AN OFFPRINT FROM

Creating Material Worlds

The uses of identity in archaeology

edited by

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Front cover image by Christy McNutt.
*Back cover image. Terracotta plaque, seventh century BC. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the
Archaeological Institute of America, 1953, www.metmuseum.org.*

Contents

Preface

Like many archaeology projects, the genesis of *Creating Material Worlds* can be found in the pub. Throughout years of seminars, papers and conference presentations, postgraduates in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Glasgow found themselves repeatedly using various forms of identity theory in their work regardless of time period or geographic area, proving those categories to be artificial restrictions in the study of past human interactions. We felt that the resulting theoretical cohesion emerging in our work was a strength to be played upon, and eventually *Creating Material Worlds* was born.

Many of the contributors to the volume have crossed academic paths in the past, but some have more recently entered the discussion. What unites us is our clear explanation and application of theoretical concepts to archaeological data sets in the belief that, despite the ever-changing nature of identity, we can begin to understand not just the basic elements of people's everyday lives but how they perceived themselves and the world around them. From the Iroquois burial practices of northern North America to the far reaches of the Classical world, and from the flint scatters of Mesolithic Scotland to the edge of the known world in medieval Greenland, we hope to demonstrate that even old evidence can be re-evaluated to shed new light on the people who lived in the past.

Thanks to a grant from the Chancellor's Fund at the University of Glasgow, we have realised our vision of a project that not only presents a publication of our new approaches to identity, but also has brought together a network of early-career researchers in the field and supported a series of public lectures at the University of Glasgow by young scholars from around the UK. Two of the lecturers from our seminar series – Oliver Harris from the University of Leicester and John Creese from Cambridge University – have since joined us as contributors to this volume.

Early versions of the papers in this volume were presented during a workshop on 24 November 2012 under the watchful eye of Professor Bernard Knapp. Together, the volume represents the work of researchers from five different nations, representing six different institutions. Perhaps identity has played such an important role in our research because many of the contributors have lived and/or worked outside of their home nations. Having an understanding of what it is to negotiate local, national and international identities in the modern world can help to inform our ideas of how people related to one another in the past, regardless of when or where these people lived.

It is our hope that the accessibility of the ideas presented by the early-career researchers in this volume will inspire other scholars who might not otherwise incorporate identity into their work to consider the ways identity can be found in human society past and present. The ideas presented are not unique to a particular time or place, but rather reflect continuing themes within the human experience.

Contributor Biographies

Louisa Campbell received her PhD from the University of Glasgow in 2011. Her thesis, entitled *A Study in Culture Contact: the distribution, function and social meanings of Roman pottery from non-Roman contexts in southern Scotland* incorporated an extensive reassessment of all Roman material culture from across northern Britain. Her main research interests are threefold: Roman material culture, the Roman and Provincial interface and theoretical approaches to culture contact. She has taught an evening class at the University of Glasgow's Centre for Open studies and has written several papers which are currently in press, forthcoming and in prep. She is currently coordinating EAA Glasgow 2015, the largest cultural heritage event ever to be held in Europe. She is also co-editing two archaeological volumes on *The Roots of Nationhood: the Archaeology and History of Scotland* and *The Experience of Technology*.

John Creese recently completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge. His current research explores the interrelations of social power, community, and identity among ancestral Wendat societies of eastern North America. He is currently an Assistant Professor in Anthropology at North Dakota State University.

Oliver Harris graduated with a BA in Archaeology from Sheffield in 2002, took an MA at Cardiff University, and stayed on to do a PhD under the supervision of Alasdair Whittle. His PhD focussed on developing new theoretical approaches to identity, emotion and memory, and applying them to the British Neolithic. Since finishing his PhD, Oliver has worked in contract archaeology and held two post-docs. The first, at Cambridge, was part of the interdisciplinary Changing Beliefs of the Human Body project. The second, at Newcastle, was a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship looking at the different kinds of community that occupied Southern Britain in the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age, and what happens when we think about communities not just as collections of people, but as assemblages of people, things, animals, places and monuments. He has just published a book on the history of the human body with John Robb, and spends his summers digging in Ardnamurchan, Western Scotland.

Jeremy Hayne gained his PhD from Glasgow University in 2013. His thesis examined the long term effects of culture contact on Iron Age Sardinia. Based in Milan, he has excavated in the UK, Spain and Italy and he regularly does field work and research in Sardinia on Punic and Nuragic sites. His current investigations explore sacred sites and their role in identity transformations in the Nuragic communities of early Iron Age Sardinia. For many years an Associate Lecturer for the Open University, his research interests include identities, consumption practices and performance.

ADRIÁN MALDONADO received his PhD in 2011 from the University of Glasgow with a thesis entitled *Christianity and Burial in Late Iron Age Scotland, AD 400–650* and was a lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Chester in 2013–2015. With a background in Medieval History (A.B., Harvard, 2004), he is most interested in the ontological transformations that came with the conversion to Christianity and the adoption of literacy beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire.

BEATRIZ MARÍN-AGUILERA is currently working at the Department of Archaeology at Ghent University as postdoctoral researcher. She has recently completed her PhD at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain, where she was granted a four-year government scholarship. During her doctoral studies, she conducted three research stays abroad at the School of Humanities at Glasgow University (2011–2012), at the Spanish School of History and Archaeology in Rome (2012–2013), and at the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University (2014). She has done fieldwork in Cyprus, Italy and Spain, and is currently field co-director of the research project at Peña Moñuz (Olmeda de Cobeta, Guadalajara). Her research interests include postcolonial theory, household archaeology, the anthropology of food and consumption, and the archaeology of colonialism and cultural contact.

ERIN MCGUIRE has been teaching at the University of Victoria in British Columbia since 2010. Her PhD from the University of Glasgow examined the role of migration in changing funerary practices in Scandinavia, Britain and Iceland in the Viking Age. Her research interests include the archaeologies of gender and identity, death and funerary rituals, migration, and the life course. She also takes an interest in education and teaching methods to assist students in learning.

ELIZABETH PIERCE received her PhD from the University of Glasgow in 2011. Her thesis examined identity and material culture in the North Atlantic in the period after the Viking Age. She has worked in commercial archaeology in Britain and the U.S., and taught courses on the archaeology of the Vikings and early medieval Scotland at the University of Glasgow and at the university's Centre for Open Studies. Currently she lectures about archaeology on board expedition ships in Scandinavia and the North Atlantic. Her research interests include the Middle Ages in the North Atlantic, exotic materials such as walrus ivory and jet, and recumbent monuments in medieval Scotland.

ANTHONY RUSSELL completed his PhD at the University of Glasgow in 2011. His thesis, entitled *In the Middle of the Corrupting Sea: Cultural encounters in Sicily and Sardinia between 1450–900 BC*, explored the effects of culture contact in the Middle and Late Bronze Age on the two largest islands in the Mediterranean. He earned a BA in English Literature, and an MA in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology from the University of British Columbia, and an MLitt in Mediterranean Archaeology at Glasgow. He has participated in field work in Tuscany, the Aeolian Islands, Scotland and the Canadian prairies.

DENE WRIGHT is a lithics specialist undertaking post-doctoral research at the University of Glasgow. An advocate of symmetrical approaches in archaeology, his research focus centres on Mesolithic events and the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition in west central Scotland. He is a senior team member and site director for the Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot Project.

Chapter 9

There Is No Identity: Discerning the Indiscernible

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Abstract

This paper is cast as a journey in abstract in the construction of a theoretical bricolage of symmetrical and interpretive approaches to offer an understanding of what the lithic assemblages of the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers of West Central Scotland can tell us about identity and group identities. A central tenet of Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* (2004) [1968] is the notion that there is no identity. However, psychology considers group identity to be the normative ties that bind people. Anthropology takes these normative ties further and asks us to consider the agency of the objectification of practice within a performance setting, which is recast in terms of symmetrical approaches. A continuity of technological practice, as 'a way of being,' exists across the greater part of the *longue durée* of the Mesolithic period in Scotland. The continuity of technological practice may be said to mask identity and blur distinctions between different groups of hunter-gatherers. However, the *chaîne opératoire* makes it possible to identify aspects of the identity of a person from the detailed analysis of the technological attributes of lithic artefacts. Group identities may be distinguished by the recognition of the variations in the choices made in the procurement of raw materials by different hunter-gatherer groups.

Keywords: *Mesolithic, Deleuze, difference, becoming different, being Mesolithic, technology, symmetry, supervenience, group identities*

Introduction

The character of the Mesolithic resource in West Central Scotland primarily consists of lithic scatters comprised of surface collections and excavated assemblages, which represent a conflation of different events creating palimpsests of two or more phases of activity. As shown by previous regional studies (e.g. Hardy and Wickham-Jones 2007;

Mithen 2000), the resource is set against a background of a continuity of technological practice throughout the greater part of the *longue durée* of the Mesolithic period in Scotland. What can the patterning in the lithic scatters of the Mesolithic period really tell us about identity and group identities?

When initially confronted by the lithic assemblages I felt as if I stood transfixed on a threshold before understanding. What follows is my journey in abstract to construct a theoretical *bricolage* of symmetrical and interpretive approaches (cf. Olsen 2010) to offer a meaningful understanding of aspects of Mesolithic lifeways in West Central Scotland from the dataset. The initial trigger to my first step over the threshold stemmed from the continuity of technological practice, although I recognised it has never been understood in the abstract. This highlighted to me a requirement to consider how I could explore and give meaning to difference as an abstraction, and as such I was drawn to the philosophies of Gilles Deleuze, with a principal focus on *Difference and Repetition* which was first published in 1968.

My journey in abstract combines the two principal themes of difference and technology that are folded into a cohesive framework by reference to Deleuze's (2004 [1968]) *Difference and Repetition.* Because I have been engaged mainly with the technological and attribute analysis of lithic assemblages these constructs have been recast to incorporate the *chaîne opératoire* (after Leroi-Gourhan 1993 [1964]). By conjoining these themes of variation and technology, I would argue that the structure has allowed me to understand that it is people and things as technology within the relational continuum that inscribe the landscape in the creation of a potentially meaningful taskscape (after Conneller 2000; Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Deleuze and Guattari 2004 [1972]; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Ingold 1993). The taskscape enriched with material culture serves as the forum for academic enquiry into identity and group identities. Let me clarify what is meant by the 'relational continuum'. It is a shorthand for the relations of human with human with non-human with non-human in the lived-world, and the repetitive character of the ebbs and flows, connections and disconnections of those relations understood as multiple cross-cutting rhizomatic *chaînes opératoires* (after Conneller 2011; Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]; Harman 2002, 167; Latour 1993 [1991]; 2005; Olsen 2010, 9).

This paper fundamentally encapsulates three key points of enquiry. Firstly, the Deleuzian notions of repetition, difference and becoming are briefly explained as integral to an understanding of identity. Secondly, the weave of technology with people and things as an inseparable concept is touched upon. Thirdly, an interpretation is offered to clarify the recursive relation of identity to group identities. The brief case study draws upon the key factors and highlights difficulties encountered in academic enquiry by the analyst in the quest to seek out identity and group identities from the analysis of lithic assemblages of West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period.

A central tenet of Deleuzian philosophy is the notion that there is no identity (Deleuze 2004 [1968]), which may be understood by analogy to rhizomatics where things are forever in a state of construction and reconstruction within the relational continuum (after Deleuze and Guattari 2004 [1972]). Things are, therefore, never 'well-defined' and cannot have a definitive or fixed identity. This is explained by repetition as a perpetual sphere of becoming different (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). The paradox of an identity that is 'well-defined' and things that are in a continuous state of becoming different is reconciled when the lithic artefact is understood as a moment of becoming within the relational continuum; the identity of the person as technology is fixed within that moment.

The next stage in the journey was to create a pathway to make enquiry into the identity and group identities of the people who created the taskscape (after Ingold 1993). This was accomplished by drawing in concepts from philosophy (Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Heidegger 1962 [1927]), anthropology (Shankar 2006), sociology (Bourdieu 1977 [1972]; Sawyer 2002; 2003), psychology (Burke and Stets 1999; Stets and Burke 2000) and analytical philosophy (Kim 1990 and others). The resultant theoretical *bricolage* forms one of the interwoven strands in the structure of my research. This highlights an unavoidable tension in the use of abstract notions from the philosophical academic enquiry of the 'living' to offer an understanding of identity and group identities in prehistory. Implicit within the *bricolage* is that the materiality of stone should not be reduced to a passive raw material but given meaning as a dynamic and living entity within and inseparable from the relational continuum (after Conneller 2011, 13; Ingold 2007; Stout 2002, 704).

The *bricolage* does not offer a meta-narrative for understanding prehistoric identity; rather, it serves as a structure to facilitate exploring notions of identity from the material culture of West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period. It is because of this approach that I have chosen to avoid theoretically contentious and value-laden terminologies such as 'individual' and 'dividual' (cf. Knapp and van Dommelen 2008 and respondents).

Philosophy and archaeology

The incorporation of aspects of Deleuzian concepts into a structure for understanding the past follows a well-trodden path of archaeologists recasting philosophical insights to facilitate 'alternate ways of knowing, conceiving of, and writing about, the past' (Knapp 1996, 151). For example, there is the work of Heidegger (1962 [1927]) and Merleau-Ponty (1962 [1945]) in Gosden (1994), Tilley (1994), Thomas (1999) and Olsen (2010); Gadamer (1976) in Hodder (1991a; b) and many others instances of archaeologists incorporating Marxist theory. Dobres' (2001, 48) concept of 'meaning in the making' was developed from her interpretation of prehistoric technology as 'sensuous' and was formulated from a critical analysis of the writings of Kant, Dessauer, Mumford, Ortega y Gasset and Heidegger (cf. Dobres 2000, 72–95) However, I am mindful of the dangers highlighted by Miller (2010, 79–80) in stating that:

> Academics tempted by the promise of an easy and assured claim to cleverness, create vast circulations of obscure and impressive citations. A scattering of names such as Lacan or Deleuze and Guattari is usually a good sign of such oppressive conceits.

Philosophy is often inaccessible to those in other disciplines; a category in which Deleuze sits comfortably. In using philosophical concepts there is a fine line between challenging and losing the reader. The latter is a trap that I seek to avoid, as Miller (2010, 80) goes on to say:

> It is only through the subsequent processes of maturing and re-grounding theory in its application to everyday lives and languages that such cleverness becomes transformed into understanding and re-directed to a compassionate embrace, rather than an aloof distaste.

It may be prudent to explain why Deleuzian philosophy features so strongly in my journey in abstract. Until comparatively recently, his work has been largely ignored in archaeology, except for the concept of rhizomatics developed in his later work with Felix Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]; 2004 [1972]). For example, it has been used for discourses on archaeological interpretation and the structure of thought (cf. Shanks 1992; Shanks and Hodder 1995; Tilley 1993), and incorporated into aspects of landscape theory (cf. Conneller 2000). Deleuze and Guattari are intrinsic to Latour's (1993 [1991]; 2005, 77) concept of symmetry and subsequent symmetrical approaches in archaeology (cf. Hodder 2012; Jensen and Rödje 2010, 2; Webmoor and Witmore 2008 and others). The relations within the connections of the relational continuum are always immanent, i.e. 'with' and not 'to', thereby avoiding the dialectic of making one thing transcendent to another (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]). Dialectics has been described as 'the most classical and well reflected, oldest and weariest kind of thought' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980], 5).

Derrida (2001, 192–93), writing after Deleuze's death in 1995, summarised *Difference and Repetition*: '[Deleuze speaks of]…an irreducible difference "more profound" than a contradiction'. If identity is about anything, it may be said to be about transformations, i.e. its negotiation and renegotiation at the intersections of the cross-cutting rhizomatic *chaînes opératoires* that form the relational continuum. Parr (2010b, 226) explains that 'repetition is the creative activity of transformation…and an understanding of difference.'

Becoming different

The basis of my enquiry into identity and group identities from the material culture of West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period focuses on the concepts of repetition and difference, which is a tri-partite phenomenon comprised of two principles, three repetitions, and three syntheses (cf. Deleuze 2004 [1968]).

The second principle in the Deleuzian scheme is 'forget everything'. Deleuze informs us that it is intensities, i.e. stimuli which may be memories, something
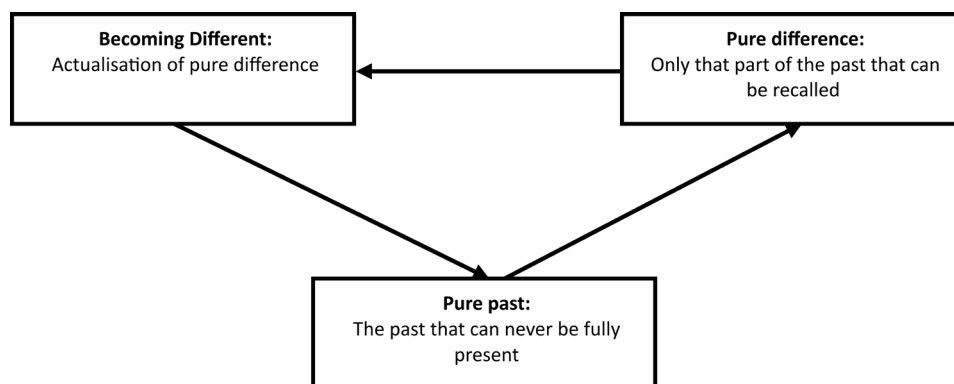
Fig. 9.1: The relation of the pure past to pure difference and the actualisation of pure difference as becoming different (after Deleuze 2004 [1968]).

imagined, thought or uttered that promise becoming different. They are at the same time virtual and real events in the process of creating the tangible manifestation of difference (Boundas 2010a; Deleuze 2004 [1968], 280–82). For example, all that is the past is understood as virtual, i.e. the pure past, on the basis that a memory cannot fully presence the past, and this imperfect memory is referred to as either pure difference or difference in itself. The reality is the actualisation of this pure difference, the materialisation of becoming different (Fig. 9.1). Pure difference is the singularity of becoming different for each person, thing and moment (Deleuze 1988 [1966]; 2004 [1968], 142–46; Stagoll 2010a).

As can be seen in figure 9.1, becoming different is a dynamic concept and is a form of presencing the past with its origins in repetition (Boundas 2010b; Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Lampert 2009). Although counter-intuitive to western rationalisation (cf. Brück 1999), it is important to stress that for Deleuze 'identity' does not have a primacy over difference (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). For example, the 'identity' of either a person or thing is not because they have a different 'identity' to other people or things, it is difference as becoming different that creates singularities (Deleuze 2004 [1968], xvii). Drawing on the doctrine of eternal return (Nietzsche 1961 [1883–85]) rewritten as the 'repetition of the eternal return' on the basis that it is only difference that returns (Deleuze 2004 [1968], 374), becoming different is always in the middle. This underlies the concept that people and things are never well-defined, and why the recurrent theme throughout *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 2004 [1968]) is that there is no identity (Williams 2003, 14). It is different trajectories within the relational continuum that create different identities. As such, people and things can be understood as events (Colebrook 2009, 9; Deleuze 2004 [1968]).

Let me clarify the philosophical understanding of people and things as events. Events are a conflation of the repetition of intensities within the relational continuum,

creating difference. As events, we are challenged to think of about understanding them as *chaînes opératoires* and not using the flawed concept of biography (*contra* Kopytoff 1986). Becoming different is the manifestation of difference which actualises the multi-authorship of people and things. The concept of multi-authorship is not the construction of the 'social' in the sense of either 'society' or the 'social dimension' (*contra* Finlay 2003; Strathern 1988; Williams 2003), but the product of cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* in the lived world, i.e. the relational continuum.

The lithic struck from a core is an event emanating from an intensity, a moment of repetition within a series of events in the creation or assembling of a lithic scatter. The lithic moves from the actual to the pure past/virtual and so on as each lithic is detached or modified. Although the lithics may be typologically similar, a concept of negative difference (Deleuze 2004 [1968], xviii), they are singularities on the basis of becoming different because of the actualisation of pure difference (Fig. 9.1). A subsequent series of intensities actualised as events creates the palimpsest. Each lithic changes the inherent nature of the whole by presencing either some or all of the earlier intensities and resultant events. It is important to understand that becoming different is not determined by events but the intensities that go to make up an event (Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Stagoll 2010b) emanating either consciously or unconsciously from stimuli triggered by relations within the connections in the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires.*

The nexus of technology and 'identity'

The case that people and technology during the Mesolithic period are inseparable has been made elsewhere (Wright 2012; in press). This interpretation is drawn from primary and secondary philosophical texts (Buchanan 2008; Colebrook 2006; Deleuze 1986 [1983]; 1988 [1966]; Deleuze and Guattari 2004 [1972]). People as technology and things as technology can be understood as a Möbius strip; one side of the two sides of a sheet of paper (Wright in press). This goes beyond Dobres' (2001, 48) concept of a sensuous technology which is described as 'meaning in the making', where technology is 'a simultaneously personal and collective body of experiences engendered through the hands of knowing, thinking and feeling agents'. For the purposes of my research, technology cannot be understood as extrasomatic (cf. Dobres 2001, 49). Technology may be explained as the recurrent correlation of the concept of the deterritorialised hand with the core within the relational continuum. Deterritorialisation in this sense is both transformative and indicates a recursive relation of people with things, i.e. the hands cannot be separated from the percussor and the core (after Deleuze and Guattari 1994 [1991]; Parr 2010a). People as technology determines that they can be restyled as the multi-authored technicians.

It was Kopytoff (1986) who suggested that things cannot be completely understood by looking at only a given point in their existence. The *chaîne opératoires* of people and things are inextricably woven together in a sequence of cross-cutting repetitive transformations through time, movement and change.

A redefinition of Deleuzian concepts would state that people and things cannot exist prior to the relational continuum as opposed to the 'social' (contra Deleuze 2004 [1968]; Williams 2003). The relational continuum is the forum for forging and the perpetual renegotiation of 'identity' (cf. Gosden and Marshall 1999, 173), i.e. becoming different. It determines that as people are multi-authored, so too are things. These transforming singularities are a result of the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires.* The symmetrical trajectory of things within the relational continuum implies that things can be considered as '...detached parts of people...where people can be subject and object' (Gosden and Marshall 1999, 173). The lithic scatter is not only the manifestation of the taskscape but also the relation of people as technology with things as technology. This may be distinguished from 'mutual becoming of people and objects' (Dobres 2010, 104) on the basis that, for Dobres, people and things are defined in opposition (Wright 2012). The multi-authored technician is then recast as the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician (after Chapman 2000; Gosden and Marshall 1999; Strathern 1988).

The materiality of stone as a living entity (Stout 2002, 704) may be understood as a mode of being (Deleuze 1990 [1969]; Message 2010, 39). The Balyo people of Irian Jaya (Indonesian New Guinea) believe that stone ages; it is imbued with a life-cycle, cosmological significance, and is given names. The older the stone, the better, mirroring the perception of a person's technological prowess (Stout 2002). The entanglement of the concepts of personhood (cf. Fowler 2004, 4) and a dynamic materiality fits coherently with an abstract and meaningful understanding of a technology, as both concept and method, which is folded into people and things within the rhizomatic character of the relational continuum (Deleuze 1993 [1988]; 2004 [1968]; Gosden and Marshall 1999). To deny the multi-authorship of the partible, distributed, technician and things may serve to constrain our understanding of becoming different by repetition that is the relational continuum (Derrida 2003, 90; Finlay 2003).

In contradiction to Edmonds (1997), the lithic scatter is not the embodied material remains of past actions, but fragments of the multiplicity of facets that is identity, as becoming different forged in the relational continuum. The *chaîne opératoire* in its methodological guise is the medium for analysis of lithic artefacts, which may provide the insight for academic enquiries into recognising and giving meaning to identity and group identities. The lithic assemblage is potentially representative of each stage in the *chaîne opératoire*, a conflation of moments of the actualisation of becoming different from intensities creating events; fragments of identity frozen in time.

Group identities

It is important to be cognisant of the caveats regarding ethnographic analogy across time (Jordan 2006; Spikins 2000) and contemporary analogy across space (Warren 2007). Ethnographies from the temperate coast of western Canada indicate average

group/band sizes of 50–60 people within wider open communities of 280 (Layton and O'Hara 2010, Table 5.1). These communities facilitate the movement of people between the constituent groups, where the composition of groups are defined as both fluid and permeable. It is usual for hunter-gatherer groups to have entitlement, although not absolute claims to resources within their environs (Layton and O'Hara 2010).

It may be possible to consider variations in raw material procurement strategies as a potential indicator for the characterisation and differentiation of hunter-gatherer groups (e.g. Hardy and Wickham-Jones 2007; Wickham-Jones 1990). This makes the assumption that raw material distinctions are indicative of events meaningful to different groups of hunter-gatherers. This may be explained in Deleuzian terms. Zourabichvili (2004, 99) informs us that difference is a forum for communication. For example, the lithic assemblage may be said to represent the diachronic links to place, and it is those links across the landscape to raw material resources, i.e. cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires*, that may offer insights into an interpretation of distinctive group identities (Viveiros de Castro 2010; Zourabichvili 2004). Differences in raw material use and procurement have been used in determining the taskscape of hunter-gatherer groups as regionalities (e.g. Clarke and Griffiths 1990; Finlayson 1989; 1990; Wickham-Jones 1986; 1990).

The continuity of technological practice would seem to challenge the concepts of repetition and difference, where the relational continuum is the medium for difference which is created by repetition (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). How can the apparent contradiction of the 'stasis of technological practice' as a macro-phenomenon be explained? Firstly, the lithic assemblage is the product of technological practice. It is important to distinguish 'assembling' from 'assemblage'. The 'assembling' of the lithic assemblage is difference by repetition. For example, as the flake is struck from the core and falls to the ground – difference is mereological – the core, flake and assemblage are transformed. Even as a macro-phenomenon, difference is inherent. The product of the continuity of technological practice is common difference, a term borrowed from Wilk (2004, 81). The emphasis is of 'difference' over 'similarity'.

Secondly, the importance of material culture as metaconsumptive practice within groups was the focus of Shankar's (2006) study of the South Asian American Desi communities of Silicon Valley in California. Shankar (2006) sought to demonstrate that it was not material culture that had agency, but the objectification of practice relating to material culture within a performance setting. Shankar's metaconsumptive practice can be rewritten not as agentic but the relation between the human and non-human. For Deleuze, this relation is in itself a thing (Deleuze and Parnet 1977, 55). It may, therefore, be argued that the continuity of technological practice cannot be regarded as passive but as a dynamic played out within the relational continuum. As such where repetition for Bourdieu (1977 [1972]) is explicit as a 'way of doing', repetition for Deleuze (2004 [1968]) is a 'way of becoming'. In this sense a 'way of becoming' understood as a 'way of being Mesolithic'.

The macro-phenomenon of the continuity of technological practice appears to highlight disconnections in the Deleuzian scheme for variation forced by the performance of 'being Mesolithic', in the sense of belonging to a broader constituency. The dynamic of the 'being Mesolithic' obfuscates distinctions between different groups of hunter-gatherers. Studies on group identity in psychology suggest that the membership of a group is a form of self-verification within that group, representing normative behavioural practice. The psychologists maintain that a person's agency has to be initially constrained to join the group, and it is then enhanced by being a member of the group, which in turn is augmented by that person's membership (cf. Burke and Stets 1999; Stets and Burke 2000). Although not referred to in the psychological texts referenced, the theoretical underpinning to this may be found in analytical philosophy, with the notion of supervenience (Fig. 9.2) (cf. Kim 1990).

Supervenience, as a model to articulate the dependent relations between distinctive properties, was first expressed as a concept 90 years ago (Moore 1922; Seager 1988, 697). Where there are a minimum of two sets of properties there can
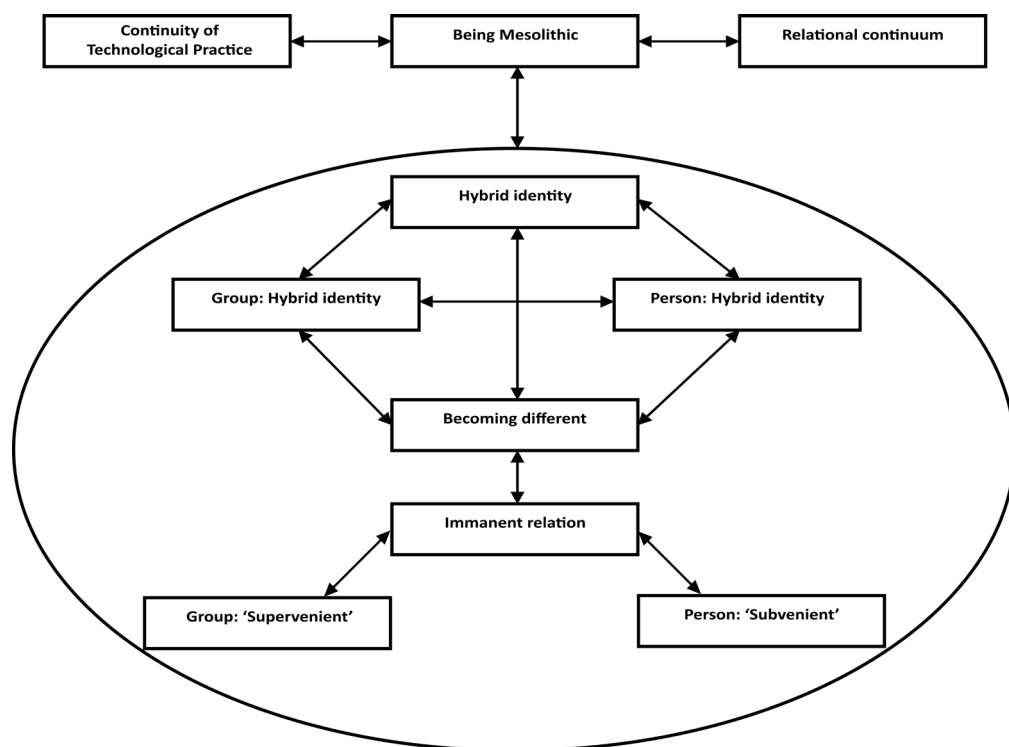

Fig. 9.2: Diagrammatic schema for supervenience (after Kim 1990) replacing the term covariation with becoming different (after Deleuze 2004 [1968]). Relation in this case is weak supervenience (cf. Kim 1990, 9–11).

be no variation in one without variation in the other, i.e. covariation, or *becoming different* in Deleuzian terminology. The relation is where the supervenient set of properties supervenes upon the subvenient set (after Kim 1990; Nightshade 2001). Supervenience is, in this sense, mereological as it concerns difference arising from the relation of the base properties of the supervenient and subvenient, both in total and from component to component (Boogerd *et al.* 2005, 134–35; Kim 1984, 154). For the purposes of this study, the accent is on the notion of weak supervenience in becoming different (Kim 1984; 1990). The terms 'supervenient' and 'subvenient' imply that the group is transcendent. Here it is important to distinguish the difference between 'connection' and the 'relation' within that. There may be a power imbalance in the former but the latter is always immanent within the relational continuum (after Deleuze and Guattari 1987 [1980]). The terminology is retained for ease of reference. For example, let us assume that a hunter-gatherer joins another group within the wider community, perhaps as a levelling mechanism to avoid confrontation and disputes (cf. Layton and O'Hara 2010). This will result in hybridity (cf. Jiménez 2011; van Dommelen 2005) as becoming different in terms of the identity of the incomer, the other members of the group and the group identity. The continuity dynamic of 'being Mesolithic' within the wider community would facilitate movement between groups; however, becoming different from weak supervenience would be indiscernible in technological practice subverted by the performance of being Mesolithic (after Kim 1993; Rowlands 1995). Indiscernibility is represented in the properties at the 'supervenient' and 'subvenient' levels (Kim 1997, 188; Sawyer 2002, 543). The supervenient causation of 'being Mesolithic' does not require the conscious awareness of the subvenient (Sawyer 2003, 218). This echoes the third synthesis of reciprocal determination which does not depend on conscious choice in becoming different (Deleuze 2004 [1968]). Supervenience reconciles the 'stasis of technological practice' to the Deleuzian framework of becoming different. Difference is inherent within the dynamic but is simply indiscernible.

This form of supervenience as hybridity developing within the wider regional communities of hunter-gatherers can be distinguished from that arising out of an external relation between two sets of properties. The latter can be seen in instances of strong supervenience, often over prolonged periods of time, in the diachronic development of hybrid forms of material culture, and what that can say about the transformations of identity and group identities (e.g. Jiménez 2011; van Dommelen 2007).

It may be argued that, for investigations into identity and group identities, a recast symmetrical supervenience is the vehicle that connects the Deleuzian concept of becoming different to those constructions from anthropology (Shankar 2006) and psychology (Burke and Stets 1999; Stets and Burke 2000). Firstly, supervenience may be used to augment an explanation of the continuity of technological practice as 'being Mesolithic'. Secondly, it sits comfortably alongside the Deleuzian notions of repetition

and difference by demonstrating the dynamism of the relational continuum, where people and groups are entangled in cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires*; an unremitting state of becoming different. Thirdly, it offers an abstractive foundation for hybridity as multi-layered, closely aligned to Deleuzian concepts.

Aspects of identity and group identities in practice: discerning the indiscernible

My research has produced a regional synthesis for West Central Scotland during the Mesolithic period (c. 8250–3700 BC). This is an area where the inland boundaries are demarcated by watersheds (Bartholomew 1895), which suggests that the mainland region can be considered a meaningful geographic unit (cf. Spikins 1999). The regional profile has been constructed from a comparison of the lithic assemblages from mainland coastal and inland sites in a transect (c. 2550 sq. km) from Ballantrae and Girvan on the Ayrshire coast, inland to Loch Doon, South Ayrshire, and beyond to the Daer Valley in South Lanarkshire, including three sites from outwith the transect (Fig. 9.3). The lithic assemblages of West Central Scotland are the taskscapes – the manifestation of the relational continuum.

The character of the lithic resource creating place out of space (Low and Lawrence-Zuniga 2003; Tilley 1994), the lack of surviving organic materials, and the paucity of radiocarbon dates presents real difficulties in determining the chronology of Mesolithic events at intra-site, inter-site, intra-regional and regional scales of enquiry. Implicit within the interpretations arising out of my research is that becoming different derives from the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* borne out of the relations within the connections of human with human with non-human with non-human in the lived-world.

The work undertaken on the technological analysis of the assemblages within the research area affirms the continuity of technological practice, as common difference, during the greater part of the Mesolithic period in Scotland. The task of the lithic specialist is to disassemble the assemblage, and through fine grained attribute analysis reassemble it to give meaning and understanding to some of the events made manifest from the intensities of the relational continuum. The reassembling allows the analyst to appreciate difference by repetition – discerning the indiscernible.

As a macro-phenomenon the continuity of technological practice further demonstrates the effectiveness of an interpretation based upon the performance, i.e. the relation of people with things, of being Mesolithic, weak supervenience, and the indiscernibility of becoming different as a technological concept. For example, the analysis reveals common differences for the contemporaneous and complementary use of bipolar and platform reduction strategies, the use of simple platforms for bipolar and platform reduction, the preference for the use of a soft
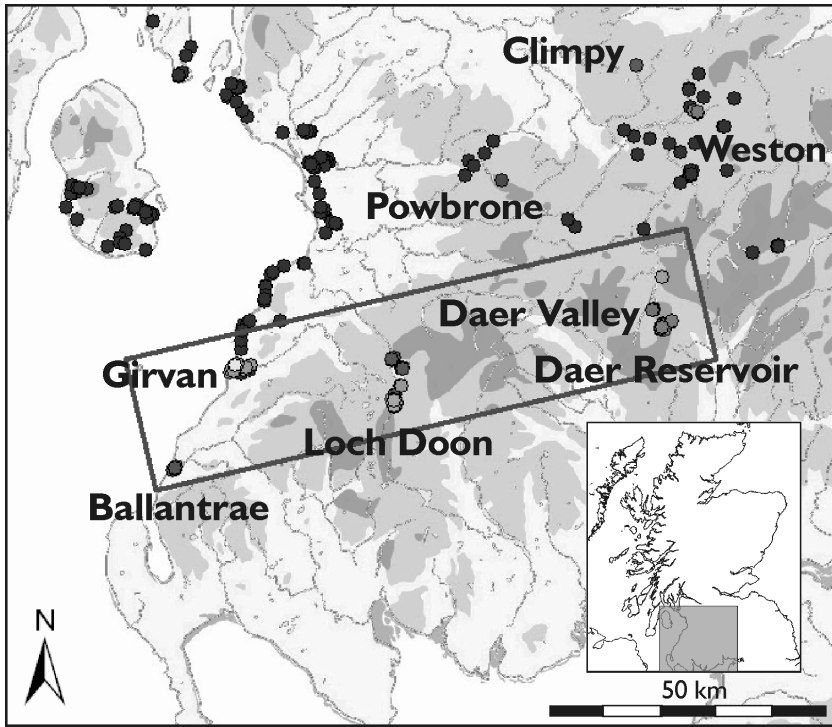
Fig. 9.3: The Mesolithic sites of West Central Scotland and the research transect (map by Ryan K. McNutt).

hammerstone, the presence of blade industries, the form of microlithic retouch, the proximal profile of blades, and the use of blade segments for retooling. However, each assemblage is the product of 'assembling' difference by repetition. What can the patterning in the lithic scatters of the Mesolithic period really tell us about identity and group identities?

From a technological perspective it is rare to be able to differentiate the work of one person from another. It often comes down to the granularity of technological attribute analysis in the form of retouch, coupled with the lateralisation of artefacts, refitting blanks, and the sometimes profound common differences in the morphology of modified artefacts. The composition of the lithic assemblage may give indications of task differentiation at an inter-site level of enquiry. The analyst can only recognise and give meaning to minor aspects of the multiplicity of facets of personal identity fixed in moments of intensities of becoming different. Understanding technology as somatic (Wright in press) and people and things as simultaneously multi-authored within the relational continuum (Finlay 2003; Gosden and Marshall 1999), it is still only possible to see the identity of the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician in grey – undefined.

It is the first stage of the *chaîne opératoire* in which the analyst can potentially distinguish different hunter-gatherer groups in the taskscapes of West Central Scotland. The distinction of raw material attributes is representative of differential procurement strategies, which in turn reference different resource locations in the landscape. It may be argued, as others undertaking research in Scotland have done (see above), that these distinctions in raw materials are the manifestation of becoming different, and as such permit the recognition of differentiated hunter-gatherer groups. This implies that use of certain raw materials may have been culturally proscribed.

Flint dominates the coastal assemblages despite the availability of chert on the coast of South Ayrshire (Armstrong *et al.* 1999; Wright 2012). The cortical, i.e. the original outer surface of the flint, indicates the use of beach pebbles and riverine resources from fluvio-glacial deposits. It is not possible to distinguish the occupational events at Ballantrae and Girvan by raw material choice, although subtle differences in the percentage frequencies of certain forms of modified artefacts indicate task differentiation and possibly different temporal episodes of activity.

The evidence from the inland lithic assemblages is more complex. It must be remembered that the sites are palimpsests of two or more events. Generally, chert is the most common raw material; however, at Daer Reservoir 1 and 3 flint dominates the assemblage. This pattern is not reflected in any other of the 40 Mesolithic sites at Daer Reservoir. Flint artefacts have also been recovered from sites at Coom Rig in Daer Valley c. 2 km to the north-west of Daer Reservoir. The sites with the highest percentage frequency of flint are Daer 104 (58.9%), Daer 123 (21.2%) and Daer 114 (12.7%). Daer Reservoir 1 and 3 can also be distinguished by the bluish-grey hues of flint and chalcedony and the presence at Daer Reservoir 1 of the enigmatic siliceous 'blue stone'.

It is possible that the presence of flint is a temporal marker and may indicate pioneering incursions of hunter-gatherer groups inland from the coast (Finlayson 1989), where subsequent events may be related to hunter-gatherers who are becoming different by forging new group identities inland (Larsson 2007), as indicated by the predominant use of chert. Radiolarian chert can be found across the Southern Uplands, from the Ayrshire coast east to East Lothian and Berwickshire (Owen *et al.* 1999a; b). Variations in the cortical surface of chert suggest different procurement strategies by different hunter-gatherer groups. For example, the dominant forms of chert at Daer 84 and Daer 85, which are only 50 m apart, present a smooth/hard cortex and a smooth/chalky cortex, respectively. The chert recovered from the sites in Daer Valley is the ubiquitous greenish-grey which is also noted at Daer Reservoir, although the bluish-grey chert from Daer Reservoir is not recorded elsewhere.

If flint can be understood as an indicator of pioneer incursions then a number of differentiated hunter-gatherer groups may have been responsible for Mesolithic events at Daer Reservoir. Firstly, the groups who resourced bluish-grey flint were possibly moving inland through the Southern Uplands from the Solway coast. Secondly, the groups utilising grey flint resources were potentially travelling inland from the Ayrshire coast, and may have also been responsible for Mesolithic events

in Daer Valley. The colour attributes of chert suggest a common difference in the boundaries of movement and occupational events. The subsequent occupations for the Southern Uplands groups did not extend beyond Daer Reservoir, while the eastern groups' occupations incorporated Daer Valley and Daer Reservoir. The evidence of the cortical attributes of chert from Daer 84 and Daer 85 in the Daer Valley suggests a minimum of two potentially distinguishable eastern groups operating within the same geographic locations. This does not imply that these groups were necessarily contemporary, in which case the palimpsests may be said to take on the character of a 'spatial mnemonic' (Gatewood 1985, 206–207) of temporal group identities. The lithics as intensities of the pure past may on actualisation as 'memory moments' affirm group identities and reaffirm ancestral claims to place, raw material resources, and alliances with other hunter-gatherer groups who may have undertaken activities at the same sites, e.g. Daer 84 and Daer 85.

Conclusion

Events are forged by the intensities emanating from connections arising out of cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* within the relational continuum. These events are contributing to a constant state of becoming different. Is it possible to understand identity from the archaeological record, or is it an aspiration that is simply not achievable? Perhaps what we can achieve is an interpretation understood by the Deleuzian concepts of repetition, difference and becoming. The character of the archaeological record for West Central Scotland, and in particular the continuity of technological practice as 'being Mesolithic' across the greater part of the period, determines that identity of the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician of the Mesolithic is a shadowy figure – undefined. The search to give meaning and understand identity is nevertheless a valid line of academic enquiry (cf. Maldonado and Russell, this volume), which stresses the importance of a theoretical framework as the structure to interrogate the archaeological record. Regardless of the difficulty, it is incumbent upon the archaeologist to assemble these fragments of becoming different as markers of identity. These markers reveal an insight into aspects of the relations within the connections of the relational continuum. The methodological *chaîne opératoire* incorporated within the theoretical framework forces the analyst to investigate distinctions in the attributes of raw materials – the process of disassembling to reassemble to discern the indiscernible. These distinctions, which may be culturally proscribed, can be interpreted as being representative of differentiated group identities and permit the tentative demarcation of movement and related occupational events.

Research is itself a series of intensities triggered by an investigation into the archaeological record, and the judicious use of both ethnographic and contemporary analogy. If the pure past of the hunter-gatherer of the Mesolithic can never be wholly

recovered, then the archaeologist can only ever encounter pure difference from an incomplete archaeological record of the cross-cutting *chaînes opératoires* actualised as becoming different. Identity is, therefore, a construction of the archaeologist, where meaning and understanding are given to partial aspects of everything that went into actualising the partible, distributed, multi-authored technician. The lithic as an event, where the person is subject and object, can fix identity in a moment of the past. This is not counter to the Deleuzian tenet that there is no identity, because unlike the archaeologist it serves to highlight that Deleuze was writing a philosophy of the living. Perhaps as archaeologists we can agree with Deleuze that with the limitations of the archaeological record of West Central Scotland past identity can never be well-defined.

The journey in abstract has delivered a robust theoretical *bricolage*, and although it has been drawn from many disciplines, it is a structure woven together through the theme of transformation, i.e. becoming different. I believe it may be a suitable vehicle for landscape perspectives, gender studies, an abstract understanding for hybridity in colonial and post-colonial studies, and also to augment both symmetrical and experiential phenomenological approaches in archaeology.

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