

What is Archaeological Ethnography?

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In this introductory essay to this volume, we chart and survey an emerging field, that of archaeological ethnography. We show its links and associations with both disciplinary and social-political trends in archaeology and in social anthropology in the last decades, and discuss some of the key recent work that has been carried out under this rubric. We argue that archaeological ethnography needs to be defined broadly, as a trans-disciplinary and trans-cultural space that enables researchers and diverse publics to engage in various conversations, exchanges, and interventions. Material traces from various times are at the centre of this emerging space. The production of this space requires a radical rethinking of the ontological and epistemological basis of archaeology, questioning the modernist roots of official archaeologies, and demonstrating the existence of other, public discourses, practices and engagements with the material past which can be defined as alternative archaeologies. Archaeological ethnography can bring to the fore these alternative engagements without necessarily endorsing their premises, being constantly alert to their political connotations and renderings. The main interconnected facets of archaeological ethnography as we propose it here are its critical reflexivity, its holistic and multi-sited nature, its multi-temporal rather than presentist character, its sensuous and sensory engagement with the world, its political commitment, and its conception as collective and team practice, which transcends the boundaries between the researcher and his or her diverse publics.

KEYWORDS Archaeological ethnography, Social anthropology, Modernist archaeology, Alternative archaeologies, Materiality, Temporality, Kalaureia, Greece

Introduction

The term ‘archaeological ethnography’ is not new. It was introduced in ethnoarchaeology as early as the 1970s (e.g. Watson, 1979). It is still used to describe work that either operates within this paradigm (e.g. Parsons, 2006) or originates from ethnoarchaeological tradition but which addresses through ethnography and ethno-history issues broader than conventional ethnoarchaeology (e.g. Forbes, 2007). At the same

time, it is also used (e.g. Verhoeven, 1999; Robin and Rothchild, 2002) or invoked in modified forms (e.g. Tilley, 1996) by several other archaeological works, more or less metaphorically, in order to denote an approach that pays specific and detailed attention to the textures of daily life, a 'thick description' of the remote or recent archaeological past.

In recent years, the term with its variations has grown to signify something rather different: the introduction of ethnographic methods into archaeological projects, or the merging of ethnographic and archaeological practices in order to explore the contemporary relevance and meaning of the material past for diverse publics, the politics of archaeological practice, and the claims and contestations involving past material traces and landscapes (e.g. Meskell, 2005; Hamilakis, 2007a; Castañeda and Matthews, 2008a; Mortensen and Hollowell, 2009). This development signifies a rapprochement of distinctive disciplinary traditions, such as archaeology and socio-cultural anthropology, which is also reflected in, among others, ethnographic studies of archaeological practice itself (e.g. Edgeworth, 2006; Hamilakis 2007a, chapter 4). This recent trend, which Castañeda (2008, and this volume) has termed the 'ethnographic turn' in archaeology, is the outcome of several related but diverse processes (see Hollowell and Mortensen, 2009): from challenges to the authority of archaeology by indigenous peoples and other disenfranchised groups, to the emergence of reflexivity as a key epistemological feature of archaeology, to the growing realization that archaeology is a social practice in the present, to the proliferation of the ethnographies of heritage and studies on the socio-politics of archaeology and the material past.

It is our contention, however, that this current, important wave of thinking, which this volume is largely part of and to which it acknowledges its debt, has not always resulted in an in-depth reflection on the nature, the epistemological underpinnings, the potential pitfalls, and the political dimensions of the endeavour. We argue that it would be a mistake to view this development as merely the emergence of a range of new practices that can be appended to conventional archaeology; in other words, as a useful methodological innovation, the reintroduction of the ethnographic method into archaeology to investigate new questions. In this introductory chapter and, directly or indirectly, in the volume as a whole, we show that this new development, if it is to succeed, will have to dislodge the certainties of archaeology, the belief placed in its absolute authority, and its naturalization by its practitioners as the sole and exclusive agent for the production of discourses and practices about ancient things.

This volume brings together several scholars who have been at the forefront of these intellectual advances for the past decades, as well as others who have entered this field more recently through various routes. Its aim is to intervene in the current discussion by critically evaluating some of the current work carried out under the rubric of archaeological ethnography and, more importantly, by contributing towards an open and flexible framework of ideas, methods and practices, through theoretical reflection and a range of innovative case studies. While most contributions on archaeological ethnography to date originate in conventionally understood post-colonial contexts, this volume contributes several case studies from Europe and other, less explored, locales, offering thus a much-needed critical comparative analysis.¹

Our main thesis is that archaeological ethnography is not simply a *practice* emerging out of the rapprochement of social archaeology and social anthropology. We define archaeological ethnography instead as a highly contested and thus fertile cross-disciplinary as well as transcultural,² politically loaded *space*; a space for multiple conversations, engagements, interventions, and critiques, centred on materiality and temporality. This space encourages the downplaying of the distinction between past and present, and between diverse publics and researchers of equally diverse backgrounds. We argue that the emergence of this space necessitates a position that considers official, modernist archaeology *as only one* amongst many frameworks that produce discourses and practices on past material things. At the level of methodology and practice, archaeological ethnographies involve multi-sited, ethnographic and ethno-historical research such as formal and informal interviews, participant observation, archival research, or ethnographic site tours amongst local and trans-local communities, amongst visitors to an archaeological site, and amongst the archaeological team (including workmen and workwomen); ethnographic and other participatory and dialogic events in schools, with the active involvement of schoolchildren; and performative and art installations in various media and sites which can also generate further ethnographic research (exhibitions, blogs, photo-essays, other performances; see Castañeda; Hamilakis, Anagnostopoulos and Ifantidis, this volume).

As with this disciplinary space, this volume is also multivocal and dialogic, rather than a monolithic construction. As such, we do not expect nor do we wish all contributors to agree with all the theses advanced in this introductory chapter, and it will be up to the reader to produce their own synthesis out of this dialogue. Furthermore, this introduction is itself unconventional: it does not wish to be an introduction to the papers of the volume as such, especially since each chapter is prefaced by an abstract. Nor is it an exhaustive survey of all the work in this field, a ground that has been traversed in recent, excellent and thoughtful accounts by Castañeda (2008), Castañeda and Matthews (2008b), Hollowell and Nicholas (2008), and Hollowell and Mortensen (2009). It is, rather, a critical introduction to the intellectual and social background of this emerging scholarly trend, and an outline of the authors' positions and views on how this field should develop in the future. This intervention and the theses advanced here are based on our experience in engaging with archaeological ethnography as part of the Kalaureia Project (www.kalaureia.org), centred around the excavation of the ancient sanctuary of Poseidon on the island of Poros, Greece. They are also informed by our other work on the politics of the past and on historical anthropology, and, of course, our political-scholarly trajectories and archaeological, anthropological, and other sensibilities. The various contributions in this volume are thus dialogically meshed and organically interwoven in this discussion.

Where do archaeological ethnographies come from?

Scholarly anxieties to constantly demonstrate innovation and originality often dodge attempts to trace intellectual roots and chart links and associations, despite the continuing interest in the history and philosophy of archaeology. The new wave of archaeological ethnographies that we map out in this volume did not emerge full-fledged and Minerva-like from the head of an academic Zeus. The road was

already paved by several important trends, both intellectual and socio-political. It is often forgotten that the links between anthropology and at least some strands of archaeology (especially the ones most heavily influenced by cultural evolutionism) go back to the nineteenth century. To give just one example from our own geographical research focus, John Myres (1869–1954) and Richard Dawkins (1871–1955) were not only archaeologists and classicists but also specialists in their *contemporary* Mediterranean cultures and partook of the same intellectual space as their contemporary anthropologists: the first became twice president of the Royal Anthropological Institute (1928–1931), and editor of its journal, *Man*, whereas the second did extensive work on ethno-linguistics and collected folk tales through ethnographic work, while his Oxford Chair in 1920 was not in archaeology but in Byzantine and Modern Greek. Leaving, but only for a moment, essentialist undertones and colonial overtones aside, to both of them the concept of research hybridity would have been alien, yet, at least in terms of their practice, scholarly hybridity is what they pursued. The professionalization of archaeology in the second half of the twentieth century was achieved at the cost of severing, to a large extent, these links with a variety of fields, including social anthropology. Archaeology felt that it needed to carve its own space and put up fences in order to grow and develop (see Gosden, 1999 for discussion).

The picture is much more complex, of course, and regionally diverse. For example, in the USA the links with certain strands of cultural evolutionist anthropology were maintained, and archaeology demanded to be taken seriously as anthropology, anxious to demonstrate an ability to infer cross-cultural, universal and diachronic rules and patterns of human behaviour. The ethnoarchaeology of the 1960s and 1970s was a by-product of uniformitarianism, prevalent in that academic tradition. This subfield attracted widespread and thoroughly justified criticism from the 1980s onwards, not least for denigrating contemporary people, who were seen primarily, if not exclusively, as sources of information in order to interpret the past (e.g. Fewster, 2001; see also below the discussion on allochronism).

Yet, it is easy to forget that ethnoarchaeology has diversified since then, and several of its recent renderings have taken on board much of this criticism and have attempted to develop in new directions. Despite the original, underlying principles of ethnoarchaeology, the familiarity and the lasting engagement with the lives and experiences of contemporary people that it does (or should) entail, have the potential to transform the researcher, and lead their work in novel and unpredictable directions. For example, ethnoarchaeological research aimed at understanding patterns of agriculture and land use in Greek prehistory came to valorize contemporary practices *in their own right*, and has produced intimate portraits of rural life, which hitherto had escaped academic research (e.g. Halstead, 1998). Equally, ethnography as part of conventional archaeological projects has often incorporated archival and ethnohistorical research in order to address novel questions, such as the vernacular valorizations and meanings of the ancient material past (e.g. Stroulia and Sutton, this volume).

In another example, Forbes (2007), in his study of the Greek peninsula of Methana, turns his attention from a perceived ‘continuity’ — as conceptualized by earlier ethnoarchaeology projects — to the practices of remembering and forgetting as they are anchored upon material artefacts of the past (2007: 207–284; see also Forbes, this

volume). Forbes raised a line of questioning that becomes especially pertinent for current archaeological ethnographies, by investigating how present modes of livelihood influence the ways in which contemporary people perceive and remember the past. Without meaning to defend ethnoarchaeology uncritically here, the total rejection of the ethnoarchaeological tradition can be both misguided, given the diversity and recent developments in the subfield, and short-sighted, given the lessons that can be learned from both its mistakes and its strengths and contributions.

The recent wave of archaeological ethnographies, however, owes much more to the politically loaded redefinition of contemporary archaeology as a social practice in the present, a shift that is due as much to the challenges from outside as to the intellectual developments from within. The emergence of diverse, interpretative, feminist, Marxist, and postprocessual archaeologies in the 1980s and early 1990s, with their emphasis on multivocality and reflexivity, and on the inherently political nature of archaeological practice, was singularly important. But they would not have led to this development were it not for the challenges to the authority of professionalized Western archaeology by diverse social groups, from indigenous people resisting their objectification as scientific material, to archaeologists and scholars from non-Western contexts, critiquing the Eurocentric bias of the discipline.

At the same time, however, neoliberal capitalist economics (often in an ambivalent alliance with nationalism), together with the increasing fascination of diverse publics with the material past, helped bring about the development of heritage tourism, of 'heritage industry', and the dispersal of archaeological and other past material referents in diverse public and private arenas. The phenomenon has produced both its surveyors and critics (e.g. Lowenthal, 1998; Holtorf, 2005), as well as its ethnographers, resulting in an extremely important body of ethnographies of heritage. These works studied and critiqued phenomena such as the clashes between archaeologists and local residents inhabiting buildings worthy of preservation, as in the case of the Venetian and Ottoman quarter of Rethymno in Crete (Herzfeld, 1991); the glossing-over of power inequities through objectivism and mimetic realism (the attempt to show history 'as it really was') in iconic heritage spaces such as Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia (Handler and Gable, 1997); the multiple meanings of a national monument such as the Athenian Acropolis, and its parallel existence in multiple spaces, both local and global (Yalouri, 2001), or its problematic coexistence with a humble neighbourhood of unimpressive houses, which urban planners and state officials would very much like to erase as 'matter out of place' (Caftantzoglou, 2001); the interplay between colonial archaeology, tourism, private interest, and local and regional identities in other iconic sites, be it Chichén Itzá in Mexico (Castañeda, 1996; Breglia, 2006) or Knossos in Crete (Solomon, 2006), and the contested landscapes produced by monumental sites such as Stonehenge (Bender, 1998) and Great Zimbabwe (Fontein, 2006); the local renderings and meanings of diverse practices that archaeologists routinely homogenize and classify as 'looting' (Antoniadou, this volume with references); and the 'turn of tables' by Europe's others, by revivalist projects such as the 'rebuilding' of the library of Alexandria in Egypt (Butler, 2007). As Hollowell and Nicholas in this volume show, these works, and further systematic ethnographies on local conceptions of heritage, have the potential to transform the currently dominant managerial, top-down perspectives that dominate the field of 'heritage studies'.

Related phenomena that have paved the ground for the current wave of archaeological ethnographies are, first, the emergence of what can be called archaeologies of the contemporary past, that is the archaeological study of very recent or contemporary events and social practices, such as the early twentieth-century labour disputes and struggles or the archaeologies of commemoration of the two World Wars, and the material traces of the Cold War (see papers in Buchli and Lucas, 2001; Holtorf and Piccini, 2009); and second, the studies on the politics of the past and of archaeology (e.g. Gathercole and Lowenthal, 1990; Hamilakis and Duke, 2007), often involving the exploration of diverse public, contemporary uses, renderings and valorizations of archaeological material culture (e.g. Hamilakis and Momigliano, 2006). In both cases, conventional archaeological practices alone are insufficient, and archaeologists often have to combine them with ethnographic accounts, especially since the many social actors involved in such practices are very much present, and often demand the right to partake of the research endeavour. In some of these studies, such as the study on the links between archaeology and national imagination in modern and contemporary Greece carried out by one of us (Hamilakis, 2007a), the term archaeological ethnography, in its broadest sense, is invoked to denote not only the contemporary focus of the project, but also its character as both a reflexive and a detailed exploration of social practices involving the materiality of the past.

It is from this fertile ground that the current wave of archaeological ethnographies has emerged, several important examples of which are presented in this volume. Their main difference from the studies described above is that in these recent projects ethnographic practices form an integral part of the archaeological framework *from the moment of its inception*, and, to greater or lesser degree, are fully integrated within the overall rationale and philosophy of the specific research. Earlier such cases are already too many to be outlined here in full, and we thus limit our comments to only a couple, which allow for further reflection. The Çatalhöyük project in Anatolia — under the direction of Ian Hodder (1998, 2002, 2003), who incorporated the concepts of multivocality and reflexivity into his approach — was one of the first to employ social anthropologists with the explicit aim of understanding local perceptions and ideas about the archaeological site, and charting out the various local and global diverse publics that take an active interest in the site and its legacy, from local farmers and politicians to new age feminists and international fashion designers (Bartu, 2000; Bartu Candan, 2005; Shankland, 2005). Based on that research, Bartu has concluded that the existence of different perceptions, interests and agendas affects critically the archaeological process itself. Archaeologists have to identify and engage with those different interests in ways that transcend the disciplinary boundaries of archaeological authority, in order to bring to the fore ‘multiple sites and groups through which different kinds of knowledge about this site is produced and consumed’ (Bartu, 2000: 102). This significantly expands existing archaeological notions of the ‘site’ from a localized, delimited area, to a dispersed, socially constructed and contested field of power, practice and knowledge. Yet, this work has been less successful in demonstrating the material expressions and effects of economic and power inequalities, and in exploring the asymmetrical impact of the archaeological project upon different social and economic groups; it fell short, in other words, of engaging with the *political economy* of archaeological practice, beyond the politics of identity

(see Hamilakis, 1999). Equally, the recording of the local perceptions and stories about the site (Shankland, 2005), valuable as this may be, does not go beyond their rendering as folk tales (implicitly juxtaposed to ‘proper’, ‘scientific’ archaeological knowledge), failing thus to explore their distinctive epistemologies and modes of material historicization (see Hirsch and Stewart, 2005).

Meskel's archaeological ethnography in Kruger National Park in South Africa (2005, 2007), a land enclosed by the park for the almost exclusive use of white, middle-class tourists but which used to be tribal territory for Venda people, whose descendants still live around the confines of the site, constitutes a valuable contribution to the current debates. She draws a sharp line between ethnoarchaeology and archaeological ethnography, which she defines as a hybrid practice (2005: 81) and as ‘holistic anthropology that is improvisational and context dependent’ (Meskel, 2005: 83). As we will explain below, however, the emphasis on archaeological ethnography as primarily a *practice* weakens its potential for challenging the foundations of conventional archaeology. After all, as we saw above, ethnographic, hybrid practices are nothing new in archaeology, and what is at stake today is the broader philosophical and epistemological framework within which they are deployed.

A collaborative and innovative (both in terms of conception and in terms of method) archaeological ethnography project is the San Pedro Valley ethnohistory project in southern Arizona, which sought to move beyond the conceptual limits of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the discussions about ‘ownership’ of the past (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson, 2004; Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2006). The researchers working on this project conducted a series of ‘place-based’ interviews — peripatetic discussions with members of the community selected by tribal officers for their knowledge of the site — while seeking at all times to have a multidimensional view of the subject by interacting with both Hopi and Zuni indigenous communities (Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2006: 150). The ways in which communities remember and reiterate space present a unique interpretation of material remains that intersects at many points with official archaeological narratives and forges an integral communal history of place that cannot be ignored by professional archaeologists. More importantly, this project attempts what is fundamental for archaeological ethnography as we conceive it: to bring into the fore alternative epistemologies and ontologies on the material past, and valorize them as worthy of reflection and study (see also Colwell-Chanthaphonh this volume). For example, unlike conventional archaeological conceptions of (linear and sequential) time, in some native perspectives ‘(p)ast and present coexist, and ancient stories are one with current existence’ (Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2006: 31). Archaeological ethnographies unsettle conventional archaeological ontologies and modes of thinking and practice, as we will attempt to show below.

Modernist official archaeology and alternative archaeologies

An in-depth exploration of what archaeological ethnography is will be impossible without a radical re-conceptualization of the field of archaeology itself. Conventional histories of archaeology often produce a teleological and linear narrative, portraying a scientific field that emerged out of earlier antiquarian practices. More importantly, and more problematically perhaps, they assume a singular version of archaeology,

relegating earlier engagements with the material past as pre-archaeological mnemonic practices at best, and at worst as superstitious and ignorant folk traditions. In this narrative, colonialism, nationalism, modernity writ large, and their entanglement with archaeological discourses and practices, remain thus unchallenged.

As the work outlined above shows, however, conditions are ripe for a radical rethinking of this narrative. We thus prefer here to define archaeology more broadly (and closer to its etymological roots) as the discourses and practices involving things of another time (for a similarly broad definition, see Hollowell and Mortensen, 2009). Academic and professional archaeology as we know it today, emerged out of specific conditions of Western modernity (see Schnapp et al., 2004; Thomas, 2004; Hamilakis and Momigliano, 2006; Hamilakis, 2007a). We thus define it as official, modernist archaeology, although we contend that there are multiple versions of this official, modernist archaeology, as there are multiple modernities. In addition to these modernist, official archaeologies, however, archaeologies as discourses and practices involving things from other times existed prior to the emergence of modernist archaeology, and their histories, ontological and epistemological principles wait to be discovered, understood and valorized (see Schnapp, 1996; Hamilakis, 2008).

The replacement of these pre-modern archaeologies by the official modernist archaeology, however, is not complete; alternative engagements with the material past continue to exist, sometimes side by side or in dialogue with, and sometimes in opposition to, official modernist archaeology, some connecting to pre-modern archaeologies, others emerging under completely new circumstances, and others combining, in a hybrid manner, pre-modern and modern elements. Some of these unofficial alternative archaeologies may be called indigenous in certain contexts. While the recent emergence of indigenous archaeologies, especially in the USA, or Australia and New Zealand, has highlighted and valorized these alternative practices (e.g. Smith and Wobst, 2005), it would be a mistake to assume that these alternative archaeologies are absent in contexts such as Europe, or in other contexts not directly linked with European colonialism. In this volume, Stroulia and Sutton have shown how in parallel to the official discourses on the ancient material from the site of Nemea past championed by archaeologists and the state, there were other, local discourses and practices on the material past. These were based on ancient mythological connections. Yet, they have also acquired a material presence by valorizing and promoting, instead of the famous Nemea site itself, a cave that these local alternative archaeologies linked to Heracles.

The valorization of these practices as alternative archaeologies does not, of course, necessarily entail their endorsement and acceptance, in a hyper-relativist mode, nor are we to assume that they should remain immune to critique and debate, and to ethical and political judgements. Both professional archaeologists and alternative archaeologies historically have produced (or continue to produce) narratives that at times champion dangerous essentialisms, exclusivist or racist and xenophobic ideas. A context-specific analysis, valorizing the empirical and physical nature of materiality itself (and its ability to resist), and a comparative, historically informed, explicitly political judgement and response are the best antidotes to these expressions of archaeology: contemporary essentialist and exclusivist renderings of the material past

can (and should) be resisted on empirical as well as ethical and political grounds (see Lampeter Archaeology Workshop, 1997; Hamilakis, 2007b; see also below).

What is archaeological ethnography?

Based on the discussion above, we contend that archaeological ethnography is more than the reintroduction of ethnography into archaeological projects, and more than a mere *practice*. It is rather a trans-disciplinary or even a post-disciplinary and transcultural *space* for engagement, dialogue and critique, centred upon the material traces of various times and involving researchers as well as various other participants. It is a space that brings into sharp focus the poetics and politics of the present, being at the same time multi-temporal, rather than presentist. It does not so much aim at combining and mixing archaeological and ethnographic-anthropological practices, as at producing instead the ontological and epistemological possibilities for new practices — ethnographic, archaeological, ethnohistorical, educational, artistic or other — to emerge. In this attempt, it builds on the experience of not only social archaeology and social anthropology, but also social history, contemporary art, media and cultural studies, human geography or other disciplinary areas. Based on the broad definition of archaeology as discourses and practices on things from another time, it defines materiality and temporality as its two main concerns. It accepts that there are multiple archaeologies, some official modernist ones, and many other popular, unofficial, vernacular, alternative, indigenous ones. While all of them constitute social practices in the present, they often perceive time and temporality in distinctive and often radically different ways, from the linear, sequential, chronometric and Cartesian time, to the time defined by the coexistence (rather than succession) of past and present, and often a combination of diverse modes. Central to these conceptions of time, however, are the material objects, things, artefacts, landscapes and seascapes, and their sensuous and sensory, embodied, mnemonic properties. Archaeological ethnography thus produces the space where these diverse archaeologies coexist, become visible (as well as audible and tangible), come into dialogue, engage with and often critique each other.

Archaeological ethnography is an arena that enables a scholarly-cum-political engagement, and allows various social actors that are normally kept apart to coexist, share information and ideas, engage in common practices, but also disagree and clash. It is also a theatre that places social inequalities and political processes centre stage. It reminds the archaeologist of the contemporary social effects of their actions, and the social anthropologist or scholar from other disciplines of the importance of material traces of the past and their political connotations. Perhaps, as Roland Barthes would have it, an interdisciplinary or rather metadisciplinary endeavour such as this one, creates an object that belongs to none of the sciences that vie for it (Barthes, 1989: 72).

In contrast to other related strands of research, archaeological ethnography, both as conceptualization and as a range of practices, shapes the research endeavour, *from the moment of its inception*. To put it more boldly, rather than conceiving of archaeological ethnography as one distinct component of an overall archaeology project, *all* official archaeology projects should be archaeological ethnography projects. By bringing into the fore a range of alternative, hitherto ignored or undervalued

ontologies and epistemologies of matter and time, archaeological ethnography has the potential also to transform official, professional archaeology and anthropology. In other words, this new space, by reconstituting modernist archaeology, allows for different archaeologies to emerge.

Archaeological ethnography as scholarly-cum-political practice

What does it mean to do archaeological ethnography as we understand it? In what follows, we outline some of the main, interconnected elements and features of our vision of archaeological ethnography. We illustrate this discussion by citing examples from our own fieldwork in Kalaureia. At the same time, we bring into this dialogue the other examples and cases contained in this volume, either because we felt that our vision and that of the other contributors converged, or because a diverging and contrasting case was deemed to be illuminating for the reader.

Critically reflexive

Archaeological ethnography entails an interrogation of the position and the situatedness of the ethnographer. In other words, it entails a hard but necessary exercise in political-autobiographical reflexivity bringing to the fore collective attachments and associations, rather than the scholar as an isolated individual. Taking our Kalaureia project as an example, both of us are Greek — born and raised — scholars who have been trained and work mainly within western European academia. This fact alone would, in theory, raise the problematic of doing anthropology ‘at home’ (see Bakalaki, 1997), namely that us, as observers and participants, may already have a degree of familiarity with our fieldwork locus that prevents us from observing crucial details in its constitution. This is hardly the case, however. First of all, being ‘Greek’ does not automatically give us insider status in every setting within Greece, since one’s local allegiances may be seen to clash with constructions of local identity in other parts of Greece. Once, Aris mentioned to the local workers at the excavation that he was ‘Cretan’. Having questioned him further, and hearing that his father hails from Laconia, in the mainland Peloponnese, one of the workers challenged him half-jokingly: ‘so why do you claim to be Cretan? You should say you are *Moraitis* [i.e. from the Peloponnese].’ This same worker found it equally valid to refer to a common ‘us’, Greeks, when discussing matters of historical import or national significance on other occasions. Despite good-humoured attempts to include ourselves the researchers as ‘insiders’, we are still regarded as unclassifiable ‘outsiders’ to the local community. There are other, less conspicuous parameters, having to do with educational status, class background, gender, political conviction and so on, that also posit the researcher in respect to his or her subjects. Instead of viewing these as limiting, however, we should see them as tools that enable the researcher to understand not as a privileged observer, but as an ethical subject.

Reflexivity, however, becomes more potent and relevant when linked to the critical-genealogical exercise of the overarching scholarly project we are invested with, an expansion and deepening, in other words, of what Castañeda calls (2008: 45), *research positioning* (as opposed to researcher positioning). It is this kind of reflexivity that has enabled us to draw a distinction between official, modernist archaeology and alternative archaeologies, and which can expose our professionalized interests, and

our at times convenient self-justifications. It is this constantly self-questioning reflexivity which admits that, as Handler notes (2008) in most contexts, we, the researchers, need the people we are doing ethnography with more than they need us, and which should make us never hesitate to drastically alter or even abandon ethically and politically questionable projects. All studies in this volume, one way or another, are guided by critical reflexivity, but two in particular engage with the issue in a more explicit manner: Marshall and her colleagues discuss how the notion of auto-ethnography in the Greenham Common study enabled them to bring to the fore the explicitly political character of their project and articulate their own personal academic interest in it, facilitating at the same time the working relationships amongst themselves and with other women who lived that collective experience. Antoniadou recounts the ethical dilemmas arising from her dual role as an archaeologist and as an ethnographer attempting to conduct ethnographic research amongst people whom official archaeology describes as 'looters'.

'Total' ethnography

The archaeological ethnography that we propose here is, in some ways, a total ethnography, not an ethnography dealing exclusively with archaeology and the material past. By total we do not mean a totalizing, idealized and all-encompassing notion of ethnography as a method sufficient to take in the totality of a social group or a 'site' studied, a panopticism which is both unattainable and politically suspect (see Pyburn, this volume). On the contrary, we refer to the social anthropological tradition of 'participant observation' in as many areas of social life as possible. The researcher must strive to familiarize him- or herself with all aspects of the life of the communities he or she is studying, not simply their relationship with the material past. To do this, the ethnographer has to, at least partially, relinquish the security of institutional research, and enter an experimental field, which entails on the one hand methodological and ethical improvization, and on the other an almost existential anguish that often transforms the researcher in unpredictable ways (see Cerwonka and Malkki, 2007).

The reasons for advocating a total archaeological ethnography are also practical. The ethnographer has to be sufficiently familiar with the social context in which he or she is working, in order to acquire the necessary confidence to interpret, or at least offer a range of possible interpretations of, the traits being observed. This is what Clifford Geertz proposed as the work of ethnography, in his famous formulation of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1993). The homological links between attitudes towards antiquities and attitudes towards other material or non-material entities could be easily lost to an ethnography focusing exclusively on the material or archaeological past. However, in some contexts, such total ethnography may not be feasible, in which case well-thought-through and ethically and politically meaningful protocols such as Participatory Action Research (PAR), advocated in this volume by Pyburn, and Hollowell and Nicholas, may be the best way forward.

Multi-sited

It has become increasingly evident that we can no longer think of communities and 'sites' as spatially and culturally bound entities (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997). This, we

argue, should not lead to an urge for ethnographers to produce more and more ‘non-situated’ ethnographies, as the call for ‘multi-sited ethnography’ (Marcus, 1998: 80–83) seems to have been at times interpreted. It is a call to trace the multiple meanings of a specific — archaeological — site at their spatially diverse points of production, reproduction, dispersion, and consumption. The ethnographer faces nowadays the daunting task of not only describing a particular site, but of contextualizing it against the bewildering variety of supra-local processes that endow it with its specific characteristics.

For example, as soon as we started our research on the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Poros and on the island as a whole, it became clear that the site itself had been produced at the intersection of local, national and global processes and networks of knowledge and power. It was Swedish archaeologists who first excavated here in 1894, which prompted the archaeologists from the Greek archaeological service to invite, in the 1990s, the Swedish Institute of Archaeology at Athens to come back and continue the excavations. The team of researchers today is international, but working under the auspices of the Greek archaeological service. Knowledge and documentation about the site and about its various entanglements with local people, local and national authorities, archaeologists, financial sponsors, and others are dispersed in various sites and localities, from Poros town itself, to Athens, Stockholm, Uppsala and Lund, London and Southampton, to name but a few. Moreover, local people on the island are marked by a long and diverse history of migration, travel, and movement, and many of them still spend their lives between the island, Piraeus and Athens. A significant part of recorded local history is not stored locally but in places outside Poros, whereas new media and the internet in particular have added new fields of dispersion (see Hamilakis, 2000).

There is another important issue at stake, however: this multi-sited dispersal is never neutral and politically innocent. The act of re-collection relies on the ability to travel and visit these diverse locales, to access the internet, to participate in international and other scholarly fora where knowledge is produced, to bypass and overcome bureaucratic obstacles in accessing archives that store documentation and information. While we as scholars may have the means to access most of these sites, many of our interlocutors do not. Their access to this multi-sited production of the site is thus limited, and we have certainly sensed a desire on the part of many of them to reground and reterritorialize some of this knowledge and information. This desire is expressed through suggestions for international academic conferences to be held on the island, and attempts to create a local archive that would host the totality of the place’s historical documentation.

Our multi-sited ethnography, therefore, includes the commitment to reground some of these knowledge constructions with a series of academic events held locally (as in the workshop upon which this volume was based), but also events and actions that are loosely associated with ‘community’ or ‘public archaeology’: tours, exhibits, school events, plain-language reports, and so on. These efforts, however, are still informed by our ethnographic quests and the understanding gained through them. At the same time, these locales are not seen as spaces for ‘public outreach’ and ‘knowledge transfer’, as is often the case with public archaeology, a concept that is commonly associated with communication and engagement with diverse publics (see

Merriman, 2004). They are seen instead as arenas for dialogue, or even as ethnographic installations, as explained by Castañeda in this volume, which may lead to the collaborative production of new knowledge and understanding, removing thus the boundaries beyond knowledge production and its communication.

Taken as a whole, this volume offers a vision and a materialization of a multi-sited archaeological ethnography, engaging as it does with locales as diverse as the archaeological site, the village or the town, the archive (Forbes), a visitor's book (Chourmouziadi), an artisan's workshop (Herzfeld), a photographic installation (Castañeda; Hamilakis, Anagnostopoulos and Ifantidis), or tribal terminologies and their dispersal in various locales (Colwell-Chanthaphonh).

Sensuous scholarship

The familiarity produced by ethnography is something that is corporeal and sensuous, it is 'felt' rather than conceived in an abstract sense. As Watson notes, 'what we are doing in the field, then . . . is making ourselves inward with a culture to the point where we feel as comfortable with it as we do with our own' (Watson, 1999: 5). This feeling of 'comfort' is, however, not to be taken literally, because feeling part of the society under study often means that the ethnographer is faced with ethical and existential conundrums inherent in that particular setting (Cerwonka and Malkki, 2007: 34–35). Cerwonka and Malkki, following a long tradition in socio-cultural anthropology (see most notably Rosaldo, 1993), elaborate on this point by introducing the body of the ethnographer as 'a site of analytical insight about various aspects of fieldwork' (2007: 35). Their contention is that an emphasis on the bodily presence and affective passions of the ethnographer may further the techniques for 'situating' ethnographic knowledge and field research. Affect and the body are 'resources that allow a better understanding of our changing investments in the varied contexts of fieldwork that produces more ethical research' and 'a way of tapping into another level of information about the subjects of our research' (2007: 36; see also Seremetakis, 1996; Stoller, 1997; Herzfeld, 2001, 2004, and this volume). The involvement of one of us (Aris) in the back-breaking work of clearing space next to the sanctuary from debris left there by the first excavators, gave him a sense of the work involved in producing a 'site'. Simultaneously, however, it alerted him to the tempo of manual work, which was measured in this case by cartloads of soil and punctuated by cigarette-breaks. The duration of manual work thus perceived, created a sense of temporality that was contained in the same site as other temporalities such as the 'official' record of archaeological strata, and the everyday temporality of the archaeologists.

Given the fact that materiality, objects, artefacts, things, form a focal point of an archaeological ethnography, indeed they are key and often active participants in this new space, the sensory and sensuous quest becomes even more important. Materiality is produced and experienced through the sensuous body, through multi-sensory, synaesthetic and kinaesthetic processes, through vision and touch and movement (see Hamilakis, 2002). Moreover, materiality, through its sensuous properties and effects, produces bodily mnemonic effects, collective memories, through a complex process of evocation, elicitation and recall (Jones, 2007; Hamilakis and Labanyi, 2008). These mnemonic effects can be (and often have been) recast as national memories, but they also constitute the raw materials in myriad counter-mnemonic processes.

A 'sensuous scholarship' may help us understand how people's interaction with archaeological artefacts may produce alternative modes of valuation. Mr M., a middle-aged workman in the excavation, had a special relationship with a stone bearing a 19th-century traveller's inscription. It was 'his' stone in a way that may sound mundane: first of all, it enabled him to sit in a specific way during breaks, resting his right leg upon it, and his elbow upon his right knee. In a way, the stone 'propped him up', somewhat like sitting while standing up. This ease of propping oneself upright may be part of a technique of the body (see Mauss, 1973; Jackson, 1983: 329) which confers masculinity, stamina and pride. The stone in question is of little meaning to the main archaeological research question on site, but it is important from the point of view of our historical–archaeological ethnography, as a material trace that testifies to the continuous life of the site; it had already been recorded by us, together with the many other, more recent graffiti inscribed on the ancient stones. But for M., this artefact had acquired a different value and meaning. The stone, half-buried, had attracted the conversation of the company of workers, and also the attentions of archaeologists: the director of the excavation complained that M. extinguished his cigarettes in a crack at the middle of the stone. This prompted a series of discussions upon the stone and the inscription. M. insisted, perhaps jokingly, that he would bring some whitewash to wipe the inscription of the traveller from 'his' stone. He later took extra care to fish out all the cigarette butts from the hollow he had been using as an ashtray. It seems that his treatment of it was simultaneously brutal and disrespectful (it was 'just a stone') but also tender and attentive. We suspect that similar mundane actions may confer local value upon elements of the archaeological but also the broader landscape — hence the need for total ethnography — that do not otherwise have any significance for 'official' valuation procedures.

Multi-temporal

Any archaeological ethnography will have to tackle temporality alongside its preoccupation with materiality. This coupling acquires for us a deeper and more fundamental relevance, given the work that one of us (Yannis) has been developing on the links between materiality and temporality. Briefly and schematically, the starting point of this work is founded on the Bergsonian ideas of *duration* as a fundamental property of matter, and on the ability of material and of materiality to re-enact multiple, coexisting times (Bergson, 1991). Rather than subscribing to the Western modernist concept of linear time and chronological succession, we find it more inspiring and more relevant to talk about multiple, coexisting times enacted by the presence of materiality (see Al-Saji, 2004; see also Olivier, 1999). This becomes more pertinent in cases where a material artefact, a building or an object has been initially created in, say, ancient times, but has been reworked and reshaped in subsequent times, making it thus impossible for the archaeologist to engage in the customary process of dating and typology. That artefact has the ability to re-enact multiple temporalities that coexist, and may become reactivated through human sensuous and sensory practices (see Hamilakis and Labanyi, 2008). Equally, an archaic temple, a Hellenistic building, a 19th-century graffito on an ancient stone, a mid-20th-century graffito on another stone nearby, and the remnants of a late 20th-century farmstead, all at the same 'heritage' space, our site in Kalaureia (see Hamilakis, Anagnostopoulos and

Ifantidis this volume), re-enact multiple and coexisting times, and evoke often conflicting social practices and political strategies. Our ethnographic interlocutors, for example the workmen in the excavation, are constantly negotiating these multiple times, and it is our task to attempt to understand some of this interplay.

There is a justified and well-waged critique of the ways in which the insistence on the 'ethnographic present' in fact creates a sense of a place as 'allochronous' (Fabian, 1983), as outside the grand historical processes that shape modernity. In archaeology, allochronism has worked in multiple ways: archaeologists, especially the ones who have used ethnoarchaeological studies unreflectively and uncritically, have often treated local people (and their agricultural practices) as examples of pre-modern situations, as living in another time (see Fotiadis, 1995), comparable to ancient times (but see Forbes in this volume for a different view; also Herzfeld, in this volume, for discussion). The national-cum-colonial project in Greece has also been associated with another allochronic process, since the 19th century: due to the constitution of modern Greece as an inheritor of classical heritage, the country as a whole was allochronized, it was seen by both Western colonial and national discourses as living in another time (Hamilakis, 2007a). As a result, Greece became an isolated case, and the 19th-century War of Independence was deprived of its historical contingencies and social connotations, inhibiting any comparison with, say, the Balkan wars of independence or contemporary social movements in Europe (Skopetea, 1988). Yet, while critiquing *allochronism*, we should also be aware of the danger of *homochronism* (see Birth, 2008): the inability to accept that time is not homogeneous and abstract but diverse, multiple, and socially and materially produced. As noted above, any of our ethnographic locales may contain and re-enact various times simultaneously, some chronological (e.g. the classical age, the 20th century), some social and experiential (the agricultural circle, the tourist season).

Modernist archaeology did not just 'happen' once and we are left with it ever since, but this original moment of conception is repeated in everyday acts of appropriation and reappropriation of materiality and meaning, of material archaeological commodities, which are constitutive of the temporality of modern capitalism (see Hamilakis and Duke, 2007). To record and study both, these modernist (national, colonial or other) temporal ascriptions *and* the alternative embodiments of temporality, as well as the interplay between the two, should be a central aim of archaeological ethnographies. Equally, temporal ascriptions may be transient and unstable, with the same objects being placed by the same people sometimes within a framework of linearity, and at other times within a realm of temporal coexistence (see Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2006; Herzfeld, this volume). This tacking back and forth between often strategically different conceptions of temporality may be illustrated perfectly in 'object biographies' (Appadurai, 1986; Hoskins, 1998). These are most notably explored in this volume by Deltou, who traces the biographies of ancient sites such as Sikyon in the Peloponnese and their local perceptions, especially in juxtaposition to officially sanctioned and much more prominent sites such as Corinth or Epidavros.

Politically sensitive scholarship

The discussion on allochronization and its political connotations reminds us that in engaging with archaeological ethnography we enter a field of contestation with

multiple power dynamics and interplays, performed in multiple sites and spaces, hence the need for a multi-sited approach. Some of these dynamics involve us as individuals or members of a team of specialists, working under the auspices of certain knowledge–power structures.

In Kalaureia, we worked daily under the supervision of the state archaeological service, but that organization itself is constituted by multiple hierarchies, discourses and structures of power. Our site guard was a temporary staff member, quite junior within the service, yet he was in charge of overseeing (on a daily basis) a team of foreign and Greek specialists. The excavation followed the standard practice of Mediterranean archaeology of employing local workmen in the field. This is a practice which often produces a dichotomy between manual and intellectual labour, and introduces students into a certain power-laden and hierarchical way of conducting field archaeology. Yet, in our case, both the archaeologists and the ethnographers were also involved in manual labour, which may not erase the existing power inequities in the field but it produces certain interesting effects: one day, we were visiting the site coming from the town, and upon seeing us, one of the workmen said: ‘thank God that the scholars (*epistimones*) came for a visit, so that we can have a cigarette break’. There were several scholars already there, in the shape of archaeologists and students, yet, temporarily, and as the archaeologists and students on site, both male and female, were performing manual labour in ways similar to the workmen, we, the ethnographers, had become the scholars.

Beyond the site, there are many other forms of power inequities that we have already encountered, be it the divide between local authorities and the many ordinary residents with little financial or political power, between the Athens-based affluent islanders and the year-round fishermen and other residents of Poros, between the local people and the destitute (and often exploited) recent immigrants from Asia or Africa, and so on. None of these fields of contestation is simple and unproblematic: the state archaeological service has caused considerable resentment in the area because of its strict policies in terms of planning permission and regulations, and land expropriations. Indeed, the owners of the land on which our site is located were involved in a long and bitter battle with the archaeological service. Yet, the archaeological service, despite its many faults and its often colonizing attitude, has also acted as a *de facto* environmental agency, preventing damaging real estate development, especially by organized groups such as large housing consortia based in Athens and elsewhere. Our archaeological ethnography, which follows long-term research on archaeology, politics, and national imagination in Greece more broadly (e.g. Hamilakis, 2007a), aims at interrogating these multiple and often interlinked power dynamics and associated inequalities, and showing their articulation with broader macropolitics, be it the nation state, large private capital, or supranational tourist interests.

Archaeological ethnographers, in their desire to listen to and promote alternative narratives and practices of engagement with the material past, should be aware of the danger of overlooking essentialist claims to continuity and identity or dualist accounts of ‘natives’ versus ‘officials’. Some scholars tend to examine ‘reclaimed’ cultural heritage as a means for the empowerment of local communities, in view of the politically important anti-colonial struggles of the latter. They thus tend at times to take alternative narratives at face value, without always examining their often

essentialist overtones and their exclusionary political effects. This danger has been recognized by Colwell-Chanthaphonh when he comments that uncritical acceptance of 'alternative' views may result in pure jingoism, stating at the same time that falling back into scientific objectivity as the sole gauge of correctness and truth in the 'final instance', reeks of scientific essentialism (Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2006: 149).

Let's take the concept of indigenism as an example. As it must have become clear in the discussion above, we consider the recent emergence of various indigenous archaeologies as an important step both politically, as it redresses colonialist inequities, and epistemologically, as it challenges the authority of official, Western archaeology and brings to the fore alternative epistemologies. Some renderings of the concept, however, not only evoke essentialist ideas, or what Ingold has called genealogical as opposed to relational modes of ancestry (2000: 132–151), but in certain contexts 'indigeneity' can also acquire xenophobic or racist connotations; after all, indigenist ideologies, in their various configurations, are at the core of most nationalist and colonialist projects. For example, in Europe today the concept of the indigenous (along with claims of ancestry and continuity) is invoked to support racist attitudes towards recent economic and political immigrants: in 2008, extreme right wing parties in Italy launched anti-immigration posters depicting stereotypical representations of Native Americans, accompanied by the phrase: 'they too accepted immigrants; and they now live in reservations'.³

The archaeological ethnography that we advocate here confronts this problem by adopting a three-pronged perspective: a critical–political one, by recognizing and addressing the social and political inequities and dynamics, the interests and values that are promoted in each context; a historical one by exploring the time-depth and the trajectories of power structures such as colonialism but also of ideas and their political effects; and finally, an empirical and comparative perspective, as for example in the wide coverage of diverse 'ethnographic areas' and cases in this volume, in order to show the specificities, the grounding, and particularities of each, but also to draw them in dialogue and comparison by their juxtaposition.

Official, modernist archaeology has, for far too long, failed to come to terms with its links with capitalism (see Hamilakis and Duke, 2007), the notion of private ownership (see Castañeda and Matthews, 2008: 14), and with the political economy inherent in its own processes. A politicized archaeological ethnography opens up the space for such fundamental political–reflexive work to be carried out. It does so by bringing into sharp focus the various and at times conflicting economic and other interests that the material past and archaeological production generate, by exploring aspects such as land ownership and rights, agriculture and cultural tourism, the so-called heritage industry, land expropriations by archaeologists, and so on. A number of contributors to this volume take up this challenge, most notably Pyburn who questions the commodification of 'authenticity' within the cultural heritage industry, whereby 'poverty becomes sanctified as authentic'; Hollowell and Nicholas who subject the discourses of 'intellectual property' and 'heritage management' to scrutiny, based on archaeological ethnography amongst several local communities; and Herzfeld who explores how the commodification of the material past by neo-liberalism deprives local people and subjugated social groups of crucial weapons in political negotiations.

Ethnography as collective practice

Scholars who conduct archaeological ethnography often debate whether such an endeavour is best practised by someone with primarily archaeological training, or whether it is better left to socio-cultural anthropologists (see Hollowell and Nicholas, 2008; Delsou, this volume). Competence is crucial, of course, but it is not achieved simply through formal training; scholarly and life experiences, sensibilities, ethical and political stances and convictions may be more important, at least in the kind of archaeological ethnography we advocate here. As a possible answer to this dilemma we propose instead archaeological ethnography as collective practice. There is no reason why archaeological ethnography should be carried out by a solitary researcher, be it an archaeologist or an anthropologist. In our case, one of us was formally trained in social anthropology with an emphasis on historical anthropology and with an active interest in the historical ethnography of the archaeological past, and the other was trained in archaeology but with an active interest (and previous experience) in ethnography and with extensive work on the politics of the past in the present. For specific strands of research, we also collaborated with other colleagues, such as the archaeologist and photo-blogger Fotis Ifantidis (see Hamilakis, Anagnostopoulos and Ifantidis, this volume), and the doctoral researcher Vasko Démou who works on media, art, and archaeology. This sense of ‘team ethnography’ counters the individualism of contemporary Western academia, and has resulted in a dialogue between disciplines that is inherently pragmatic, in the Latourian sense of pragmatism (Latour, 2005): it places material reality, things (*pragmata*, in Greek), at its centre.

But there is another sense of archaeological ethnography as collective practice that we want to flag up here, perhaps the most difficult to achieve, and the most contentious. It involves the expansion of the ethnography team to include, in a truly collaborative manner, the groups and people whom ethnographers normally consider as ‘informants’, or interlocutors (see Kerber, 2006; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson, 2008; Silliman, 2008). Some practitioners in archaeological ethnography have used instead the term ‘participants’ (see Antoniadou this volume; Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2006), whereas others place emphasis on *sharing* as a fundamental principle for archaeological ethnography (see Pyburn this volume). In our work, we have made an effort to communicate information and ideas to the people we have talked to, and many of our encounters, be it with visitors to the site or local people living in the vicinity or elsewhere, are about communicating the results of excavation and study of the material, and the findings of the ethnographic research. We have also frequently been asked or have volunteered information on our own background, ideas, type of work and outcomes, and have thus endeavoured to be as open as possible. At times, it seemed that we were not the only ethnographers at work (see also Antoniadou). With one crucial difference: we were the only ones who were writing down and recording these encounters, either at the time or later. In other words, the broad and inclusive ‘team ethnography’ that we advocate here would be impossible if we cannot find a way to constitute all participants of the ethnographic endeavour, not just co-producers of knowledge (which they already are) but also co-authors of that knowledge and experience, that is full participants in the global exchange of ideas. This is a huge challenge for us all, with no easy answers or recipes.

Decolonizing archaeology through archaeological ethnography

We have defined archaeological ethnography here as an emerging space of thinking, engagement, dialogue, collaboration and intervention, rather than merely a scholarly practice at the interface between archaeology and anthropology. The shift from *practice* to *space* carries important implications that are worth recapping here: the notion of space offers possibilities for *multiple coexistences*: coexistence of scholars from various disciplines as well as artists; of ethnographers and various other social groups and publics, constituted as *participants* in an ongoing conversation, rather than as subject and object; of ethnographers, diverse social groups, and material artefacts of diverse times, producing social and political effects in the present; of multiple temporalities and materialities, beyond the ones officially sanctioned and valorized; of multiple archaeologies, from the officially sanctioned one to the various alternative archaeologies with their often distinctive ontologies and epistemologies; and of multiple participatory practices, be they scholarly, artistic, or other. The creation of this trans- (or post-) disciplinary and transcultural participatory space is the starting point for the decolonization of scholarly practice, archaeological, ethnographic/ anthropological or other.

Decolonization is a process that will have to take place simultaneously in all these locales where colonial and neocolonial effects and structures are being produced and reproduced, and not only in the conventionally conceived ‘post-colonial’ contexts. The papers in this volume take up the challenge of producing the new space of archaeological ethnography, offering rich and diverse insights on its nature, its potential methods, and its associated problems and conundrums. At the same time, taken as a whole, this volume widens the debate in a geographical-comparative sense, offering some very closely argued case studies from Europe, and other, often overlooked contexts. The deliberately broad framework adopted here, and the multivocal nature of the volume, signals the beginning of what promises to be an exciting and fruitful dialogue.

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Notes

¹ Archaeological ethnography may be taken to also include the ethnographies of archaeological practice and of archaeologists, especially the ways in which archaeological knowledges are produced and archaeological practices are carried out; while none of the contributors in this volume ignores this important, indeed crucial, dimension, given the publication of a recent, invaluable volume on the topic (Edgeworth 2006) we have decided, for reasons of

convenience and focus, to underplay this specific angle here.

² We use ‘transcultural’ in the sense of a crossing of disciplinary, as well as cultural and social, boundaries — ethnic, national, class, gender, or age amongst others (see Castañeda, 2008, and in this volume, for discussion).

³ These posters were brought to our attention by Agata Meuti, whom we thank.

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