic studies of prestate societies, burial often constitutes the first in series of ritual events surrounding the death of an individual. Such multistage rituals occurred in a number of prehistoric communities of Southwest Asia, particularly during the Neolithic period when practices

of skull removal, skull caching, secondary burial, and the like are widely attested (Kuijt 2000). One can readily imagine the celebratory ceremonies, processions, and feasts that must have accompanied these rituals, and ethnographic examples suggest that for pre-state societies these are likely to have been more than single-phase events. The role of feasting during the Neolithic of Southwest Asia has been a central focus of research in recent years (e.g., Hayden 2009; Kuijt 2000, 2009; Twiss 2008), yet the sex or gender of those who organized and competed in these ritual events has not been explicitly discussed, implying by default that males were the principal actors (Bolger 2010). A more gender-oriented approach to ritual in early societies in the region has been undertaken by Garfinkel (2003), who has analyzed dancing figures depicted on representational art of the eighth to fourth millennia B.C.E. These painted figures appear to be engaged in ritual performances, perhaps associated with feasting, and Garfinkel has calculated that female figures appear more frequently in earlier depictions and decrease with time; male depictions do just the opposite, being relatively rare in early contexts but becoming more numerous in later periods. It may also be significant that more than 50 percent of the figures in Garfinkel's study had no indications of gender, and that images of male and female figures dancing together were relatively rare. While more work is needed on this topic, Garfinkel's results suggest a central role for females in feasting activities and ritual performance during the early phases of agriculture and a more prominent role for males in later phases.

Gender and human imagery

The area of Southwest Asian prehistory that has perhaps been most receptive to developments in gender and other types of social theory is the investigation of anthropomorphic imagery, resulting in a veritable flood of research in recent years (e.g., Hamilton 1994, 2000; Knapp and Meskell 1997; Miller 2002; Ribeiro 2002; Talalay and Cullen 2002; Bolger 2003:chap. 4; Kuijt and Chesson 2005, 2007; Meskell 2007; Voigt 2007; Croucher 2008; Daems 2008; Mina 2009; Nakamura and Meskell 2009). While only some of these publications make gender a central focal point, all are highly critical of traditional interpretations that draw exclusively upon evidence of female imagery while ignoring a large body of evidence for male, ambiguous, and dual sexed examples. Current studies of human imagery, especially anthropomorphic figurines, consider entire corpuses of material rather than a few selected examples, interpret material within a contextual framework, and seek to identify particular patterns of spatial and temporal variability. This has resulted in a much more complex picture than the simple matriarchy/patriarchy narrative of earlier research (e.g., Mellaart 1967; Gimbutas 1974, 1991). It also raises important questions about gender. For example, why were anatomical features on these images explicitly depicted in some cases and left vague and ambiguous in others? And why do modes of depiction vary spatially and temporally? Who made and used these images, and for what purpose? Were they intended to portray generic gender and/or age groups or did they represent particular individuals? In a study of Pre-Pottery Neolithic imagery in the southern Levant, Kuijt and Chesson (2007) suggest that diachronic shifts from ambiguous forms to figures with more explicit anatomical detail can be correlated with changes in levels of social cohesion; ambiguous images, they argue, "may reflect attempt to mask or control differences at the individual level, thereby emphasizing collective,

communal practices" (2007:219). Along similar lines, Talalay and Cullen have shown that the manufacture of schematic plank figures in Cyprus coincided with changes in social organization on the island during the earlier Bronze Age that deliberately masked indications of gender and individuality in order to promote ideologies of kinship and communality (2002). Knapp and Meskell (1997) hold the opposite view concerning these figures by arguing that they attest to the emergence of individual identity during the earlier phases of the Cypriot Bronze Age. This view is difficult to sustain on the basis of the formal and contextual evidence (see Bolger 2003: 188–189), but it nevertheless offers a refreshing departure from traditional interpretations of these objects as fertility figures or mother goddesses.

From Prehistory to Protohistory: Gender, Complexity, and Social Status

Beginning in the fifth millennium B.C.E. and moving forward into the third, there were major economic, social, and political changes throughout Southwest Asia that are visible in a number of innovations (see Table 18.2 for chronology of later Mesopotamian prehistory and protohistory). They include the intensification of agriculture and pastoralism, the movement of people into urban settlements, the development of economies based on specialized labor, and in some locations the presence of major religious and political institutions. Although there were cultural differences, the restructuring of households, divisions of labor, and class distinctions significantly altered the social relations between men and women in these societies.

The evidence provides a rich, though challenging, corpus of materials that crosscuts several disciplines. The cuneiform specialists provide the major gateway to the textual sources. Archaeologists are dependent upon material culture from published data often limited to excavations from the high mounds where temples and palaces were located, although more recent research has included the study of smaller, non-royal mounds and household architecture and activities (Pollock 1999:100ff.; Wattenmaker 1998a). Finally, art historians have focused on the major works of art and architecture

Table 18.2 Chronological chart of later prehistoric and protohistoric periods in Mesopotamia referred to in the text (all dates are calibrated B.C.E.).

Date	*Period*
2100	Ur III
2350	Akkadian
	Early Dynastic III
	Early Dynastic II
	Early Dynastic I
2900	Jemdet Nasr
3100	Late Uruk
	Middle Uruk
4000	Early Uruk
5000	Ubaid

that appeared for the first time in these regions. Their interpretations of human imagery, often complemented by textual references, have provided major insights into male and female identities.

Gender, urbanism, and socio-economic complexity

Research in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was dominated by the writings of Marx, Engels, and Weber, whose theories profoundly influenced conceptions about social changes with the advent of state societies. The evolutionary perspective of Marx and Engels argued for a shift from kinship-based political and economic organization to the appropriation of economies by state leaders. This strategy reduced the power of kinship, leaving the state as the major productive organization and kin groups diminished in their power base. Several anthropologists, following these theories, suggested that changes resulted in gender inequalities (Sacks 1974; Leacock 1983; Gailey 1987) while others argued that both men and women lost their autonomy, though differently (Rapp 1977). Recent archaeological research on this question has shown that while the interventions of states were broadly experienced and transformed gender, other important changes involving class and ethnicity imposed legal statuses that crosscut gender (Wright 1996, 1998). Weber (1968) also viewed early state leaders as the major source of power. Using a patrimonial model, he argued that all households and property were centered on the crown, a position taken by some Assyriologists (e.g., Schloen 2001; Studevent-Hickman 2006:331). Other scholars have documented the "substantial private and disposable real property" held by high-status families, merchants, and some craftsmen (Zettler 1992:236). With respect to gender, elite women held socially sanctioned public roles and substantial property. Along with others in intermediate positions, they engaged in activities independent of the central administration (Wright 2008:205). This evidence (and others to be discussed later) challenges Weber's patrimonial model although it continues to be widely cited. Finally, in a wide-ranging study of gender in ancient Mesopotamia, Karen Wright (2007) uses evidence of texts, figurines, and other forms of human imagery to assess the degree to which women's roles were altered with the emergence of early states. She advocates a unilineal model of social change and concludes that women's status in Mesopotamia declined through time, an interpretation that differs from our understanding of women's status and the evidence discussed in this paper. Recent research by Proppe-Bailey challenges Wright's interpretation, arguing that future studies on the effects of urbanization on women's roles need a more contextual, gender-sensitive approach that focuses on heterarchical rather than hierarchical forms of social organization (Proppe-Bailey 2011). These examples aside, there were significant social, political, and economic changes as people moved into urban environments in northern and southern Mesopotamia and surrounding regions, which can be viewed from a long-term perspective in various parts of Cyprus, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq.

As discussed earlier, significant changes occurred in Cyprus when populations shifted from a hunter-gatherer economy to one based on agriculture and pastoralism and people settled into more sedentary lifestyles. While these changes varied regionally, household dwellings tended to demarcate the boundaries between social groups and evolved into divisions of labor that are linked to the emergence of stratified economies and social classes (Bolger 2003:41). Counter to neo-Marxist

expectations, however, kinship groups in Cyprus maintained a level of control by contesting the power of the emerging state, a factor that may account for the more flexible roles for women in social, political, and economic life that was reminiscent of earlier kinship organization.

At Ebla in northern Syria, the administration was controlled by the palace, as attested by stores of written documents drawn from the palace archive (Archi 2002). Leadership at Ebla did favor men whose positions, in addition to the king, included the chief minister and other officials. The social hierarchy also included the queen, who owned land, and priestesses, who played important roles in establishing alliances between the king and the sanctuaries of the gods. Although women and others "derived their rank from membership in a certain family" (Archi 2002:6), they held property, bestowed rank, made ritual offerings (Archi 2002:7), and were not secluded. Their land belonged to the palace, but it was used for their support and could be passed down to heirs. In other cases, palace land acquired by women and men could not be passed on to their heirs. This clearly indicates that class and rank superseded gender.

In southern Mesopotamia, much of the economy and political organization was centered in temple and state institutions. One of the problems with Weber's patrimonial model is that it effectively excludes women from history because they are outside of the bounds of his male-centered vision (Wright 2008). Once these barriers are removed, his model is falsified in several ways. Although the major Mesopotamian institutions were responsible for much of the urban infrastructure, there are numerous examples of women and men at many social and economic levels who held official positions and property (Hattori 2002; Maekawa 1973–1974; Zettler 1992). In certain instances access to land was much like some lands described at Ebla that are referred in the Mesopotamian literature as "prebend." These lands were cultivated, harvested, and taxed on the individual, but they were not inheritable. Some elite women, on the other hand, owned land and other property that was passed down to their heirs, while a deposed king's land reverted to the palace administration.

Elite women were on a par with their male counterparts as a result of a strategy that promoted stability and consolidated power. These women took advantage of their positions by assuming active roles by building on their sanctioned offices, conducting appropriate cultic activities, acquiring loans, brokering merchants, and buying and selling property. Beyond these elite women, other women, who appear not to have been related to royal lineages, were employed in middle level administrative positions. Others were employed in lower level roles (see below).

Division of labor

The lists of occupations and statuses from Mesopotamia and Ebla offer insights into the wide range of activities in which women engaged. In Mesopotamia, women are listed as slaves, royal women (wives, daughters, and "junior wives"), goddesses, priestesses, child bearers, widows, mothers, and *lukur* (see Sharlach 2008:178 for the complexities of translation and changes over time). Their occupations included overseers, weavers, millers, sheep shearers, spinners, singers, supervisors, and transporters of a variety of products, such as reed or fodder for animals, agricultural laborers working on irrigation, harvesting, winnowing, and hauling (Kramer 1987:107ff.; Sharlach 2008; Wright 2008). They are also listed as female mourners and interpreters of dreams (Asher-Greve

1987). Many of the same professions for women are listed in the Ebla archives, but others named there include wet nurses, stable-handlers, doorkeepers, gardeners, wardrobe mistresses, cloth dyers, basket weavers, and bakers (Archi 2002).

A major industry listed in the earliest texts that remained prominent throughout the third millennium is textile production. During the Ur III period, there may have been 50,000 to 60,000 people employed in "workshops," the majority of whom were females. They were responsible for shearing (plucking) sheep, spinning, weaving, plaiting, cleaning cloth, trimming it to size, and possibly sewing garments (Wright 1996:92). The finishing of the cloth or fulling was performed by men, a division of labor in which the production process facilitated the separation of men and women.

Supervision of the weaving establishments was carried out by women and men. At an establishment in Nippur in the late third millennium (Ur III), the daughter of the king owned a textile workshop and employed both women and men as chief administrators. These positions at a "middle rank" were on a par with those of administrators in other state and temple workshops. Using their personal seal, they authenticated records kept in the weaving establishment (Hattori 2002:218), indicating that there were no social sanctions against appointing women to positions at these middle ranks. This may have been an effort by the owner of the workshop to carve out "niches of influence" for women (Meier 1991:547).

In other textile workshops, women are listed in two roles. One group managed teams of workers and was responsible for grading the quality of cloth before passing it on to the fullers for the final step in production. Women workers came from several different social groups. Some (at Girsu-Lagash and Umma (Ur III)) were taken as prisoners of war and cast into slavery, a practice known from the Early Dynastic period, suggesting that slave labor was a significant part of the state's infrastructure (but see Adams 2009 for a different view). While some of the 6000 weavers were slaves, others were indentured or local free women (Waetzoldt 1972, 1987:119, n. 19). In any event, their compensation (rations) was at the lowest end of the scale among all other types of workers and graded by age, young and older receiving less. Whether slave, indentured, prisoner of war, or local free women, they lived and worked together in social groups in what Ruby Watson has referred to in another context as a "sharply defined world of somebodies" (Watson 1986:629).

Based on the study of settlement patterns during the Late Uruk through to the Ur III period, textile production was an "urban phenomenon" financed by urban elites for their consumption and use (Algaze 2008:84). Although clearly more limited, there are reports of textiles brought into cities as tribute (Kang 1973), and Van de Mieroop (2004) suggests there may even have been a "cottage industry" in which women worked at home rather than in institutional workshops.

The evidence from Ebla is more limited, but what we do know from texts is that similar divisions of labor and workshop conditions existed. A large number of women and men were employed in the household of the palace. In some instances women outnumbered men, such as one house where there were 82 women and 43 male and female children employed. Among the 5000 family groups working for the palace, some were listed as part of the king's household, while others lived in the lower city of the town. Women were employed in weaving and milling. Some had male supervisors, while others were supervised by women as was the case in Mesopotamia. Comparisons of compensation for their labor show variations by gender and a different

system of remuneration. For example, women received amounts of silver or barley, while men only received silver. Production also has been documented at the household level in other cities in northern Mesopotamia, where it was carried out on a small scale for domestic use and exchange (Wattenmaker 1998b).

Unlike northern and southern Mesopotamia, there are no written documents for Bronze Age Cyprus. However, there is an excellent archaeological record for certain crafts and divisions of labor. Weaving again is associated with women during the earliest phases of the Bronze Age, when production occurred in the household, but there was a shift in the later Bronze Age. Joanna Smith (2002) believes that when production became highly specialized and large quantities of textiles were produced, weaving was not as sharply segregated as was the case in northern and southern Mesopotamia. Based on research at Kition, the evidence indicates that men and women were employed in indoor workshops that were located in large public administrative complexes. There they performed the full range of production, including dyeing and fulling, without the separation known in the weaving establishments in southern Mesopotamia.

Gender and mortuary evidence

The evidence from mortuary remains throughout southern and northern Mesopotamia complements these interpretations. We consider death rituals as representative of idealized social relations that are expressions of community, social identity or individuality and gender differences (Pollock 1999:199). This conception corresponds to the changes that took place leading up to and during the third millennium in southern and northern Mesopotamia.

In the south the earliest graves (Ubaid period) emphasize the cohesiveness of the community. These burials are relatively undifferentiated, the only exceptions being the under-representation of child burials and a preferential treatment of older individuals. Perceived differences include the presence of a number of copper artifacts and the treatment of skeletal remains (Pollock 1999:196). The most distinguishing characteristic of the Ubaid graves is that a specific area was allocated for burial "as a piece of community land" (1999:203). Whether this practice continued into the Uruk is unclear, since no burials have been discovered for that period.

Changes in burial practices in the following Jemdet Nasr and Early Dynastic periods are in contrast to the homogeneity and community integration reflected in the Ubaid. Burial sites are found in cemeteries (off-site or in unused areas of the settlement), households (still occupied), rubbish heaps, and pits. Some tombs contained multiple burials, while others held an individual. The most spectacular burials during this period are from a cemetery at the city of Ur that contained 2000 graves. The most significant, for our purposes, is from the Royal Cemetery, where major differences during the Early Dynastic period were based on social identities related to gender, class, and age (Pollock 1999:213). Sixteen of the burials were tombs with chambers that are accessed through shafts and contained a major individual, retainers, and lavish burial goods. The largest tomb had 74 retainers. One of the most notable burials was that of a woman named Pu-abi whose grave was richly provisioned with retainers and sumptuous goods. Aside from these elaborate burials, the greatest numbers of individuals were buried in earthen pits. Among all the burial goods, axes, daggers, and

spears were associated with males, while jewelry and other forms of personal adornment were placed with women. McCaffrey (2008) has challenged the precision of gender attributions in the cemetery based on poor skeletal evidence and ambiguities in the excavator's descriptions of at least one of the graves, an issue that is undergoing continued study. Still, the evidence for hierarchy, social status, and conceptions of gendered difference complement analyses from the contemporary graves at the city of Kish that were examined by physical anthropologists. They support the gender-based attributions at Ur (Pollock 1991:373).

This uniformity of burial customs and clear distinctions between men and women in southern Mesopotamia are in contrast to those in northern Syria and southeastern Turkey. While there are status and gendered differences observable in burials, variable burial practices at settlements reveal forms of social organization than differ from the centralization in the south. One type of burial comprises "family groups in elite mortuary facilities" while another includes smaller, more simple facilities suggestive of collective identities.

At Jerablus, located on the Middle Euphrates in Syria, burials are dated to the second half of the third millennium, a period immediately preceding and coincident with the Early Dynastic at Ur. Like other sites in this region, Jerablus was fortified and contained a defensive wall with gated entrances. Burials were discovered in several locations. One major mortuary complex was situated adjacent to the fort. Thirty-one individuals were interred in a large tomb with corbelled stone walls and entrances. The grave goods included "copper, gold, ivory, and ostrich eggshells" (Bolger 2008b:222), along with 700 pottery vessels, 100 of which were "champagne pots" often associated with feasting. In distinction to the elaborate chamber burials, multiple inhumations were placed in pithoi (2008b:223). In another area of the site there were 30 smaller tombs constructed in the same manner as the larger one. This area also included pit and cist graves and cooking pot burials.

Due to poor preservation and mode of interment, only 20 of the 106 individuals interred were aged and sexed. The analysis presents the impression of more flexible modes of social organization and gendered conceptions than in the south. Of the 20 individuals buried in the various arrangements, nine are associated with the large tombs, six with smaller tombs, and two with pithoi, all in areas that were part of the funerary precinct of the large and smaller chamber tombs. When wealth scores based on the numbers of objects with the individuals interred were calculated (Bolger 2008b:figure 6.6), there were few differences between type of tomb and wealth level, while there were higher wealth scores related to age grades. Tombs with children alone had the lowest levels of grave goods, while tombs with adults and children had a larger quantity and variety of artifacts; in fact the burials with the best preservation included many with high quality artifacts.

This association of gender identity and chamber tombs is consistent with other burials from this period at the Middle Euphrates site of Umm el-Marra where an elaborate tomb includes two young adult males and females and two infants that are spatially separated (Schwartz et al. 2006). Grave goods included gold ornaments, silver pins, lapis jewelry, "stone beads and shells filled with cosmetic material" (Bolger 2008b:225). Male goods included silver ornaments, a copper dagger, pin and spearhead, and young caprid bones. In another tomb in which males and females were interred together, there were no distinctions in grave goods.

Most significant is the handling of disarticulated skeletal remains, a practice that is present at Jerablus and Tell Banat in the Middle Euphrates. At Jerablus, skeletal remains in many of the smaller tombs consist almost exclusively of extremities, "mainly by wrists, hands, feet, and kneecaps" (Bolger 2008b:224). This practice is thought to be a deliberate attempt to obscure individual identities, including the gendered identities, of the persons interred. In a similar mode of interment as the burials at Jerablus, mortuary rituals at Tell Banat included "defleshing, disarticulation, secondary burial, and burning of skeletal remains" (Bolger 2008b:224), a practice interpreted as a means of destroying individual identities in the interest of "collective identities" (Porter 2002:22).

Finally, the site of Titris in the Upper Euphrates in southeastern Turkey is divided into an Outer and Lower Town and is believed to be a major trading center (Lanieri 2007:245). Burials contemporary with settlements in the Lower Euphrates bear some similarities to those at Jerablus. In the first phase of the Early Bronze Age (3000–2600 B.C.E.), three cist graves included an adult female and a single pot. Two others contained infants and lacked goods. In the Middle Bronze Age extramural cemeteries were built on the fringes of both the Outer and Lower towns. A chamber tomb was surrounded by smaller cist graves with multiple skeletal remains and various copper and silver ornaments and precious stones. A major shift occurred at the end of the third millennium in the later part of the Early Bronze Age (2400–2100 B.C.E.). Extramural cemeteries were replaced with intramural tombs that were located in the main courtyard of dwellings, apparently built during the initial construction of the building. Multiple burials were discovered in the tombs, some of which were articulated and others disarticulated. Most of the skeletal remains included skulls. The interpretation in this instance is that the bones of previous burials, with the exception of skulls, were removed as new remains were interred. Of the seven individuals in one tomb, one female, a young male, three young adult females, and two other non-sexed adults were buried together. Grave goods in intramural tombs include pottery and figurines, as bronze weapons placed under male skulls, also bronze ornaments and semiprecious stone necklaces in which no sex is reported. Finally, one intramural burial in a plaster basin discovered in the corner of a house in the Outer Town included 17 skulls encircled with scatters of bones, all of which were young adult males, with the exception of a young adult female and two infants. There were 19 cut marks on the bones, a practice reminiscent of others in the Lower Euphrates. Taken together, these changes at Titris have been interpreted as the assertion of a new authority in which social stratification and households played major roles in the society (Lanieri 2007, 2011). The lack of gendered differences suggests that the roles of women in kin-based households were strengthened rather than diminished in these later phases of the millennium.

Gender and human imagery

The term "ideology" often is used to define a society's religious principles, but feminist archaeologists speak of gender ideologies. These terms need explanation in the study of Mesopotamian imagery. In an important paper on gender ideology, Pollock and Bernbeck (2000) use textual and archaeological evidence to investigate the ways in which ideologies are transformed into social realities. They define ideology as "the

portrayal of the particular interests and values of certain social groups as if they were the interests of everyone in a society," and maintain that "ideology structures systems of beliefs, knowledge, and values so that they legitimize a particular set of interests" (Pollock and Bernbeck 2000:151; cf. Pauketat and Emerson 1991:920). Ideologies convey powerful messages by masking or naturalizing a particular view of the world and by confounding the social with the natural order. The way things are, the social reality, is thought to be unchangeable because it is natural, or because social relationships are "legitimate products of historical change, innovation and creation of order" (Pollock and Bernbeck 2000:151). While it surely is the case that all members of a society do not adhere to a particular ideology, it may be in one's best interest to do so.

One of the examples Pollock and Bernbeck provide conveys the significance of a gender ideology promoted by pictorial material. In southern Mesopotamia, a major source for identifying the roles of women is human images on cylinder seals. These include depictions of a variety of productive activities from the earliest seals in which women (identified by their hairdo) are engaged in weaving and pottery production in what appear to be workshops (Asher-Greve 1985). The imagery on seals from the middle to the end of the third millennium is more complex. A select group of seals is described as "ritualized portrayals." One type represents seated females engaged in drinking and is referred to as a "banquet scene." Seals with this scene most often belong to women when they are found in graves and when an inscription specifies a female name (Pollock 1991:381). A second type depicts human figures engaged in combat with wild animals or domestic animals taming wild ones, a "combat" scene. These seals generally are associated with males, an attribution challenged by McCaffrey for seals from the Royal Cemetery at Ur (McCaffrey 2008). Whether or not the images represent real actions, they clearly are a reflection of Mesopotamian views of gender differences.

A second example, from figural imagery, is the well-known Uruk vase, a 1.5 meter tall alabaster vessel from the Late Uruk period that was discovered in the sanctuary of the goddess Inanna at Uruk (Bahrani 2001). It is a depiction of an event in celebration of fertility and a fruitful harvest. In five ascending registers, this cultic scene depicts wheat and flax, male and female animals, male nudes carrying vessels or baskets that are offered to a figure at the top, presumably Inanna, who accepts a basket filled with various "fruits of the land"(Pollock and Bernbeck 2000:158). The basket is offered by an unidentified male figure, variously interpreted as a priest, leader, or king. Much has been said about the ambiguity of this goddess and the contradictions her aggressive behavior, as told in legendary sources, may have presented to Mesopotamian women and their real world. Still, it cannot be doubted that the focus of cultic attention in this image is the female, clearly reflecting the importance of females in religion and ritual performance.

One of the best known women in the "real world" of Mesopotamia is Enheduanna, the daughter of an Akkadian king (Sargon), who was appointed to the official position of en-priestess. We know her from a votive object she commissioned and from her poetry. The office of en-priestess was one of the highest attainable in Mesopotamian society. Most likely her appointment to the office was arranged by the king in order to forge an alliance with a temple that was dedicated to the male moon god Nanna, the most important god in the city of Ur. What is important about Enheduanna is her

active involvement in official life. The alabaster disk on which she is represented, most likely not a "mimetic portrait" (Bahrani 2001:116ff.), preserves her image in a visually dominant position as an important official engaged in a ritual act (Winter 2010). On its obverse an inscription identifies Enheduanna by name (Winter 2010). During the time in which she served as en-priestess, which may have been as long as 35 years, she wrote poetry that is one of the first literary works "attributable to a specific individual, whether from Mesopotamia or elsewhere" (Bahrani 2001:116). Today we might refer to her words as "writing women's worlds" (after Abu-Lughod 1993). Enheduanna uses her poetry to promote her own ideas, thereby acquiring social recognition (Pollock 1991:370). She does this by writing poems that have political overtones and what appear to be her frustrations about and aspirations to male power. In one she complains that Sargon has driven her out of her official position, and she appeals to the goddess Inanna and to the god Nanna to restore her to the office of en-priestess. The poem ends when she is given a sword and a dagger, the "symbolic trappings of male power" (Pollock 1991:370). Enheduanna's manner of representation and ideas expressed in her poetry demonstrate one of the ways in which gendered ideologies were challenged by elite women and those who attained important positions. Other examples discussed here might also fall within this attempt to break the "glass ceiling" and defy certain ideologies.

Finally, another way in which gendered ideologies reflect on how conceptions of males were represented was in public monuments. Irene Winter, in a collection of papers in *On Art in the Ancient Near East* (2010), examines stele, public monuments, and seal imagery from the early periods to the end of the third millennium B.C.E., showing male and female representations. Winter bases her analyses on Mesopotamian gendered ideologies by drawing on a "lexicon of value," the ideal attributes ascribed to a king from texts that can be read in imagery. She identifies these as "good form or breeding, auspiciousness, vigor/vitality, and specifically, sexual allure or charm" (Winter 2010:86). Her subject is a stele in which the king, Naram-Sin, is shown at a military victory where he stands above his stricken enemy. He wears a helmet with bull horns, previously reserved for gods alone, thereby asserting the "fusion of a hero-plus-ruler" (2010:92). His well-rounded and muscled upper torso and other attributes thus combine virility and sexuality and link his image with the "concepts of power and leadership" that prevailed for millennia in Mesopotamia in a way that was "seen as not unnatural"(2010:101).

Conclusion

Not surprisingly, our review of current research on gender studies in Southwest Asia shows both variability and patterning. There is no question that as societies became increasingly complex with the advent of urbanism and state societies, there were major changes in gender and status. We cannot, however, state unequivocally that gender was always the guiding principle. In many instances, status or class distinctions superseded gender as in the case of certain elite women in virtually all of the cultures discussed here.

There is much variability in the ways in which women's status and roles changed when we take the full swath of evidence from the prehistoric to the protohistoric periods. Divisions of labor varied spatially and chronologically, with no predictable

pattern, undermining support for traditional evolutionary narratives of women's status in early states (see Hutson et al. this volume for a discussion of this issue in other world regions). In Upper Mesopotamia and Cyprus, for example, producers were not segregated by gender as was the case in the major institutional settings in southern Mesopotamia. Women at the lowest ranks there, however, present most dramatically an erosion of women's status.

When it comes to changes in kinship organization over time, clearly a major shift occurred between an era of early hunter/gatherer subsistence groups and settled populations. In those instances, there is much variability in Upper Mesopotamia and Cyprus where the evidence indicates that corporate groups could be identified by kinship, guild, or other form of lineage arrangements, and maintained their power or at least, as demonstrated in funerary settings, a strong impulse to demonstrate their individuality. In southern Mesopotamia, the evidence does not support earlier theories that the power of kinship groups was vastly diminished (Wright 1996). Additionally, the relatedness and kin-based power structures are best viewed among royal and other elite women in Lower Mesopotamia (Wright 2008).

In conclusion, the picture that has begun to emerge from recent gender-oriented research in Southwest Asian prehistory is far more complex and variable than the unilinear models of traditional research – and it is also far more interesting. There are tremendous gaps in this research, however, both in terms of regional imbalances (more work has been done in Cyprus and southern Mesopotamia, for example, than in Anatolia or the Levant) and theoretical limitations (e.g., there has been almost no research to date on non-binary gender constructs, or on queer prehistory, as has been noted also by Croucher 2005). If gender research in the region is to continue to expand and to address more comprehensively a greater range of issues and approaches in current feminist and social theory, greater effort must be made – in the field, in the classroom, in the lab, and at the desk – to integrate gender and feminist perspectives into broader teaching and research agendas.

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SECTION 5

Gender in European Prehistory

CHAPTER 19

The History of Gender Archaeology in Northern Europe

Marie Louise Stig Sørensen

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to trace the trajectory of gender research in Northern Europe from the late 1970s to the present. Two points, however, need to be clarified. One is what the geographical scope of "Northern Europe" refers to. The other is what constitutes a meaningful structure for the overview; in other words, how we might meaningfully trace the development of an interpretive and analytical concern that is expressed within a dispersed research area – geographically, epistemologically, and in terms of its archaeology.

Northern Europe is not a well-defined geographical region. It obviously refers to the northern part of Europe, but which countries are involved is less clear. The United Nations, for instance, includes Ireland and the United Kingdom in Northern Europe but not Germany, whereas most of us probably do not group these countries together with, for example, Sweden and Finland. Another term is the Nordic countries, which refers to Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Iceland. Meanwhile, in discussions of gender archaeology "Scandinavia" is often the term used, although as a geopolitical term that refers only to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. Each of these definitions has validity, but the historiographic development will be different depending on what understanding of "Northern Europe" we use. At the same time, offering an overview of the development of gender archaeology within a particular regional setting presupposes that this is a meaningful project, and that there are trends, discursive traditions, and cohesions that are meaningful within the chosen limits. Among the different geopolitical units mentioned above, Scandinavia is the one that best satisfies this expectation, and it shall be the focus of this chapter.[1] But why does this clarification

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of the nomenclature matter? We tend to use terms such as "Scandinavia" as if they are natural and self-evident entities, forgetting, it seems, that they are complex geopolitical constructions through which various regions are united and presented as having a shared identity and innate qualities. It is therefore easily assumed that they also embody common intellectual traditions. Within Scandinavia there are shared traditions but also diversity. The countries constituting Scandinavia have had complex historical relations to one another. Each country also has its distinct language,[2] and although it is relatively easy to read each other's literature, different publishing houses are used, and academic literature is divided by languages and nations; in other words, the literary *koine* is not necessarily shared.

Having emphasized some of the ambivalences involved in the assumption of a unified region, it is also necessary to include some reflection on how one "traces" the development of intellectual trends. This chapter could focus on each country, providing a chronological review on the basis of national trends. It could equally follow developments within major research concerns, defined, for example, by cultural historical periods or by themes such as textile research. The benefit of such an approach would be that it would remain close to the actual research communities: specialists of the Mesolithic or the Viking Age or any other period constitute research communities within which particular assumptions and vocabularies have developed and within which research agendas are set and trends formed. The influence of such research communities is part of the development of fields such as gender archaeology; there is a naturalness in how ideas unfold within them as this is the level at which people collaborate and exchange ideas. Indeed, historiographic work on gender archaeology has shown that women were often more active within some parts of the discipline than in others (Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998). In Scandinavia, for example, female archaeologists have had a greater presence in Iron Age studies than in other parts of the discipline, and textile research has been and continues to be strongly dominated by women (Sørensen 2000:30). In addition, gender research, even when using the same theoretical basis, responds to different challenges and explores different sources depending on the archaeological period and material being investigated, especially if a relatively traditional understanding of what gender research means causes the researcher to focus on the identification of women and men according to "positive gender attributes." For instance, within later periods of Scandinavian prehistory,[3] gender research has benefited from early texts and various kinds of complex images, such as picture stones, whereas Neolithic and Bronze Age studies have explored the availability of widely differently furnished graves, and Mesolithic interpretations have been informed by analogies with modern hunter-gatherers. Period and thematic specializations have therefore been important influences helping to shape understandings and debates about gender. However, there are trends and tendencies that crosscut such divisions, suggesting cross-fertilization between archaeologists working in different fields, as well as shared influences from other disciplines and from society at large.

For the sake of expediency, however, this chapter traces the development of gender research within Scandinavia as a whole, crosscutting disciplinary communities and aiming to identify both general and special characteristics. This does not deny that there are national stories to be told, as well as others defined by sub-communities within the discipline. In the concluding section, therefore, I shall return to some of the challenging differences that may exist between the accounts generated at different scales of reflection.

The development of gender archaeology in Scandinavia has been commented on many times before (e.g., Hjørungdal 1991:10–14; Sørensen 2000; Engelstad 2007), and Scandinavian gender research is sometimes given an almost iconic role in general discussions of gender archaeology, with the same early publications repeatedly referenced; these have become significant for our stories of origin, satisfying a need to locate an early beginning for explicit and self-aware gender archaeology. The challenge here is whether there are more nuances to be teased out and how the balance between a distinctly local version and a generalized one is struck. In addition, we should be mindful of what is involved in constructing genealogies. Historiographies do not write themselves. They are projections, and we are confronted with both substantial and more subtle decisions, not only in terms of inclusions, exclusions, scales, and comparisons, but also with simple but distracting questions. Who are the researchers, what are the works, and what are the influences that fall within our remit? Do I qualify as a Scandinavian researcher because of my nationality, despite having worked in the United Kingdom throughout my professional life, and does Ericka Engelstad qualify because her professional life has been based in Norway although she was originally trained in the United States?

What follows, therefore, is one account based on the developments I have observed and seen reflected in publications and discussions. Moreover, it is an account that has had to ignore substantial epistemological and social differences between the three countries and their different languages in order to outline a regional tradition. It is an account focused on individuals and their networks, and on how seminal works published over the last 30–40 years have shaped our engagement with gender in prehistoric Scandinavia.

General Political Background and Historiographies of Gender

Although this overview is explicitly concerned with the development of prehistoric gender research from the 1970s onward, it is important to acknowledge the substantial role of the women's movement, which began in the 1960s, and to recognize its impact on the developments outlined here.

In line with the common emphasis in histories of the women's movement on phases or waves, the development of gender archaeology is often presented in terms of "waves." The "First Wave" is commonly linked to the suffrage movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and its concern with equal rights, including working conditions, voting, and educational possibilities. As a means of distinguishing this early period of political feminism from subsequent struggles for women's equality, the women's movement of the 1960s to 1980s is often referred to as the "Second Wave," when cultural and institutionalized inequalities, their causes, and ways of counteracting them emerged as critical concerns. The "Third Wave," generally dated from the late 1980s to the present, can be more difficult to identify as it may be seen both as a continuation of the "Second Wave" and as a response to the perceived failures and shortcomings of previous approaches and interpretive frameworks.

In an early discussion of gender archaeology primarily focused on America, Wylie has used a similar division although she is mainly concerned with post-1980s developments and thus a shorter time frame (1991). Her first stage is the critique of

androcentrism in science; this is followed by revisionary statements aiming to make women visible (remedial phase), and a final stage concerned with gender as construction and its relationship to power (1991:31–32). Such divisions are helpful since they bring into sharper focus the changes that have taken place, although the concerns with disjuncture and progressive stages do to some degree obscure the fundamental continuity within these debates, concealing lateral changes and progressive developments (see also Engelstad 2007).

In the context of Scandinavian archaeology, it seems that the First Wave and perhaps also the Second Wave of critical thinking on gender can be identified, whereas later developments are more difficult to characterize in terms of cohesive shifts, partly because gender research has become more multifaceted and therefore less programmatic and less easy to define. Moreover, particular trends are often represented by only a few individuals clustered at particular institutions. In the following sections I explore these characteristics further in terms of four phases that roughly follow the series of "waves."

The "Second Wave" in Scandinavian Prehistoric Archaeology

The interest in gender archaeology that can be observed in Scandinavia from the 1970s onward is only meaningful within the larger context of the women's movement in the region during the previous decade. The emerging interest in "women and archaeology" and concerns about the working conditions within the discipline were closely linked to the politics of the time (e.g., Hjørungdal 1991:10; Sørensen 2000:chap. 2). A generation of women (and men), who had grown up during the 1960s, with its challenges to establishment norms, including traditional views on gender and sexual behavior, had entered universities and now began to question assumptions and worldviews that had previously been taken for granted. Authority was challenged on several fronts although, as in society at large, it was the inequality between men and women that was most explicitly confronted. Within Scandinavian archaeology this was expressed in two ways. On the one hand, there was a concern with gender relations within the discipline, both with regard to university employment and access to excavation work. Demands for equal access to work and pay came to include a challenge to male domination at universities and a struggle by women to gain access to higher level positions – the so-called "glass ceiling." Publications that criticized gender relations in terms familiar from the labor market are thus among the very earliest published works by archaeologists on gender relations in Scandinavia (Hjørungdal 1991:120, nn. 17, 19; Sørensen 2000:31–32). For instance, a group of young female archaeologists from Copenhagen wrote about the composition of the discipline as early as 1972 (Fonnesbeck-Sandberg et al. 1972), and similar articles were published a few years later by researchers from Norway (Holm-Olsen and Mandt-Larsen 1974; Næss 1974). The Norwegian archaeologist Gro Mandt, who later became a prominent gender archaeologist, reported on a conference on women and feminist research[4] within the humanities organized in 1975 by the Norwegian Research Council (Mandt 1976). Her article established a kind of agenda for what gender archaeology could be, and demonstrated clearly how closely this was connected to ideas about dissemination and critique of gender stereotypical thinking within

society at large. One of her explicit recommendations was the need for archaeologists to become involved in popular dissemination about the past (1976:47).

The earliest articles about women and archaeology in Scandinavia are thus typically about women and the job market, showing the now familiar picture of women decreasing in numbers at the upper levels of the career ladder. At the same time, and as a logical development of equity arguments, an explicit critique was also being formulated about the presentation of women. This concern was primarily focused on the representation of women in museums, but it gradually developed a wider agenda to include the low visibility of women in interpretations of the past and debates about non-sexist language (e.g., Næss 1974; Thålin-Bergman 1975; Bertelsen et al. 1987). A particular concern was the tendency of presenting women as sexually and culturally passive. Underlying both agendas was a call for equality and the rejection of female stereotypes. Gradually, the challenge was not just about access but became a rejection of the dominance of male authorships of the world: women claimed the right to be co-authors of history.

Within the arguments for change various claims and distinctions were drawn and new strategies developed. Such differences were noticed early on. Maria Lind, commenting on the construction of meaning within museums, showed how they tended toward what feminists had identified as "misery" and "dignity" research, with the former intent on proving as extensively as possible how unfairly women had been treated, and the latter focused on demonstrating how deserving women are (1993). In one way or another, however, the emergent debate aimed to reject the notion of men's given rights and privileges. This period can therefore be characterized as woman-centered rather than gender critical.

Within archaeology, actual case studies and more focused intellectual and strategic discussions were spearheaded by a number of researchers clustered in a few environments, in particular Bergen and Copenhagen universities and Stavanger Museum. At the level of academic research, therefore, this was far from representing a generally shared epistemological or political development. Consequently, the frequent praise in the general literature for the early development of gender archaeology in Scandinavia is not entirely deserved. Another interesting point is that there was a distinct quantitative aspect to the earliest explicit work on gender within Scandinavia. This follows naturally from some of the mainstream concerns of the women's movement at the time with issues of access and equality. In archaeological interpretations this translated into a concern with demonstrating the presence of women as active participants in prehistoric society. For the most part this was approached in one of two ways: either attempts were made to upgrade women's domestic work, or attempts were made to demonstrate that women had occupied positions and taken on roles that previously had only been associated with men. Much of this work focused on the Late Iron Age and Viking societies due to their rich burial evidence (e.g., Næss 1974).

It is important to appreciate the pioneering quality of these early works. They were produced by a network of individuals working within a number of research communities, especially in Norway. It is also important to stress that this development was not predictable since other countries, including neighboring ones in which the students movement had been very active, did not experience similar trajectories. It should also be stressed that although the early publications on gender in Scandinavian archaeology have been frequently referenced in later works, they began as relatively

informal in-house publications rather than being supported by mainstream publishing houses, and at times they met with resistance. The volume *Were They All Men?*, for example, which is often cited in histories of gender archaeology, was the result of a conference held in 1979, but it was not published until 1987; according to the editors, this took place against substantial resistance from the academic world (Bertelsen et al. 1987:7). Other gender-oriented publications from that period (e.g., Fonnesbeck-Sandberg et al. 1972; Holm-Olsen and Mandt-Larsen 1974; Mandt 1976) appeared in *Kontaktstencil*, a journal managed by archaeology students from the Nordic countries and itself a child of the students' movement. Such publications felt like, and were, part of the grassroots movement of the day, and many of the academic arguments and discussions they engaged in were closely linked to people who later came to work with museum exhibitions and other forms of public outreach. In many ways, however, it was not a strongly theorized field, and the close similarities between the women's movement as a political and union-based activity and the early development of a concern with gender in Scandinavian archaeology are obvious. This was a critique focused on the absence of women and on claims about their roles in history but not on questioning the nature of gender.

Between the Waves: The Development of Gender Archaeology in Scandinavia

Following this early equity-focused period, a second period began during which gender archaeology became programmatically and in various ways epistemologically consolidated. Core terms were introduced, in particular the concepts of sex and gender (e.g., Sørensen 1988; Engelstad 1991; Hjørungdal 1991), and agendas were broadened, although research by and large continued to operate within a relatively traditional theoretical framework. The first issues of the Norwegian journal K.A.N.[5] provide a useful indicator of the kind of research conducted during this period. This periodical, which ran from 1985 to 2005, was founded on the initiative of Jenny Næss and Gro Mandt. Its aim was to publish and stimulate archaeological gender research and research on women in archaeological research (Dommasnes and Johansen Kleppe 1985:1–2).

An overriding concern during this period was to find gender (and for "gender" read "women") in the archaeological record and to demonstrate women's importance. The study of mortuary evidence was a favorite topic since it provided a means of investigating the roles of women by linking expressions of rank and roles to sexed individuals; as a result, new interpretations of female roles, as indicated by burial evidence, were put forward (e.g., Boye et al. 1984; Randsborg 1984; Stalsberg 1987). Dommasnes's investigation of Norwegian Iron Age graves (1982, 1987) stands out as an important example of this stage of Scandinavian gender archaeology. Dommasnes is a Norwegian archaeologist who has played a seminal role in the development of gender archaeology in Norway, and the development within her own archaeological work is an interesting indication of some of the obvious stages of gender research at this time. On the basis of burial evidence she aimed to investigate why some women seemed to obtain rank equal to men in a society which, according to written sources, was male dominated (1987:69). Her analysis was based on the proposition that the

ratio of male to female graves can be used as a measure of the general status of women within an area (1987:71), thus introducing a normative social perspective within an essentially gender critical analysis. She supplemented her study of the numbers of graves with an analysis of possible socio-economic factors, such as the differences between graves with regard to their proximity to good agricultural land, and access to wider trade networks (1987:72). The results led Dommasnes to propose that "Women achieved high rank when they took over male tasks and responsibilities. In the period in question this happened because men invested their energy in other fields than farming" (1987:76). The proposed complementarity of men's and women's work was to become a *leitmotiv* in Scandinavian gender archaeology, especially in interpretations of later periods (Sørensen 2009:258). The mixture of gender critique and normative expectation found in Dommasnes's seminal works from this period is typical of the time and illustrative of how deeply entrenched established scientific methodological thinking was. The only shared theoretical reference among the archaeological papers in *Were They All Men?*, for instance, was Lewis Binford, although the influence from anthropological debates on mortuary evidence can also be seen.

Epistemologically, research was therefore still strongly influenced by (neo)positivism (see Arwill-Nordbladh 2001:27–28); objects were approached as passive reflections or signatures of gender, and attempts were made to develop ways of using material culture as proxies for gender (women in particular). The emphasis on the distinction between sex and gender meant that gender as a cultural or social construct became the primary focal point of gender research. However, this was often accomplished through empiricist arguments that relied upon traditional scientific forms and assumptions, and that were based on the principles of verification favored by New Archaeology rather than a more profound feminist critique of science. In her self-reflections on gender in archaeology, Dommasnes suggests that the first phase of gender archaeology in Norway was facilitated and accepted because it closely followed the scientific prescriptions of processualism (1992:6). In the efforts to demonstrate women's importance, this research was often preoccupied with tracing evidence of wealth to show that women were equal to or even more highly ranked than men. The most explicit theoretical influences during this stage came from social anthropology as indicated, for instance, by Hjørungdal in her reflections on her own intellectual growth (1991:8–9).

Apart from its continuous concern with equity issues, both within the discipline and in museum presentations, this period was important for introducing central concepts, such as the distinction between sex and gender, and for beginning to develop gender critical thinking based on gender discussions in other disciplines (social anthropology in particular). As gender archaeology developed in neighboring countries, these first steps toward a gender critical archaeology were emulated there. Attempts to investigate women's prehistory and to demonstrate women's roles in the past were also of great importance, even if the methodologies used were still relatively traditional.

The "Third Wave": Postprocessual and Alternative Approaches

In the third phase, which began in the 1990s and continues today, new theoretical frameworks have increasingly been explored, and a variety of approaches have developed. Influences during this phase have come from a range of disciplines, including feminism

and sociology, and from developments within the discipline itself, such as postprocessualism (for a critical review of this relationship, see Engelstad 1991). This is therefore the period when research specifically dedicated to the theoretical and analytical aspects of gender began to be published within Scandinavia, and when conference sessions began to be dedicated to the topic of gendering the past. The journal K.A.N. began to publish in English, thereby signaling an interest in moving beyond its earlier focus on Scandinavian scholars (Arwill-Nordbladh 2001:57–58), and dissertations (especially at the levels of BA and MA, but also some PhDs) with a gender focus began to appear. Among the many contributions during this period are works by authors such as Arwill-Nordbladh (1994, 1998, 2001), Engelstad (1991, 2007), Hjørungdal (1991, 1994), Nordbladh and Yates (1990), and Sørensen (1992, 2000), which in different ways were important for introducing a more theoretical agenda. In recent years the framework laid down earlier has been further developed and discussed by younger scholars (e.g., Skogstrand and Fuglestvedt 2006).

New approaches to gender

Through these works basic ideas about gender have been discussed and challenged. In particular, the distinction between sex and gender began to be criticized as the concept of "gender" and later "sex" was problematized. Challenging ideas about how gender was constituted and made, in contrast to questions about how we identify it archaeologically, was now the focus. This change is illustrated in a paper by Nordbladh and Yates (1990) in which they introduced the idea of a gender spectrum, arguing that there are not just two sexes but a range of differences between two poles, and that the binary classification "male and female" is arbitrary and disregards variability. Their point is that sex is experienced and learned, rather than divisible into discrete natural categories, and that each culture constructs its own sexual categories by relating them in different ways to the life cycle of the individual. They suggest that binary oppositions should be replaced by the concept of spectrum (1990:222). Although this paper had little impact with regard to analyses of prehistory, it was of substantial importance for the treatment of sex and gender as well-defined categories. Other kinds of critiques of the stable definition of gender have been developed by Hjørungdal and Engelstad. Tove Hjørungdal in particular has been concerned with how archaeologists attribute sex and gender, and with the uncritical expectations of these as contrasting dualities. She has also argued for the existence of a third gender, and has suggested that sex serves as a metaphor for gender (1994).

Further dilutions of the idea of gender as a stable category emerged in the late 1990s as arguments about multiple or complex identities became more specific. In archaeology this frequently resulted in gender and multiple identities being linked, so that gender became one among several identities (Damm 1991). It thus became possible to argue that "women" and "men" were not homogeneous categories (e.g., Skogstrand and Fuglestvedt 2006:5) without recourse to biological arguments (as Nordbladh and Yates had to do). Nor were the different identities that make up a person considered to be hierarchically ranked since their meanings and impacts were seen as situational and relational. While it might appear that gender was being downplayed in these approaches, in actuality it was being explored in ever more complex

and subtle manners, particularly in terms of fundamental questions about how gender "becomes" and what its relationships and dependencies are – not only to sex but also to other dimensions of the individual body and society. The relationship between age and gender was of particular interest, and studies of lifecycle changes became central as this provided both an emphasis on and access to how individuals change through the life course (Arwill-Nordbladh 2001:50). Sørensen's study of Bronze Age women's costumes provides an example of how this focus can affect analysis since differences in the composition of women's costumes are used to argue for differences among women (1997). This study explores theories of the materialization and performance of gender, which, together with the idea of the changing body, are used to argue that the composition of women's costume changed as they progressed through different stages of life.

However, such arguments, with their emerging awareness of feminist critique and varied theoretical foundations, were the works of only a few individuals, and although widely cited they did not thoroughly permeate the thinking about gender more widely within archaeology. The distinction between sex as biological and gender as cultural, which was so strongly argued in the 1980s, had by this time become (and remained) part of mainstream archaeological frameworks, and attempts to argue for these identities as more complex, fluid, and negotiable aspects of the person (e.g., Sørensen 2000, 2009:254–256) have had a more limited impact, due perhaps to problems involved in the application of abstract concepts and arguments to actual data.

Some of the more exciting developments during this period are to be found in explicit attempts at uniting and exploring feminist and gender critical thinking as a means of engaging with the archaeological record. Ideas about materiality, negotiation, and performance are important in these developments, with arguments by feminists such as Judith Butler and sociologists and anthropologists such as Pierre Bourdieu and Henrietta Moore influencing the emergence of new approaches. Among the seminal contributions from this phase is Elisabeth Arwill-Nordbladh's reinterpretation of the Viking Age ship burial at Oseberg, Norway in which she investigates the choreography of the burial as a means of interpreting how a gendered space was constructed (1998). Using Conkey's concept of "context of action" (1991), she demonstrates how different pre-existing gendered understandings of activities were brought into play in the choreography of the burial as assemblages associated with distinct spheres of meanings were consigned to particular spaces. In doing so she demonstrates a way of gendering that is not about identifying women (or men) but is concerned with the construction of difference. The analytical approach developed by Arwill-Nordbladh has been explored further in more recent works by other authors, such as Synnestvedt (2006). Similar concerns are also found in Sørensen's volume *Gender Archaeology* (2000), which considers several aspects of Scandinavian prehistory in an attempt to engage with the question of how gender is constructed, maintained, and performed through material engagement. Sørensen's recent works (2007, 2009) have continued to debate what she terms the "materialization of gender" in which she argues that:

> Gender archaeology is now at a stage where it can explore such ideas about material culture as a fundamental and at the same time a very flexible medium that is used both in creation of notions of traditions, the maintenance of conventions and normative behavior,

> and as a means of defiance against and disrupting of such norms. This means that material culture cannot be approached merely as a source for the "finding of" gender; it is in itself implicated in the construction of gender. [Sørensen 2009:263]

Following general intellectual trends within the social sciences and humanities, interests in gender over the last decade have shifted toward the individual, both in terms of agency theory and theories of the body and embodiment. While this puts at risk the collective effort and solidarity that characterized earlier concerns with women, it also gives space to more comprehensive debates about difference and identities (see Arwill-Nordbladh 2001). Moreover, it has allowed gender archaeology's traditional preoccupation with burial evidence to gain new significance as it enables a closer focus on the body, the life course, and the ways in which individual identities are formed through life stories. Within this framework, the intellectual (and political) interest in masculinity has been able to find some expression within Scandinavian archaeology (e.g., Strassburg 2000). Focusing on differences within, or on the pluralities of, identities, Strassburg argues for the presence of non-normative gender and queer identities through time and suggests that they may often have had shamanic associations. Queer identities have also been explored in more recent studies of the Late Iron and Viking Age, especially with regard to the character of the Norse god Odin (Solli 2002) and to shamanistic elements of Norse religion, and calls for a politically explicit and theoretically informed masculinist perspective have now been made (e.g., Østigård 2006). Through these and other similar investigations, it is possible to see how studies of sexuality and the sexed body in various ways are beginning to merge with arguments about the gendered body, and how, in turn, embodiment theories have brought a different depth of focus to questions of how we are constituted.

Historiographic research

A very different strand of gender research has developed through recent studies of the history of women in archaeological research. In a co-edited volume on this topic (Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998), Sørensen (1998) argues in general terms for the importance of critical gender reflection in accounts and investigations of our disciplinary history as we write ourselves and our aspirations into that story. A different approach has been explored by Arwill-Nordbladh, who from the 1980s onward has produced a range of works on the history of women contributing to the Swedish school of archaeological historiography; chief among these are her various biographical studies of the early archaeologist Hannah Rydh (Arwill-Nordbladh 1987, 1989, 1998). Through her work we have been given a critical insight into the early stages of women in the discipline, whose aims sometimes coalesced with liberal policies. Arwill-Nordbladh also examines the ways in which social and psychological factors can influence women's career and life choices, and her study of nineteenth-century women has resonances for contemporary women.

These historiographic works have helped to reveal the roots of some of the key elements in later discussions of women's roles in prehistory. The argument concerning women as men's property, and the general interest in working relations and "natural" divisions of labor found within Scandinavian archaeology, for example, have clear links

to Engels' influential volume on the origin of the family (Arwill-Nordbladh 1998:5; Sørensen 2000:37). Historiographic work has thus helped to reveal assumptions embedded within our thinking about the past, and it can therefore be used as a critical tool advancing archaeological interpretations and self-reflection (Arwill-Nordbladh 2001:18–20). Historiographic gender analysis has become a distinct hallmark of Swedish gender research. Such works are largely absent in the other Scandinavian countries, but are also found as a distinct theme in North German gender research (e.g., Koch 2002).

Feminism and gender, equity and theories

The difference between gender and feminist research began to appear in the late 1980s when discussions introduced a distinction that has never properly been settled within Scandinavian archaeology. Feminist archaeology has routinely been associated with the critique of a masculine science regime and critical awareness of women's conditions and roles within society, whereas gender archaeology has been seen to be wider in its scope through its concern with developing new ways of interpreting the past. Engelstad is the scholar who has most consistently advocated a feminist archaeology, although she also maintains that the distinctions made between feminist and gender archaeology are often too simplistic or misleading (2007). Despite her arguments and advocacy, gender archaeology has become more widely adopted within Scandinavian prehistory than feminist thinking, at least in the sense that it has more widely influenced archaeological analysis and practices. Together the two approaches have challenged gender neutral thinking and added new levels of awareness. It can, however, be argued that the lack of a continuous feminist critique, and in particular the exploration of its current voices rather than its early form, are obvious drawbacks that may result in a tendency toward an uncritical and non-reflexive use of gendered terminology and a static understanding of the intellectual agenda.

There is one exception to the current lack of feminist involvement, however, and this is found in the continued concern with equity as expressed in particular by Norwegian scholars. The presence of a "barrier" to women's progress and to their value within the discipline has continued to be a concern (e.g., Engelstad et al. 1994). As this barrier becomes ever more invisible, it is perceived by many to have become more insidious; thus it has become even more important to demonstrate its presence and its impact on what work and what kind of people are most highly valued within the discipline. As Engelstad observes, the pattern demonstrated in the early 1990s of women's academic output tending to be assigned lower status and prestige despite women now gaining higher positions is one that is still far too familiar (2007). This awareness of inequity and uneven representation has meant that the early interest in the (re)presentation of women has continued, and has now spread to various sectors of the profession. This is particularly the case in Sweden and Norway, where there has been an explicit interest in the creation of women's history and in stronger and more explicit accounts of women's roles in mainstream history. As a result, not just museums (e.g., Gaarder Losnedahl 1994; Høgsbro 1994; Mandt 1994; Sørensen 1999) but also the wider field of heritage management has been concerned with becoming gender inclusive and gender reflexive (e.g., Kristoffersen 2004).

Final Reflections

Various observations stand out in this review. One is the distinct difference between Denmark, on the one hand, and Sweden and Norway on the other. Apart from works by Danish archaeologists working abroad (e.g., Sørensen 1988, 2000; Damm 1991) there has been very little interest in explicit gender research within Danish archaeology since the 1970s. The difference is well known and has been commented on elsewhere (see Hansen 2004), but its reasons are unclear. In the 1970s there were similar calls for gender awareness and for a critique of existing paradigms and work conditions within all three countries. Some of the leading young archaeologists from Copenhagen were particularly articulate, but the archaeologists who remained in the country did not develop these arguments and research issues any further.[6] It is not clear why this was the case, but one of the other differences that can be observed is that New Archaeology (i.e., processualism) was much more influential within Norwegian (and to a lesser degree Swedish) archaeology than it was in Denmark. Processual archaeology's explicit focus on the structure of society meant that structural models which had previously been taken for granted were scrutinized. It is therefore very likely that the generation who had been young adults during the 1960s reacted critically to the implicit androcentrism of the interpretations put forward. In her comments on this difference, Engelstad indirectly suggests a similar reason when she notes that there has been a strong cultural-historical tradition within Danish archaeology, and that this framework has made archaeologists less inclined toward theoretical debate (2007). It is very likely, however, that the reasons are not only to be found within the discipline, since similar discrepancies among the Scandinavian countries are also found in other social contexts, such as members of political committees.

Of the reasons put forward to account for this, two may have some bearing on what has happened within archaeology. The first is the argument that there is a "saturation" point beyond which gender is no longer regarded as an important concern (Dahlerup 2009). However, this argument does not sufficiently account for the cultural and political factors that affect "saturation" within any particular society. While it is possible that Danish society reached a saturation point very early on with regard to its concern with gender equality, the argument does not explain why the situation was different elsewhere in Scandinavia. It is, however, possible that the point at which gender is considered a critical variable within society at large varies from country to country as a result of their different social structures. The second, related argument focuses on the pressure (or lack thereof) exercised by the women's movement (or other types of women's interest groups), suggesting that if pressure is not maintained, the motivation to change existing conditions disappears (Dahlerup 2009). This clearly seems to be one of the differences between the three countries, and it is also a factor that may explain some of the changing attitudes toward gender that are occurring at present. This connection was recently acknowledged by Lisbeth Skogstrand, a female PhD student at Oslo university, who declared that "as far as I know, I am the only Norwegian PhD student at the moment with an explicit gendered perspective" (Skogstrand 2009). Whether or not this is a correct observation, it gives a sense of how the field is perceived, and this appears to be radically different from what one would expect, given the prominent role of gender archaeology in Norway. Skogstrand's explanation is similar to the argument above as she suggests that if gender is not

clearly linked to fights for equal rights, it loses its ability to provoke and thus, although part of the mainstream, it will not stimulate thoughts or actions.

Another observation relates to the different theoretical outlooks and the equation or disjuncture between feminism and gender archaeology. Some scholars, such as Engelstad and Hjørungsdal, have pursued an explicitly feminist approach informed by feminist writing and aligned to some of the developments within the United States; but the majority of works that may be classified as gender prehistory have focused on engaging with and using gender as a means of opening up new aspects of the analysis and understanding of prehistoric societies. In practice these two types of emphasis often overlap within Scandinavian archaeology, but at other times their different perceptions of priorities and their intellectual alliances keep them apart. In my own volume on gender archaeology (Sørensen 2000) my aim was primarily archaeological: I was searching out the archaeological voice and its means of critically engaging with gender in terms of the remains of past people and actions, rather than pursuing a feminist approach per se. This distinction between different kinds of aims has been criticized by some, while others have found it beneficial for moving gender archaeology forward. Amongst the former, Engelstad has argued that this has meant abandoning the feminist project and co-opting gender by transforming it from a politically engaged endeavor to an apolitical academic pursuit (2007). Although I understand such concerns, I personally see an insistence on a feminist standpoint in all our endeavors as potentially limiting our political imagination and awareness. Wondering how academic work can escape its essentially apolitical character, I believe we must strive to be politically inquisitive, in a continual process of self-reflection and critique; this includes exploring feminism and contributing to its development but not being limited by it. I find that a similar distinction, whether articulated or not, exists within Scandinavian gender archaeology more generally. With the help of the historical perspective it is possible to perceive a range of different theoretical positions and approaches among the scholars working on gender; this has generated frictions as well as fruitful searching and healthy debate.

A third distinct characteristic that emerges is the close cooperation between academic research and the wider public, in particular in terms of museums, their roles, and their activities. The earliest arguments for gender equality were highly critical of the role of museums in perpetuating the portrayal of differences between men and women and presenting women as passive; as a result, museums were regarded as spaces that could engender change. This perspective, as well as other practical concerns, such as working conditions and measures of equality, has continued to be important and is routinely scrutinized; within this area of the discipline there have been far-reaching changes. Many museums exhibits are now gender-challenging rather than gender-stereotypical, or at least they try to be, and employment practices have changed from a situation in the 1970s when a female professor of archaeology was a rarity, to greater parity at all levels. A glass ceiling still exists, but it is now more difficult to discern than before.

A final point for reflection is the issue of changing generations. Young men and women in Scandinavia today live with the changes and benefits that have resulted from the earlier women's movement. They have the right to do this, and they naturally take current conditions for granted; from their perspective they must develop agendas, research as well as political, which are meaningful to themselves. This sometimes

causes tension between generations, tensions that are difficult to sense through publications but are expressed verbally and through actions and decisions. Unless we are careful, there might easily develop a split in our appraisal of the importance of gender and of what it means to do gender research. On the one hand, a sense of emotional (and political) betrayal might emerge among the generations who were instrumental in changing earlier social conditions. Younger generations, on the other hand, may become impatient because gender agendas are not moving forward; they may also become irritated because they are not being given the space to create their own agendas. I find this cross-generational tension, more than any other aspect, a tremendously interesting and important challenge since it asks us to consider how feminism and gender archaeology can continue to provoke and inspire archaeologists to be self-reflexive and critical in their engagement with the past when their own experiences of gender are very different. Moreover, it presents us with the difficult task of adapting and adjusting our research agendas according to changes in our personal experiences of gender in the modern world while remaining concerned with how to understand the "other" world represented by the past.

NOTES

1 A discussion of developments in gender archaeology in Germany is not included in this chapter, but interested readers should consult Kästner (1997, 1998), Mertens and Rambuscheck (2001), and Owen (2001) for useful accounts.
2 Had we been looking at the Nordic countries, the language differences would have been even more substantial as Finnish is not an Indo-European language.
3 In Scandinavia "prehistoric archaeology" refers to all periods until the end of the Viking Age.
4 The term used was "Kvinneforskning," which literally means "women-research." The impact of different linguistic definitions on the emergent field of research and interests (e.g., Kvinneforskning rather than either feminist or gender research) may have been significant for the further identification of the fields.
5 This acronym, which also means "can," stands for "Women in Archaeology in Norway" (Kvinner i Arkeologi i Norge).
6 Many Danish archaeologists are working outside Denmark, and some of these have participated actively in the development of gender research, such as Charlotte Damm, Else Johansen Kleppe, and Marie Louise Stig Sørensen.

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CHAPTER 20 Gender in Eastern European Prehistory

John Chapman
and Nona Palincaş

Introduction

This discussion of gender relations in prehistory is limited to studies of the material culture of six modern nation-states: Slovakia, Hungary, the Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia. The chronological range of this chapter covers six millennia, with the following calibrated dates: Mesolithic (6500–5500 B.C.E.); Neolithic (6300–4000 B.C.E.); and Chalcolithic (5000–2500 B.C.E.). The chronology (based on radiocarbon, cross-dating with the Eastern Mediterranean Basin, and historical data), as well as the definition, of the Bronze and Early Iron Ages differs within this rather broad study region. In Slovakia, Hungary, and Serbia the Bronze Age is dated to ca. 2500–800 B.C.E. and the Early Iron Age to ca. 800–450/300 B.C.E. In the rest of the study region the Bronze Age is dated to ca. 3300–1200/1150 B.C.E. and the Early Iron Age to ca. 1200/1150–500/450/400 B.C.E., although significant differences in chronology are found sometimes among authors from the same country. To avoid misunderstandings, the terminology adopted by individual authors for the Metal Ages is used and their chronology given in brackets.[1]

The impact of socialist politics on gender studies

Ever since gender research began in the West in the 1980s, the contribution of Eastern Europeans has been very poor. In fact to date only two countries, Romania and Serbia, have some autochthonous production in the field, beginning around 2005 and inspired by post-structuralist sociology and postmodern philosophy. Most of the debate on gender issues in this region's prehistory has been the product of Western academic research. Eastern Europeans have mostly ignored the debate, generally

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working with ahistoric, essentialist, and dichotomous gender concepts of modern European origin. This is rather surprising, considering that for 50 years the region's archaeologies claimed to have been informed by Marxist social theory, which (should have) included Engels' explicit theorization of the historical character of gender relations (Engels 2004[1884]), and that post-World War II archaeologists have experienced within their lifetime the reshaping of gender relations through the socialist states' measures toward gender equality. Why then is gender archaeology almost absent in Eastern Europe? And why, insofar as there is an archaeology of gender, is it not of Marxist inspiration?

As Buchli (2000) has shown, archaeological research on gender in Eastern Europe is much older than in the West. It began in nineteenth-century Russia, and by the late 1920s to early 1930s it attracted high-level political interest as the Soviet state set out to construct a sexually egalitarian, classless, and industrialized society. Since, according to Engels' theory, class and gender inequality was the result of historical evolution, archaeology was mandated to investigate the period before its onset (i.e., primeval communism, located in the Upper Paleolithic) in order to provide a model for future industrialized communist society. Already during the 1930s with the rise of Stalin, more bound to the pre-Revolutionary bourgeois ideas of gender, Engels' theory of the primacy of economic relations of production over biology in shaping male–female relations was replaced with the primacy of biologically determined male–female relations in establishing relations of production; women were tied to the private sphere, men to the public one, and the competition among patriarchal nuclear families was placed at the origin of social inequality (Buchli 2000, with further literature there).

In the following period (late 1940s to 1989), Soviet archaeology was introduced into the other countries of Eastern Europe, only to be confronted with the same bourgeois concept of gender. Socialist politics valorized and entrenched this concept of gender but at the same time leveled substantially the relations between men and women. In the public sphere, the lack of civil society and private property reduced the scope of action for men while simultaneously enlarging it for women through their full-time employment and proportional representation in politics (Watson 1993). The sexual division of labor remained basically unchallenged in both public and private spheres, but practical reasons dictated a certain degree of redistribution of domestic chores (Massino 2010). This complex and ambivalent evolution resulted in a neo-traditional organization of society: while men's right to power remained unchallenged, women lacked any sense of inequality with men (Watson 1993). How gender relations evolved in the specific field of archaeology is less clear. A brief analysis of the situation in Romania shows that when state socialism was introduced in the country, Romanian archaeology was organized on a very low level and often based on the patriarchal family (the male professor helped by his wife). From the 1950s onward, as archaeology grew considerably, the patriarchal family extended to incorporate younger generations in a way that advantaged male archaeologists and disadvantaged female archaeologists; but at the same time it induced women to avoid discussion of their situation, and made everyone agree that the socialist regime was to be blamed for all the shortcomings (Palincaş 2010a:103–106). To what extent this internal mechanism is valid for other countries in the region has not yet been assessed, but the end result was the same: women as much as men opposed gender

studies, considered gender to be biologically determined and self-evident, viewed agency as a masculine phenomenon, and regarded women as auxiliary, if not altogether marginal, figures in history.

From 1989 to the present, gender relations in Eastern Europe have worsened as there has been a general rise of masculinism. In the name of transition to liberal capitalism women have lost many of the rights they had under state socialism, but they seem to be unaware of this process, allowing it to unfold with no significant challenge (Watson 1993). The only exceptions are found in the academic sphere: stimulated by Western state and private funding, gender studies have made serious progress among sociologists and political scientists since 1990 (Zimmerman 2007). Archaeologists, in contrast, still reject gender studies. The explanation resides probably in the history of these domains: while sociology and political science had to be re-established after a long interruption under the socialist regimes, archaeology continues its long patriarchal tradition.

Marija Gimbutas's domination of the early years (1970s–1990s)

In the post-World War II socialist states, very few forms of gender archaeology were "safe," and the principal form was developed by an archaeologist synonymous with the gendered study of Balkan prehistoric figurines beginning in 1970: Marija Gimbutas. Born in Lithuania in 1921, Gimbutas incorporated national folklore, mythology, and forest religion into her worldview of prehistoric religion (Chapman 1998). She started her studies of the neglected field of Neolithic figurines with museum tours in the 1960s, realizing that the high density of ritual equipment on sites in Greece, the Balkans, Hungary, and southern Italy comprised a long-lasting cultural unit (7000–3500 B.C.E.), which she termed "Old European civilization" (Gimbutas 1974:11–13). In her first book on figurines, Gimbutas combined symbolic links with the Paleolithic with an agricultural concept of the fertility of the earth, and associated figurines with "the psychology and religion of the farmer" (1974:11) as the medium of the communal worship of a pantheon of deities. Gimbutas recognized many aspects of figurines for the first time, including the proliferation of masks, the frequent hybridity of images, and the androgynous nature of rod-head and Hamangia figurines. Gimbutas recognized that the pantheon of divinities reflected a matriarchal society (1974:236–238), which was abruptly brought to an end by the Indo-European "Kurgan" invasions of the fourth millennium B.C.E.

Gimbutas co-directed five important excavations in "Old Europe" (Obre, Anza, Sitagroi, Achilleion, and Grotta Scaloria), three with large figurine samples. Gimbutas utilized these samples to exemplify the interpretations she had already published concerning figurines as either divine beings in a variety of aspects or their worshipers enacting a variety of rituals; the samples showed the strong preponderance of female over male figurines. The most informative site was Achilleion where the architectural remains uncovered showed that figurines were deposited in every type of context but that different styles of figurines occurred within and outside the house (Gimbutas 1989:213–214).

In her last books Gimbutas sought a pan-European synthesis of "archaeo-mythology," incorporating archaeology, comparative mythology, and folklore (1989, 1991; Gimbutas and Dexter 1999). These were top-down books in which the

well-established pillars of Old European religion were merely exemplified by archaeological finds. The focus here was not on sexual fertility as much as earth fertility: "the rising and growing powers of earth dwell in all living things" (Gimbutas 1991:317). There was no trace of the Father in the Paleolithic and no division into a Great Mother and a Great Father. Here, the Great Goddess takes center stage at the expense of the "Mother Goddess" in a society where the sexes are equal but women were dominant in social and political life.

Criticisms of the "Goddess" perspective

Gimbutas's overarching theory that figurines mirrored a matrilinear and matrifocal society where women dominated social and political life has received much criticism. For example, Hutton (1997) has observed that her Childean, diffusionist-invasionist concept of Balkan prehistory was conservative, and that almost all its elements can be disputed (e.g., Anthony 1995). Hutton noted that Gimbutas's theory of the continental-wide veneration of a single Goddess is an elaboration of 1950s orthodoxy, supported by an outdated and strongly critiqued psychological theory of Neumann (1963). The notion of Old European civilization as utopian, a popular view among eco-feminists, is based upon the assumption of an unchanging and ahistorical Golden Age (Meskell 1998; Tringham and Conkey 1998). Meskell (1998:55) quotes Bamberger's (1974) ideological critique of matriarchy as a tool used to keep women in their place, reinforcing the unresolved tensions between the conservative and radical aspects of Gimbutas's thinking.

Tringham and Conkey (1998) link two forms of essentialism running through Gimbutas's *œuvre*: the use of a transcendent single cultural and religious tradition, stretching from the Upper Paleolithic to the ancient Greeks, and the way in which southeast European figurines have been made to stand for the whole continent. To these, Goodison and Morris (1998) add a third – the biologically essentialist vision of the Goddess theory, which homogenizes gender roles, denying men and women their agency.

A third area of criticism has been Gimbutas's method, characterized as anecdotal and impressionistic (Bailey 2010), with inferential links between data and interpretation entirely lacking. Tringham and Conkey (1998) observe that Gimbutas resolutely ignored both the figurines' find contexts and their use-life, as well as all alternative readings.

The overall result of these critiques is that figurines are now perceived to have had far weaker links to women and female ideology than was once assumed. One unanticipated consequence is that it has made gendered archaeology in the Balkans more challenging.

Gender and the Living

Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Chalcolithic

The dominance of the domestic domain in Eastern Europe has not led to an elaboration of gender studies in either settlements or households. One of the regrettable legacies of the Mother Goddess meta-narrative has been the neglect of the gendered

interpretation of material culture other than figurines. In her pioneering chapter on Balkan Neolithic gender relations, Tringham (1991) stressed that architecture was the material context for social practices and not their reflection. She maintained that understanding action at the micro-scale of the household was essential for grasping social relations of production at larger scales.

Tringham's statement that households comprised adult males, adult females, and children, and that the research task was to make visible their gendered relations, clearly had not convinced Whittle (1996:70) when he retorted, "We know nothing about the composition of households" or later still (2005:68) when he added, "the gendering of tasks and roles … remains difficult to approach with the available evidence (as well as difficult theoretically)." Are Whittle's skeptical observations correct?

Three major changes can be identified in this period: the emergence of agriculture; the exploitation of secondary animal products (Sherratt 1997); and the development of metallurgy. Each change is identified by intensive innovation in embodied skills that created more individualized persons (Chapman and Gaydarska 2011). For early farming, over 25 new skills are involved, including pot-forming, plastering, and figurine-making, as well as women's horticultural innovations (Bogaard et al. 2008:136). The changes in gender relations stimulated by the secondary products scenario have been well discussed by Ehrenberg (1989) and Anthony (2010). Anthony identifies the start of the gendered public/private dichotomy – women at home in the *domus* (*pace* Hodder 1990) and men controlling external relations in the *agrios* – while Chapman (1997) maintains that female power increased in the home through textile and dairy production to offset male domination of agriculture. Disputing such generalized narratives, Bolger (2010) emphasizes the variability in agricultural practices in different communities and regions, with flexible task allocation and labor-sharing. The complex *chaînes opératoires* of both farming and metallurgy led to many new embodied skills, making cooperative work by men and women essential. Souvatzi (2008) has argued for similar cooperation for complex specialist production in Neolithic households, as has Handsman (1991) for the Iron Gates Mesolithic. These ideas illustrate the theme of the important shaping effects of gender on the human body (Sofaer 2006).

Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

Thus far there have been no gendered studies of production processes. Many activities, such as bronze metallurgy, extraction of salt, and long-distance trade have been attributed to men by virtue of assumptions about traditional gender roles, but without supporting evidence. The best known example is the association of herding with strong masculine domination for the Early Bronze Age Usatovo Culture (3300/3200–2750 B.C.E.) whose members were believed to have introduced patriarchy into the region (Dergaciov 2010:274–275); this idea has now been generally abandoned for lack of proof.

Some case studies seem nevertheless to confirm traditional gender roles. For example, the idea of housekeeping, pottery, and textile production as women's tasks finds support in the Late Bronze Age Fundeni-Govora and Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare areas of the Lower Danube (ca. 1550–1350 cal. B.C.E.) where on the so-called gynomorphic (female-shaped) clay vessels the motif of the female breast executed in relief

is associated with other decoration executed in *Stichkanaltechnik* (added pricked depressions to create a groove), the latter inspired most probably by embroidery (Palincaş 2010b:87, n. 20, figure 8.8). In the Osthallstattkreis (ca. 800–450 B.C.E. in central and southern Poland, northern Austria, southern Moravia, southwest Slovakia, western Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia) women's textile production became so important that it not only ensured certain women a high social position but became a metaphor for the construction of human life itself, as determined by female gods, the *Moirae* (Eibner 2000–2001:110–115; Teržan 1986:238). By this time textile production was organized in a more complex manner, with some settlements specialized in fiber production and others in weaving (Belanová et al. 2007:431).

Based on imagery and grave goods, Teržan refers to the Late Bronze Age population from Lăpuş in northern Romania (ca. 1300–1100 B.C.E.) and those of the Osthallstattkreis as bull breeders and bull worshipers (*Stierzüchter und Stierverehrer*), who associated the bull with masculinity (Teržan 2005:251–252). However, in "reading" gender roles from artifacts, one has to be aware that the latter were meant to participate in the construction of gender identity and symbolic violence, and may not simply mirror production processes, which could have relied on cooperation between genders at various stages.

Less traditional gender roles and overlaps of male and female roles are known for the Scythians (ca. late eighth century B.C.E. to third century C.E.). In addition to housekeeping, pottery, textile production, and tending the herds, Scythian women had to defend their family and property while men were at war (Rolle 2010:159). Some authors also argue for women's participation in war as light cavalry (e.g., Fialko 2010:120).

The relation between gender and labor has been explored at Mokrin by Porčić and Stefanović (2009), who show that most activities relied on the use of feet and forearms; but these do not relate to social status, gender, or age while the use of arms and shoulders does so in a rather unexpected way: wealthy males and poor females used them intensively while wealthy females and poor males did not. Porčić and Stefanović's explanation is conceived in terms of a patriarchal society in which wealthy men had to prove themselves in the competition for leadership, and wealthy women, who owed their status to men, could mobilize help for various tasks. One outlier skeleton in terms of musculo-skeletal markers was identified as a man who carried particularly heavy loads.

A connection between economic evolution and the dynamics of gender relations has been pointed out by Palincaş (2007) for the Fundeni-Govora area: the radical growth of trade networks at the beginning of Late Bronze Age made women's otherwise traditional activities (housekeeping, the receiving of guests, pottery, and textile production) gain so much importance that women challenged patriarchy and gained higher social positions. As the development of long-distance trade also resulted in the emergence of fortified settlements (e.g., at Popeşti and perhaps also Cârcea) after hundreds of years of living in small, open villages, this example also shows that gender relations are part and parcel of the same transformations in economy, social stratification, and architecture. The process of planned nucleation that resulted in settlements like Feudvar in Serbia (especially ca. 1700–1600 cal. B.C.E.) and Barca and Spišský Štvrtok in Slovakia (especially ca. 1500–1400 B.C.E.) must have also been

connected to as yet undiscussed changes in gender relations. Much research remains to be done, and Patricia Galloway's (1997) question remains valid today: "Where have all the menstrual huts gone?"

Imagery

Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Chalcolithic

The post-Gimbutas debate over the meaning and active use of the varied images in the region (Figure 20.1) has taken three welcome turns: an emphasis on find-context and use-life (Tringham 1991), including deliberate fragmentation (Chapman and Gaydarska 2006); a more explicit categorization of the gender of images (Biehl 1996; Mina 2008); and an appreciation of the ways that figurines foster ways of seeing and experiencing the world, understanding oneself, and forming attachments to others. Recognizing that representations of males and females do not inform us directly about male–female relationships, Hodder (1990) has emphasized the conceptual centrality of certain aspects of femininity, but also sometimes masculinity, in images which were used as metaphors of social practices. Reflecting on the variability of the images, Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997) have identified three principal forms: images with highlighted erotic/reproductive parts, referencing fertility; naturalistic heads indexing individuality; and asexual, schematic images, embodying (*pace* Orphanidis 1998) abstract concepts such as religious beliefs. It would be a mistake to reject (as Bailey 2005) the link to fertility just because of Gimbutassian hyperbole: cereal grains and flour mixed with clay paste for Tripolye figurines underline the connections between female bodies and crop fertility (Anthony 2010). Equally, the search for individuals in figurines has been stimulated by Tringham's (1991) difficulties in operationalizing human "faces" in archaeological remains.

The rephrasing of the question "what do figurines mean?" with "how do figurines mean?" (Lesure 2002) has led to new approaches to human imagery. Bailey's (2005) characterization of figurines in terms of their size, intimacy, and portability, as well as the psychological effects of these traits on users, is interesting but has been poorly applied to Balkan Neolithic figurines. Meskell's (2007) reanalysis of the Çatalhöyük corpus interprets figurines not so much as a finished product but more as a process. This concurs with the whole use-life of a figurine, as well as the notion of deliberate figurine breakage, where fragments continued to be used "after the break" to create enchained relationships between dividuals,[2] to negotiate gender relations (e.g., Hamangia figurines), or to make statements about families or wider groupings through structured deposition in houses (e.g., Dolnoslav figurines) (Chapman and Gaydarska 2006).

Another research direction concerns the active uses of images as material culture in political praxis. Handsman (1991) maintains that the elaborate stone sculptures of the Late Mesolithic at Lepenski Vir in the Iron Gates gorge legitimized gender differences by materializing a male-dominated ancestral clan ideology through the portrayal of important living male leaders. Whittle (1996) suggests, more modestly, that fertility was celebrated through ancestor figurines in the Early Neolithic, while Haaland and Haaland (1995) propose that figurines were mostly female because they were used to support usufruct rights to land through matrilineal descent claims

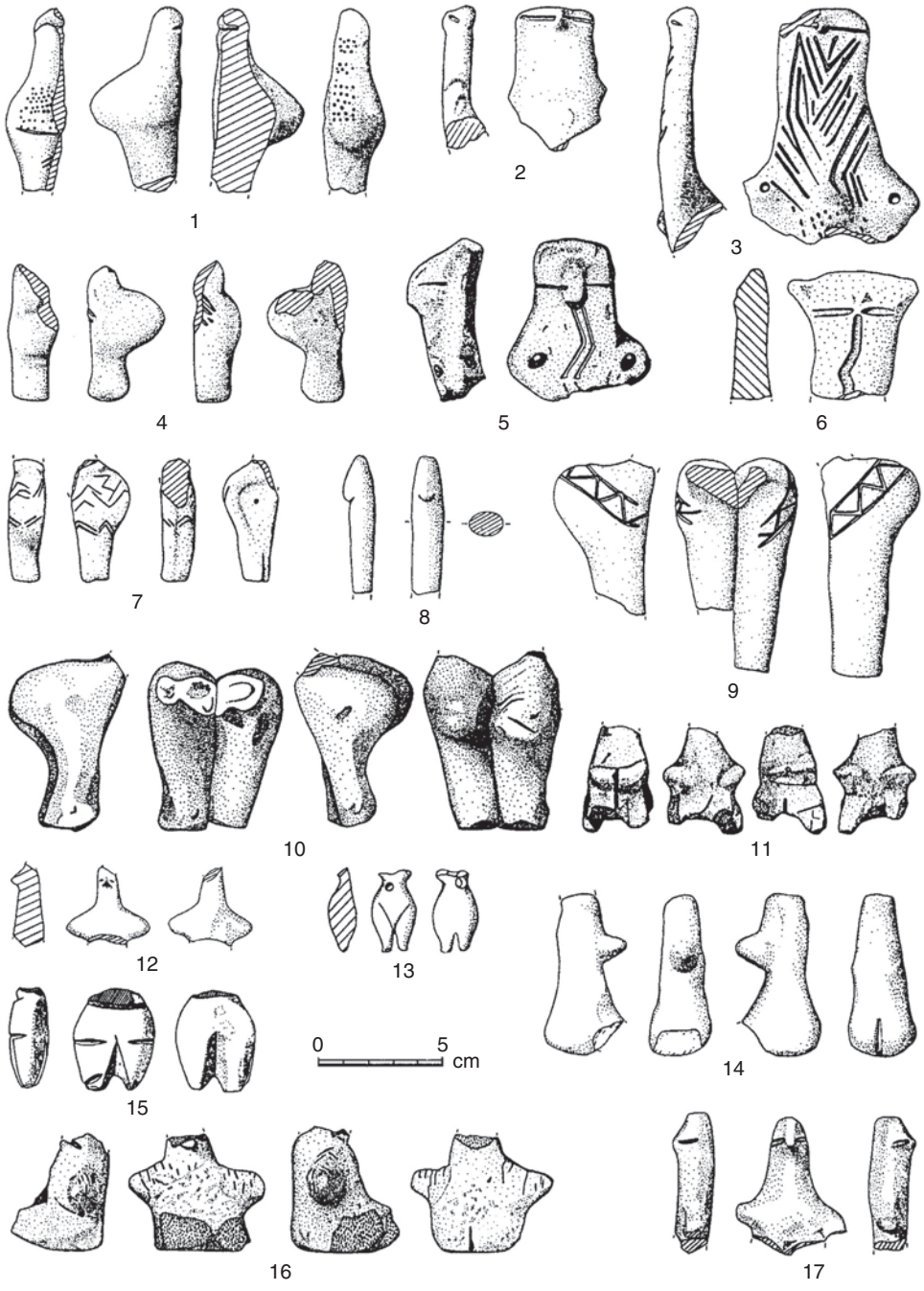


Figure 20.1 Early Neolithic figurines from Kovachevo, southwest Bulgaria (from Hansen 2007:Abb. 161. Reproduced by permission of Svend Hansen. First published in *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*. © École française d'Athènes.)

based upon female contributions to cultivation. Bailey (1996) has interpreted the predominantly female figurines of the Bulgarian Late Chalcolithic as sexual insults to men from women responding to male use of ostentatious materials (copper, gold, serpentine), thereby challenging male political dominance. Mina (2008) provides an excellent example of diachronic changes in the socio-political agency of images in Neolithic Greece.

Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

Interpretations of human imagery in the region fall into two categories: authors who regard images as merely reflecting aspects of human life, and those interested in studying them a means of constructing social relations.

The first category of studies addresses the fact that, in contrast to the Chalcolithic, Bronze Age representations of female bodies were very rare while sun symbols (circles, spirals, and rays, all with variants) were frequent and ubiquitous. This has been interpreted as reflecting the subordination of the old female-centered fertility cult to the new sun cult tied to more male-dominated societies (Florescu 1979:83, 127, 130; Dergaciov 2010:277). The largest group of representations of humans in the region, the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare statuettes (mostly female and from children's graves), were interpreted by several authors as representations of a child-related goddess (criticized by Palincaş 2010b:81). Teržan (2005) identified in the combined representations of a woman with trees and birds the "Goddess of the living and dying nature" (*Göttin der lebenden und sterbenden Natur*); this otherwise more widespread representation appears in the Late Bronze Age (e.g., Lăpuş, northern Romania) and in the Osthallstattkreis where representations of bulls, wolves, and/or dogs were used as symbols of masculinity (Figure 20.2:1–3). Teržan (2001) has also identified (in the West- and Osthallstattkreis from the seventh century B.C.E.) representations of a female goddess that presided over men in combat and protected male heroes, but neither of her studies discusses how these representations contribute to an understanding of maleness and femaleness in those contexts. Eibner (2000–2001) has seen in the rich imagery of the Osthallstattkreis a reflection of the main attributes of high-status women: for example, ladies of the house, weavers (Figure 20.2:9), priestesses, and chieftains. The most important shortcoming of this group of studies is that they analyze males and females as if they were living separate, parallel lives, and as if they presented a static picture of gender relations; moreover, they do not explain why certain aspects are "reflected" while so many others are not.

The second group of studies maintains that images are used to further certain social relations. Palincaş (2010b) has argued that the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare statuettes were produced with the aim of materializing a whole worldview, part of which was the understanding of maleness and femaleness as interdependent and/or unstable states. For the Fundeni-Govora area, Palincaş (2004–2005a, 2007) argues that clearly defined meanings for metal as masculine and pottery as feminine were inherited from the Middle Bronze Age. In the Late Bronze Age, the female breast motif was placed on pottery in a symbolic setting where *in other regions* the male phallus remained in view (Figure 20.2:1, 4–5); the gynomorphic vessel was thus used to assert women's new status, resulting in a challenge to patriarchy. At the same time, it could not avoid the limitations imposed by older symbolism: just like the pottery which represented

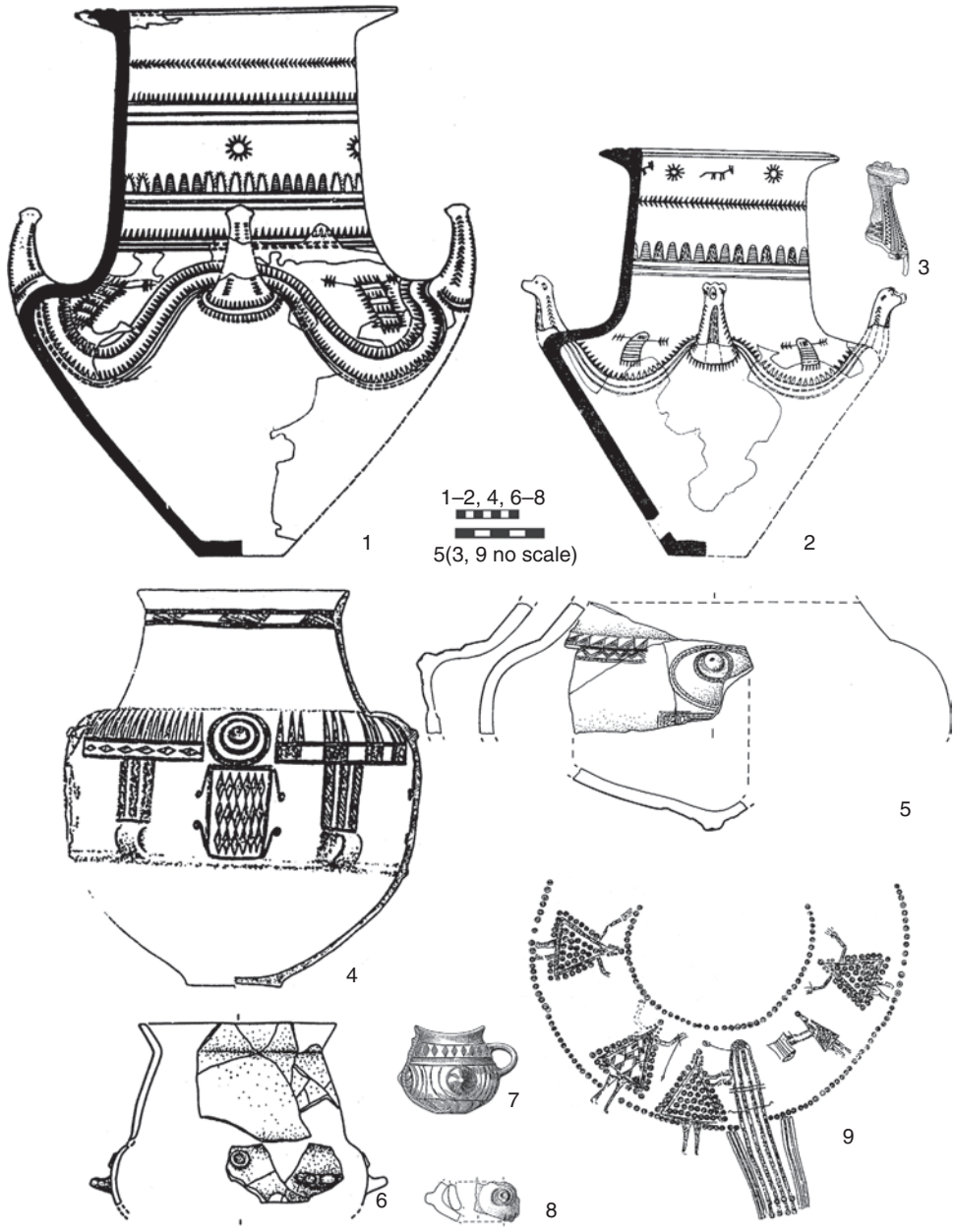


Figure 20.2 Pottery with male and female symbolism. 1–3. Lăpuş, Late Bronze Age barrows (from Kacsó 1975:figs. 5, 7, 8.1a). 4. Cârcea, Fundeni-Govora settlement (from Nica 1996:fig. 12.b). 5–6. Popeşti, Late Bronze Age settlements (5. Fundeni-Govora type, 6. Zimnicea-Plovdiv type; after Palincaş 2004–2005a:figs. 4.1 and 6.1). 7. Pietroasa Mică, late Monteoru, Grave 64 (from Oancea 1981:fig. 20.1). 8. Popeşti, Early Iron Age settlement (Pre-Basarabi; from Palincaş 2004–2005b:fig. 3.1). 9. Sopron, Barrow 27, Osthallstattkreis (from Eibner 2000–2001:fig. 2a. Reproduced by permission of Alexandrine Eibner.)

it, the new status of women was fragile and short-lived; gynomorphic vessels ended their use-lives as sherds discarded in various contexts as opposed to more durable objects in metal (weapons, sceptres, and tools), which were handed down through generations and ended up deposited as hoards. During the fourteenth to ninth centuries B.C.E., gynomorphic vessels appeared more frequently and were always undecorated (Figure 20.2:6, 8); it is conceivable (given their reappearance 500 years later on Basarabi vessels) that the previous set of religious symbols was transferred to another medium, probably as a result of the redistribution of religious tasks and power to a third gender (Palincaş n.d.). One should note that the studies of the second category consider not only the depictions themselves, but also their wider contexts of use.

The Mortuary Domain

Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Chalcolithic

There is a strong contrast in this region between the use of intramural burial and the creation of formal cemeteries. The former continues throughout the period in some groups (e.g., Karanovo I–VI, Tripolye-Cucuteni) while cemeteries appeared in other areas (sixth millennium: Dudeşti, Vinča, Hamangia; fifth millennium: Copper Age Hungary). The application of categorical analysis compares the exclusive or shared distribution of artifact categories with age-sex categories.[3] In a categorical analysis of the Iron Gates Mesolithic, there were few object categories associated exclusively with any gender in the intramural burial domain, with bone tools associated mostly with women, and antler or antler tools mostly with men (Handsman 1991). Even though the paucity of adult male burials on early farming settlements in Hungary may have meant ambiguous male identities (Whittle 2008), relational, crosscutting categorization dominates the intramural mortuary domain. Moreover, even in Neolithic and Chalcolithic cemeteries such as Cernica and Vărăşti in the Lower Danube valley, there is a lack of marked gender differentiation in any dimension of mortuary practice, although female graves preferred ornament combinations to male tool-and-ornament combinations in both cemeteries (Chapman in press).

A set of categorical analyses of Late Neolithic and Copper Age Hungarian sites shows the emergence and later consolidation of opposing gendered practices, with contrasts between body placement (adult males on the right side, females on the left) on some Late Neolithic flat sites (e.g., Csőszhalom: see Anders and Nagy 2007) but not at others (e.g., Aszód: see Siklósi 2007); some gendered categorical differences for grave goods appear at both of these sites. It is not until the appearance of formal cemeteries, such as the Copper Age cemetery of Tiszapolgár-Basatanya, that rule-bound body placement becomes stronger and object association with men and women becomes more polarized (Sofaer Derevenski 1997; Chapman 2000). But even then, body placement is not strongly gendered at Copper Age cemeteries such as Hajdúböszörmény (Kovács and Váczi 2007). The varied significance of gendered oppositions through time and space shows how negotiations over gender changed with the emergence of secondary products and copper metallurgy. Siklósi's (2004) diachronic account of prestige goods in the Hungarian Neolithic shows that the Late Neolithic is the first period when specific grave goods are exclusively associated with particular age-sex categories, contemporary with a widening gap between well

and poorly furnished graves. Unfortunately for Siklósi, the assumption of male leaders in this period is contradicted by the unexplained prominence of well-furnished female graves.

A final categorical analysis of three Late Chalcolithic cemeteries (Devnja, Vinitsa, and Goljamo Delchevo) from Eastern Bulgaria (Chapman 1996) shows how maleness was indexed by a wider range of material culture than either femaleness or childness in each cemetery; it also shows that the women at Devnja were associated with functioning non-metal tools in oppositional to the symbolic, non-functioning copper tools placed with men. Contra Bailey (1994), there was competition between genders in both the mortuary and the domestic domains at these sites. At the Late Chalcolithic cemetery of Varna, males had clearly won the ideological competition over burial in the cemetery core, and there were clear signs of hierarchical deposition of the grave goods, which lasted as long as the cemetery itself (Chapman et al. 2006).

Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

Although almost every publication on mortuary remains in the region contains references to gender, few belong to gender archaeology proper. Traditionalists, who consider two genders (men and women) as self-evident and ubiquitous, use funerary data to identify culturally distinctive, gender-specific burial norms.

Correlations between gender and grave goods were expected, the latter *reflecting* men and women's separate roles: public activities, war, and hard work were regarded as male preserves while housekeeping and child-rearing were associated with females. In the absence of anthropological analyses, this correlation has sometimes been used to classify bodies as male or female – for example, the Late Bronze Age barrows from Lăpuş (Teržan 2005:246) or some of the Osthallstattkreis barrows (Teržan 1986, extending these criteria to bronze hoards).

A strong correspondence between gender and body positioning in inhumation graves occurred in some cases: for example, in the Early Bronze Age Chłopice-Veselé and Nitra Cultures (Bátora 1991:113, 116, 119) and in the Middle Bronze Age Füzesabony Culture (Bóna 1975:149). Once established, it has been extended to infer the sex of anthropologically undiagnosed skeletons and young children (e.g., Bátora 1991:133).

The construction of the graves relates less clearly to gender, except in rare cases, such as some Füzesabony cemeteries (Bóna 1975:149) where such a relation exists for all buried persons. However, impressive burial mounds, often with intricate internal constructions, played an important role in the way prehistoric gender relations were conceived. The monumental barrows at Čaka (ca. thirteenth to twelfth centuries B.C.E.; see Točík and Paulík 1960) and Očkov (ca. twelfth century B.C.E.; see Paulík 1962) in Slovakia and Susani (twelfth to eleventh centuries B.C.E.) in Romania (Stratan and Vulpe 1977) were interpreted, despite the lack of anthropological diagnosis, as male chieftains' graves (*Fürstengräber*) on the basis of analogies with the *Iliad*'s accounts of the funerals of Patroclus and Hector (Paulík 1962:35–42). Such cases were often extrapolated to the entire Bronze and Early Iron Ages as testimony to male domination of society.

Exceptions to expected depositional patterns have either been classified as "abnormal" or, more frequently, left without comment. These exceptions constituted

the starting point for gender archaeology. Some authors have pointed out the variability of gender roles, an issue for which funerary data are crucial. The clearest case relates to the Scythians since both written sources (particularly Herodotus IV and Pseudo-Hippocrates) and archaeological evidence attest to women's participation in combat: over 100 girls' and women's graves in modern Ukraine contain weapons (e.g., bows and quivers with arrows, stone missiles for slings or a bolas-like weapon, and, less often, spearheads and swords) alongside spindle whorls, various other tools, personal ornaments, and occasionally children. Bone pathologies attest to the actual participation of women in armed conflicts (Rolle 2010:154). Women buried with weapons are also known from the Early Bronze Age Nitra Culture (Bátora 1991:125) and the Late Hallstatt period at Cozia in eastern Romania (fifth to fourth centuries B.C.E.; see Vulpe 1990:46–48, no. 56).

Research on the Early Bronze Age cemetery at Mokrin (ca. 2100–1800 B.C.E.) has shown that identifying prehistoric genders is by no means straightforward. At Mokrin, there is a strong correspondence between sex, orientation of the body, and grave goods. Rega (1997:232) maintained that there were only two genders because the few graves with the anthropologically determined sex at variance with the expected orientation fall within the expected range of sex estimation error. O'Shea attributed the latter to abnormal individuals: shamans or medical practitioners (1996:140). Porčić tried to verify whether gender was defined by the type of labor, i.e., whether biological males and females buried opposite to the norm of their sex also engaged in activities opposite to their sex, but his hypothesis was supported by only one case (Porčić 2010:176–177 as reported by Matić n.d.). Matić argues that terms like "abnormal" and "misorientation" are the result of the transfer of the modern concept of biological sex and gender hetero-normativity to prehistoric contexts. He argues that the group of four men and four women oriented opposite to the norm of their sex could not have been abnormal, queer, but rather must have had a high social status, judging by the grave goods (mostly rich but with Grave 10 the richest in the cemetery). There are thus two equally probable interpretations, both in the range of the "normality" of the Mokrin people: (1) if gender was defined by sex, there were two genders (men and women), while the other two categories (biological men oriented as women, and biological women oriented as men) were transgressions of the first allowed only to prestigious individuals; (2) if gender was not defined by sex alone, but also by body, wealth, and status, then the aforementioned categories represent four genders (Matić n.d.).

Palincaş (2010c) has argued that variations in funerary ritual among three Late Bronze Age cemeteries from the Monteoru area (Carpathian Arc ca. 1700–1500 cal. B.C.E.) were connected to a fundamental reshaping of gender relations. Cemetery 4 at Sărata Monteoru, with its new social emphasis on the mother-child bond and the increasing variations in body positioning, represents the stage of negotiation. The body positioning specific for a group of women in this cemetery was generalized in the two cemeteries of the following period, together with a complex body symbolism; the mother-child bond was no longer expressed in cemeteries, but gynomorphic and sun symbols were combined on pottery (Figure 20.2:7). This trajectory of the symbols with their origin in the female body may indicate higher rank for the female gender (Palincaş 2010c). This conclusion is at odds with Constantinescu's interpretation of osteological remains (depressed cranial vault fractures and parry fractures) as indicators

of domestic violence (Constantinescu 2006–2007). Even if Constantinescu's examples are earlier by at least one century, it is not likely that gender relations had changed so radically in such a short time. There are many undiagnosed skeletons that could alter the statistical basis of this interpretation, but one wonders how it is possible to regard injuries resulting from domestic violence as more severe than those resulting from battle, if one continues to see the latter as the exclusive province of men (e.g., Bârzu 1989).

Social Formations

Mesolithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic

In postmodern fashion, the paucity of grand narratives in Balkan prehistory, let alone a gendered story, has led to a dearth of general social interpretations. Long gone (even if republished in 1997!) is Sherratt's (1982) evolutionary sequence of early farming, with matrilineages giving way to plough-based farming with large patrilineal clans; with the exchange of women, valuables, and trade items in the former leading to arranged marriages to concentrate land-holding in the latter; and with the decline of female horticultural labor leading to more work in the home. Social interpretation since 1991 has focused on regional or site-based cameos, some recognizing lineages and others looking at ideological structures or relational trends in personhood. As an example of the former, Handsman's (1991) reflectionist reconstruction of changes at Lepenski Vir recognizes the transformation of a dual lineage organization into a dominant and junior lineage through variations in production and contacts outside the Danube gorges. Zalai-Gaál (1986) has used mortuary data and serological analysis of human bones from the western Hungarian Late Neolithic to infer a matrilineal, matrilocal, segmentary society with adult male tribal leaders. While the groups of graves within the settlements support this model, the basis of serological analysis has been challenged, and there are few symbols of power in exclusively adult male graves. On the basis of gender polarization in mortuary data, Häusler (1990) makes reflective assumptions to interpret the Hungarian Copper Age as "a new structure built on two gendered sub-cultures." However, a more probable alternative is that this dichotomy signals the importance of gender negotiations in the absence of figurines and at a time of social change.

Accepting Hodder's admission that his *domus/agrios* model was not about gender relations but about the way in which gender was manipulated in wider ideological structures (1990:308), later commentators (e.g., Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997) have recognized the household as an appropriate framework for the active materialization of gender and other ideologies, while noting that the well-attested increase in warlike practices through time in this region may well have led to the male-dominated *agrios* (Whittle 2005). Jones (2005) builds on the importance of Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements densely packed with houses to suggest that the settlement is the primary locus for the development of personhood through the formation of kin-based group identities and dense networks of enchained social relationships.

Developing this notion further, Chapman and Gaydarska (2006) have sought to characterize two gendered forms of emerging personhood based upon differing

fragmentation patterns of Balkan figurines, thereby creating a framework for discussing both individual and dividual forms of personhood and the tension between enchained relations and object accumulation.

Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

In approaching social organization during the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, gender archaeologists have focused primarily on the ranking of men and women, secondarily on the variability of gender roles and, more recently, on the variability of gender arrangements.

Case studies in which women ranked higher than men run counter to the dominant idea (e.g., Chicideanu 1986:28; Bátora 1991; Shennan 1993; Harding 2000: 395–398, 409–410; Dergaciov 2010) that social differentiation was always the creation of men, who transferred their status to women in patriarchal societies. Rega (1997) has shown that this conviction has led to double standards for cemeteries where there is a strong association between wealth in metal and gender: metal objects in male graves are routinely interpreted as indicating men's control of metal trade, an activity that was fundamental for the social stratification in Early Bronze Age societies; metal objects in female graves are seen as reflecting male wealth and prestige (e.g., Shennan 1993). In order to escape the circular logic implied by the principle that "rich male burials are rich [i.e., 'men'] while rich females simply married well" (Rega 1997:241), Rega used other data from Mokrin, such as the preference for female children and the presumed importance of women's labor in small-scale societies. While pointing out that all these traits taken separately are not incompatible with patriarchal societies, Rega argued that their association at Mokrin made higher ranking of women in relation to men conceivable. Palincaş (2010c) also argues for ranking women higher than men in the Late Bronze Age Monteoru cemeteries.

The Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare concept of gender implies that the genders are interdependent and/or unstable (Palincaş 2010b:82); consequently one wonders if they were ranked. For the Osthallstattkreis, Eibner pointed out that if we use the same standards to evaluate rich male and rich female burial mounds, there must have been women chieftains and priestesses, roles that are sometimes not clearly separable; evidence of the funerary record has been corroborated by the rich imagery of the period (Eibner 2000–2001). Although from this example one cannot be sure that men and women were ranked equally, it certainly suggests that if there were differences in ranking, they were not important enough to prevent at least some women from exercising chiefly power.

A typical case in which men ranked higher than women comes from the Middle and Late Bronze Age Fundeni-Govora area and shows that, despite challenges, patriarchy remained in place for centuries. For the Scythians, it appears that the archaeological record confirms the written sources, which allegedly show that women had much autonomy in decision-making in everyday life without access to the highest level of power (Makhortykh 2010). Interestingly, it seems that the quasi-masculine performances of Scythian women did not secure their access to supreme political power, while the more traditional roles of the Osthallstattkreis women did win them this recognition.

Although these studies are concerned primarily with men and women, it is certain that there were more than two genders in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages, as has been

suggested for Mokrin, for the Middle Bronze Age Füzesabony Culture (Dáni 2004:91–92; Koós 2006:79), and for the Latest Bronze Age and possibly also the Early Iron Age in the Lower Danube (Palincaş n.d.). It is hoped that future research will contribute further to this line of investigation.

Critical Assessments, Gaps in Coverage, and Future Challenges to Gender Archaeology

Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Chalcolithic

Although gender archaeology has made some progress in Balkan prehistory, the following recent comment by a young female researcher shows that androcentric beliefs are still rife and continue to merit refutation: "Generally, it can be said that males had higher status than females and it was always males who filled the leading positions in society" (Siklósi 2007:188). However, most syntheses of Balkan prehistory (e.g., Whittle 1996, 2005; Jones 2008; Souvatzi 2008) and recent collections of essays (Bailey et al. 2005; Bailey et al. 2008; Spataro and Biagi 2007) have very limited or simply no gender coverage. Lesure (2002) observes that, since Mother Goddess syntheses cannot be removed by local, contextual archaeology, a new set of gendered, smaller-scale narratives are needed to replace the Gimbutassian story. We are currently some way from creating these new stories; minimum requirements would be a deeper recognition than hitherto of gender as pivotal to histories of social and productive relations (Handsman 1991) and a clearer assessment of the importance of other principles, such as age, kinship, and status, operating simultaneously with and crosscutting gender principles.

Despite the widespread acceptance by interpretive archaeologists that material culture played an active role in past lives, there has been insufficient research on the ways that gender-object relationships have developed; this is ironic in view of the extraordinarily object-rich character of Balkan prehistory. Not only have there been few answers to the question of how material culture was used to make interventions about gender roles, in the Daniel Miller (1987) sense of the objectification of persons through things,[4] but few archaeologists have even focused on how to answer this question. Unfortunately, Knappett's (2005) important theory of material culture excludes gender considerations completely. A general theory of the relationship between personhood and material culture is emerging, but the gendered aspects have not been strongly developed, least of all for later Balkan prehistory. Thus, Gosden (2005) notes that humans are socialized according to their pre-existing material world – in the Balkans, often in bright, colorful houses replete with gendered objects. Lesick has focused on one aspect of socialization: "gender embodies the nature of experience of each person's 'material environment'" (1997:38). There is great potential for discussion of gendered contrasts between people who grew up in large populations (50–300 people) on tells or flat sites and those living on dispersed homesteads in households of a dozen or so people; another contrast is between metropolitan sites with rich material culture and small or short-term "peripheral" sites with a paucity of objects, including few figurines. Such differences in settlement form will also have a major impact on another gap in research – the means to integrate Balkan prehistoric gendered practice with Trevor Watkins' (2005) notion of architecture as "theatres of

memory." However, one major issue with so-called "house assemblages" concerns whether the objects excavated in an abandoned house represent a "living" assemblage reflecting actual everyday activities or a "death" assemblage created by the introduction of new objects and/or removal of parts of the "living" assemblage. This question is well illustrated by Marangou's (1996) discussion of the household deposition of figurine sets large enough for the ritual activities of a whole village. Were these sets kept for active use in a "shrine" and stored for general village ritual use, or were they assembled from several different houses as a "mortuary" deposit? This question has implications for many gendered interpretations and requires much additional research.

On a final methodological note, the insights developed from categorical analysis are only as good as the anthropological identifications of skeletal age and sex. With few exceptions (Zoffmann 2001), three age-sex categories have to be used: adult males, adult females, and children (e.g., Chapman 2000). The widespread use of old-fashioned German anthropological methods continues to limit the discussion of the probabilities of a sexual identification or the probabilistic range of age (Gowland and Knüsel 2006). Thus, restudy of many skeletal collections would have major research benefits for gender.

Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

In apparent contrast to Neolithic and Chalcolithic communities, variability of gender arrangements is surprisingly high in the Bronze Age, as can be seen in the following neighboring and roughly contemporaneous examples: in the Monteoru area women were ranked more highly than men; in the Fundeni-Govora area patriarchy was long in place and its challenge had only limited success; and in the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare area genders were conceived as interrelated and/or transient states of being. The variations in gender arrangements over such a small territory make extrapolation difficult, necessitating gender studies in all other regions. Furthermore, gender studies often extrapolate conclusions from certain sites to the whole area of an archaeological culture. Given the criticism that has been leveled against the concept of the "archaeological culture" (and in particular against the assumption that the same norms are shared by all people living within its distribution area), a more cautious attitude is necessary since there is no guarantee that the same gender identities and relations were at work in what is in fact the distribution area of a pottery repertoire.

Assessing gender in relation to rank is methodologically a serious challenge; we shall have to find better arguments than the author's personal convictions or Classical anecdotes to distinguish between when "rich females simply married well" and when they reached the top positions in order to understand the development of patriarchy in the region. Studies in the region have focused generally on high-status persons (Eibner 2000–2001:132) and have treated masculinity and femininity as homogeneous categories. However, social inequality, the unequal distribution of power and wealth, produces internal differentiation in genders. As masculinity and femininity are life projects conceived in terms of gender, unequal access to resources results in different (even if related) ways of conceiving these projects and unequal chances in realizing them (Connell 1996). This means that in the Early Iron Age in particular, when most

societies showed signs of complex stratification, genders could not have been homogeneous. For example, if ideal masculinity among Thracians was indeed conceived of as possession of authority and control over life and death (Sîrbu and Ştefan 2010:244), then this ideal was accessible for only some men; most men were excluded from it to varying degrees. Such exclusion must have been less dramatic in the less sharply stratified societies of the Early and Middle Bronze Age, but this aspect of gender has not yet been investigated.

While in some societies there are more than two genders, and that fact is treated as "normal," it does not follow that prehistoric persons were unable to regard other genders as "abnormal." But how are we to identify them? It is also worth exploring the relationships between gender and kinship; while it is important to avoid imposing our own notions of kinship onto prehistory, one could nevertheless profit from the DNA analyses recently initiated in the region (Cardoş et al. 2008) as a stepping-stone to future discussions. But all of these new research directions, interesting as they are, will have very little impact on the archaeology of the region without the abandonment of the idea of gender as self-evident and ahistorical.

Conclusion

The limitations on the development of gender archaeology in Eastern Europe echo the constraints on the emergence of theoretical archaeologies in these regions. The deconstruction of "Great Goddess" interpretations has made gender archaeology far harder to practice, although intellectually more satisfying, opening up prehistoric images of humans to a multiplicity of new interpretations throughout prehistory, not least linked to political praxis and personhood. There is still great unfulfilled potential in creating a gendered household archaeology in the Neolithic as much as the Metal Ages, especially through the debate on the gendered spatial dichotomy between private and public.

The vast majority of the archaeological literature on Carpathian and Balkan prehistory works with an essentialist concept of gender and sees no point in engaging with gender studies as they are understood in other research fields. Different strategies have been attempted to counter this essentialism, with the use of categorical analyses in the Neolithic and Copper Age to characterize rule-bound gendered differences, and the demonstration in the Bronze and Iron Ages that the identification of prehistoric genders is not a straightforward and unambiguous enterprise. Recent research on gender in the region also demonstrates that gender identities and relations vary over short time and small spaces, that they are everywhere part and parcel of the social dynamic, and that they account for much of the variability of the archaeological record. The development of gendered interpretations of craft specialization in the Metal Ages has progressed farther than in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic, especially when extensive Late Bronze Age exchange networks raise the value of women's labor. There have also been more frequent attempts to discuss third and fourth genders in the Metal Ages, with more conservative approaches in the earlier periods. What the research for this chapter has shown both authors is that gender archaeologists in Eastern Europe will need to work untiringly to make further progress against the resistance of an essentially patriarchal archaeological establishment.

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NOTES

1 In this chapter, John Chapman covers the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, and Marija Gimbutas, while Nona Palincaş covers the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age and the impact of socialist policies.
2 The term "dividual" refers to a person composed of the relationships in which she participates. This form of personhood is characteristic for some parts of Melanesia (Strathern 1988).
3 "Categorical analysis" is that form of analysis in which age-gender categories of person are compared with artifact categories to identify which artifact categories (e.g., flint sickle inserts) were associated solely with one age-gender category (e.g., adult females) rather than with all categories of person (Chapman 1996).
4 "Objectification" is the term used by Miller (1987) to discuss the extension of human bodies and personhood through the use of material objects.

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CHAPTER 21

Gender and Feminism in the Prehistoric Archaeology of Southwest Europe

Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Sandra Montón-Subías

The position of gender archaeology in the region that might loosely be referred to as southwestern Europe is far from homogeneous. Whereas in Spain the status of gender and feminist-oriented archaeology as major areas of research is quite solid, the same cannot be said regarding France and Portugal. Our aim in this article is threefold. First, we will briefly summarize the historical evolution of gender archaeology in France, Portugal, and Spain. Second, we will provide an overview of the main debates among archaeologists working in this area of research in the three countries. Finally, we will evaluate the main challenges currently facing gender archaeology in southwestern Europe. Most of the publications referred to in this article will be examined in terms of a gender and/or feminist approach although in some instances the connection may actually be implicit rather than explicit. While writing this article we compiled an extensive body of literature produced since the late 1980s that is too large to include here in full. Our selection, therefore, is not exhaustive, but we believe it to be a relevant sample reflecting the development of gender archaeology in the three countries under study.

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Feminist and Gender Issues From the 1980s to the Present

A perusal of the literature dealing with gender archaeology makes immediately evident the gulf that separates France and Portugal from Spain. In Portugal, the debate on gender in archaeology is still in its infancy. The invisibility of women and the prevalence of gender stereotypes in archaeological discourse were first discussed by two of the best-known Portuguese archaeologists at a session of TAG (Theoretical Archaeology Group) in 1993 entitled "Women in European Prehistory" (Jorge and Jorge 1996; Jorge 1997). This line of questioning was taken up again recently by young researchers contributing papers to conferences held in 2008 (Gomes n.d.; Martins n.d.). Importantly, the study of gender in past epochs features, however indirectly, in publications dealing with other topics such as weapons (Senna-Martinez 2009) and is the main subject in an as yet small number of papers (Vale 2010; Boaventura 2011; Jorge and Jorge n.d.). Despite the high number of female professionals in Portuguese archaeology, the lack of a strong tradition of critical reflection within the Portuguese feminist movement, according to Vale (2010:143), has so far precluded the rise of gender archaeology in Portugal.

In France, feminism and archaeology seem to have gone separate ways, and gender archaeology stirs little enthusiasm. Coudart (1998) places this lack of interest within the context of French history and sociology, claiming that in French culture in general a universal concern over human beings prevails over gender divisions and the focus on gender issues. For this reason, she claims, gender is not a priority in French archaeology. This account, however, seems to us to be contradicted by the relevance of gender in other cultural fields in France. As Coudart herself acknowledges, there is a long-standing tradition of feminism in France, from Simone de Beauvoir and the *Mouvement de libération des femmes* (Women's Liberation Movement, MLF) in the aftermath of May 1968 to more recent forms of activism to which we owe concepts such as "ecofeminism" and "the feminism of sexual difference." Despite the marginalization of feminism in university circles, France was the first European country in which a center for women's studies was founded (Segarra 2003).

A more likely explanation for the irrelevance of gender in French archaeology may perhaps be found in what Coudart herself sees elsewhere (1999) as the manifest resistance to theory on the part of French archaeologists, or what Audouze (1999) sees as their *different* approach to the role of theory. A refusal to explicitly engage with issues of theory explains the absence of works dealing with gender in French archaeological literature, and accounts for the fact that discussions of theory are circumscribed within the sphere of publications on methodology. A good example of this is a widely used handbook, now in its third edition, in which the term "sex" is employed while "gender archaeology" is summarily dispatched with a synopsis of Coudart's views on the subject (Demoule et al. 2009:205, 236). In the same country that has given us anthropologists of the stature of Bourdieu, archaeology has not confronted the existence of the individual within society, and prefers to continue talking about the social group as a whole as if it acted as a seamless, coherent unit (Coudart 1999). Despite all the above, it might be argued that André Leroi-Gourhan's (1911–1986) vision of prehistory, promoting concepts such as *chaîne opératoire*, has strongly influenced research on men's and women's roles as conducted in particular by some of

France's senior archaeologists. Thus, the work of Leclerc and Masset (1983) and Pigeot (1987) was closely connected to Leroi-Gourhan's approach. More recently, publications on gender archaeology, or at least with an implicit concern for gender issues, feature a number of research papers dealing with the Eastern Mediterranean (Pomadère 2008, 2009), as well as France itself (Pigeot 2004, 2010; Audouze and Janny 2009; Audouze 2010).[1]

Within this framework Spain is an exception. Here feminist and gender archaeology emerged as early as the 1980s, shortly after their appearance in Scandinavia and the United States, and they have continued to grow ever since (see also Cruz Berrocal 2009). This phenomenon was not connected with the early presence of women as professionals in the field of archaeology since their research was mostly conducted within the then unchallenged parameters of male-dominated discourses (Díaz-Andreu and Sanz Gallego 1994; Cárdaba et al. 1998; Díaz-Andreu 1998b; Sánchez Liranzo 2000); instead it can be attributed to the particular evolution of Spanish archaeology in a period of political upheaval in the country's history after 1975.

Several factors explain the success of gender archaeology in Spain. To begin with, there was the emergence of Second Wave feminism after the end of the right-wing dictatorship in 1975 (Davies 1999), which influenced the pioneers in the field of feminist archaeology. A second crucial factor has to do with the transformation of Spanish universities in the late 1970s and 1980s as the result of a combination of demographic and political forces. As the mandarins of Francoist-dominated academic life (including archaeology) reached the age of retirement *en masse*, and their tight grip on decades-old networks of clientelism began to loosen, a number of vacant posts became available for young professionals. Among these young new lecturers and researchers, some men and women openly took up the banner of Marxism, and many women that of feminism. In this context of political turmoil, the first papers dealing with the women of past epochs ever written in Spain from a politically engaged, openly feminist perspective were presented in 1982 at the II Jornades Catalanes de la Dona by María Encarna Sanahuja, then at the University of Barcelona. Although they were not delivered to an audience of archaeologists, and were never properly published,[2] this was the public start of a line of research that still continues today in Barcelona.

Although in the late 1980s and early 1990s only a rather small number of scholars were concerned with women's studies in archaeology, at the 1992 *Reunión de Arqueología Teórica* (RAT, the Spanish version of TAG, which only met once) a session was held on "Archaeology and Women" with the attendance of scholars from Barcelona, Madrid, and Santiago de Compostela. While the proceedings of this conference were never published as such, some of the papers on gender appeared in different journals (Colomer et al. 1993; Díaz-Andreu and Sanz Gallego 1994; Álvarez García et al. 1998). The session turned out to have a decisive impact on many women in the audience, stirring interest in the topic among female archaeologists from other parts of Spain such as Andalucía (Hornos and Risquez 2005:480). Soon afterwards the influence of two path-breaking books, *Were They All Men?* (Bertelsen et al. 1987) and *Engendering Archaeology* (Gero and Conkey 1991), fostered an interest in gender and promoted debate on the introduction of gender as a suitable analytical category for historical interpretation (Díaz-Andreu 1992; Colomer et al. 1999). It may be worth mentioning here that a new interest in the roles of women also emerged *outside* the study of prehistory among classical archaeologists and specialists in ancient history

(e.g., Martínez López 1991; Picazo 1995; Molas 2005; Zarzalejos Prieto 2008). More recently, a workshop entitled Gender in Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology was organized at the University of the Basque Country in 2008 (Belén Bengoetxea Rementeria, pers. comm.).

In the first decade of the twenty-first century gender archaeology became the solidly established area of research and scholarship it now is. All over Spain conferences on various aspects of gender and feminist archaeology have been organized in cities such as Granada, Barcelona, Valencia, Madrid, and Almería, and a number of important monographs have been published (González Marcén 2000; González Marcén et al. 2005, 2007a; Sánchez Romero 2005a, 2007; Escoriza Mateu et al. 2008; Montón-Subías and Sánchez Romero 2008; Prados Torreira and Ruiz López 2008). There have been both single- and co-authored books (Querol 2001; Escoriza Mateu 2002a; Hernando 2002; Sanahuja Yll 2002, 2007; Querol and Triviño 2004; Masvidal and Picazo 2005), as well as a book based on an exhibition (Soler Mayor 2006) (see below). Gender archaeology has also been the main subject of quite a few papers and sessions at each of the three Meetings of Young Archaeologists held annually between 2008 and 2010, and recently the first two doctoral dissertations on gender archaeology have been completed and defended (García Luque 2008; Alarcón García 2010).

It seems beyond doubt, therefore, that gender archaeology has become a leading area of research within Spanish archaeology (for recent reports, see Sánchez Liranzo 2008; Sánchez Romero 2009). This does not mean, of course, that there is no opposition and that all scholars without exception accept the field's mainstream status, but in this regard the situation in Spain is probably not different from that in other European countries, including Britain.

Main Areas of Research and Lines of Enquiry

As has been explained above, gender-based approaches have been making an impact on the archaeology of southwestern Europe for more than 20 years. During this period various issues ranging from critical analyses of androcentrism to the need for new conceptualizations have been discussed and debated. In the following sections we will attempt to sketch a brief overview of the main developments.

The critique of androcentrism

The analysis of androcentrism in archaeological discourses and practices has been one of the main concerns of gender archaeology in southwestern Europe from its very inception, and this issue soon became the subject of monographs. In the early 1990s gender-biased language was the focus of an article entitled "The Importance of Being Called a Man in Prehistory" (Argelès et al. 1991), which was one of the papers presented at the 1992 RAT (Álvarez García et al. 1998). Later on, the same issue was noticed for the images selected or created to illustrate archaeological accounts, with special attention given to human evolution (Querol et al. 2000; Querol and Triviño 2004; Querol 2008). Just as in English-speaking countries, the critique of distorted depictions of human evolution was one of the first issues



Figure 21.1 Exhibition on "Women in Prehistory," Museu de Prehistòria de València, June 2006 (photo courtesy of Begoña Soler).

mobilizing women's discontent and a point of departure for the attack on the deep-seated gender bias in archaeology (Sanahuja Yll 1991, 2002). In recent years this critique has led to serious proposals for the elaboration of alternative imagery capable of subverting the androcentric album (González Marcén 2008:105).

Special mention should be made of discussions on the representation of gender in museum displays, which have occasionally led to changes in exhibits, such as the Jaén Museum (Risquez Cuenca and Hornos Mata 2000; Hornos Mata and Risquez Cuenca 2005:485) or to more accurate and prominent representations of women and the organization of the first "Women and Prehistory" exhibition in 2006 (Figure 21.1), an event which included a round table discussion (Soler Mayor 2006, 2008). Although originally planned as a touring exhibition traveling to small towns in the Valencia area, it became so successful that it had to be shown in many other places around the country. At the time the present chapter was being written, the exhibition was still touring and had already been shown at 35 locations, including major towns such as Badajoz, Ferrol, Granada, Guadalajara, Santander, Tarragona, and Valladolid (Soler, pers. comm.). Finally, between March 9 and 14, 2010, to mark the occasion of International Women's Day, the Altamira Museum organized an exhibition called "The Times of Altamira," which showcased the role of women as hunters; women were granted free admission. In addition, activities for children were held every weekend during the month of March aimed at questioning the representation of women in art from the prehistoric period to the present.

Maintenance activities, time, space, and identity

The critique of androcentrism in Spain led to a search for new analytical categories capable of conceptualizing women's experiences and practices more accurately. This process resulted in the elaboration of the concept of "maintenance activities," which was first coined in the early 1990s by a team then working at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. It spread to research groups in other regions a few years later, becoming the focus of intense debate from different theoretical perspectives that continues today. The concept gained international currency thanks to workshops held in 2005 and 2007 (González Marcén et al. 2005; González Marcén et al. 2007a; Montón-Subías and Sánchez Romero 2008). The "maintenance activities" approach deals mainly with the practical chores involved in the management of daily life from a gender-oriented perspective: cleaning, making clothes, care-giving, raising and socializing children, food processing and cooking, public health and healing, the organization of living spaces, etc. By enabling and regulating the welfare, cohesion, and reproduction of human groups, these activities become indispensable for social stability and the governance of daily life. Moreover, they require a combination of specialized knowledge and the ability to create and sustain networks of interpersonal relationships since, as research has shown, decisions taken at this level may affect many other social spheres that depend on maintenance activities for their own sustainability. Neither the continuity of the recurrent patterns of social practice nor the channeling of change into new, iterative forms of daily life management would be possible without maintenance activities (González Marcén et al. 2008:3).

Over the years the multiple dimensions of this concept have been further explored in theoretical discussions (Picazo 1997; González Marcén and Picazo 2005; González Marcén et al. 2007b; González Marcén et al. 2008; Hernando 2008) and through the analysis of specific practices, such as cooking and food processing (Colomer 1996; Montón-Subías 2002) or general care-giving (Alarcón García 2007; Sanahuja Yll 2007; Montón-Subías 2010a). Some works have focused on specific settlements, periods, and/or regions, such as the Bronze Age in the Iberian Peninsula's northeastern area (Colomer et al. 1998), the Argaric Bronze Age (Alarcón García et al. 2008; Alarcón García and Sánchez Romero 2010), and the Iberian Iron Age (Curià et al. 2000; see also Montón-Subías 2011 for a recent report; and Lozano 2011 for a discussion on epistemology). Research has also been conducted on Western Phoenician colonies from the perspective of postcolonial theory (Delgado and Ferrer 2007).

With regard to maintenance activities and the provision of care, an interest has developed in the archaeology of childhood and motherhood with a special focus on children's learning and socialization. Findings of key importance for the development of this new line of inquiry have been obtained through field research at the Argaric site of Cerro de la Encina (in Monachil, near Granada) where some coarse-tempered vessels lacking surface treatment were identified as toys on the evidence afforded by similar pots found in a burial containing the remains of two children. Consequently, these vessels are thought to indicate the connection between play and learning in the acquisition of manufacturing skills during childhood (Sánchez Romero 2008). Children have also been the focus of research conducted by a team working from an explicitly Marxist approach at another Argaric site, Gatas near Almería. The offerings found in the burials of six-year-old children at the site seem to support the hypothesis of the hereditary nature of private property and its uneven transmission in Argaric society (Lull et al. 2004).

The general interest in childhood and motherhood first expressed in Scandinavian and Anglo-American research (e.g., Lillehammer 1989; Sofaer Derevenski 1994) has influenced the growth of that subject in Spain, as can be seen in many publications analyzing archaeological contexts in light of data on pregnancy, infant births and deaths, child care, material culture, and burial rites (Balaguer and Oliart 2003; Chapa 2003; Nájera Colino et al. 2010; Roig et al. 2010). The number of osteoarchaeological studies on the subject is also steadily increasing (Jiménez-Brobeil et al. 2007; Miguel Ibáñez 2010). In France, the identification of children's activities has been the focus of recent research on Upper Paleolithic settlements (Audouze and Janny 2009).

Although the study of maintenance activities has brought to the foreground the importance of the tasks that women have traditionally been associated with, a substantial body of research has also located women in what were hitherto regarded as exclusively male domains, such as lithics (Sánchez Romero 2005b; Orozco Köhler 2006); metalwork, as revealed by research at the Argaric site of Peñalosa (Baños de la Encina, Jaén) (Sánchez Romero and Moreno Onorato 2003; Alarcón García 2010); and the production of high-quality standardized pottery, as shown by analyses on Gatas in Almería (Colomer 2005). The concept of *chaîne opératoire* has also been enormously influential in Spain. Indeed, the attempt to grasp the operational sequence behind artifacts from a gendered perspective has led to extensive reflection on the sex and gender of agents carrying out technical operations.

As part of the vogue for the study of maintenance activities, time and space have also become major concepts in gender-oriented research. Quotidian or "everyday" time in particular has been studied as a form of temporality characterized by repetition and recurrence and typically linked to maintenance activities (Picazo 1997). Reflection on time has also encouraged debates on the gendered nature of archaeological chronologies, as has been shown for the Argaric period (González Marcén and Montón-Subías 2009). With regard to space, the concept of *espacio vivido* (living/lived space) has been devised to define the place where maintenance activities occur (Curià and Masvidal 1998; González Marcén et al. 2008). While including what is traditionally referred to as domestic space, it is not limited to it. In fact, the term "maintenance activities" was originally intended to emphasize that the common factor in this basic pattern of human activities does not derive from the *location* of one particular type of space (domestic space) but from its *structural* function. Actually, the location of living/lived space is not necessarily fixed but depends on the practices and the relationships associated with maintenance activities (Montón-Subías 2000). From this perspective various studies in the Iberian Peninsula have analyzed these spaces of daily life (Colomer et al. 1998; Curià et al. 2000; Sánchez Romero 2000; Pedro Michó 2006) although houses and domestic space continue to be studied from other perspectives as well (Castro et al. 2003; Delgado and Ferrer 2007; Belarte 2008; Audouze 2010; Pigeot 2010).

In connection with research on gender, space, and time, some authors have been exploring the construction of the self and the historical reasons for gender inequality. On the basis of their own ethnoarchaeological work, and drawing from enquiries in the domains of psychology, sociology, philosophy, and anthropology, they have studied the interplay between personhood and social practices and the role of intermeshed relational and individual identities in the construction of gender differences (Hernando 2002; Hernando et al. 2011). Male and female selves, it is argued, have developed divergently, connecting with the surrounding world and its basic, ordering

parameters of space and time in widely different ways. This may have resulted historically from the asymmetry between men's and women's degree of spatial mobility. Men's (usually) higher mobility may have triggered the process of personal detachment and self-differentiation, leading to individualization – an almost exclusively male attribute before the advent of modernity according to the author (Hernando 2000).

Starting from very different premises within a fully Marxian framework, ethnoarchaeological research has also been carried out by a team from the Autonomous University of Barcelona studying the Yamana group in Argentina (Piana et al. 1992; Piqué i Huerta et al. 2008). Revisiting previous work by others, they claim that resources associated with women, including vegetables and small fauna, tend to be less valued by the society in general and even by archaeologists today. They suggest that lithic and other tools should be classified according to their use (for example, by looking at micro-residues) rather than their form or typology. However, actual analytical studies on the Yamana still remain to be carried out.

Gender and burial rites

Mortuary archaeology has been at the core of gender-oriented research in Spain, with major lines of inquiry centered on funerary furniture and the spatial distribution of tombs, mainly from the Argaric Bronze Age and the Iberian Iron Age. Some works have debunked the prevalent bias that tends to assign gender to certain items in the funerary deposit on the basis of androcentric criteria (Sanahuja Yll 2006; Prados Torreira 2010a). Concerning the Argaric period, some scholars have used the analysis of combinations of grave goods and objects exclusively associated to one or the other sex to pose hypotheses about sex roles (Castro et al. 1993–1994; Sanahuja Yll 2006). The fact that awls are almost exclusively found in female tombs has led to further reflection on maintenance activities and the processes contributing to the formation of personal identity (Montón-Subías 2007). Research in this direction has also incorporated information provided by paleoanthropological studies (Aranda Jiménez et al. 2009; Montón-Subías 2010b). In fact, gender-focused osteoarchaeological analyses are progressively growing in number, and not only for the Argaric period, for which differences have been ascertained regarding the types of injuries sustained by women versus men, and adults versus children (Jiménez-Brobeil et al. 1995; Rihuete Herrada 2002; Jiménez-Brobeil et al. 2004; Miguel Ibáñez 2006). Finally, it is in relation to burial analysis that some preliminary reassessment of traditional male roles has been achieved (Aranda Jiménez et al. 2009).

As regards burials in the Iberian Iron Age, recent investigations have focused on hitherto under-researched areas, such as the roles of prominent women (Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa 1998; García Luque and Risquez 2008; Prados Torreira 2010b; Risquez and García Luque 2010) and the presence of maintenance activities (Rafel Fontanals 2007; García Luque and Risquez 2008).

Gender and art

The iconographic representation of gender is one of the other major areas of research in the archaeology of gender in southwest Europe. Prehistoric art and proto-historic (mainly Iberian) sculpture have attracted most studies although some French and

Spanish archaeologists have also studied figurines and sculptures from the Eastern Mediterranean (Masvidal and Picazo 2005; Masvidal Fernández 2007; Picazo 2008; Pomadère 2009).

The Iberian Peninsula is one of the richest areas in the world for prehistoric art, and this has allowed discussions about gender to be based on a large and varied body of material evidence. Margaret Conkey's early feminist comments on Paleolithic art (Conkey 1991) were soon followed by other feminist scholars in Spain (Hachuel and Sanahuja Yll 1996). There are also some studies that emphasize the representation of women in Paleolithic art (Ramos et al. 2002; Corchón Rodríguez 2005). Most research, however, concentrates on post-Paleolithic art. It is widely believed that the Atlantic rock carvings, as well the carvings and paintings in the other areas of the Iberian Peninsula from the Mesolithic onward, represent a world in which male domination was imposed, although explicit discussions on gender are the exception. In the Levantine style (which some experts ascribe to the Neolithic and others to an earlier date) scenes of hunting and warfare abound, and some scholars (mainly women) have attempted to identify representations of women describing the activities they carried out (Alonso Tejada and Grimal 1993; Olària 2011). It is widely agreed, however, that the majority of gendered figures are masculine. Still, on the basis of certain representations, more balanced gender relationships have been hypothesized for one of the earliest Levantine art styles (Martínez Valle and Guillem Calatayud 2006:54) (see Figure 21.2), and female researchers working from an explicitly gender or feminist-oriented approach argue that this type of art might represent the exploitation of women or even constitute an example of men's biased self-representation (Díaz-Andreu 1998a; Escoriza Mateu 2002b, 2006). As regards schematic art, gender has been identified as the basic theme of a myth depicted on a carved rock in the middle of a valley in central Spain (Díaz-Andreu 2003:figures 15–17).

Images of warriors on stelae from the Late Bronze Age have been interpreted as evidence of a male-dominated society (Celestino Pérez 2001; Harrison 2004; García Sanjuán et al. 2006) whereas representations on stelae of females with prestige objects have been viewed as allegories of powerful women (Risquez Cuenca and García Luque 2007:264–265). Although the image of the warrior is also prevalent in Iberian societies of the subsequent Iron Age, studies from a gender-oriented approach offer alternative interpretations. Some scholars have examined the ways in which women are represented in pottery (Griñó 1992; Tortosa Rocamora 2007), ritual figurines (*exvotos*) (Rueda Galán 2007), and sculpture (Izquierdo Peraile 2008; Olmos and Tortosa 2010; Prados Torreira 2010b). A study comparing various depictions of women across different media in the Iberian world proposed interesting hypotheses on the interrelationship of gender and status, suggesting, for example, that powerful women might have adopted masculine symbolism to indicate their status (Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa 1998).

With regard to their explicit discussion of gender, the above mentioned articles are exceptional, however, as gender imbalance and differentiations are often mentioned but not explicitly addressed. Facts and data, such as the higher percentages of weapons, male anthropomorphs, and male symbolism across a wide range of media and periods (Galician rock art and phallic menhirs in southern Portugal, among others), are duly noted but rarely thematized. Yet precisely by not *explicitly* addressing gender issues, scholars are *implicitly* considering gender inequality (even if it is not alluded to) as a

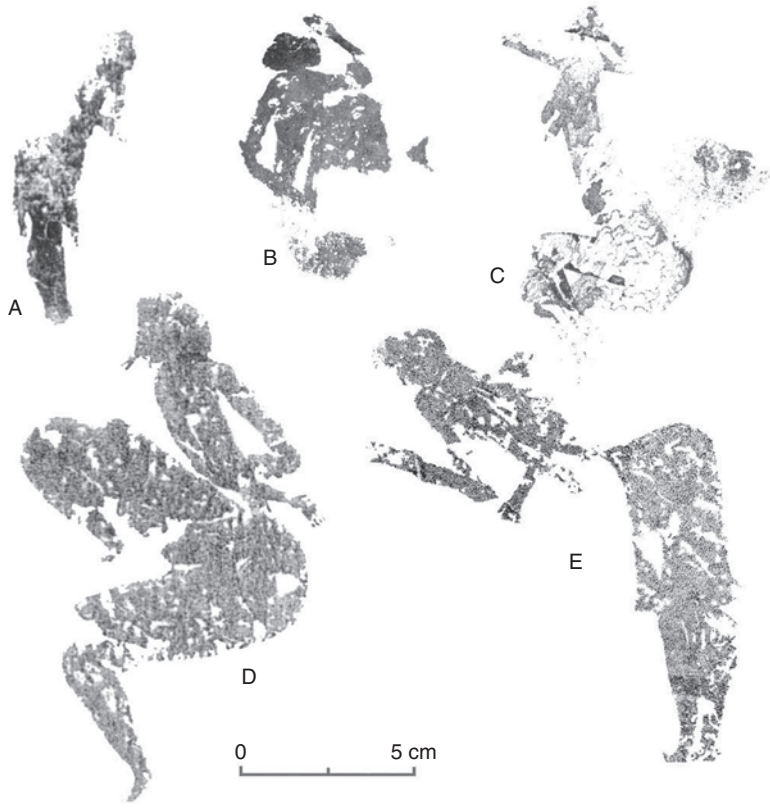


Figure 21.2 Representations of women in Levantine art, Centelles style. A. Racó Gasparo; B. Cova Alta del Lledoner; C. Les Covetes del Puntal; D. and E. Abric Centelles (after Villaverde et al. 2006:figure 5).

by-product of social change. The same criticism can be leveled at many of the studies on the representation of the body in rock art, figurines, and sculpture, which have produced some analyses on bodily decoration and dressing. From the representations in both rock art and sculpture, and from the offerings in burials dated throughout the post-Paleolithic period up to the Roman era, it is clear that men, women, and children ornamented their bodies, sometimes with different types of adornments, different materials, and different clothing (Lull 1983:203–206; Gibaja Bao 2003:248; Rafel Fontanals 2007; Izquierdo Peraile 2008). Engagement with this body of evidence from an explicitly gender-oriented perspective would no doubt greatly enrich our vision of these societies.

Challenges Facing the Archaeology of Gender in Southwest Europe

The stimulus behind the emergence of gender archaeology in southwest Europe came from the countries where these ideas first appeared – the United States, Scandinavia, and Britain. Yet its arrival occurred in a context in which there were already ongoing

discussions concerning how to interpret the role of women in the prehistoric past, whether inspired by Leroi-Gourhan's work in France or Marxist-feminist theory in Spain (Colomer et al. 1993). It was precisely in Spain, however, that the concept of gender initially became more widely accepted. In addition to the changes in the social base of academic archaeology in the late 1970s and 1980s (see above), there are other factors that explain why gender has become a viable topic of study. One of these has been the country's research policy during the last three decades, which resumed the policies adopted during the first third of the twentieth century (i.e., before the Franco dictatorship) when young Spanish scholars were given grants and scholarships to study abroad. A return to this policy after 1975 meant funds were made available for relatively generous two-year postdoctoral grants abroad, as well as research residencies in foreign countries for PhD students. This proved to have a huge impact on the development of archaeological thought. After more than 20 years, this active policy of grants has resulted in the emergence of a new generation of scholars much more open to, and acquainted with, the current intellectual debates in other countries, including those connected with gender archaeology.

In France and Portugal, by contrast, the allocation of research funds followed different, more nationalistic lines, and gender archaeology is now only an incipient field. France seems to be the country where there is a higher resistance to gender archaeology, although this may perhaps be an erroneous or unfair impression elicited by the theoretical vocabulary employed in French archaeology rather than by an actual disregard of gender difference in the past. In fact, a deeper analysis shows that while the term "gender" has hardly ever been used, French archaeologists have nevertheless been interrogating the archaeological record during the last two decades for perceived differences between tasks carried out by men and women. A change of direction may be signaled, moreover, by some recent French publications on gender (cited above) that seem more in tune with the type of gender archaeology first developed in the United States and Scandinavia.

In Spain and to a much more limited extent in Portugal and France, the archaeology of gender has had a much deeper impact on archaeology as a whole than it has had on other subjects, probably as a result of intense theoretical debates that have shaken the empiricist and positivist bias at the core of the discipline's traditional foundations. Archaeologists working from gender-oriented approaches also stand out in terms of the interdisciplinary nature of their engagement with the subject: from the outset, debates on gender have been conducted in interdisciplinary spaces where archaeologists exchange ideas with historians, philosophers, art historians, anthropologists, and specialists from other areas in the social sciences. Archaeologists working on gender have been presenting their research at conferences on topics ranging from migration and domestic violence to the ethics of care and peace studies (see, e.g., Díez Jorge and Sánchez Romero 2010). By the same token, meetings on gender archaeology often incorporate contributions from other fields in the humanities and social sciences.

Nevertheless, despite its strength, gender archaeology also faces problems. In a mirror image of the situation elsewhere, it is not uncommon to find that many scholars associate gender archaeology almost exclusively with the study of women. In the early years of gender archaeology, the focus on women did actually seem to be a viable alternative to traditional approaches, but even then it was noted that the scope of the discussion could not be confined to monolithic categories of gender (Conkey and

Spector 1984). The strength of gender archaeology in southwestern Europe (and everywhere for that matter) depends in our view on a clear grasp of the intersection between gender and the social dynamics of the past.

In sum, the archaeology of gender has undergone varying degrees of development and success in Portugal, France, and Spain. In Spain the increasing number of researchers in this field has led to the development of independent lines of research quite distinct from those in other nations. The best example, and a success story in terms of the elaboration of new, theoretically fruitful ideas, is the debate on maintenance activities mentioned above, which has attracted scholars from other countries who are now actively participating in ongoing discussions. In France and Portugal, by contrast, gender archaeology's main challenge at the moment is simply to gain status as an accepted field of study. The increase in the number of publications, however, seems to indicate that this may indeed happen in the near future.

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NOTES

1 The work of Belgian scholar Olivier Gosselain (2001) on gender and pottery technology in Sub-Saharan Africa, also written in French, is worthy of mention here.
2 In fact, another seven years had to pass before the first feminist article appeared in an archaeological publication (Sanahuja Yll and Picazo Gurima 1989).

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CHAPTER 22 Gender in British Prehistory

Benjamin Edwards and Rachel Pope

Introduction

This paper is a first attempt to synthesize work on gender in British prehistory and aims to discover something of the nature of prehistoric gender identities from the archaeology. Recognizing a failure in British settlement studies to move beyond unenlightened ideas surrounding sex/gender as binary, with female as domestic, we turn instead to the mortuary evidence in an attempt to identify specifically prehistoric gender identities through graveside practices and artifacts associated with sexed bodies in the Early Neolithic, Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age, and Middle Iron Age periods. Beyond the Earthen Long Barrow tradition of the southern and eastern Early Neolithic, the gendering of mortuary practices in the Neolithic and Bronze Age is typically rare. By the Middle Iron Age, there seems to be a greater concern with the structuring principle of age rather than sex. In Yorkshire, the gender of status individuals was marked through material culture, with preliminary analysis suggesting that Iron Age gender was not strictly binary and that society was not strongly patriarchal.

In British prehistoric studies, we are familiar with work that seeks to "naturalize" a division of the sexes. When prehistoric women are represented in the discipline they are generally found to be "at home," often shown sitting down – caught in the act of *being domestic*. Conversely, prehistoric men are often shown outside the home: fighting, trading, and performing rituals (cf. Cunliffe 1995; Ballard 2007). Men are active and political while women stay at home. In a children's coloring book from the British Museum, Iron Age men are categorized socially according to their labor (as woodworker or smith), but Iron Age women remain uncategorized: as "women" their labor is unquestioned and self-evident: a message colored in and communicated through the generations. The popular understanding of prehistoric gender is very much a product of our time.

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Despite real advances in British gender archaeology since the 1980s (see Sørensen 2000), many mainstream prehistoric studies persist in classifying the gender of women in the past as being inherently domestic and opposed to the non-domestic nature of men.[1] Most late twentieth-century work in British prehistory attempted a gendering of the past from the settlement evidence, with much stemming from the work of David Clarke. With the advent of a "new" archaeology in late 1960s Cambridge, Clarke attempted to apply his model-based approach to archaeology using the Iron Age site of Glastonbury. Heavily reliant on anthropology, Clarke's (1972) analysis devised a social model centered on the sexual division of labor. During the 1980s, those who inherited this Cambridge model – Ian Hodder in Neolithic studies and Ann Ellison (now Woodward) in Bronze Age studies – followed Clarke by seeing gender segregation as a way in to understanding prehistoric settlement and ultimately social organization. These early attempts at gendering prehistoric settlements were heavily reliant on stereotypical gender roles (the "cooking pots = women" premise).

By the late 1980s, the critique of Clarke's methodology drew attention to his uncritical attitudes toward gender and his application of a top-down model, apparently almost irrespective of the archaeological detail (Ehrenberg 1989; Coles and Minnitt 1995). Despite this, the adoption of structural anthropology under Hodder saw Clarke's ideas taken still further in the 1990s under the guise of postprocessualism – with Colin Richards (1990) in Neolithic studies, as well as Richard Hingley (1990) and Mike Parker Pearson (1999) in Iron Age studies, all using structuralist modeling to play out the nature/culture dichotomy as if the burgeoning gender theory of the late twentieth century had never existed. The result was rapid critique, culminating in the full deconstruction of the structuralist method in prehistoric archaeology, and raising new questions concerning the validity of analogy for understanding gender (Gilchrist 1999; Pope 2007). Meanwhile, in Bronze Age studies a new Cambridge model inspired largely by the research and teaching of Marie Louise Sørensen saw archaeologists such as Joanna Sofaer Derevenski (2002), Joanna Brück (2001, 2009), and Koji Mizoguchi (1993) begin gendering the Bronze Age burial record, work that might be considered to have greater longevity regarding the topics of social identity and organization than those settlement studies influenced by the thinking of Clarke.

The mechanism that much settlement archaeology typically uses to validate ideas surrounding gendered practice is that of analogy – be it from anthropology, history, or our own society. We frequently apply an apparently universal understanding of gender roles, often from Western anthropologies of non-Western communities. Without critical awareness gained by reading post-colonial and feminist theory, this is politically very dangerous ground, as we risk merely reproducing modern Western structures both in the anthropology we write and in the past (Edwards in press). Important here is recognizing the problems inherent in accepting analogy as central to archaeological interpretation, as identified by those, such as Alison Wylie (2002), working on the philosophy of science – something referred to by Foucault (1970) as "the anthropological sleep." As prehistoric studies now recognize, we should be prepared for the *possibility* that the past was culturally very different (Edwards in press). This necessitates an increasingly critical use of analogy in contrast to much British work, which continues to see sex-based social hierarchy as a universal

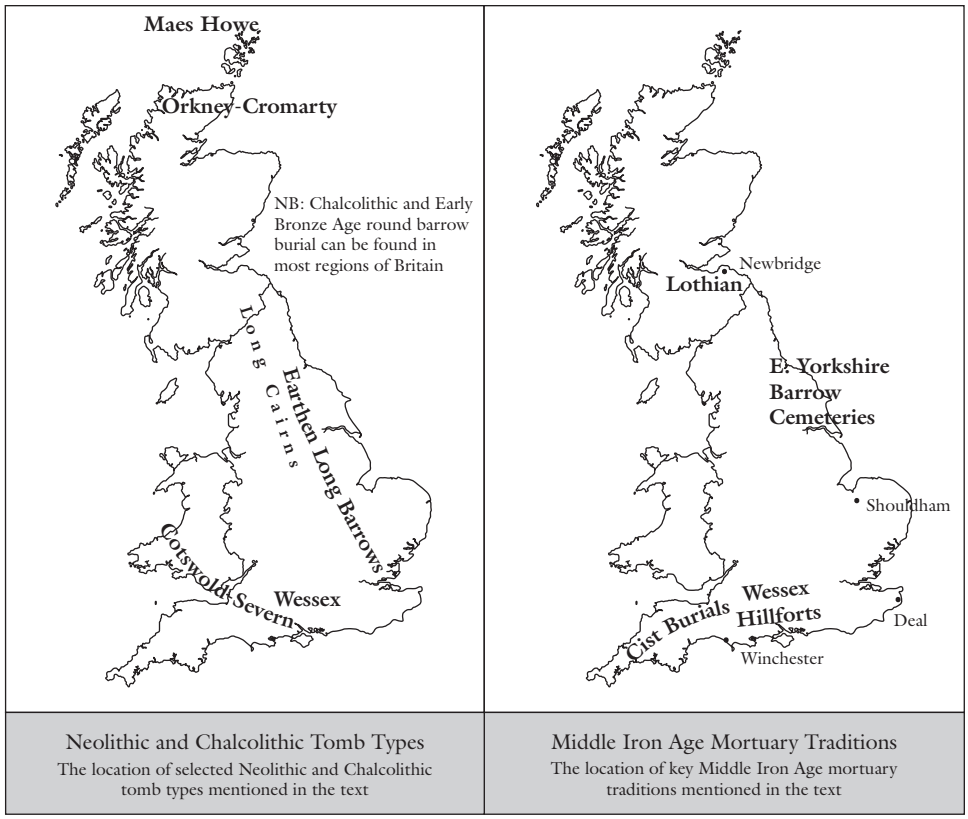


Figure 22.1 Locations of burial types and areas mentioned in this chapter (produced by the authors).

human trait and, as such, uses the device of binary opposition as a shortcut to understanding past societies (Pope 2007).

In the later twentieth century, British prehistoric studies exchanged an over-reliance on functionalist and historical interpretation for an over-reliance on anthropology. From readings in feminist theory, it is now clear that we cannot project our assumptions about sex and gender back onto the past, as has so often been the case in archaeology in the creation of imaginary reconstructions of gendered labor in prehistoric settlements. As critical archaeologists, we can again attempt an objective, contextual study of our material evidence – working from the ground up – in our rejection of top-down social modeling and the uncritical use of analogy. As part of this trajectory, the present authors turn to gender archaeology in the hope of identifying distinctly *prehistoric* gender identities in the mortuary evidence – Brück's (1999) "prehistoric rationality."

As such, this chapter focuses on those periods whose traditions preserved skeletal material: the Earlier Neolithic long barrows and Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age round barrows of Wessex (central southern Britain); and the Middle Iron Age inhumations of southern and eastern Britain (Figure 22.1) in an attempt to discover something of the nature of prehistoric gender identities in these periods.

Neolithic Studies

The Neolithic period, which is dated 4000–2400 B.C.E., provides the earliest opportunity to examine gender identities in British prehistory. However, due to the nature of the burial record, the information from the Neolithic is chronologically and geographically fragmented, with the most complete records dating from the very beginning of the period. Early in the Neolithic (ca. 3750 B.C.E.) the phenomenon of megalithic long barrow construction of the Cotswold-Severn tradition provides data from a restricted area of southern England (Whittle et al. 2007b:126); there is only very limited information from the passage graves of the west coast of Wales and the Orkney-Cromarty and Clava groups of the central Scottish Highlands (Henshall and Ritchie 2001), and while there are some large assemblages from the Maes Howe type tombs of Orkney, the evidence is problematic. Other regions adhered to different traditions, which resulted in less satisfactory preservation, such as the non-megalithic Earthen Long Barrows of lowland and eastern England; or they appear to have contained fewer or no human remains, such as the long cairns of the Pennines, Cheviots, and Scottish Borders, or the portal dolmen tradition of the west coast.

The greatest limiting factor in our appreciation of gendered identities and practice in the Neolithic is the date at which the majority of excavations and skeletal assessments were undertaken. The largest proportion in all regions occurred in the nineteenth century. It is not surprising, therefore, that the osteological analyses from these investigations are very limited in their utility (Smith and Brickley 2009:39); there are problems not only in the techniques used to sex individuals, but also their theoretical context, with gender often assigned according to the assumptions of the excavator (see Greenwell 1877:119 on "suttee"). Spectacular sites and assemblages, such as Rudston in Yorkshire (Greenwell 1877:497–501) or Belas Knapp, Gloucestershire (Winterbotham 1866), both excavated in the nineteenth century, despite being of value regarding tomb structure and material culture, must therefore be excluded from demographic analyses. As a result, landmark papers on the human remains in long barrows, such as the Marxist archaeology of Shanks and Tilley at Fussell's Lodge long cairn (1982), can be criticized on the reliability of their data (Smith and Brickley 2009:38) in addition to concerns over their theoretical position (Thomas and Whittle 1986:134). It is recommended that even for very recent reports, all sex and age information should be treated with caution unless an explicit methodology is published (Mays et al. 2002). Although re-examinations of skeletal collections are now being undertaken, these suffer from a geographical bias, with recent programmes favoring the visible and popular monuments of Wessex (Whittle et al. 2007b; Smith and Brickley 2009) and Orkney (Bernal et al. 2005). They are clearly necessary, though; for example, Stuart Piggott's original reports of 10 males and 13 females at West Kennet (Wells 1962:79–80) have recently been revised to 15 males and 12 females (Bayliss et al. 2007:87). Even more striking, at West Tump the excavator's "young woman and her baby" (Witts 1881) have become the unsexed "juvenile and their dog" (Brickley and Thomas 2004).

There have been attempts at producing accounts of gendered practice in the Neolithic. One of the most noteworthy of these highlights the problems of producing interpretations without evidence linking material culture or structural data to human

remains. Building on the work of Childe (above), Mike Parker Pearson and Colin Richards examine the structure of Neolithic houses at Skara Brae, Orkney. Several of the Skara Brae structures share a basic cruciform layout, with the entrance facing a central fire, flanked by stone beds. The right-hand bed is usually larger than the left, with the entrance slabs of House 7 also leading toward this large bed, which, it is argued, would therefore have received more light (Richards 1990:116). The central hearth, however, appears to have been cleaned out toward the left-hand bed. The authors note that in historic times, it has generally been the women's role in Orkney to sweep out the fire (Parker Pearson and Richards 1994:44). These disparate pieces of evidence are combined using ill-considered structuralist methodology to produce a scheme of gender relations that saw women confined to the "darker, dirtier, inside" left-hand side of the house, with a smaller bed; this is contrasted with the right-hand "male, clean, light" half. The only bases for this argument are that Western academic males believe that men should occupy a larger bed (when it could just as plausibly have been used by several children) and that an analogue from recorded history is applicable to evidence from several thousand years in the past. The confinement of women within the Western, contemporary "domestic" space – rather than the spaces of Skara Brae – is, in this account, most sharply defined.

Most attempts at the reconstruction of Neolithic identities exhibit a repeated pattern: the exclusion of discussions of sex or gendered practice. This is most apparent in the trend toward considerations of Neolithic "personhood," which have been prompted by readings of post-structuralist anthropology that expose the temporally specific nature of the bounded Western individual (e.g., Mauss 1954; Meigs 1990; Strathern 1990; Busby 1997) and the potential for alternative conceptions of individuality to exist in the past. Notable studies of the nature of Neolithic individuality and the person, such as Fowler (2004) and Brück (2001), omit any substantive reference to sex or gender. Whilst such information is scant, it is by no means absent from the burial record, as we shall see below, and one is led to question the value of an approach that excludes something so fundamental, so absolutely basic, as sex from the construction of persons and identities.

On a more positive note, by using more recent evidence we can attempt a consideration of gendered identities and practices, though these are geographically and chronologically limited. The Cotswold-Severn long cairns of Wessex and South Wales have been the focus of re-dating and reassessment programmes (see above), and while a consideration of the gendered identities of those buried has not been explicitly produced, data is available for an initial attempt. These tombs are characterized by a broadly trapezoidal stone or stone and earth mound into which are constructed a series of stone chambers, usually accessible by a terminal passageway, or a series of passages set laterally. They appear to have been in use for a short period beginning after 3750 B.C.E. (Whittle et al. 2007b:126). In many cases, the human remains from these tombs were accessible after their deposition and are characterized by varying degrees of disarticulation from movement and reordering. Specifically excluded from this dataset are tombs belonging to the broadly contemporary and geographically overlapping tradition of Earthen Long Barrows. They share a rectangular or trapezoidal form, but the deposits were not accessible and appear to have been placed within wooden mortuary structures, sometimes burnt. Unlike the Cotswold-Severn tradition, the building of the mound closed or prevented the possibility of interaction

Table 22.1 Adult interments from Cotswold-Severn long cairns (juveniles and infants are not listed).

Site	*Male*	*Female*	*Undetermined*
Adlestrop	1	1	1
Ascott-under-Wychwood	6	3	7
Lanhill	4	2	0
Parc-le-Breos-Cwm	11	10	3
Rodmarton	2	4	5
Wayland's Smithy	11	2	1
West Kennet	15	12	1
West Tump	3	2	10
Totals	*42*	*34*	*27*

with the deposits – a very different form of mortuary ritual. Table 22.1 summarizes the available information on accurately sexed burials from reassessed Cotswold-Severn tombs; Earthen Long Barrows are considered separately.

Considering overall ratios of male and female skeletons, there is a negligible bias in favor of males (1:1.2), which is not deemed statistically significant. This differs from the figure of 1:1.6 quoted by Smith and Brickley (2009:88) as they include the non-megalithic Earthen Long Barrows of Boles Barrow, Haddenham, and Wayland's Smithy A (see above). Given the small sample numbers involved and the large number of indeterminate skeletons (26 percent of the total sample), it would appear that at the coarse level of whole tombs there is no *significant* difference between male and female representation in the Cotswold-Severn tradition (contra Smith and Brickley 2009:88).

The division of Cotswold-Severn type monuments into separate chambers complicates this picture somewhat, as it creates the potential for the categorization of bodies. However, where data is available, there appears to be little division on the basis of sex in tombs that contained a large number of interments. At Parc-le-Breos-Cwm, for example, there is close parity between sexable male and female interments: 2:1 (male:female) in the NE chamber; 3:2 in the NW chamber; 1:1 in the SW chamber; and 5:4 in the SE chamber. All are badly disturbed, with two relatively complete females in the passage (Whittle and Wysocki 1998:162). Similarly, at West Kennet male and female interments occur in equal proportions, with 6:6 (male:female) in the SW chamber; 1:1 in the SE chamber; 3:3 in the NW chamber; and 1:2 in the NE chamber; only the terminal western chamber held exclusively males and one child (Bayliss et al. 2007:87). In each of these cases, given the quantities involved, it seems more appropriate to focus on the close similarity between the numbers of the sexes represented, rather than on the very slight predominance (proportionately) of males. Indeed, even in the case of Penywyrlod, where males outnumber the female skeletons by 5:1, during the reordering of the bones into mixed anatomical sets, there appears to have been a deliberate attempt to include elements of the single female skeleton in every pile of remains (Wysocki and Whittle 2000:598).

Non-megalithic or Earthen Long Barrows present a different picture. These monuments are more varied in morphology, being united only by the absence of recognizable megalithic stone chambers, and they have a wider distribution, occurring across

much of lowland southern and eastern Britain. Some share a pre-mound phase of timber mortuary construction, though this differs in structure and occasionally is burnt prior to the raising of the mound structure. At Haddenham, Cambridgeshire, all three primary interments in the wooden mortuary structure and the secondary mound burial were male (Evans and Hodder 2006:140–141) while the non-megalithic early phase of Wayland's Smithy A was dominated by males at a ratio of 11:2, with one individual of indeterminate sex (Whittle et al. 2007a:105). Similarly, the mortuary deposit at Boles Barrow, laid on a pavement beneath the mound, was dominated by males at a ratio of 7:2, with three indeterminate (Smith and Brickley 2007:54). It appears, therefore, that the earlier Neolithic saw fluidity in attitudes toward the appropriate type of person for burial in tombs. In addition, one can argue that the Cotswold-Severn tradition made no distinction in burial identities along the lines of gender or sex, given the very low ratios. Yet for Earthen Long Barrows, one of which directly pre-dates the later Cotswold-Severn monument at Wayland's Smithy, there was clearly a selection of males. One should hesitate before ascribing to this practice a higher "status" based upon gender since there is no other evidence for status distinction in the period, but it certainly indicates that differential identities were being generated in accordance with biological sex – identities, however, which were temporally and geographically specific, lasting only briefly.

Other regions suffer from an unfortunate lack of evidence; even Orkney, with a wealth of potential tombs, possesses only two with sufficient skeletal information or with information of reliable origin (Reilly 2003:142; Henshall and Ritchie 2001:123). Isbister, of the Orkney-Cromarty type, contained an estimated 341 individuals, but unfortunately the data on sex are based entirely on extrapolation from a sample that, questionably, has *no indeterminate category* (Reilly 2003:142 after Hedges 1983: 73–78). A similar extrapolation for Quanterness of the Maes Howe type has produced an estimated number of individuals of 394 (Reilly 2003:148). Subsequent reassessment work by Bernal and colleagues (2005) did not find any significant bias in Orkney tombs on the basis of sex.

There are few further dimensions of mortuary practice that can be explored in reference to the construction of gendered identities in the Neolithic. Due to the often disarticulated state of the remains, and to problematic original excavation records, it is not appropriate to comment upon differences in bodily orientation across all tombs; nor is there sufficient material culture evidence associated with human remains to speculate on grave goods and burial practice. Although it is possible to identify a specifically male identity associated with Earthen Long Barrow burial, this is chronologically and regionally specific, and we should be extremely wary of ascribing to this a value-based status distinction. Certainly, the gendering of tasks during life, while ripe for speculation, should not be attempted without further work.

Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age Studies

In the later twentieth century, in such seminal works as those by Stephen Shennan and Andrew Sherratt, the development of individual inhumation in the Chalcolithic, associated with the Beaker culture (ca. 2400 B.C.E.), and in the Early Bronze Age was traditionally associated with the rise of a society dominated by a male warrior elite

(Shennan 1977, 1986; Treherne 1995; Brück 2009). Their status was reflected in the wealthy burials of the Wessex I type, such as the Amesbury Archer (Fitzpatrick 2003). This is a parallel position to that maintained for the "princely grave" tradition of Bronze Age Europe by Paul Treherne, who advances an interpretation that relates wealthy burials to the existence of a social ideology centered on male beauty and the beautiful death of the individual warrior – ideas taken largely from the Greek tradition of epic poetry (1995:122). Such an approach ignores the evidence for wealthy female burials, such as barrow 16 at Barrow Hills, Radley (Barclay and Halpin 1999:62), and fails to adequately demonstrate the relevance of the Greek literary tradition to northwest Europe. Revisionist explanations have generally followed one of two approaches: first, those that question the idea that the single inhumation burial necessarily reflects the existence of a type of person that can be equated with (and therefore achieve dominance as) the Western Cartesian "individual" (Barrett 1990; Garwood 1991; Thomas 2002; Brück 2004); and second, those that criticize the underlying notion of warrior hierarchy, instead identifying other variables that may denote the identities of the deceased. Unfortunately, these latter accounts still tend to maintain the subservience of those gendered female.

Andrew Sherratt's interpretation of Beaker ceramics as indicative of an elite male drinking culture was the last to explicitly gender British Beakers as male and to posit male cult authority over society (Sherratt 1987, 1991; see also Burgess and Shennan 1976). Although the extreme rarity of evidence for brewed or alcoholic beverages from Beakers has discredited this view (Brodie 1997:298), this has not prevented the more subtle persistence of an uncritical strain of misogyny in Early Bronze Age mortuary archaeology. Despite his robust criticism of Sherratt's position, Neil Brodie has argued for a subservient role for Beaker women, one associated with ceramic production and ultimately with serving the dead in a domestic capacity while male mourners, in his view, were responsible for grave goods denoting political status and wealth (1997:300). He maintains this position despite his explicit acknowledgment that there is no empirical evidence for any particular female association with Beakers or their production, and that both sexes and all ages are buried with them (1997:300, 1998:47–48). In the absence of archaeological evidence, this theory is supported by unfortunate recourse to anecdotal ethnographic analogy (i.e., that women "usually" make pots, and where they don't they "might still have derived female connotations from the transformation of substances which was required for their production, and caused by their use" (1997:49). Since neither the nature of the substances, nor their transformation, is made explicit, the relevance of these analogies remains enigmatic.

Humphrey Case (2004:205) accepts unquestioningly Brodie's hypothesis on female ceramic production despite the acknowledgment that Beakers are not a specialized artifact, and do not otherwise favor a male identity (Case 1995). However, he argues that the high-status artifacts in female graves demonstrate their active participation in long-distance exchange networks (2004:205) rather than their receipt of status items as gifts from husbands or fathers. In addition, attempts have been made to examine the quality of the Beakers associated with inhumations. Pierpoint advances the hypothesis, based upon various indices of elaboration and decoration, that adult males received higher quality (and therefore higher status) Beakers, whilst females and subadults received lower ones (1980:59). Robin Boast, however, asserts that Beakers that entered the burial record were always of lower quality fabric than those used in other

contexts, a further indication that this most common of artifacts had little role to play in the gendered expression of relative status (1995).

Moving beyond a focus on artifacts, Tuckwell examines burial orientation as an indicator of gendered identity in Yorkshire round barrows, concluding that males were oriented east and females west (1975:113). However, Pierpoint (1980), using a more recent dataset, claims there is no evidence for division on the grounds of orientation. Yet here, also, there is a problem, because the re-examination of the skeletal data is alluded to, but details are not provided. Similarly, Mizoguchi (1993) undertakes an insightful study of Yorkshire burials, stressing the role that memory must have played in ensuring continuity in the burial rites; however, as with Tuckwell's study, much of this argument is based upon the premise that the sexing of the individuals by nineteenth-century excavators is to be trusted. He cites only eight examples out of 104 primary deposits where a primary male burial is followed by a secondary female interment, equating this with the greater importance of males (Mizoguchi 1993:227). These are not viable statistics, and they tell us more about the nineteenth-century preoccupation with gendering a burial as male *because it was the primary burial* than they do about a meaningful social distinction in the past.

The most recent development in interpretation has been to question the very basis upon which ideas of status are discussed; these interpretations also highlight the extreme importance of reliably sexed skeletons. Through an insightful study of data from the Thames Valley using reliably sexed skeletons, Joanna Sofaer (Sofaer Derevenski 2002) addresses the manner in which male and female burials provide very different potentialities through which different identities could be displayed. She finds that similar numbers of men and women were buried with "status" artifacts, but that female graves were far more varied in terms of their position in barrows, size, grave shape, and orientation. Male graves displayed far less variation (2002:201), suggesting that male and female status and identity were very different constructs, not directly comparable in "value" terms, and that grave goods, including status artifacts, are not reliable indicators of difference (2002:206).

This question of comparison has been most recently addressed by Joanna Brück, again self-consciously aiming to use reliable skeletal data. Of the 87 sexable inhumations from a total sample size of 544 burials, 62 percent were male and 38 percent female, and of the 134 sexable cremations, 47 percent were male and 53 percent female (2009:4). Her findings also support the general trend toward an increase in cremation burial over time. Brück argues that cremation burial was not a "lower status" rite reserved for females; instead it was a form of ritual that allowed the fragmentation and circulation of deceased persons, and one which also required more "effort" in terms of labor expenditure. Indeed, it is an open question whether the argument for inhumation as a "higher status rite" is a circular one: is it described as such *because* the majority of sexable burials are male? We are also reminded that the weak statistical trends evident in this and other studies indicate the fluidity of status and identity afforded to those we would sex as either male or female (Brück 2009:14).

It is telling that earlier studies or those that uncritically accept the sex evidence of nineteenth-century excavators are liable to propose an interpretation that is androcentric and founded upon the privilege of the Western white male making the interpretation (or providing the data). Conversely, studies that re-examine skeletal evidence

tend to arrive at a more balanced and nuanced view of what constitutes gendered identity and its expression in the mortuary record. We can be relatively certain that this record does not present evidence for the rise of the "individual" in the Western sense (Barrett 1990; Garwood 1991; Brück 2004) or the existence of a male warrior elite devoted to drinking, feasting (contra Sherratt 1987, 1991), and self-beautification (contra Treherne 1995). It is worth remembering that for the vast majority of Beaker and later inhumation and cremation burials, especially in central and northern Britain, there was no status artifact placed in the deposit, only the solitary ceramic. So while the Beaker tradition did see the rise of the status burial, it was a rare phenomenon, and one that was largely restricted to southern Britain.

The brief flowering of the Beaker culture gave way around 2200 B.C.E. to the dominance of the rite of cremation associated with food vessels and collared urns (Needham et al. 2010:1) with certain regional distinctions. This shift in rite was accompanied by a paucity of grave goods (Brück 2009) and presents increased difficulties in accurately sexing skeletons, so interpretations of gendered practice once again begin to founder. However, some targeted studies have been undertaken successfully; for example, the analysis of later Deverel-Rimbury Middle Bronze Age burials shows an absence of any sex-based distinction in the rite, vessel size, or distribution within cemeteries, where sex is determinable (Ellison 1980:124). It therefore seems that British prehistory was not on a permanent evolutionary pathway toward increased status differentiation by gender throughout this period, but rather that it witnessed punctuated instances of increased status in burial contexts.

Iron Age Studies

The British Iron Age begins ca. 800 B.C.E., with major transitions at 400/350 B.C.E. and 100 B.C.E. The period's end is traditionally assigned to 43 C.E., the Roman conquest of England. Spearheaded by Hill (1989), British Iron Age studies witnessed a paradigm shift from a reliance on Roman and early medieval textual evidence, as inherited from mid-twentieth-century Celtic studies, to an understanding of social organization from the archaeological evidence, an understanding against which we might then test the historical texts. Mainstream studies now accept that the traditional model of "Celtic society" is not supported by the archaeological evidence in Britain until perhaps the first century B.C.E. We now recognize that both class- and sex-based social hierarchies are not universals and are potentially anachronistic social models for many areas of Iron Age Britain (Hill 1989, 1995; Pope 2007; Pope and Ralston 2011). We are instead now open to the possibility of a "different" past, one that is constructed from a detailed, regional understanding of the material evidence. Iron Age archaeologists are now moving toward the study of prehistoric gender identities from the mortuary evidence, as opposed to employing modern stereotyped gender roles. In Britain, formal burial traditions are found only in the Later Iron Age period and are very regionally restricted, largely to the south and east coasts. East Yorkshire still provides us with our best dataset (cf. Giles 2000; Pope and Ralston 2011).

Middle Iron Age burial practices, including depositional context, body position, and graveside ritual, do not seem to have been marked by strongly gendered traditions,

particularly in the Scottish Lothian and southwest cist burial traditions (Figure 22.1). In the East Yorkshire barrow cemeteries slightly more women than men are identified (ca. 90:80), but proportions are too similar to suggest selection based on sex. No significant difference was found between males and females regarding treatment of the body on burial or the provision of a barrow or coffin, while the proportion of unaccompanied to well-accompanied bodies is consistent for both (Pope and Ralston 2011:figure 5). Ceramic vessels, perhaps for the provision of alcohol, are common for both as well as foodstuffs, perhaps redolent of feasting, with both mutton and pig/pork appropriate for either sex. Certain items of jewelry (brooches, finger- and toe-rings) also lack sex-based associations. No distinction is found between males and females regarding the relative provision of status goods. Of 12 sexed chariot burials, 9 are male and 3 female, with vehicle fittings equally "lavish"‘ for both sexes (Giles 2000). Thus while typically associated with males, deposition with a chariot was not *gendered* male. Five vehicle burials included martial equipment, revealing that they complement a martial identity. Interestingly, two female graves produced wheel-shaped objects: a coral-decorated pin from Danes Graves and a wheel ornament from Arras (Pope and Ralston 2011).

Perhaps our earliest "status" burial in Iron Age Britain is the Newbridge chariot burial in Midlothian with its heritage in the Belgian Ardennes (Hunter et al. 2010).[2] From the late fourth century B.C.E., together with the decline of elite graves in France, we begin to find iron mirror burials in East Yorkshire, as well as rare evidence for high-status continental affiliations, such as the east–west burials at Arras with continental items, and an east–west (but flexed) "possible female" warrior from Rudston, as well as the extended inhumations of two women, with non-local isotope signatures, at Deal in Kent (Pope and Ralston 2011). These status females seem to emerge slightly earlier in the burial record than the more masculine martial status identities. The latter are also found along the east coast, with good candidates for continental links being the extended Rudston sword burials, as well as the "possible male" with short sword from Shouldham, Norfolk. Whatever this early activity along the east coast of Britain might suggest, it clearly involved high-status individuals of both sexes. In anticipation of the usual comments regarding wealthy women as the wives of powerful males, there is little obvious evidence for wealthy "partnerships" in Yorkshire: the graves of wealthy males and females are often spatially separated, sometimes occurring in gendered clusters (Pope and Ralston 2011). Discovering why a small number of men and women might have moved to the east coast of Britain at the start of the La Tène period is certainly a topic for further study. Regarding the women in these burials, we must resist the assumption that any "foreign" links signify the existence of exogamous marriage, when other social mechanisms, such as political migration, might constitute an equally valid interpretation.

There is greater evidence for variable social status after ca. 300 B.C.E. in eastern Britain, when male mortuary rites seem increasingly centered on martial ideologies, while the number of status burials remains relatively equal between the sexes (Pope and Ralston 2011). In East Yorkshire, five individuals were equipped on death with three or more items apparently denoting very high status (e.g., chariot, pig/pork, iron mirror/martial equipment); three of these were female and two male. In these burials, only two elements of the funerary ritual indicate sex-based differences in mortuary tradition: foodstuffs and burial costume. Regarding foodstuffs, proportionately

more women were provided with joints of meat, usually a leg of mutton, at a ratio of 3:1. The majority (60 percent) of women had foodstuffs positioned near their upper body; some of them seem to have been positioned as if to interact with the food/drink in the act of consumption. For men, the rite was more varied, with 40 percent positioned near the knees/feet and 30 percent near the upper body (Pope and Ralston 2011:figure 6). There seems to be less "interaction" with the food/drink for male bodies, and it may be that a role in the burial feast was more commonplace among the female dead, with whom a greater conformity with prevailing traditions may have been observed. Beyond this, only high-status costumed burials were increasingly gender-defined, with weaponry as typically masculine (and associated with youth), and with iron mirrors and exotic jewelry as typically feminine.

Iron mirrors do seem to have exclusively female associations and tend to come from unusually large barrows (Giles and Joy 2007:16). There are currently five examples, four of which have been excavated and sexed female under modern conditions. Of the four iron mirror burials definitely lacking an association with jewelry, three were deposited with a vehicle and pig/pork. The "bean-tin" woman from Wetwang Slack CB2 does have two iron pins (Dent 1985), but these are unusual among female jewelry assemblages and are more akin to the decorated pin from the martial burial at Grimthorpe. It may also be significant that the possible female warrior at Rudston also lacked jewelry, as did the seven Rudston females buried with pig/pork. The suggestion is that jewelry and vehicles/weapons/pork were not compatible identities: the former were feminine, the latter more typically masculine. If the Arras mirror was found with jewelry (this is not clear), this could present mirrors as a more flexible symbol of female status (i.e., ultimately more feminine) than weaponry or vehicles/pork. Women in Iron Age Yorkshire, then, were not excluded from more masculine martial identities, with iron mirrors playing an associated, yet exclusively female role (Pope and Ralston 2011). It has been suggested that iron mirrors may be linked to the art of divination known as catoptromancy (Melanie Giles pers. comm. February 11, 2011).[3] With handles that reference horse bits, iron mirrors do seem to reveal an exclusively female high-status role associated with martial ritual. Crucially, we have evidence for two distinct female identities in the Iron Age.

The Yorkshire jewelry assemblage is varied, but typically features blue glass beads; these often survive as necklaces, as at Arras Queen's and Cowlam. Jet necklaces also feature in the Iron Age, as do bronze or shale bracelets, and bronze, amber, gold, or shale finger-rings. Of particular note are the 12 glass bead necklace burials from Wetwang Slack: these were spaced relatively equidistantly across the riverine landscape and attracted clusters of later graves, giving them the appearance of "founder" burials (Giles 2000). Similarly, grave cluster 1–22 at Burton Fleming holds at its center three bracelet-wearing women, each with an extra large barrow (Pope and Ralston 2011:figure 7). This high-status female identity seems to have revolved around exotics (jet from the east coast of Britain, blue glass from the west coast, gold perhaps from Ireland, and amber from the Baltic), materials that seem to reference traditional Bronze Age themes and represent widespread kinship or political networks. Interestingly, as well as iron mirrors, we seem to have a purely female association with iron bracelets and finger-rings in the Yorkshire burials (Giles 2000). The exclusively female association with this newly flourishing metal in the region is an interesting one.

Regarding burial costume, certain jewelry items (brooches, bronze toe-rings, worked bone finger-rings, and ear-rings) are found with both males and females. Certainly, a number of Iron Age men wore jewelry, with only the higher status items typically gendered female. A possible male (originally thought to be female) from Newnham Croft, Cambridge, had three brooches, one with coral inlay, and a beautifully decorated bronze armlet, while the assumed male martial burial from Grimthorpe included a chalk bead and four bronze pins. Perhaps mourners deposited such items, and this requires detailed contextual work. We must also recognize, however, that some work on jewelry burials might assume the body as female directly because of the jewelry association, rather than investigating the sex via osteoarchaeology. Where modern methods are employed, the sexing of those deposited with shale items often proves difficult. Sexing is also difficult for young leather- and woodworkers (Pope and Ralston 2011). It may be that youth or perhaps a lack of fixed gender was a factor here. What is clear is that even biological sexing is proving difficult for some individuals whose gender may have been more complex than traditional binary categorizations allow. It is the study of these individuals, together with those of identifiable males and females, which may hold most promise for gender archaeology.

Regarding masculine status burial costume, we have 30 associations with martial equipment in Middle Iron Age Yorkshire; the majority of these (22) have been sexed male (Pope and Ralston 2011). Most reliably associated with males is the sword and shield combination (six examples) although a possible female example (Rudston 163) suggests that this combination was not *exclusively* male. Small numbers of individuals, most frequently males, were singled out for unusual treatment of the body in East Yorkshire: these include positioning the body to face west (as an inversion of the dominant east-facing tradition); the construction of circular (as opposed to the more normal square) barrows as at Garton Station; and the placement of foodstuffs near the feet (as opposed to the upper body). We also have 14 examples of the corpse being "speared" as part of the burial ritual; this was typically a male rite although a female example is attested at Wetwang Slack (Dent 1983). However, minority mortuary rites that ran contrary to the norm were usually reserved for men, suggesting perhaps that a subversive or asocial element was more common amongst that sex. Melanie Giles argues that the strong association between martial equipment and young men (aged 16–25) may be linked to the quality of aggression in young male adulthood. Interesting too is the small cemetery at Garton Station where all five of the high-status burials were male (Stead 1991).

Of the 30 martial associations in East Yorkshire, four are of unknown sex, two have contra-indications, and two are believed to be female. When we consider the notion of "warriors" we tend to envisage men. However, Rudston 163 in East Yorkshire (with sword and shield), the speared woman at Wetwang Slack, the Rudston 3 woman with healed cuts to her face, and the three women buried with chariots remind us that a more active martial role may have been open to some women in the Iron Age (Pope and Ralston 2011). The consumption/deposition of pork by the burial party, often found with martial and chariot burials, is also found in graves without martial equipment, including 11 female examples from Yorkshire. Whilst traditions involving martial equipment, notably the warrior costume and the rite of spearing the corpse, are strongly male, the associated deposition of pig/pork seems to have been

more appropriate for (elder/martial) women. At Maiden Castle hillfort in Dorset, a 20–30 year-old woman was found deposited with shale bracelet, loomweight, and 117 sling-stones (Whimster 1981), and recent osteoarchaeological work by Rebecca Redfern (2008) suggests that women may also have been active combatants in this region. Whilst Iron Age women may not normally have engaged in violence, there is now growing archaeological evidence that martial ideologies were not exclusively male.[4] Historical evidence exists too for Iron Age warrior queens – Boudica in England and Macha and Medb in Ireland – alongside evidence for female warriors in the coin evidence of northwest France.

An analysis of the sexing of bodies in martial burials indicates that just over two-thirds are sexed male, but how many of these might be deemed reliable by modern methods remains to be seen (Pope and Ralston 2011). Less reliable male martial associations are the lone sword burials, where six of the 12 are of unknown sex. A similar proportion of individuals deposited with only a shield were also of unknown sex (three in seven), and of two East Yorkshire dagger burials individual 153 at Rudston had "contra-indications" – something that may eventually shed light on the "possible male" with short sword from Shouldham, Norfolk.[5] At Rudston cemetery, in close proximity to sword-bearing individual R163, whose poorly preserved skeleton was assessed "possible female" due to the lack of male characteristics, were three "contra-indications" martial burials. These were R182 with sword (who again lacked securely male characteristics), R148 with shield (with some male characteristics but very slight limbs), and R153 with dagger (Stead 1991). Might this sector of the Rudston cemetery, with its "possible female" and "contra-indications" martial individuals, have been reserved for martial/masculine women? Crucially, the limited sexing (by modern standards) of individuals with martial items leaves room for the discovery of more females with martial equipment.

Beyond the status martial and jewelry burials, there are also potential Iron Age "ritualist" burials. The deposition of a knife in male "ritualist" burials, such as the Winchester sickle burial and the Burnmouth spoon burial, may suggest that in certain contexts knives held ritual associations, perhaps involving the slaughter/butchery of an animal as part of mortuary rites/rituals. A number of status burials, including those with martial associations, 12 chariot burials, and a number of typically older female burials, contain the cleft skull and forelimbs of a pig, something which is taken to imply graveside feasting, a burial tradition clearly considered appropriate for high-status men and women. Interesting, too, is the fact that spears were generally reserved for a martial graveside ritual involving the multiple spearing of the corpse; there are only two examples of a spear deposited as a grave good, and these occur at Rudston. We do, however, see the deposition of a spear and knife at Burton Fleming 63 and at Hod Hill hillfort in Wessex (Whimster 1981; Stead 1991). On the basis of present evidence, individuals who took the material culture of these mortuary rituals to their graves seem to have been typically male. Similarly, our only sickle burial (also with knife) is male. Although spoon burials are not gendered – there are females at Deal in Kent and Pogny in France and a male, with knife, at Burnmouth – some mortuary rituals (animal slaughter, corpse spearing) may have been typically practiced by men, while mirror-based rituals were perhaps exclusively practiced by women. Consequently, while Iron Age ritual practice was not itself gendered, it may have comprised a variety of gendered roles.

There are only a handful of graves that might represent Iron Age craftworkers, with as yet only one or two examples each of burials with toolkits for spinning, weaving, carpentry, leatherworking, and smithing (Pope and Ralston 2011). Regarding gender (in the Rudston cemetery at any rate), metalworking tools were with young males (R87 and R154: both aged 17–25), while in Yorkshire textile-working had typically female associations, although spindlewhorls found in the neck or lower torso region may have been inherited items worn as pendants (Giles 2000).

Beyond Yorkshire, textile-working associations are more mixed: a loomweight with a woman at Maiden Castle; and a loomweight and spindlewhorl with three men and a child at Casterley Camp (Whimster 1981). As yet the crafts of weaving, leatherworking, and woodworking have no clear gender associations: a young craftworker from Rudston 141, with awl, knife, file, and tine, produced contra-indications on sexing; a woodworker from Ham Hill hillfort is of unknown sex; and Giles (2000) found bone awl/points with both sexes in Yorkshire. Osteological evidence for domestic tasks – a supposed link between squatting facets and prehistoric women, and by extension the interpretation that women were engaged in querning activity – is not demonstrated for the Iron Age. In fact, of the 13 individuals found with this complaint at the Deal cemetery, the majority (62 percent) were male.

It seems that sex was not a primary structuring principle in British Iron Age mortuary traditions, with males and females typically treated very similarly on death. Regarding high-status identities, we find a masculine-to-feminine spectrum of combat-to-contact. Masculine identity was associated with the material culture of armed combat, while status jewelry, with its references to social contact, whether ancestral, kin-based social networks or political allegiances, was more exclusively female. Gender in the Iron Age seems to have been more fluid for women than for men. There were numerous female identities; these were most frequently based around exotic jewelry, but they also reflect martial (pig/pork, vehicles, weaponry) and ritual (mirrors and spoons) concerns. Some were mutually exclusive (e.g., martial women notably did not wear jewelry). Crucially, some women had more typically male identities, demonstrating that Iron Age ideas surrounding gender were not strictly binary. On current evidence, however, the burial identity of status males was more typically fixed as that of warrior, even to the extent that the young Rudston smith, alongside his tools, was also provided with dagger and shield, and had his grave speared. Martial equipment seems to have been a badge of masculinity; most typically for men, but also for martial women, and perhaps for active combatants of either sex.

Preliminary work suggests that gender during the Iron Age may have been primarily age-defined, with age a more significant structuring principle in the British material than sex (Pope and Ralston 2011). No children are found with status items, such as chariots; therefore we can assume that status was not inherited but ascribed, and changed over time. In Wessex, it seems that age was the deciding factor, with infants (but also the elderly) most likely to be selected for deposition. Shale bangles or the provision of daggers rather than swords seem to be items common for young adults, many of whom also seem to have been engaged in crafts. Future research may also reveal some individuals who held a less easily defined gender, be that in adolescence or in adulthood.[6] With age came the sacrifice of an animal on death, with the provision of meat in the grave more commonly associated with older adults. Beyond chariot burials, those from Rudston with pork included four men with swords, the

young craftworker (R141), and 11 others, most of whom were older women: five of the seven women with pork were aged over 35. This may indicate that older women were given the same mark of respect on death as martial men. Particularly interesting in this context are the five Rudston females with pork found in the same cemetery cluster as the possible female warrior and the three "contra-indications" martial burials. Similarly, the Deal spoon burial was an elderly woman. A detailed contextual analysis correlating sex and age attributes would therefore seem the next logical step for Iron Age gender archaeology in Britain.

Discussion and Future Directions

Gender in British prehistory, or more specifically gendered identities recognizable through burial practices, were more indeterminate than discredited twentieth-century models could accommodate; they were also expressed in more nuanced ways than simplistic readings of the available data often allow. While everyday life may have held a multiplicity of identities and transitory statuses based upon sex and other criteria, it seems that these were only rarely expressed in the burial record. Yet it is this burial record which, unfortunately, is the only reliable source of information linking sex distinctions to material culture and practices that can denote the construction of gendered identities. Based on this evidence, it is clear that for much of the period surveyed briefly here (ca. 4000–100 B.C.E.) biological sex appears to have had a relatively marginal role in the ascription of identities or of relative status, particularly prior to 300 B.C.E. (if not later).

There has certainly never been an *evolution* toward greater status distinction between men and women; instead we have punctuated instances, in both space and time, where burial was used to express different identities and statuses, but these did not grow more distinct as one period changed into the next. Cotswold-Severn and most Bronze Age burial practices appear to stress the leveling of status in death, but they are separated by 2000 years. There are few gender distinctions between bodies in Neolithic tombs, apart from a male identity (but not necessarily "status" in a relative sense) associated with Earthen Long Barrow burial, and only very rare distinctions on the basis of material culture in later Bronze Age cremations. For the brief flowering of the Beaker tradition between these two periods, status was expressed in burial, but it does not appear to have been polarized along male/female lines; furthermore, there is evidence that female identities were more varied and had more potential for internal distinction than the typical male burial. This is a theme that re-emerges in the Yorkshire Iron Age, with more homogeneous male identities associated closely with martial practice, while equally "wealthy" female identities were based predominantly on the display of social networks – and perhaps ritual – through status artifacts, alongside a smaller number of more masculine martial female associations. In Middle Iron Age Wessex, particularly Dorset, similar traditions are apparent for both sexes.

Certainly the acquisition of status does not appear to have been gendered in later prehistoric Britain; low-status mortuary traditions are generally found to be comparable between the sexes, with men and women of status found in relatively equal proportions. Beyond the Earthen Long Barrow communities of southern and

eastern Britain, there currently seems little to indicate that any form of burial was a predominantly male concern, and in those areas and periods where social hierarchy may be considered to be more reliably demonstrable, women seem to have been just as likely, and it seems in some cases more likely, to achieve elevated status. Moreover, for Earlier Neolithic and unaccompanied Early Bronze Age inhumations and cremations, one should be wary of ascribing greater gendered "status" to a form of burial simply because there is the greater presence of a particular sex. Where burials lack contextual information for status distinction through artifact association, it is more critically acceptable to posit different male and female-related identities. This runs contrary to the circular argument that has often been proposed in the past, where inhumation burial in Early Bronze Age barrows was deemed of higher status simply because males were more commonly disposed of in this manner – despite the fact that, as Brück (2009) notes, female cremation practices took more physical effort to organize and would have been far more visible in the wider landscape.

What is clear from this survey is that mortuary traditions focused on gender: (1) were very strongly regional and generally in the minority; (2) are to be found in chronological snapshots, something that should become apparent with better dated material chronologies; and (3) were not necessarily valid for all sectors of society, particularly during the Iron Age. Clearly there is no predictable trajectory toward more status and differentiation in burial over time. The wealthy Chalcolithic Beaker and Yorkshire Iron Age are anomalies in the face of an otherwise stable background. For most of the four millennia covered in this paper, it is easier to criticize earlier interpretations and state what gendered identities were *not* than it is to make definitive statements to the contrary. Indeed, the more the interpretations of the later twentieth century are examined, in terms of their content but also with regard to the data upon which statements are based, the more one comes to question their motivations. It is clear to the present authors that it is only later twentieth-century European archaeology that has written strong women out of history, something which ultimately tells us more about later twentieth-century society in Europe than it does about prehistoric social structures (Pope 2011).

A theme that emerges strongly from the examination of all the periods considered here is that approaches to prehistoric gender based upon archaeological and osteological evidence remain under-developed and under-theorized. Recent work in osteoarchaeology, including new thinking on sex and sexuality, the application of new analytical approaches to older skeletal material, and new data, has the potential to revise the views tentatively expressed above. Perhaps most importantly, the theoretical basis of osteoarchaeology is seeing a revolution in critical self-awareness. This is most apparent in Sheilagh Stead's (1991) use of "contra-indications" as a useful category in the sexing of skeletal remains, and the five-point sexing system more commonly in use today (WEA 1980). It is here that we may find our best evidence for prehistoric gender. Differences in the "maleness" and "femaleness" of skeletons, or between the apparent sex of crania and post-crania, especially when associated with contradictory assemblages of material culture, may open our awareness to prehistoric gender as markedly *different* – far removed from binary notions based on traditional ideas concerning the dualism of biological sex.

It is equally clear that settlement studies from all periods often do not possess the theoretical or empirical rigor to approach gender in a reflexive manner: we have

examples of essentialist narratives from Neolithic, Bronze Age, and Iron Age studies. The concept of gender written into these accounts is too enmeshed in the use of ethnographic and contemporary Western analogy to begin a consideration of the everyday life of past peoples. There needs to be extensive critical reflection on the use of analogy in gender archaeology, building on the feminist writing of Alison Wylie, as we move toward methodologies for an increasingly scientific approach to the past, one steeped in critical thinking. As intelligent practitioners we must now move beyond "top-down" models that begin with the assumption of social hierarchy or sex opposition, and which – via recourse to formal analogy and a selective reading of the data – merely construct the past in their own image. Instead we should build an understanding of the past "from the ground up" through self-aware analysis of the archaeological data, in order to reconstruct the past as best we can. Indeed, although encouraging new research has been undertaken over the last decade, the brief survey of the archaeological data presented in this chapter does much to highlight the lack of empirical rigor that has been the hallmark of British prehistoric gender archaeology thus far.

NOTES

1 A peculiarly post-1945 vision of what constitutes gender roles, emerging as married women were actually barred from the professions, thus *ensuring* their domesticity (cf. Pope 2011).
2 Use of the term "status" here refers to people marked out by their grave goods as being socially distinct from the majority of the population; an attempt is made here to limit any assumption regarding the link between this "status" – whatever it may represent – and that of social hierarchy, particularly as linked to our own understanding of class structures.
3 Divination using the reflective properties of a mirror, perhaps also with water, as practiced in ancient Greece.
4 Even more so in the mortuary evidence of later Iron Age eastern Europe, particularly in Scythia, Sarmatia, Ukraine, the Caucasus, and southern Siberia (Pope and Ralston 2011).
5 "Contra-indications" individuals are those where male and female characteristics are present in equal balance (Stead 1991).
6 While the deposition of a sword with a shield is generally believed to be male (with the exception of Rudston 163), individuals buried with a lone sword or shield, or with a dagger, seem less reliably so – an apparent distinction that warrants testing.

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CHAPTER 23

Gender in Central Mediterranean Prehistory

Ruth Whitehouse

In this chapter I present a survey of gender studies in the prehistory of the central Mediterranean (Italy and Malta). I reviewed gender archaeology in Italy a decade ago (Whitehouse 2001), so here I shall concentrate mainly on work published since then. I shall divide it into two main chronological sections: the Neolithic, Copper, and Bronze Ages, where the focus has been on the analysis of iconography; and the Iron Age, which is the period that offers the richest data for gender analyses and where some of the most interesting work of the last decade has been concentrated.

The Study of Gender in the Central Mediterranean

Gender archaeology has not taken root in central Mediterranean archaeology as it has in the Anglo-American world and in parts of western and northern Europe. I have explored the reasons for this previously (Whitehouse 1998b:2, 2001:50) and can summarize them briefly here. In simple terms, Italian archaeology over the last half century has been strongly empirical in nature, with most effort devoted to the plotting of material patterns in time and space within the traditional culture-historical paradigm. As Alessandro Guidi has argued, the development of processual archaeology that characterized Anglo-American archaeology from the 1960s and postprocessual Archaeology that succeeded it from the 1980s, especially in Britain, has touched Italy only peripherally (Guidi 1996). Postprocessual archaeology in particular has had very little impact. As a result, there has been little work on topics such as the symbolic use of material culture or the individual in archaeology and little recognition of the possibility of multiple perspectives on the past. Moreover, feminist theorizing has left

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Italian archaeology untouched, in spite of the importance of Italian feminist writers in other fields (discussed in Baker 1998). In fact, much of the work on gender archaeology in Italy has been done by non-Italians. However, things are now changing: when I first published on the subject (Whitehouse 1998a, 2001), I could find no Italian authors writing on gender archaeology. Now there are several, especially Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri (2008), Gilda Bartoloni (2003), Mariassunta Cuozzo (2003, 2005), Elisa Perego (2011), and Giulia Saltini Semerari (2009). These scholars are explicitly addressing the subject of gender and contributing to the development of gender archaeology as a field of study in Italy. The term "gender" has entered the archaeological literature in Italy – quite often in English, even when the work is in Italian (e.g., Luttikhuizen 2000) – an indication that the subject is here to stay.

Much of the literature on gender in the central Mediterranean consists of period, culture, or site-specific individual studies, but there are also collections of papers (Whitehouse 1998a; Herring and Lomas 2009) and some overview studies (Robb 1994b, 1997; Whitehouse 2001). In the latter category, the two articles by John Robb offer social evolutionary accounts of gender in Italian society from the Neolithic to the Iron Age, whereas my own paper is a more free-ranging survey of the kinds of evidence and approaches brought to the study of gender in Italy and covered a longer time range, from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Iron Age. Talalay (2005) includes the central Mediterranean in a broader survey of gender in the prehistoric Mediterranean as a whole.

What is the theoretical underpinning of the work on gender archaeology in Italy? It must be admitted that much of it assumes a normative binary division based on biological sex, with "men" and "women" as uncontroversial categories, with the job of gender archaeology being to define their respective roles in society and the relations between them. This can be described as gender essentialism and often involves the projection onto past communities of models of gender that characterize our own society (or have done so in the recent past). However, this is not the whole story, and some scholars have argued against the normative binary division in particular contexts. Others have recognized that such a binary division is not a cultural universal, but have nonetheless deduced that it was present in particular places in the past through analysis of the archaeological evidence.

The issue of the difference between biological sex and social gender – a distinction often taken as fundamental in gender archaeology but not without its theoretical problems (see, for example, Gilchrist 1999:9; Talalay 2005:131) – has been tackled explicitly by some authors. The most widely accepted way of identifying social gender categories based on biological sex is to compare the cultural features of burial, such as the location and type of grave, burial rites, and accompanying grave goods, with biological sex identified from skeletal remains. One example of such a study is provided by Lisa Cougle in her study of the Iron Age cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa, which sets out explicitly to test the theory that the community had a binary gender system founded on biological sex (Cougle 2009, 2011). She starts with a pilot study of a sample of burials consisting of adults of securely identified biological sex and sub-adults for which sex could not be established. This analysis shows that there were strong associations of ornament numbers and types with sex and age, and on this basis the analysis was extended to a larger sample, using the associations established in the pilot sample to attribute gender to many adult burials for which biological sex could not be securely attributed. Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri, the excavator of Osteria dell'Osa,

adopts the same approach, using not only ornaments but other grave good types, too, though she is somewhat less critical about the extension of gender attribution to non-sexed skeletons, especially in the case of children (Bietti Sestieri 1992a, 1992b, 2008). Clearly there is an important distinction between the *assumption* of a binary gender system (which can be labeled gender essentialism) and an examination of the archaeological record to assess whether or not such a system existed (which is sound scholarship). While Bietti Sestieri's and Cougle's studies fall into the latter category, others are less rigorous, and it would be possible to construct a notional series, ranging from works that deal with the issue in an explicit fashion at one end to those that simply assume a binary gender system at the other.

On the issue of additional or ambiguous genders, which has figured strongly in the gender archaeology literature elsewhere, there has been little work in the central Mediterranean, although there has been some discussion in relation to iconography in connection to the Neolithic (e.g., Vella Gregory 2007; Malone 2008) and the Iron Age (most recently, Bonfante 2009; Sandhoff 2009). In the case of burial analysis, some attention has been paid to the cases of individuals who do not fit the gender norms of the community in question; these have been explained in a variety of ways, though no one to date has suggested the existence of an official third gender in any period.

There has been rather little attention given to distinctions between different aspects of gender, such as roles, relations, ideologies, and identities, although some work is now being done on these aspects, particularly in relation to the Iron Age (e.g., Cougle 2009, 2011; Lomas 2009; Perego 2011). However, there is still a tendency for gender to be considered as fixed rather than something to be negotiated, transacted, or performed. An exception is provided, in the context of the Etruscans, by the work of Vedia Izzet (1998, 2007) and her research student, Lucy Shipley, who is currently pursuing a doctoral dissertation on the subject of sexuality and gender performance among the Etruscans (pers. comm. February 2, 2011).

In addition to studies that explicitly address issues of gender, there is a wider body of work in Italy concerned with what can be labeled "the archaeology of women" (most notably, Rallo 1989). These works can definitely be criticized for gender essentialism: their unquestioning acceptance of the category "woman" as part of an essentialist binary system of sex/gender, assumed to be a human universal. Nonetheless, as I have argued elsewhere (Whitehouse 2007), there is a place for the archaeology of women in the development of our subject. A concentration on women allows us to redress the gender imbalance of earlier studies. As well as establishing ways of making women more clearly visible in the archaeological record, such studies allow us to challenge stereotypes of female roles and behavior, and to consider the possible contributions of women to the development of technology, economy, and society. I am aware that for some feminists I am writing heresy here, but I believe, as I have argued previously (2007:37–38), that a "strategic" gender essentialism may serve the purposes of gender archaeology.

So far I have not mentioned Malta. This is because, in spite of its position in the central Mediterranean and its proximity to Sicily, it is normally considered separately from Italy. This is partly because its prehistory was genuinely distinctive, but partly because its different recent history as part of the British Empire until Independence in 1964 has led to a different intellectual tradition of study. In terms of gender studies, Malta is strongly associated with the Mother Goddess theory, attached to the statues and figurines of the so-called Temple period, and indeed is a major focus of tourism

for the present-day Mother Goddess movement. I discuss this theory below. Other potential sources of information on gender have not been explored for prehistoric Malta, or have proved problematic. For instance, the massive burial deposit in the Xaghra circle site, comprising some 220,000 bones, represented mostly disarticulated remains that had undergone complex and variable processes of deposition; attempts to tease interpretive patterns out of these data have not identified major differences based on gender (Malone et al. 2009:chap. 11).

The Neolithic, Copper, and Bronze Ages

There are several types of evidence that have been used to study gender in the Neolithic and early Metal Ages: burials (Robb 1994a); cult caves possibly used for male initiation rites (Whitehouse 1992a, 1992b; Pluciennik 1998); and spatial patterns in gender symbolism and practice (Morter and Robb 1998). However, little new work has been done in these areas in the last decade. The study of iconography, by contrast, has seen a number of new studies, so I shall concentrate on this subject here.

Iconography showing the human form comes in three main types in the prehistoric central Mediterranean: figurines, statues, and rock art. Figurines, small portable figures, occur throughout the region from the beginning of the Neolithic (ca. 6000 B.C.E.) though in relatively small numbers compared with neighboring regions, such as Greece or the Balkans; in Malta, Sicily, and Sardinia they continue into the Copper Age (Figure 23.1). Statues, approximately life-size figures, start rather later in date, belonging mainly to the Copper Age (ca. 3500–2500 B.C.E.) (Figure 23.2); most take the form of largely two-dimensional statue-stelae or statue-menhirs made of stone, which have a patchy distribution, with major groups in northern Italy and others in southern Italy and Sardinia; another large group found in Corsica dates mostly to the Bronze Age (Lanfranchi 2005). A different type of statue, the flamboyantly three-dimensional "Fat Lady" of Tarxien, is found in Malta at a date equivalent to the Copper Age in mainland Italy. Rock art occurs both as parietal art in caves in peninsular Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, and as open-air rock art, especially the great concentrations at Monte Bégo, Valcamonica, and Valtellina in the Alpine region, but with sporadic occurrences elsewhere.

Figurines

Figurines, small anthropomorphic statuettes mostly in clay or stone, are usually described as "Mother Goddess" figures in most Italian scholarship, where the identification is considered unproblematic. In the broader archaeological literature, the Mother Goddess concept is generally rejected by both non-feminist and feminist archaeologists (from rather different perspectives), and there is an extensive bibliography on the subject (for a brief summary see Whitehouse 2006:756–758). The issue of the Mother Goddess is at its most controversial on Malta, which the non-academic Goddess Movement regards as one of its most important pilgrimage destinations, while most academic archaeologists, with the main exceptions of Marija Gimbutas (1982, 1989, 1991) and Christina Biaggi (1986), reject this interpretation. Two scholars, Caroline Malone (1998) and Ann Monsarrat (2004), have explicitly addressed the question of whether the figurines and the statues (which clearly belong

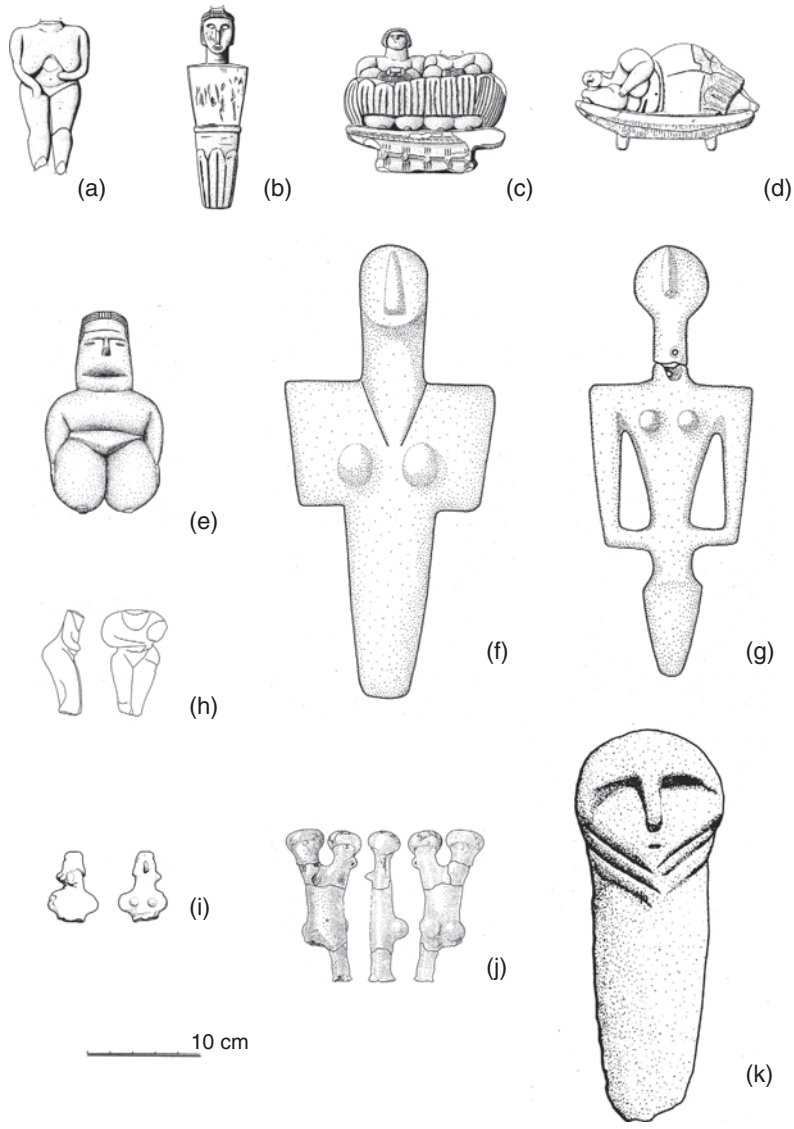


Figure 23.1 Neolithic–Copper Age figurines: a–d from Malta (after Malone 2008), e–g from Sardinia (after Lilliu 1999), h–k from mainland Italy (after Holmes and Whitehouse 1998). (a) Hagar Qim, female. (b) Xaghra, gender not shown. (c) Xaghra, paired figures, gender not shown. (d) Hal Saflieni, female. (e) Cuccuru s'Arriu, Cabras, volumetric type, gender not shown. (f) Turriga, Senorbí, unperforated plaque type, female. (g) Portoferro, perforated plaque type, female. (h) Fonti di San Callisto, female. (i) Grotta di Ponte Vara, female. (j) Vhò, ambiguous gender (breasts shown, but double heads are phallic shaped). (k) Arnesano, ambiguous gender; necklace shown, usually associated with specifically female figures, but overall shape of figurine is phallic. (Figures a–d: reproduced by permission of Equinox Publishing; figures h–k: reproduced by permission of Accordia Research Institute.)

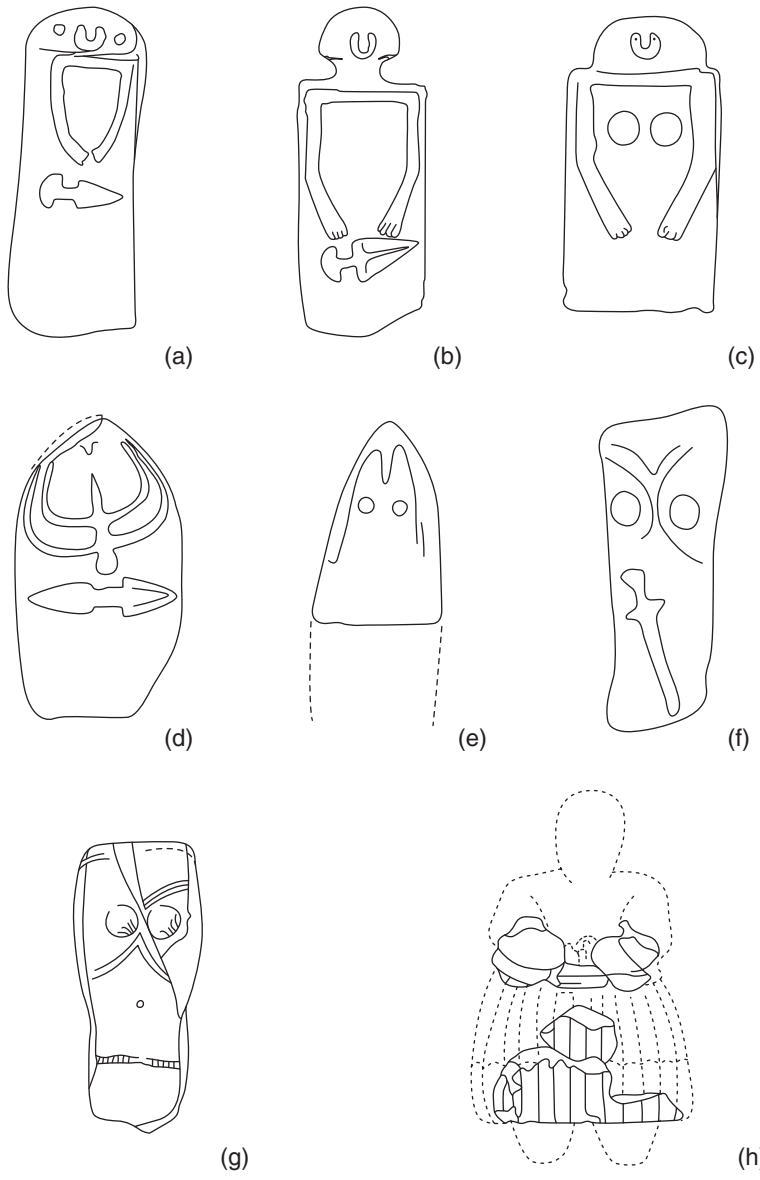


Figure 23.2 Copper and Bronze Age statues: a–c from Lunigiana (after Barfield 1998); d–e from Sardinia (after Lilliu 2003); f from Corsica (drawn from photograph in *Préhistoire de la Corse*, Centre Régional de Documentation Pédagogique, Corsica 1990:99); g from southeast Italy (after Trump 1966); h from Malta (after Townsend 2007) (none are to scale). (a) Pontevecchio type, male shown with dagger. (b) Malgrate type, male shown with dagger. (c) Pontevecchio type, female shown with breasts. (d) Laconi, male shown with dagger and "trident." (e) Laconi, female shown with breasts. (f) Castaldu, apparently female with breasts shown, but carrying a sword. (g) Castelluccio dei Sauri, female shown with breasts. (h) Xaghra, reconstruction of statue, probably of "fat lady" type; gender in fact not shown. (Figures a–c: reproduced by permission of Accordia Research Institute; Figures d–e: reproduced by permission of Edizione Il Maestrale; Figure g: reproduced by permission of Thames & Hudson.)

together in the Maltese context) represent goddesses, human women, or neither. Both authors address the putative female attribution of the figures. The best known examples, including figurines, small statues, and life-size or larger than life-size statues, do not normally have either genitalia or breasts. They have been assumed to be female because of their rounded shapes, often with bulbous buttocks and thighs, but Malone argues that these features cannot be taken as diagnostic of gender. Instead, female gender should only be attributed to the small number of figurines that have either breasts or the pubic area marked; the rest should be considered genderless. The variety of figures found in Malta is remarkable, including many that are not of the "fat lady" type, and it is implausible to force them into all into one simplistic explanatory model (Figure 23.1:a–d). Moreover, although there are no explicitly male human figures, male symbolism is abundant in other forms, including model phalli. Malone (2008) offers a detailed and complex analysis of the Maltese iconography, which takes into account not only subject (including animal and monster figures and architectural models as well as humans), but also scale and context, all interpreted as metaphorical expressions of belief in an elaborate and multi-layered cosmos. Townsend (2007) also argues against the traditional emphasis on female symbolism and suggests instead that the anthropomorphic imagery expressed an ideal concerned with the primacy of life in both males *and* females – a concept he labels "ephebism." Whether or not one accepts Malone's or Townsend's interpretation completely, they have certainly demonstrated the inadequacy as well as the implausibility of interpreting all the representations as part of a universal Mother Goddess cult.

The Neolithic figurines found on the island of Sardinia are significantly different from those of both mainland Italy and Malta. They too have been regarded traditionally as "Mother Goddesses," but recent studies by Isabelle Vella Gregory (2006, 2007) and Losi (in press) have looked at them in different ways, using theories of the body and agency. In an analysis of 118 figurines, Vella Gregory demonstrates a development through time. Figurines first appear in the Middle Neolithic (fifth millennium B.C.E.). They may be made of either clay or stone and are described as "volumetric" in type, with curvy lines but lacking clear indications of gender, not unlike some of the Maltese figures (Figure 23.1:e). In the subsequent phase, belonging to the earlier fourth millennium B.C.E., the more schematic "elongated volumetric type" appears with an exaggeratedly long head, very narrow waist, and curvy hips. Later in the fourth millennium we find the "unperforated plaque" type: crucifix-shaped figurines, mostly of clay, which are very schematic in form and indicate female gender by the presence of breasts (Figure 23.1:f). Up to this point the figurines come mainly from settlement sites, but this changes in the subsequent Copper Age (third millennium B.C.E.) when they are found mostly in burials; at this time the "perforated plaque" type occurs (so-called because they have empty spaces between the arms and the body) (Figure 23.1:g); these are even more schematic and may be made of either stone or clay. They are all of female type with breasts shown. Vella Gregory regards the figurines not simply as representations (whether of humans or supernatural entities), passive reflections of social reality, but rather as agents which can themselves cause things to happen. Material objects such as figurines are "secondary agents" in the sense of Gell (1998:17) since their agency is acquired through their engagement in social relationships. So "figurines thus acquire a dual purpose, they represent the body as an artefact and also embody lived experience" (Vella Gregory 2007:30). The figurines

may show us that embodied experience in the Sardinian case changed through time. Initially it seems that sex did not need to be made explicit and materialized, but with time, as the ambiguously sexed volumetric figurines were replaced by standardized schematic figurines with clear female sex marked, lived experience may have been based on more strictly defined norms of sexual difference. Losi (in press) argues that sexual identity was not prioritized in the Sardinian figurines and observes that, with the exception of breasts, which are shown on some figurines, female genitalia appear rarely. She also shows that, as in Malta, male symbolism is not absent, appearing not as complete male figures but in model phalli.

The Neolithic imagery of Sardinia contrasts strongly with that found later on the island in the so-called *bronzetti*, small bronze figures, including models of boats and of animals, as well as people, associated with the later phases of the Nuragic culture, dated to the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age. Most of the human figures seem to be male, with many being shown as armed, traditionally interpreted as representing a warrior elite, while figurines shown as veiled or in a praying/offering position are interpreted as women. So far, so familiar, with the Nuragic culture portrayed as very similar in social terms to the mainland Italian Bronze and Iron Ages. However, Nuragic culture is actually very distinctive and the *bronzetti* also offer far more to potential interpreters than a simple male/female divide, with the males as dominant warriors. There are many non-warrior figures, showing many aspects of Nuragic life related both to everyday life and to cult; there are also figures that probably relate to cosmology/mythology. Vella Gregory's agency and body-centered approach (2007, 2009) allows *bronzetti* to be seen as actively involved in Nuragic society and showing a much greater variety of bodies and activities than normally considered.

Returning to the Neolithic, figurines on mainland Italy and Sicily are different from those of both Malta and Sardinia: they are rather few in number (Giannitrapani 2002 catalogues 124 including some very fragmentary examples), and the vast majority are clearly female, with breasts, pubic triangles, or both (Figure 23.1:h–i). There are few clearly male examples and no sexless ones. There are, however, some examples that combine male and female symbolism in a variety of ways: for example, figurines with clear female features, such as breasts or genitalia, that are phallic in shape overall (Figure 23.1:j–k). The traditional explanation of these figurines is, predictably, in terms of the Mother Goddess, but some alternative interpretations were offered by myself and a colleague in 1998 (Holmes and Whitehouse 1998). In particular we considered a model based on Marilyn Strathern's work in Melanesia in which gender is conceived not as fixed in individuals, but as essences – male or female – that can be exchanged, drawn out, or reproduced, and combined in either same-sex or cross-sex combinations (Strathern 1988). We observed in the Italian figurines a distributional pattern with same-sex figurines appearing mostly in settlement sites while ambiguous ones occur in burials or cult caves. On this basis we suggested that the domestic arena may have been appropriate for same-sex, specifically female, symbolism, while cross-sex symbolism was suitable for ritual contexts.

Statues

Life-size (or larger) statuary occurs on Malta and Gozo: the best known example is the "Fat Lady" of Tarxien, referred to above, but fragmentary examples of similar

statues have been found also at other sites, including Hagar Qim and the Xaghra Circle on Gozo (Figure 23.2:h). They share the characteristics of many of the figurines – volumetric curvaceousness combined with gender ambiguity – and are equally problematic as representations of a Mother Goddess.

In some parts of mainland Italy and Sardinia, stone statues of the Copper Age take the form of statue-stelae (two-dimensional with incised features) and statue-menhirs (partly three-dimensional with features carved in the round). Although many have been found out of context, those excavated in recent years have come from ritual sites, such as Aosta (Mezzena 1998b) and Ossimo (Fedele 2008); although these sites often include funerary elements, the statues do not seem to have been simple grave markers. They have been interpreted by some as representations of deities (e.g., Mezzena 1998a; Casini and Fossati 2007) while others see them as ancestors (Keates 2000). There are different regional groupings, but most seem to have a clear division between those representing females, shown with breasts (Figure 23.2:c, e, g) and in some cases necklaces, and those representing males, shown with weapons (Figure 23.2:a, b, d). In a previous publication (Whitehouse 1992b) I made much of this distinction, adopting a structuralist interpretation that emphasized associations between women and nature (women being marked primarily by the biological feature of breasts), and between men and culture (men represented by artifacts, especially weapons). While I still believe this distinction is a valid one for the Copper Age, I am more struck now by the complementarity of the representations: whether gods or ancestors, both males and females seem to have been venerated. In any case, the binary division is clear-cut: in the whole corpus of statue-stelae and statue-menhirs from the central Mediterranean I know of only one example which combines breasts with a weapon (a sword in this case), a late example from Corsica (Figure 23.2:f).

Rock art

One form of rock art in the central Mediterranean occurs as parietal art (mostly painted) in caves. In a detailed analysis of one cave in southern Italy, Grotta di Porto Badisco (Whitehouse 1992a, 1992b), I argued from an analysis of the number and form of gendered human figures depicted that the cave was possibly used for male initiation rites. The male figures, identifiable by the depiction of phalli, were shown as hunters with bows, sometimes in scenes with red deer and possible roe deer as prey. Female figures, recognizable through brown blobs in the pubic area on otherwise red figures, were shown without artifacts but in a characteristic position with one arm in the air and the other in hand-on-hip position, perhaps representing a dancing pose. Male and female figures appear in approximately equal numbers in the initial zone of this long cave, while only male figures occur in the more internal zones. I argued from this distribution, in the context of a general interpretation of the cave as used for rites of passage (an argument too complex to reproduce here), that females took part only in the first stages of initiation while males proceeded to further stages, involving transitions to progressively more interior zones of the cave.

While my interpretation has been criticized by some scholars (e.g., Skeates 1994; Pluciennik 1998), Barfield and Chippindale (1997) have proposed a rather similar interpretation for the open-air rock art of Mont Bégo, high up in the Alps near the French-Italian border. Here, images dated to the Copper and Bronze Ages seem to

show exclusively male figures, depicted with phalli, and associated with weapons and with ploughing, as well as individual signs, such as daggers and axes, interpreted as male symbols. Barfield and Chippindale suggest that climbing up to this remote mountain locale and inscribing symbols on the rock might have been part of male initiation rites.

Lynne Bevan's recent study of the rock art in the Naquane National Park, part of Valcamonica, also in the Alps but in a less remote location, offers a different interpretation, suggesting that female rites were also being practiced in this area (2000, 2006). The only figures in the entire corpus of Valcamonica art that show clear female sexual characteristics are some of the so-called *oranti* ("praying" or "worshiping") figures. These figures have bodies consisting of a single line, splayed arms, legs in a symmetrical arrangement, and often a sexual organ between the legs (a circular cup mark indicating a female, a phallic line a male); there are also figures with no sexual organ shown. The *oranti* figures, once thought to be Neolithic, are now usually dated to the Middle and Late Bronze Age and are generally considered to be depicted as participating in ritual; although there is no agreement about the type of ritual involved, they may well include rites of passage. Some scenes have all-male figures, others all-female figures, and some have both sexes. All-female scenes appear on the Great Rock and on Rocks 26, 32, and 44 at Naquane; some of the female figures are shown with large hands – a feature that also appears on male figures and is interpreted as indicating special ritual status, perhaps shamanic. Bevan argues that male, female, and sexually mixed rituals were being conducted in Valcamonica and that Naquane in particular was a focus for female rituals, though not exclusively so. Some of the all-female *oranti* scenes were incorporated into later panels of carvings, suggesting that they continued to have significance in the Iron Age, when there was a strongly male emphasis in the art (discussed below).

The Iron Age

The Iron Age is a period that creates mixed feelings in a feminist archaeologist like myself, who would dearly like to explore a world that is gendered in very different ways from recent Western society. On the one hand, it offers greater potential for gender studies than earlier periods, which is probably why most recent work has concentrated on this field. On the other hand, the evidence seems to indicate, at least on first examination, a depressingly familiar world divided on binary gender lines, with men in public roles, both military and political, and women in domestic ones, practicing crafts such as textile manufacture and pottery-making, as well as presumably being wives and mothers – though these latter roles are rarely discussed in the literature. Nonetheless, although the binary gender divide seems real enough, the attribution of roles is less clear-cut, and there is room for discussion both about the status of female gendered activities such as textile manufacture and about the exceptions that occur to the generally strict associations of each gender with particular activities or roles.

The potential for gender studies in the Iron Age arises from the variety of types of evidence available. Firstly, there is abundant burial data from almost all parts of Italy; osteological analyses are sometimes available, but even where these are lacking, it may

be possible to recognize gendered patterns in funerary practices or types of grave goods, particularly where mutually exclusive patterns of association occur. Another major source of information is provided by iconography, which takes many different forms in the Iron Age: funerary stelae, painted tombs, rock art in the open air or on cave walls, and decorated artifacts of many different types. Another source of potential evidence for gender available for this period, in contrast to earlier ones, is writing: not the historical accounts written by Greeks or Romans, which are beyond the scope of the present chapter, but the writing produced by the Iron Age people themselves, mostly found on tombstones or on tombs themselves and on artifacts deposited as grave goods or as votives in sanctuaries. The significance for gender studies is that personal names figure prominently in the epigraphic record and for most of the languages the linguists distinguish male and female names with some confidence. This opens up the possibility of recognizing the roles of men and women in a range of activities for which writing was used.

Burial evidence

Studies of funerary data predominate in studies of gender in the Iron Age. This is partly because of the dominance of burials in the archaeological record but also because in most areas they appear to demonstrate a fairly clear binary gender system, with males and females presented with distinct identities in death. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the existence of a binary gender system based on biological sex sometimes appears to be taken for granted, but several scholars (e.g., Vida Navarro 1992; Toms 1998; Cougle 2009, 2011) have produced very thoughtful approaches to this issue. Moreover, most studies that identify a binary gender system recognize that there was not a one-to-one correlation between social gender and biological sex and offer interpretations of the exceptions that occur in their particular databases.

The comparison of the cultural features of burial with biological sex identified from skeletal remains is unfortunately often not possible because bones frequently survive only in poor condition or, in the case of the many old excavations, were never recovered in the first place. One outstanding exception, in terms of both the size of the cemetery and the meticulous quality of the excavation and subsequent analyses, is the Latial cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa, excavated by Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri (Bietti Sestieri 1992a, 1992b). This cemetery has been the subject of several analyses with gender as their focus.

Lisa Cougle's work (Cougle 2009, 2011) focuses on gender as expressed in dress in the Latial Iron Age II phase (traditionally dated ca. 900–770 B.C.E.). The evidence for dress takes the form of ornaments, which are divided into two main types: those that provided structural support for garments (buttons, belt fastenings, studs, fibulae, and pins); and those whose function was aesthetic and were associated more closely with the body than the garment (beaded jewellery, hair rings, finger rings, earrings, and pendants). Cougle's analysis demonstrated that in general adult females and sub-adults had more ornaments than adult males, and all the specific ornament types had strong associations with both females and sub-adults, except for serpentine fibulae, which were strongly associated with adult males (arch fibulae were strongly associated with adult females). Females normally had many more ornaments than males, especially those of the "aesthetic" type, worn on the body rather than attached

to garments. Sub-adults had ornamentation that resembles adult females, and this can be interpreted in one of two ways: either almost all of the sub-adults were female; or children were considered to be gendered female, with full male status available only to adult men. The clearest conclusion is that the community of Osteria dell'Osa had a social gender system based on biological sex, and that for adult individuals this system was represented by differential dress and ornamentation.

Cougle's analysis is concerned specifically with dress, which is certainly a potent gender marker in many societies. However, Osteria dell'Osa, like many other Iron Age cemeteries, also presents other indications of gender differentiation, particularly those relating to social roles. The most widespread distinction found in Iron Age Italy as a whole is between warriors (indicated by males buried with weapons and defensive armor) and textile workers (females buried with spinning and weaving equipment, such as spindle whorls, bobbins, and loomweights). Apart from the cases where biological sex has been adequately established, the gender associations of these types of equipment are indicated by the fact that the two groups are, with very few exceptions, mutually exclusive (see, for example, Toms 1998; Vida Navarro 1992).

In a paper devoted specifically to gender in the Latial Iron Age, based on the evidence from Osteria dell'Osa and another cemetery, Castiglione, Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri recognizes these gendered roles and possibly also others (Bietti Sestieri 2008). The societies of this time in Latium are characterized as largely egalitarian in structure and kinship-based, with lineages subdivided into smaller units described as extended families (marked social differentiation appears only in the subsequent phase, Latial Iron Age III, in the eighth century B.C.E.). The "warrior" and "weaver" roles take particular forms in the Latial context. Specifically, the male warrior burials are almost all cremations and are invariably associated with miniaturized weapon sets, in contrast to the full-sized weapons found in other parts of Italy. The textile-working roles are indicated by a recurrent set of artifacts: two pottery jugs and a cup accompanied by a set of spindle whorls and spools/bobbins and sometimes a loomweight. Bietti Sestieri, unlike Cougle, regards sub-adult burials with "female" goods as being definitely those of biological girls; as the "weaver kits" are found predominantly in the graves of children and young women, she suggests that weaving was predominantly practiced by females, who started at a young age and played a lesser role once they reached maturity. Interestingly, although the "weaver sets" appear only in a minority of graves, single spindle whorls occur in the majority of graves of biological females; these may represent a generic reference to female gender rather than an active involvement in textile-working (a material equivalent of the use of the term "spinster" in our own recent history).

Bietti Sestieri argues that women may have been responsible for pottery-making at Osteria dell'Osa, on the grounds that female burials contain larger numbers of pots than male ones and significantly higher proportions of decorated vessels. She claims that they may have been responsible for the administration of food resources (although the evidence suggests that this role was related to age rather than gender: larger containers for liquid, for instance, have strong associations with adults and mature/old individuals of both genders).

Bietti Sestieri (2008:155–157) also maintains that in general women did not have access to political or social leadership roles, which were the exclusive preserve of men. A partial exception is indicated by two female graves containing knives, along with

other grave goods that were richer than usual. Knives are rare artifacts in burials at this time and are thought to be exclusively associated with cult (used for sacrifice), so these women may have held priestly roles. Other female graves containing rattles, double amphorae, and/or miniature votive vessels are interpreted as those of women who played secondary roles in cult activity but were not themselves priestesses. In contrast to these official cult roles, two other women, both in the 40–60 age bracket, had unusual burials, with grave goods anomalous for their age class, and with unusual features in the graves themselves: small white pebbles around the body in one case and heavy lava blocks over the body in the other. Bietti Sestieri (2008:154–155) believes that these women may have been involved in witchcraft, a self-appointed role with an ambivalent value in the community that demanded special treatment in burial.

Textile working

Margarita Gleba looks at textile working in Iron Age Italy in terms of the status of the female workers who practiced it, accepting a combination of burial and iconographic evidence for the female gender of these workers (Gleba 2008, 2009a, 2009b). She argues that some of the women weavers held high social status. This is based partly on burial evidence: some tombs have grave goods including distaffs (tools used to fix the fibre on during the spinning process) made of precious materials such as bronze, silver, amber, glass, or ivory. There is also iconographic support for the claim: the late eighth to early seventh-century B.C.E. Tomb 89 at Verucchio contained, among a wealth of elaborate grave goods, a remarkably preserved wooden throne with delicately carved scenes showing women spinning and weaving (von Eles 2002; Gleba 2009a). Another richly equipped late seventh-century B.C.E. tomb from Bologna produced a decorated bronze tintinnabulum (ceremonial rattle) showing various stages of textile manufacture, including one scene depicting a complex two-storied warp-weighted loom (Morigi Govi 1971; Gleba 2009a).

Gleba maintains that there was some specialization in textile production. The tomb with the throne at Verucchio also produced many actual textile remains, including two almost complete mantles and a possible tunic. Both of the mantles have elaborate borders made by the laborious tablet-weaving technique. Gleba believes that tablet-weaving was a specialized task, arguing that the so-called spools or bobbins found in some female graves were in fact light loomweights used for tablet-weaving; this view is supported by the fact that the "spools"‘ usually occur in sets (more appropriate for use as weights rather than bobbins) and occur mostly in graves that also have other textile-making equipment, such as spindle whorls and standard pyramidal loomweights. Bietti Sestieri's tombs with "weaver kits" at Osteria dell'Osa are of this type. In spite of the level of specialization suggested by this evidence, Gleba believes that textile production was mainly based at the household level in the Early Iron Age, as indicated by the finds of textile instruments in low numbers on settlement sites. This changed in the later seventh and sixth centuries B.C.E. when some sites, such as Murlo, produced very large numbers of such tools concentrated in small areas (Gleba 2000). This suggests a workshop mode of production, and Gleba hints at the possibility that female dominance of the craft may have been replaced at this time by slave labor and/or male craftsmen, although firm evidence of this is lacking (Gleba 2009a:76).

There was also a ritual dimension to the practice of textile manufacture. Spinning and weaving implements, including spindle whorls, spools, and especially loomweights, commonly appear in votive deposits in sanctuaries (Gleba 2011). Moreover, at Francavilla Marittima in Calabria, a large timber building (Building Vb) on the eighth-century B.C.E. acropolis, labeled a "weaving hut" by the excavator, Marianne Kleibrink, contained a row of post-holes associated with some very large meander-decorated loomweights, indicating the existence of a large standing loom occupying one end of the building (Kleibrink 2006:120–135, 2010:72–85). Because later buildings on the same spot of the Greek colonial period are demonstrably temples, Kleibrink suggests that this earlier building was also a temple, dedicated to a goddess of weaving. Spindle whorls and loomweights are common finds throughout the site, confirming the prominent role of textile production in the sanctuary. Gleba (2011:79) suggests that the building may have been used for the weaving of a special robe for the divinity, a practice well-known from written sources in the Greek world. It is likely that women would have played a major role in the running of a sanctuary of this sort, perhaps dedicated to a goddess of weaving.

Iconography

The warrior/weaver dichotomy turns up in another body of data from Iron Age Italy: the so-called Daunian stelae from southeast Italy (Nava 1980, 1988; Norman 2009). These are limestone slabs elaborately incised to represent a human figure, together with abundant secondary iconography; they are dated from the late seventh to early fifth century B.C.E. and are assumed, though not proven, to have been grave markers. A primary division of the stelae produces two groups: stelae with weapons and stelae with ornamentation. There are also many that remain unclassified because of their fragmentary condition. Nava and Norman describe different absolute numbers though similar proportions of the different groups: stelae with weaponry (Nava 83, Norman 118); stelae with ornamentation (Nava 520, Norman 642); and unclassified stelae (Nava 529, Norman 411). There is almost certainly a gender element to this primary distinction, but the imbalance in numbers suggests this is not the whole story. Norman has undertaken a study of the secondary iconography on the stelae, identifying a wide range of different individual elements and scenes, and correlating them with the primary division between weapons and ornamentation. What emerges from this analysis is a fascinating and complex story in which gender plays a role, but certainly not the only one. A male group can be identified, represented by hunting and horsemanship as well as weaponry, while a female group is characterized by weaving and the procession, as well as ornamentation. Other elements and scenes, such as those concerned with food-gathering or possible mythological or cult scenes, have less clear gender associations and may instead reflect other aspects of social organization, such as age, kinship, status, or possibly personal choice.

The Iron Age iconography of the Valcamonica rock art is dominated by male motifs and scenes to a much greater extent than the art of earlier periods in the valley (Bevan 2006). In particular male figures are shown as warriors, often taking part in apparent duels with swords or spears, or as hunters – roles that are characteristic of elite males in the iconography of the Iron Age in many parts of Italy. Scenes involving females are rare or non-existent at this period in the Valcamonica, but as mentioned previously,

some of the Bronze Age all-female *oranti* scenes were incorporated into panels of carvings in the Iron Age, suggesting that they may have retained some significance in this period.

Writing

Another source of evidence for gender in Iron Age Italy comes from inscriptions. Writing appears in Etruria as early as the late eighth century B.C.E. and is found in many parts of Italy from the sixth century B.C.E. Writing provides two routes into the study of gender: one is through the analysis of gender-specific personal names; the other is through the identification of the gender of individuals buried with inscribed grave goods. In her study of the early inscriptions in Etruria, Bagnasco Gianni (1996) has shown that the earliest objects, dating to the late eighth and early seventh century B.C.E., appear exclusively in female tombs; from the second quarter of the seventh century inscribed objects start to appear also in male tombs, but the proportion of female tombs with such objects remains high. For both genders, inscriptions occur only in the tombs of high-ranking individuals with rich grave goods (Bagnasco Gianni 1996:351–352, 445–446). It is interesting that some of these earliest inscriptions (mostly very brief, some only single letters) are found on items used in textile manufacture – spindle whorls and spools, or, according to Gleba, weights used for tablet-weaving – suggesting a direct link between women, textile-working, and writing. At later dates (from the sixth century B.C.E.) inscriptions are sometimes found on loomweights in other parts of Italy from a range of contexts (votive, funerary, and possibly domestic), suggesting a continuing connection between writing and the female sphere of textile manufacture.

Writing also figures in the analysis of gender in the Venetic area of northeast Italy, discussed in the following paragraphs.

Combinatory studies

One of the most encouraging aspects of recent work on gender in the Iron Age is that some scholars have tried to produce more holistic accounts, drawing on more than one source of evidence. Two such accounts relate to the group labeled *Veneti* found in northeast Italy dating from the eighth to the first century B.C.E. Both papers (Lomas 2009; Perego 2011) consider votives deposited in sanctuaries (in terms of both iconography and inscriptions), tombstones (also in terms of iconography and inscriptions), and evidence from the burials themselves.

In their discussions of cult, both authors focus on the sanctuaries at one of the major Venetic centers, Este. Here five major sanctuaries were each apparently dedicated to a different deity and demonstrated distinctive patterns in the types of votive deposited. Two provide interesting information on gender. The Meggiaro sanctuary (Ruta Serafini and Sainati 2002), possibly dedicated to a male deity called *Heno[–]to(s)*, yielded pottery and bronze equipment for food and drink consumption, several embossed bronze laminas with figures of warriors, and great quantities of ornaments and animal bones. It is suggested that it was mainly a male cult site and may have been used primarily for initiation rites into a warrior cult. The best known sanctuary, at Baratella, was excavated initially in the late nineteenth century and again

from 1987 to the present (Capuis and Chieco Bianchi 2002). The deity worshiped was a goddess called *Reitia*, who seems to have been a patron of writing. Among the more than 14,000 votives deposited in the sanctuary, which included pottery vessels, bronze figurines and laminas, weapons, and weaving and spinning equipment, were bronze versions of equipment used for writing, the originals of which would presumably have been made of wood and wax (i.e., writing tablets and styluses). The bronze writing tablets carry both a tabulated version of the Venetic writing system (with vowels, consonants, and consonant combinations) and a dedicatory inscription to Reitia. The bronze styluses also sometimes bear inscriptions dedicating the artifact to Reitia, though most contain only lines of repeated letters (Whitehouse and Wilkins 2006). The dedicatory inscriptions on these artifacts show that both men and women dedicated writing instruments: the tablets had both male and female dedicators, but the styluses were all dedicated by women. This suggests that women were able to act in a comparable way to men in the ritual sphere and may have had a specific connection with the practice of writing. This is only true of the Baratella sanctuary, however: in the dedications from other sanctuaries only male names appear.

In the funerary sphere, one of the focuses of study is inscribed tombstones, which have been found mainly at the two southern Venetic centers of Este and Padua, mostly dating from the fifth to third centuries B.C.E. The Este tombstones were smallish elongated pyramid-shaped stones bearing inscriptions but no iconography, while the Padua tombstones were rectangular and contained a carved scene depicting the dead, surrounded by the inscription. The inscriptions are formulaic in nature and characteristically short, often two or three words only and very rarely more than six, including the name of the deceased and often a word for "I" (so-called "speaking inscriptions"). At Este 16 tombstones bear male names and 6 female ones, while at Padua, of the 8 tombstones with legible inscriptions 6 bear male names and 2 female names. If we include the rare tombstones from other Venetic locations and the so-called *ciottoloni* with inscriptions (large natural pebbles which may also have been funerary markers), we end up with a total of 40 males and 17 females commemorated in stone – a clear preponderance of males. Interestingly, in the later period (third to first centuries B.C.E.), when it became more common to find names on the ossuary itself placed inside the tomb and not on an external tombstone, the balance is much more even, with almost equal numbers (31:29) of male and female names. This pattern may simply reflect a chronological difference, but Perego plausibly interprets it in terms of male control of public space, in contrast to the more equal role of females in the hidden space of the tomb itself. Even in the public landscape space, however, women were not totally excluded: as in the case of the sanctuaries, some elite women were able to participate in the public domain, apparently on the same basis as men.

Lomas and Perego also look at other aspects of funerary evidence, such as tomb type and grave goods, and in Perego's case, details of burial practice. Both scholars concentrate on the site of Este, which has produced the most detailed burial evidence. In terms of grave goods, there are clear differences between male and female burials, particularly from the late seventh century onward. Male burials characteristically have serpentine fibulae, knives, pins, arm-rings, and drinking vessels in bronze or fine pottery, while female burials have bronze and bead jewellery, bronze discs and other ornaments, drinking vessels of different types from the male ones, and spinning and

weaving equipment, such as loom weights, spindles, or spindle whorls. Both male and female burials include some very richly equipped examples. From the end of the fifth century B.C.E. grave goods become less lavish and, while grave goods still show gender differences, both male and female graves contain items connected with banqueting and with cooking, suggesting an emphasis on ritual feasting for both genders.

Perego's most original contribution is her analysis of the ritual process in Venetic burials, where recent research has demonstrated intense ritual manipulation at the time of the funeral and later. After cremation, the bones were carefully separated from pyre debris, washed, and selected; some were deliberately broken. Sometimes more than one individual was buried in an urn, often as a result of the exhumation of the older urn and its substitution with a new vessel in which the remains of the old and the most recent dead were buried together. Grave goods were subject to similar manipulation. Perego argues that the manipulation of bones and grave goods was of paramount importance for the reproduction of Venetic social structure, with a particular emphasis on the negotiation of kin relationships. Women seem to have played a crucial role in this manipulation and indeed dominate the burial record as a whole: recent osteological analysis of more than 400 individuals from a range of Venetic sites shows that 70 percent of the identifiable individuals were women, while 40 percent of the total sample consists of unsexed children. If this pattern is confirmed by future work, it raises the question of what happened to the missing male dead (since we should assume an approximate 50:50 representation in the living population). However, it supports Perego's view that the female body and the material culture linked to women were important media of negotiation of identity, power, and social memory in Venetic culture.

These more holistic accounts of gender, drawing on multiple lines of evidence, show that in the case of the Veneti gender was a major basis of social classification, as in the rest of the Italian Iron Age, with traditional differences in roles (e.g., warfare/textile manufacture) and representation (e.g., different dress styles and ornamentation). There may also have been a major difference in the spheres of activity, with men dominating the public arena of sanctuaries and above-ground burial space, and women in charge of the hidden underground manipulation of the burial world, ensuring the continuity of the fundamental groups and relationships of society. Having said that, it is clear also that a sizeable minority of elite women were sufficiently powerful to be able to participate in the public sphere, apparently on the same basis as men, figuring both as dedicators of votives in sanctuaries and as individuals whose graves were marked with tombstones bearing their names. Moreover, women may have played a specific role in the practice of writing, perhaps associated with the teaching and learning of the art within the ritual setting of the Baratella sanctuary.

Conclusion

We can discuss the work on gender archaeology in the central Mediterranean in two different ways: firstly, in terms of what we have learned about gender in the societies in question and secondly, in terms of the development of gender archaeology as a field of study within the area.

In relation to the first topic, it is useful to review the evolutionary scheme proposed by Robb in the 1990s (Robb 1994b, 1997), which described a development from a

situation of gender complementarity and fluidity in the Neolithic to a rigidly divided and hierarchical gender system in the Iron Age: "how New Guinea evolved into Rome" as Robb (1997:44) evocatively, though perhaps somewhat misleadingly, phrases it. To some extent recent work lends support to Robb's scheme. Certainly in the Neolithic gender does not seem to have been a crucial factor in all aspects of life, though in terms of imagery female symbols seem to dominate in some spheres. By the Late Neolithic and into the Metal Ages, as indicated by evidence of statues and rock art, gender seems to have been a main classificatory category, but was marked by complementarity, with both genders represented in the statue-stelae/statue-menhirs, and with possible indications of both all-male and all-female, as well as combined male–female rites, represented in the rock art. By the Iron Age, and possibly starting in the later phases of the Bronze Age, we find a fairly rigid gender divide, with clearly defined roles for men and women and a possible gender hierarchy in which the political sphere was controlled by men. However, recent studies have shown, on the basis of tombstones and offerings in sanctuaries, that some elite women were able to participate in the public sphere on a basis apparently equivalent to that of men. Moreover, in one activity often associated with men (the practice of writing) it seems that women may have played a particular role, both in Etruria and in the Veneto. And even the archetypical female craft of textile manufacture, apparently practiced by women throughout Iron Age Italy, was not only a domestic household activity but was also a symbol of femaleness and in some contexts was associated with high social status and links to the world of the gods.

In relation to the development of gender archaeology as a field of study within the central Mediterranean, we can say with certainty that we are only at the beginning. There are many approaches to gender studies that have not yet been applied in this area, and there are many bodies of data with the potential to throw light on aspects of gender that have not yet been looked at from this perspective. For instance, in the account presented here I have glossed over the many regional variations found in Italian prehistory, but I feel confident that within this mosaic there will be variations in gender roles, relations, ideologies, and identities, just as there are in many other aspects of society and culture. I could end this chapter by bemoaning the limitations of the studies on gender done so far, but I prefer to look forward to the work of the next decade, which I predict will see the full range of archaeological approaches to gender being applied to the richness of the material record of the central Mediterranean, yielding results that promise to be exciting, enlightening, and in some cases probably surprising. Personally, I can't wait.

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CHAPTER 24 Gender in Greek and Aegean Prehistory

Louise Hitchcock and Marianna Nikolaidou

Introduction

Prehistoric Greece and the Aegean provide a rich data set for the study of gender in archaeology. Starting with Lucia Nixon (1983) in the early 1980s, archaeologists have increasingly developed feminist and gender-sensitive approaches, resulting in a proliferation of scholarship devoted to the topic (Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 2007:44, with references; Alexandri 2009; Kopaka 2009b:xvii–xxviii). There is also strong interest in the historiography of professional women in the discipline (e.g., Allsebrook 1992; Picazo 1998; Cullen 2005; papers in Kopaka 2009b). These advances correct problems of theory and method that had dominated many decades of scholarship (Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 2007): an imbalanced focus on iconography at the expense of archaeological context and simplistic equations of imagery with social reality; anachronistic projections from classical antiquity, with exaggerated emphasis on female roles in religion, myth, and ritual; and outdated notions of matriarchy and matrocentrism that had developed in opposition to patriarchal paradigms of the past. Scientific and experimental analyses shed further light on important but hitherto unknown aspects of material and social existence (Laffineur and Betancourt 1997; Foster and Laffineur 2003).

These achievements notwithstanding, gender scholarship in the Aegean still faces many challenges. Indeed an archaeological interest in gender arose much later in the Aegean than it did elsewhere, or in classics and anthropology (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2009). To give a personal example, in 1993 we both presented papers at the Theoretical Archaeology Group Meeting at the University of Durham (UK) where a full day was devoted to gender and another to women in archaeology. By contrast, that same year we participated in a colloquium on gender sponsored by the American Philological Association, which had been rejected by the Archaeological

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Institute of America (AIA). For the next few years, gender was admitted only sporadically at the AIA Annual Meetings, and was usually relegated to the last afternoon of the event![1] By the mid-1990s only 5 percent of the 298 individuals listed in the Directory of Aegean Prehistorians were engaged in gender research, amounting to fewer than 15 individuals spread across four countries on three continents.[2] It took another decade for the first international conference on gender in the prehistoric Aegean to take place, in 2005 at the University of Crete (Kopaka 2009b), with a majority of papers still focused on the study of women, and with only seven males among the 32 contributors. Finally, the first and still the only synthetic monograph on gender in the Aegean appeared in 1993, the joint labor of two (then) graduate students in Greece (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1993); an update of similar scope has not yet followed. Also pending is the incorporation of gender in museum exhibits and outreach programs (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2000).[3]

This slow development is at odds with the fact that for over a century, Greek and foreign women have been extremely active in archaeological projects (above). Female representation in high-ranking academic and administrative positions has become increasingly prominent during the last decade; however, equality in the profession is far from complete, both in terms of field practice and work ethics (Conkey and Gero 1997; Cullen 2005; Moser 2007; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2009). Despite these limitations, new scholars are pursuing these topics in a more open research climate.

The study of gender in Aegean prehistory is maturing from "remedial" attempts to restore female visibility in the face of androcentric misconceptions, and is beginning to acknowledge the varied manifestations of gender beyond binary stereotypes of "femininity" and "masculinity." It is also beginning to reveal the many layers of human identity encompassing, but not restricted to, gendered perceptions and behaviors. In this chapter we touch upon important areas of analysis, including architecture and space; subsistence and craft; burial practices; fertility and health; costume and appearance; artistic representation; religion; and ritual. Our material spans several millennia of life and a spectrum of cultures (Mesolithic to the Late Bronze Age, ca. 8000–1180 B.C.E.) across the Greek peninsula, Crete, and the Aegean islands (see review articles in Cullen 2001).

The Mesolithic and Neolithic

The Stone Age cultures range from nomadic hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic (ca. 8000–6500 B.C.E.) to settled farmers of the Neolithic (ca. 6500–3500 B.C.E.). Diversified in their subsistence practices and technologies, these societies shared a kin-based organization without marks of sharp vertical differentiation. Complexity was based instead on heterogeneity along the lines of age, gender, technical expertise, social knowledge, ritual skill, or personal charisma (Perlès and Vitelli 1999; Perlès 2001). In addition to household and community, people traded regionally and beyond, traveled in search of new opportunities, exchanged marital mates, and surrounded these interactions with ritual to ensure social cohesion. Women and men acted as artisans, herders, peddlers of resources and products, messengers and instructors, leaders, healers, and spiritual specialists (Talalay 2000).

Burials, families, and maintenance

From the Mesolithic strata at Franchthi Cave (eighth millennium) on the eastern coast of the Peloponnese comes an important assemblage of primary inhumations and cremations and secondary disposals of infants, adolescents, and adults (Cullen 1995). Purposeful placement and ritual treatment of the dead crosscut age: a young man was placed on top of earlier burials, with a stone inserted in his mouth, while an infant was uniquely accompanied by a marble vase. Spatial clustering indicates family groupings (cf. Rutter 2003). Significantly, the deceased were laid to rest within the habitation area, a tradition that persists into the Neolithic alongside extramural cemeteries. Although earlier scholarship dismissed in-house deposition as fit only for less significant members of the community, Perlès (2001) has suggested that it might instead have been reserved for those especially beloved and/or vulnerable. The frequent burial of women and children under house floors raises several questions: was the family reluctant to part from those who died at a tender age – maybe needing protection – or was a woman's presence in the household regarded as especially valuable or too powerful to be removed? Such possibilities are indicated by a Neolithic burial of an adult female, also from Franchthi (Talalay 2000:11), furnished with extraordinary gifts (a rare occurrence in the Aegean): a whole clay pot, tools of bone, and exotic obsidian, which may have been related to the woman's activities during her life.[4] The manipulation of tools for household cooking, processing materials, and craft were arguably women's domain (Elster 1997), and pottery has been recognized as a female invention and possibly a source of ritual prestige for the innovative practitioners (Vitelli 1993). Dental analysis on the Franchthi skeleton showed wear on the incisors that could have been caused by thread biting, suggesting her occupation with spinning and weaving (Talalay 2000:11), another female specialty (Barber 1994). As managers of key maintenance activities involving sustenance, provision, and comfort (González Marcén et al. 2008; see also Díaz-Andreu and Montón-Subías this volume), women seem to have been symbolically exalted within the Neolithic household (Hodder 1990).

Gendered imagery: Figurines and household symbols

Female figurines, many with corpulent bodies and pronounced sexual features, are frequently found within or near hearths, ovens, storage bins, and platforms within habitation spaces and in areas of communal activity; they are often associated with pots, tools, spinning, and weaving equipment, as well as with symbolic artifacts, such as ornaments, tokens, and seals (Nikolaidou and Elster 2003). Such associations bespeak an esoteric power ascribed to women, whose biological qualities of procreation and maternity may have been perceived as archetypes for material production and social reproduction (Hodder 1990; Chourmouziadis 1994; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997).

Marija Gimbutas, a pioneer in figurine studies, interpreted all female images and their find contexts as expressions of a religion woven around the great Mother Goddess of Fertility, who was the prime motivating force of Neolithic civilization (Gimbutas 1991). In contrast to this scenario, other approaches correctly emphasize the remarkable variability of figurines in terms of morphology and style, thematic arrangement, and temporal and regional distribution. Plastic imagery extends far

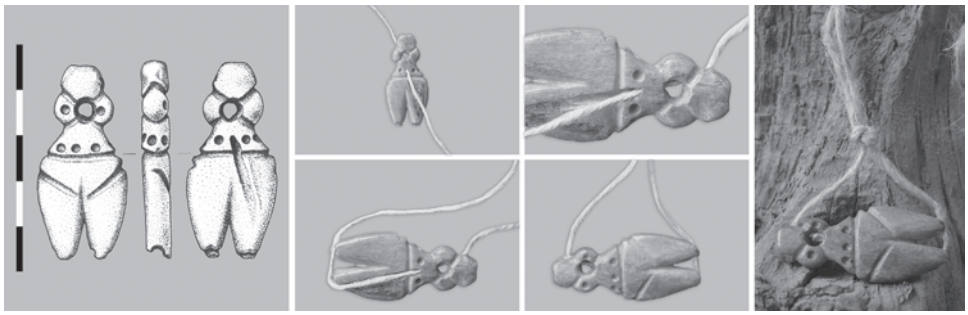


Figure 24.1 Bone pendant of the 5th millennium B.C.E. in the shape of a reclining female from Dispilio, northwest Greece. (Courtesy of Fotis Ifantidis, Dispilio Excavations/Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Drawing by Ilir Zaloshnyá. Photograph and reconstruction by Fotis Ifantidis.)

beyond "goddess" images to include males; schematic or hybrid forms; expressionistic bodiless heads or headless bodies; "genre" scenes; animal effigies; miniatures and models of houses, ovens, tools, and implements; and anthropomorphic and zoomorphic attachments on ceramics (see illustrations in Papathanassopoulos 1996). Naturalism, exaggeration, and abstraction run as parallel stylistic choices, or may even be fused together in a single figurine (Figure 24.1). Multiple, and not necessarily exclusive, meanings and functions can be read in this variegated imagery: ritual and magical objects, teaching devices, charms; tokens, toys, and ornaments; portraits of prehistoric individuals; ancestral images; signals of personal desires or even rudimentary signs of a "proto-script" related to the productive and reproductive experiences of Neolithic people; materializations of gender-specific ideologies and power relationships; and embodiments of gender identity and associated roles (Marangou 1992; Talalay 1993; Chourmouziadis 1994; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997; Talalay 2000, 2005; Mina 2008). Moving beyond binary gender categories, Marangou (2009) recognizes a third and fourth gender in the ambiguous or schematized forms and in hermaphrodites or hybrids, respectively; age, physical maturity, and context-specific persona could signal further distinctions. Noteworthy is the portrayal of elderly individuals of both sexes: seated or standing, dressed or naked, with fleshy but not so firm bodies and faces sometimes marked by signs of advanced age (Chourmouziadis 1994).

Layers of symbolism are encoded in a foundation offering underneath the floor of a Late Neolithic house at Plateia Magoula Zarkou, Thessaly – a unique find in the Aegean. A baked clay model of an unroofed structure contains interior furnishings (a platform/bed? and oven) and a group of eight movable figures comprising adult males, adult females, and children (Papathanassopoulos 1996:307, no. 22; Rutter 2003). These are differentiated by size, degrees of abstraction, and spatial arrangement in three distinct groupings; however, they were all placed horizontally on the floor (as if lying down) and bear rich incised decoration. Some of the figures feature sex-specific conventions familiar in the Neolithic: females (?) have breasts and voluminous lower bodies that may indicate a compact seat, while males (?) are modeled with the lower part fused into a four-legged stool. This composition has been interpreted

as the representation of a family of three generations and captures the essence of material and emotional well-being that lies at the core of household life: shelter, sustenance, comfort, intimacy, and socialization (cf. Elster 1997; Souvatzi 2008). The incised designs on the figurine's body, probably indicating garments and/or ornaments (Gimbutas 1991; Marangou 1992; Nikolaidou 2003), convey messages of the formal and semantic elaboration that was a key structuring principle of Neolithic life (Hodder 1990; Perlès 2001). This idealized tableau would be most appropriate to seal the founding of a new house, an event of great importance in the settled communities of the Neolithic.

Gendered bodies: Nature, community, and ideology

Within the family and beyond, figurines highlight perceptions and experiences of the human body as a physical and social presence. Symbols of authority and prestige may be encoded in figures seated on furniture, an indicator of comfort and material sophistication (Marangou 1992). This theme finds various formulations, from accentuated "sexuality" to images of elaborate domesticity. An extraordinary example is the early *kourotrofos* (child bearer) from Sesklo (Rutter 2003; Budin 2011) whose "mothering" persona is surrounded by cultural attributes: a high stool and a profusion of painted designs (textiles?) that cover her whole body and the seat. On the other hand, an unusually large and naturalistic idol of a seated male is strongly phallic, suggesting couvade or mimicking of pregnancy (Bolger 2009). More standardized are male figures with the lower body fused into a stool (farmers resting from the day's labor, according to Chourmouziadis 1994) or figurines attached to seats (the "throned goddesses" of Gimbutas 1991). Other figurines, however, are seated without support, either elaborately dressed or naked with pronounced sexual anatomy.

Concern for the erotic and reproductive areas of the human body is a key theme: females and males are modeled touching their genitals, women holding their breasts, or possibly in birth-giving position; and some figurines are phallus-shaped or fuse female body with phallic neck. These forms echo an attempt of Neolithic people to understand and to interfere symbolically in the phenomena of fertility and sexuality (Chourmouziadis 1994:222–231). The intimate and powerful appeal of this imagery is indicated by anthropomorphic pendants with exaggerated pubic triangle (Figure 24.1) or in the shape of a phallus: instruments of sympathetic magic, erotic charms, devices for instruction, markers of initiation – all are possible functions for these ornaments (Marangou 1992; Chourmouziadis 1994:87–89). Other anthropomorphic pendants have rich decoration, perhaps meant to emphasize the bearer's special connection with the crafts of adornment.

Adornment, costume, and identity

Archaeological findings and figurine iconography highlight ornament production and use as important occupations of Neolithic communities, with economic, social, symbolic, and ritual value. Outstanding among the ornaments are those made from the attractive marine shell *Spondylus Gaederopus*, extracted and manufactured in the Aegean and coveted as far north as central Europe (Ifantidis and Nikolaidou 2011). Such valuables could belong to young members of the community, as exemplified by

a *Spondylus* ring in the burial of child at Makriyalos, one of the major centers of ornament production in northern Greece (Pappa and Veropoulidou 2011). Many other rings at Makriyalos and elsewhere are of very small diameter and, if indeed worn as bangles, could only have fitted a small limb. Such finds call attention to the experiences of childhood (Baxter 2005) and indicate that learning how to produce and/or use ornaments could be an important step toward maturity and the attainment of self-awareness (Nikolaidou 2007). Rites of passage may also be evoked by the preponderance of female figurines among the ornate effigies, some of which could represent brides in their finery (Nikolaidou 2003). If so, they would have brought to focus notions of gender, age, status, mating availability, group affiliation, and family prestige. Ornaments often occur together with spinning and weaving equipment and with pattern-bearing figurines, thus reinforcing the hypothesis for a special connection between ornaments and textiles (Nikolaidou and Elster 2003, including comparanda). Elaborate costume accessories, artifacts possibly used as cosmetic tools, and figurines with rich masks(?) or tattoo-like decoration further attest a vivid concern for body decoration, visibility, and performance (Nikolaidou 2003; Marangou 2009). The decorated – and gendered – human body thus emerges as a powerful symbol in its corporeal, ritual, and social existence (cf. Marcus 1993).

Early and Middle Bronze Age: Protopalatial Crete

The Early Bronze Age (ca. 3500–2000 B.C.E.) saw crucial developments that crystallized into the distinct civilizations of Crete (Minoan), mainland Greece (Helladic), and the islands of southern Aegean (Cycladic). The focus shifts from the Neolithic farming centers of the north to the islands and coasts of the south, which advanced toward greater complexity, urbanism, and ranking, and were supported by innovative economic strategies such as plough agriculture, pastoralism, metallurgy, intense trade, and seafaring. In Crete exceptionally, the first states emerged at the onset of the Middle Bronze Age, during the Protopalatial era (2000–1700 B.C.E.) (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou 2004a, 2004b). The spectrum of accomplishments includes politics and diplomacy; literacy and bureaucratic administration; military skill; craft specialization; architecture and engineering; sophisticated art; and organized religion and ritual.

In contrast to the Neolithic, cemeteries become a prominent feature of the social and natural landscape, foci of communal rituals that promoted people's links with their land, ancestors, and deities (Branigan 1991). The remarkable variety of funerary architecture and practices (see Laffineur 1987) offers a compelling picture of the emerging social complexities, which are also highlighted by distinct differences in the quantity and quality of burial goods, many of them in exotic materials (Colburn 2008). However, difficulties in dating burial gifts with close precision, together with poor preservation and even poorer analysis of skeletal material for sex and age, often hamper our ability to make inferences. The rich burials of children do indicate inherited wealth and rank that could cut through age distinctions (Soles 1992:254). On the other hand, paleoanthropological analysis of burial populations in non-elite cemeteries in Macedonia revealed no remarkable sex-specific differences in diet or work-related traumas (Triantafyllou 2003).

It is in iconography and ritual that we can best discern gendered personae in the Bronze Age (Goodison 1989; Nikolaidou 2002). As a broad distinction (and allowing for the essentially generic character of Aegean imagery), female identity is associated with collectivity while male identity is defined by individuality.

Women, maintenance, and authority

In line with long-standing traditions (above), women in Bronze Age iconography are celebrated as nourishers, providers, and specialists in pottery, weaving, cooking and food management, pharmacology, and medicine (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1993; Kopaka 1997); these technologies played crucial roles in the household, community, and palace (Laffineur and Betancourt 1997). The relatively inaccessible location of weaving and storage facilities deep in the interior of Minoan and Helladic houses indicates the material, social, and conceptual importance of these activities – and thus the authority of those in charge (Yiannouli 1992). The symbolic fusion of women's birthing and nourishing capacities with the functions of providing and crafting would emit messages of knowledge and skill with a comforting, communal impact (cf. Kopaka 2009a).

A series of anthropomorphic vessels from Crete have the shape of a pregnant(?) woman with a bell-shaped body holding pots or her perforated breasts; she is accompanied by snakes, and wears an elaborate dress and/or headdress (Goodison 2009:plates XLa–XLIc; Budin 2011). These figures, which come from cemeteries or settlements and are interpreted as receptacles for libations (rhyta), are the earliest images of Minoan goddesses. Their occurrence across regions that specialized in distinct pottery technologies points to the significance of this imagery as a symbolic thread connecting local cultures by reference to shared material and social experiences. Among these, the consumption of liquids, a powerful social practice at the time (e.g., Branigan 1991), is evoked by the form of the rhyta themselves, their perforated breasts, and their accompanying vessels (jugs and jars). The latter count among the novelties of the ceramic repertoire (Betancourt 1985); they are specifically intended for liquid commodities, such as oil, wine, and milk, products of the new practices of viticulture, olive cultivation, and the exploitation of secondary animal products. Above all, water, critical for sustaining crops and life, would be diligently treasured in the often arid landscapes of the southern Aegean. Feasting (Hitchcock et al. 2008), which is also attested at the cemeteries and sanctuaries of the period, punctuates wider developments in diet and culinary skills involving an expanded repertoire of ingredients, social know-how, and symbolism surrounding food consumption and trade. Wool and leather likewise became increasingly important, with evidence for technical and formal refinement in clothing and costume (Colburn 2008). At the Early Minoan coastal settlement of Myrtos, textile production involved the extraction of dye from murex shells (Warren 1972).

An elevated status of craft specialists can be identified in Minoan seals, a principal vehicle for signification and administration. Some of them depict humans engaged with pots or weaving, or bear motifs recognizable as loomweights and textile patterns. The owners of such seals were possibly enterprising crafters, who would have chosen the theme as a mark of professional identification and/or as a signal of pride and prestige (Nikolaidou 2002; Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou 2004b). Producers of fine cloth

may be depicted in the elaborately dressed female figurines from Protopalatial peak sanctuaries, which bear a standardized attire of open bodice, voluminous skirt, and tall hat (Pilali-Papasteriou 1989). This distinctive costume, shared across palatial regions in the island, may have materialized a strong collective experience of "womanhood" shaped and communicated on many levels: kinship, residence and ethic/cultural affiliation, age, social maturity, rank, technical expertise. Peak sanctuaries and other open-air places of worship were the principal loci of communal worship in the early second millennium (Watrous 1996) and therefore prime fields for display and negotiations of power.

Motherhood, sexuality, and ambiguity

Although an explicit iconography of intimacy and motherhood did not attract interest in the Aegean (Budin 2011), a range of images nevertheless point to female sexuality and fertility. Triangular decorated clay plaques or counters from early Minoan and Helladic sites reference the pubic area (Goodison 1989:10). The early Cycladic "frying pans" (Coleman 1985), shallow vessels with a circular body ending in two short, peg-like protrusions, have been interpreted as schematic renditions of the female (pregnant?) body, an idea that is supported by the explicit depiction of the pubic triangle on many examples (Goodison 1989:16–18). One of the many suggested functions for these enigmatic vessels is as containers for the collection of salt, a valuable commodity; some bear images of boats, a key symbol of achievement in the maritime Cycladic society (Broodbank 2000). In these cases we once again see "female" connotations of technology and prosperity similar to the ones embodied in the "goddess" rhyta. Both artifact types exemplify the association of pots with "female-gendered" fertility, which is also seen in the "nippled" jugs of the Middle to Late Cycladic period: high-spouted vessels with bulbous bodies and plastic protuberances accentuated with painted motifs (jewellery?) at the base of their necks (Tzachili 1986). A canonized representation of pregnant bodies is seen in the Early Cycladic figurines (third millennium B.C.E.) with arms resting over a slightly swollen abdomen and pubic triangle often indicated (Getz-Preziosi 1985). Sporadic occurrences include groups of adults (female?) and children from the Cyclades (Rutter 2003), and Minoan models of birthing women and effigies of babies from peak sanctuaries (Budin 2011). This "iconography of reproduction" might also have celebrated midwifery and healing, important domains of female expertise and power to care for and "mother" the community (cf. Kopaka 2009a). The Minoan peak sanctuaries are believed to have been, among other things, centers for healing cults (Watrous 1996).

From the rural sanctuary of Atsipadhes in western Crete comes a unique large deposit of votive clay phalloi, the single strongest reference to male sexuality (Peatfield 1992). Although phalloi occur in other sanctuaries as well, the sexual attributes of the male body have been given less emphasis than the female ones. Interesting but rare are hybrid images, including a large Cycladic figure (Goulandris Museum, Athens, no. 969) with folded arms in the "pregnant" posture and phallus; and the "Goddess" rhyton from Myrtos with large pubic triangle and long, phallic neck (Warren 1972). We also see a significant increase of asexual figurines in the Early Bronze Age (Mina 2008; Marangou 2009), suggesting new interests encoded in the human form that require further research.

Individuality and masculinity

Males are shown in a variety of roles pointing to individual "real-life" achievements rather than the stereotypical symbolism surrounding femininity. The distinctly male idioms include war and hunting, drinking and socializing, performing, and initiation. The figure of warrior-hunter, bearing a dagger and/or belt, is common throughout the Aegean. Bronze daggers, products of innovative metallurgical techniques and an expanding metal trade, are found as emblematic elite offerings in Cycladic and Minoan tombs (Blasingham 1983). Warfare intensified from the Early Bronze Age onward, a corollary of more enterprising and competitive economies and social relations (Laffineur 1999). The daggers worn by the Protopalatial votive figurines could be the badges of an emerging warrior class, directly dependent on the palatial system (Pilali-Papasteriou 1989) or emblems of manhood related to rites of passage (Watrous 1996). From the first palace at Mallia come three ceremonial weapons: a stone feline-shaped axe and two long, gold-set swords, one decorated with the figure of a (male?) acrobat (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou 2004b, including references).

Individuality is striking in the two "portrait" heads of a mature man and a youth on sealings from the palace archive at Knossos (Rutter 2003). Evans (see below) described them colorfully as the priest-king and his son. Although the archaeological context does not support this association (Weingarten 1995:305–308), it is nevertheless interesting that these two images are associated with palatial administration, in which the engraved seals stamped tax-related documents.

Performance, sophistication, and socialization are evoked by the Cycladic figures of musicians playing harp or flute and the cup-bearers seated on a stool (Getz-Preziosi 1985). In the peak sanctuaries only votive males wear jewellery and shoes (Pilali-Papasteriou 1989); these, combined with individualized hairstyles, including the partially shaved heads characteristic of adolescents (Chapin 2009), point to rankings of age and initiation rites taking place at these very loci of cult.

The Late Bronze Age: Neopalatial Crete

The Aegean Late Bronze Age (1700–1200 B.C.E.) followed a seismic event that ended the period of the first Minoan palaces. It was marked by the expansion of urban centers, the rebuilding of existing palaces, and the construction of new ones. These vast complexes consisted of a labyrinthine plan organized around a central courtyard and embellished with fine masonry and wall paintings. There was also an expansion in the use of writing, using the (undeciphered) Linear A script, and of the visual arts, resulting in more detailed figural depictions of humans, animals, and hybrid creatures in wall paintings and glyptic art (i.e., seals and sealings) (Rehak 1999). Most scenes fall into a limited number of genres: processions, agonistic scenes, and ritual activity. These were depicted in a variety of media, including clay, colored stone, and an increased use of imported luxury materials such as bronze, gold, and ivory. Minoan influence extended to the Cyclades, mainland Greece, and the Near East.

Beginning in 1900, Sir Arthur Evans excavated the palace at Knossos and named the civilization "Minoan" after king Minos, its mythical ruler. His interpretations are

published in a four-volume work, *The Palace of Minos at Knossos*, which he published from 1921 to 1936 (Evans 1964). This, together with his extensive (and controversial) reconstructions of the palace and works of Minoan art has colored our understanding of Aegean civilization with Victorian images of kings, queens, and mother goddesses (Alberti 2002:100–101; Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006; Morris 2009; Budin 2011).

Although the civilizations of the Minoans and their neighbors on Thera have captured our imaginations with their prominent depictions of women, our understanding of this era is unclear. We gain little information on social structure or gender from the Linear A texts, and there are few well-published burials from this period. Thus, most of our ideas about gender are based on artistic representations. The variety of approaches used to interpret this evidence include historiography, iconographic studies, anthropological analogy, and quantitative and scientific analysis. Increasingly, feminist, social, and hermeneutic approaches are being used.

Rather than seats of monarchy, it is probable that the Minoan palaces served as the religious and economic centers of their regions, supported by an agricultural and prestige goods economy (Hitchcock 2000b). Gender was an organizing principle in Minoan society, with most representations falling into neat binary categories of male and female (Marinatos 1987). Representations that cannot be securely gendered seem to be associated with males (Hitchcock 2000a, 2009; Alexandri 2009:20).

Skin coloring, genitalia, hairstyle, and dress have been used to identify gender, age, status, and ethnicity in Aegean art. Men and women wore their hair in long "snaky" locks down the back and shoulders, and women's hairstyles often included a great curl on top of the head. These are general characteristics rather than rules. Evans (1964, vol. 1:153) believed that the color convention derived from Egyptian art, whereby a reddish-brown hue indicates male identity and a pale or white skin tone is associated with females. Dress conventions among the Minoan elite frequently include a kilt with codpiece for males, and a flounced, paneled skirt with open bodice for females. Both also wore a variety of robes. Morris (2009) observes that the breast distinguishes depictions of Minoan females from males and other genders, and that clothing was designed to emphasize them (Alexandri 1994:171; Alberti 2002; Budin 2011). Similarly, the codpiece emphasizes (while hiding) the penis on males (Cadogan 2009:228).

The tight waistbands and multiple designs on many Minoan garments fragment the male and female body (Tzachili pers. comm., June 2005). Studies of Minoan art in the early twentieth century thought that corsets and/or cinching belts achieved the slender waists of the Minoans, an idea that was based on fake statuettes (Younger 1998–2000). Younger believes that the Minoans practiced waist compression, and that such bodily modification served as a marker of identity. Verduci (2012) distinguishes nine types of Aegean belt, and observes that the cinched belt as depicted on many males is absent on females who show a preference for rolled belts. The images of constricted waists and participation in dangerous activities, such as bull leaping, may have conveyed a covert eroticism that is otherwise limited in Aegean art to just a few animal figurines (Younger 1998–2000; Rehak 2009:15, plate IIg). Additionally, they never adopted the full frontal nudity depicted in Canaanite representations of the goddess Astarte.

The Mother Goddess

The notion, strongly influenced by Evans, that every important female figure in Minoan art represents an all-powerful Mother Goddess has come under increasing criticism (see Kopaka 2009b). Ironically, depictions of motherhood are absent in Minoan art (Olsen 1998; Budin 2011). Rehak (1999:192) notes that belief in a Mother Goddess diminishes the possible existence of powerful women in Aegean society. Other possibilities for interpreting images of elite females include priestesses, rulers, huntresses, and overseers. In addition, kings and warriors in Egyptian (pharaohs), Greek (Achilles), and Near Eastern (Gilgamesh) society and myth attained divine or semi-divine status. Why should such status be denied to Aegean females? By the Mycenaean era, we know of many named deities, including various *potnia* (ladies), goddesses such as Athena and Demeter, and male deities, including Zeus and Poseidon.

Gendered spaces

With regard to architecture, Evans suggested that men and women were spatially segregated within palatial buildings (1964, vol. 1:316–367; vol. 3:282–298; see also Graham 1987:84–93). In this scheme, the larger halls were male domains and the smaller ones were the domains of women. Although this stereotype persists in tourist literature, Hitchcock (2000b:157–176) has critiqued these assumptions, suggesting that the use of halls had more to do with climate and seasonality (the smaller halls were often open to the elements) and served as places of elite display. Beyond associating weaving areas with women, it remains difficult to associate architectural spaces with gender.

Two of the painted crowd scenes, the "Sacred Grove" and "Grand Stand" frescoes from Knossos may indicate gender segregation. In both paintings crowds of males and females are depicted adjacent to, but separate from, one another. A wash of white paint with individual details painted in depicts a crowd of women, while a wash of red paint with details painted in portrays a crowd of men. The decision to execute these works in this way, however, may have been made by the artist in order to save time and effort. While gender segregation observed in some of the Theran frescoes may relate to thematic content, males and females frequently appear together in religious scenes on gold seal rings.

Gender segregation is typically a feature of age grade rituals, and these are indicated in representations of males and females (Koehl 2000:137). Among the most famous of these is the fresco program in Xeste 3, a large villa at Akrotiri on Thera. Space within the house was cleverly manipulated through the opening of partitions that formed a screen between rooms, gradually revealing the fresco program on the walls (Marinatos 1984:60–75; Vlachopoulos 2007; Shank 2012). On the ground floor this includes four males, young and old, carrying objects on the west wall; three females on the north wall above a small sunken room (symbolizing ritual descent into the earth and separation); a mature woman on the west wall carrying a necklace to a young woman in the center who is sitting on a rock holding her bleeding foot; and a young female with shaved head and a veil; on the east wall is a "Horns of Consecration" (stylized bull horns) placed on a shrine with blood trickling down it. After leaving the

area, a participant in the rite could ascend to the upper floor. There we find another elaborate fresco program, which included females gathering crocuses in baskets and offering them to an enthroned woman, flanked by a monkey standing upright and a griffin. Their otherworldly aspects indicate her status as a goddess.

The combination of imagery, manipulation of the partition wall, and the small sunken room has led to the interpretation that Xeste 3 was devoted to separate rites of male and female initiation into adulthood or marriage (Koehl 2000:139–141; Younger 2009). This interpretation draws on anthropological studies of rites of passage rituals, which may involve separation, followed by symbolic death characterized by circumcision, knocking out a tooth, ingesting a drug, or cutting a part of the body and shedding blood, followed by rejoining the community (Haviland 2002: 374–376). Saffron from the crocuses is linked to females through its use as a painkiller during menstruation, and a fabric dye for yellow cloth worn mainly by females (Barber 1991:338; Younger 2009:208).

Gender and status

Glyptic representations depict idealized males and females in positions of prominence, as famously portrayed in the Master Impression and Mother of the Mountains sealings (Hallager 1985). The "Master" depicts a male standing atop a building and holding a staff in his outstretched arm. Similarly, the "Mother" shows a female standing atop a mountain and holding a staff in her outstretched arm. Rampant lions flank her, creating a "Mistress of Animals" motif. They are not identifiable as particular individuals but as generic representations of the elite.

The absence of ruler portraiture in Minoan art has received much comment among scholars (Rehak 1995). Depictions of humans emphasize group rather than individual identity (Rehak 1999:191) although, as noted above, depictions of powerful, but generic, individuals exist. Groups of faceless elites depicted on gold rings indicate that status, kinship, and corporate rule may have played a more important role in Minoan society than did gender (Marinatos 1995, vol. 2:584; Alexandri pers. comm., June 2005). This idea is reinforced by elite architecture, whereby benched rooms, prevalent in some Minoan palaces and villas, suggest group meetings of the religious and bureaucratic elite rather than rule by a single individual. Throne iconography associates women with griffins and thrones, and these have been interpreted as sites of ritual performance rather than as evidence for a ruler. Procession frescoes, which occur with greater frequency in the Mycenaean era (discussed below), suggest different symbolic and ritual associations for men and for women.

Childhood, old age, and masculinity

Children and youths were typically depicted with shaved heads, with one or more locks of hair growing from the head. Chapin has studied the anatomical development in depictions of boys and youths, and has shown that changes in hair length do not closely correlate to age grades as once believed (2009:177). Koehl has proposed the existence of hair-cutting rituals in male rites of transition, citing razors and tweezers found in the Diktaian cave, and suggesting that agonistic depictions of fishing and boxing formed ordeals in rites of transition (2000:142–143).



Figure 24.2 Bronze figurine from Kato Syme, Late Minoan IA–B, ca. 1700–1450 B.C.E. (reproduced from Preziosi and Hitchcock 1999:143, illustration 90, by permission of Oxford University Press).

The *kourotrophos* motif that characterizes Mycenaean and Near Eastern cultures is absent in Minoan civilization (Olsen 1998; Budin 2011). Although depictions of childhood are less common than depictions of adults, Budin observes that Minoan children were depicted in social settings, primarily for displays of prestige, and regards as votive the few examples of figurines of babies that occur in peak sanctuaries and sacred caves (2011). Depictions of the elderly and the obese are also rare, an exception being the bronze figurine of a portly man from Tylissos House A (Rehak 2009:15, plate IIe). Koehl believes that some rituals were age and gender specific, which may explain why most representations of humans appear slender and youthful (2000).

Despite the prominent depiction of elite women in Minoan art, men also occupied an important position in Minoan society, as indicated by access to bronze, an imported material. Bronze figurines depicting males outnumber females by a ratio of two to one (Sakellarakis 1996; Hitchcock 1997). Hitchcock (1997) has studied the gestures made by bronze figurines and has suggested that particular gestures, such as hands to the chest, indicate status among males (Figure 24.2) and the hands on the hips gesture of females may be linked to status. A famous sealing from Chania depicts a male standing above a "Horns of Consecration" with his hands to his chest and flanked by two mythical creatures, a winged goat and a genius (a hybrid creature with hippopotamus or lion head, a long dorsal appendage, that walks upright). Females depicted on gold rings with their hands on their hips are frequently portrayed in hierarchic scale, suggesting their status as priestesses. Others have argued that gesturing was used to

induce an altered state of consciousness (McGowan 2006). These interpretations need not be mutually exclusive.

Gender ambiguity

The most debated exceptions to the skin color conventions are found in the "Priest King" fresco from Knossos and in bull-leaping frescoes from Knossos and Tiryns (Hitchcock 2000a; Alberti 2002, this volume). In each of these, individuals are depicted with the white skin pigmentation of females, a lack of breasts, and the kilt and codpiece of males. The bull-leaping scenes, which depict red and white leapers, have been interpreted as female leapers in "activity wear;" as young men emerging from a feminine guise in a rite of passage; as elite males who have had little sun exposure; or as representations of different stages in a temporal sequence (Hitchcock 2000a). Another possibility is an individual choosing to represent an alternative gender identity, as Hatshepsut did in portraying herself as a male king in order to legitimize her rule over Egypt (Hitchcock 2000a). Additional skin tones depicted in Aegean frescoes, including black, yellow, and pink, indicate that color use exceeds a simple binary explanation and may be relevant for interpreting gender, status, or ethnicity (Alberti 2002:103; Chapin 2012).

Although analysis of color conventions has focused on wall paintings, problems with their rigorous application also occur in sculpture, notably in the chryselephantine statuette from Palaikastro, regarded as a *kouros* or youthful Zeus (MacGillivray 2000). Another possibility is that wooden sculptures that have not survived, perhaps in ebony and cedar, depict additional skin tones.

The idea that we should always be looking for the "correct" interpretation in Minoan art or force gender representations into essentialist categories has been critiqued (Goodison 2009; see also Goodison and Morris this volume). The lack of male penises or female breasts does not always relegate the image to its binary opposite, so that it is the uncertainties themselves that may be regarded as meaningful (Alberti 2002). Ambiguous or genderless figures can hint at fluid conceptions of gender, frequently termed "third genders" (Alexandri 2009:21).

Applying the concept of a third gender is rare in Aegean scholarship. A recent example is provided by Hitchcock in a study of the Minoan genius (2009). The genius motif was adapted from depictions of Tawaret, an Egyptian goddess of childbirth and fertility depicted as a hippopotamus walking upright, with exaggerated belly and breasts; on her back was a lion's mane, a dorsal appendage, or a crocodile. The Aegean adaptation developed gradually, first losing the breast, then acquiring a cinched waist by the Neopalatial period. It was frequently depicted in Aegean culture carrying a libation jug, watering trees, or engaged in hunting and animal sacrifice. Drawing on Mesopotamian literary metaphors in which water poetically stands for sperm, Hitchcock associates the genius with male fertility through interpreting the jug, used for fertilizing trees, as a symbol of the phallus. Other depictions of the genius associate it with male activities of hunting and sacrifice. She argues that these activities, combined with the ambiguity of its gender, placed the genius outside the boundaries of sexual dimorphism and in the realm of special potency through its non-human characteristics. Cadogan observes that the genderless aspects of Minoan culture as suggested by aniconic representations such as baetyls (stones regarded as sacred), sacred trees,

mythical creatures, and doors as liminal zones, are understudied (2009:230). He believes that the term "meta-gender" better conveys something above and beyond binary categories.

Gender in Mycenaean Greece

By the mid-fifteenth century B.C.E., Minoan civilization ended violently with the destruction of most Minoan sites, followed by the occupation and remodeling of the palace at Knossos by Mycenaean Greeks. These destructions were preceded by economic tensions (Driessen and MacDonald 1997). Still earlier, in the late seventeenth century B.C.E., the neighboring island of Thera was destroyed by a volcanic eruption. The extent to which this disrupted Minoan culture through the spread of ash, tsunamis, and earthquakes remains debated. By the time that Mycenaean civilization rose to prominence in the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries B.C.E., there were clear changes in gender representation.

Linear B texts written on clay tablets were an early form of Greek that served as accounting records. They provide information about the status and occupations of men and women who worked on behalf of the Mycenaean palaces. They indicate that division of labor was gendered, and that women were undertaking numerous responsibilities (Olsen 2009). Most research has addressed women's primary involvement in textile production, in which they performed differentiated tasks of combing, weighing, spinning, weaving, and sewing (Barber 1991; Nosch and Laffineur 2012). Women were exclusively engaged in this activity at Knossos, while at Pylos they were also involved in maintenance of the palace and food preparation (Olsen 2009: 122–123).

Linear B also provides more information about Mycenaean hierarchy than we possess for the Minoans. There were clearly delineated strata, with males occupying positions of king, feudal lords, followers, and landowners (Killian 1988). While the majority of women recorded in the tablets served as palace dependents assigned to work groups, at least 120 priestly women and a small number of named women (wives or daughters) appear in conjunction with high-ranking male officials (Olsen 2009:120). Women had less access to commodities than men, with the exception of priestesses, who had power over valuable commodities such as land and bronze (Olsen 2009:116–117). This conforms to what we know about access to bronze among Minoan elites. In general, the social status of aristocratic women did not translate into economic status.

Although Linear B tablets are not a comprehensive source of information, they indicate that both men and women were subjected to repetitive, labor-intensive tasks, and it has been suggested that individuals were subjected to corvée labor in both the Minoan and Mycenaean periods (Preziosi and Hitchcock 1999:118; Olsen 2009:119, 123). The toll of such tasks on palace dependants and on those who suffered trauma at various times throughout Aegean prehistory might be better understood through future osteoarchaeological studies. Human skeletal remains can reveal trauma to the skull while healed fractures may indicate abduction or beatings; and ossified ligaments, osteoarthritis, asymmetries, and dental pathologies can provide evidence of servitude (Martin et al. 2010). Little has been written about the effects of

violence on individuals in Aegean prehistory. One example of how it was directed toward the population at the end of Minoan civilization was found at Mochlos in the disarticulated skull of a young woman, bearing a hole, suggesting that she had been killed by a sharp blow to the head (Soles 1999:57–58).

The women who are depicted in procession frescoes are interpreted as priestesses, the highest-ranking women in Mycenaean society (Wilson 2009). Elite women additionally held the titles of "key-bearer" and "servant of the god" (Olsen 2009:120, n. 31). They were prominently featured in the most important buildings on the mainland, with all-female processions known from Thebes, Pylos, Tiryns, Mycenae, and Ayia Triada. Processions that included both males and females are known from Knossos, Ayia Triada, and Pylos (Wilson 2009). Procession frescoes in the palaces would have been viewed by a variety of visitors, from bureaucrats to crafters, and in cult buildings they depicted rituals that were carried out exclusively by women (Wilson 2009). Women carried a limited range of objects, including flowers, pyxides, vessels (especially stirrup jars and amphorae), cloth, and figurines; the tradition of women carrying flowers extends back to the Minoan period (Wilson 2009). Vessels, musical instruments, and bolts of cloth were primarily carried by men (Cameron 1987; Vlachopoulos 2007).

In addition to the bull-leaping frescoes (see above), other unusual examples of skin color convention exist in Mycenaean art. These include fragmentary white-skinned figures wearing boar's tusk helmets, white-handed boar hunters, and a white figure wearing a figure-of-eight shaped body shield interpreted as a warrior deity (Rehak 1984). A female burial from Mycenaean Crete was also associated with shield iconography. An intriguing, but fragmentary, representation of a white-skinned figure from Tsountas House at Mycenae wears a boar's tusk helmet and carries a griffin. Its larger context is unclear, and it has been suggested that it represented an ivory statuette carried in a procession (Immerwahr 1990:121, 192). Rehak has argued that these figures represent female hunters with access to boar's tusks, while griffins are associated with females in Aegean art (1999:192).

The use of *kylikes* (stemmed drinking cups) was a clear marker of male identity among the Mycenaeans (D'Agata 1999:52). Evidence for this comes from representations of drinking and from their use as grave goods. Although the Cupbearer fresco from Knossos depicts a male carrying a conical rhyton, libation activities among the Mycenaeans were more frequently associated with women. This represents a clear change from the Minoan era, when there was a connection between males and libation practices (Davis 2008).

Conclusion

The Stone and Bronze Age cultures of the prehistoric Aegean offer a rich mine of information for the study of gender. Although it has taken a long time for such studies to become a focus of interest, relevant research has been advancing at a brisk pace over the recent years, and we look to the future with optimism and excitement. There is much scope for further work, especially with regard to masculinity, age grades, alternative genders, skeletal remains, architectural analysis, food and feasting, household archaeology, and cognition and corporeality, as well as ongoing reassessment of the discipline.

In this chapter we have focused on key principles spanning space and time, drawing attention to the ways in which they are manifested in specific contexts. We have traced a symbolic association of womanhood with technology and provision. We have observed gender-specific distinctions of skin color, anatomy, and appearance in Bronze Age art, but have also discussed the fluidity of male/female categories in the "liminal" zone of ritual, as observed on hybrid ("bisexual") Neolithic figurines and Minoan bull-leaping frescoes. We have followed constructions of authority and prestige encompassing both men and women, visualized in seated figures and in commanding postures. Finally, we have stressed the potential for multiple genders, which is implied by the continuous occurrence of hybrid and asexual imagery.

The Aegean record invites readings more complex and inclusive than the customary male-versus-female dichotomy and associated ideologies. Societies in this region were diverse and dynamic in their cultural trajectories, suggesting a variegated world of identities, roles, and related symbolisms. A gender-sensitive approach to prehistoric Aegean populations does not simply restore missing parts in our picture of past lives; it radically transforms the picture itself.

NOTES

1 See program and abstracts, American Journal of Archaeology (April 1995) 99(2):295–358; (April 1996) 100(2):337–407.
2 Alexandri, Cullen, Hitchcock, Knapp, Kokkinidou, Kopaka, Lee, Meskell, Nikolaidou, Olsen, Rehak, Younger, Zarmati.
3 Notable exceptions include the exhibitions (and accompanying catalogues) "Από τη Μήδεια στη Σαπφώ: Ανυπότακτες γυναίκες στην αρχαία Ελλάδα," Athens, National Archaeological Museum, 1995; "Coming of Age in Ancient Greece: Images of Childhood from the Classical Past," Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, 2003.
4 Volcanic obsidian, a coveted tool material, was traded around the Aegean as early as the Mesolithic at Franchthi.

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SECTION 6

Gender Prehistory in the Americas and the South Pacific

CHAPTER 25

Gender in the Prehistory of the Eastern United States

Cheryl Claassen

Gendered reviews of eastern United States prehistory have been written over the past 15 years (Claassen, 1997, 2006; Joyce and Claassen, 1997) during several significant changes in theoretical interests and amidst several useful technological innovations. Specifically aiding and enlarging this endeavor are the sexing of fecal remains, the development of the fertility-centered approach to population reconstruction, the recognition of numerous violent deaths in the Archaic, and the turn of research toward spiritual and ritual activities and beliefs, particularly feasting and sacred landscape. All of these issues will be touched upon in this essay that will proceed along temporal lines (for locations of major sites referred to in this chapter, see Figure 25.1).

Since the most recent review of this subject, several significant studies addressing gender specifically have been published. Yet some of the earlier research topics remain under-developed, such as the impact of the adoption of the bow and arrow in men's lives, the gendered use of the landscape, and the striking disparity of gender proportions buried in Mississippian mounds. There are also topics bearing on this summation that are timeless in their relevance, some of which will now be reviewed.

One of the most informative lines of evidence for the activities and roles of women and men in the past is skeletal analysis. However, an impediment to gathering these data is found in skeletons sexed before about 1980. One re-examination of Indian Knoll skeletons resulted in sex changes for 9 percent of the bodies (Claassen 2001).

Previous aging criteria also are outmoded now. Aging criteria based on cranial sutures are now known to be unreliable and incapable of identifying individuals older than 50. Resulting age profiles and survivorship curves are then flawed, but even more

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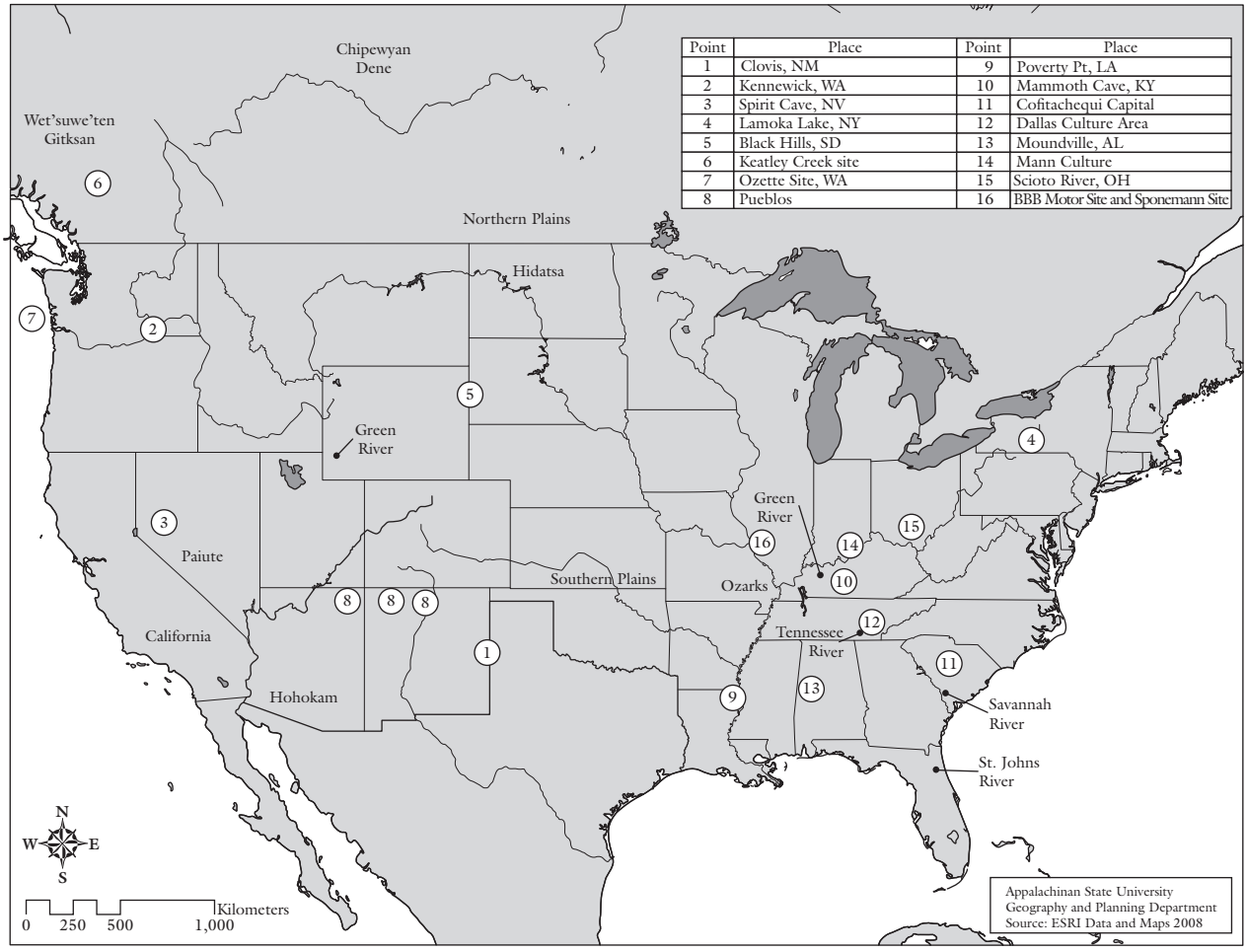


Figure 25.1 Map of North America showing locations of major sites referred to in chapters 25 (Claassen) and 26 (Kehoe).

significantly, bioarchaeologists now reject the thinking that underpinned model life tables as they were based on mortality. Mortality-centered tables like the Kohl and Demeny life tables of 1983 or the West models rely upon regressions that force the data into a preponderance of deaths between ages 35 to 50 that will mirror the village population reference sample, regardless of whether the skeletal population was derived from village-dwellers. The use of those mortality tables has now been replaced by fertility tables, bringing women into the center of population reconstruction where they should be (McCaa 2003). Until skeletal populations are re-examined, modern aging criteria employed, and a fertility-centered approach to population reconstruction applied, it will only be possible to make suggestions about burial programs, fertility, and life expectancy.

A topic increasingly of interest to archaeologists is that of symbolism and ritual. If we study the rich ethnographic record of Mesoamerican (Furst 1995) and Andean societies (e.g., Classen 1993) we learn that women are associated with wet, flesh, dark, cold, feet, earth, moon, underworld, low, down, south, left, and west; and men with their opposites. These attributes of femaleness and maleness also led to a gendering of the landscape such that sky and mountains were male, caves and springs female. Given that these ideas were shared from northern Mexico to southern South America, it is highly likely that they were also held by ancient people living in what is now the United States and Canada.

Paleoindian Period

A temporal review of gender in eastern United States prehistory mirrors that of just about any other topic. The least is known for the Paleoindian Period and the most for the Mississippian Period. This lack of information on gender for the Paleoindian Period is partially the result of scanty preservation of organic and skeletal material as well as campsites. Nevertheless, from the beginning of colonization of the Americas gender was significant and should constitute a major research question. Arenas where women are crucial to researching the colonization phenomenon are in DNA and fertility.

Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), carried by women, and Y-chromosomes, carried by men, have both been employed to talk about founder populations and the process of migration into the New World across the Beringian land bridge. The view of this emigration process as derived from the mtDNA is that 15 women, probably residing in Beringia (the land bridge) 18,000 to 20,000 years ago, are the mothers of 95 percent of today's native peoples residing in the Americas (Perego et al. 2010). As for the Y-chromosome perspective, the M3 mutation appears to have arisen on the eastern side of Beringia 15,000 to 10,000 years ago and is now carried by nearly all native South Americans and most native North Americans (Genography Project 2010).

Once into North America, the spread of people throughout the continent and the hemisphere was remarkable for its speed if we take Clovis points as our guide. This rapid spread of people during a 700-year period (11,500–10,800 B.P.) required both high mobility and high female fertility. Blurton-Jones and Sibly (1978) concluded from their modeling exercise that the problem of transporting children and transporting food for those children were the key elements in limiting women's (mothers') fertility among the modern !Kung peoples of Africa. A more recent study of mothers' mobility and fertility by Todd Surovell (2000) found that rather than making foraging trips out from

long-term residences where women have to carry children and food, frequent moving of base camp cuts down on foraging distances and transport costs for women and is accompanied by high fertility (Ache and Hill Pandaram groups are good examples). This solution then moves a group across much more land on an annual basis while reducing the actual amount of walking, and suggests that Paleoindian families adopted the same strategy of frequent camp moves in order to feed their children (Surovell 2000).

High mobility, of course, leaves little for archeologists to study. Rock shelter sites have yielded information on plants used, primarily nuts and fruits, which were collected and processed by native women in historic times. In spite of the greater preservability of hickory nutshell over other nuts, it appears that late Paleoindian and Early Archaic women in northern Alabama did prefer hickory nuts to walnuts, acorns, and hazelnuts. Their strategy was to maximize fats, calories, oil, and fuel that they got from the hickory nut meat and shell, all of them higher in hickory than the other varieties of nuts that were also collected (Hollenbach 2009:208). The ubiquitous use of hickory and other nuts increased further during the Archaic.

The fruits recovered in all northern Alabama samples are persimmons, grapes, and sumac berries; hackberries were recovered in fewer samples. Wild legumes and wild chenopod (goosefoot) seeds were also frequently found in samples from northern Alabama rock shelters. Eight thousand years later women would produce a domesticated chenopodium.

In order to feed themselves and their families and to procure plant matter for medicines, baskets, bedding, diapers, shoe and cradle padding, and menstrual pads, women had to know the geographical distribution of hundreds of plants, plant lifecycles, and how weather affected both. They gained this knowledge as their group moved camp, as they gathered firewood, went for water, laid and checked traps, etc. (Hollenbach 2009:214). To process these foods we see very early on (earliest Early Archaic?, see Munson 1988) the use of stones for simmering in the hot rock cooking method. There are millions of pounds of fire-cracked rock in early sites probably generated by hot rock simmering used to render nut oils among other uses. Poured clay "floors" were interpreted as stationary griddles (Sherwood and Chapman 2005) for parching nut meats, deep bedrock mortars, earth ovens, and shallow dirt ovens for which tremendous quantities of rock were collected and then wasted.

Archaic Period

Several significant practices developed during the Archaic Period, each with gendered implications. Early in the Archaic Period we see the building of ceremonial centers, including dirt and shell mounds and earthworks, intra-communal feasting, the production of offerings, the capture and taking of human life, and the manufacture of grinding equipment. All of these activities accompanied an increasing expression of group differences. Later in the Archaic came the adoption and manufacture of pottery, the domestication of several native plants, and possibly for the first time the gendered use of certain landscape features.

It is during the Middle Archaic Period that we find the first people who have met violent deaths at the hands of others. In some cases a person was scalped, killed by shooting, or possibly tortured by having a body part cut off. This violence was

differently distributed along sex lines, with females being scalped or beheaded while males may have had any number of body parts removed as well as being shot and scalped. There is also a hint that women who died in childbirth and men who died from shooting or body-part trophy taking may have been accorded the same treatment in burial ritual and beliefs about the afterlife (Claassen 2010:115).

Apart from the violent deaths, most deaths were "normal" and characterized by flexure of the body. Several sites show females commonly buried flexed on their left sides and males on their right sides, in keeping with the earlier mentioned beliefs about the places for women and men in the cosmic scheme. This burial positioning according to sex needs to be explored in greater detail.

The first adoption of pottery during the Late Archaic Period indicates a menu revolution and a major time-saving innovation for women. Although the earliest vessels on the coastal plain of the Savannah River (4500 to 4000 years ago) were utilized as serving vessels only, by around 4000 years ago they were being used for cooking by direct heat in that valley. Prior to this development, cooking involved baking, roasting, drying, salting, fermenting, and hot rock heating to bring water to a simmer. Pottery quickly spread to the St John's River valley in Florida but was largely contained in these two river valleys for another 800 years.

Ken Sassaman (1993) thinks that the spread of ceramic technology away from the Atlantic coastal plain some 1000 years after its adoption in that area was impeded by gender tensions that he explains in the following way. Prior to the adoption of ceramics, cooking with liquids was possible only through the hot rock method since the gourd and basket containers could not be put directly into a flame. The rocks that were heated and then dropped into water on the lower Savannah River were soapstone, quarried from the upper Savannah. Assuming that men quarried the soapstone and controlled its trade, men would have worked to stop the adoption of a cooking method (using ceramics) that would have eliminated the need for soapstone. Only when the soapstone trade dissolved, perhaps because of the adoption of pottery by women living away from the main river channel and out of the influence sphere of the traders, did pottery spread west across the Appalachians and northward into the mid-Atlantic coastal zone, New York, and New England. With the regional adoption of pottery technology, which happened very quickly, archaeologists gained their major means of tracking women and their communities across space and a significant tool for dividing the last 3000 years into cultural units.

The spread of the earliest pottery from South Carolina to Florida and west to Poverty Point and into Missouri between 4000 and 3500 years ago, and the explosion of pottery adoption from Michigan to Maine by 3000 years ago, speak volumes about the connections women had forged in this era. In no more than 500 years (and probably many fewer years than that) women heard about, saw, learned, and adapted their skills to produce a wide range of pottery styles and forms.

One possible mechanism for the rapid spread of innovations may have been women's gambling matches. In historic groups women conducted gambling games employing two-sided dice thrown as sets with stakes of jewelry, houses, clothes, maize, and even themselves. According to DeBoer, more than 100 dice games have been recorded, occurring from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts and from the subarctic of Canada to northern Mexico (DeBoer 2001). He proposes that gambling activities during the Archaic were responsible for the distribution of shell beads (and I would add pottery) around the eastern landscape.

Feasting was another way in which the idea of pottery as well as actual vessels could have diffused rapidly over large geographical distances. Major feasting/ritual locations have been assigned to the enigmatic oyster shell rings and arcs of the southern Atlantic coast (e.g., Russo 2004) and to the freshwater shell heaps found on the Green, Ohio, Cumberland, Harpeth, and Tennessee Rivers (Claassen 2010) as well as on the St John's River in Florida and the Savannah River of South Carolina (Sassaman 2006). The dense piles of marine shell found on the Hudson River and up the coast of Maine may also have been major feasting locations. In fact, this feasting activity has been proposed as the very stimulus for initial pottery adoption. Decorated serving vessels conveyed messages about the maker or the community, and numerous vessels were needed for food preparation and serving guests at feasts. Extremely well-made vessels were no doubt in high demand by the hosts of these feasts for gifting to guests. Some pots conveyed uterine and fertility symbolism and came to be used as burial urns as well as water collection vessels for the purest of water found in caves.

During the Late Archaic and very early Early Woodland periods on the Cumberland Plateau of eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, women began to utilize bedrock mortars at rock shelters and put art on the same rock as the mortars (Ison 2004); bedrock mortars appear to be much older in northern Alabama. Several of the Kentucky rock shelters with mortars and rock art also have yielded caches of the earliest domesticated seeds of chenopodium and *Iva annua* (sumpweed). Much about the archaeological record recovered from these rock shelters suggests that these places were retreats for menstruating, birthing, or sick women (Claassen 2011) and were not, as is commonly assumed, campsites for either families or hunting parties. While women stayed in these shelters they processed nut oils and spent a great deal of time gathering and processing fibers as well as braiding and making string and rope. The most obvious of these shelters is Newt Kash in Kentucky where excavators found bedding, hundreds of pieces of twine and rope, a cradle, and dozens of species of medicinal plants, many with historic uses for "women's problems" (Claassen 2011).

Women's retreats may also be indicated by the bedrock mortars of southern Illinois (Carey et al. n.d.) and the finding of dozens of cradles in rock shelters in the Ozarks of Arkansas and Missouri along with stashes of domesticated seeds. Could it be that the plant species later domesticated were first of interest to women foragers for their medicinal or retreat needs? For reasons discussed below, the practice of menstrual seclusion at this time would indicate matrilineal societies in the vicinity of the Ozarks, the southern Illinois River, and the Appalachians.

What the pottery, new cooking techniques, and feasting were serving were more frequent social interactions in larger groups than it seems people were accustomed to in the Paleoindian and early Archaic periods. Mound building, burial preparation and transport, ritual preparation, and annual pilgrimages no doubt took a great deal of women's and men's time.

Woodland Period

Two significant adoptions by women during the Early Woodland Period (3000 years ago) directly impacted women's lives and those of their families: the widespread move to horticulture using native domesticates, and the regional adoption of ceramic container technology.

Prior to the invention of ceramic containers for direct heat cooking, women spent hours collecting rocks, heating them, and dropping them into pitch-lined baskets waiting for the water temperature to reach simmer (about a "2" on an electric stove), the maximum temperature possible with hot rock cooking. It was impossible to boil water, so it was impossible to process foodstuffs high in starch. Hot rock cooking required a great deal of firewood as well. With the adoption of pottery, which could be put directly into the fire, water could boil in a short period of time, new foodstuffs or new parts of plants could be added to the menu, new recipes were possible with old foodstuffs, and there was a new way to render dyes, purify liquids, kill germs, and clean clothes. There was also a new medium upon which women could express self and social identity and a new item that could be traded for other items desired. Women had a new way to participate in the economy of the time.

Cooking and the adoption of pottery clearly show women to be admirable chemists and physicists. The pyrotechnology of open pit ceramic firing was well within their means. The addition of different types of tempering material into a variety of clay types further indicates their skills with these materials and their mastery of this technology. Other than the physics of the atlatl and the bow and arrow, we do not see comparable scientific knowledge expressed through men's activities. Heat treating of stone, astronomy, sailing, and landscape engineering are not easily segregated by gender. Salt processing, a distillation process, was pursued by women in historic times and may have been women's work during the Woodland.

We can add to this picture of women of the past as the scientists of their societies by considering their genetic engineering skills. By 3500 years ago a number of local plants had been domesticated, meaning that their genetic makeup was so modified that they could no longer reproduce without human intervention. The seed food matter had been increased in volume (sunflower, chenopodium, knotweed), the fruit had been enlarged, the branching had been controlled (sunflower), and the geographic homeland had been enlarged (maygrass). Women were creating microhabitats and genetically modified plants.

While women seem to have used rock shelters, men may have been exploring, mining, and conducting rituals inside caves. Amino acids in six fecal specimens from Salts/Mammoth Cave returned evidence of one or more male bodies. Several desiccated bodies in the vicinity of Mammoth Cave are male (Watson 1974) although perhaps an equal number found outside of this region are female (but they are poorly dated). Two activities that we are certain were conducted inside caves are the mining of various salts from the walls and the production of "art."

Throughout the eastern Woodlands during this era the most striking cultural development is that called Hopewell, a religious perspective that resulted in burial mounds and burial caves, utilized lunar alignments and timing for rituals, and saw groups from large areas gather together for mortuary disposal and feasting. Leadership roles filled by women living in Hopewell groups have been investigated by Field et al. (2006). The differences uncovered in leadership roles held by women within the modern state of Ohio indicate that there was cultural variation across the northern Hopewell interaction sphere. In southwestern Ohio, the frequent burial of women with artifacts carrying leadership connotations (copper headplates, copper breastplates, earspools, and metal celts) contrasts with burials in central Ohio or in northeastern Ohio which suggest that these roles were filled exclusively by men. The same geographic pattern was found for the role of priest.

Regional differences in the leadership roles assumed by women is one of several lines of evidence for positing that the southwestern Ohio peoples were a matrilineal group, like those south of the Ohio River during historic times, and that the Scioto and northeastern regions of Ohio had patrilineal groups foreshadowing later Algonkian tribes in eastern Ohio and in New York. The evidence for multiple genders comes from three individuals with roles as priests, the precise arena where alternative gendered people have been observed elsewhere (e.g., Hollimon 1997). Based on this study, Field et al. (2006) and others have concluded that "Hopewell" was not a hegemonic structure but was regionally diverse in its social expressions.

Does life in a matrilineal society offer greater equality for women? Skeletal stress markers on skeletons from the Turner Hopewellian site in the southwestern corner of Ohio indicate that the work performed by men and women at the site was different to a degree. For example, women seem to have been grinding using mortars and pestles, slicing, scraping, knapping with a hammerstone, and running while men appear to have been grinding with a *mano* and *metate*, and using end scrapers. Lower limb injuries common in walking and running were common among this population while arm injuries were less frequent. Perhaps most interesting was the discovery that men buried with high-status and leadership objects showed few skeletal stress markers while women buried with these objects had frequent stress markers. Even when women had items indicative of multiple important roles, they had frequent stress markers. In other words, high status did not shield them from hard work (Rodrigues 2006:426). Among the important statuses, however, individuals with ritual paraphernalia had the fewest stress markers and appear to have spent large quantities of time using their hands, wrists, and forearms in some activities (Rodrigues 2006:427).

Clay figurines are an obvious item to examine for information about women and gender roles, but they are quite rare in the eastern United States. Male and female clay figurines are found in the Havanna (Illinois) and Mann (Indiana) Hopewell areas, primarily in non-mortuary contexts (Keller and Carr 2006:442). However, this location does not preclude ritual or ceremonial use because Joyce Marcus (1998) found that as ritual activities became more spatially circumscribed and formalized, women increasingly carried out hearth and home rituals while men undertook the "formal" rituals. Keller and Carr argue that when figurines were placed inside a grave, the figurine was a representation of the dead person. They also believe that clay was manipulated by women in residential settings but that the figurines did not exclusively express women's social roles or status. These figurines show women and men hunting, working with children, and grinding grain. Both the figurines and grave inclusions for southwestern Ohio and Indiana indicate that men alone wore earspools and topknots of hair or had their heads shaved on both sides, while women appeared with all three head traits in southern Illinois (Keller and Carr 2006:457).

Distinct clay tempers and treatments of facial features indicate that women in the three regions did not confer frequently about figurine manufacture nor did they move outside of their region as wives. However, Scioto and Mann culture women did interact with each other, and apparently Mann women much more commonly interacted with women from other regions.

It is certain that as ritual life became more complex – with the great feasts, the labor-intensive constructions, and the production and gathering of gifts and offerings –

that women's productive energies were increasingly dedicated to those preparations and enactments. Keller and Carr found that "the sequential addition of utilitarian pottery, fancy pottery, and figurines to the list of goods placed in graves over the course of the Early and Middle Woodland may indicate an increase in the participation of women in mortuary rituals through time" (2006:428). One should also add to this list the production of mats for wrapping the dead, and the food gathering, preparation, cooking, and cleanup that accompanied the feasting.

There is possible evidence that women adopted or invented the drop spindle in the later Late Woodland, perhaps stimulated by the demands of group interaction. Hall (1975) has commented on the occurrence in the American Bottom of "s-twist" cords prior to that time, but sherds deposited later have a "z-twist." His explanation for this was that women had changed from rolling the fibers on their thighs (with their right hand) to twisting them (with their right hand) while spinning a drop spindle (in their left hand). The drop spindle, the fire drill, and the stone drill are basically the same device, with the later two probably in use for millennia prior to the adoption of the drop spindle. However, weights for the spindle, presumably a disk-shaped object with central hole, have not been found. Perhaps instead, drop spindle weights could take the shape of Poverty point items, balls of clay with grooves in them, or even so-called atlatl weights which do have central perforations. Both the clay balls and the atlatl weights are much older than this suggested time frame (i.e., 6000–4000 years ago).

The adoption of the bow and arrow appears to have begun sporadically in the eastern United States during the Late Archaic Period, with complete adoption in the east by 700 C.E., although it may have been part of the hunting equipment used by Folsom hunters (Nassaney and Pyle 1999:244–245). Nassaney and Pyle suggest that the discontinuous spread of small points indicates that diffusion was not the mechanism by which this technology spread. Instead, the adoption of bow and arrow was embedded in economic and political concerns that were also discontinuously experienced.

The implications of the adoption of this new hunting technology have been poorly developed by archaeologists, but one of the ramifications of bow and arrow hunting was the increased success rate in hunting deer (Nassaney and Pyle 1999:244–245), a development which may help to account for the increased social differentiation seen in Mississippian times. Furthermore, several cultures talk about the spiritual danger that hunting incurs since Deer is considered to be both a deity and a relative. Hunting shrines and rituals may have developed or their use intensified in order for men to assuage these dangers. Bow and arrow hunting technology displaced hunting with the atlatl; by late Mississippian times, the latter would soon morph into the flute and the peace pipe, both of which are associated primarily with men and with the concept of breath (Hall 1997).

During the Late Woodland, several significant processes were strongly affected by decisions made by women. Chief among these was the adoption of Chapalote maize into the Mississippi River valley societies, and the development of tribe formation and village life throughout the eastern United States. Tribalization is no doubt an important element in the widespread diffusion of a new type of pottery tempered with shell throughout the southern Ohio and Mississippian valleys.

The adoption of maize by eastern women has rarely been problematized, and the same can be said for the development by women of better adapted maize races, such

as Maiz de Ocho or Northern Flint maize. Given that maize was being grown in the southwestern United States 2000 years earlier and that there is evidence of some communication between peoples in both areas, eastern women must have decided not to adopt this plant as a crop until after 200 C.E. (i.e., 1800 years ago). Why they chose not to adopt maize earlier needs to be explored: perhaps the labor required (the preparation of fields instead of gardens, for instance, in dense woodlands) or the religious connotations (which were extensive) were important considerations.

One of the benefits of maize when compared to the native plants grown in gardens during the Woodland Period was that it was far superior as a weaning food, given the sugar content of the plant (Claassen 2002). Perhaps mothers' labor requirements for ritual, foraging, and feeding tasks while carrying and nursing children were manageable throughout the Late Archaic and Woodland periods but became unmanageable under the developing labor demands during the Mississippian. Weaning children earlier would simultaneously enhance women's labor potential and increase their fertility.

The Chapolote maize that diffused into the eastern United States from the west around 1800 years ago was poorly suited for the habitats and climates found north of the Ohio River. In an oft-cited paper, Watson and Kennedy (1991) make the case that women gardeners of Pennsylvania and around the Great Lakes selectively bred a better adapted maize (Maiz de Ocho) approximately 800 years ago, and then fed thousands of people for 800 years. In fact, this variety of maize was so successful that it is one half of the genetic material found in the corn the reader eats today. The rapidity with which Maiz de Ocho spread across the Great Lakes region offers unexplored fodder for a study of the social connections between women late in the Woodland Period.

Mississippian

While maize had been present during the Woodland Period, it was not a dietary staple. In fact, carbon isotope studies of skeletons fail to reveal maize in the diet at all during the Woodland Period although parts of the plant are found in numerous Woodland Period sites. It was not until the Mississippian Period that maize took on the role of food for native easterners. To turn this plant into a dietary staple meant that men had to clear dozens of acres of woodlands annually and that villages had to move to unbroken forest areas periodically to find fertile land. The maize fields, located away from villages, required vigilance to prevent animals from eating the new shoots or the cobs, and the cobs required harvesting, drying, storage, seed selection, and seed storage.

An examination of the history of maize in the eastern United States serves, among other things, to show us that there was no monolithic role or experience for women or for men in this era. For instance, while women in the area of St Louis were growing chapalote-like corn, later women in northern Pennsylvania were modifying and growing Maiz de Ocho. Women in western Missouri were living in villages with social identities of elite or commoner and making goods for ceremonies held in nearby mound centers at the same time that women living on the coast of New England were harvesting and preparing primarily marine resources (Little and Schoeninger 1995). Mound centers never developed during this era on the mid-Atlantic coastal plain

of North America. Even within a single region there were differences. Women were participating in maize agriculture in the Connecticut River valley by 1400 C.E., but their neighbors and possible kin on Cape Cod did not begin to clear fields until a few decades before the Pilgrims arrived. While all of the communities in Georgia had moved to maize for their staple food by the eleventh century, no one in Florida did so until the mission period (Hutchinson et al. 1998). We also see that within the same community some women and men were buried in a mound while others were buried in the village, suggesting some significant social differences. Perhaps mound burial was reserved for men who died while carrying the mantle of warriors and for women who died in childbirth, a pairing found in Mesoamerican cultures.

The changes to social life during this period, as a result of the adoption of field agriculture, were profound for people living in the southeastern United States and along the Mississippi River. Where the groups living prior to 900 C.E. in the eastern United States were non-village dwelling hunter/gatherers and later, horticulturists, living most of the year in dispersed small groups but coming together annually in aggregation places for rituals, Mississippians were agriculturalists living in villages, towns, and possibly even cities. There is no greater change in lifestyle in the pre-European era of the eastern United States than that between Late Woodland and Mississippian. Changes in everything from subsistence to housing to social organization to religion made significant new demands upon women and men ranging from diet to faith. Fields of a single crop (maize) required much greater access to tillable land and longer residence near those fields for extensive clearing, planting, weeding, guarding, harvesting, storing, and drying. In addition to the maize fields, gardens with other crops were needed. Maize use led to new menus but more importantly to new rites to insure corn growth, rain, and harvest.

Maize agriculture supported the rise of much more complex societies everywhere it was adopted, a relationship that has been demonstrated by Schurr and Schoeninger (1995). In the Middle Mississippian mound centers elites and commoners ate the same amount of maize and ate more maize than did members of the Fort Ancient culture on the Ohio River. The Middle Mississippian mounds were also larger with more mounds and the associated populations were larger than those of the Fort Ancient culture.

While the rise of village living and the adoption of tribal identities have been the focus of many studies, seldom has a study addressed changes in household level or village organization. This is the point made by Susan Prezzano (1997) in a study of the transition to chiefdom by the Iroquois. When people change from living in small household clusters for part of a year to living in permanently occupied longhouse villages, not only do the relationships change between kin groups, but also between gender and age groups.

In general, archaeologists have failed to recognize the wholesale movement of maize symbolism from Mexico into the United States that accompanied the maize kernels and imparted a strong female-based oral tradition (Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2004:196–197). "First Woman" or "Old woman who never dies" was an important agricultural deity in Mississippian life, at least in the Cahokia region (Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2004). She was often elicited through the use of a vulva-form motif in rock art and on ceramics found west of the Mississippi River, and was served by birds. Her home was in the south and prayers to her were sent southward, the direction of migrating and returning birds. Her vulva was a portal to spiritual power, the recipient

of the sun's generative power, the portal through which her six children emerged, and "it is the grave where all go who die" (Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2004:195). Rites addressing her today conducted by Siouan speaking groups are those for pottery making, corn, and gardening, and in the past included a sacred bundle for her given over to the care of a woman who hung it on a stick in her garden from spring to fall (Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2004:196–197). Relatively recent discoveries of red stone (bauxite) figurines in the Cahokia area, such as the Birger figurine, depict this deity – red being the color of both blood and earth.

It is also highly probable that the Mesoamerican beliefs associated with maize are partially behind the increased use of caves for ritual. Uto-Aztecan speakers of northern and central Mexico believe in a simultaneous creation of corn and humans in an underworld cave. We now know of more than 25 caves in the southern Ohio Valley with art in the dark interior. Judging from modern Mesoamerican practices it is most probable that the majority of priests who trained to enter these underworld portals (wombs) and conduct the relevant rituals were men.

The question of women's menstrual retreat places resurfaces in the Mississippian era in a paper by Patricia Galloway (1997), who brilliantly ties menstrual retreat to fundamental aspects of Mississippian social organization. No menstrual retreat houses or huts have been identified for this time period even though historic southeastern matrilineal groups practiced seclusion. After a survey of worldwide ethnographic data, Galloway concludes that menstrual seclusion correlates reliably with matrilineality. Historic southeastern matrilineal groups are usually used in ethnographic analogies for interpreting Mississippian lifeways, yet some have argued that matrilineality during the historic period was the result of social disintegration brought about after European contact. As Galloway argues, if Mississippians did not practice menstrual seclusion – as the archaeological record seems to indicate – they probably were not matrilineal societies, and the use of historical groups for analogies must be completely re-evaluated. Furthermore, matrilineal groups that practice seclusion "have weak fraternal groups" and have little need to defend the subsistence base. On the contrary, Mississippian societies are often depicted as "aggressive chiefdoms." We have here a fundamental reality of women's lives that has become pivotal for understanding Mississippian social organization.

Using menstrual seclusion facilities as the primary test implication for this research problem, Galloway looked through the literature for a possible menstrual retreat location. She makes a convincing argument that women's houses (not menstrual "huts") are possibly seen in the "temple" structure found at the BBB Motor site and at the Sponemann site, both in the American Bottom near Cahokia. At the former site two red bauxite figurines depicting kneeling women breaking the ground were found, as were three figurines at Sponemann. Both sites also yielded Ramey pottery with motifs that have been interpreted by men as fertility related and highly visible from a distance. Galloway sees the figurines, the distinctive pottery, the large quartz crystal with a dramatic red impurity, the presence of the aborticide *Datura stramonium*, the large house structure, and the location of the BBB Motor site in the middle of a marsh as evidence of a women's seclusion place. The broken pottery and broken figurines at Sponemann suggest a decommissioning event at that women's house. Both places would then appear to indicate that at least a portion of the Mississippian world was occupied by matrilineal groups.

A second menstrual house example, and thus a matrilineal group, has been proffered by Michelle Schohn (2001) for central South Carolina as seen in the isolated Mississippian structure called the Manning Dike Break Site. This mid-1400s structure is eight kilometers down river from the nearest mound center, Mulberry, the center of the historic chiefdom of Cofitachequi. After creating a list of expectations for artifacts (particularly ceramics) and features in a lineage head's household, farmstead household, and menstrual lodge, Schohn concluded that the high proportion of decorated vessels and serving vessels, the presence of a surrounding ditch, and the noticeable lack of lithics, exotics, burials, maize remains, or deer bones (meat prohibitions for menstruating women) indicated that this isolated structure was a women's retreat lodge. Surely more examples can be found.

Work has left its mark on the late pre-Columbian body in many decipherable ways. Skeletal evidence tells us much about the impact of maize farming on women's and men's bodies. For instance, for people living on the coasts, farming activities (when agriculture was finally adopted under Spanish pressure) proved to be less stressful on their bodies than gathering/fishing in the intertidal had been (Larsen and Ruff 1991); but the opposite situation was uncovered for Mississippian peoples living in northern Alabama, who showed significant increases in leg and arm strength as farmers (Bridges 1991).

Field labor aside, both men and women, elites, commoners, and captives must have devoted considerable time, calories, and resources to Mississippian ritual and craft production. The source and quality of those calories, however, was found to differ between men and women in several settings. Mary Powell (1988:78) found that women in Moundville, Alabama had nutritionally inferior diets when compared to the men; Van der Merwe and Vogel (1978) suggested that maize-farming women of the Midwest consumed more wild plants than did men; and Diane Wilson (1997:129–133) uncovered evidence of gendered diets at the Powers Phase Turner site in Missouri. Whether or not these differences are directly related to dietary differences or to reproductive demands is unclear, however (see discussion in Claassen 2001:18–19).

Other skeletal evidence echoes Galloway's caution that the "aggressive chiefdoms" of the Mississippian Period maybe more imagined than real (1997). What violence Maria Smith found in the Dallas phase was present on eight women and one man, and in the Mouse Creek phase ten males, nine females, and one sub-adult (2003:306). When head trauma is separated from the warfare acts of scalping and embedded points, a very low 1.16 percent and 3.36 percent of the burials show potential warfare violence. The six scalping victims included two women, and two women of six victims had embedded points. In a study of 2700 Mississippian burials from the Tennessee River valley there is only one site with high numbers of violent deaths, indicating little support for a warrior class or rampant warfare during late pre-Columbian times in the southeast. What these two samples do seem to indicate is interpersonal, village-focused violence against women (seen in the head trauma data) although this rarely resulted in a woman's death.

Lynne Sullivan's cautionary paper about variability in social organization among southeastern groups points out that ethnographers have commented on the extreme separation of men's and women's daily lives, indicating separate, gendered spheres of influence (2001:108). While burial in a mound may indicate the peak achievement for

men, it would not have been the place to put a highly influential woman when she died. She argues successfully that women probably achieved high status later in life, and that vestiges of prestige and influence (specifically grave goods) should therefore appear at different stages of life for men and women. A comparison of burials of elderly people should show greater similarity in influence and social respect, which is precisely the case at Toqua, her case study: the grave goods associated with individuals older than 40 did not support images of political dominance by men.

Some of the crafts/products produced by Mississippian women of eastern Tennessee were textiles, ceramics, nut oils, and salt (Thomas 2001). Women also probably spent a lot of time gambling, particularly for jewelry if historic accounts are our guides (DeBoer 2001), but they rarely seem to have participated in sweat bath rituals, judging from the lack of female skulls with auditory exostoses (Lambert 2001), at least in the mid-Atlantic piedmont. Among Siouan-speaking groups of Virginia and North Carolina, women were buried with sex-specific items when young but not when old, suggesting a change in gender identity over a lifetime. This characteristic was not observed among men. Female fecundity seems to have been marked with marine shell items (Eastman 2001), a practice which was in keeping with the renewal, rebirth symbolism associated with shell (Claassen 2008).

Conclusions

It is clear from this cursory review that a focus on gender can contribute much to our understanding of social organization among the prehistoric communities of the eastern United States, shedding important light on developments such as increasing complexity and kinship; technological innovations, adoption rates of new items, diffusion mechanisms, and resistance to change; fertility, population growth, and the peopling of the Americas; labor organization and work; diet, health, and technology; and ritual beliefs and practices associated with the sacred landscape. A gendered lens focused on the prehistoric cultures of the eastern United States has enabled scholars to redirect their attention to the human elements of environmental and social adaptation and to elements of ritual and religion. But there is still much research to be done – assumptions to be made or challenged, hypotheses to be tested or expanded, research questions to be developed or reopened, data to be reviewed or collected, conference papers to be written, and articles to be published.

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CHAPTER 26

The Archaeology of Gender in Western North America

Alice Beck Kehoe

Western North America is taken here to be the continent west of the Mississippi Valley and central Canada. This chapter will however include the Arctic since it forms a broad culture area from Alaska to Greenland. So huge an area as "the West" encompasses a strong variety of landforms and climates, from the continent's highest mountains to its lowest point in Death Valley, southeastern California (for a map of the region, see Figure 25.1 in the previous chapter). If we make the area four-dimensional by adding time, from Terminal Pleistocene to Euroamerican conquests in the mid-nineteenth century, it is evident that a chapter such as this perforce selects only highlights.[1]

Stereotypes and unfounded assumptions beset interpretations of archaeological data from Western North America. First and most pernicious is the fiction that west of the Mississippi Valley, First Nations were nomadic hunters ignorant of plant cultivation. This view stems from the myth of America as a wilderness inhabited by bestial savages, a myth legitimizing European invasions and conquests (Kehoe 1998:65). Astounding as it seems, this myth empowers the dominant class even into the twenty-first century, as demonstrated by the 1991 *Delgamuukw* decision and the appointment of its judge, Allan McEachern, to be Chancellor of the University of British Columbia in 2002. In his ruling against Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en First Nations[2] in 1991, McEachern claimed:

> There is no doubt, to quote Hobbs [*sic*], that aboriginal life in the territory was, at best, "nasty, brutish and short" (p. 236). … It is asked whether a nation may lawfully take possession of some part of a vast country in which there are none but erratic nations, whose scanty population is incapable of occupying the whole? … Their unsettled

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> habitation … cannot be accounted a true and legal possession, and the people of Europe … finding land of which the Savage stood in no particular need, and of which they made no actual and constant use, were lawfully entitled to take possession (p. 239). … Some tribes are so low in the scale of social organization that their usages and conceptions of rights and duties are not to be reconciled with the institutions or the legal ideas of civilized society (p. 246). … they more likely acted as they did because of survival instincts (p. 248). … the Indians of the territory were, by historical standards, a primitive people without any form of writing, horses, or wheeled wagons (p. 247). [Reasons for Judgment, quoted in Culhane 1998]

Other stereotypes range from the squaw as drudge to sheer oblivion for women and children (Kehoe 1983). Male ethnographers, who were engaged primarily in observing and interviewing men, created biased records, in part from the ethnographers' equating working women with unvalued domestic labor; in part from etiquette frowning on *tête-à-têtes* between men and women; and in part from beliefs in many indigenous societies that contact with female power would weaken men (Kehoe 1976). Using ethnographic records to interpret archaeological data therefore tended to put Man the Hunter front and center, slighting women. Curiously, an abundance of accounts of war prowess in Western American classic ethnographies failed to alert archaeologists to their own data evidencing warfare, a case of the obfuscating effect of the Myth of the Primitive (LeBlanc 1999:3–7). Ethnographies are our prime source of interpretive models and our final recourse. We must extend the ethnographic gaze to our own social milieu, to see how language, societal, and disciplinary conventions blur and bias archaeologists' work.

Paleoindian Societies

Nowhere does the Man the Hunter stereotype dominate archaeology so much as in Paleoindian studies (Hudecek-Cuffe 1998; Chilton 2004). Classic Clovis and Folsom knapping virtuosity attracts today's hobbyist flintknappers, most of whom are men, as one sees at lithics demonstrations, although plenty of women archaeologists can knap (Gero 1991; Finlay this volume). Men such as George Frison and Gary Haynes replicate Clovis bifaces, fix them to shafts, hurl them at dead elephant stand-ins for mammoths, and, according to science television films, end the day of hearty exercise standing around a campfire scarfing down meat. Terminal Pleistocene people did butcher mammoths. In what is now southeastern Wisconsin, they used nondescript stone blades; were we there, we would have been awed less by the great chunks of meat than by the setting, within sight of the immense glistening front of the continental glacier (e.g., Overstreet et al. 1993). Whether the animals were slaughtered by humans, or whether their carcasses were scavenged by humans (Haynes 2002:180) can be debated without invoking the common visual contrast between heroic muscle-men confronting an enraged beast and scruffy people in skin hoodies huddling round a fire. Gender questions are ignored in an analysis of butchering of *Bison antiquus* (a large Late Pleistocene species) at the Folsom type site in New Mexico, an otherwise model detailed discussion of reading prey and processing data from a Paleoindian kill site (Meltzer 2006:235–244).

Since he was surprisingly dated to 9400 radiocarbon years ago, Kennewick Man from the bank of the Columbia River in Washington state has dominated news of Paleoindian finds. Although the date is technically earliest Holocene rather than late Pleistocene, the skeleton resembles pre-Mongoloid populations of northern Eurasia more than historic American First Nations. A middle-aged man, the skeleton had a Paleoindian (Cascade type) spearpoint embedded in his hip, befitting the Man the Hunter image of Paleoindians. In contrast with Kennewick Man, several skeletons of the same antiquity from dry caves in Nevada are of both sexes and are accompanied by astonishingly well preserved grave goods. Spirit Cave, a large rockshelter east of Reno, Nevada, contained the naturally mummified corpse of a middle-aged man wrapped in a shroud, the cremated remains of a younger woman (or two women) placed in bags, and possibly some bones from two or three additional individuals. The man, like Kennewick, more closely resembles early northern Eurasian populations than present-day Indian people (Barker et al. 2000). These burials evidence a local community no doubt living off the rich resources of a well-watered landscape very different from today's desert. Artisans in the community gathered bulrushes, dogbane, and juniper to weave into the warp-faced plain-weave fine mat shroud and bags, twined mats, and twined bags (Kehoe 2001). These are the earliest complete textiles found anywhere in the world; they exhibit great skill in preparing the fibers, in weaving, and in twining, and the warp-faced plain-weave technique was not used by historic Numa and Paiute in the region. Were these artisans women? Might there be DNA data adhering to the textiles? Out of respect to objections by the region's contact-period First Nations, research into such possibilities has not been pursued.

Archaic Societies

The seven or eight Holocene millennia following the end of the Pleistocene in North America, labeled Archaic, are interpreted to have supported relatively small seasonally mobile communities ancestral to historic First Nations. In 1980 Lewis Binford introduced the term "forager" for such human economies, an insensitive choice both because its ecological-functionalist model equates human societies with non-human species, and because the word for centuries has denoted collecting fodder for livestock (Kehoe 1993).[3] Archaic communities are supposed to have subsisted on harvesting indigenous foods without resort to cultivation, taking us again to the savage-in-the-wilderness myth for America. Pragmatically, archaeologists term an occupation "Archaic" if it lacks ceramics. Whether meant to indicate living off the bounty of nature or simply time before ceramics were used, the "Archaic" label hides the variety and complexity of Holocene American formations.

Patty Jo Watson and Mary C. Kennedy have argued that women probably domesticated indigenous plants and later developed maize varieties in the Eastern Woodlands (1991); this argument rests on the assumption that men hunted and women gathered plants. Ethnographic collaborations with American First Nations suggest that women's reproductive power tends to be seen as antithetical to power to kill, and that hunting is therefore better left to men (Kehoe 1995). Women's knowledge tells how to harvest plants without killing them and how to cultivate for maximum harvest. Men may be forbidden to enter the grounds where women are cultivating,

lest their male power endanger the plants (e.g., Ackerman 1995:94–97). Women's reproductive power being the sine qua non of human societies, such a conceptual emphasis and extension may be postulated to be common in small autonomous communities subsisting on indigenous resources (i.e., "Archaic" societies).

"Archaic" as used in American archaeology was introduced by New York State Archaeologist William Ritchie in 1932 to distinguish his non-ceramic and apparently early Holocene Lamoka Lake site from stratigraphically later occupations with ceramics. Emerson and McElrath (2009:24–28), in an excellent discussion of the history and use of the label, realize that this term reflects continuing acceptance of the nineteenth-century schema of unilinear cultural evolution. "Archaic" sites presumably were not only earlier than occupations with ceramics and corn, but were likewise formed by small, autonomous, egalitarian, hunter-gatherer communities whose craftspeople (inexplicably) had lost Paleoindians' knapping virtuosity. Circular reasoning labels historic societies so characterized as representing an Archaic lifeway, then describes small sites without ceramics as earlier cases of this lifeway. In this manner "neo-evolutionary" textbooks ignore historic factors such as colonial resource expropriations to teach that nearly all the North American West and North had never "progressed" beyond Archaic cultures (Kehoe 1998:178–187). A corollary of this view is that in these societies, men hunted and knapped, women gathered plants and made baskets, and if you want to see what they looked like, get Smithsonian photos of nineteenth-century Shoshone – never mind that they had been dispossessed by Mormon colonization.

Feminism, expressed in archaeological analyses as gender research, exposed the masculine bias implicit in traditional archaeology's focus on "projectile points" most often found in domestic contexts and, functionally, food processing tools rather than weapons (O'Brien 1990).[4] Ethnoarchaeological observations carefully listening to and documenting every person's activities reveal pragmatic flexibility in task performances and indigenous perspectives at variance with Western assumptions. Particularly recommended are the mind-opening reports by Robert Jarvenpa and Hetty Jo Brumbach (e.g., Jarvenpa and Brumbach 1995): their Chipewyan (central Canadian forest) companions see men working to provide raw materials to women whose strategies and skills enable their communities to survive. Brumbach, the archaeologist of the team, states that "The presence of women's gear (pounding stones [for making pemmican], hatchets, stretching racks, hide scrapers, smokehouses) … or, more emphatically, the residues of hide-making tools, suggests the presence of women" (Jarvenpa and Brumbach 1995:68; cf. Kehoe 2005). Perhaps not as aesthetically pleasing as a blade of fine-grained chert, these heavier stones and smaller, less patterned postholes serve as testimony to the activities of half the universe in hunting-gathering communities. Beyond announcing women's presence, women's processing tools and storage facilities demonstrate, in the light of ethnographic observation, sophisticated complex technologies and what Carole Crumley terms heterarchical organizations – societies which may recognize several non-competing leaders, or emphasize egalitarian relationships (Crumley 1987, 1995). The outcome of the movement to find women in the past, which began in the 1970s, has been to push archaeology away from "neo-evolutionary," naively racist praxis, toward the understanding that, like species, every society now and at any time in the past has been as "highly evolved" as any other. Historical particularism, scoffed at by New Archaeologists, is necessary for contesting neo-evolutionary models of cultural

development. Broadly generalized labels such as "Archaic" blind us to the richness of human lives, even that residue left to us in the archaeological record.

Regional Studies

Clark Wissler insisted on grounding American Indian ethnographies in their geographical contexts. His culture areas are based on the dominant food staple as the critical ecological link (Wissler 1917, 1926). I shall use culture areas, not only because they refer to critical features but also because they work as archaeological research sectors. On this basis we can distinguish six regions: the Arctic and Northern; the Plains (with Plateau); the Great Basin; California; the Northwest Coast; and the American Southwest.

Arctic and northern regions

Many Faces of Gender: Roles and Relationships Through Time in Indigenous Northern Communities (Frink et al. 2002) is a good introduction to archaeological interpretations sensitive to gender in Arctic and Northern communities. In its first chapter, Henry Stewart raises an important caveat for gender studies: probably generally among Inuit, a newborn's genitals do not necessarily indicate its ordained sex (i.e., social gender), for the child may reincarnate an ancestor of the other sex or may have failed to hold its penis firmly while traveling the birth canal. Bernard Saladin d'Anglure (referenced by Stewart 2002:21) added eastern Inuit practices of cross-dressing to hide from malevolent spirits, and in an ethnographic compendium (1994) expounded on Inuit belief that all fetuses are male but that long childbirth labor, or the fetus's wish to be a girl, as well as laxness in holding its penis, may result in the penis cracking open to become a vulva. Midwives were expected to hold or watch a neonate boy's penis while cleaning him, lest it crack open. In short, hypo- or hypertrophied genitalia in newborns allowed Inuit to believe sex in humans is mutable. "Third gender" or "two-spirit" (a recent term among English-language Indian people) are not appropriate here since they represent a Western Enlightenment rationality rather than indigenous Americans' lesser concern with boundary maintenance.

The relatively recent occurrence (and paucity, overall) of colonial settlement in the North not only strengthens ethnographic analogies in the Frink et al. (2002) volume and permits straight ethnoarchaeological fieldwork, such as that of the Jarvenpas: it also permits mapping documented cultural changes in historical time. Archaeologists in the North see the shift from indigenous houses where distributions of men's and women's tools more or less match ethnographic traditional work spaces, to commercial housing and abandonment of central men's buildings (*qargi*, *kashim*) within villages. Issues raised by Frink et al. (2002) include whether central men's houses in villages indicate a marginalization of women and women's activities or, conversely, a marginalization of men from the productive lives of women. Such either/or judgments have provoked Crumley to bring forward the concept of heterarchy (Crumley 1987, 1995). Heterarchy fits the ethnographies describing that, with or without central men's houses, Northern hunting-fishing societies recognize complementarity between men's killing and women's processing of game

and fish, so that women's skill in "making dry meat" would be praised to the same degree as men's hunting records (e.g., Sharp 1988).[5]

Plains and plateau regions

The Hidden Half symposium at the 1977 Plains Conference was meant to be a wake-up call alerting researchers to the neglect of women's activities in the societies studied by Plains anthropologists. It was followed a decade later by another symposium on gender research (Kornfeld 1991) and then by the landmark 1989 Chacmool Conference (Walde and Willows 1991). In her address to this conference Alison Wylie asked in reference to the emergence of gender archaeology, "Why not before now?" (1991:17–23). Part of the answer, she suggested, was New Archaeology's ecological determinism, a stereotypically masculine prime mover. Another part of the answer was bias against giving women opportunities in archaeology, as documented in an analysis of US National Science Foundation applications and grants for archaeological projects, and in employment statistics (Levine 1991; Stark 1991). Kent Flannery's "real archaeologist" could only be played by a macho guy like Clint Eastwood (Flannery 1982).

Two publications about bone awls are outstanding examples of the rich context that can be evoked by archaeological research strongly grounded in firsthand ethnographic experience. Janet Spector's monograph *What This Awl Means* (1993) movingly opened a postcolonial as well as gendered perspective from her work on a Dakota village site; and Linea Sundstrom linked grooves on a rock face to Lakota women's quests for craft inspiration from the legendary Double Woman associated with that rock (2002). In her book-length analysis of rock art in the Black Hills region, Sundstrom distinguishes depictions of warfare, which are likely or explicitly male, from a variety of apparent vulvae, awl-sharpening grooves, bison and animal tracks, as well as a few clear depictions of women; bison and women are often linked in Plains mythology and ritual (2004:199). Similarly, by combining field archaeology with historical and ethnographic correlations, Gerald and Joy Oetelaar (Oetelaar 2000) have shown how simple tipi rings (circles of stones that held down tipi lower edges) yield evidence of gendered activities. Displacement of First Nations by Euroamerican settlers occurred on the Plains, as in most of the West except for the Southwest, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ethnographic interviews as late as the mid-twentieth century elicited memories of "prehistoric" ways of life from elderly persons who had actually lived at some of these sites, making possible the specific identifications utilized by the scholars cited here.

Philip Duke recast the prehistory of Alberta into the *longue durée* perspective developed by Fernand Braudel, concluding that in this High Plains environment the reliance on bison herds structured a relatively unchanging way of life (1991: 182–184). Duke devoted a section to gender (1991:145–160, 174–175), evaluating the likelihood that historic Blackfoot societal structure represents that of the prehistoric past. Grappling with archaeological theoretical positions, Duke considered the possible significance of contrasts between point styles through the 2000 years of evidence he examined, and questioned the view that points and sherds indicate men's and women's activities, respectively (1991:183). His thoughtful discussion exemplifies how strongly we depend upon historic ethnographies for the Plains. This is graphically

illustrated in a more recent study of Blackfoot prehistory (Brink 2008) with minimal specific text discussion of gender but many illustrations, keyed to text, of Blackfoot women working.

In contrast to the preceding studies of nomadic Plains communities, two women archaeologists edited a volume on *Plains Earthlodges* (Roper and Pauls 2005). Although Pauls' chapter in that volume (Pauls 2005) is the only one that explicitly addresses questions pertaining to gender, the focus on houses built and owned by women in these Central and Northern Plains settlements is implicitly gendered. Janet Spector's contribution (Spector 1983) to Albers and Medicine's *The Hidden Half* (1983) laid out an analytical framework for distinguishing, or postulating, men's and women's tasks and associated artifacts in Hidatsa traditional communities (where earthlodges were used). Her model has been widely employed, not only in archaeological investigations of Missouri agricultural towns, but also for Plains societies generally since the towns depended upon bison and went out en masse on extended hunting trips.

The Plateau culture area adjoins the Northwestern Plains, overlapping in that Plateau hunters went through mountain passes to pursue bison, packing the meat and hides home on packhorses during the nineteenth century. Before horses became available in the eighteenth century, they may have packed on dogs and their own backs, or bands may have moved seasonally onto adjacent Plains areas. Bison were also found in intermontane valleys, Plateau nations' territories. Brian Hayden's publications on his work at the largest winter village in the British Columbia Plateau, Keatley Creek, include descriptions of activity areas within excavated houses that are similar to Plains archaeologists' inferences from tipi ring artifact and feature distributions, and show similar patterns of gendered task difference (e.g., Hayden 1997:69, 82).

The Great Basin

Great Basin archaeology was dominated by Jesse Jennings' concept of a 7000-year-old Desert Culture he surmised would have matched the ethnography of Julian Steward's (1938) classic Bureau of American Ethnology monograph. Challenged in the 1970s by historically informed researchers, who emphasized that Steward had not realized that his informants were refugees marginalized by Euroamerican, particularly Mormon, expropriation of lake and stream valleys and marshes, Jennings acknowledged that the prehistory of the vast region is more complex than he had premised (Jennings 1973). A further complication is the issue of when the Numa (Uto-Aztecan speaking Shoshone, Utes, and Paiutes) spread over the Great Basin and adjacent eastern Sierra (Madsen and Rhode 1994): genetic analyses (Kaestle and Smith 2001:8) support linguistic postulation of an expansion of Numa about 1000 years ago, replacing or substantially adding to a population similar to Californians.

With its patchiness of foods and water, the Great Basin had attracted ecological-functionalist archaeologists using optimal foraging theory to predict sites and site contents.[6] However, a cohort of younger women began moving into research in the region in the 1980s, leading to a symposium at the 25th Great Basin Anthropological Conference in 1996 entitled "Invisible No More" (Leach 1999:191). The organizer's overview is mainly programmatic (Leach 1999); among the few published studies she cited, several were predictive models prepared for the Bureau of Land Management

or a cultural resource management company. One paper in another edited volume hinted at women's work in its analysis of a cobblestone-filled roasting pit in the Green River Valley of Wyoming, estimating that "hundreds of kilograms of roots [or camas bulbs] could have been roasted in one pit, … a major portion of the caloric needs for one family for several months" (Francis 2000:166). Cultivation, harvesting, and processing of camas was a major responsibility of women historically in the intermontane valleys and foothills as well as higher on the Plateau. Two women archaeologists, Isabel Kelly in the 1930s and Emma Lou Davis in the 1960s, wrote ethnographies of Eastern Sierra Paiutes (Kelly 1932, 1964; Davis 1965) in order to inform field research in the area. Fashionable statistical models borrowed from animal management eclipsed these well-documented guides to Paiute landscapes.

California

Alfred Kroeber and Robert Heizer, both on the faculty at Berkeley, dominated Californian archaeology for most of the twentieth century. Kroeber, like his erstwhile student Julian Steward, focused on "salvage" ethnography to glean a picture of pre-Euroamerican societies, apparently not realizing the degree of bias in their reconstructions due to unexamined notions of "the primitive" and to their neglect of the drastic effects of colonialism upon western First Nations. Nineteenth-century cultural evolutionism equated nudity with primitivism; thus California and Great Basin people who adapted to the climate by dispensing with clothing were assumed to lack knowledge of food production, complex technologies (except for "women's work" basketry), and political structures. Regardless of the high number of unrelated languages in California, there was little interest in teasing out population movements. Then in the 1960s, a growing conservation campaign fostered landscape studies that indicated the tremendous change which had taken place during the century since First Nations were displaced. Meadows disappeared under new forests, impenetrable chaparral spread, and streams clogged. Lowell Bean, Thomas Blackburn, and Kat Anderson argued that California Indians had practiced sophisticated resource management, using fire to clear brush and rejuvenate landscape productivity (see Anderson 2005). They cultivated indigenous crops, using hardwood digging sticks as hoes; sowed native grasses in burned-over fields; and planted acorn oaks and nopal cacti in groves near villages. In both California and the Great Basin individuals acquired in-depth knowledge of certain plants or animals, becoming recognized as community leaders in maintaining and harvesting their specialties. Men more usually were "bosses" for procuring animals, women for plants. Historically, women used mortars and pestles to pound acorns into meal, leaching tannic acid from it with water and drying it to store as a staple food.

Californians in the first half of the Holocene routinely harvested small seeds and ground them on *metates* with *manos*; hence this millennia-long period is called the California Milling Stone horizon. Beginning about 4000 years ago, *metates* and *manos* were replaced by mortars and pestles, a change thought to indicate the substitution of acorns for small seeds as the staple food. Concomitantly, weapon points and butchered large game (deer, elk), as well as fish and shellfish, increased. Jones (1996) and Hildebrandt and McGuire (2002) discern in these data a shift from a broad range of foods and other resources procured by nearly everyone in a community, to gendered

subsistence roles, with women collecting and processing plants around more or less sedentary villages and men spending time hunting large game, a social pattern observed historically among their descendants. Hollimon (2000) has used historic Southern California ethnographies to postulate that possibly as early as the Early Period (i.e., Holocene), a "third gender" of non-procreating persons was recognized and perhaps given the task of preparing the dead for burial, as was the '*aqi* organization among the Chumash. More recently, Hollimon has published a brief review of California archaeological studies in which gender is a topic (2009). Considering that Hollimon has been interested in the approach throughout her career, to the extent of convening a Gender and Archaeology conference at her home base, Sonoma State University, the paucity of prehistoric gender studies in her review reflects a dearth of interest in local prehistory among the major theoreticians in the large California research universities.

The Northwest Coast

Northward along the Pacific coast from central California, a Mediterranean climate gives way to temperate rain forest. The debate between anthropologists enmeshed in the discipline's nineteenth-century imperialist evolutionary schema, and mavericks taking a postcolonial standpoint, rages in Northwest Coast studies as in California: should the First Nations be labeled hunter-gatherers (or worse, "foragers") or did they cultivate some of their principal resources? Deur and Turner's *Keeping It Living* (2005) presents detailed case studies for the latter position, arguing that cultivation of fields of wapato and camas may have been a factor promoting sedentary winter villages and extensive sophisticated trade networks (e.g., Darby 2005:194). As on the Plateau and Plains, Northwest Coast women owned the fields they worked. Men, as in these regions and in California, set and managed burning to maintain open fields, meadows, and groves. Northwest Coast plant resources are usually described in terms of lineage or family corporate ownership rather than as managed under leadership of specialized-knowledge "bosses;" this may be partly a matter of conventional terminology in the regions.

Overshadowing debates about labeling Northwest Coast resources management is that about labeling its constituent societies. From southern Alaska into northern California, people lived in plank houses in villages. Stratified social classes from aristocrats to commoners and slaves amassed wealth, raided and warred upon rival or weaker nations, produced surpluses, used money (dentalium shells) in international trade, and supported artists; if these societies were not quite kingdoms, then they were certainly cacicazgos or baronies.[7] Yet British and Euroamerican visitors, who observed them living off the seacoast instead of by plow agriculture, held that they had not evolved culturally beyond a stage of animal-like foraging. *Delgamuukw*, the 1991 Northwest Coast claims case, exposed how pernicious such academic theorizing can be to real people. It is hardly "foraging" to commission seagoing boats carrying hired crews to bring in tons of halibut, to set up assembly lines of netting and processing runs of thousands of salmon, to deploy parties of women to cultivate and harvest wapato and berry locations under their ownership, and to manage stores of food for dozens of families year-round. The peculiarity of the Northwest Coast is that unlike Europe or most of Asia, its sophisticated fishing and sea-mammal hunting

baronies were cut off from potential farming inland by high mountains, constraining them to cultivate indigenous root and tuber crops and berries in estuaries, marshes, and ecotones.

Frederica de Laguna carried out exemplary fieldwork for many years in southern Alaska and the Yukon, not overtly categorizing "gender" but devoting ample text to her women consultants' lives and stories. Possible archaeological manifestations were always sought in her multifaceted projects (e.g., de Laguna 1960). Madonna L. Moss continued multifaceted research in her dissertation and subsequent publications, bringing out the word "gender" in a richly nuanced paper on Angoon Tlingit (1993). She emphasized the interplay of ideology, voiced in ethnographic interviews, and quotidian life, reconciling the huge quantities of shellfish in settlement middens with molluscs' professed low status, food of the poor gathered by commoner women and slaves. A telling insight came when a Tlingit consultant remarked that shellfish were to his people as "bread and butter" to Euroamericans, eaten regularly and without comment. So, Moss suggests, "We might think of shellfishing women as the 'breadwinners' of Tlingit society" (Moss 1993:643).

Wetlands along the Northwest Coast have preserved normally perishable artifacts. Ozette is a Makah village that was buried by a mudslide ca. 1700 C.E. and has yielded many thousands of household artifacts identifiable through Makah ethnohistory. Also on the Olympic peninsula of Washington is the Hoko River wet site from which Dale Croes and his colleagues have recovered 3000 years of occupation, interpreted through comparative Northwest Coast ethnographies. An overview paper by Croes (2003) spends half its 24 pages on fishhooks, harpoons, and similar male-associated procurement gear, but only four lines on digging sticks; in addition, it places its three pages on basketry hats under the heading "Social Organization" (signs of rank) and four pages on baskets likely used in trading under "Exchange." In the latter section, Croes mentions that he interviewed Makah women about basketry techniques and styles and learned that families "jealously guarded" their basketry styles, insisting that women marrying in from other villages perform the family's style (Croes 2003: 72–74). In the same volume, Kathryn Bernick (2003) describes a 1000-year-old basket found in the mud of a Fraser River estuary beach, a known but unexcavated occupation site. The basket's unusual cross-stitch-wrapping seen in modern Coast Salish baskets was supposed to have been borrowed from African raffia or European basketry decoration, but the Fraser beach find confirms it is an indigenous technique learned over the course of 1000 years by Salish craftswomen.

The American Southwest

Gender questions came to the fore for Southwestern archaeologists participating in a School for Advanced Research (SAR) seminar, producing the volume *Women and Men in the Prehispanic Southwest: Labor, Power, and Prestige* (Crown 2001). Not surprisingly, all the seminar participants were women, with only one man, a graduate student at the time, listed as a junior author for one paper. The SAR seminar had been preceded by an issue of *Journal of Anthropological Research* (51(2) from 1995) devoted to gender archaeology in the Southwest; the organizer of this issue, Katherine Spielmann, contributed to the SAR volume, as did Hegmon, Mobley-Tanaka, Fish, Martin, and Hays-Gilpin, mentioned here. In 2003 Michelle Hegmon published an

ambitious essay on "Issues and Theory in North American Archaeology," focusing on her generation's postprocessual movements beyond their teachers' New Archaeology. Hegmon devoted only a page and a half to gender archaeology (2003:218–219) even though she states that it is "paradigmatic of processual-plus … draws upon a diversity of theoretical approaches to address a common issue" (2003:213).

Several papers in the 1990s postulated changing gendered roles in Ancestral Pueblo prehistory. For example, Mobley-Tanaka (1997) discussed subterranean rooms for grinding maize (mealing rooms), created during the transition from pithouse dwellings (prior to 900 C.E.), and aboveground dwellings with underground kivas in Pueblo II (900–1100). Mealing rooms where women worked would have complemented men's ritual space in kivas. During Pueblo III (1300–1600), mealing rooms declined, and corn-grinding became less communal and was more often performed outdoors, implying less organized integration into ritual practices (Spielmann 1995). For the southern sector of the American Southwest, Patricia Crown and Suzanne Fish (1996) examined Hohokam data to infer shifts in gendered roles and statuses between the Pre-Classic and following Classic periods. Kathryn Kamp (1998, 2002) pursued a broader picture, investigating children as well as women in Ancestral Pueblos, rightly acknowledging that children, too, comprise a gendered category.[8]

Along the border between the eastern Southwest (Río Grande region) and Southern Plains, interactions between societies were sustained by hunting excursions of Pueblos, trade between Pueblos and Plains nomadic bison hunters (the latter sometimes wintering over adjacent to a pueblo), and Pueblo people taking refuge from war or crop failure with a Plains band. Judith Habicht-Mauche has published several papers weighing the archaeological evidence for Pueblo women in Southern Plains sites to determine whether they may have been captives or refugees, and to assess their possible contributions to their host bands (e.g., Habicht-Mauche 2008). In the same volume Debra Martin presents affecting data on violence wreaked upon some of the women buried in the La Plata River valley of northern New Mexico between 1100 and 1300 C.E. Compared to some male skeletons exhibiting trauma associated with fighting, these women were repeatedly abused and buried without grave goods and without their bodies being arranged neatly in the grave (Martin 2008:171). Consequently, Martin infers that these women were slaves or captives, perhaps from an abased class in the larger society (2008:174–175).

Rock art and figurines are abundant in the dry climate of the American Southwest. In her award-winning book,[9] Kelley Hays-Gilpin takes a feminist standpoint in studying what she aptly titles *Ambiguous Images: Gender and Rock Art* (2004; see also Hays-Gilpin this volume). Like so many women archaeologists, Hays-Gilpin seeks experiential knowledge through ethnographic participation and interviews (see, for example, *Hidden Scholars*, Nancy Parezo's brilliant 1993 collection of biographies of Southwestern women archaeologists). Similarly, linguist Jane Hill has conducted ethnographic fieldwork, deriving from this and from ethnohistorical research the Mesoamerican-Uto-Aztecan concept of a lovely colorful "Flower World" heaven. Hill and Hays-Gilpin are struck that "the flower, widely attested around the world as a symbol of female progenitive power … was recruited [in Mesoamerica and the Southwest] to male ritual practice" associated with warfare and hunting (Hays-Gilpin and Hill 1999:2, 19). Figurines have not been widely discussed since Noel Morss' *Clay Figurines of the American Southwest* (1954). Four papers in a compendium

edited by Stocker and Charlton (Scott 2001; Shafer 2001; Tuohy 2001a, 2001b) build upon Morss' survey. Although none of these focus on gender, ample illustrations provide material for a reader's consideration – or frustration, since most of the objects are fragmentary or ambiguous.

Overview

As Mary Whelan has observed, "It appears that gender is integral to American archaeology, although not usually as a topic of scholarly investigation. It influences who has access to fieldwork opportunities, whose voices are heard telling stories about the past, and what roles men and women in the past are allowed to have played" (1995:49). Whelan's call for questioning rather than assuming gender roles and statuses came in a volume encouraging Plains archaeologists to embrace "postprocessual" approaches rather than uncritically follow narrow ecological-functionalist premises. More recently, Cheryl Claassen has cogently discussed a range of methodological and theoretical approaches used, or with potential, for gender studies over North American prehistory (1997:85–87). And Michelle Hegmon has pleaded that "North Americanists … become aware of the way theory conditions the manner in which we see the world" (2003:234). She uses the label "processual-plus" to describe what most North American archaeologists perform.

Older "processual" archaeology seemed inimical to researching gender as it is concerned with identifying evolutionary processes. Since only populations can evolve, processual archaeology could not look for individual agency or for social roles other than those involved in reproduction.[10] Population growth and environmental crises were commonly advanced to account for societal change (Kehoe 1998:110–112, 116–117). Associated with the flag word "processual" is commitment to a concept of science as a search for general laws, or at least regularities, a standpoint incompatible with research seeking particulars of human lives in a multiplicity of times, places, and communities. In short, processual archaeology tended to be reductionist. The traditional view of First Nations of the West (other than Pueblos) as non-agricultural, foraging the wild, attracted processual archaeologists who sought to model small societies adapting to niche environments.

Hegmon, working in Southwestern archaeology, which was dominated for over a generation by New Archaeology processualists, called for "processual-plus" while Whelan, a Midwestern archaeologist trained in a department still valuing historical studies, favored the humanities-linked term "postprocessualism." British archaeologist Ian Hodder is credited with establishing postprocessual archaeology during the 1980s, leading a cohort of his graduate students at Cambridge University. One of the group was Henrietta Moore, who published *Feminism and Anthropology* in 1988. In 1991 Hodder wrote, "It can be claimed, plausibly, that the growth of postprocessual archaeology depended on the growth of feminism and feminist archaeology" (Hodder 1991:10). Postprocessual archaeology is postmodern in that it asks researchers to reflect upon the premises and conventions they have accepted, and recognizes that differently socialized persons can legitimately argue for other interpretations – in other words, that standpoint can strongly affect conclusions (see note 4). Charges of "unscientific" and "anything goes" have been hurled at

postmodernists, including postprocessual archaeologists, but as Hodder has replied, "There is a need to give science a context in archaeology as … clearly defined methodological procedures … to avoid ungrounded undermining of knowledge" (Hodder 1991:10). Postprocessual or "processual-plus" archaeology extends scientific inquiry beyond natural science questions and opens the floor to diverse concerns, such as seeking evidence for Gitksan and Wet'suwe'ten territorial holdings before British Canadian invasion.

"Indigenous archaeologies" is a recent and quite postmodernist term meant to orient archaeologists to First Nations' needs to document their preconquest territories and ways of life, to record their people's knowledge of and understanding of their pasts, and to train and employ their members (Bruchac et al. 2010). Particularly since the United States' 1990 NAGPRA legislation (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act), American First Nations have not only demanded the return of ancestors' bones and holy objects, but often have also required archaeologists to obtain permits from their governing councils or Tribal Historic Preservation Offices before conducting research on their lands. Many now employ their own archaeologists and encourage their young people to enter the profession. Collaboration with First Nations communities has become the norm in much of Western North America. This has enhanced respect for their sciences, which are perhaps expressed in novel points of view but are seen to be solidly empirical. Such "postcolonial" or "decolonizing" acceptance of non-Europeanist points of view strengthens rejection of the standard Eurocentric cultural-evolutionist "progress" schema, opening our eyes to the varied resource cultivation practices common in Western North America.

"Complexity" has similarly benefited from rejection of the standard unilineal model. As Carole Crumley has remarked, "All societies are (at least periodically) complex" (1987:163). Each summer, Plains First Nations held, and still hold, a rendezvous of hundreds of households to perform ceremonies, trade, race and gamble, enjoy social dances, and create friendship and marital relationships. Prior to the institution of tribal courts under Anglo governance, chiefs would adjudicate disputes at the rendezvous camps, and soldier societies of men with martial experience policed the camps. Archaeologists recognize sites with hundreds of tipi rings to be periodic *poleis* (such as Aristotle's "polis," a Greek city-state where the functions of a state are carried out). A few of the tipi rings are larger, presumably the remains of big tipis where band chiefs met in council, or a leader feasted his peers and followers. Modern annual tribal powwows are the descendants of preconquest summer rendezvous, now minus the formal governmental practices. Tipi ring clusters do not, alas, preserve the presence of Old Ladies, dignified but warm matrons managing households, admonishing the young and errant in public speeches, holding women's rituals, renewing kinship with bison, the staple of life, and performing women's portions of community worship (Kehoe 1976). Similarly, Plateau communities gathered periodically (and still do) to celebrate first fruits rituals performed by their women cultivators; today, the community hall displays a row of hand-twined harvest bags and wooden digging sticks attesting the celebrants' work (unhappily, neither artifact is likely to be preserved archaeologically). In the Great Basin and California, "bosses" (specialists) for each game animal and utilized plant are a good example of complexity based on heterarchy since the "bosses" are not ranked against each other but are complementary. For the Southwest, it appears that Hohokam (in the southern, desert

sector) had complexity with ranking – judging from their walled compounds on mounds surrounded by unpretentious residences – and Ancestral Pueblo in the northern sector probably did between ca. 900 and 1300 C.E., after which ideologically egalitarian complexity ruled through priests' councils and ritual task allocations. Only the Northwest Coast struck European visitors by displaying "house societies" with overtly ranked members. Arctic and Northern communities, with low population densities, were minimally complex, families consulting together to best match households to resources over the landscape, and the spiritual power of *angakok* healers. Surveying the American West and North, we see that societal complexity, designating roles and fixing them into the fabric of the community or *polis*, may be latent much of the year where resources require seasonal movements of small bands, and yet it was observed. Neither primitive communism nor simple egalitarian relationships have been reliably attested historically or ethnographically.

The problem for archaeologists working in the American West and North is, bluntly, a lack of monuments. The Southwest attracted researchers because Pueblo nations built large, enduring structures of stone and put handsome painted pots inside them. Although opinions have shifted over how many rooms were living quarters versus storage or special chambers, pueblos appear to be bounded self-recognized communities, and they definitely had agricultural cornfields. In contrast, structures in the rest of the West and North were ephemeral (even the huge plank houses of the Northwest Coast were often dismantled for the summer); sites are apt to be palimpsests of camps; the only iconic art is likely to be on rock and of limited repertoire; and ethnoarchaeological observations, such as those of Jarvenpa and Brumbach, indicate men and women are competent in all subsistence tasks, regardless of customary allocations by gender. Persons who do not conform to the roles expected of their sex may be cross-dressers, but the presence of artifacts supposed to be used normally by the opposite sex of a skeleton does not invariably indicate a "third gender" or "two-spirit" (not indigenous terms; see Kehoe 1997): the artifacts may be incorrectly interpreted by the archaeologist, or may have multiple functions and uses.[11] Compared to so many parts of the world where people labored to build highly visible permanent structures and emblazon them with realistic art and texts, the American West and North *look* simple. Its archaeological record *is* impoverished, and its great artwork in wood and fabrics, including basketry and featherwork, are highly perishable – hence the empirical value of ethnographies, describing what archaeologists can seldom see, and, when carefully interrogated, hinting at traces.

Questions of gender in the archaeology of prehistoric Western North America were literally beneath the radar of practitioners until late in the twentieth century when women gained professional opportunities. Neither the earlier cultural-historical phase nor its successor, processual archaeology, sufficiently problematized gender. Even a decade into the twenty-first century, women predominate in gender-oriented research. Men have tended to distance themselves from engagement with the humans of the past communities they are investigating. Asking about gender roles opens the field to a re-evaluation of technologies practiced by women, to a re-examination of the economies of First Nations that did not farm maize, and, pursuing that path, to a realization of how false and pernicious is a cultural evolutionism justifying their denigration and dispossession.

NOTES

1 For a comparable overview of the region, see Bruhns 2006.
2 The plaintiff nations live on the Upper Skeena River in British Columbia, where they traded down to the coast through the lower Skeena Tsimshian, related to the Gitksan. McEachern's ruling was overturned, on procedural grounds, in 1993 by the British Columbia Court of Appeal, and in 1997 by the Supreme Court of Canada.
3 Forage: bulky food such as grass or hay for horses and cattle; fodder. Derivatives: forager. Origin: Middle English, from Old French *fourrage* (noun), *fourrager* (verb), from *fuerre* "straw," of Germanic origin and related to fodder.
4 See Alison Wylie 2002:185–199 for explication of the feminist standpoint in archaeology.
5 I watched, and one day assisted, Amskapi Pikuni (Montana Blackfeet) elder Molly Kicking Woman slicing beef for feasts. Her virtuosity with the butcher knife brought admiring onlookers and was reverently praised.
6 In their introduction to *Key Issues in Hunter-Gatherer Research*, editors Ernest Burch, Jr. and Linda Ellanna dismiss optimal foraging theory as not worth discussing in their book (Burch and Ellanna 1994:7–8).
7 Claude Lévi-Strauss realized the parallels between Northwest Coast societies and medieval France, developing from the comparison the concept of "house societies" (Lévi-Strauss 1982; see also Joyce and Gillespie 2000).
8 Novelist Kurt Vonnegut, holder of an MA in Anthropology from the University of Chicago, famously wrote of five genders and seven sexes in his 1969 novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*.
9 Society for American Archaeology Book Award, 2005.
10 "Processual" was a fad word during the 1950s and 1960s, with "processual theology," "processual geography," etc. Archaeologists espousing processual archaeology liked to organize data into a flow chart system, incorporating environmental factors.
11 Ralph Linton's (1936:402–409) distinction between function and use, and form and meaning, should be kept in mind.

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CHAPTER 27

The Archaeology of Gender in Mesoamerica: Moving Beyond Gender Complementarity

Elizabeth M. Brumfiel

Mesoamericanists showed an early interest in questions of gender, perhaps because the rich textual and iconographic materials from the region supplied initial data on gender roles and gender ideology in prehispanic culture. Early discussions of women's status in Mesoamerica relied heavily upon these sources. We now recognize that the information supplied by the texts and iconography is limited. The texts were produced by sixteenth-century observers of native culture, and they are skewed by the biases of their mostly Western, mostly elite, mostly male authors. In addition, these texts are profoundly ahistorical (i.e., they record native culture as observed at a single endpoint of more than three millennia of settled agricultural life). Iconographic materials, if properly interpreted by modern scholars, do convey indigenous views of native gender systems, but most works of complex iconography were produced by a small elite fraction of the population, and they reflect the narrow political and ideological goals of their sponsors.

During the past two decades, archaeological data have been added to our sources of information on gender in Mesoamerica, and they have enriched our understanding. Archaeological data are unique in being highly democratic: all humans, both rich and poor, male and female, interact with the material world and leave archaeological traces of their behavior. In addition, some types of archaeological data have the advantage of

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being produced without conscious reflection; these data constitute an accurate record of what people actually did instead of presenting ideal norms which may or may not have been adhered to. Finally, archaeological data are ubiquitous: they occur in all parts of Mesoamerica during the entire span of human occupation. Thus, archaeological data represent the full range of variability for gender across the region (see Figure 27.1 for a map of the region and the locations of sites discussed in this chapter).

The goal of this essay is to present the literature on gender in Mesoamerica published since 2005, with a specific emphasis on archaeological data relating to gender.[1] I use this literature to evaluate a model of gender relations that has gained great popularity in Mesoamerica, the model of gender parallelism or gender complementarity. I argue that this model has only limited utility in understanding Mesoamerican gender systems. The variability in these systems frustrates any attempts to explain them with any single, uniform model. A true understanding of Mesoamerica's gender systems will require close attention to archaeological variability and social context, particularly the strains and stresses generated by political economies operating at the levels of the household, the community, and the region.

Gender Complementarity: A Model for Gender Relations in Mesoamerica?

The model of gender parallelism or gender complementarity was first proposed by Sharisse and Geoff McCafferty (1988) to provide an alternative to an earlier picture of extreme male domination in Aztec society offered by June Nash (1978) and María Rodríguez-Shadow (1988). McCafferty and McCafferty (1988) argued that the model of extreme male dominance did not take account of the separate domains of economic, ritual, political, and social power held by Aztec women. According to sixteenth-century ethnohistoric sources, women worked as merchants, weavers of valuable textiles, priestesses, physicians, and herbalists. Gendered duality was inscribed in many dimensions of Aztec religion, including the existence of primordial male and female gods Ometecuhtli (Lord of Duality) and Omecihuatl (Lady of Duality) at the moment of creation and the recognition of many powerful female goddesses, which provided models of female power. Aztec women could even share in the prestige of male warriors: women who successfully gave birth were likened to men who seized captives on the battlefield, and women who died in childbirth were said to rise to accompany the sun across the sky, as did men who died in combat or on the sacrificial stone. Drawing upon these ethnohistoric data, McCafferty and McCafferty concluded, "Males did not dominate women, although the resources of power which they controlled may have been more 'important', at least under an androcentric Western definition of cultural relevance. Instead, males and females interacted as structural complements dialectically renegotiating control over resources of social power" (1988:52).

McCafferty and McCafferty's model of gender complementarity drew strong support from Kellogg's (1988) conclusion that Aztec systems of kinship and inheritance were cognatic (i.e., that male and female ancestors counted equally in reckoning descent). Cognatic descent conferred property rights and inheritance rights upon both men and women. Kellogg also documented the parallel roles played by male and female priests in Aztec religion.

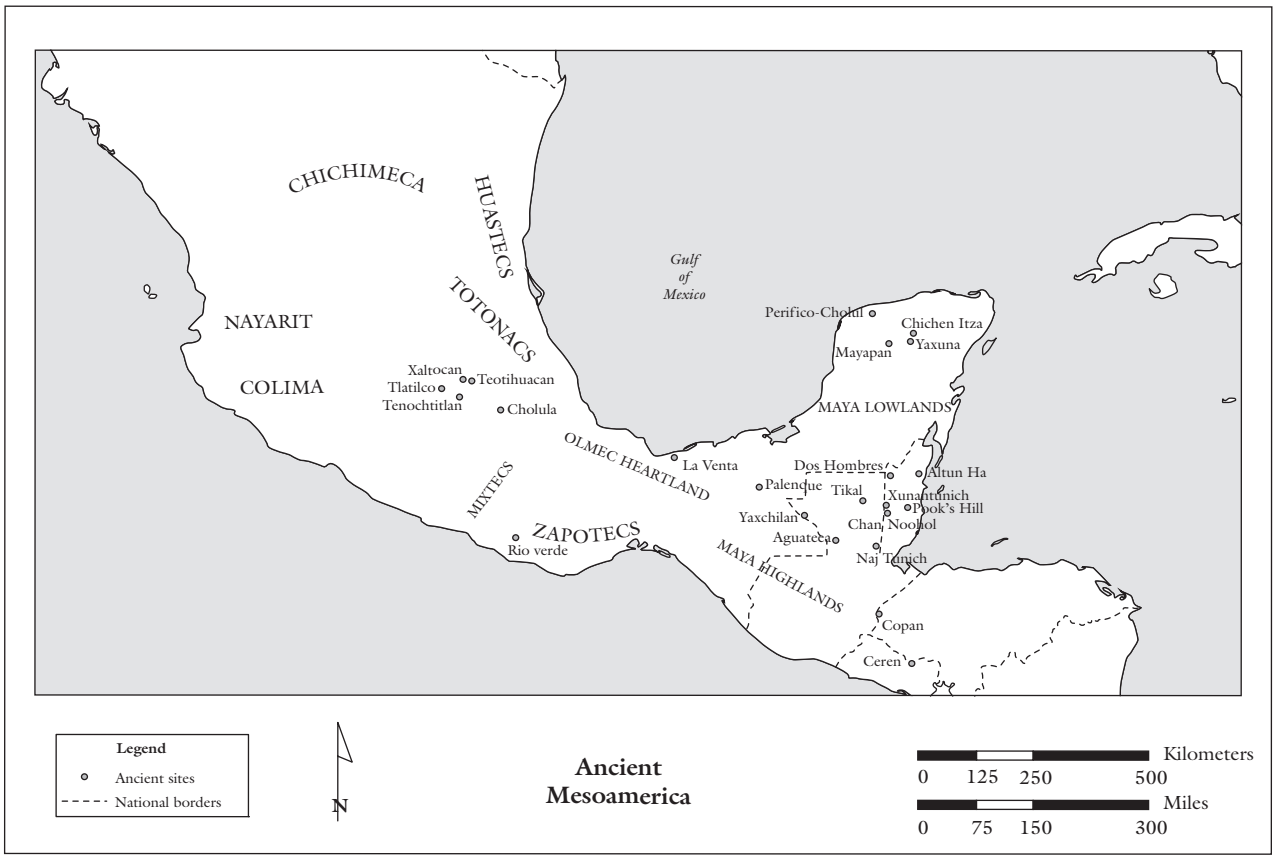


Figure 27.1 Map of ancient Mesoamerica showing locations of sites discussed in this chapter (produced by the author).

The model of gender complementarity was also consistent with patterns of gender relations described by ethnographers of twentieth-century Mesoamerica. In a highly influential article, Lois Paul (1974) observed that husbands and wives in San Pedro, Guatemala, were complementary economic partners, each performing tasks indispensable to the other. In this Maya-speaking village, the clear contributions of women to daily survival provided them with a sense of self-worth and dignity. Leslie Devereaux (1987) also found a strongly gendered division of labor between husbands and wives in Zinacantan, Mexico, leading to marital relationships which she characterized as complementary but asymmetrical. Households in Chamula, Mexico were found to be rooted in a similar ideology of mutual obligation and exchange between spouses (Rosenbaum 1993).

Perhaps because much of this supporting ethnographic data was drawn from contemporary Maya-speaking communities, the model of gender complementarity was accepted by archaeologists working with the ancient Maya. Rosemary Joyce (1996a) found that male and female images on Classic Maya monuments often occurred in standardized male–female pairs arranged in complementary positions and engaged in identical or complementary ritual actions. Joyce concluded that this reflected an ideology of gender complementarity among the Classic Maya elite, and probably among many other Mesoamerican peoples as well. Julia Hendon (1999) concurred, arguing that not all differences between genders constitute inequalities. She suggested that separate and equal structures of prestige exist for women, for men, and for other genders in many parts of the world. Hendon argued that Western social scientists had not taken sufficient notice of the many gender systems based on separate but complementary gender roles such as existed in Mesoamerica.

As discussed below, gender parallelism and complementarity do capture important dimensions of the Aztec gender system and gender systems in other parts of Mesoamerica. From a feminist perspective, the concepts of gender parallelism and complementarity usefully challenge popular theories of universal male dominance by highlighting the importance of women's roles in prehispanic civilizations and the sources of women's power. In addition, the model of gender complementarity establishes gender as an important axis of social organization, requiring the full attention of social scientists. However, a growing number of feminist and gender archaeologists have found gender parallelism and complementarity problematic for both theoretical and empirical reasons (Gero and Scattolin 2002; Stockett 2005; Wiesheu 2006; Brumfiel and Robin 2008). In Mesoamerica, it is archaeological evidence that has called into question the model of gender complementarity, a model which, as described above, relies heavily upon ethnohistoric and ethnographic data.

Gender Complementarity in Production: A Dichotomous Division of Labor?

The model of gender complementarity implies a sharply gendered division of labor, resembling the way that gender roles are envisioned by many indigenous Mesoamerican peoples today: "The man plants corn and brings firewood … the woman prepares the food and weaves clothing" (Rosenbaum 1993:74). Archaeological evidence of a sharp division of labor might include the segmentation of household space into separate

areas for female and male activities (Flannery and Winter 1976) and, in burials, the association of adult males with one set of tools or finished products and adult females with another set of tools or finished products. But the results of recent archaeological research do not meet these expectations.

Most importantly, Cynthia Robin (2006) examined the distribution of domestic and agricultural space at the Late Classic commoner site of Chan Nòohol, Belize. The proximity of houses to agricultural fields, the overlapping uses of workspaces surrounding the house, and the relatively unspecialized farming techniques utilized at Chan Nòohol led Robin to propose that collaborative labor (rather than a complementary division of labor) characterized many farm and household tasks. Robin suggests that in this farming community the easy interaction and communication, facilitated by the interdigitation of houses and fields, resulted in collaborative or integrative relations between people of different ages and genders rather than the maintenance of separate and parallel spheres of action so often recorded in twentieth-century ethnographies.

Intersite variation in household procurement practices also suggests that a universal complementary, gendered division of labor did not exist for Mesoamerica. For example, differences in the fuel used at rural Chan Nòohol and the more elite Pook's Hill site in Belize suggest to Morehart and Helmke (2008) that firewood gathering must have been organized differently at the two sites. They propose that two different strategies were employed: self-provisioning at Chan Nòohol and acquisition through networks of exchange at Pook's Hill. Morehart and Helmke suggest that these strategies relate to other differences in the organization of farm labor, household labor, and exchange relationships at the two sites. Morehart and Helmke conclude that no single model of household labor is consistent with the differences in firewood that they have identified. Firewood acquisition may have entailed complementary labor at some Mesoamerican sites, collaborative labor at other sites, and exchanges with non-household suppliers at still other sites. Firewood acquisition cannot automatically be ascribed to one side or the other of a gendered division of labor.

Recent research on craft production also supports the idea that male and female household members collaborated in many activities. Craft production in Mesoamerica has been shown to occur mostly in household contexts rather than in discrete workshop locations (Feinman and Nicholas 2000; Inomata 2001; Hirth 2009). Wiesheu (2006:146) argues that the household context of craft production makes the existence of a strict division of labor by gender improbable since many members of a single domestic unit probably contributed to such home-based production (see also Wright 1991; Gero and Scattolin 2002). This appears to have been true at Teotihuacan where most evidence of specialized production occurs within apartment complexes rather than in workshop locales (Kroster 1987; Manzanilla 1993; Gómez Chávez 1996) and where neither specific tool types nor finished products are associated with male or female burials (De Lucia 2008; Clayton 2011), implying the absence of products produced by specifically male or female specialists.

Preston-Werner (2008) points out that in the southern regions of Middle America the assumption of discrete male and female activity sets has led archaeologists to assign certain (utilitarian) artifacts to female activities and other (artistic, religious) artifacts to male activities. This implies that men served as the primary intermediaries between humans and the supernatural. However, in subscribing to a model of a gendered

division of labor, archaeologists have ignored the clear evidence provided by figurines of men and women engaging in identical activities, such as sitting on artistic *metates*/benches, smoking cigars, and carrying out shamanic rituals. Assuming a complementary division of labor caused archaeologists to ignore evidence of identical activity patterns for men and women and the existence of female ritual specialists.

Data from several sites call into question the existence of strictly defined gender roles in spinning and textile production. Spindle whorls have been found with both female and male burials at Postclassic Cholula (McCafferty and McCafferty 2006: 41–42), at the Classic Maya centers of Tikal and Altun Ha (Welsh 1988:284, 297), and at other sites in the southeastern Petén (Chase et al. 2008:136). At Early Postclassic Río Verde, the dense concentration of highly standardized spindle whorls in household contexts suggests to Stacie King (2011) that all household members, young and old, female and male, engaged in spinning cotton yarn for commercial export to other regions of Mesoamerica. Neither complementary nor collaborative labor is a correct term to describe this case; instead, both men and women may have engaged in identical activities. Despite the high densities of spindle whorls and bone and needle fragments in household contexts, none were recovered from graves. Instead, men and women were buried in nearly identical positions, in similar contexts, with similar offerings, leading King to conclude that either "adult gender identities were not partitioned or that gender identities were not linked to spinning and weaving" (2006:184).

Early Formative burials at Tlatilco in central Mexico have also produced no clear differences in the grave goods associated with males and females (Hoar 2009). This lack of difference suggested to Hoar that "the sexual division of labour was virtually non-existent at Tlatilco" (2009:163), and it led her to question the acceptance of any universal proposals concerning the gendered division of labor throughout Mesoamerica, such as "Man the Warrior" or "Woman the Weaver."

Even when artifact or iconographic evidence does link men or women to particular productive activities (for example, women to weaving), the consequences in terms of wealth, status, and identity for the producer can vary significantly from one case to another, and only the analysis of the variable economic and social contexts of production reveals these differences (Brumfiel 2006, 2007). For example, at Formative and Classic sites weaving tools are most common in high status burials and residences (Hendon 1997; Chase et al. 2008). This and the association of high status women with cloth bundles on Maya stelae (Joyce 1996a) suggest that weaving was a marker of elite status for Classic Maya women. During the Postclassic, cloth production intensified. At many sites spindle whorls are almost universal among commoner residences; at other sites certain households are marked by very high frequencies of spindle whorls. Both patterns suggest the widespread incorporation of textile production into the regional economy through the Postclassic institutions of tribute and markets (Brumfiel 1991; Smith and Heath-Smith 1994; Wiesheu 2007; Ardren et al. 2010). In contemporary Mesoamerica, women spin and weave to establish their identities as members of specific communities and ethnic groups within modern, stratified multi-ethnic states (Hendrickson 1995; Otzoy 1996). The variable contexts of weaving in Mesoamerica mean that observations concerning the organization of textile production by gender or the consequences of textile production for gender status and identity cannot be automatically extended from sixteenth-century ethnohistory or twentieth-century ethnography to all eras and regions of the prehispanic world.

Socialization to Binary Gender Roles?

The presence of complementary labor might be approached from another angle: at what age did Mesoamerican children begin to be enculturated into their roles as men and women, the future halves of complementary wholes? Several documentary sources (e.g., Sahagún 1950–1982, Book 6; Durán 1971:124; Codex Mendoza 1992) record that gender identity was distinguished at birth by the spindle whorls given to female infants to mark their future roles as weavers, and the shields and arrows given to male infants to mark their future roles as warriors. Relying on these sources, Joyce (2000a) suggests that rituals to instill gender into unformed infants and young children commenced at an early age. However, recent studies of the archaeology of children and childhood in Mesoamerica (Ardren and Hixson 2006; De Lucia 2010) suggest that such "reconstructions of childhood based on ethnohistory alone can be problematic" (De Lucia 2010:620).

In fact, gender indicators are rare in archaeological contexts relating to early childhood. For example, in Middle Formative Tabasco gender is most clearly marked on adult figurines of reproductive age; in contrast, genitals are not depicted on Olmec "baby face" figurines even though their lower torsos are exposed (Gallegos Gómara in press a). This suggests to Gallegos Gómara that gender became an important part of individual identity only after the onset of puberty.

Pre-adult graves at the Postclassic Central Mexican sites of Xaltocan and Cholula rarely contain utilitarian tools, and when tools do occur they are not gender-specific. Neither spindle whorls (which might be associated with females) nor projectile points (which might be associated with males) appear in children's graves (McCafferty and McCafferty 2006; De Lucia 2010).[2] Instead, children's graves contain their own artifact types, including whistles and flutes, beads, ceramic balls, and figurines. On this basis, De Lucia (2010) concludes that children's identity as children, an age category, was more salient than their membership in the gender groups, boys and girls.

In contrast, Trachman and Valdez (2006) found that in sub-adult burials from Maya sites dating from the Middle Formative through the Late Classic, female gender identity was marked by a shell pendant worn at the pelvis. This is consistent with Landa's sixteenth-century observation that little girls' gender identity was marked by such a pelvic bead pendant, and it suggests great temporal continuity in this way of marking gender. However, Trachman and Valdez found no parallel archaeological evidence for the marking of male identity in little boys with disk shell beads worn in the hair, also reported by Landa.

Houston (2009) uses glyphic texts and iconography to examine gender formation among male Maya youths during the Classic period and concludes that such youths were a focus of interest for Classic Maya elites. Young men were identified as a group participating in tribute payment, dance, and battle. Houston wonders if special locales for training young males existed among the Classic Maya as they did among the Aztecs and Maya at the time of contact (Sahagún 1950–1982, Book 3 Appendix; Landa 1941:124). He suspects that these houses, like the liminal recesses of the cave of Naj Tunich, may have been the sites of drunkenness, enema insertion, revelry, stunned inebriation, dancing, and homoerotic grappling.

Hendon (2006) examines the long apprenticeship needed to acquire the practical knowledge and bodily habits used to produce textiles on a backstrap loom as a mechanism of gender formation among Mesoamerican girls. She argues that the time

demanded to acquire the bodily habits needed for weaving, as well as the social networks that link experienced weavers to girls just beginning their training, tend to confine weaving to a specific segment of the population, that is, to create an embodiment of knowledge that is exclusive to women. She concludes that such factors might work to sustain a dichotomous division of labor.

What these cases reveal is variation by time and space in patterns of gender socialization. In some cases childhood emerges as a distinctive stage of identity without strong gender markers; in other cases gender indicators are present, and patterns of gendered behavior are indicated for male and female adolescents. However, there is little evidence to support a model of socialization to parallel and uniform gender categories across Mesoamerica.

Gender Complementarity in Social Organization: Parallel Structures?

Archaeologists have looked to stelae, murals, and burials to determine the role of women and men in Mesoamerican political systems. Their findings have varied. Follensbee's (2009) systematic examination of the physical traits, garments, and accessories of ceramic and stone figurines from Gulf Coast Olmec sites has enabled her to identify male and female figures of various age categories. She discovered that male figures make up the strong majority of gender-identifiable, large-scale stone images, but that female images comprised a much larger percentage (12 percent) of large stone sculptures than previously recognized, comparable to the frequency of female images at the Classic Maya site of Palenque. The representation of women in large stone sculptures leads her to conclude that women could occupy positions of high status in Olmec society.

Among the Classic Maya, high status women appear mostly in standardized male-female pairs, suggesting gender parallelism (Joyce 1996a, 2000b). As the wives of ruling men, these women complemented male power and confirmed the all-embracing scope of the ruling couple. As the mothers/regents of male rulers, high status Maya women established the noble ancestry of male rulers in the maternal as well as the paternal ancestral line. Discussion of the roles of ruling women among the Classic Maya continues (Hewitt 1999; Ardren 2002; Houston et al. 2006:52; Chase et al. 2008; Martin and Grube 2008).

Benavides (2007) observes that the appearance of women on Maya stelae is confined to a relatively narrow time span during the Late Classic, 662–780 C.E. Women do not appear on stelae carved before and after this date. Ardren and Hixson (2006) observe that there are also geographic limits to the depiction of women on Maya stelae – they are rare or absent on stelae in the northern Maya lowlands. Here, elite men legitimated their royal power through the graphic portrayal of self-sacrifice, blood-letting from the penis, and warfare instead of emphasizing lineage and dynasty. Women rarely appear in the public art of Postclassic Yucatan (Joyce 2000b). Thus, while gender parallelism can be said to have played an important role in one phase of one region's political development, it does not appear to have been universal.

Nor did a single principle necessarily apply to all levels of the political hierarchy. Pool Cab and Hernández Álvarez's (2007) analysis of burials from a Classic Yucatan house at Periférico-Cholul suggests that while men may have dominated local and

regional politics, both men and women served as household heads over the course of the structure's occupation.

In the Mixtec region, references to politically important women rulers frequently appear in Postclassic historical codices and colonial records, but Mixtec ruling females appear as the full equivalents of male rulers rather than as halves of complementary pairs (Spores 1997; Boone 2000). McCafferty and McCafferty (2007) provide evidence that female political leaders in the Mixteca and Puebla-Tlaxcala led their armies into battle. In contrast, politically important women rarely appear in Aztec pictorial histories (but see Diel 2007 for the role of high status women in Aztec politics). At the same time, the Aztec state seems to have been intent on constructing parallel institutions for men and women, including young men's and women's houses, male and female priestly hierarchies, and male and female market directors (Kellogg 1997). Gender complementarity was clearly present as an organizing principle of the Aztec state.

Parallel structures of ritual practice in Mesoamerica are suggested by three recent studies. In a thorough review of ritual features in an Early Postclassic commoner house at Cholula, Geoff McCafferty (2007) documents the presence of ritual practices involving household altars, buried offerings, infant and children's burials, sweatbaths, incense burning, and feasts. He concludes that two separate spheres of ritual activity existed in Postclassic Cholula: the sphere of household ritual, gendered female, and the (male-gendered) sphere of public ritual. As McCafferty states, "The Postclassic house was a nexus of female activities and ritual practice, in contrast to more public or state-level religious practices" (2007:239).

Similarly, for Middle Formative Tabasco, Miriam Gallegos Gómara (in press a, in press b) argues that the abundance of ceramic figurines depicting females of reproductive age in household contexts suggests the existence of a separate sphere of domestic ritual centered on fertility and fecundity. This contrasts with the predominantly male greenstone figurines and the monumental sculptures in the Olmec style that belong to a more public ritual sphere (Follensbee 2009).

Masson and Peraza (in press) maintain that parallel female and male rituals were both included in the cycle of public ceremonies at Postclassic Mayapan. This is implied by the unusual distribution of figurines at the site. In other parts of Mesoamerica, ceramic figurines are found in household contexts, but at Mayapan figurines were concentrated in religious and administrative structures at the site center. Zoomorphic figurines were the most common form (29–54 percent), followed by female figurines (30 percent), whistles (6–11 percent), human figurines of indeterminate sex (7–9 percent), and male figurines (3–4 percent). The specific concentration of female figurines in public buildings suggests to Masson and Peraza that women were involved in public ritual as well as rituals within their own households, perhaps leaving offerings of figurines at the public buildings to address their anxieties over reproduction and maternity. This, then, might constitute evidence for the existence of separate but parallel public rituals, addressing female and male concerns.

Gender Complementarity and Gender Equality?

While Rodríguez-Shadow (2007a, 2007b) continues to paint a picture of extreme gender inequality in Mesoamerica, others have demurred. McCafferty and McCafferty

(1988) and Hendon (1999) believe that gender complementarity provided a safeguard against gender inequality. Separate but complementary spheres occupied by women and men and alternative genders meant that each gender maintained control of certain areas of life, which constituted separate power bases from which to negotiate relations of wealth, power, and prestige, and to maintain relative gender equality. The relative well-being of women and men in prehispanic Mesoamerica has been the subject of numerous empirical studies, some focused on physical health and others assessing the effort and wealth invested in male and female burials. These studies do not reveal consistent advantages for men or women. Typically, males and females suffer some health threats equally while women suffer from some ailments more often than men, and men suffer other ailments more often than women.

For example, in a brief report on 35 burials from the Classic Maya urban center of Yaxuna, Ardren (2009) finds that men and women experienced an equal incidence of macrohypoplasia, an indicator of childhood nutritional stress, while men suffered from a higher incidence of arthritis, and women experienced a higher incidence of tooth decay. Overall, females had a shorter life expectancy than males, perhaps due to the dangers of pregnancy and childbirth, and this was so despite the fact that males from Yaxuna more frequently died violent deaths. Nearly half of the male sample from Yaxuna died violently, reflecting what Ardren calls a "Classic Maya masculine lifestyle – in which violence was normalized and expected" (2009:52).

Using diet to gauge the extent of gender equality in Mesoamerica has yielded similar results. Some dietary differences between men and women are evident, but the extent and nature of these differences vary from site to site. Most recently, Christine White (2005) has used bone chemistry to reconstruct the diets of Maya men and women ranging from Pre-Classic to the Spanish colonial period. White focused particularly on "preferred foods," such as meat, maize, and marine/reef resources. She concludes that "Gendered dietary differences vary by resource, time, and site location. … The differences seem to have been broadly distributed but are not dramatic. Their meaning is still unclear, but it is argued that because elite males consumed more 'preferred' foods, most of which were used in rituals, elite women may not have participated in ritual food consumption in the same way or to the same degree" (2005:375).

Burial treatment has been used as another gauge of gender equality or inequality. A comparison of nine female burials and 13 male burials from a single Classic Maya residence in the Yucatan revealed that three male and one female burial were significantly richer than the others, suggesting that both men and women had served as household heads (Pool Cab and Hernández Álvarez 2007). In Early Classic Oaxaca, greater wealth was associated with burials of men than with the burials of women and children (González Licón 2007; González Licón and Zamora Sánchez 2007). Men were buried with more decorated ceramic vessels, and they monopolized exotic materials, such as jade, shell and obsidian. However, these differences diminished by the Late Classic. At Teotihuacan, female burials were slightly more likely to completely lack grave goods, but some of the richest, most complex burials belonged to women (Sempowski and Spence 1994; De Lucia 2008). More striking than the overall differences in the treatment of male and female burials at Teotihuacan was the variation in the way that different apartment complexes treated men and women (Clayton 2011). At one complex, significantly fewer women than men were buried

with offerings; in another complex, women and men were equally likely to have grave goods.

This lack of consistency in indicators of health, wealth, and status seems to point to a general conclusion: that gender equality in Mesoamerica differed within sites, between sites, and according to time period. In addition, gender equality was affected by the intersection of gender with other social categories, such as class and age. Understanding this variability requires close attention to the strains and stresses generated by the political economy of the time as well as an awareness of the general conceptions of gender in Mesoamerica.

Gender Ideology: Dichotomous Sex or Gender Ambiguity in Late Prehispanic Mesoamerica?

The case for pervasive gender parallelism in Mesoamerica would be strong if binary oppositions were a common theme in Mesoamerican iconography. As we shall see, such oppositions are in fact common, but underlying them was a belief in the pervasive unity of the cosmos, a belief that the cosmos was composed of a dynamic, unstructured, fluid substance that was the basic constituent of reality. Maffie describes this substance as a "vivifying, eternally self-generating and self-regenerating sacred power, force, or energy. … [E]verything that exists constitutes a single, all-inclusive, and interrelated unity" (Maffie n.d.). This unitary substance may explain why, in Mesoamerican thought, gender is regarded as highly fluid and not essential, innate, or immutable. As Joyce notes, gender is "produced from an original androgyny or encompassment of sexual possibilities" (Joyce 1996b:109; but cf. Houston et al. 2006).

At the same time, the structure of everyday life arises from the spontaneous division of this substance into complementary opposites capable of sustaining life. As López Austin explains:

> Preeminent in this world view … is the dual opposition of contrary elements. … Sky and earth, heat and cold, light and darkness, man and woman, strength and weakness, above and below, rain and drought are conceived at the same time to be polar and complementary pairs, their elements interrelated by their opposition as contraries in one of the great divisions and by their arrangement in an alternating sequence of dominance. [López Austin 1988:52]

This world view accounts for both the gender fluidity and the gender parallelism that can be observed in Mesoamerica.

Stockett (2005) points to several lines of archaeological evidence that point to sex/gender fluidity in ancient Mesoamerican thought. Human figures often have exposed chests and waists but lack any indication of male or female sexual characteristics; Joyce (1998) suggests that these might represent sex/gender ambiguity or androgyny.[3] Depictions of ritual performances by male and female elites who are dressed in costumes of the opposite gender might depict androgynous third gender beings as embodied by the Maize God and Moon Goddess (Looper 2002). Moya Honores (2007) proposes that the male gods in the *Dresden Codex* who wear elements of female dress and perform "female" activities, such as weaving and sewing, are evidence that

in Maya belief the masculine and the feminine were not sharply divided, but could be integrated in a single individual. Sharisse McCafferty and Geoffrey McCafferty (2009) thoughtfully suggest that hunchbacks, dwarfs, albinos, and birth anomalies represent ambiguous and alternative identities to normative male/female dichotomy and derive part of their power from their liminal status.

At the same time, gender parallelism and duality is a common theme in Mesoamerican art and ritual. Joyce (1996a) documents the opposites of male/female, vertical/horizontal, above/below, front/back, outer/inner, right/left, and north/south associated with gender imagery at Classic Maya centers. Clayton (2011) notes the presence of contrasting body positions for male and female burials at some Teotihuacan apartment complexes, suggesting the presence of an ideology of gender complementarity within these complexes. However, contrasting body positions are absent at other complexes, suggesting that gender complementarity was not universally recognized at Teotihuacan. Elements of well-known male/female oppositions sometimes provide the basis for interpreting other bodies of archaeological evidence. For example, Trachman (2009) suggests that the association of Classic Maya women with earth/water symbolism might account for some of the details of a female burial excavated at Dos Hombres, Belize: the body's position inside a round structure that might symbolize a water container, and its association with a reservoir feature and a cache of water jars. McCafferty and McCafferty (2008) trace similar associations between the earth, earthly waters, caves, sweatbaths, female deities, ritual cleansing, and healing across Mesoamerica.

Traci Ardren points out that because gendered principles are so fundamental to Mesoamerican thought, gender beliefs and expectations "can be seen in operation at every level of ancient society, from the structure of burial grounds to the daily processing of corn, from the design of temple architecture to temporary hunting camps" (2008:21). Thus, Ardren maintains, the study of gender can illuminate "the complex intersections of ideology, politics, and economy that provided the machinery of complex societies" (2008:2).

Gender Politics

A number of scholars have argued that state elites play a major role in shaping gender ideologies in Mesoamerica. Political elites have found it useful at one time or another to emphasize either gender ambiguity or gender dichotomy. Joyce (1996a) maintains that Maya elites attempted to encompass both male and female identities through dress in order to claim the complementary totality that they wished to control, and to represent themselves as exercising the cosmological powers of the creator gods. Brumfiel (2008a) suggests that gender relationships among Aztec commoners were mostly based on the principles of gender complementarity and gender equality but that Aztec rulers were intent on promoting gender hierarchy. In order to win the loyalty of their male citizen-soldiers, Aztec rulers emphasized the positive qualities of masculine strength and dominance in opposition to feminine weakness and submission; and in order to materialize these redefined gender roles, the state appropriated design motifs from pre-Aztec household implements, such as spindle whorls, and displayed them in ritual contexts, such as ball games and human sacrifices, where male warriors

were glorified as defenders of cosmic order against the feminine forces of chaos and darkness (Brumfiel 2008b).

The state might also have played an active role in shaping masculine heteronormativity among the Aztecs. Recent discussions of alternative genders in prehispanic Mesoamerica have relied heavily upon sixteenth-century documents to identify nonheterosexual forms of sexuality (Olivier 2004; Balutet 2007; Sigal 2007; Sharisse McCafferty and Geoffrey McCafferty 2009). Alternatives to heterosexual intercourse are clearly condemned in these texts, but it is difficult to tell whether these condemnations stem from their Western authors (thus misrepresenting what may have been an indigenous tolerance for sexual ambiguity) or whether they faithfully represent the value systems of indigenous cultures. Balutet (2007) suggests that Aztec condemnation of sexual relations between men was limited to the passive member of the pair, part of a broader Aztec glorification of the domineering warrior/hunter in Aztec state ideology and the consequent definition of women or feminine postures as submissive, humiliating, and the object of scorn.

López Hernández (2007) insists that Aztec religion must be the subject of diachronic study. On the one hand, Aztec religion shares in the "archaic Mesoamerican tradition," which she believes associated feminine deities with the home, the Earth, night, sexuality, fertility, and fecundity. On the other hand, Aztec mythology presents a later overlay which depicts female deities as rebellious, destructive, and hostile. López claims that this same division is evident in a synchronic analysis that compares the folk religion of commoners with the official religion of the Aztec state. In both forms of Aztec religion, female deities prescribed ideal models for women's behavior, but while folk religion focused upon women's roles in promoting the health and well-being of household members, official religion dictated that women should dedicate themselves to promoting the stability of the Aztec state through social, biological, and economic production. Postulating clear differences in Aztec religion before and after the expansion of the Aztec empire, López emphasizes the need for an approach to the Aztec gender system that includes both diachronic study (comparing the preimperial and imperial systems) and synchronic variability (comparing state ideology with popular forms of religion).

The implications of this conclusion are significant. It means that Mesoamerican gender systems cannot be reconstructed from the information available in sixteenth-century documents or current ethnographies. Mesoamerican archaeologists must assume responsibility for defining and explaining variability in gender roles, identities, and ideologies across time and space.

The Future of Gender Studies in Mesoamerican Prehistory: The Uses of Archaeology

Lopéz's argument points the way for future studies of gender in Mesoamerican prehistory. In the past, Mesoamericanists have sought a single model that might be applied to gender in Mesoamerica. Some have favored models of gender complementarity or gender hierarchy while others have emphasized the fluid and ambiguous nature of gender. Often these models have been supported by bits and pieces of evidence, drawn mostly from sixteenth-century ethnohistory and twentieth-century

ethnography. The use of these relatively restricted data to elucidate Mesoamerican prehistory has imposed a misleading homogeneity on interpretation.

A growing body of archaeological evidence reveals the variability of gender relations in Mesoamerica. Production was organized by gender complementarity, gender collaboration, or by the performance of identical tasks by male and female workers. Parallel political and religious institutions existed for men and women in some places; in other places, either men or women could fill positions of leadership; and sometimes men monopolized leadership roles. Gender equality is reflected in the bioarchaeology and burials of some sites; gender inequality is indicated at others. Mesoamerican religions have sometimes focused on well-defined dualities while at other times they have emphasized a unitary, but fluid, sanctity.

Clearly, with deeply rooted principles of both gender fluidity and complementarity, Mesoamerican people had the capacity to structure gender relations in many different ways. López's insistence that gender roles be viewed in terms of both diachronic and synchronic variation implies that gender must be understood in terms of context. In particular, understanding variability in gender roles, identities, and ideologies requires close attention to the strains and stresses generated by political economy operating at the levels of the household, the site, and the region.

Joyce's (2000b) study of gender and power in prehispanic Mesoamerica provides an outstanding effort to understand Mesoamerican gender systems in terms of diachronic and synchronic variation. Future studies should attempt to extend Joyce's analyses to new regions and to develop new models to explain diverse data sets. This calls for a detailed recognition of variation in the ways that gender is manifest in Mesoamerican archaeology and for intensive efforts *neither* to generalize *nor* to reduce the variation to individual case studies. Instead, through the systematic study of gender in context, archaeologists should attempt to arrive at an analytical understanding of how gender both responds to and accounts for other structures in Mesoamerica's past.

By now, the manipulation of gender identity by emerging states is a familiar concept. But gender identity may be manipulated by domestic groups to provide a focus of group identity. Geoffrey McCafferty and Sharisse McCafferty (2009) argue that shared practices of beautification relating to gender are a common means of marking ethnic groups. Clayton (2011) suggests that distinctive norms and practices relating to the burial of men and women were used to define the identity of the separate apartment complexes at Teotihuacan.

De Lucia (2011) maintains that macroscale changes in Mesoamerican economies and polities are necessarily rooted in microscale changes at the level of the household. Thus, archaeologists will want to explore the tensions that arise within household groups in association with major shifts in political economy (Tejeda 2008). For example, archaeologists may want to ask if conformity to gender ideals is more strictly enforced in high status households as opposed to low status households, as Robin (2004) has observed for the Classic Maya. Archaeologists may wonder if household conformity increases when autonomous communities become part of territorial states. They may ask if individuals enjoy greater autonomy under systems of extensive cultivation than under systems of agricultural intensification where improvements on the land and issues of land inheritance give elders greater leverage over younger generations.

Brumfiel (2011, in press) suggests that the variability in artifact designs on different classes of artifacts can be used to explore these questions. Decorated serving vessels might be viewed as representing a negotiated, collective identity that the household as a unit presented to outsiders when it faced the public as the sponsor of household feasts. In contrast, decorated spindle whorls were selected and used by individuals within the household, reflecting individual identity. *Shared* motifs on spindle whorls and serving vessel motifs would indicate the unitary character of a household and the acceptance of that identity and its norms by its members. *Differences* between the design motifs appearing on serving vessels and those appearing on spindle whorls might reflect the gap between the personal identity of habitual spindle whorl users (i.e., women?) and the negotiated identity of the household as a group. These differences would signal the extent to which the household was a place of interpersonal tension.

The history of gender relations in prehispanic Mesoamerica remains to be written. Two decades of research have demonstrated that no single model can adequately describe Mesoamerica's gender systems. The model of gender complementarity was proposed to allow for the possibility of gender equality in ancient Mesoamerica. Archaeological data now reveal many more possibilities for gender in Mesoamerica than were previously imagined. With multiple strands of archaeological evidence at our disposal, we are now in a position to produce more comprehensive, more analytical histories, specifying the conditions under which particular gender roles and ideologies emerge. For example, by examining Late Classic Maya gender relations across royal, noble, and commoner household groups and drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of social distinction, Robin (2004) observes that higher status groups are more committed to perpetuating gender differences than lower status groups. Similarly, by comparing the apparent lack of interest in gender difference at Teotihuacan with the emphasis of gender difference among the Aztecs, archaeologists might conclude that "corporate" states foster greater gender equality than states that relied upon coercion to maintain their social dominance. Through the systematic study of gender in context, archaeologists should formulate theories that account for variation in gender across Mesoamerica's past.

While the interpretation of archaeological materials relating to gender will continue to draw insights from ethnohistory and contemporary ethnography, archaeologists no longer have to rely on conjectural models to imagine what the past was like for Mesoamerican women, men, and otherwise gendered people. The evidence for gender in Mesoamerica is available to archaeologists, and it awaits our analysis.

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NOTES

1 For reviews of the literature before 2005, see Joyce (2006) and Ardren (2008).
2 A possible exception to this are incense burners, which were found with eight percent of the adult male burials and none of the females. Incense burners also occurred in five sub-adult graves, which might mark them as males.
3 However, Marcus (2009:45) suggests that the gender of some "sexless" figurine bodies could have been specified by perishable clothing.

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CHAPTER 28 Gender in South American Prehistory

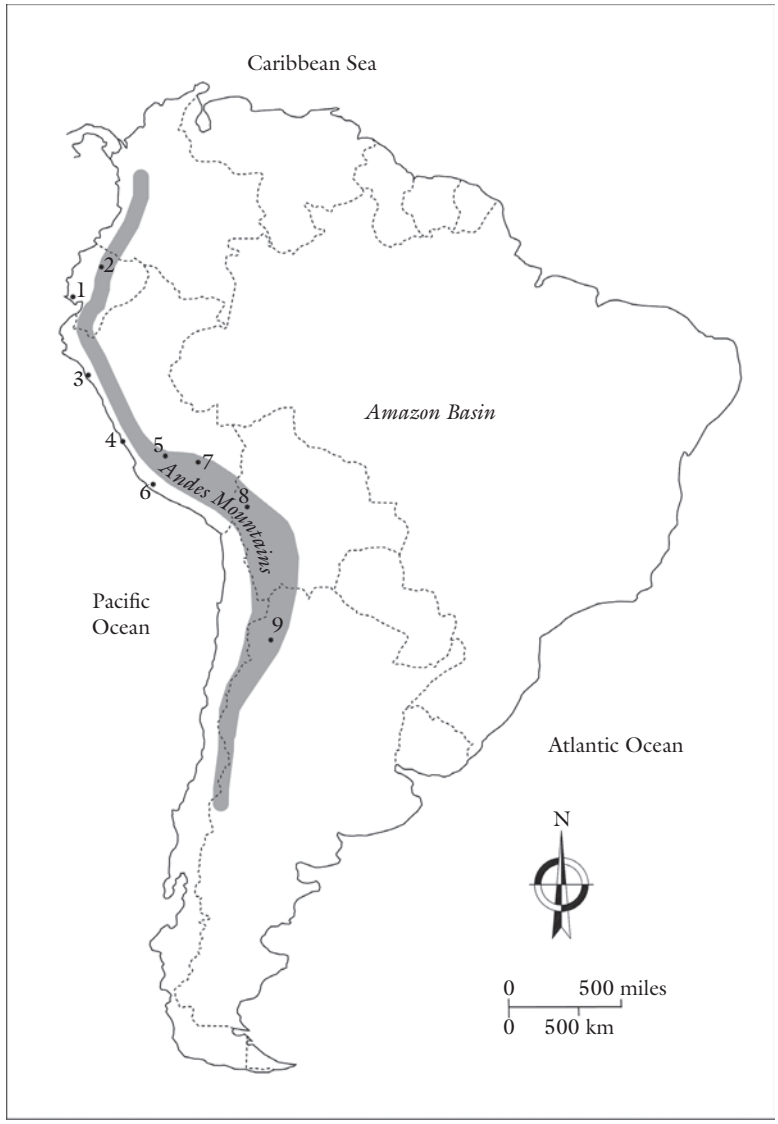
Melissa A. Vogel and
Robyn E. Cutright

Introduction

South American archaeology has long been criticized for lagging behind its other Americanist peers in terms of theoretical advances. Unfortunately, this critique applies to the engendering of South American prehistory as well although progress has certainly been made in a few important areas. Despite the slow emergence of gender as a subject of analysis in this region, the archaeological literature on gender in South America has now become extensive enough to form the basis for review articles such as this one (see Ebert and Patterson 2007; Ardren 2008). From seminal efforts to locate women's activities in the archaeological record (e.g., Hocquenghem and Lyon 1980; Rostworowski 1986; Benson 1989; Gero 1991; Hastorf 1991) to more recent discussions of sexuality, the body, and reproduction (e.g., Gero 2004; Weismantel 2004; Doyon 2006), gender-focused analyses are increasingly enriching our understanding of the South American past.

South America encompasses diverse ecological zones, including the arid Pacific coast, the deeply carved valleys and high altitude plains of the high Andes, the dense rainforests of the Amazon basin, the mangrove swamps and forested slopes of the northern Andes, and the *pampas* of the Southern Cone (Figure 28.1). Prehistoric societies in these regions faced vastly different environmental challenges and followed distinct cultural and historical trajectories from the arrival of the first human settlers by at least 12,000 B.P. until the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century C.E. One should expect gender ideologies and the lived experiences of men and women to vary greatly, not only through time but also across the broad region of South America. Given the still limited geographical scope of gender archaeology in

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1 = Santa Elena Peninsula, Ecuador: 2 = Quito, Ecuador; 3 = San Jose de Moro, Peru; 4 = Lima, Peru; 5 = Wari, Peru; 6 = Nazca, Peru; 7 = Cuzco, Peru; 8 = Tiwanaku, Bolivia: 9 = Yutopian, Argentina

Figure 28.1 Map of South America (produced by Robyn Cutright).

South America, this chapter focuses primarily on the Andean culture area, especially Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, northern Chile and Argentina, and spans over 3000 years, from the Preceramic to Inka periods (Figure 28.2). Even within this relatively limited region and time span, the archaeological evidence shows a remarkable diversity of gender systems and ideologies.

Since the 1980s, scholars working around the globe have endeavored to build an archaeology that engenders the past, incorporates feminist and queer theory, and seeks appropriate methodologies for exploring gender in prehistory (e.g., Conkey and

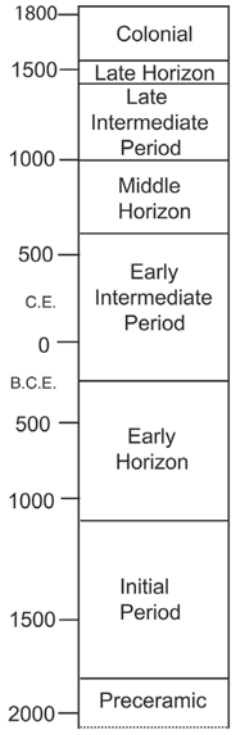


Figure 28.2 Andean chronology (produced by the authors using data from Rowe 1960 and Keatinge 1988).

Spector 1984; Gero and Conkey 1991; Wylie 1992; Nelson 2006; Joyce 2008). This scholarship emphasizes that gender and sex are two distinct but related concepts. Sex refers to the genetic and physiological distinction between males and females, and tends to be the primary focus of the bioarchaeological studies discussed below (e.g., Ceruti 2003; Gagnon 2008). However, most of the research we discuss here deals explicitly with gender, or the culturally constructed roles and identities associated with, but not rigidly determined by, sex. While multiple gender systems have been documented elsewhere in the Americas, ethnographic and ethnohistoric data on Andean South America stress dual gender categories (male/female) that are correlated with biological sex (e.g., Rostworowski 1986; Silverblatt 1987; Weismantel 2001:139–140). While these data do not exclude the possibility of third or fourth gender categories in the pre-Columbian past, there is not yet evidence to support the existence of such categories. On this basis, most of the research we discuss here assumes that gender categories were binary and complementary in the Andes. While distinct from gender archaeology, we do consider here some archaeological studies of sexuality (e.g., Voss 2008) that furnish insights into the complex and varied sexual identities and practices of men and women in ancient South America (e.g., Bergh 1993; Gero 2004; Weismantel 2004; Bourget 2006).

Many archaeologists working in the Andes have begun to incorporate gender into their reconstructions of past societies in useful ways although they may not consider their research to be "gender archaeology" or "feminist archaeology" (e.g., Aldenderfer 2006; Gagnon 2008; Prieto 2010). These categories are distinguished in that gender archaeology explicitly focuses on engendering the past (e.g., defining gender roles, statuses, and ideologies); while the broader category of feminist archaeology applies feminist thought to the entire discipline, encompassing archaeological practice, pedagogical approaches, and writing styles, as well as research topics. Others may place their work more squarely within the category of gender archaeology without necessarily adopting a theoretically informed critical perspective (e.g., Hocquenghem and Lyon 1980; Benson 1989; Arsenault 1991; Cordy-Collins 2001a; Bray 2003; Cook 2004; Cutright 2009). Only a few South American archaeologists would identify their work as contributing to feminist archaeology that explicitly challenges androcentric biases and critiques systems of inequality (e.g., Bruhns 1991; Gero 1991, 2004; Hastorf 1991; Vogel 2003).

Researchers have approached gender in South American prehistory using a wide range of methodologies and lines of evidence. Analyses of ethnohistorical sources provided important insights into past gender systems and ideologies, especially for the Inka Empire (e.g., Rostworowski 1986; Silverblatt 1987; Gose 2000; Dean 2001).[1] However, this chapter emphasizes studies that explicitly engage the archaeological record rather than those that rely primarily on ethnohistorical or ethnoarchaeological evidence. Likewise, although archaeologists have usefully addressed sex and gender in the colonial period, we have restricted our focus to prehistoric contexts. A growing body of literature explores how South American archaeology, as a part of the academy and as a field-based practice, is itself gendered (e.g., Politis 2001; Gero 2006; Williams and Alberti 2006).[2] While the ways in which modern gender relations and ideologies inform archaeological practice are important, literature that does not directly involve the archaeological record is outside the scope of this chapter. Within these limits, the present chapter aims to examine the ways in which the archaeological record has been concretely brought to bear on issues of gender in South American prehistory as comprehensively as possible in order to serve as a much-needed resource for those interested in gender in the early societies of the region.

This chapter is organized around three key areas of recent research on South American prehistory: power and status, ideology and cosmology, and production. Within each category, we consider how different kinds of evidence, such as mortuary patterns, osteological data, iconography, space and architecture, production debris, and food remains, have been used to study various aspects of gender. By organizing the literature thematically, instead of chronologically, geographically, or theoretically, we hope to show how different researchers working in different places and time periods have approached some of the central questions about gender relations in South American societies.

Gender, Power, and Status

One of the strongest themes represented in the literature on gender in South American prehistory is the study of social stratification and power, especially with

regard to elite women's roles and paths to power. Unfortunately, there has been far less investigation of non-elites. The two most common datasets utilized in these studies are iconography and mortuary data, the latter including bioarchaeological analyses. Although this research is often aimed at more recent prehistory (ca. 500–1500 C.E.), a few analyses have tackled earlier societies as well. Zeidler (2000), for example, has investigated the emergence of inequality and increasing complexity during the Valdivian Formative period (ca. 4400–3000 B.C.E.) as people settled into more permanent villages and adopted an agricultural lifestyle on the Ecuadorian coast. He used two elite female burials and ceramic figurine iconography to argue that by Phase 3 senior women were filling significant (possibly even hereditary) leadership roles, and that by Phase 8 they were also important performers of shamanistic rituals (2000:164). He also linked shamanism to the preponderance of Valdivian female figurines, which have received significant archaeological attention (e.g., Meggers 1966; Bruhns 1991; Di Capua 1994), proposing that these figurines were used in shamanic rituals surrounding lifecycle events, such as menarche, marriage, pregnancy, and childbirth or for curing serious illnesses (2000:174). After examining multiple lines of evidence, he concluded that women played a prominent role in Valdivian communities.

Iconography is another key data source for gender archaeology in South America. Ringberg (2008) examined Moche figurines at the site of Ciudad de Dios in the Moche Valley of Peru from a variety of domestic contexts, including *chicha* (maize beer) brewing areas and metalworking areas; as well as providing evidence for women's roles, these figurines conveyed messages from the Moche state aimed at women. Since *chicha* brewing was strongly associated with women, and metalworking has generally been considered a male task (Ringberg 2008:353), Ringberg argues that the presence of figurines representing Moche noblewomen in this area challenges the assumption that metalworking was an exclusively male task. She also suggests that the figurines represented roles or individuals in the Moche hierarchy, although it is uncertain whether these images were state-produced and imposed on the rural households at Ciudad de Dios, or whether they represented commoners' ideas, wishes, and aspirations. While this is an interesting hypothesis, it draws largely upon evidence of figurines in household ritual rather than their relation to women's status, and it relies on a very small sample of figurines with identifiable sex.

Gender and the state: Political power

Two culture areas clearly stand out in the literature as foci of research on gender and political power in South American prehistory: the north coast of Peru, with primary emphasis on the Moche and Lambayeque cultures; and the south-central Andes, with emphasis on the Inka Empire and, to a lesser extent, the Wari culture. The Inka studies rely heavily on ethnohistoric sources while the Moche, Lambayeque, and Wari studies draw upon iconographic and mortuary data.

Gagnon (2008) examined 751 burials from the Gallinazo site of Cerro Oreja for bioarchaeological evidence of changes in diet and gender roles during the development of the southern Moche state. Her thorough analysis of dental pathologies revealed that increased consumption of starchy crops and access to coca was divided along gender lines rather than by social status, as might have been

expected (Gagnon 2008:182). Men's diets remained unaffected by political change while women and children consumed greater quantities of starchy foods over time. Coca use, on the other hand, was more prominent among men than women, which Gagnon maintains was the result of male participation in conscripted or hired labor for the Moche elites.

Vogel (2003) synthesized the growing evidence for the rise of women to positions of power in Late Moche and Lambayeque culture during the seventh and eighth centuries C.E. These "sacred women" clearly held important roles in the religious hierarchy and therefore likely also in the political realm since religion and politics are rarely separated in archaic states. Drawing on multiple lines of evidence, including burials of high status Moche and Lambayeque women, images of supernatural and/or high status females in Moche and Lambayeque iconography, and ethnohistoric data on related cultures, she linked concepts of the divine feminine in Pre-Columbian America to roles filled by "real" women, emphasizing the intersections between cosmology, ritual, and social order as sources of power and legitimation.

An overwhelming amount of evidence for the rise of noblewomen on the north coast of Peru comes from the site of San José de Moro in the Jequetepeque Valley where the famous Moche priestess tombs (Donnan and Castillo 1992, 1994; Castillo 2005, 2006) and a number of elite Lambayeque female burials are located (Bernuy 2008; Prieto 2010).[3] Castillo's work has documented the evidence for the importance of elite Moche women, who served as priestesses and members of the highest echelon of Moche society (e.g., Castillo and Holmquist 2000; Castillo and Rengifo 2008). These women were first identified in Moche iconography as members of the ruling class who participated in the central ritual of Moche society known as the "sacrifice ceremony." However, until Donnan and Castillo (1994) excavated the wealthy tombs of elite women at San José de Moro, who were accompanied by the same dress and accoutrements as the priestesses depicted in Moche art, it was unclear whether these women had actually existed or were only characters in Moche mythology. The discovery of these tombs (along with the males found in the tombs of Sipán) confirms that the scenes in Moche art represented real people and real events. Castillo (2006) asserts that the priestess role was filled by different women over time as an integral component of the Moche sacrifice ceremony, and that therefore these women held a position of considerable power in Moche society. This figure is also represented in Moche iconography as an officiate in the Funerary Ceremony and in association with long-distance trade, an association that has been confirmed by the abundant presence of foreign ceramics in the priestess tombs (Castillo 2005:26).

Prieto (2010) and Bernuy (2008) have also based their studies on mortuary data from San José de Moro, but with an eye to the later Lambayeque occupation. In a careful examination of the Lambayeque mortuary patterns in the San José de Moro cemetery, Bernuy (2008) concludes that 22 percent of her sample consisted of high status women associated with the textile arts (based on the presence of spindle whorls and needles among their other grave goods, such as masks and metal rattles). Prieto (2010) has explored a residential compound that he believes was administered by the middle to high status Lambayeque women buried nearby; the presence of this elite residence in the San José de Moro cemetery, he argues, indicates the Lambayeque interest in controlling the site and the funerary practices enacted there, which continued to focus on the burial of powerful women (2010:241). More significantly,

he claims that these women exercised ceremonial control over the site on behalf of the Lambayeque state (2010:245).

Lambayeque iconography has also provided useful clues about the role of women in their society, as Cordy-Collins has shown in her study of "labretted ladies" (2001a). Images of women wearing labrets through their lower lips appear in both Late Moche and Lambayeque ceramic vessels and figurines, and are often shown holding a drum and manifesting a distinctive heart-shaped head suggestive of cranial deformation. A female buried at the Lambayeque site of Illimo was actually found wearing a labret, and was accompanied by a face-neck vessel of a woman wearing a labret (Cordy-Collins 2001a:254). Cordy-Collins cites archaeological and ethnohistoric data from the far north coast of Peru and southern Ecuador. The ethnohistoric sources describe labretted women who were elite members of the matriarchal Tallan culture, and who were politically and economically powerful in early colonial (and presumably also late prehistoric) times. Cordy-Collins suggests that these far northern women may have infiltrated Moche society in the eighth century and had a significant influence on Moche and Lambayeque women's access to power, as evidenced by the rise of the priestess cult and the presence of labretted women themselves in these societies (Cordy-Collins 2001a:256).

Other important work has documented the presence of the *aqlla*, or Inka "chosen women," at sites on the north coast. Burials at the Lambayeque site of Tucumé (Heyerdahl et al. 1995:92–100) and the Chimú site of Farfán (Mackey 2010) have shown that once the Inka conquered the north coast, they instituted the practice of recruiting the best weavers and *chicha* producers into state service. Mackey (2010) discovered over 20 *aqllas* elaborately buried during the Inka occupation of Farfán. On the basis of isotopic analysis, age at death, and regional hairstyles, she soundly argues that these women were indeed recruited from various parts of the empire and occupied different stages of the hierarchy at different ages, as described in ethnohistoric documents. Mackey reasons that the interment of these women of various ages in a single event strongly suggests that they were sacrificial victims, reminiscent of the *aqlla* found at Tucumé.

While the literature on highland Andean women is somewhat less prolific, they have not been entirely left out of the research on gender and power. In one of the most overtly theoretically informed analyses on gender in South American prehistory, Gero (2001) combines data on the spatial distribution of artifacts, such as *tupu* pins (worn by women) and spindle whorls (used by women), as well as evidence for feasting at the Recuay site of Queyash Alto, with an extensive analysis of gendered representations in Recuay iconography. In a carefully reasoned argument she links evidence for ritual feasting to men's and women's roles in these events, and thereby to the sociopolitical hierarchy of Recuay society. Significantly, she acknowledges the limitations of empirical data in engendering the past and the benefits of an explicitly theoretical approach, in this case coming from feminist theory (2001:48–52).

Cook and Tung (Cook 2004; Tung and Cook 2006) have speculated about the roles of elite Wari women based on burial data from the site of Conchopata, which shows evidence for increased stratification and wealth differences during Wari times. In their sample of 188 individuals, females outnumber males at a rate of almost 2:1 and are associated with numerous grave goods, such as copper *tupu* pins, *Spondylus*, turquoise, gold, and Wari blackware face-neck jars (Cook 2004:159; Tung and Cook

2006:85). Tung and Cook (2006:85) conclude that these women were wealthy intermediate elites, but hesitate to say whether their wealth resulted from their place in the social hierarchy or indicated positions of leadership within the community. Also at Conchopata, Isbell and Groleau (2010) have argued that one woman, whose burial was surrounded by smashed jars and the remnants of feasts, held high social status in her own right and was venerated as an ancestor after her death. Cook (2004) has also examined the role of gender in Wari iconography, drawing tentative parallels between Moche and Wari representations of women in sacrificial scenes (Cook 2004:163).

Despite the plethora of ethnohistoric analyses, archaeological data has only rarely been incorporated into the gendering of the Inka world. In her discussion of the mummified remains of a young woman and two children recovered from the summit of the volcano Llullaillaco, Ceruti (2003) comprehensively demonstrates that the criteria for Inka sacrificial victims given in ethnohistoric sources (youth, beauty, relatively high status, and origins in various locations of the empire) are indeed validated by bioarchaeological analyses, such as X-rays and CT scans, DNA and hair analysis, and odontological and paleopathological examinations. Moreover, she maintains that such individuals were brought into the Inka tributary system as intended sacrificial victims or as *aqllas* (chosen women), and that these women played important roles in state ceremonies and in creating or cementing political alliances (Ceruti 2003:271).

Gendered Ideologies and Cosmologies

Only a few scholars have ventured into the realm of gendered cosmologies and ideologies in prehistoric South America. As might be expected considering the subject matter, these studies rely heavily on representational art and iconography. For example, Di Capua hypothesizes that figurines from early Valdivian society (3500–2000 B.C.E.) in Ecuador represent different stages of female physical development and the rituals associated with these stages in Valdivian culture (1994:229). She argues that the figurines were used not only in fertility or curing rituals (1994:231), but that they were also used in puberty rituals (1994:241). Although her direct evidence is entirely iconographic, she draws upon ethnographic and ethnohistoric data on analogous rituals in South America to create a plausible argument.

Stothert (2003:399–401) revisits the Valdivian figurines in a more comprehensive manner as part of her larger treatise on ideology in Formative Period Ecuador. In addition to making general references to gender ideologies as expressed in competitive feasting and warfare, she suggests that Ecuadorian artists used the female body as a metaphor for cosmic creation and regeneration (2003:399). She offers a number of suggestions for their use in rituals by shamans, as teaching aids or talismans, and as objects of protection (2003:400); and she explores their symbolic meanings, suggesting that the figurines represented mythic ancestors or female spirit helpers that were the source for shamanic power, and that they were indicative of Valdivian women's agency and active participation in ritual.

Because the Moche left behind a phenomenal iconographic record, the Moche art of Peru's north coast has been extensively examined for gendered meanings and roles; this is one of the only cultures in South America for whom studies of sexuality have been conducted. The earliest attempts to "find women" in Moche art can be credited

to the iconographic studies of Hocquenghem, Lyon, and Golte (Hocquenghem 1977, 1986, 1987; Lyon 1978; Hocquenhem and Lyon 1980; Hocquenghem and Golte 1987). The pioneering work on this topic cleared the way for later interpretations of women in Moche religions and mythology, such as the priestesses described above (Donnan and Castillo 1992, 1994; Castillo 2001, 2005, 2006). In these early efforts, the focus of research was on identifying gendered characteristics in Andean art and linking these representations to Andean cosmology (Lyon 1978). While Hocquenghem's work is restricted to Moche iconography, Lyon has identified female supernaturals in the Chavín, Yaya-Mama, Cupisnique, Paracas, Pukara, Nasca, Recuay, Nievería, and Wari styles. Her study documents the continued presence and importance of female deities in Andean religions and cosmologies for at least 3000 years and remains a classic resource for this topic.

Benson's (1985, 1989) description of women in Mochica art builds on Hocquenghem and Lyon's (1980) interpretations, as well as early work by Donnan and McClelland (1979), by cataloguing the ways in which women were portrayed (i.e., the activities they were shown to be engaged in and the inferred concepts associated with these activities, such as fertility and sacrifice). Along similar lines, Arsenault (1991) examines a sample of 247 images in a contextual analysis of gender roles and relations in Moche society. In a somewhat contradictory fashion, he assumes that Moche ideology was male-dominated and that these representations were manipulated by masculine power, while simultaneously arguing that some women were able to "affirm their own symbolic interests" and that women's status was not necessarily inferior to that of men (1991:314). He concludes that in general Moche men were more successful in their power strategies but notes the emergence of female shamans and priestesses in later Moche depictions (1991:324).

Cordy-Collins' series of studies on females in Moche ceramics (1977, 2001a, 2001b) notes the proliferation of the priestess figure in late Moche art (see also her study of the *Capullanas*, cited above). Her attention to women overlaps with her long-term study of *Spondylus* shells in which she links the spiny oyster shells to priestesses, human blood sacrifices, and the cult of the Moon, drawing analogies to the Maya use of the *Spondylus* shell as a cup for holding blood (Cordy-Collins 2001b:47). She also contributes to the relatively sparse information on females in Ecuadorian art in an examination of Earth Mother/Earth Monster symbolism in Manteño art, in which images of splayed female figures carved on stone slabs in the Manteño style are compared to similar images found in Aztec art thought to represent the Earth Mother and the Earth Monster (Cordy-Collins 1982:205–206). On the basis of ethnohistoric data concerning Ecuadorian merchants and long-distance trade, she convincingly argues that this Ecuadorian deity had a Mesoamerican origin (1982:227).

Mackey (2000; see also Moore and Mackey 2008) also documents the importance of a goddess in the very limited supernatural pantheon of Chimú Imperial iconography, which includes four main figures: the Staff God; the Plumed Headdress God; the Goddess; and the Moon Animal. Based on depictions in Chimú ceramics, Mackey maintains that this goddess was associated with weaving, children, the sea, and lunar imagery (Moore and Mackey 2008:800), and was probably a continuation of the Moche supernatural female identified by Cordy-Collins (1977). The fact that the figurines of this goddess have been found in domestic refuse indicates to Mackey her

status as a popular deity among the common people, and one that was also recognized by the state.

Although sexuality is almost never addressed in South American archaeology, several authors have focused their attention on the so-called "erotic pots" of the Moche, which are unusual for their graphic depiction of sexual acts (see Bourget 2006:66–73; Voss 2008:322).[4] Most authors maintain that vaginal penetration is rarely depicted in Moche art, and therefore that reproductive sex was not portrayed (e.g., Benson 1972; Gero 2004; Bourget 2006). However, Weismantel (2004) uses ethnographic data to argue that in some cultures many sexual acts that involve an exchange of fluids (such as anal and oral sex) are also considered reproductive. Taking a deliberately non-Western perspective on what constitutes "reproduction," she proposes an intriguing explanation – that sexually explicit Moche art served as a means to expand reproductive time and to emphasize intergenerational transfers of fluids as connections to the ancestors (2004:502). In contrast, Bourget (2006:177) links Moche illustrations of sexual acts to a principle of "ritual inversion" that characterized their funerary and sacrificial rituals. In an extensive and complex analysis of Moche ceramic art, he suggests that through these sexual and violent acts, sacrificial victims became facilitators of ancestral involvement in fertility.

Bergh's fascinating exploration of Moche phallic-spouted vessels uses iconographic and ethnohistoric data to demonstrate the association of the phallus with mountain peaks and semen with foamy, flowing water (such as that found in irrigation canals), as well as with *chicha* (1993:82–84). She links imagery and mythology to argue that the symbolism behind these phallic vessels may refer to the insemination of people and the earth, to generative and regenerative powers, and perhaps even to ancestral origins; she suggests further that representations of sodomy were symbolic of the cycles of death and life, decay and regeneration (1993:84–86).

Gero (2004) has noted that in addition to the Moche erotic pots, there are about two dozen Recuay vessels showing images of sexual intercourse. This is perhaps not surprising given that the two cultures were largely contemporaneous and geographically in close proximity. She maintains that the individuals performing these acts represent high status members of Recuay society engaging in sex as a public ritual event (2004:11) and argues that Recuay "sex pots" emphasize interdependence and complementarity while Moche depictions emphasize hierarchy and the male orgasm (2004:20). While the reasons for this difference in interpretation are not fully convincing, her suggestion that sex was used as a metaphor for power relations in both cultures seems quite plausible.

Gero (1999, 2001) has also identified characteristic features for masculine and feminine personages and their associated objects and themes in Recuay ceramics, and has interpreted these associations with respect to Recuay gender roles, social organization, and power structures. She suggests that the absence of non-copulating paired male–female representations (along with the abundant presence of solo-male and solo-female representations) in Recuay art indicates that "rights and authority were held individually, being passed down hereditarily" (1999:38). She concludes that women had access to power in Recuay society, especially in terms of divine intervention and the reproduction of lineages (1999:35).

Only a few studies have investigated gender on the south coast of Peru. In addition to describing some identifying sex characteristics and gendered associations in Nasca

art, Silverman and Proulx (2002) have briefly explored gender ideology in Nasca culture (ca. 1–750 C.E.). They argue that the prevalence of women in late Nasca iconography (as compared to their near absence in earlier periods), and the juxtaposition of female/fertility ideology with male/aggression imagery, represent fertility concerns stemming from long-term drought (2002:255).

In an iconographic analysis of a more limited scope, Doyon has investigated a repeated motif from Nasca art, the "Jagged-Staff Demon," an anthropomorphic figure characterized by a "scroll mask" and often associated with a "jagged staff" (2006:352–353). She believes that the scrolls of the mask represent pooling liquid such as water or blood, while the jagged staff refers to flowing liquids such as waterfalls and cascades. The gendered aspect of her interpretation comes with the link to Andean folklore, in which pooling liquids are considered female and flowing liquids male. These concepts are linked in the "Jagged-Staff Demon" through the principle of gender complementarity so central to Andean cosmology, and to the concept of a living landscape (2006:370).

Chavez (2002) provides a detailed iconographic analysis of another female/male pairing in Pucara art, the "camelid woman" and "feline man." He believes that these figures represent supernaturals from Nasca mythology, and that the female personage is associated with life-giving properties and imagery, such as an alpaca, while the male is associated with life-taking properties and imagery, such as a severed head. Although he identifies an economic aspect with the female and a political aspect with the male, both personages are considered to be images of power (2002:61).

Finally, Niles' (1988) study of the temples atop the dual peaks of the Amantaní, an island in Lake Titicaca, also emphasizes gender complementarity. Persuasively arguing that these shrines for Pachamama (Earth Mother) and Pachatata (Earth Father) represent paired female–male deities, or Janus-like deities representing both genders, she links patterns in religious architecture, such as circular and square constructions, to gender dualism.

Gendered Relations of Production

In the Andes, the sexual division of labor appears to have been shaped in part by strong ideologies of gender complementarity (Silverblatt 1987). Ethnohistoric accounts from the Inka Empire indicate that the household was the basic economic unit, with husband and wife performing different tasks to meet the household's collective obligations (Murra 1982; Silverblatt 1987). Mortuary patterns, iconography, and ethnohistoric accounts suggest that some forms of production, such as weaving and metallurgy, were strongly gendered both conceptually and in the daily division of labor. In addition to sex and age, however, production was also organized by social class, economic specialization, ethnic affiliation, and ecological zone (Rostworowski 1986). In this section we review several approaches to the sexual division of labor and gendered relations of production in South American prehistory.

Bioarchaeological evidence for the sexual division of labor

One of the most concrete records of male and female participation in different kinds of production lies in their bones.[5] Standen et al. (1997) examined a large sample of

crania from northern Chile for the presence of external auditory exostosis (EAE), or osseous proliferations in the auditory canal usually linked to regular exposure to cold water. They found that males had a significantly higher rate of EAE than females in both Archaic and late periods. For the intervening Formative period, however, they found no significant sex differences in EAE rates, which could mean that males and females were both involved in collecting marine resources during this period, and thus that sexual division of labor changed through time (Standen et al. 1997:126). Even in the earliest and latest periods, 12–20 percent of females had EAE, suggesting that task differentiation was not rigidly defined according to gender.

Analysis of skeletal remains from the Preceramic site of Paloma on the Peruvian coast points to an increasing similarity between male and female activity patterns through time. This convergence was probably related to increased specialization in marine resource exploitation (Benfer 1990:310). Only male individuals, however, exhibited bony growths consistent with EAE, suggesting that males did most of the deep water marine foraging at Paloma (Benfer 1990:305) and that this subsistence activity was more rigidly gendered at Paloma than in the northern Chilean communities discussed above. Quilter's (1989) analysis of the grave goods from Paloma burials suggests a weak association between males and hunting or small processing tools, and between females and grinding stones, providing further evidence for a gendered division of food production tasks in Paloma society. Bioarchaeological studies such as these shed light on male and female lives and labor in prehispanic South America, even if they do not always adopt gender as a key framework of analysis.

Food production and preparation

The ways in which food was procured, processed, prepared, and consumed are highly illustrative of prehispanic gender systems in South America. In a study linking gender relations and food procurement, Aldenderfer (2006) explores the domestication of camelids and the transition to herding in Asana in the southern Peruvian highlands. Using optimal foraging models, he suggests that in the Qhuna phase (4600 B.P.) women gathered chenopods (goosefoot) and men hunted guanaco within the foraging radius around the sedentary community of Asana. During the subsequent, Awati phase (4400 B.P.) the subsistence strategy shifted to focus on camelid herding. According to general models of behavioral ecology, women's provisioning is generally focused on feeding families, while men tend to focus their provisioning efforts on status display; consequently, Aldenderfer argues that the shift to camelid herding can best be understood as a strategy used by men to compete for status. He suggests that the shift to herding, and the consequent changes in labor and provisioning, may have increased men's status while decreasing women's status (2006:193). However, there is little archaeological evidence from Asana that demonstrates changes in men's and women's status; Aldenderfer relies instead on cross-cultural generalizations of women's lower status in pastoralist societies and estimates of the energetic returns of different foraging strategies to link gender relations and changing subsistence strategies in the deep Andean past.

Hastorf (1991) traces changes in women's status and labor allocations during a much later period: the Inka conquest of the Mantaro Valley in the central Andes. Based on the spatial patterning of botanical remains in Wanka II (pre-Inka) and

Wanka III (post-Inka conquest) households, she suggests that maize processing, traditionally performed by women, became more intensive and more spatially restricted after the Inka conquest. At the same time, stable isotope analysis of a limited sample of burials shows that males began to consume relatively more maize as compared to females during the Wanka III period. On the basis of this evidence, Hastorf concludes that after the Inka conquest, women lost access to state-sponsored political feasts where maize beer was consumed, even as their household labor intensified.

Along similar lines, Robin Goldstein (2008) proposes that family economic strategies may have changed under Inka rule in the Mantaro Valley, and that families may have met higher tribute demands by frequently forming large, multi-structure households with shared grinding stones. Multi-structure, multi-generational households that share food preparation and production tasks are consistent with ethnographically described households in the Andes (Weismantel 1988). In Goldstein's view, the distribution of hearths and grinding stones across Wanka sites reflects not the normative Andean household, composed of a husband and wife who performed distinct but complementary tasks, but rather a collaborative model in which individuals from multiple households worked together to meet their families' needs (2008:40).

A number of archaeologists have recently explored the social organization of *chicha* preparation (Jennings 2005; Hayashida 2008; Jennings and Chatfield 2009). According to Jennings (2005:244), women were primarily responsible for *chicha* preparation for household use, and for communal labor or religious feasts. While not explicitly focused on gender dynamics, Jennings' ethnoarchaeological analysis suggests that *chicha* preparation for feasts would have required the periodic, large-scale mobilization of women's labor. The Inka state had access to the labor of cloistered *aqllakuna*, but other sponsors of political and religious feasts in the Andes would have had to draw upon a wide network of kin ties and reciprocal obligations to produce *chicha*.

Women's central role in *chicha* production often seems to have contrasted sharply with their access to the power and status garnered by hosting feasts. Gero (1992) argues that the production of food and drink for feasts at the Early Intermediate Period site of Queyash Alto in the central Andes was intimately linked to competition for status and power between kin groups, or *ayllus*. Women's traditional labor, in the form of preparing and serving food and *chicha*, would have contributed to their *ayllu*'s political prominence. According to Gero, political centralization increased and kinship groups became less powerful over the course of the Early Intermediate Period. Although women's labor in preparing and serving feasts continued, their access to the political power generated by feasting decreased. Anita Cook (2004) also suggests that elite women may have been involved in producing *chicha*, which was served in the large Wari vessels found at the site of Conchopata as part of politically charged ritual feasts, but she does not discuss the nature of women's access to the political power and prestige generated by hosting and participating in these feasts.

Paul Goldstein (2003) has argued that communal feasting rituals were a central element of the appeal of Tiwanaku cultural and ritual practices, which spread through much of Bolivia and southern Peru during the Middle Horizon. Tiwanaku feasting practices, however, may have excluded women to a greater extent than the Formative period practices they replaced. In Cochabamba, Bolivia, drinking vessels were a common grave good for both men and women in earlier phases, but after Tiwanaku

feasting practices were adopted, drinking vessels were not placed in women's burials (Anderson 2009). Through time, drinking rituals seem to have become more exclusively associated with social competition among men at Cochabamba, and very likely at other Tiwanaku sites as well (Anderson 2009:187).

As in Tiwanaku society, feasts were an important element of Inka statecraft. *Chicha* and food were supplied to festive labor parties working on Inka state projects, and provincial elites were hosted at feasts that emphasized Inka hospitality and generosity (Bray 2003). Bray's analysis of Inka ceramics as culinary equipment reveals that Inka provincial assemblages emphasized vessels for distributing *chicha*, cooking maize-based stews, and eating meat. These valued products of women's labor were distributed at state-sponsored feasts and served to support and emphasize Inka dominance. Thus Inka dominance and control were expressed not only through military conquest, but through "female-controlled domains of cooking, serving, and feasting" (2003:133). In this case, the Inka state not only drew on women's labor to host feasts, but communicated its authority through the idiom of feminine hospitality.

Craft production

Textiles played a central role in the economy and politics of the Inka Empire. Fine cloth was given as gifts to cement alliances, used as offerings, and accompanied elite burials (Boytner 2004). Cloth and clothing also signaled gender identity in some parts of the Andes. Clark (1993) has identified distinct male and female dress in Late Intermediate Period Estuquiña burials in the Moquegua Valley of Peru. She has also identified two individuals wearing clothing styles associated with the opposite sex, suggesting a more complex relationship between gender identity and biological sex in this case than in many other Andean cases reviewed here.

Costin (1993, 1996, 1998, 2004, and this volume) demonstrates that the social and gender identities of weavers were inextricably linked to the form, value, and meaning of the cloth they produced. On the basis of ethnohistorical descriptions, burial assemblages, and iconography, Costin (1996, 1998) suggests that weaving and spinning had a deep ideological association with femininity in Andean societies, although in practice men as well as women may have participated in spinning and weaving certain kinds of cloth (Boytner 2004:143). This ideological connection placed practical demands on the labor of elite and commoner women alike throughout the empire. Commoner women routinely produced plain-weave textiles for household use, and in order to meet the tribute obligations of the state. According to Costin (1996:125), women's textile production in the Mantaro Valley increased dramatically after the Inka conquest. In addition, the Inka used male specialists (*qompikamayoq*) and elite female "chosen women" (*aqlla*) sequestered in state installations to brew beer and weave fine cloth for the state.

Clark (1993) found tools associated with spinning and weaving in burials of males, females, adolescents, and children. Her analysis shows that men and women are likely to have employed different methods for producing yarn, which was used for different purposes. Women spun with an initial Z-twist and wove cloth on looms, while men spun in the opposite direction, with an initial S-twist, and used non-loom methods like braiding and twisting (1993:789–791). In this case, both men and women produced textiles but used different methods for different purposes.

Among the coastal Moche, some cloth was produced by women working in specialized workshops. One image of textile production from a Moche ceramic shows several women sitting in a roofed space weaving on backstrap looms while male figures supervise (Donnan and McClelland 1999:126). At the urban Moche site of Pampa Grande, Shimada (1994) has identified an architectural space as a likely textile production workshop like the one shown in the iconography. Moche men may have produced other craft items, such as metal objects, in other specialized workshop contexts at the site, since Moche depictions of metalworking show exclusively male metalworkers (Costin 2004:198), and other cross-cultural and ethnohistoric evidence similarly suggests that metallurgy was largely men's work in the Andes (Costin 1996:122; but see Bruhns and Stothert 1999:141–143 and Ringberg 2008:353).

Gero (1991) adopts an explicitly gendered approach to lithic production, a task frequently associated with men by archaeologists, by exploring how the lithic assemblage at Huaricoto in the north central Andes changed from the Preceramic period to the Early Intermediate Period-Middle Horizon transition in terms of the raw materials, degree of tool preparation, and context of tool production and use. She argues that expedient tools, generally made of local raw materials, increased in proportion relative to bifaces and other formal tools like projectile points through time, while time spent on preparation and retouch decreased. On the assumption that women tended to produce expedient tools rather than formal bifacial tools, Gero interprets the increase in expedient tool production as evidence that women became more involved in tool manufacture during later periods of occupation at the site (1991:185). She also suggests that as their participation in formal stone tool production decreased, men would have become more involved in trade and other activities related to wider sociopolitical networks as part of the process of state-building in the Early Intermediate Period of the central Andes.

The organization of household production

While lithic analysis has generated some insights into gender systems in the Formative Period Andes, Gero (1991:186) correctly points out that reconstructing gendered relations of production in the past requires investigating the convergence of multiple lines of evidence. Several fruitful approaches to exploring gendered relations of production in the Andes have focused not on one task, but rather on the interplay and overlap of multiple tasks within the household. Gero and Scattolin (2002) provided a good example of this approach in their work at the Formative Period site of Yutopian in northwest Argentina. In this article they focus on "disentangling the various ways that gender organizes social life" (2002:162), using the spatial distribution of hearths and *metates* (grinding stones) in three structures to argue that contrasting sets of gender arrangements existed at the site. The first dataset they discuss is a set of clustered grinding stones in one structure. Because they were found on the same occupation floor and were morphologically similar, Gero and Scattolin argue that the stones could have been used simultaneously and communally by a group of women. Although the archaeological record does not explicitly support this hypothesis, the authors speculate that relationships between the women grinding maize would have been diverse and characterized by variations in age, status, and power.

Gero and Scattolin (2002) also contrast food processing at grinding stones with another context of domestic production – the hearth – in two different structures. Both hearths contained carbonized food remains and were probably used to cook household meals. One, however, also contained metal production debris, suggesting that some households, but not others, engaged in metallurgy. Within specialist households metallurgical and culinary tasks overlapped spatially. At Yutopian, then, some forms of domestic production were spatially segregated by gender at the intra-household level, but were presumably performed by members of all households. Other forms of production shared space and personnel within the household but were differentiated among households. In this view, gender is one of several categories of social identity that act to structure household-level production.

Another way to look at the overlap of multiple productive activities is to compare men's and women's scheduling priorities. Cutright (2009, 2010) has explored household responses to Chimú imperialism at the rural village of Pedregal in the Jequetepeque Valley of northern Peru. She found that production and processing of maize and cotton increased through time, while focus on wild plants and fruits decreased. This implies a shift in the scheduling of women's activities as a result of the greater time needed to process maize and cotton than for fruits and wild plants. At the same time, household consumption of marine resources declined in favor of more domesticated camelids and guinea pigs. This shift might have entailed a reallocation of male labor from marine resource procurement to the tending of fields and animals. Cutright found no evidence for changes in ceramic, lithic, or textile production, suggesting that these activities were characterized by continuity in the face of changing demands on men's and women's labor. Focusing on the interplay of different tasks, then, is one fruitful way to integrate studies of production and gender relations.

Conclusions

Over the last several decades, our understanding of how gender intersected with power, status, ideology, cosmology, and production in ancient South American societies has been greatly enriched by the studies cited above, which underscore the diversity of gender roles, statuses, ideologies, and representations in prehistoric South America. However, as we have shown, most gender archaeology to date has focused on the Andean region, and more sustained attention to other regions, such as the Amazon Basin and the Southern Cone, is needed to better document the full range of gendered lives in South American prehistory. There is also a distinct lack of attempts to engender the archaeology of earlier and less complex societies, an arena that could prove especially fruitful for future investigations.

Within the diversity of gendered behavior that has been revealed thus far, it is possible to identify some common threads. In many cases, burials and iconography have drawn attention to women's roles as ritual practitioners; this seems to have given women access to religious power and in some cases political power as religion and politics were closely intertwined in many past societies (e.g., Zeidler 2000; Cordy-Collins 2001a, 2001b; Vogel 2003). By the same token, a number of studies have determined that as political power became more centralized and institutionalized, women's participation in politics declined relative to that of men (e.g., Hastorf 1991;

Gero 1992; Gagnon 2008; Anderson 2009). Gender ideologies in many parts of the Andes emphasized women's and men's fertility, the generative and regenerative powers of sex, and a complementary relationship between men and women (e.g., Niles 1988; Bergh 1993; Stothert 2003; Gero 2004; Weismantel 2004). While productive tasks, such as spinning, weaving, brewing, and metalworking were strongly gendered, at least ideologically (Costin 1998, 2004), archaeological evidence suggests that these strong divisions may have broken down in practice (e.g., Clark 1993; Standen et al. 1997; Gero and Scattolin 2002; Ringberg 2008).

Research on gender in South American prehistory has thus far been concerned with locating women in the archaeological record, gauging women's and men's relative status and access to political power, and identifying the gendered division of labor; recently, however, more attention has been paid to gender ideologies and cosmologies and to understanding how gender shaped household maintenance strategies. Most gender archaeology in the Andes has focused on women's lives and identities, leaving men and masculinity undertheorized, and has rarely considered the possibility of multiple, non-binary gender systems. As in other regions, archaeologies of sexuality and queer studies have yet to enter the mainstream in South American archaeology, and direct engagement with feminist theory remains relatively rare. In fact, many recent studies cited here (e.g., Jennings 2005; Aldenderfer 2006; Prieto 2010) include gender as part of a broader range of social identities that structured past social dynamics and do not necessarily situate themselves within the field of gender archaeology or explicitly draw on gender or feminist theory. Yet this work is helping to generate a more subtle and holistic view of gender as an axis of social identity that shaped political strategies, systems of belief and ritual practice, and daily lives, without focusing merely on "finding women" in the archaeological record. In some senses, we might interpret this "normalizing" of gender research within the culture of South American archaeology as an indication that gender archaeology is no longer confined to the margins, to be pursued by a few interested specialists, but has become part of the wider discourse on the prehistory of South America.

NOTES

1 Three scholars in particular have made important contributions in the ethnohistoric literature: Maria Rostworowski (1986), Irene Silverblatt (1978, 1987), and Carolyn Dean (2001). See also Peter Gose's (2000) critique of Silverblatt.

2 Williams and Alberti's (2006) collection of essays includes relevant contributions on material culture (Alberti and Williams 2006) and a critique of binary gender systems (Gero 2006). While most of the 2006 essays do not explicitly address archaeological data, this collection of theoretical perspectives suggests that gendered approaches to archaeology in South America are broadening in new directions.

3 In addition, the well-preserved and elaborate burial of the so-called "Señora de Cao" discovered at the site of El Brujo in the Chicama Valley showed that women were already playing powerful roles in Early Moche society (Mujica et al. 2007).

4 But see Horswell (2005) for an in-depth ethnohistorical investigation of "queer tropes" in Andean sexuality.

5 The bioarchaeological studies discussed in this section represent a small sample of a wider literature that does not explicitly adopt a gendered approach, yet has yielded important insights into the organization of men's and women's lives and activities in prehistory.

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CHAPTER 29

Gender and Archaeology in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the South Pacific

Cherrie De Leiuen

This chapter examines the emergence and evolution of gender archaeology in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the South Pacific (see Figure 29.1). The impacts and manifestations in terms of disciplinary culture, as well as the growth and legitimization of gender as a research area, are explored. A strong processual framework characterizes much of the prehistory of Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the South Pacific and has shaped the development and nature of a gender archaeology in this region; so too has the legacy of European colonization. Despite the ill fit of gender archaeology into this framework, there has been important research by many individual archaeologists, culminating in conferences and publications on gender in the 1990s (see du Cros and Smith 1993; Balme and Beck 1995). One notable contribution to gender archaeology in Australia in recent years is a paper by Jane Balme and Sandra Bowdler on the role of gender in the human colonization of Australia (Balme and Bowdler 2006, discussed below). Theories on colonization in this region are distinctive following the argument put forth by Davidson and Noble (1992) that the maritime colonization of Australia had to have been linked to people with language and therefore constitutes some of the earliest evidence of modern human behavior.

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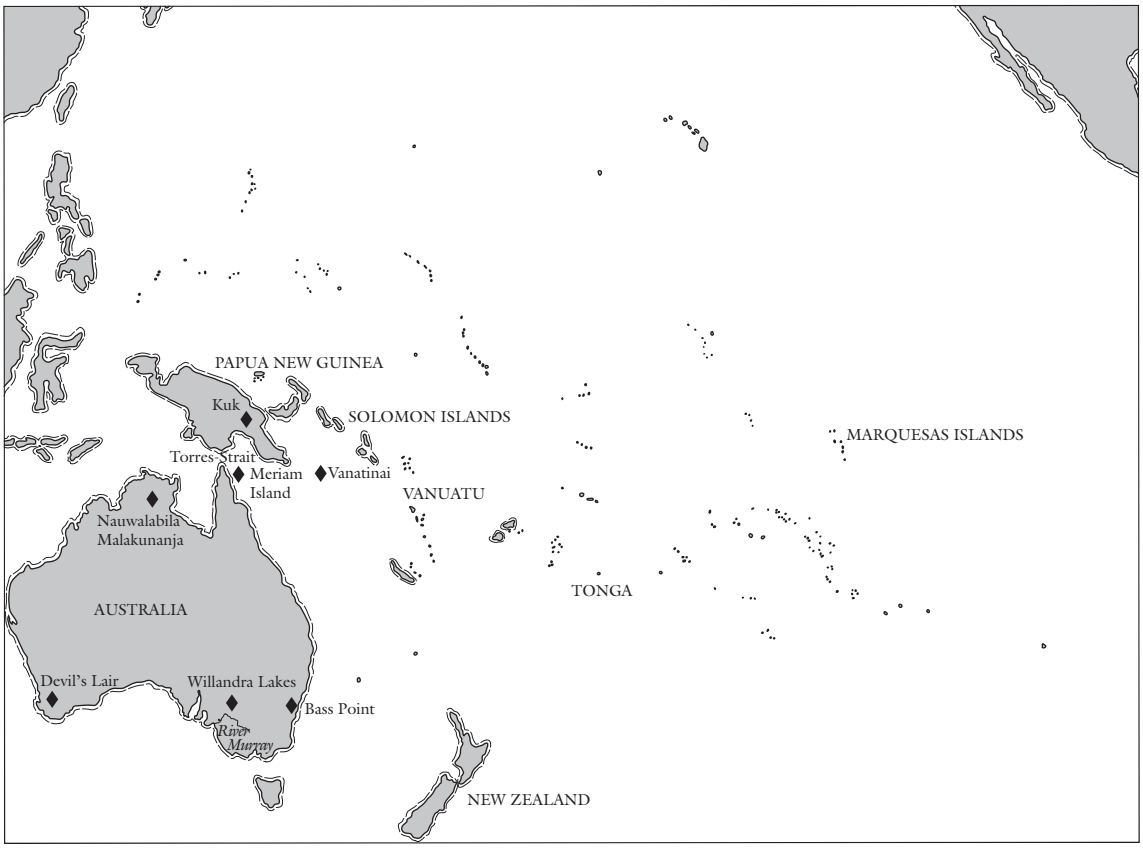


Figure 29.1 Map of Oceania showing locations of principal sites and regions referred to in the text (produced by the author).

A Background to the Region

In the Pleistocene the land mass known as Sahul was made up of Australia (including Tasmania), Papua New Guinea, and some of the islands of the South Pacific. The evidence for human colonization for Sahul is at least 40 ka[1] (see Murray 1998), but there is also confidence in the dates of 50–60 ka for sites such as Nauwalabila I, Malakunanja II, Devil's Lair, and Lake Mungo (see Gillespie 2002; Allen and O'Connell 2003; O'Connell and Allen 2004; Veth et al. 2009) and thus the setting for 80 percent of human occupation in this region. With rising sea levels and significant environmental change, the Holocene histories of Australia and the Pacific islands diverged and differ significantly in our imaginations. Landscapes of distinction emerge. Australia is the world's largest island and the driest, flattest continent while Papua New Guinea is mountainous and dense with tropical rainforest. Aotearoa, or New Zealand, is cooler, marked by volcanism, and the islands of the Pacific, Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia are primarily atolls and coral reefs. Results from mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) do not support a close relationship between Indigenous Australian and Papua New Guinean populations but instead suggest multiple migrations in the peopling of Sahul (Redd and Stoneking 1999:808).[2]

Archaeology has demonstrated that Indigenous Australians have occupied the mainland and islands of Australia for at least 45,000 years (O'Connell and Allen 2004:849). At the time of contact with the British there were 270 Indigenous languages, with up to 600 viable dialect groups indicative of the great diversity of nations. There are extensive differences in the social organization and cultural practices of Indigenous peoples across Australia. Indeed, some of the social systems used by Indigenous groups are among the most intellectually complex and refined in the world (see Hiatt 1996). Archaeologically we now have knowledge of what were probably the earliest planned sea voyages, the earliest examples of deliberate human burials as part of ceremony, the earliest rock art and personal adornment, and the earliest boomerangs, ground edge axes, and grindstones (see Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999). For thousands of years these cultures had been influencing each other, developing responses to a range of climates and environments, and remaining persistently different from New Guinea by not adopting agriculture.

A common fallacy held by the British at contact, and one that still persists, is that Indigenous Australians were a unified, homogeneous group of people. Since the time of the invasion of Australia by the British in 1788, many of the interpretations and representations of our region's Indigenous cultures have been produced, controlled, and discussed by non-Indigenous people. These interpretations have often been biased, Eurocentric, androcentric, and for Indigenous people disempowering. At contact, there was little or no two-way communication about social systems, language, beliefs, and laws, but a one way, prevailing sense of cultural superiority. The classification of inhabitants into a single category ("Aboriginal") reinforced colonial notions of "primitive" and symbolically reinforced the loss of identities and diversity.

This is also the case in Papua New Guinea where human remains have been found dating to about 50,000 years ago, over 700 languages were spoken, and sites such as Kuk and Madol furnish some of the earliest evidence of horticulture in the world at 7000 B.P. (see Denham 2006). In New Ireland there is evidence at 35 ka for the exploitation of

coastal marine resources. Across Melanesia over 1100 languages are spoken. These cultures have often been labeled as "primitive" – a legacy of the first explorers who were filled with ideas from the time of the Enlightenment. Throughout the region known as Oceania, there were no pyramids, palaces, or cities against which Europeans could measure cultural complexity and wealth (i.e., their own status symbols). It is into this climate that archaeology in Australia and the region emerged, as ultimately did archaeologies of gender.

The Development of Gender Archaeology

The legacy of British colonialism, combined with a minority Indigenous population and changing relationships between the two groups, institutional structures, and key individuals, has affected the development of professional practice of archaeology in Australia and the region. This situation has also impacted the nature of research and accounts in part for the lack of research specifically directed toward gender archaeology.

In Australia the 1960s and 1970s are often referred to as the "golden age" of archaeology (see Colley 2002). Major revelations for researchers at this time were the sites of Lake Mungo and Willandra Lakes. Assisted by radiocarbon dating, the discovery that the occupation of these sites occurred at ca. 32 ka was a breakthrough and legitimized an Australian research agenda. Previously it was possible to study anthropology and the Classics, but it was during this period that Australian archaeology was first taught at Australian universities, questions of the continent were asked, and theory and method were modified for Australian conditions. Fieldwork was paramount; explanations of the human past were framed in terms of environment and technology; and cultural materialism, with a deterministic emphasis, was the dominant theoretical framework (Huchet 1991:44). A strong processual framework still characterizes the archaeology of this region, as do questions of the antiquity of occupation, and patterns of settlement and subsistence.

Central to a discussion of the development of gender archaeology in the region is the highly gendered nature of archaeology's disciplinary culture. This has been characterized as distinctively male (see Moser 1995, 2007; Smith and du Cros 1995; Smith and O'Donnell 2006) and is worth elaborating upon here. As a reflection of the broader society's vision, Australia, New Guinea, and the remote Pacific islands were often perceived as a man's domain, a frontier, and in Australia this reinforced the mythology of the white pioneer in the bush, with accompanying attitudes of "mateship" and an anti-establishment ethos. As Stephanie Moser has stated for Australia, "With its connections to colonialism and penetration of the frontier, fieldwork has been instrumental in attributing archaeology a masculine status" (2007:251). Before the 1990s, women working in archaeology in Australia were also in one of the most segregated workforces in the industrialized world (Smith and du Cros 1995:13). According to du Cros and Smith (1993), this segregation was reflected in the divide between the academy and Cultural Resource Management (CRM): most women archaeologists worked in CRM and very few had senior research or academic positions; this is still the case.

The first Women in Archaeology conference was held in Australia in 1991 and was a turning point for gender as a field of study in Australian archaeology. It reflected

both a broader change in Australian society about gender roles, national identity, and workplace rights, as well as a "wind change" in archaeology. While research on gender had been undertaken prior to this point, the climate of the discipline had not allowed gender to become a major research area; nor had it permitted a feminist platform to penetrate wider research interests. For example, Phyllis Kaberry recorded women painting rock art and their roles in economic systems and information exchange in Northern Australia (1939); Susan Bulmer began excavating in the 1950s and made highly significant contributions to archaeology in Papua New Guinea (1969); Sandra Bowdler interpreted changes through time in deposits of a midden site at Bass Point, Australia, in terms of gender relations (1976); and Isabel McBryde made an enormous contribution to the professionalization of the discipline in Australia (1986, 1996).[3]

The significance of the 1991 Women in Archaeology conference cannot be understated with respect to research on gender in Australia. It was the trigger for formal discussions of gender, legitimizing research interests and groups. Although archaeologists such as Jane Balme, Wendy Beck, Lesley Head, Josephine McDonald, and Claire Smith had previously contributed exceptional work on gender, it was at this conference that the number of women archaeologists with an interest in gender and women's issues reached a critical mass. It was also a significant opportunity for networking in a less hostile environment than that typified at many other conference forums in Australia. As discussed by Smith and O'Donnell (2006), attendance at the conference was perceived as a professional risk. The conference organizers stated subsequently, "Both the negative written and verbal criticisms we have received implies that we have ignored a hierarchy. It is this implication that we find most disturbing. It is this notion of 'hierarchy' that indicates how much we are still constrained as feminists by the patriarchal structures in which we operate" (Smith and du Cros 1995:19).

A survey of participants was undertaken at this conference, the results of which were analyzed by Laurajane Smith and Hilary du Cros in an illuminating article published after the second Women in Archaeology conference in 1995 (Smith and du Cros 1995). One of the key issues to emerge included the invisibility of published work on feminist or gender archaeology, even though some gender research was occurring: 64 percent of respondents stated they had undertaken some research on gendered questions (Smith and du Cros 1995:16). This was despite an acknowledgment of work by women such as Meehan (1977, 1982), Bowdler (1981), Sullivan (1985), McBryde (1986), Flood (1995), and others. What is more disconcerting is that workplace issues (or perhaps a recognition of inequity in the workplace) rather than a theoretical standpoint or familiarly with feminist literature prompted attendance at the conference, and thus served as the basis for the emergence of gender archaeology in Australia and the Pacific. As Smith and du Cros (1995) note, women, like Indigenous people, felt adversely affected by the manifestations of archaeological theories in Australia and across the Pacific. The centrality of the male and assumptions about the divisions of labor, both in the past and in the contemporary workplace, were, and still are, erroneous and prejudicial.

It is still surprising that after substantive publications and multiple conferences on the issue throughout the 1990s there has been a general failure to incorporate gender into archaeological research in Australia. Of the small number of journal articles that have been published on gender or feminist perspectives in Australia in the

last 15 years, the vast majority address issues of women's status in contemporary society rather than gender theory or women as subjects of archaeological enquiry (e.g., Bowdler and Clune 2000; Smith and Burke 2006; O'Connor 2008; Bowman and Ulm 2009). A summary of postgraduate and undergraduate thesis abstracts published by the journal *Australian Archaeology* shows that since 1987 only two dissertations have been produced that have gender as a central theme (De Leiuen 1998; Adamson 2005), and there are four others that have been produced but that have not had abstracts published (Wellfare 1990; Drew 1991; Damhuis 2005; Baric 2006).[4] Though undoubtedly more have been written, their existence has not been publicized, and thus they are not highly visible or easily accessible. These figures are surprising given the impetus from the Women in Archaeology conferences and the accessibility to a wealth of literature available on gender archaeology globally. Gender archaeology as a standalone course was taught at undergraduate level at several universities in Australia during the 1990s. Today it is only taught as a separate unit within the classics departments of two institutions, and not at all in the area of prehistory. In some archaeology departments gender has been subsumed into content and assessment of core subjects taught, for example, within reading lists or essay questions, but this is wholly dependent upon individual instructors' assessments of its importance or relevance. This may be attributed to increased pressure on academics to teach only core topics, the burden of increased administrative loads, and decreased funding for research generally. The lack of explicit teaching on gender archaeology may also account for a minimal number of postgraduate theses in this area of research.

There are several other major factors that contribute to a resistance to incorporate a theory and practice of gender in prehistory. Firstly, there is what Claire Smith and Emer O'Donnell (2006) refer to as a reluctance in Australian archaeology to "do" theory since the focus of many publications is on empirical results. Developing theory is something undertaken by few in the Australian archaeological community. This also seems to be the case for Papua New Guinea and across the Pacific although of course there are always exceptions. In addition, most archaeological work is done in the arena of Cultural Heritage Management (CHM), which leaves little room for theorizing. Developing and applying theory, such as innovative frameworks and methodologies for gendered analysis, is much more difficult than applying a typology or taking a set of GPS readings. As one archaeologist has recently stated, "Questions of meaning are undoubtedly the hardest archaeological questions of all, but a lack of quizzical ambition, a lack of daring to address the hard questions, remains one of the most limiting and therefore unsatisfactory aspects of our disciplinary venture" (David 2006:48).

There is perhaps a further explanation as to the lack of theorizing or writing on gender. Conkey and Williams (1991) refer to a "hierarchy of knowables" in which some things are perceived to be more recoverable (or "factual") archaeologically than others. As Balme and Bulbeck (2008) argue, gender theory has made much less of an impact on the archaeology of deep time, which is a main focus of Australian archaeology and of much of the writing in *Australian Archaeology* and *Archaeology in Oceania* (two of the most popular archaeological journals). In other words, the more social, spiritual, and symbolic qualities of archaeological interpretation are increasingly inaccessible or perceived to be unknowables (rather than "facts" or "data") and hence have become to be regarded as irrelevant or simply ignored. Joan Gero (2007) adds

another dimension to this argument by pointing out that archaeological practice rewards unambiguous certainty in interpretations of the past, despite the fact that conclusions are normally drawn from partial, undetermined, and complex evidence. In her words, "Issues of ambiguity are also feminist issues because they are issues of power, and our practices of certainty tend to be a masculinist style of working, disadvantaging (some) women who reject its exaggerated confidence" (2007:322). Gender, regarded as less factual or readable, is extrapolated from the present, and loses salience while the lack of hard "evidence" in the past further obscures the locus of women's power.

Dominant models for Indigenous occupation have failed to incorporate gender, as do the overarching narratives that archaeology has advanced in Australia (see Flood 1995; Lourandos 1997; Murray 2004), and it is a difficult concept to discern through material remains. It can be further complicated by complex Indigenous social and knowledge systems (commonly termed in Australia as "men's business/women's business") and the fact that male archaeologists have in the past allocated primacy to men's business. This dichotomy also has had implications for the assumptions underlying interpretations of a Man the Hunter/Woman the Gatherer division of labor. It has been essential in the past to identify and evidence the importance of gathering activities in hunter-gatherer societies (see, for example, Meehan 1982), but it is one thing to identify what either sex might have been doing and another to make assumptions about the meaning and universality of task attribution. Twenty years ago, Wendy Beck and Lesley Head pointed out the failure of Australian prehistorians to move beyond simplistic associations of material culture to binary categories of male/female (e.g., identifying stone artifacts with males and shell middens or seed grinding stones with women) rather than challenging the assumption that a prehistoric division of labor existed. In their opinion, "there has been little systematic feminist influence on either theory or methodology in Australian prehistory" (Beck and Head 1990:41). Given the minimal output of work in the area of gender prehistory in Australia, it is apparent that there is still a reluctance to move beyond evidence derived via natural sciences and "safe" interpretations based on ethnography. Balme and Bulbeck (2008) note that feminist theory has had far more impact across humanities based disciplines than on positivist or natural sciences. As such, the cultural materialist and cultural ecology predilection of Australian archaeology further hinders gender as a line of examination.

Ultimately, what are needed to advance an integration of gender into mainstream archaeological practice are not only complex paradigms and theory, but also an understanding of gender as a social construct – something that is not stable, but contradictory, accumulative, and changeable across time and place, and that takes a broader, more inclusive view of the human past. Indigenous archaeology in Australia, as elsewhere, is not homogeneous, nor do Indigenous people have a common approach or view of history or cultural heritage (see Atalay 2008), but it is essential to move away from Western notions of gender, to recognize an Indigenous voice, and to acknowledge the position of power and privilege from which most white academics practice. As Conkey (2005) argues, white middle-class experiences are often projected onto all men's and women's experiences. This has been recognized by some researchers in Australia (e.g., McDonald 1992; Colley 2000; Moreton-Robinson 2000; Smith and Jackson 2005), but it has not been absorbed by the broader archaeological community.

On Gender, Origins, and Colonization

Sahul

One of the major research questions for archaeologists working in Australia and New Guinea is the timing and means by which Sahul and the continent of Australia were first colonized by humans, as well as the origins of those humans. These questions continue to generate research interest and constitute a current area of theoretical debate. There is a consensus that the initial colonization was by anatomically modern humans, and that this colonization process is central to understanding human evolution. In a recent paper, Jane Balme and Sandra Bowdler (2006) have put forth an argument for the role of gender in the colonization of Australia. They make a case for the division of labor based on their belief that gender is a characteristic of all modern hunter-gatherer societies where primarily men hunt and women gather. They acknowledge that with the exception of hunting large aquatic fauna, there are no constraints imposed by female reproductive activities on carrying out any task performed by men. The only real constraints are social rather than biological:

> A gendered division of labour as a means of production is organized in a social and symbolic way that is neither biologically determined nor purely economic. This does not preclude the suggestion that the human division of labour is an adaptation to the requirements of child rearing but, if it is an adaptation, we suggest it is a social one … one of the defining characteristics of human society, a patterned sexual division of labour as a structuring principle, is organized according to social and symbolic constructs and is, in fact, a division of labour by gender. [Balme and Bowdler 2006:383]

There is much scope for contesting such a conclusion about the division of labor among hunter-gatherers (see, for example, Vinsrygg 1987; Dobres 1988; Gero 1991; Peacock 1991; McKell 1998; Sassaman 1998; Wadley 1998; Zihlman 1998; Gilchrist 1999; Brumbach and Jarvenpa 2007), particularly in terms of its projection of modern (Western) concepts of gender onto the deep past. Davidson and Noble (1992) have set out an argument for the necessity of language in the colonization process, but Balme and Bowdler take this further by making the case that it was actually a gendered division of labor (for which language is a prerequisite) that allowed adaptive success of anatomically modern humans and the colonization of Australia. In their opinion this is due to a structured system of resource exploitation – presumably based on fish, shellfish, and plants that could be gathered – which they attribute to females (Bowdler 1990:333). This would have allowed males to hunt or explore as part of dual (codependent) strategies. In other words, Balme and Bowdler argue that a division of labor by gender enabled a system of exploitation and a flexible subsistence economy that allowed colonizers to successfully adapt and move across an unfamiliar ecosystem.

The authors support their argument by examples of later Australian rock art, some of which dates to 40 ka (see Morwood 2002). The Dynamic Figures (Mimi art) of eastern Arnhem Land depict what are interpreted to be men and women associated with activities and items of material culture which they argue are indicative of gender. The case of the Bradshaw figures in the Kimberley is also cited in which males are represented with spears and boomerangs, and women with objects that may be digging sticks (see Walsh 2000:229). Balme and Bowdler propose that gender as a

social system must have been established in these cultural groups prior to its depiction in rock art and established in their lives prior to the colonization process. While the binary assumptions and universalizing regarding gender that serve as the basis of their arguments are likely to be flawed, Balme and Bowdler nevertheless raise important considerations about the role of gender in such processes as colonizing new lands, an area where discussion on gender or women as active participants in this process is traditionally absent. The contribution of this paper is also significant in that it considers gender as a major theoretical and processual factor rather than being only site-specific.

Across the Pacific

Balme and Bowdler's model offers potential insights for the interpretation of colonization of the three groups of Pacific islands, Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. Theories on origins and colonization have been based historically on geography, language, material culture, and physical appearance, but more recent archaeological research suggests that social behavior is likely to have been a significant factor in the settlement (see Anderson 2004). There is substantive evidence across Melanesia that the majority of kinship groups have been matrilineal, and while there are examples of patrimoieties (such as the Sio), matriliny is the primary organizing structure and is the one which is most characteristic of horticultural societies. This is supported by the evidence of genetics in which the prevalence of mtDNA in Melanesian people of southeast Asian origin (which is maternally transmitted) can be attributed to an effect of matrilineal institutions of residence and descent in Austronesian proto-Oceanic society. This hypothesis is supported by abundant linguistic and ethnographic evidence (see Hage and Marck 2003:19).[5]

Oliver (1989) attributes the evolution of what he considers to be superior patrilineal groups from matrilineal groups to political factors such as war-making and rivalry.[6] He also discusses land tenure and property, marriage, and ceremony and points out that there were *more* ceremonies, such as male initiations, which strengthened communal ownership in patrilineal groups. But perhaps it is the view of the "traditional" anthropologist that has something to do with the interpretation here. In groups such as the Vanatinai and Nagovisi from the islands of New Guinea, for example, matriliny is equated with a greater degree of gender equity (see Huffer 2008).

What is significant to note is that *descent influences a culture's infrastructure*. Family and kinship groups are central to these cultures, and language has evolved around family groups. Ethnographic evidence suggests that women maintained control of marriage and reproduction, as well as principal myths, cosmogonies, and land tenure, which were fundamental to economic and social structures. Though men may have exercised overt power, it was women's power and gender roles that, applying Balme and Bowdler's (2006) arguments, were a primary mechanism for colonization across this region. In other words, gender as a social construct and manifested as an organizing principle (but not as a universal division of labor) must have been a factor in the human colonization of the South Pacific. This is because social organization along gender lines gave individuals or groups the capacity to colonize efficiently and effectively and was a good adaptive strategy since it maximized the chances for success. Archaeology seems to have overlooked this, perhaps on account of androcentric ethnographic accounts, which characterize much work in the region, or on account of

the difficulty in attributing gender to material culture. It is disappointing to note that in places such as the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, a legacy of European colonization (and perhaps the conflation of men's roles by early anthropologists) has resulted in the demise of women's control of land tenure. After thousands of years of women's control, men now have control, much to the detriment of women's economic, social, and political status (Huffer 2008).

The origins and history of the Lapita Cultural Complex offer great insights into the early colonization of Western Polynesia by the Austronesian people. It is characterized by distinctive dentate-stamped pottery, but also by a range of portable artifacts and faunal and plant remains (see Clark et al. 2000). But what of the Lapita potters? In the mid-1980s Yvonne Marshall undertook a feminist analysis of the Lapita potters by reassessing early ethnohistorical accounts and considering agency in an attempt to reconcile women's symbolic value with their productive roles (1985). While traditional debates concerning Lapita focus on trade, exchange, and colonization patterns, Marshall instead questions the meaning and symbolic role of Lapita pottery in terms of societal continuity and change. There is a need to revisit Marshall's work in order to further the dialogue on gender in this area and to humanize the archaeology in ways relevant to, and consistent with, descendant communities. Similarly, Beverley Parslow has conducted research on gender in Maori archaeology, pointing out the need for a reconceptualization of men and women in Maori prehistory (1993). Even today there is a significant gap with regard to gender in the prehistory of these regions.

Reassessing Human Remains

An area of significant research growth, and one that has to some degree addressed issues of gender in the region, is that of human remains. Several studies have sought to reassess the gendered assumptions underlying the interpretation of human remains held in museum collections and concerning the burial practices of Indigenous Australians. Denise Donlon (1993) found that there is an imbalance toward male attribution in the sex ratio of Indigenous skeletal collections worldwide. In the sexing of human remains held in the Australian Museum, there was also systematic bias in the attribution toward males, particularly those from the Pleistocene and early to mid-Holocene. This may be explained by differences in male and female burial practices, or simply the bias of researchers. Jeanette Hope (1998) also found bias in interpretations of Indigenous burials in Southern Australia, and Judith Littleton (1998) discovered that there was no evidence to support a shorter life span for women from burials along the River Murray. In a similar fashion Penny McCardle (2002) disagreed with previous research on the Australian Indigenous bark burial mortuary practice unique to the Central Queensland highlands, which maintained that these specific burial rites were reserved exclusively for children and young men who had died an unnatural death. It has been assumed that this practice was a recent phenomenon derived from European influences. Instead McCardle demonstrates that all age groups and both sexes were included. Although the decision to include people in this mortuary practice was not based on age or gender, other basic social divisions existed. For example, some individuals were deliberately isolated and placed for final interment alone while others were placed together in multiple burials. It is argued that these differential burial practices were based on basic socio-cultural divisions.

In Tonga, Dirk Spennemann (1990) has examined the skeletal remains of "ordinary" men and women and extrapolated the tasks that each group undertook from evidence of wear on bones and joints. He ascribed women's work to gardening, production of tapa (bark cloth), and shell fishing while men built houses and canoes, made weapons and ornaments, and fished. While these distinctions may have some merit, Tongan women of the past are likely to have participated in a much wider range of activities – bones alone do not tell the whole story. Moreover, extensive osteological research at prehistoric sites outside of the region, such as Peterson's work in the Levant (2002), demonstrates the difficulties of associating musculo-skeletal stress markers with specific activities in the remote past.

Significant Contributions: Rock Art, Stone, Bones, Shells, and Spaces

Rock art is fundamental to Australia's prehistory and is an area where a significant contribution has been made to understanding gender in Indigenous cultures. It is found in all environmental zones of the continent, and examples of rock art of Pleistocene antiquity have been found although most sites are dated to the Holocene. Early ethnographic research assumed that only men were responsible for its production (e.g., Crawford 1968; Gould 1969). This has been disputed by Claire Smith (1991), who cites a number of ethnographic and archival examples from regions of Northern Australia. She contends that gender was a variable that needed to be factored into rock art interpretation; that rock art may have been produced by men, women, and children; and that it may encode information on the age and gender of the artist. Likewise, Josephine McDonald (1992, 1995) has systematically challenged the androcentric interpretation in several papers while providing evidence that men, women, and children had a role in the stenciling of hands and implements in an analysis of rock art and excavated material. More recently Stephen Damhuis (2005) has explored the possibility of identifying sex through hand stencils.

In the South Pacific, rock art refers to anthropomorphic sculptures (*tiki*), petroglyphs, and pictographs. Sidsel Millerstrom (2006) documents these in a study conducted on the Marquesas Islands, French Archipelago. This art occurs in association with sacred structures (*Me'ae or Ahu*) and tribal ceremonial complexes (*Tohua*), and the majority are associated with high status architecture. The *Me'ae* is always *tapu* (meaning sacred, forbidden, prohibited) to women other than high status priestesses. The *Tohua* was the central assembly place where feasts and certain ceremonies took place. There is little evidence concerning the place and role of women in the *Tohua*. A commonly held belief is that they were places that women could not enter under any circumstances. On the basis of ethnographic research Millerstrom proposes that women of high status were allowed on certain platforms and parts of the floor, and that the *Tohua* were divided into a strict *tapu* place and a more communal space that may have varied according to ceremony or season. Of the rock art recorded, 12 percent occurred in the *Tohua* and 85 percent around high status residential units. Geometric and anthropomorphic designs reflecting status are the most prevalent and correspond with tattoo designs and carved motifs found on bone and wooden artifacts, such as war clubs and turtle headdresses. Millerstrom has

also found that *tiki* depict both males and females, contradicting earlier claims that they only depicted females. Although not directly addressing the question of the role of gender in the production of this art, her work is nevertheless the first step toward deconstructing an androcentric and Eurocentric tendency to order the division of labor according to *tapu* under which women are viewed as a destructive force.

As Parslow (1993) notes for New Zealand, outside archaeology there is a recognition of *mana wahine*, acknowledgment of matrilineal descent, female knowledge, and the complementarity of the male and females spheres. Radhika Mohanram (1999) importantly points out (as a caution to Western feminist archaeologists) that on *Marae* (Maori communal sacred space) women have the role of greeting and men of speaking. Feminists may be critical of perceived male authority and *tapu* in the space, but the specific gender roles are not an issue for Maori women – women have their own role to play on the *Marae* as well as gender roles to maintain (Mohanram 1999:110).

Developing an archaeology of gender has meant moving beyond the premise that "women's archaeology" is found in remains such as baskets and mats made from fibres, wood, food, and other materials that do not endure archaeologically (but see MacKenzie 1991 for an exceptional study on gender and string bags in New Guinea). In Australia there has also been a re-examination in the analysis of stone artifact use and manufacture and hunting whereby women making stone artifacts ("tools") are often dismissed as exceptions. A groundbreaking article by Bird (1993), for example, documents the manufacture and use of stone artifacts by women in Australia and New Guinea. In the western desert of Australia women used stone tools for woodworking and meat cutting, for making digging sticks and fighting sticks, and flake scrapers for finishing wooden bowls. In addition to differences in use, the choice of raw materials varied between men and women. This is replicated in the Kimberley, but here women also used stone hatchets. In southwest Australia there is evidence of women making stone barbs for death spears, and in the southeast they made stone flakes for decorating skins and cutting hair; and on Cape York women ground axe blades and used sharp stone flakes for bloodletting. In New Guinea women used stone tools to manufacture tools for tattooing and bloodletting, processing sago, and pottery manufacture. This evidence attests to the fact that women could and did make stone artifacts, and that there is significant regional variation. Men's and women's technology might be organized differently, but it should not be presumed that women were less skilled at tool manufacture than men. As Bird has noted, the attribution of stone artifacts to male or female activities based on inadequate ethnographic evidence can lead to simplistic generalizations (1993; see also Finlay this volume).

Sandra Bowdler (2006) has argued that it was Tasmanian women who made the stone artifacts found on the southwest coast of Australia when they were translocated there by sealers. As such it may be Tasmanian women who made the specific sumatraliths found near Malimup, Western Australia and on Kangaroo Island, South Australia. More broadly this suggests that Hoabinhian pebble tools in these areas may be multipurpose tools made and used by women (O'Connor 2008). Similarly, De Leiuen (1998) has identified gendered roles through stone artifacts by investigating the roles and presence of Indigenous women on European whaling and sealing sites. These women were exploited for many reasons, including their skills in hunting seals.

Children

One of the most noteworthy papers on shell middens is that produced by Bird and Bird (2000) on the role of Meriam children of the Eastern Torres Strait in foraging and shell fishing. While this research does not explicitly concern gender, it is important to remember that children are not free from gender, for it is during childhood that they are socialized and imbued with gender primers. Children are often inconsequential in archaeology or inappropriately allocated to an adult male/female gender, frequently the "women and children" group. As pointed out by Baxter (2005), children are often regarded as a presumed burden that prevents women's engagement in other activities. Motherhood is also a culturally constructed category, as is child, and child rearing duties differ significantly between Indigenous cultures, although they are usually undertaken by extended family and community. The lack of directed study on childhood and gender seems to be a result of a consensus view that identifying them archaeologically is impossible or that they are unproductive and dependent, and therefore do not produce distinctive archaeological signatures (but see Baker 1997; Derevenski 1997; Moore and Scott 1997; Baxter 2005). Perhaps it is also linked to the fact that many archaeologists have not been interested in children as a subject for serious research, or even as a separate category to women. In comparison to questions of deep time, studying children may have been regarded as a "soft" option, but in fact the study of children and gender is a challenging option (as demonstrated by the lack of research in this area). Bird and Bird (2000) focus their study on marine subsistence but note that children participate in a number of activities, such as fruit and nut collecting and fishing. Their analysis of collection rates and efficiencies shows that children's labor does have material consequences. It also shows that age linked results in foraging do not necessarily indicate attempts or goals by children to acquire knowledge and skills of adults, but are more likely linked to physiological constraints. This study highlights the fact that when the right questions are posed, different results can in fact be found. Archaeological models uncritically linking evidence of children with women deny both an understanding of gender and an Indigenous point of view.

Present and Future Research Directions

This chapter has set out not only to summarize the work on gender, but to highlight the contributions of many individuals who have laid the foundations for a research tradition in these regions. Despite such work, Australian archaeology remains firmly processual in its focus and has not yet come to grips with the notion of sex and gender as fluid categories rather than as binary male/female dichotomies. In Indigenous archaeology, the reliance on ethnographic evidence reinforces binary models since it revolves around the particular customs, rituals, and practices that are undertaken by men and women separately ("men's business" and "women's business"). Each has a separate system of meaning, and these can also be public or private. Many archaeologists seek to access sites and information for survey, excavation, and interpretation of artifacts and landscapes. On mainland Australia many ceremonies are concerned with acting out The Dreaming, its laws and stories.[7] Men and women have different roles

in ceremonies that vary from language group to language group. For example, there are areas in which either women or men are given the role as guardians of a special spiritual site where a ceremony is performed. This role means that the site needs to be cared for accordingly in order to ensure that a particular spirit would continue to live there. Women or men are also guardians of special knowledge and therefore hold great religious and spiritual power within the language group, and both men and women had their own particular spiritual and sacred objects. Neither men nor women possess greater spiritual needs than the other; rather they coexist in different ways to ensure that sacred elements of The Dreaming are practiced and passed on. Other rituals are shared across genders and communities. Hannah Bell (1998) maintains that "men's business" and "women's business" are biologically, not ideologically, grounded, and that a division of responsibility ensures respect for sovereignty, authority, and liberation of each other. As Smith and Jackson demonstrate (2005:329), Indigenous people allocate researchers to a social group that is most appropriate to their own social position, particularly in terms of age and gender, and the information to which a researcher has access varies according to these factors.

Australian archaeologists are wary of drawing a long bow from contemporary cultures to those in the deep past. But ethnography does have a role to play in archaeological interpretation, and men's business/women's business is far more than simply a code of conduct – it is about laws that ultimately govern everything. This means that there are always two parts, but rather than being polarized these are always dynamic, interactive, interrelated, and complementary. The reliance on male sources by male anthropologists and archaeologists has shaped the discipline in Australia in the past and marginalized women's roles. This has been compounded by the influence of missionaries and white colonists who have altered men's and women's statuses in some communities. But separating these two gender groups and allocating predominance to one or the other is no longer acceptable today. Imposing Western notions of gender fails to respect an Indigenous perspective. Furthermore, a feminist approach, advocating an equality of scholarship directed toward both men's and women's roles and making fewer presumptions about gender roles in the deep past, can affect Indigenous communities in the present, as can a greater degree of Indigenous control and authorship of knowledge. Both can be beneficial to our understanding of prehistory.

In conclusion, much of the work conducted on gender throughout the 1990s in this region was undertaken with a political, often feminist motivation. There seems today to be a loss of political motivation, an apathy or distancing from feminism, and a greater focus on gender. There are two reasons why this may be the case. Firstly, younger women in countries such as Australia have been taught at school they can do anything they choose regardless of their class or ethnic background, regardless of whether they want to be an engineer or an archaeologist, and on the face of it there are no institutional barriers to prohibit them from doing so. This is certainly not the case for Indigenous women in rural and remote communities. It may be that the majority consider the battle won, or even if there was one to begin with, that it no longer matters. Secondly, much attention in education today is being devoted to employment outcomes. Students are focused on "real life" skills and training, which universities are increasingly providing. Gender archaeology may therefore be perceived to be of less importance when aiming for a job in CHM where most archaeologists are employed. Perhaps the apathy toward issues of gender is also reflected in broader

Australian society. The Global Gender Gap Index 2010 ranks Australia at 23rd in the world (after Mozambique), dropping from its 2006 ranking at 15, while New Zealand is currently ranked 5th and Fiji 108th (World Economic Forum 2010). This report, which assesses how equitably income, resources, and opportunities (including education) are distributed between males and females reflects the sliding gender "agenda" for contemporary Australian women. Despite its promising development, particularly in the 1990s, the future of an archaeology of gender (and especially of feminist archaeology) in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and other regions of the Pacific is uncertain. Given the recent focus on job and fieldwork training, the emphasis on "testable" data, and the general apathy toward feminism, does gender archaeology have a future? And will white male archaeologists' views, which have been the dominant voice within the field until recently, ultimately give way to the emergence of other, more nuanced narratives of the past that have gender and feminist theory at their core? If we wish to develop and improve upon current archaeological practices in the region, the answer to these questions must be a resounding "yes."

NOTES

1 The designation "ka" ("thousands of years ago") adopted here is the standard way of indicating dates of sites referred to in this chapter.
2 Following the practice of Indigenous scholars, I capitalize the word "Indigenous" throughout this chapter in order to denote Indigenous sovereignty.
3 For a comprehensive discussion on women's roles in Australian archaeology see Bowdler and Clune (2000).
4 For further details see http://www.australianarchaeologicalassociation.com.au/thesis_abstracts.
5 An opposing view has been voiced by Anderson (2004) and others, who argue, on the basis of the Melanesian origin of "male" genes and the Asian origin of "female" genes, that male colonists, in control of boats, suppressed females of their own lineage and favored females of other populations, perhaps to facilitate ownership of new land through intermarriage.
6 Oliver defines "political" in terms of overt power within a Western framework of thought involving large scale ceremonies, warfare, and competitive feasting; women's political power is judged, as in many Indigenous communities, to be less important. It is also important to note that matriliny does not equate with matriarchy.
7 The Dreaming refers to the creation era when ancestral beings created features of the landscape and cultural practices; it establishes the rules governing relationships between people, the land, and all things. The word "Dreamtime" is not used as much now as it was in the past since from a Western perspective it trivializes Indigenous belief systems as fictitious and unreal.

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