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representations, such as Timothy McNiven's discussion of gestures of fear and the constitution of masculinity in Athenian Greek art (McNiven 2000), or Miranda Aldhouse-Green's (2004) exploration of the range of bodily gestures portrayed in the European Iron Age. This division of interest reflects a philosophical separation, associated with archaeology's historical emergence as an Enlightenment project of rational and empirical enquiry (Thomas 2004), between the objective material world of fleshy, earthy nature within which 'the body' has been understood to be located, and the subjective world of mind, culture, and representation.

In what follows, I review some of the ways in which archaeologists have attempted to overcome these disciplinary limitations, notably by deploying a range of anti-foundationalist perspectives to theorize the embodied agency of past people. I then explore how questions of materiality have entered into the debates around embodiment. Finally, I present two case studies. The first considers the use of apotropaic devices (protective objects used to ward off evil) in seventeenth-century England, and the second looks at how the agency of the dead body is portrayed in discourse around contemporary forensic archaeology.

CHAPTER 16

MATERIALITY AND EMBODIMENT

ZÖE CROSSLAND

INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers archaeology's contribution to the interdisciplinary study of materiality and embodiment, focusing especially on the emergence of archaeology of the body since the late 1980s. Human bodies have been a focus of archaeological study since the discipline's antiquarian origins, with two divergent modes of analysis emerging over the course of the twentieth century and acting to constitute separate fields of expertise. On the one hand, the bioarchaeological focus on physical or skeletal remains has tended to address questions of diet, disease, and demography. On the other, a concern with mortuary treatment, grave goods, and figurative representation led to a concern with social roles and identities and ideology (e.g. Binford 1971; Parker Pearson 1982; Shanks and Tilley 1982; Thomas 1991c; Brumfiel 1996; Joyce 1996). The latter included a focus on dress and ornamentation of the body (e.g. Sørensen 1991; Marcus 1993; M. M. Lee 2000), and more recently, the forms of bodily practices that may be inferred from

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ARCHAEOLOGIES OF EMBODIMENT

The first area of archaeology in which human bodies emerged as a significant focus for archaeological theory was in archaeological studies of gender and sexuality (Conkey and Gero 1991; Walde and Willows 1991; Yates 1993; Kampen 1996; Meskell 1996; Wright 1996). Early gender archaeologies within a social constructionist vein tended to view the physical body as a stable material entity on which gender is inscribed (see reviews by Gilchrist 1999 and Sørensen 2000; additionally Bahrani 2001 and Voss 2008a provide critical perspectives on archaeological approaches to sexuality). The sex/gender distinction, on which social constructionist studies were predicated replicates the dualist partitioning of the naturalized sexed body and the socially constructed, gendered body. Archaeologists Lynn Meskell (1998: 140) and Rosemary Joyce (2005: 142–145) have observed that this has been expressed by an archaeological focus on the surface of the body, whether in terms of dress and adornment or as the focus of artistic representation. Roberta Gilchrist (1999: 6–7) notes, however, that while this focus has dominated in European gender archaeology, in the United States more attention has been paid to the corporeal effects of gender. Christine Hastorf's (1991) study of changing gender relations in relation to shifts in the consumption of food during the intrusion of the Inka state into Sausa social life and politics (in modern-day Peru) illustrates this orientation, as does the

pervasive interest in gender hierarchy and differential exposure to disease and bodily life stresses (e.g. Cohen and Bennett 1993; Holliman 2000; Peterson 2000).

Gender archaeology therefore acted as a common node of interest for archaeologists from very different backgrounds and traditions and brought bioarchaeologists and those engaged with more artefact-focused archaeologies into conversation with one another. However, the dominant social constructionist orientation left the body itself somewhat under-theorized, viewing it as a stable biological ground from which gender was elaborated. An early critique of this position within archaeology was made by Nordbladh and Yates (1990), who noted that sex is not the stable and binary biological category that is often assumed (cf. Laqueur 1990; Meskell 1999). This intervention grew from a post-structuralist suspicion of the apparently pre-discursive, empirically verifiable, sexed body that was thought to underwrite gender.

From the late 1990s an emphasis on embodiment and the lived experience of the body emerged in archaeology. This work called the category of 'the body' into question, and developed a focus on the practices and social relations within which bodies are brought into being (e.g. Meskell 1996, 1999; Joyce 1998; Montserrat 1998; Rautman 2000; Hamilakis *et al.* 2002; Fisher and Loren 2003). Archaeologists have explored the production of the lived body and the performance of identity by assembling disparate strands of evidence (e.g. papers in Halperin 2009; Borić and Robb 2008). Thus, Rosemary Joyce (2003) has analysed representations of women as figurines in the Formative period in Mesoamerica, comparing them with grave goods to explore the embodied experience of different life stages, and the transition between them. Brian Boyd (2002) has linked dietary evidence from isotope analysis with the mortuary dress of the dead to explore understandings of pollution and avoidance in the Epipalaeolithic Levant. Another example is provided by Carolyn Nakamura's (2005) account of Neo-Assyrian apotropaic figurines in terms of the sensuous and embodied experience of place.

The turn towards embodiment in archaeology has reflected a broader questioning within the humanities and social sciences of previously unanalysed and naturalized understandings of human bodies (e.g. Turner 1984; Feher 1989; Laqueur 1990; Shilling 1993; Csordas 1994; Bynum 1995; Cohen and Weiss 2003; Shilling 2008; Campbell *et al.* 2009). The conception of 'the body' as a natural and trans-historical entity has been broadly critiqued by these perspectives, which attempt to take account of both the corporeality and sociality of human life, viewing 'the body' as historically contingent and in flux. In its material focus and its long-term perspective, archaeology therefore has much to offer to these broader debates (Meskell and Joyce 2003). Common to all the theories of embodiment drawn upon in archaeology is the critique of the separation of mind and body, subject and object. Such dualisms are conventionally traced to the Cartesian division between the thinking subject (*res cogitans*) and the physical and corporeal world (*res extensa*). Although the emergence of the perceived separation between mind and body did

not originate with Descartes and may be situated as part of a dualist tradition, traceable back to Plato and beyond (Loraux 1989; Synott 1992), dualist conceptions of mind and body became increasingly dichotomized during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This shift was part of broader changes bound up with the Protestant Reformation, the expansion of the Renaissance world, and transformations in artistic conventions and scientific knowledge practices (Bordo 1987). In the critique of dualist dichotomies, social and cultural theory has often sought to find ways of re-situating the thinking subject in the world, through its embodiment in the fleshy, living, and breathing body.

The idea of embodiment has emerged from diverse intellectual traditions, most notably phenomenological approaches (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 1968), practice theory (Bourdieu 1977, 1990; Giddens 1984), and feminism and psychoanalytic theory (e.g. Kristeva 1982; Irigaray 1985; Martin 1987; Bordo 1993; Grosz 1994), often influenced by the anthropological work of Mary Douglas (1966). An interrogation of naturalized categories of the body has also characterized those strands of post-structuralist thinking derived from Michel Foucault (e.g. 1973, 1977a), especially as developed by feminist cultural theorist Judith Butler (1990, 1993). As such there are many tensions and incompatibilities in ideas of embodiment as they have entered into archaeological accounts.

Those approaches growing out of a perspective broadly based on the phenomenological writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (e.g. Csordas 1990, 1994; Leder 1990; Ihde 2002) aim to start with the pre-reflexive (but, importantly, not pre-cultural) experience of embodied perception, in the act of which consciousness is constituted interactively and intersubjectively, extending into the world and participating in it. Since, as socio-cultural anthropologist Thomas Csordas (1990: 9–10) observed, for Merleau-Ponty there can be no objects prior to perception, the only possible starting point for perception is the body in the world, and as such, the body is privileged as a site for understanding experience, yet without being located as prior to, or separable from that experience.

Phenomenological approaches made their way into the archaeological literature alongside an increased concern with the lived experience of past people, and were first articulated through landscape studies (Tilley 1994; Gosden 1994; Thomas 1996: 11–91). However, philosophers such as Don Ihde (2002) have been critical of the unexamined and implicit body, and its masculine gendering, at the centre of Merleau-Ponty's writings. Such a universal view of the body has characterized much phenomenological archaeology and has been used as the basis for generalizations about past bodies, based on an assumed universality of corporeal experience. The effect has been to narrow the definition of past subjects to healthy individuals of adult height, unburdened by heavy loads, illness, or the distractions of children (Brück 1998), applying twentieth-century categories and assumptions to embodied engagements in the past (Thomas 2001: 181). As Lynn Meskell (1999) has argued, this generalized phenomenological understanding of past individuals has a tendency to

obstruct efforts to engage with the specifics of the social and cultural understandings that were involved in people's constitution as embodied persons. The dominant characterization of phenomenology in archaeology has also been accused of overplaying the subjectivity of the interpreter and not adequately emphasizing phenomenology's attention to things themselves (Olsen 2007).

The widespread use of the 'practice theories' of sociologists Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens in archaeological interpretation since the 1980s represents a parallel strand in the emergence of archaeologies of embodiment. Critical of what he perceived to be phenomenology's subjectivism, Bourdieu (1990: 25–26) placed more emphasis on the practical interaction between the external structures confronted in day-to-day life and their inculcation and reproduction as *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977). Archaeologists have used Bourdieu alongside Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration to think about the ways in which the material world structures and is structured by embodied practice (e.g. Barrett 1994; Gilchrist 1994; Dietler and Herbich 1998; Nilsson Stutz 2003; Hodder and Cessford 2004). Bourdieu's practice theory has been criticized within anthropology and sociology for relying overly on the concept of *habitus*—durable, transposable dispositions that shape practice and are shaped by it—to conceptualize social practice, thus leaving individual agency, social mobility, and choice inadequately theorized (Jenkins 1982; A. J. Strathern 1996; Shilling 2005; also see Meskell 1999: 27–28). Questions of agency have also been foregrounded in archaeology (Barrett and Fewster 2000; Dobres and Robb 2000b).

Practice theory has been influential in archaeology because it provided a way for archaeologists to consider how human relations were mediated through past material conditions, as John Barrett (1994, 2000) has explored. For the same reasons, Foucault's radical de-centring of the subject has also influenced archaeological accounts (see discussion in Tilley 1990b; Meskell 1999). As part of his critique of phenomenology Foucault elaborated the ways in which embodied subjects are shaped through discursive practices (e.g. Foucault 1970) and through regulatory regimes of surveillance and control (e.g. Foucault 1973). Foucault's countervailing emphasis on the discursive formations within and through which the body is produced acted to disperse the human subject, leading to complaints that he dealt poorly with questions of agency (as for example by sociologist Bryan Turner 1982). Within archaeology Meskell (2000: 16–17) has argued that an over-emphasis on the 'social body', growing in part from practice theory and partly from archaeology's engagement with Foucault, has led to a view of past bodies as 'artefacts', existing in the landscape alongside monuments and other archaeological traces. This she suggests has led to an inadequate consideration of specific forms of embodiment or of the role of individuals.

The influence of Foucault and other post-structuralist thinkers in archaeology has led to a questioning of the biological body's stability and irreducibility, particularly from a gender perspective (Nordbladh and Yates 1990). It has also

encouraged a focus on the role of the material world in the production of the lived experience of embodiment, emerging primarily from an engagement with Judith Butler's work on the performance of bodily identities (Meskell 1996, 1999, 2000; Joyce 2000a, 2000b, 2002; J. S. Thomas 2002). However, Judith Butler's emphasis on the materiality of the body as an effect of discourse led her away from a consideration of the corporeal specificities of bodies' compositions, something particularly pertinent to archaeology (Perry and Joyce 2001). Archaeologist Joanna Sofaer (2006a, 2006b) suggests that an emphasis on the materiality and plasticity of the human skeleton can provide a way of thinking through its corporeality more critically. Certainly, the archaeological orientation towards material and substance seems to offer the potential to extend and rework concepts of 'the body' and embodiment as they currently stand. This includes a consideration of the manner in which the body's materiality is constituted and reconstituted, distributed and extended into the world, as will be discussed below.

MATERIALITY AND EMBODIMENT

While the archaeology of embodiment has been characterized by a focus on lived experience (Joyce 2005) new directions in archaeological research are interrogating the implicit limitations that are often assumed to underwrite embodied experience. These developments have grown out of a more general sense of frustration at the lack of engagement with the materiality of archaeological evidence, the inadequacy of textual analogues (e.g. Barrett 1994: 78–79; Buchli 1995), and a sense that the material world has been viewed as secondary to discourse (e.g. Schiffer 1999; Graves-Brown 2000b; Meskell 2004; papers in Meskell 2005b; Knappett 2005; Preucel 2006; Boivin 2008). These approaches have emerged in the context of a broader interdisciplinary concern with materiality and material agency (e.g. Kopytoff 1986; W. J. T. Mitchell 1996; Gell 1998; Brown 2001; Myers 2001; Miller 2005; Henare *et al.* 2007b), as discussed elsewhere in this volume. The wealth of studies on materiality offers a range of perspectives salient to a development of concepts of embodiment, particularly in relation to the extensions of the body and the body after death. Although theories of embodiment attempt to understand experiences of personhood as situated within and through the body, they also allow for an extended and distributed understanding of self and body, not necessarily bounded by the constraints of the flesh in predictable ways (cf. Bateson 1973; Haraway 1991a, 1991b: 150–155; Latour 1993b; Csordas 1994: 2). An increasingly destabilized and dynamic conception of human bodies has led to a 'post-humanist' concern with bodily boundaries and those sites of transition between human and non-human,

whether animals, machines, objects, or otherwise. Donna Haraway (1991a, 1991b) in particular has explored the possibilities of the hybrid body, incorporating technological and non-human elements into its constitution and questioning and challenging the body's accepted boundaries through her conception of the 'cyborg' (cf. Balsamo 1988; Hayles 1999; Featherstone and Burrows 1995). Similarly, the phenomenological focus on the human body in studies of embodiment has been critiqued in socio-cultural anthropology (Hallam *et al.* 1999) and archaeology (e.g. Meskell 1999; Sofaer 2006a) as resting upon an unspoken assumption that self and body are one and the same, and that both are bounded and contained within the skin of a single living and indivisible individual.

Archaeologists have increasingly questioned assumptions about the relationship of the body to an individuated and bounded sense of self (e.g. Houston and Stuart 1998; Gillespie 2001; J. S. Thomas 2002; Fowler 2004a). Marilyn Strathern's (1988) formulation of 'dividual' personhood has been influential in shaping the debate, together with anthropological research on partible, permeable, and distributed conceptions of person in Melanesia (Knauf 1989; Wagner 1991; Mosko 1992; Bird-David 1999 and India (Marriott 1976; Busby 1997, 1999). These understandings of the person challenge assumptions of the one-to-one mapping of self onto the body, and emphasize other more relationally defined possibilities. Dividual personhood is understood to be formed and negotiated through the exchange and circulation of bodily substances and other material extensions of the body. However, it need not be positioned in opposition to the individual (LiPuma 1998), but rather may be viewed as a different inflection or modality of personhood. These ideas have been drawn upon in archaeology to critique the common assumption that personhood is underwritten by a stable, individuated sense of self and body, and to explore other ways to conceptualize personhood in the past (e.g. Chapman 2000a; Thomas 2000b; Brück 2001b; Fowler 2001; Loope 2003; Meskell 2004; Jones 2005).

Concepts of partible, permeable, and distributed personhood have encouraged an archaeological reconsideration of the significance of objects placed in mortuary contexts dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age in Britain. Recent accounts have re-conceptualized past identities as relational and distributed through an exploration of how grave goods and other curated objects and heirlooms may be endowed with elements of personhood (e.g. Brück 2004; J. S. Thomas 2000a, 2002; Woodward 2002). Recently, Howard Williams also used this perspective to think through the agency of bodies after death in Anglo-Saxon England (Williams 2004). The concept of the distributed person allows an extension of the concept of embodiment so that it does not rest upon a bounded and naturalized physicality, or indeed assume a unified and bounded sense of self, but can be expressed through materials that are distributed and circulated away from the body. It also leads to a focus on the senses and affective states or relationships in the constitution of personhood through the material world (Gosden 2001, 2004a; Hamilakis 2002; cf. Kus 1992), and directs attention to human-animal relations and hybrids

(Philo and Wilbert 2000). Chantal Conneller (2004) has considered red deer remains from the Early Mesolithic site of Star Carr in North Yorkshire, England within this framework. Conneller suggests that red deer antler frontlets were involved in masking practices that acted to reveal hybrid human-deer bodies that took on 'deer effects' through their modification by masking. A focus on human-animal relations has also been used to recast archaeological understandings of the beginnings of domestication and agriculture in Anatolia (Hodder 2006), the Levant (Boyd 2004), and in the Balkans (Boric 2005).

The understanding of the person as distributed rather than confined to the apparent bounds of the body is often characterized as in opposition to liberal humanist perceptions of personhood and individuality (see discussion in Battaglia 1995; also critique in Carsten 2003: 83–108). However, others have generalized the arguments developed within Melanesian ethnography to present broader models of the ways in which humans and objects interact, most markedly in Alfred Gell's (1998) study of *Art and Agency*.

The conception of the distributed person was anticipated in the late nineteenth century by pragmatist philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, whose semiotic approach allows a way to think through the lived experience of the body in relation both to the dead and to the phenomenological lifeworld (Peirce 1940a). Peirce rejected the inherited foundationalisms of rationalism and positivism. Instead, he argued that thought takes place through signs, and signs are neither internal mental phenomena nor wholly external objects, but rather relational entities constituted through and within the sensuous world of experience (Peirce 1940d). His approach is distinct from Saussure's semiology, and by convention Peirce's preferred spelling of 'semeiotic' is used to reflect this. Archaeologists have found a Peircean approach useful for thinking through the material and affective dimensions of signs and interpretation (e.g. Preucel and Bauer 2001; Bauer 2002; Preucel 2006; Lele 2006; Watts 2008; Joyce 2008; Crossland 2009b). A Peircean understanding of personhood views it as a shared and social 'outreaching identity' as the anthropologist Milton Singer (1980) has explored. Peirce provides a language and orientation to explore the ways in which personhood emerges relationally through signs. Peirce's conception of person therefore has some commonalities with theories of material engagement (Renfrew 2001, 2004; papers in De Marrais *et al.* 2004; Malafouris 2008a), although he pays more attention to the sensuous semeiosis through which engagement takes place. His semeiotic also allows a consideration of interpretive habits that are neither cognitive in nature, nor restricted to human beings.

Building upon the work of Marcel Mauss (1973) and Leroi-Gourhan (1943, 1945, 1993) an archaeological interest in the relationship of technology to social agency has also led to fruitful avenues of research in relation to embodied social action and the social production of technology (e.g. Lemonnier 1992, 1993; Dobres 2000; Schiffer 2001a; cf. Noland 2009). Archaeological discussions of materiality have also been influenced by recent research in Science and Technology Studies (STS) (e.g. Bloor 1976; Bijker *et al.* 1987), and especially by actor-network theory (ANT) as

developed by sociologists of science Michel Callon, John Law, and Bruno Latour (e.g. Callon 1986a; Latour 1987, 1993a, 1999a, 1999b, 2005; Callon and Law 1997; Law and Hassard 1999). Archaeological studies that draw on Latour echo his call for a replacement of the modernist settlement that divides subject from object. Instead, an alternative framework is proposed that focuses on the variety of fluid and constantly changing relationships between non-humans and humans. Rather than assuming the existence of an absolute dividing line demarcating humans from non-humans and culture from nature, all are seen to be entangled in a complex socio-technical assemblage. Humans and non-humans are folded into each other to create distributed but stable networks, which act collectively to achieve certain goals (Olsen 2003; Witmore 2006).

This perspective has been drawn upon to differing degrees to refigure human and non-human relations within archaeology (e.g. Walker 2008; see also Martin 2005 for a use of an earlier strand of Latour). In the view of archaeologist Bjørnar Olsen (2003) the continued primacy afforded to human agency in many accounts of distributed personhood reproduces an unhelpful division between mind and matter. This he argues maintains a focus on dynamic human agents acting on the apparently inert and passive world of things. Olsen makes the case that humans and non-humans might be reconceptualized as entangled hybrids, part of complex socio-technical collectivities that are comprised of mixtures of animals, objects, landscapes, and indeed all material substances, a position reiterated by other authors who subscribe to a broadly Latourian approach (e.g. Witmore 2006, 2007; Shanks 2007; Webmoor 2007). This perspective refuses Gell's characterization of object agency, arguing that his emphasis on the distribution of human agency into objects retains a Cartesian humanism at its core (Olsen 2007; Webmoor 2007: 568; cf. Pels 1998; Meskell 2004: 115). Such an argument moves away from the concept of embodiment, as overly subject-centred and humanistic (Olsen 2003: 101, 2007: 584; cf. Vilaça 2009). It should be noted that there is a theoretical tension between the call to consider the agency of objects and a Latourian view that positions agency as a relational entity distributed throughout the collectivity and not inherent in any particular object or person. This has yet to be adequately addressed in archaeology. A strongly 'symmetrical' approach following Latour (1993a), in which humans and animals may be substituted for one another has come under criticism from within STS for apparently failing to recognize the distinctions between the operations of humans and non-humans (e.g. Pickering 1995; Ihde 2002). This it is argued derives from the influence of structuralist semiotics on ANT (de Saussure 1959; Derrida 1976), encouraging a focus on the dispersed and interchangeable nature of representation, rather than the performative aspects of the agentive acts in which humans and non-humans are involved (but see Hicks 2005 for archaeology). This critique may be situated as part of a wider concern with the erasure of embodiment in the posthumanist literature (Dery 1996; Springer 1996; Hayles 1999; Vint 2007). The posthumanist emphasis

on mediation, translation, and transformation demands that we pay attention to the semeiotic links that constitute and maintain hybrids (Latour 1993a, 1999b; Clarke 2008). Arguably, the affective and energetic dimensions of a Peircean semeiotic allow a continuing consideration of embodiment, neither limiting it to the bounds of the flesh, nor eliding the affective, tactile, and corporeal dimensions of meaning. This offers a way to engage with the varied nuances of representation, technical action, and performance. Peirce's semeiotic was influential in Derrida's discussion of the chain of signification and acts as an apposite semeiotic counterpart to theories of distributed and entangled human-non-human entities. Unlike the Saussurean sign his conception of semeiotic meaning is not tied to mental representation, but instead is context-specific and processual, also entailing affective and energetic interpretive responses as much as 'representational' ones (Peirce 1940a). Equally his sign vehicle is not an empty linguistic signifier but is situated in time and place with a variety of characteristics of its own. This opens up possibilities for understanding the materiality and corporeality of the signs of the body on their own terms as much as in relation to other signs.

In order to explore these tensions between embodiment and materiality in archaeology, in the rest of the chapter I shall present two case studies that draw on a Peircean semeiotic. These build upon each other to illustrate the complex ways in which people may be considered to be both bounded and distributed within the framework of Early Modern and Enlightenment thought and Western scientific practices. I start by analysing the spatial boundaries of the body in relation to apotropaic devices in seventeenth-century England, and move on to look at the temporal bounds of embodiment with some discussion of the dead body in present day forensic practice.

BOUNDARIES OF THE BODY: WITCH BOTTLES

A focus on the materiality of the body encourages interrogation of the nature of the collectivity that constitutes the person, accounting for non-humans alongside human beings. It is within this context that I would like to consider early modern apotropaic devices known as 'witch bottles'. The use of witch bottles in seventeenth-century England illustrates the changing perceptions of the body's boundedness at a key period when the mind and matter distinction was being formalized and privileged, and the sense of self interiorized (Bordo 1987). David Canter (2002: 65) notes that the self is an unstable concept, particularly difficult to sustain at times of bodily crisis and violation. He argues that the modes and forms of bodily violation, and responses to them, reveal the techniques through which self is

constructed and the points of potential dislocation and fracture within its constitution. In the context of changing understandings of the constitution of the body and its relation to the soul and/or mind in seventeenth-century England, apotropaic objects provide striking evidence of the coexistence of different and somewhat conflicting ways of thinking about the body and its boundaries at moments of bodily crisis. The practices involved in the use and deposition of 'Bellarmine' witch bottles provide an example of an Early Modern tradition of embodiment through objects which were understood to be extensions of the body, and to act and have agency away from the body. The constitution of the vessels and the elements contained within them indicate anxieties over bodily integrity and a blurring of bodily boundaries between 'witch' and victim. At the same time, they show an increasing concern with the bounded and fragile nature of the body, expressed through its metaphorical construction as a breakable vessel.

Buried under hearths and thresholds, in ditches and cowsheds, thrown into the River Thames and retrieved centuries later, witch bottles exert a powerful fascination, their power to enchant and to capture the imagination apparently still as strong as ever. Although the use of protective charms has a long history in Britain (Gilchrist 2008), witch bottles appear as part of a distinctive set of new practices in south-east England in the later sixteenth century, becoming most common in the second half of the seventeenth century, and persisting until the present day in various forms. The vessels were often filled with pins and nails, splinters of wood, human hair, nail parings, and urine, corked tightly, and hidden as a form of protective magic. Initially, Frechen stoneware Bartman jugs, commonly known as 'Bellarmine' jugs, were used. These were produced in the Rhineland from the mid-fifteenth century and are distinctive in their broad belly and narrow neck decorated with a male mask or face applied in clay before firing (Gaimster 1997: 37) (Figure 16.1). It is usually suggested that these apparently anthropomorphic vessels were chosen for the task because of their similarity to the body. I'd like to start with this assumption, exploring how they are like bodies, and asking why and how the vessel became an appropriate and common metaphor for the body? Although the vessels were made in the Rhineland, and traded throughout Europe and beyond, their use as witch bottles was a peculiarly English practice, found particularly in the south-eastern counties, but also in North American English colonies (see Merrifield 1987: 174; see also Becker 1978 and Painter 1980 for eighteenth-century examples), and associated with rural peasants and urban town dwellers alike. Witch bottles can tell us something of the changing vernacular beliefs about the body through wider society, away from the learned discourse of royal societies and universities where the emergence of Enlightenment beliefs about the relation of body and soul is usually located. Their appearance prompts the interrogation of the coming into being of a particular set of beliefs and practices that made these vessels appropriate stand-ins for the body.

The idea of the body as a vessel is a powerful image, one that relies on a metaphor of containment, which appears to play a key role in organizing our

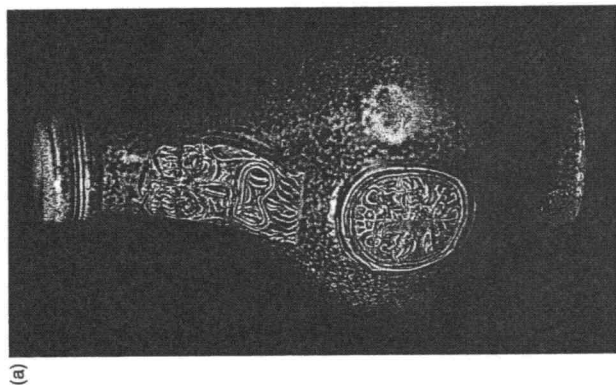
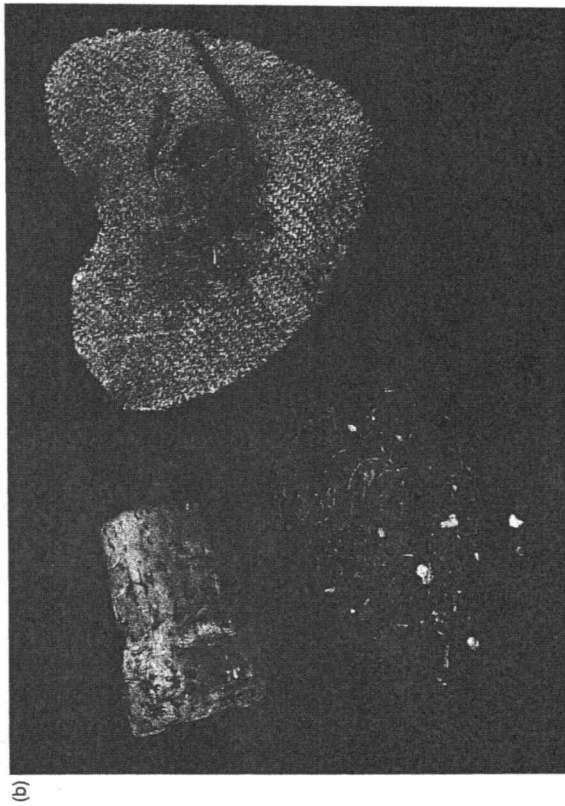


Fig. 16.1 Bellarmine jug (a), with (b) contents, comprising brown cloth heart stuck with pins and human hair with nail parings, with cork stopper. Recovered during excavations in Westminster, London in 1904, and donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum by Edward Warren (courtesy of Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, accession number 1910.18.1).



understandings of self and subjectivity (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Johnson 1987: 21–23). In English, the metaphor finds its expression in language that compares the person to a fragile and breakable vessel, containing fluid and labile emotions (Lupton 1998). It is also articulated in the descriptive terminology and material organization of vessels. Like vessels, people can be *full of joy*, *boiling over with passion*, *brimming with love*, *broken*, *shattered*, *exploding with anger*. Like people, vessels have feet, bellies, shoulders, necks, lips, and ears. Clearly the concept of person as vessel is deeply embedded in the English language and in the metaphors we use to orient ourselves to the world. Philosopher Mark Johnson (1987) argues that metaphors of containment are fundamental organizing properties of experience, growing out of our material engagement with the world. This may be the case, and indeed, archaeologists commonly find pottery vessels decorated with anthropomorphic motifs in many parts of the world, suggesting that the analogy between vessel and body is one that makes itself felt forcefully in many contexts (e.g. Fowler 2008: 51–56; Joyce 2008b). However, the understanding of fluid emotions as contained within a fragile body has a complex and particular history, one that simultaneously relates to the bounded and individuated sense of self, and also to humoral theories of the body. Viewing the vessel as a natural metaphor for the body masks the difference and variability possible in the metaphor of the body as container. It allows little space to distinguish between seventeenth-century popular understandings of the body as made manifest through apotropaic devices and those that were apparently emerging through Enlightenment scientific practice and foundationalist philosophies.

Archaeologist Ralph Merrifield (1987) collated and synthesized the fragmentary information on witch bottles over the course of his career, bringing the evidence together with documentary sources in his study of *The Archaeology of Ritual and Magic*, one of the very few archaeological studies of folk beliefs in the UK. Brian Hoggard has continued this research, searching for examples hidden in museum and private collections and working towards a synthesis of the available information. Although Merrifield noted that most of the few catalogued examples of witch bottles belonged to the second half of the seventeenth century, Hoggard has subsequently recorded many more English witch bottles. By 2001 his findings indicated that of 187 bottles identified, most (58%) date from before 1700, and that the first examples appear in the mid-sixteenth century (Hoggard 2004: 170), consistent with their documentation in contemporary sources. Although the use of these devices continues until the present day, in general their temporal distribution is consistent with the period of witchcraft accusations from the 1550s to the end of the seventeenth century.

Witch bottles are usually found, often inverted, placed under houses (Merrifield and Smedley 1958), in churchyards and graves (Merrifield 1955: 196), and particularly at thresholds and boundary places. Common locations include under domestic hearths and chimneys (Harvey 1945: 270; Merrifield *ibid.*), or house doors and

walls (e.g. Smedley and Owles 1965: 90), at field boundaries, town ditches, city boundaries (Maloney 1980), and watery places (Allen 1991). Brian Hoggard's (2004: 173) work shows that, although practices vary regionally, the majority of witch bottles have been located under hearths, with others mostly found under walls, floors, and thresholds. The contents are sharp and spiky, with iron nails and brass pins (often bent) and wooden splinters frequently found within them, together with bodily products: urine, hair, and nails. Some of the later seventeenth-century examples have been found containing felt hearts, sometimes pierced through with pins, and they seem to have been stoppered tightly, whether with cork, clay, or wax (Merrifield 1987: 163–165).

The witch bottle seems on first reflection to constitute the body as a bounded and fragile vessel, with a heart at its centre (and clearly an important element of its constitution). Contemporary accounts, such as one by the antiquarian John Aubrey, describe them as defensive in nature, used to attack witches and to protect people and animals from their predations (Aubrey 1696; see Merrifield 1987: 170–171). The vessel works through an extraordinary redundancy of symbolism to effect their sympathetic magic, simultaneously expressing what C. S. Peirce (1940b) would term iconic, indexical, and symbolic relationships with the desired object. Imitative (or iconic) in their similarity to a person (the face mask and maybe the vessel) and contagious (or indexical) in their physical connection (through the inclusion of hair and urine), the devices also include conventional symbolic elements in the form of the felt hearts, which represent the heart without resembling it or having any physical connection with it. They are confusing objects from the perspective of the individuated and indivisible modern body: the Bartman bottle itself with the often-fearsome bearded mask seems to represent the witch containing pins and needles to effect injury upon him or her, yet the bodily contents, which are being acted upon by the pins and needles, come from the victim. The manner in which they were understood to affect the witch was explained in a contemporary account:

Another way is to stop the urine of the Patient, close up in a bottle, and put into it three nails, pins or needles, with a little white salt, keeping the urine always warm: if you let it remain long in the bottle, it will endanger the witches life . . . The reason . . . is because there is part of the vital spirit of the Witch in it, for such is the subtlety of the Devil, that he will not suffer the Witch to infuse any poisonous matter into the body of man or beast, without some of the Witches blood mingled with it . . .

Joseph Blagrave's *Astrological Practice of Physick*
(1671: 154–155, quoted in Merrifield 1987: 169–170)

Crucially, in contrast to the individuated and indivisible understanding of vessel and bodies that is common to vessel-metaphors today, both witch and victim seem in this account to be represented in the same vessel. As Merrifield (1987: 170) notes in creating a magical link of sympathy with his or her victim, the witch is le

vulnerable to being attacked through the victim's bodily excretions and secretions. Witch bottles work from the supposition that not only can detached parts of the body (nails, hair, urine) act on another person from far away, but also that the body penetrates into the world through its excised parts and secretions, and in its movements and actions in the world it leaves traces and elements of itself behind. Consequently, witch bottles testify to a very different understanding of the body and its extensions. In this context it is nonsensical to attempt to determine whether the vessel represents witch or patient: it represents both at the same time and their entwined and dependent biographies.

Despite, and perhaps because of, this interpenetration of bodies, the metaphorical deployment of the Bartmann vessel shows a concern with bodily boundaries, a concern that makes a ceramic vessel an appropriate metaphor for the body. However, this seems to be a bounded body that is very different from modern understandings of the body as a vessel for the soul. Another account quoted by Merrifield (1987: 171–172) notes that the efficacy of the device may be improved by heating it until it explodes. The concern with urine and heat, and the stoppering of bodily excretions is in line with theories of bodily humours and temperaments. Within this framework of reference, the fluids and excretions of the body should flow for the continuance of good health: to prevent their egress was dangerous to a person's health and well being. The echoes of this conception remain in present day metaphorical discourses, which emphasize the proper regulation of the flow of emotion (Lupton 1998; Rublack 2002). Here we have a vessel with the heart at its centre (cf. Le Goff 1989) and where the proper circulation of fluids within and through the body is a concern, but where there are also anxieties about bodily boundaries, and the invasion of the body. This tension is negotiated through the gathering of boundaries and their holding in place (cf. Casey 1996: 24–25). Vessels are buried in walls and ditches, marking the edges of place and securing it as a contained and bounded entity, but they are also placed at vulnerable points of transition, particularly at thresholds and chimneys. The buried vessels act to regulate and protect passage into and out of place, mirroring concerns with the regulation of bodily excretions. In passing over thresholds held in place by witch bottles, or in preparing food on hearths under which bottles are buried, thoughts and memories are located in place creating different locales and densities of affective response and meaning within the household and broader community. Diane Purkiss (1995) has suggested that the witch disrupted the boundaries between the house and the exterior world, entering uninvited, and creating domestic disorder. The concern with bodily boundaries was therefore part of a broader concern with the holding of boundaries more generally, simultaneously revealing the place-making activities through which witches were constituted, and through which, as philosopher Edward Casey suggests, modes of containment were composed. To use C. S. Peirce's terminology, the interpretants that the witch bottles

elicited were affective as much as they were energetic. This affective recognition of the secured boundaries of the house and of the person informed and maintained the habitual practices that revolved around them, without necessarily entering into any more explicitly discursive realm.

These anxieties about boundaries and flows of excretions are clearly gendered, but space does not permit a detailed analysis here. I should at least note that not only was it mostly women who were accused and convicted in the trials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Bartow 1994) but witch bottles are often (although not always) found in domestic contexts, and seem to be associated with securing the edges and floor of the house. Historian Laura Gowing (2003: 73–80) has outlined how women's place in the hierarchies of household and community was often defined through the invasion and defence of bodily boundaries, with witches' bodily boundaries problematically masculinized, in that they were understood to be harder, more durable and defended, but also more extended and extendible, out of their houses and communities and into the homes and villages of others (cf. Gilchrist 1999: 109–145).

Witch bottles then have a lot to tell us about the changing understandings of the body in the seventeenth century. In particular, they indicate a concern with the bounded body in popular culture at a moment when the dualist framework of subjective mind and objective body was emerging, while the grotesque and transgressive elements of the medieval body (Bakhtin 1968; see also Stallybrass and White 1986) were increasingly being viewed as problematic and needing containment and regulation. They also emerge at a time when medical discourses on the body were focusing on contagion and its association with sin (Healy 2001: 40–43). Witch bottles therefore point to the incorporation of older conceptions of the body into the dualistic understanding of the body as a bounded vessel for the soul in the Modern period, suggesting that it would come to have such metaphoric power, because the space for its popular acceptance had already been prepared (cf. Healy 2001: 18). In the context of witch bottles we can detect the submerged echoes of the Galenic flows of substances in the metaphors of the emotion-filled body as we use them today (Lupton 1998; cf. Grosz 1994), but tied to an understanding of the body as vessel-like, one that from the eighteenth century onwards no longer needed the iconic elements of the Bellarmine bottle for its force and efficacy. As Deborah Lupton (1998: 97) notes, emotions are viewed as 'problematic in that they tend to dissolve the boundaries between outside and inside'; they relate to Galenic understandings of the body that have been incorporated and bottled in the modern body. The witch bottles seem to speak to a broader anxiety about bodily boundaries in the sixteenth to seventeenth century, one that was being articulated at a popular level through apotropaic devices, as much as through the philosophical discourse of body and soul.

RELATIONSHIPS AFTER DEATH:

FORENSIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Just as the spatial boundaries of the modern embodied self are not firmly delineated, neither are the temporal boundaries. As socio-cultural anthropologists Elizabeth Hallam, Jenny Hockey, and Glennys Howarth note (1999), the dead body presents particular challenges for theories of embodiment. Within a liberal humanist framework, the dead *qua* dead are understood to be body only, with no agency or mind. Their elision from discussions of embodied experience reveals the continuing power of the mind-body split that theories of embodiment attempt to overcome. Archaeologist Sarah Tarlow distinguishes the particular archaeological focus on the responses of the living to the death of others from the sociological interest (e.g. Shilling 1993) in personal preparation for one's own anticipated death (Tarlow 2002: 86). The archaeological focus on those who prepare and dispose of the body grows from the rationalist conviction that, as matter without mind, the corpse has no embodied agency and no potential to act. It is clear from the treatment of the dead body that a concept of the body as a container for the mind or soul remains a powerful and unspoken metaphorical trope, both within archaeology and elsewhere. If the body is a container, then the thing it contains disappears with death, leaving a very different sort of entity behind. This conception of the 'empty vessel' of the body, abandoned after death may seem to have created the conditions of possibility for the emergence of archaeological exhumation and osteological analysis. However, the sanctioned post-mortem interventions of western science have always drawn on a range of beliefs about the dead body, including recognition of its continuing agency after death (Ariès 1981: 353–395; Richardson 1987; Tarlow 2008; Crossland 2009a). This calls for a questioning of the archaeological body after death as a naturalized and pre-discursive category, in the same way that the living body has been questioned. Death may be viewed as a transformation of embodiment (Boyd 2002: 142) rather than its end, and the practice of archaeology demands a theory of embodiment that integrates the dead as well as the lived body. The question of whether 'embodiment' remains an appropriate term for this conception reveals the degree to which the dead are positioned as cut off and separate from the living within the framework of analysis that we currently use.

A theory of embodied experience that moves beyond a Cartesian understanding of rationality must necessarily acknowledge the materiality and potentiality of the dead body. In anthropology, studies such as Robert Hertz's (1960) survey of secondary burial practices have provided illustrations of the ways in which the dead are commonly understood to have agency, and to continue to embody the person in some manner after death. This is something that may be recognized

archaeologically in many times and places whether in the Inka customs of feeding and clothing the dead (e.g. Sillar 1992; Salomon 1995), or in secondary burial practices recognized in the Neolithic and elsewhere (e.g. Barrett 1988). Furthermore, an interrogation of the possibilities of embodiment for the dead would not only recognize that feelings or experiences are often attributed to the dead by the living, but would also explore the ways in which the dead body can disrupt and intrude upon human social life (cf. Peirce 1940a). To contribute some notes to this discussion I now turn to the popular discourse of forensic exhumation. This illustrates how, even within the framework of the most apparently empirical and rational of approaches, the agency of individuals is nevertheless understood to persist past death (a more detailed account is given in Crossland 2009b).

The portrayal of human bodies as objectified evidence is fundamental to the discourse of forensic archaeology, used to underwrite truth claims that archaeologists make when testifying in court in the context of criminal proceedings, or in the prosecution of those responsible for human rights abuses. In Foucault and Butler's terms, the status of the corpse as an object is a material effect of its production through discourses of science, law, and archaeology (amongst others). Exploring the ways in which the materiality of the corpse is constituted through acts of excavation and analysis reveals the ways in which the idiom of empiricism marks out the body as dead and as separate from the living. However, somewhat surprisingly, it also reveals recognition of the corpse's agency, elaborated in the language of mass media accounts of forensic practice. In the popular empiricism of these accounts, it is not only facts that speak for themselves, but also the dead. This is made visible in the titles of works such as 'Dead men do tell tales' (Maples and Browning 1994) or 'What the corpse revealed' (Miller 1999). Constantly reiterated is the ability of the corpse to 'speak', to 'reveal', and to 'accuse' (Crossland 2009b: 74–76). These accounts show how the dead are understood as persistently embodied even within a framework that assumes a radical rupture between living and dead. Although the materiality of the corpse is situated within a discursive field that brings it into being as a corpse and as an object that can be excavated and dissected, at the same time elements of the corpse's materiality escape and disrupt this field, contributing to the perception of the corpse as active and 'eminded' (Ingold 2000a: 170–171). The resemblance of the corpse to the living, and the knowledge and memory of human bodies of those who come into the corpse's vicinity, make it difficult, if not impossible to treat as an object. Even cadavers voluntarily donated for medical dissection are covered to hide their shape and features, in this way enabling the disaggregation of the body to take place (Smith and Kleinman 1989). In this sense discursive effects are never complete or totalizing, but are resisted and modified, not through the simple agency of the material world, but through the complex and interactive ways in which material significance emerges. While C. S. Peirce argued that it is in the interruption of the flow of semeiosis that the potential for habit change exists (Peirce 1940c), the ways in

which these interruptions and aporiae appear are conditioned by the embodied understanding and memory of past conditions (Peirce 1940d: 230). More generally it shows how the ghostly presence of the dead asserts their continuing agency among the living, both past and present, an appreciation of which extends and complicates an embodied understanding of archaeological practice (Crossland 2002).

This recognition of the agency of the dead simultaneously reveals a foundationalist appeal to the irreducible materiality of the body, creating a solid empirical ground for scientific interpretation, while also acknowledging the power of the dead-as-fetish to destabilize, disrupt, and challenge the representational field that it inhabits. Socio-cultural anthropologist Peter Pels (1998: 91–92) observes that the fetish 'beckon[s] its students to sojourn in the border zones that divide mind and matter, the animate and inanimate', encouraging the questioning of 'boundaries between things and the distinctions they are held to delineate'. The archaeological body indeed attracts attention to its temporal and spatial boundaries, particularly in the crisis moments of permeability and breakdown, illustrating how even the most empirical discourse of forensic science holds at its heart an affective appeal to emotion and 'subjective' experience, one that far from damaging the truth claims it makes, humanizes them and situates them within the ebb and flow of ongoing human relationships. Study of these boundaries calls attention to the relationships between co-inhabitants of the world, providing ways to undercut the Cartesian settlement that has underwritten much of archaeological practice and theory.

CONCLUSIONS

These studies illustrate how the tying together of the literature on embodiment together with that on materiality creates a space for alternate narratives of the coming into being of the bounded body, revealing in the process the complex beliefs about the body that we draw upon and reproduce through the embodied practice of archaeology. Although a focus on the ways in which past human lives were mediated through the material worlds that they inhabited has underwritten much archaeological theory since the 1960s, it is only recently that archaeologists have broadened the scope of their work to consider the ontological groundings of archaeological practice more critically. This opens up a range of possibilities for study, whether in terms of reformulating our understandings of the relationships between humans and non-humans both in the past and in the present; in the problematizing of bodily surfaces and boundaries as something that should be questioned rather than taken as a given (e.g. Looper 2003; Meskell 2004; Joyce

2005); or in rethinking the apparently foundational biological body as something that is continually made and remade through practice (Sofaer 2006a). Peircean approaches encourage a closer attention to the relationships between humans and the material world (Preucel 2006), allowing a refiguring of representation as itself an embodied practice that works to undermine subject-object distinctions. In this way Peirce's semeiotic brings the literatures on materiality and embodiment into productive conversation. In attending to the material world, we can consider the ways in which it can challenge, change, or shape embodied understandings of how to go on, bringing into view the relational emergence of affective response and techniques of the body. These in turn may be situated as interpretants involved in the habitual reproduction of human and non-human worlds. A Peircean orientation therefore provides useful points of intersection with studies of affect and emotion, whether in archaeology (Tarlow 2000; Hamilakis 2002; Gosden 2004a) or elsewhere (e.g. Damasio 2000; Clough and Halley 2007; Thrift 2007) as well as with technology studies (e.g. Lemonnier 1992: 79–103). This opens a space to rethink our tangible engagements with archaeological evidence as forms of representation (Crossland 2009b), as well as considering how past forms of self and person were embodied and constructed through the material world.