Chapter 1
Introduction: Evaluating Multiple Narratives: Beyond Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist Archaeologies

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Goal and Scope of this Volume

The goal of this volume is to use archaeological case studies from around the world to evaluate the implications of providing alternative interpretations of the past. Our volume is based on papers that were originally presented at a 2004 SAA (Society for American Archaeology) session in Montreal entitled "Beyond Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist Archaeologies: Evaluating Multiple Narratives." Our work builds on the twin pillars of Bruce Trigger's (1984) work on alternative archaeologies and Ian Hodder's discussion of archaeological practice in the context of globalization (1999).

In 1984, Bruce Trigger published an article that strongly influenced subsequent discussions about the sociopolitical contexts of archaeological research. Using Wallerstein's (1974) world-systems theory, Trigger's paper, "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist," suggested that "the nature of archaeological research is shaped, to a significant degree, by the roles that particular nation-states play, economically, politically, and culturally, as interdependent parts of the modern world-system" (Trigger 1984:356). Thus, depending on the position of countries in the world system, there are many archaeologies, including nationalist, colonialist, and imperialist ones, and these different archaeologies provide alternative interpretations of the past.

Trigger (1984) started his paper with a discussion of nationalist archaeology, the primary function of which is to bolster the pride and morale of nations or ethnic groups aspiring to nationhood. Examples of nationalistic archaeological traditions cited by Trigger include those in Denmark, Israel, Egypt, Iran, Mexico, China, and Germany. The second category, colonialist archaeology, refers to archaeology practiced by colonizers in a colonized country. Examples show that colonial archaeologists often emphasized the primitiveness or lack of accomplishments of the ancestors of colonized people to justify discriminatory behavior as well as colonization itself. The United States, New Zealand, and parts of sub-Saharan Africa are examples of countries and regions that experienced periods of colonialist archaeology. Third, Trigger pointed out that states with worldwide political, economic, and cultural power have produced imperialist archaeological traditions.

He included in this category the archaeological traditions of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States after the advent of processual archaeology. Archaeologists working within an imperialist tradition take for granted the superiority and universal applicability of their theoretical and methodological approaches. They also exert a strong influence on research around the world through their writings, the international nature of their research projects, and the key role they play in training archaeologists from various parts of the world.

Trigger's (1984) article is significant because it outlined the mutually constitutive relationship between archaeological interpretations and their sociopolitical contexts. He suggested that interpretations are never objective, but that they are always partly a product of their social, political, and historical contexts (see also Trigger 1980). Trigger did not, however, reject the necessity of striving for objectivity in archaeological interpretation, even if that objectivity always remained elusive. He believed that archaeologists needed to move toward objectivity by carefully analyzing archaeological findings as well as by constantly keeping in mind the socio-political context of research and interpretation (Trigger 1984:368–369). This position of moderate relativism was further elaborated in his later work (e.g., Trigger 1989, 1995, 1998, 2003, 2006; see also Wylie 2006).

Trigger's (1984) work, along with other publications that appeared in the early to mid-1980s (Gero et al. 1983; Leone 1981; Meltzer 1983; Patterson 1986; Wilk 1985), resulted in debates about the social and political implications of archaeological practice. One of the central issues in these debates is the role that politics and ethics play in the evaluation of archaeological interpretations (e.g., Fotiadis 1994; Kohl 1993; Lampeter Archaeological Workshop 1997; Shanks & Tilley 1987; Wylie 1992, 1993). Another important theme that has emerged is the analysis of the complex power relations within which individuals and groups create identities based on the archaeological past (e.g., Bond & Gilliam 1994; Dietler 1994; Gathercole & Lowenthal 1990; Kohl & Fawcett 1995; Layton 1989a,b; Leone et al. 1995; Meskell 1998, 2002; Schmidt & Patterson 1995; Swidler et al. 1997).

Ian Hodder (1999, see also 1997, 2000, 2004a,b) extends Trigger's (1984) discussion of the social contexts of archaeology by contextualizing current archaeological thought within the globalizing processes of the late twentieth century. According to Hodder, globalization has facilitated communication between individuals and isolated groups around the world through computer technology, mass communications, and global travel. This ease of communication has led to two contradictory patterns. On the one hand, globalization creates a homogenization of global culture and identity as archaeological sites and remains are interpreted as part of a pan-human heritage. On the other hand, globalization also results in the fragmentation of global culture, as small groups of people and individuals appropriate local heritage sites as symbols of their individual or local identities.

Hodder (1999) argues that archaeologists have the moral and ethical responsibility to facilitate the participation of many groups and individuals when interpreting a site. In this way, sites will be relevant to people from a variety of academic and non-academic backgrounds and multiple complementary and/or contradictory interpretations will be available. Hodder calls this process multivocality. It is generally presented

as a way of empowering underrepresented groups to present their understandings and interpretations of the archaeological past. He states that the goal of multivocality is to allow multiple interpretations of the archaeological past. Some of these interpretations are academic, others are non-academic; some interpretations are the work of professional archaeologists, others are the work of non-archaeologists or amateurs interested in the site.

Although the recent discussion of multivocality was inspired largely by Hodder's (1999, 2004a,b) work, interest in promoting alternative interpretations in archaeology has deeper roots. One of the sources of multivocality was postmodernist and poststructuralist thought introduced into archaeology during the early 1980s. The postmodern challenge to scientific objectivity, based on an emphasis on the subjective nature of knowledge, and criticism of all forms of grand theorizing, opened up the possibility of multiple interpretations in archaeology (e.g., Jameson 1984; Lyotard 1984). In addition to this, the poststructuralist perspective that texts are not objective end products, but should be understood as having multiple meanings derived from different readers, led some archaeologists to question the objectivity of archaeological interpretations (e.g. Bapty & Yates 1990; Shanks & Tilley 1987; Tilley 1990, 1993; for a more recent example see Joyce 2002). Influences of both postmodernist and poststructuralist thought can be found in Hodder's discussion of multivocality as well as in his other writings (see Hodder 1982, 1986, 1993, 1999).

Another influence on the development of multivocality was the growth of social movements supporting the recognition of the rights of socially marginalized groups. Representative of these movements in the United States are the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Rights Movement. These movements demanded economic and sociopolitical changes that would give more power to underrepresented ethnic and social groups, including African-Americans, Native Americans and women. Similar social movements developed in many other parts of the world. Parallel to these social movements was the decline of formal colonial structures that resulted in pressure on previous colonial powers, such as Britain, to allow other voices to be heard. While these influences made their way into the academy through the development of feminism, Marxism, postcolonialism, and multiculturalism during the late 1960s and 1970s, they became prevalent in archaeology only during and after the 1980s (see e.g., Conkey & Gero 1997; Conkey & Spector 1984; Gathercole & Lowenthal 1990; Gero & Conkey 1991; Gero et al. 1983; Layton 1989a,b; Leone, Potter, & Shackel 1987; Leone et al. 1995). These changes have led to legislation and professional codes of ethics that request archaeologists to give greater consideration to the opinions, interpretations and feelings of various stakeholders who are interested in the archaeological past, including descendant communities of indigenous peoples. This has translated into changes in how the ownership of the past is conceived and in how and by whom the past is represented. Examples of these legislation and ethics codes include NAGPRA (the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) functioning in the United States since 1990, and the Code of Ethics of professional associations like the Australian Archaeological Association (2007).

The authors in this volume share with Trigger and Hodder an understanding of the tension between the inherently subjective nature of archaeological interpretation and the constraining influence of the archaeological record. They also share an interest in the relevance of archaeological studies in contemporary societies. Furthermore, many of the authors are concerned about the effects of globalization on archaeological interpretation and heritage management.

The papers in this volume were written by scholars who work in various parts of the world, including areas where the political use of the past is particularly controversial. Unified by the common theoretical interests described above, each contributor to this volume examines an archaeological case study, usually of a specific site or set of sites, in a country or a region where two or more alternative interpretations of the past have been made. Alternative interpretations may have occurred within the context of different archaeological traditions (e.g., Anglo-American vs. Indigenous). They may represent different political and spatial scales (e.g., local, national, international or global). Alternatively, they may have been produced for different audiences (e.g., the general public, amateurs, groups with a specific interest in the site, tourist operators, or academic specialists). The broad range of topical and geographical interests covered here is best represented by the list of contributors. In addition, three eminent archaeological theoreticians, Ian Hodder, Bruce Trigger, and Alison Wylie, provide comments on these chapters.

Given these contexts, this volume seeks to contribute to several key aspects of contemporary archaeological discourse that relate to providing alternative interpretations. First, this book concerns the theory and methodology of multivocality. Second, papers in this book move the discussion of the sociopolitics of archaeology forward by providing concrete case studies from around the world. Special attention is paid to the dynamic and historically unique nature of the relationship between archaeology, nationalism, and peoples' identity. Third, many papers in this volume reflect a growing interest in the impact of global political, economic, and cultural forces on archaeological interpretation and heritage management. This includes tourism, commercialism, and the spread of information through the media and recently the Internet.

Evaluations of Multivocality

Evaluations of the theory and methodology of multivocality are an important dimension of this book. Because the concept of multivocality in archaeology developed originally in Britain and the United States, theoretical discussions of multivocality have been limited primarily to Anglo-American archaeology. Furthermore, to date explicit multivocal approaches can be found almost exclusively in situations where underrepresented groups in Anglo-American countries were involved in developing archaeological interpretations, or when Anglo-American archaeologists conducted research projects in non-Anglo-American countries.

Given the spirit of the concept, we believe that the advantages and limitations of the theory and method of multivocality should be discussed in relation to a variety of cultural and historical settings. In particular, given the political, economic, and cultural hegemony of the United States and Britain on the world scene, multivocality could be used to break down the power imbalance between Anglo-American and non-Anglo-American academic traditions. Thus, in our call for contributions for this volume, we raised the following three questions: (1) Is the concept of multivocality inseparable from the theory of contemporary Anglo-American archaeology, especially that of postprocessual archaeology? (2) In terms of archaeological practice, is the concept of multivocality relevant to local residents and non-Anglo-American archaeologists working in various parts of the world? (3) In the context described above, can the close examination of alternative interpretations contribute to a deeper understanding of the subjectivity/objectivity of archaeological interpretations?

With respect to the first question, chapters by several authors demonstrate that, while multivocality may have been *theorized* exclusively by Anglo-American postprocessual archaeologists, elements of multivocal approaches have been *practiced* in various forms in archaeological traditions around the world. For example, in discussing the existence of multiple interpretations of the past at Tiwanaku, Bolivia, David Kojan (Chapter 6) argues that the multiplicity exists regardless of how archaeologists feel about it, but that archaeologists can affect the manner in which the existence of the multiplicity is acknowledged. Sonya Atalay (Chapter 3) suggests from a perspective of Indigenous archaeology that Ojibwe concepts of multivocality can be useful in decolonizing archaeological practice. Rosemary Joyce (Chapter 5), in her analysis of Honduran archaeology, expands the discussion of multivocality by pointing out that academic studies of the history and sociopolitics of archaeology must be broad enough to encompass a variety of interpretative frameworks. By doing this, we avoid the assumption that concern with multivocality arose only within Anglo-American theoretical debates. Junko Habu and Clare Fawcett (Chapter 7) report a case study from Japan, in which local archaeologists independently developed strategies to encourage multiple interpretations of a Jomon period site and worked closely with local residents.

Regarding the second question, case studies in this volume demonstrate that multivocality has been, or can be, an effective tool to enhance the voices of underrepresented groups in both Anglo-American and non-Anglo-American archaeological settings. Michael Blakey (Chapter 2) provides a powerful case study in which the concept of multivocality has been critical in developing a research design for the study of the African Burial Ground in New York. Matthew Johnson (Chapter 4) argues that multivocality could be used to challenge the concept of Britishness, an ideology that has been closely tied to British imperialism and colonialism. Contrasting the definition of the state in North American and European archaeology with the definition used in Spanish archaeology, Robert Chapman (Chapter 10) suggests that the reexamination of the "alternative" state may challenge the dominant mode of thought in Anglo-American archaeology.

In his commentary, Ian Hodder (Chapter 13) argues that placing the local and global in opposition to each other ignores complex alliances and interaction between stakeholders at many levels. Multivocality, he says, is cosmopolitan, involving a "complex blending of the global and the particular in ways that do not replicate Western perspectives and which do not construct the local as a product of the global" (p. 198).

Several authors warn us that, if not introduced judiciously, promoting alternative interpretations might result in the opposite effect from the original democratizing goal of multivocality. Neil Silberman (Chapter 9) argues that multiple narratives communicated through new techniques, such as online interactivity, virtual reality, and theme park design, do not necessarily challenge dominant interpretive narratives; rather these dominant narratives may become even more deeply entrenched. Minkoo Kim (Chapter 8) introduces a case study in which alternative interpretations that are supported by non-archaeologists are used to bolster the dominant, nationalist ideology rather than to enhance the views of the underrepresented non-nationalist perspective.

Finally, many authors confront the issues that arise between multivocality and the subjectivity of archaeological interpretation. They take seriously the problems and dangers associated with hyperrelativism as discussed by Trigger (1989). Trigger (Chapter 12) further suggests that the process of evaluating multiple narratives shares with the method of multiple working hypotheses the outcome of narrowing down the range of viable interpretations of specific sets of archaeological data. As Wylie (Chapter 14) points out, multivocality does not necessarily lead to hyperrelativism. While many contributors see the virtues of multivocal engagement and the benefits such engagement can bring, all remain committed to the importance of archaeologically grounded interpretations. The various ways the authors in this volume address the relationship between multivocality and subjectivity provide important examples of how archaeologists can engage with other voices while maintaining interpretive rigor.

Archaeology, Nationalism, and Identities

Intersecting with the question of the validity and implications of multivocality within archaeology are the questions of the dynamic relationship between archaeological practice, political agendas, and the construction of people's identities. While these issues have been extensively discussed in previous publications, most authors of these texts either did not directly engage with recent discussions of multivocality (e.g., Kohl & Fawcett 1995), or had restricted areal/topical coverage (e.g., Meskell 1998 with a focus on the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East; Zimmerman et al. 2003 with a focus on ethical and legal responsibility of archaeologists in the Americas).

Chapters in this volume clearly indicate that nationalism, colonialism, and imperialism are key factors in understanding the broad features of the relationship

between archaeology and identity. Minkoo Kim and David Kojan confirm Bruce Trigger's statement that nationalist archaeology continues to be a key type of archaeology in our classification. Pat Wallace (Chapter 11) outlines the sociopolitical contexts of Irish archaeology that, until recently, discouraged medieval and Viking period studies. What is striking here is that Ireland, despite its unique history, shares with other countries the tendency to dismiss later migrants as inauthentic components of national history (see e.g., the Danish case discussed by Kristiansen 1990). The reverse phenomenon is found in Matthew Johnson's case study, which describes historical archaeology in Britain as having closer ties to British national identity than does the country's prehistoric archaeological research.

In addition, the particular goals and interests of various stakeholders, including archaeologists, local residents and others, may differ between archaeological projects. For example, the Japanese case study presented by Habu and Fawcett describes how local residents, and ultimately the prefectural government, chose to preserve an archaeological site rather than build a baseball stadium. This decision resulted from a combination of social, political, economic, and historical factors unique to the independently developed academic tradition of Japanese archaeology and to the region of Japan where the site is located. Kojan's work also outlines the multiple meanings given to a Bolivian archaeological site by stakeholders using the site for their own political purposes. By examining individual case studies that describe the regional and historical settings and perspectives of stakeholders involved with specific archaeological projects, papers in this volume reveal the historically contingent nature of archaeological interpretations and the value of archaeological sites in particular local settings.

Tourism, the Media, and Globalization

In addition to the two dimensions of multivocality discussed above, issues related to archaeological tourism and the media coverage of archaeological findings have emerged as important themes in this volume. Archaeology and tourism are closely linked. Archaeology, like modern forms of tourism, arose during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in tandem with industrialization, colonialism, and the Euro-American search for national identity (Chambers 2000; Trigger 2006). Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, tourism has increased in importance as a global industry and as a cultural space. Tourism is now an important source of transnational migration, as well as a booming economic engine in many parts of the developed and developing worlds (for discussions about the relationship between tourism and archaeology, see e.g., Handler & Gable 1997; Silverman 2002).

Many contributions in this volume argue that archaeological tourism is an element in the construction of individual, local, regional, and national identities. They also indicate that authenticity is a central theme of archaeological tourism (see also Fife 2004). While many tourists seek "real" or "authentic" connections

with the past, archaeologists, and curators recognize the partial, contextual, and constructed nature of their work and knowledge. Wallace's discussion of heritage tourism in Dublin, Ireland, Joyce's references to the relationship between government conceptions of the multicultural Honduran state, tourism, and the archaeological past, and Kim's analysis of "the oldest rice" in the sociopolitical context of South Korea demonstrate this point.

Chapters in this volume also reveal that archaeologists have a symbiotic relationship with the media, and, since the early 1990s, the Internet. Whether they like it or not, various forms of media and the Internet are powerful tools to disseminate information about their work to the public (see e.g., Wolle & Tringham 2000). For example, Habu and Fawcett describe how the long history of archaeological reporting by newspapers, and television has nurtured local citizens' enthusiasm for archaeological research in Japan. Kojan's analysis of indigenous politician Evo Morales's 2006 "spiritual" inauguration as Bolivia's president at the site of Tiwanaku shows how media presentations made Tiwanaku "…a stage for a contemporary dispute over politics, economic power and social authority, and a crucible in which these power struggles are tested" (p. 74). Kim uses a case study of the South Korean Sorori site to show how the Internet can provide small groups of non-specialists with opportunities to present interpretations of archaeological remains that contradict those of professional scholars and academics.

As Silberman's chapter demonstrates, archaeological knowledge disseminated through the media or by tourist operators has gained value as a product in many parts of the world. This commercialization of archaeological knowledge and remains influences interpretation. Silberman argues that many archaeological theme parks and museums in the United States and Europe seem to provide multiple views and interpretations of the past while actually supporting the dominant narrative of the "heritage tourism" industry based on commercial activities.

Many of the papers in this volume address the influence of cultural forces, like tourism and various forms of the media, on archaeological interpretation. These forms of communication are powerful tools for archaeologists who want to present their ideas to larger non-academic audiences. They are also important avenues through which people from outside the formal structure of archaeological research can suggest and evaluate interpretations. The analysis of both archaeological tourism and the reporting of archaeological information through traditional and new media demonstrates the shifting nature of archaeological interpretation.

Summary

In summary, the papers in this volume provide concrete examples for evaluating the implications of engaging with multiple interpretations of the past. The various theoretical and methodological approaches adopted by individual authors encourage reflection on issues that are central to current debates on archaeological theory and practice. Furthermore, the wide diversity of topics and geographical areas covered

by these authors help to clarify the dynamic nature of the relationship between archaeology, sociopolitical conditions, and people's identities in various regional and historical settings. Finally, the papers in this volume encourage the recognition and appreciation of under-theorized examples of multivocality in non-Anglo-American contexts.

As Bruce Trigger states in his discussion, classifications of archaeologies have proliferated since his initial distinction between nationalist, colonialist, and imperialist archaeologies. This proliferation encourages us not only to acknowledge the inherently subjective nature of archaeological interpretations, but also to make archaeology a socially engaged discipline. Articles in this volume reflect the enthusiasm of individual authors to explore these issues in relation to their own research in different parts of the world. If this volume allows a greater diversity of interpretation to be considered globally, we will have done our job.

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