Memory Work

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Introduction

Memory, Materiality, and Depositional Practice

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This volume focuses on ways in which material culture engages in the transmission of memory and how archaeologists use knowledge of these interactions to interpret identity, ritual practice, political action, and other facets of past societies. There has been a resurgence of interest in material culture studies in recent years, and many of these studies address how people and objects intersect in the construction and transmission of social memory. The basis of much of this new research on material culture is a focus on the interaction of humans and materials within different social contexts or sets of interrelationships, or what is now being called the *materiality* of social life (Meskell 2004:6; see also Buchli 2004; DeMarrais et al. 2004; Graves-Brown 2000; Meskell 2005; Miller 2005; Preucel and Meskell 2004). This research is opening up many new ways of thinking about the manner in which people and objects shape each other, including the meaning objects have for those who use them.

In tandem with the renewal of interest in material culture, memory studies have become a growing topic of interdisciplinary study (Climo and Cattell 2002; Olick and Robbins 1998). We also view our work as contributing to memory studies, a field that has seen remarkable growth but with highly disparate methods, theories, and interpretations. Memory studies have great potential for archaeology because of their diachronic focus on

the transmission and transformation of social practices. Although many of these studies of social memory use objects or other forms of material culture as illustrative, fewer explicitly concentrate on how memory and material practices are interdependent features of social life. Important exceptions include the work of a number of material culture theorists specifically focusing on memory (for example, Küchler 1987, 1993, 1997, 2002; Küchler and Melion 1991), the contributors to an edited volume entitled *Archaeologies of Memory* (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003), studies of mortuary ritual and memory (for example, Chesson 2001; Hallam and Hockey 2001; Tarlow 1999; Williams 2004), and pieces directly addressing how materiality and memory intersect (for example, Hendon 2000; Joyce 2000a; Meskell 2004). Our work builds on this previous research and seeks to understand how memory work is related to the objects, features, and deposits that are the basis for archaeological interpretations. In this volume, we look at material practices through a number of archaeological projects to understand how people constructed social life through their memory work.

Our use of the term "memory work" in this book has two meanings. First, it refers to the many social practices that create memories, including recalling, reshaping, forgetting, inventing, coordinating, and transmitting. As several anthropologists and sociologists have observed in their use of the concept of memory work, memories are made, not just experienced (Jansen 2007; Krause 2005; Litzinger 1998; Stoler and Strassler 2000). It is in this active construction that material traces are left behind and that the contributors of this book, as archaeologists, are especially adept at uncovering. Memory work is not just about the material traces left behind, however; it also is about understanding the materiality of those practices or the interaction of humans and materials within a set of social relationships (Meskell 2004:6). Once understood within their cultural contexts, all material traces are the residues of memory-making relationships, albeit in different social, spatial, and temporal settings. In this book we focus on a set of case studies that illustrate how social memories were made through repeated, patterned, and engaged social and material practices. These practices themselves were quite varied from case to case, but the essays are linked by the evidence they bring to bear on the materiality of memory making.

Second, "memory work" also refers to the interpretive activities we scholars follow when studying social memory. Collectively the contributors to this book form a group of archaeologists who have made it our project to understand the ways in which social memory can be looked at in past

and present societies. We came together initially as part of a seminar at the School of American Research (now the School for Advanced Research), reworked our papers for a session at the American Anthropological Association meetings, and then reworked them again for this book. Although this volume contains contributions that focus on contexts from around the world, we share a consistent perspective on the need to inform memory studies through a theoretical approach that incorporates practice, agency, and materiality.

We also share a common goal to map out the different ways in which social memories in past societies can be programmatically and tangibly studied. Our goal is to use our memory work to construct new interpretations about these societies that otherwise might not be possible. Such an approach requires that we confront the intersections of a number of fundamental theoretical issues such as those between memory and materiality, knowledge and practice, subjects and objects, and the past and the present. We do not construe these intersections dichotomously, but instead emphasize the layers of complexity within or between these categories—an approach that is more consistent with the many ways that people made the past into the present through their interactions with material things.

In this chapter we provide brief overviews of contemporary memory and material culture/materiality studies. Our goal is to bring out how anthropologists, including archaeologists, have been looking at the intersection of these two subjects. Lastly, we place the case studies in this volume within the context of this literature, emphasizing key themes that have emerged from our work.

FROM COLLECTIVE MEMORY TO MEMORY WORK

The study of memory is a truly interdisciplinary project with prominent research in literature, philosophy, psychology, history, sociology, and anthropology. Archaeological research on memory is relatively recent, and as the volume edited by Ruth Van Dyke and Susan Alcock (2003) demonstrates, archaeologists draw somewhat eclectically from these sources, especially from history, sociology, and anthropology. The literature in anthropology and its allied fields is vast, but there are several important changes in the literature that have emerged (see especially the reviews of Climo and Cattell 2002; Jansen 2007:958; Olick and Robbins 1998). These include (1) a fundamental theoretical shift from the study of social structures to that of "practice theory" (for example, Bourdieu 1977, 1990) and agency, which has led to the rejection of the broader term of "collective memory" in favor of "social memory"; (2) greater attention to how memory is an important

part of everyday life (de Certeau 1984)—not just of large-scale commemorative events; (3) how memory work is replete with "semiotic textures" (Jansen 2007:958) showing how memory and meaning are inextricably related; and (4) that memory work subsumes a range of practices, including remembering and forgetting (Litzinger 1998:226). The above trends crosscut several disciplines, making scholarship on memory studies highly interdisciplinary. In addition, as Jansen (2007) points out, current trends in memory research are highly dependent on the empirical topics of interest. Today, memory studies variably emphasize different social scales of analysis (the individual, group, or nation), the context (sites) of memory-making events and places, the selective and exclusive nature of memory work, and/or the symbolic tools of memory work and their manipulation.

Although agency theory does not preclude the agency of groups, one of the most important historical shifts in memory studies has been in directing attention away from the Durkheimian idea of a "collective memory" that is somehow separate from the memories of individuals. This term, originally coined by Émile Durkheim and elaborated upon by his student Maurice Halbwachs (1925, 1992), is still used in the literature, although there has been a preference by many authors to replace it with "social memory" to highlight the many social contexts in which memories are made and the role of individuals in the process of remembering (Climo and Cattell 2002; Fentress and Wickham 1992; Wertsch 2002). Memory does not reside in, and is not transmitted by, cultures but in people as members of social groups. Fentress and Wickham (1992), for example, entitled their book *Social Memory* to emphasize that it is the interaction of individuals as members of different collectives who engage in memory making that is important. The vast literature on oral history is one venue in which anthropologists, public historians, and others have studied how individuals engage in the process of remembering because this is one area where there is reliance on individuals' memory rather than on texts (Fentress and Wickham 1992:2). The authors of the chapters in our volume also use the term "social memory" instead of "collective memory" to mark the importance of different social scales and the various roles of individuals and agency in memory work. As we discuss below, however, our emphasis is on material culture, although oral histories may be important sources for understanding the persistence of some material practices through time (for example, Mills, Pauketat, and Walker, this volume).

Paul Connerton's (1989) book, *How Societies Remember*, also emphasizes the idea that it is membership in a social group—rather than the collective or culture as a whole—that defines the degree of similarity in remember-

ing. His research is transitional in the anthropological literature because he recognized that memory was a part of the construction of individual personhood and therefore an important part of social identity. The literature on identity and memory is now quite vast, but importantly, Connerton presented two ways in which the performative, habitual aspects of commemorative practices produce social memory: through bodily or incorporating practices and through inscribing practices, including writing. Drawing on a number of sources, especially Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990), Connerton's terminology and approach have had an impact on the ways in which archaeologists have applied memory studies in their work. But rather than seeing social memories as adhering rather mechanically to either incorporating or inscribing practices, these practices should be viewed as working together to illustrate how memory is transmitted and embodied through practice. In this way, social memory becomes more active and is better described through acts of remembering, rather than as an objectified albeit intangible thing or something that is discoverable existing outside of people's lived experience.

Thus, in contrast to Connerton's explicit emphasis on commemorative ceremonies, another shift in the literature is the recognition that memory construction is part of everyday life. It contains strategies and tactics that are the result of "models of interaction" (de Certeau 1984). The strategies and tactics of memory construction may include the more visible and more easily studied commemorative acts, but materially marked moments of memory work are everywhere. As we discuss below, the prevalence of these materially marked moments allows memory work to be studied in many different contexts and through a range of material practices. In some research (for example, Stahl's and Nielsen's chapters in this volume), it allows a blurring of the distinction between the everyday and the ritual for situating memory work (see also Bradley 2003, 2005; Brück 1999). Nonetheless, because rituals can produce highly visible material records that are well preserved archaeologically, and because rituals are highly charged moments of memory work, other contributors to our volume focus on the ways in which memory work was expressed through small- and large-scale events that were part of ritual practice (in the sense of Bell 1992, 1997).

Whether dealing with daily or more periodically marked events, the shift in attention to the range of contexts in which memory work takes place underscores the importance of seeing the process as constitutive of social life (Giddens 1984), rather than simply a tool used by particular social actors. Thus, there has been an explicit shift in language from "memory" to "remembering" (for example, Wertsch 2002:17). Memory is not

something out there to be discovered but a process that is continually changed through the active engagement of people in remembering (and other forms of memory work). An overobjectification of social memory diminishes the value of memory studies for understanding how the process of remembering can be transformative. This emphasis parallels the theoretical shift from instrumentalist to constructivist positions in the social sciences. Nonetheless, the distinction can be overemphasized: memory making is a process that constructs social life, but it also may be used as a means to an end, particularly in political actions. For example, the selective remembering that can occur when events are intentionally erased from national histories is instrumental at the same time as it reconstructs the social life of those who lived that history and the lives of their descendants. Similarly, the past may be used to legitimize the present—even if that past never happened in what Hobsbawm (1983) calls "the invention of tradition."

A final trend in memory studies is greater attention to the ways in which meaning is ascribed during memory work. Representation has always been important in the process of historical recollection. The topic of representation has been of increasing importance in the anthropological literature on memory and material culture (for example, Küchler and Melion 1991) and museum studies. Each cultural relationship ascribes a different form of meaning to objects within social interactions. For those who use them, the value of objects may be derived from their intrinsic qualities, such as their color or brilliance (Hosler 1994; Jones and MacGregor 2002; Saunders 1999, 2001), their place of origin (Bradley 2000; Helms 1993), and/or the networks that they have passed through.

Museums are an example of sites of memory (Nora 1989) in that they provide a space for housing and displaying the material objects that are used in commemorative practices, whether they are images, three-dimensional objects, or texts. Sites of memory are not restricted to museums and may also include parks and other places and landscapes. In some of them, historically documented events occurred; in others, the past is interpreted for the public (for example, Shackel 2000). Others may be places that are known from traditional histories and become important loci for memory work through their incorporation into contemporary ethnohistorical documentation (for example, Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2006).

The spatial dimension of memory work is one with which archaeologists have a particular affinity. Research on representation therefore intersects with sites of memory in the archaeological literature on landscapes and memory (for example, Alcock 2002; Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Bender, ed. 1993; Bradley 1998; Edmonds 1999; Hirsch and O'Hanlon

1995; Thomas 1999b; Tilley 1994; Van Dyke 2003). Many of these studies have taken an explicitly phenomenological approach inspired by Christopher Tilley. Although some of the contributors to these volumes tack back and forth between places and the objects deposited in these places, the vast majority of these studies foreground the ways in which monuments were transformed and then themselves became transformative of social practices. In short, landscapes *of* memory became an important bridge to the discussion of landscapes *in* memory (Bender 1993:11), as in Parmentier's (1985) distinction between signs in history and signs of history (see also Ferguson and Preucel 2005; Preucel 2006:85–86). The idea of landscapes in memory is exemplified in the chapter in this volume by Susan Gillespie, who discusses how architecture and features, once created, control future practices by channeling or concretizing subsequent depositional practices in places or sites of memory. Gillespie reexamines the stratigraphic evidence at the Olmec site of La Venta (900–500 BCE) to define relationships between collective memories and building activities. She focuses on how practice creates sacred places and how those places in turn recreate people and their memories. She traces the biography or life history of the complex's platforms, altars, and spectacular deposits of serpentine to construct a new interpretation of the history of La Venta.

That memory work includes a number of different practices, including both remembering and forgetting, has been a theme in many anthropological studies. Through her work on the destruction of monuments (Küchler 1999), and especially the New Guinea *malanggan* (Küchler 1987, 1993, 2002), Susanne Küchler has been at the forefront of bringing the memory practice of forgetting into the anthropological study of social memory (see also Forty and Küchler 1999; Küchler and Melion 1991). Much of the work in this area analyzes the ways in which memory work can be influenced by political action, but it also addresses a key area in interdisciplinary studies: how are memories selectively constructed, by whom, and for what purpose? Remembering and forgetting are important parts of memorials to the deceased, and thus this theme has become an integral part of mortuary studies in anthropology (for example, Chesson 2001; Hallam and Hockey 2001). The often paradoxical relationship between remembering and forgetting is discussed in our volume by Mills. She emphasizes that there are many ways in which this intersection is realized, including secreting or hiding (Hendon 2000), intentional destruction, and the retirement of rooms, objects, and settlements when residents migrate to new places.

As our brief discussion indicates, anthropologists' and especially archaeologists' research on memory has often involved the intersection of memory

work with material things. Whether concerned with monuments or modifications of the landscape, mnemonics for tracing back lineages, memorials to important historical figures, or images that capture events or people, the literature on memory is replete with material culture. Archae-ologists have found the anthropological works that discuss the intersection of memory with the material world the most rewarding. But at the same time that memory studies have been transformed by wider trends in the discipline, so, too, have material culture studies.

FROM MATERIAL CULTURE TO MATERIALITY

As Bjørnar Olsen (2003) recently pointed out, material culture has tended to be marginalized in the contemporary social science research despite the fact that things are a fundamental part of social life. Yet there has been a resurgence of interest in material culture on the part of ethnographers and archaeologists, who have made important contributions to building theories of material life (for example, Appadurai 1986; Buchli 2002; Knappett 2005; Meskell 2004; Miller 2005; Myers 2001; Schiffer and Miller 1999). Many of these scholars are archaeologists who have turned to modern material culture studies in order to look at consumption and commodification as part of globalization processes and/or to show how theories of material culture bridge relations between people and things in multiple cultural contexts.

A pivotal volume in the burgeoning new material culture studies was *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Appadurai 1986). Although most of the contributors are not archaeologists, several of the themes in this volume have been extensively drawn upon by archaeologists (including innumerable versions of the title). Two of the most important themes in this volume are that things have different values and meanings depending on their cultural contexts, and that the same object can endure through changes in valuation and meaning depending on its biography. For example, things that were originally produced as goods for exchange have one set of meanings, but when they later circulate as commodities in the global market, they have another. That objects may have transient values depending on the point in their life history was especially brought out in the chapter by Igor Kopytoff (1986) on the cultural biographies of things. The biographical approach can be used to show how the process of taking objects from one context and placing them in another transforms their value and meaning.

The topic of object or artifact biographies is now encountered in a number of works by archaeologists (Gosden and Marshall 1999; Meskell

2004) and historians of technology (for example, Hoskins 1998). The concept is a broad one, however, encompassing a number of theoretical and methodological approaches. Current studies of material culture in archaeology are spread across a number of different archaeologies, including behavioral/processual, cognitive/processual, and postprocessual approaches. Various terms are used, including "life histories," "structured deposition," and "object biographies." All of these are genealogical approaches to some extent, but with different assumptions and outcomes. The term "materiality" is being incorporated more and more, but often there is little specificity in its definition. Nonetheless, there is a common theme that objects have histories—that is, they have genealogies.

One of the earliest genealogical approaches in archaeology was developed in the behavioral archaeology of Michael Schiffer and his colleagues, which explicitly focuses on the life history of artifacts (for example, LaMotta and Schiffer 1999; Schiffer 1975, 1976; Schiffer and Skibo 1997; Walker 1995; Walker et al. 2000). Life histories of artifacts are based on the concept of behavioral chains, which link different activities to all stages of artifact production, distribution, and consumption. The life history approach is more encompassing than the similar-sounding *chaîne opératoire* approach begun by André Leroi-Gourhan (1964) and developed by French archaeologists to study artifact manufacture (especially chipped stone artifacts; see Bleed 2001). In contrast to the chaîne opératoire approach, the life history approach also considers what happens to objects after they are manufactured. Thus, methodologically, it is closer to the object biographies discussed by Kopytoff (1986), although there has not been the same attention to the value and meaning of objects in different social settings. Earlier work of the behavioral/processual school focused on using life histories to understand the technological choices that were made in production, largely relating production to use (for example, Schiffer and Skibo 1997). More recent contributions within this approach to life histories have focused on the consumption and discard portions of the behavioral chain, such as Schiffer's engagement with modern material culture (for example, Schiffer 1991, 1994), LaMotta and Schiffer's (1999) discussion of cultural and noncultural formation processes that structure the deposition and depletion of objects in houses, and Walker's (1995, 1999; Walker et al. 2000; Walker and Lucero 2000; Walker and Schiffer 2006) observations on how ritual objects are differentially deposited based on their histories as singularities. Walker's more recent work, especially with Lucero, explicitly incorporates agency theory to look at how artifact life histories, ritual, and politics intersect.

Paralleling the study of life histories by the behavioral/processualists in the United States was the use of the term "structured deposition" in the United Kingdom. Originally coined by Richards and Thomas (1984), it referred to Neolithic deposits that were distinct in some way from everyday domestic trash and instead were the result of ritual activity (see Pollard, this volume). They interpreted structured deposits as purposefully created and symbolically motivated. Richards and Thomas's interpretations were part of a break from processual archaeology, incorporating many of the ideas of symbolic and structural archaeology that were just beginning to be introduced into the literature (for example, Hodder 1982). As Pollard's chapter in this volume discusses, the concept of structured deposition presented several problems, largely because all deposition is structured in some way and because these deposits were seen as somehow distinct from everyday life. Nonetheless, we think that the concept of structured deposition is quite important in the development of a set of interpretive methods that uses depositional practice to look at memory and materiality.

Gosden (2005) has recently suggested that there are two basic ways to look at object biographies: their genealogy and source. His separation of these two parts of the interartifactual domain reflects increasing interest on the part of archaeologists with the idea that where something originally came from (including where the raw materials were procured) is something that adds significance to the object. This concept is similar to that of Bradley's (2000) "pieces of places," in which objects have meaning because of the association of those places with important events, people, and so on. The genealogy of objects is also important, and we can view these along a continuum of objects that are expediently collected, used, and discarded on one end (and therefore having little genealogy), and highly valued heirlooms that are often inalienable goods on the other (Weiner 1992; see also Lillios 2003; Mills 2004).

Although many archaeologists focus exclusively on genealogies of particular objects (the biographical approach), we think that a more productive approach is to focus on genealogies of practices. Pauketat and Alt (2005) emphasize the latter in their discussion of "agency in a postmold." Importantly, these are practices that have great time depth and are revealing in the degree of similarity of practice—including memory practices—that characterize Mississippian societies over long periods of time. Like Joyce and Lopiparo (2005), Pauketat and Alt view agency as something that is archaeologically accessible. In Joyce and Lopiparo's case, they advocate the idea that archaeology's unique contribution to studies of agency (and materiality) is by viewing the past practices of past peoples through

sequences of actions, chains, networks, and citations. These sequences are, however, not simply about the traditional idea of behavioral chains, or châines opératoires, but rather about viewing them as embedded within the materiality of past practices. Thus, there is a difference between object biographies and genealogies of practice: the latter is more inclusive than the former.

This embedding of object biographies within a broader field of material practices is one of the reasons that there has been a rejection of the term "structured deposits" (for example, Richards and Thomas 1984) to refer to intentional acts of object burial. As Pollard discusses in his chapter in this volume, the fallacy of the idea that deposits can be unstructured undermines the use of structured deposits as a separate entity. All deposits are structured in some way, and it is in how those deposits are structured that engages us in memory studies. Pollard addresses the evolving theoretical consideration of the concept of structured deposition, arguing that some of the most fruitful approaches entail recognizing that objects are also subjects in many cultures and that deposits provide "a context in which the status and roles" of human and other material participants (artifacts, architecture) "are highlighted and brought to the fore." Like Stahl (this volume), he recognizes that the variable nature or character of the agency of people and objects will vary cross-culturally and that the organization of deposits provides archaeologists with a window into these past object worlds (in the sense of Meskell 2004). He illustrates his argument in a case study of Etton Closure, a fourth century BCE British ditch monument. Like the people, animals and things (cattle, axes, and fossils) were "gathered/herded, controlled, killed, and combined to forge new relationships between agent laden people and things." In part the attempt to "control, channel and pay respect to these various agencies" led to the depositional patterns at this site, and these practices are examples of genealogies of practice.

Despite the fact that contemporary material culture studies may emphasize concepts of interest to archaeologists, most do not build the necessary linkages that are required for interpreting memory from the archaeological record. These linkages must be built by tacking back and forth between social interpretations and archaeological deposits. Key to this interpretive process is that there must be some grounding in the material practices that render social memory visible in the archaeological record. These practices are not unique, disconnected events but part of a string of repeated actions that are learned, transmitted, and transformed. People construct social memories through their engagement with other

people (living as well as ancestral) and through their interaction with varieties of material culture. The latter may include different kinds of substances, sediments, buildings, artifacts, unmodified objects, and even animals that are used and deposited in archaeological sites.

Thus, within the literature on "things" (to use the broadest term), there has been an important change from the use of the term "material culture" to that of "materiality" that is important for linking memory to things. This shift in meaning is similar to the change from "memory" to "remembering" in that it emphasizes the shift from objects to the ways in which objects (and monuments, features, and so on) are actively used in social practices. Many of the contributors to this volume also explicitly link their research on memory work to studies of materiality, practice, and agency (DeMarrais et al. 2004; Gosden 1994; Graves-Brown 2000; Joyce 2000a; Meskell 2003, 2004, 2005; Miller 1987; Miller, ed. 2005; Mills 2004; Owoc 2005; Pauketat 2003b; Pauketat and Alt 2004; Preucel and Meskell 2004; Thomas 1997, 1999b, 2000). Unlike studies of material culture, the concept of materiality expresses a fundamental assumption about the physicality of practice and the ways that objects and people interact.

Central to understanding materiality is its relationship to agency. Much of the intersectional work on materiality and agency builds on the ideas of Bruno Latour (1993, 1999, 2005) and Alfred Gell (1993, 1996, 1998). Latour and Gell each have questioned the anthropocentric assumption that only people possess agency. In so doing they have challenged the boundary between people as subjects and artifacts as objects. Latour argues that artifacts cause actions and that their effects have consequences. Some of those materials or simply "nonhumans" (Latour 1999) are perceived as animate and possessing agency, and some are not. But in all cases they impact action and exist in a symmetrical relationship to human social actors (Latour 1999:182). Therefore he prefers to describe them as social actors as important as any human and applies the linguistic term "actants" to them to emphasize the symmetrical or equal nature of people and things. Within Latour's actor network theory, all actants have agency. This leads him to deny many of the fundamental assumptions of the modern/postmodern debate, preferring to go beyond a social theory based on humans as the ultimate source of agency. In many ways this is a return to pre-Durkheimian notions of the social because it does not place objects in opposition to people (Pinney 2005:258). Thus, like several other anthropologists (for example, Strathern 1990; Weiner 1992), Latour shows stronger connections to the approaches of Marcel Mauss when addressing material things. In this volume, Rosemary Joyce makes the use of the term

"actant" more explicit for archaeologists by framing Latour's ideas within an approach that sees all actants (humans and nonhumans) as part of a network "whose changing articulations become our focus."

Although Gell was less willing to make a total commitment to nonhumans as actants, he sought to understand how people's agency is conditioned by their reactions to objects and even their attribution of agency to objects. He coined the term "secondary agency" to describe the effects of human agency as realized through objects and thereby stopped short of according them the full-blown analytical equality sought by Latour. Miller (2005:13) summarizes their different approaches: "While Latour is looking for the nonhumans below the level of human agency, Gell is looking through the objects to embedded human agency we infer they contain." He notes a tension between the abstraction of theoretical solutions to the subject/object dilemma, which he refers to as a philosophical argument, and the grounded albeit "messy terrain of ethnography," which he believes provides a healthy check on such abstractions. Because ours is an archaeological volume, it incorporates this tension between social theory and ethnography over the materiality of subjects and objects and complicates it by applying another layer of tension—that between the abstraction of theory-laden inferences and the terrain of archaeological deposits. Shanks and Tilley (1987) once called this the double hermeneutic of archaeology.

Inspired by Gell's notion of agency as the abduction or inference of agency by people to things (see also Gosden 2005; Olsen 2003) and Latour's desire to seek a nonanthropocentric solution to the subject/object problem, Walker (this volume) considers the role of materiality in the study of prehistoric religion. He argues that archaeologists can identify the life histories of spirits by examining the reactions of people to things they may have inhabited. He finds that anthropocentric thinking hampers an archaeological study of religion and draws on Pueblo people's memory work or oral traditions that link the underworld of the dead with the world of the living to explain the deposition of dogs and human remains in ceremonial buildings. He argues that a nonanthropocentric understanding of society encourages archaeologists to interpret specific kinds of deposits as the results of interactions between human and nonhuman agents, including animals and spiritual forces. He finds that when we recognize that dogs, witches, and buildings are potential members of societies, then the material patterns of the archaeological record become more comprehensible.

Similarly, Lucero explores the processes of ensoulment and then de-animation among Classic Maya commoners at the site of Saturday Creek, Belize. She argues that strata associated with household funerary practices

involved the simultaneous making of sacred places and the memories about those places. Mortuary customs required the creation of new houses, which involved dedication ceremonies, the de-animation of older houses, and the particular inclusion of grave goods. The logic of such practices is similar across wealthier and poorer households, albeit the elite nature of the objects involved differed between the two contexts. Perhaps one might argue that the houses, like the people, were also themselves poorer or richer rather than simply the products of the poor and rich. As a result status was created and maintained through the very interaction involved in the ensoulment and de-animation of houses. Therefore, as she notes, "The depositional sequence of a structure thus embodies histories of the people who lived and died within its walls just as much as it chronicles building, razing, and re-building."

Thus, whether or not we take a Latourian approach, in which these objects, materials, or simply "nonhumans" are viewed as social actors in their own right, we recognize that many materials were perceived as animate and possessing agency by those who made, used, and deposited them. It is in what Gell (1998) calls this "interartifactual domain" that "connectivities," "attachments," and "resemblances" are created—a domain in which "subjects and objects do not stand in opposition from each other" (Küchler 2005:210) but are complementary. Memory work is therefore understood as an active process in which "making and doing constitutes both persons and things" (Myers 2005:74).

RELATING MEMORY TO MATERIAL PRACTICES

Archaeological deposits are contexts in which memory practices are materialized. As we stated in the beginning of this introduction, we ascribe to the view that all memory practices have material consequences—that they are materialized through practice. Thus, a practice approach is at the heart of how, archaeologically, we can begin to differentiate different forms of memory work in the past. Understanding the spatial and temporal distribution of practices that produced archaeological deposits is a fundamental part of connecting memory and materiality. It requires the same skills that archaeologists use in any research program, but with the added layer of attention to the relationality of materials (including people). This is an important tenet of actor network theory, but it should be familiar to all archaeologists. Context is everything, and in order to understand materiality, it is important that archaeologists differentiate depositional processes produced as part of human practice from those produced through natural forces, and that the content, form, frequency, and distribution of materials be assessed.

Because interpretations of memory and materiality focus on practice, there has been a recursive relationship of techniques of archaeological fieldwork and the scale and precision with which interpretations of practice have been attempted. For example, it would be difficult to talk about the daily practices without being able to differentiate deposits that were made at this level of temporality from those that were produced during more occasional calendrical events, such as annual large-scale feasting. Both can be the subject of studies of the reproduction of memory and its intersection with practice, but the interpretations of daily practices rest on finergrained (literally) studies of how sediments accumulate within deposits using techniques such as micromorphology and the differentiation of layers of plaster (for example, Hodder and Cessford 2004), while large-scale feasting might better be understood in terms of deviations from these smaller-scale accumulations.

The issue of intentionality is implied in many of the previous studies of depositional practice and materiality. We do not agree that it is necessary to assign intentionality to the archaeological materials that we study. Many practices are small in scale, and the results of these activities in the archaeological record are not necessarily the result of intentional acts of discard. In fact, it is this blurring of the distinction between acts of deposition and habitual practices that results in the accumulation of deposits over long periods of time, and that is underscored by several of the authors in this volume (see especially the chapters by Joyce, Pauketat, and Stahl). Whether intentional or not, archaeological deposits are created through different practices, and it is in the differentiation of those social practices and their relationships to memory production that we find our toehold on interpretation, not in whether those practices were intentional or not.

In this volume, Joyce tackles the deeper issues of intentionality entailed in the study of materiality and depositional practices. She illustrates her ideas using examples from Early and Middle Formative (1100–700 BCE) sites in Honduras. She applies Latour's (2005) insight that analyses of networks of human and nonhuman things should ask how nonhuman participants (artifacts, strata, buildings) cause other participants to act. She recognizes that while objects do not have intentions, they can cause practices to happen. Small platforms such as the one found in the early sequence of Los Naranjos, for example, did not intend to grow into large pyramids, yet the presence of the platform encouraged or facilitated the possibility of new practices, including placement of human burials and other activities that changed consciousness about history and would eventually collectively contribute to the making of the later pyramid (compare

Gillespie, this volume). She concludes that the structured deposits "to which we can draw attention are the likeliest remaining pieces of past networks of knowledge and memory, intentionality and action, personhood and embodied dispositions."

The chapters in this volume clearly draw on several different theories of connectivity or relationality to understand memory practices. These include concepts such as enchainment, gathering, and citation. For example, the concept of enchainment is one that has been discussed by John Chapman (2000a) within his theory of fragmentation. Although Chapman's discussion of fragmentation as a way of looking at chains of people places undue emphasis on object breakage and material pieces, the practical aspects of building relationships between people through time, whether with whole or fragmentary objects, are most salient. The concept of gathering together, discussed in many chapters in this volume (for example, Gillespie, Pollard, and Mills) owes its intellectual roots to archaeologists working with small, yet highly diverse Neolithic assemblages (for example, Barrett 1999; Bradley 1990, 2000; Hill 1995; Jones 2002; Pollard 2001; Pollard and Ruggles 2001; Thomas 1999b). In these cases, fragments of objects with diverse origins were deposited together, linking places and people. Citation, or the reference back to something else during an activity, is another concept of connectivity that comes from Jacques Derrida (1982) through Judith Butler (1993, 1997; see also Jones 2001, 2005; Joyce 2003a). Butler's ideas on embodiment, in particular, provide an important way to think about how personhood and identity are expressed within memory practices. Citations to the past are ways in which genealogies of practices are built, forming bridges between people across large expanses of time and space, and these can be expressed at different social scales ranging from the individual to larger social fields or collectives.

As an example of the use of citation and enchainment, Pauketat (this volume) looks at the continuity and change associated with the spread of a founder's cult from Cahokia into Wisconsin in the eleventh century. Like Joyce he questions the role of intentionality in discussions of agency, noting that agency is not something exclusive to individuals but is instead dispersed across fields of relationships between people and things. Radical changes in history reflect significant reorderings of fields of power, but not necessarily intentionality. To explore how disjunctions in history occur, such as the creation of a founders' cult during the emergence and promotion of an ancient ruler, Pauketat focuses on how practice, defined as the tangible aspects of culture, highlights particular images, people, and things in a citational process (in the sense of Butler 1993). Highlighted or cited

relations grow and change through an enchainment of people and things. He argues that the end of effigy mound construction in Wisconsin after 1050 CE was a consequence of the decoupling of the region's old practices from their referents (out-of-date citations) and their enchainment to the new referents from Cahokia, those of a foreign founders' cult centered at a distant place (Cahokia) where the powers of *wa-kaⁿ-da* were being gathered.

Mills's chapter combines the concepts of gathering and citation to look at memory practices in Chaco Canyon at different social scales. She points out that Chacoan depositional practices brought together objects with diverse origins and histories. Dedicatory caches for round rooms featured worked and unworked objects that were remarkable in their diversity within, and redundancy between, deposits. An important commonality between these caches was that they minimally included objects that were ornaments, ornament debris, and/or raw materials used in ornament production. Through this commonality she argues that buildings were meant to be dressed, much in the same way that bodies were ornamented. Like Lucero's discussion of animation, Chacoan buildings were given an identity and animated through the deposition of beads, pendants, and other materials that provided citations to other bodily practices. Citation was also present in the ways in which small-scale depositional practices replicated the ways in which larger depositional events took place. Small kivas, for example, contained the same kinds of materials as did the largest deposits from great kivas. As she also argues, these continuities of tradition can be traced to the materiality of Ancestral Pueblo memory work into the present day.

People inhabit their worlds in very different ways (Barrett 1999) and create meaning through their residence in different practices. We may get closer to understanding how those differences were expressed by looking at the ways in which memories were created and maintained. Most of us in this volume do not use a phenomenological approach to understand these relationships. Rather, we use materiality as a window to understand the connections between people through time and across space that make each of the societies we study (and social networks within them) different. We try to understand how social memories were constructed in their terms, not our own, creating a cross-cultural study of aesthetics and meaning.

For example, Joyce (this volume) advocates creating a semiotic approach to track these networks between people through time and across space. Like a growing number of other archaeologists (for example, Preucel 2006), she draws on Peircean rather than Saussurean semiotics, arguing that the process of building the pyramid is not the result of meaningful signs (Saussure) but the process of meaning making (Peirce). She uses the

example of the malanggan described by Küchler to demonstrate that it is in the linkages or chains between people that meaning is made, not in the fact that they signify something. These images are used in performances that are part of continuing networks through time, recreating memories through their citation to past persons and reshaping them through practices that bridge generations. Their meaning derives from the presence of these connections between people through time.

Webb Keane (2003b, 2005) has made a similar argument for understanding how material items are made meaningful, focusing on the concept of "bundling." The meaning of objects is always dependent on another referent: form is bundled with other associative attributes, and those attributes are responsible for making things meaningful. Although he does not historicize that bundling together of attributes, we may extend this idea to how specific attributes of objects serve as mnemonics, making connections between people, as Joyce's discussion suggests. Many of the other authors in this volume use these kinds of associations to arrive at interpretations of how object meanings were used in memory making. These interpretations may be of individual artifacts, but they may also be of assemblages of objects. Because archaeologists often deal with assemblages, the application of theories to clusters of objects linked by their spatial and temporal properties may hold considerable importance in how we interpret what was meaningful in the past. Nonetheless, although objects within assemblages may refer to each other, for them to be meaningful in the sense of memory work they ultimately need to have associations with people—those who made them in the present and in the past. In short, meaning is a dimension of practice that relates actants to values.

Although most of the authors in this volume do not look at mortuary practices per se, the ways in which genealogies are constructed, the citation to persons in the past, and the heirlooming of objects are all processes that are important parts of ancestor veneration. The chapters by Lucero, Mills, and Nielsen all discuss ways in which ancestors were honored through practices that bridged many generations. Nielsen's chapter most explicitly discusses the dynamic properties of social memory and ancestor veneration, focusing on the late prehistoric or regional development period (900–1400 CE) of the southern Andes. He carefully culls through the ethnographic, ethnohistoric, and archaeological evidence of the relationship between burial towers (*chullpas*) and storage silos and concludes that rather than attempting to typologically distinguish these buildings archaeologists should recognize that chullpas are multifunctional objects involving relationships between people and ancestors. These structures "wove

different practices, actors, and contexts of social interaction into a single field structured around the ancestor." Indeed they embodied ancestors and did what ancestors do to "guard the fields and herds, promote their fertility, protect the harvest, bring prosperity to their descendants providing them with food, water, and other (stored) goods, represent the group before outsiders, defend the community and its territory, fight their enemies, [and] inspire political decisions."

RITUAL IS EVERYWHERE

A major outcome of the studies in this volume is that by reconstructing different genealogies of material practices there can be a rethinking of traditional distinctions between ritual and domestic life. The problems with this dialectic have been pointed out in recent years by a number of archaeologists (see especially Bradley 2003, 2005; Brück 1999; Walker 2002). Brück, in particular, critiques the post-Enlightenment concept of ritual as always in opposition to secular life. This dualism was a part of many of the early approaches to depositional practice in that "structured" deposits were seen as the result of ritual, while other, supposedly nonstructured deposits were the result of domestic action. As noted above, adherence to this dichotomy ignored variation in how ritual may have been conceptualized and practiced by past societies. Instead, she argues for an alternative tactic that emphasizes "prehistoric conceptions of effective action" (Brück 1999:314), which may include overlapping spheres of what is considered sacred versus profane and replaces practical with symbolic logic.

Bradley (2003, 2005) and Walker (2002) have made similar arguments, calling for a rethinking of the traditional distinction between sacred and profane and their replacement with the search for alternative systems of logic and value. As Bradley (2003:11) argues, many archaeologists perceive of ritual in functionalist terms as separate from daily life and as something formal in nature. This is why the "structured deposits" argument for ritual action has failed in its ability to discern new systems of value: they were seen as intentional, rational choices within a system of value that reproduced contemporary Western ritual practice. Similarly, other deposits that are less structured were seen as excluding ritual practice.

In this volume all of the authors use the idea that ritual is something to look at through practice, not through a priori ideas about what do or do not constitute ritual deposits. Stahl and Walker, especially, probe this theme in their discussions of how animals were differently valued by the Banda of Africa and Ancestral Puebloans, respectively. Stahl explores the history of Banda people in Ghana between 1400 and 1900 CE, focusing on

the interplay of practices associated with shrines. Building on the ritual theory of Catherine Bell (1992, 1997), Stahl recognizes that to understand ritual it is important to understand it as strategy or practice (ritualizing). When seen as an evolving process rather than as a type of behavior, ritual becomes a more malleable phenomenon. Seen in this way, the tantalizing manner in which ritualizing often transcends rational categories like sacred/profane, practical/impractical, belief/action becomes more comprehensible. For archaeologists the implication is that the remains of ritualization will not inhere in specific objects or buildings but in the way they are utilized. To differentiate the ritualization of a range of objects in Banda society, Stahl tracks the life histories of dogs, pythons, pots, and beads. In so doing, she does exactly what Bradley has called for: recognition of a continuum of rituals and the possibility of ritual in everyday life. Social memory is implicated in this analysis because of the continuities in tradition that Stahl so effectively tracks through the long sequence of occupation in the Banda area.

At the same time that we note that ritual is everywhere, it is clear that some rituals are performed at scales or with materials that become more archaeologically accessible than others. Susan Gillespie's chapter looks at continuities and discontinuities in depositional practices to construct a history of La Venta. She explains the patterning in deposits as the result of prestige-enhancing competition between elite households. Throughout much of that history Complex A was a "ritually charged place," which served as "an arena for negotiating and contesting that hierarchical ordering." She argues that only a powerful ruler could have brought such a long-term ritual arena to an end. She links the massive deposits of the last phase not with the abandonment of the site but instead with the emergence of such a ruling house. Interestingly, the power of this ruler is invoked in a dramatic event whose memory would replace those of earlier ones as the sole creation narrative. Further cyclical building activity at the site came to an end, leading the community to forget the contestable nature of their past—marking a break in the chain of practices that formed these mounds in the first place.

CONCLUSIONS

The papers in this volume are examples of the ways in which archaeological studies of materiality contribute to understanding how memory becomes historicized through linked activities that engage with materials. Archaeology is the one discipline that provides a long-term perspective on memory work. Recent research on materiality underscores the ways in

which materials, substances, objects, and so on are important parts of the different activities that people participate in during memory work, whether it is recalling, reshaping, forgetting, inventing, coordinating, or transmitting. Archaeologists have always been interested in material culture, but the intersectional study of materiality and memory through archaeology provides ways in which long-term practices can be appreciated in new ways. To do this we look at depositional practices that create a historicity to the ways in which memories were made. As many of us point out in the chapters that follow, these practices show strong continuities with historic and contemporary traditions. This continuity is made up of chains of repetitions that owe their continuity to particular ways in which memory was transmitted through time and to the meanings ascribed by actors during memory work.

The authors of the contributions to this volume share many concerns. We are interested in linking practices through time—in showing how relationships are created, broken, and recreated through time. One of the points of agreement is that these relationships can be approached materially, because memory work always has a material component. We also agree that what we would like to understand is the diversity of ways that people materialize relationships with the immaterial. There are material dimensions of practice that we can access, but other dimensions may not be as readily accessible. Nonetheless, by working through different scales of practice from the daily sweepings to the construction of monuments, we can begin to build a framework for understanding the range of memory work that was practiced in the past.

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