discussion article

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Rethinking emotion and material culture

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Abstract

In this article, we wish to return to the suggestion made by Sarah Tarlow a decade ago about the importance of understanding emotions in archaeology as a central facet of human being and human actions. We suggest a further expansion of this that focuses exclusively on the relationship between material culture and emotions (as opposed to textually, verbally or iconographically informed approaches), and offer a vocabulary that may better equip archaeologists to incorporate emotions into their interpretations. We attempt to show the implications of such a vocabulary in a specific British Neolithic case study at the henge monument of Mount Pleasant.

Keywords

material culture; emotions; affective fields; attunement; atmosphere

Introduction

Emotion remains stubbornly underinvestigated in archaeology. Whilst all manner of other aspects of life (such as personhood, gender, identity, memory and religious thought) have become widely discussed and debated within the literature, emotion seems to remain close to the top of a Hawkesian ladder of inference. Doubted and mistrusted by many archaeologists either because it is not 'recoverable' from archaeological material, because it is inherently 'subjective' or even 'speculative', or because it is potentially essentializing, emotion has remained largely absent from archaeological narratives. Yet since the late 1990s this lack has been identified and negotiated by a number of scholars (Gosden 2004; 2005; Meskell 1998; Nilsson Stutz 2003; Tarlow 1999; 2000; Whittle 2005). Within this paper our principal objective is to further the study of emotion in archaeology by moving beyond the understanding of emotions as internal, immaterial phenomena towards an appreciation of how the encounter with the material world is inherently affective. Failure to incorporate understandings of emotion means that our attempts to understand how human beings and material things are

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co-constitutive fall short. If we are to understand how people and things bring their worlds into being we are required to engage with emotion.

In order to accomplish this we suggest that a central difficulty needs to be overcome: how do we begin to interpret emotion in the past in the absence of text or living informants? These sources of evidence form the two staples of emotion research both inside and outside archaeology. In order to answer this challenge we proceed by developing a vocabulary that will help archaeologists to analyse and investigate emotion in the past by challenging the notion of emotion as something exclusively subjective, individual and immaterial. We will define four terms: emotion, affective fields, attunement and atmosphere, and explore how these emerge in conjunction with the material world. Whilst we acknowledge the dangers of tight definitions constricting and essentializing debate (Tarlow 2000, 714), we feel a new set of terms with which to begin discussions can be profitable in moving the debate forward. We stress here that we define these terms for heuristic and analytical purposes only; we see no absolute differences between them, nor do we suppose them to be phenomenologically distinct.

It is not enough merely to define this new vocabulary, however; we also need to apply it to archaeological materials. To do so we turn to a site where over a period of *circa* 600 years in the Late Neolithic and the Early Bronze Age a series of complex practices were carried out: the henge monument of Mount Pleasant in Dorset, England. At around 2500 B.C. people dug a huge ditch and raised a massive bank, and created a smaller henge-within-a-henge, which in turn contained an intricate series of posts. They curated and deposited pottery and other materials, and later, around 2000 B.C., raised an enormous palisade of up to 1,600 oak posts which entirely enclosed the centre of the henge, leaving only two small entrances. In turn this palisade was destroyed; parts were burnt down, in other places the posts were left to rot, and elsewhere – perhaps most extraordinarily – some of the posts were dug up and removed.

What motivated these practices? What effect did the architecture, the material culture and the practices have on people? How can we understand why people were motivated to act in certain ways and to move in certain ways? Instead of stressing chiefdoms, secret knowledge or emerging priesthoods, we wish to build on and develop understandings of emotion, and the affective capacities of material culture and performance. It is in order to do so that we develop and employ a new analytic vocabulary.

Approaches to emotion

Over the past decades emotion has become a central topic of debate in numerous disciplines, including anthropology (e.g. Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990; Overing and Passes 2000; Rosaldo 1984), geography (e.g. Löfgren 2008; Tuan 1974; Davidson, Bondi and Smith 2005), sociology (e.g. Harré 1986; Stets and Turner 2006; Thoits 1989) and cognitive science (e.g. Damasio 1999; Dolan 2002; Panksepp 1998). Many of these have provided important insights, such as the key role emotions play in maintaining sociality, in generating a sense of place and in sustaining ideas of group affiliation.

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However, in this paper we want to concentrate on archaeological approaches to emotion, in order to develop a focus on material culture.

As noted, the key work introducing emotion into archaeological research emerged in the 1990s. Drawing on long-standing traditions of thought in the anthropological community these perspectives provide us with the basis to make a number of points that we take to be axiomatic: that emotions are embodied and cannot be easily separated into 'physical' or 'mental' aspects; that they play a crucial role in the lives of *all* people in *all* times and places (Kus 1992); and that how emotions are expressed, felt, valued and understood varies both within and between cultural groups (Lutz 1988). We take these points to be relatively uncontroversial, and may refer to several anthropological and psychological approaches that support this point of view (Milton and Svašek 2007; Seremetakis 1991; see references above and also Damasio 1996; Lupton 1998; Ratcliffe 2008). Furthermore, Tarlow (1999; 2000) has shown that we need to include the emotive as an important part of many aspects of archaeology, including by connecting death with bereavement as a supplement to the more traditional archaeological tendency to link death with ritual. She primarily focuses on the cemetery context, demonstrating that the textual and iconographic expressions of love, loss, memory and bereavement have a strong bearing on her own personal state of mind (Tarlow 1999).

Tarlow's work begins with an expression of *empathy*, which is something she explicitly acknowledges (2000, 740), but also seeks to transcend (1999, 21). Through a shared sense of cultural continuity – the knowledge that death was an event involving sorrow and grief – she uses her own responses to the gravestones to stand as proxy for the emotions of past people. It is this reliance on empathy that has been critiqued by archaeologists concerned with the variability of past human identities, because of the manner in which it can be seen as relying on an idea of a transhistorical humanity (Fowler 2000; Thomas 2002). Similar criticisms have been applied to the work of Lynn Meskell (1998), who draws on written texts to inform herself about the emotions of worker's lives in ancient Egypt.

In our example from Neolithic Britain, however, no texts exist to facilitate interpretation, nor can we claim any sense of cultural continuity. The question thus remains, how do we begin to understand emotion in the prehistoric past? Tarlow's reliance on gravestone inscriptions and Meskell's on written texts mean we must seek alternative guidance if we want to think about the affective capacities of material things. A starting point for this is Gosden's (2004, 39) concise conclusion that 'emotions are materially constituted and material culture is emotionally constituted'. This argument is supported by the range of work in different disciplines that now emphasizes that human beings and material things recursively shape each other (Gell 1998; Latour 1993; Miller 2005; Webmoor and Witmore 2008). Similarly, emotions are not the product of an internal human mind looking out through their eyes at the external world, but rather are produced through engaging with that world. Gosden has pointed out that objects regularly evoke emotions in people as they embody links to people, places and events (2004, 34). A related point has been made in anthropology by Thomas Maschio (1998) in his analysis of the affective side to exchange. He argues that acts of exchange are both identity-forming

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and highly emotional events, which embody desires for objects and feelings of indebtedness, gratitude and envy (Maschio 1998; see also Mauss 2002). Fundamentally, emotions are produced through people's material engagement with the world, at the same time as emotions are productive of that engagement; indeed these processes are inseparable from each other.

In the archaeological context this may be a particularly relevant observation, and one we can build on by acknowledging that things have the capacity to work as affective agents. In a study of Yoruba art, anthropologist Robert P. Armstrong (1971) has elucidated the inadequacy of reading material culture as a symbolic container or a vehicle for meaning (see also Meskell 2004). Looking for meaning or symbolism 'behind' the art misses and denies, in Armstrong's view, the work's selfhood and affecting presence. Armstrong thereby emphasizes how the work of art 'stands in the relationship of immediacy, not of mediation' (1971, 25–26). Hence, he argues that artworks are not to be approached as something more than themselves or as representational. Rather, they work independently of their creator in affecting people (see also Gell 1998). We hold this observation to be pivotal for exploring the relationship between things and emotions.

It is not only art objects that have the potential for affective agency. Michel de Certeau (1988) held that mundane commodities are individuated by consumers in their daily routines in order to appropriate them and move them from residing in a generalized category to achieving personalized properties. Recently, Fiona Parrott (2005) explored the practices of decoration – or rather nondecoration – in a medium-secure mental institution in Britain. In short, she discovered a process contrary to the one that de Certeau describes: the patients in the institution refuse to decorate their rooms as this would bring about connotations of homeliness and permanence, which they sought to avoid, instead emphasizing transience. Such appropriation of things, or the rejection of personalizing places through things, alludes to the fact that everyday objects may have strong affective capacities, and we see no reason to assume that this is a product of 20th-century consumer culture, but hold that this is more likely to belong to an inherent human capacity to identify with and through material culture. Mundane items may thus become charged with emotional value, becoming 'objects of desire' (Forty 1995).

Emotional agencies

However, we are still a long way from gaining a sufficient understanding of how to approach these questions archaeologically. As a first step, therefore, we feel it is essential to develop a vocabulary that can both distinguish and delimit the kinds of feelings we might characterize more broadly as emotion. This is not about defining the differences between 'joy' and 'happiness', for example, which in any case are culturally constituted, but instead about developing terms of analysis of differing scale that allow us to be more analytical about the phenomena we address, in turn creating interpretive transparency. As we show in our case study, a developed archaeological vocabulary of emotion-words demonstrates that even within prehistoric contexts, where we rely solely on the material record, we can still discuss emotions. Furthermore, such a developed understanding of the material

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character of emotion may have something to offer other disciplines taking part in the much-noted 'material turn'.

Despite a number of discussions about the exact significance of certain words (Deleuze 1983; Massumi 2002; Ngai 2005, 27; Probyn 2005, 11; Richard and Rudnyckyj 2009, 59; Simonsen 2007, 176) assumptive terminologies are widespread in the debates that surround emotion in the social sciences. Indeed, specifying concepts can be seen as running the danger of creating universals out of contemporary and culturally specific notions (Leavitt 1996, 516; Tarlow 2000, 714). As noted, we do not wish to set up a list of definitions of particular emotions, but instead we wish to address the terminology surrounding the wider range of emotion studies. The terms we develop here – 'emotion', 'affective fields', 'attunement' and 'atmosphere' – are to be seen as inclusive and they are not set in a hierarchical relationship. Maybe more importantly, we want to reiterate that these terms are divided for analytical purposes, and we see and use them in this vein and maintain that they are not separated at an experiential, phenomenological level.

Emotion We define 'emotion' as the act of being moved, which is always tied to specific situations and the perception of particular bodily states. Of the terms we define below, this is the one that comes closest to a folk understanding of the term 'emotion', though we imply no separation between body and mind. Emotion is directional in the sense that it is a movement towards you or away from us; we feel angry about something or love somebody (Ahmed 2004). As such, it is not a generalized and open-ended medium, but the specific outcome of relational engagements. Other studies (e.g. Richard and Rudnyckyj 2009) have declared that using the term 'emotion' effectively separates mind and body. Here emotion is a mental occurrence (I feel sad) contrasted with affect, a bodily reaction (I cry). This approach, familiar from the work of William James (1884; 1890) imposes a temporal and causal relationship between emotion and affect, which means that the internal and mental states are driving the external and expressive.

Contrary to this line of thinking, we wish to collapse the discursive awareness of the mental and the bodily, of the felt and the expressed, thus unifying the feeling of being sad and the tears rolling down the cheek. Being sad and being in tears are one movement: the movement of being-moved-to-tears. In using the term 'emotion' we neither impose nor imply any dichotomy. Emotion is thus always bodily, and we hold that it is impossible to feel an emotion without the appropriate movement. This is what has led a number of scholars to the contention that we are effectively *moved to move* (Leder 1990, 136; Massumi 2002, 1; Rosaldo 1984, 138; Sheets-Johnstone 1999, 273; Sheller 2004, 226), meaning that the traditional separation of mental movement and body movement needs to be collapsed into one event or experience (Sørensen 2010). As a consequence we use the term 'emotion' to cover the entire range of movements from the mental occurrence to the bodily expressive as we see them in a continuous, recursive and co-constitutive relationship.

We furthermore connect the workings of emotions with human sociality. Emotions can be personal phenomena and may be experienced at the

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individual level, but need not be seen as exclusively individuated (Tarlow 1999, 34). Instead, emotions can be experienced by social groups and at times by large crowds, sometimes even by an entire people or nation, or by large parts of the world. Michelle Rosaldo (1984, 141) emphasizes how 'affects . . . are no less cultural and no more private than beliefs'. Nevertheless, emotion *has* to be viscerally experienced, yet it *can* be discursively cognized; we do not have to be aware of why we feel a certain emotion, or we might only become aware of it afterwards.

It is clear that these emotions are not separated from the material world. Not only are they embodied, but they are also tied to our engagements with material things. A wedding ring, to give one example, can evoke powerful emotions through the relationship entwined in its physical form and through the bodily act of wearing it. The materiality of the ring, its biography and its history are central to the experience of wearing it, to the emotions that arise when it attracts our focused attention. Of course, most of the time wedding rings do not cause us to feel powerful emotions which require our active attention towards them.

Affective fields Yet a wedding ring does not instantiate just a single person's emotions. Rather it is the product of a relational connection which in itself is generative of emotion. We define the affective field as the relationship between agents, where something or somebody is stimulating an emotional response in a causal set of events. As such, affective fields are dynamic and generative, because they are about the ways in which emotions are produced, triggered or provoked, changing the state of affairs in a given situation. Affective fields are produced between people, places and things, and they may thus vary depending on the relations in which they are enmeshed. To return to the wedding ring again, we can see how the affective field, which the ring is both generative of and inherent to, can vary quite substantially depending on the circumstances. Wearing a wedding ring when your spouse is deceased can be a quite different matter to wearing one when newly wed. Equally, seeing a wedding ring on the finger of a former, but still loved, partner binds a person into an affective field which again may generate quite disparate emotions. Affective fields are thus networks of relations that are produced through, and are themselves productive of, practice; they are dependent on material occurrences in the sense that bodies or things function as the affective constituent.

Affective fields are taken to signify a particular range of emotional relations. Imagine the relationship that exists between a bully and the person s/he is bullying. This relationship, which clearly involves power, or the attempt to express power, also involves emotion. The bullied person might feel fear perhaps, or humiliation. The bully in turn may feel happy, powerful, dominant or whatever. The two emotional responses (and the bodily movements that produce/are produced by them) could not be more different. Yet both are produced through a single field of relations. This is the *affective field*, the generative dynamic network through which the emotional experiences of bullying and being bullied – in this example – are produced. This does not mean that the affective field is social whilst emotions

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are individualized. Emotions can be experienced en masse (as a product of the affective field) and the affective field is always generative of emotion. Thus the heuristic contrast we draw serves merely to delineate a reciprocal causal process, rather than a dichotomous contrast. The two are always part of each other.

Attunement Attunement is the phenomenological basis of being-in-the-world. It differs, therefore, from the affective field, which is a relational construct which might spread across a place, landscape or beyond the horizon, binding in material things, people and places both present and absent. Attunement, by contrast, is the embodied process of attending to the world. We take this term from Heidegger's (1962) work on emotion. Heidegger argues that attunement is central to how human beings come to interpret their worlds. Attunement, therefore, is the means through which the world is disclosed to people (Heidegger 1962, 172–74) and recent psychological and philosophical work continues to support Heidegger's perspective (e.g. Ratcliffe 2002).

We also suggest that attunement can refer more specifically to the means by which the moods and emotions of others are also disclosed to people. For us, therefore, attunement is also how people notice, observe, perceive and recognize moods and emotions in themselves and others. This means that attunement can involve an attentive directedness, which at first may be involuntary as one's attention is suddenly focused on another person. This should not be reduced to empathy, as it is not about getting into another person's head. Rather it focuses on the ways in which bodily movement (including the micro-movement of facial expression) discloses emotional states (just as it produces them simultaneously). Like the awareness of one's own mood, which can form 'an irreducible pre-theoretical background' (Ratcliffe 2002, 287) to being-in-the-world, so awareness of others' moods and emotions can prefigure cognitive and discursive engagement. Attunement to others thus forms part of the background against which affective fields and emotions emerge. Furthermore, attunement always involves material things, because it is against the material background of the world that moods and emotions (of both self and other) are disclosed. Most of the time material things guide our attention without our conscious knowledge, what Heidegger would call being ready-to-hand. However, on occasions material things can stand out, demand to be noticed and defy attempts to ignore them; here they are present-at-hand (Heidegger 1962, 102–7).

Within this, particular actions or kinds of display can be designed to explicitly draw attention to themselves. Wearing particular kinds of clothing, for example, can deliberately signal to others the performance of a particular kind of emotion. Material things can draw in and focus attention on themselves as well as on the person employing them. When a mourning widow or widower dresses in black, the performance of crying and weeping is not necessary to show that certain emotions are being experienced. Thus the material things, the clothes, allow emotions to be extended beyond the ability of the body to sustain their active demonstration. It is through attending to these signals, which can be bodily or material but are perhaps usually

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both, that people become attuned to the emotional worlds around them. This involves all of the senses, not just vision.

Atmosphere Atmospheres are one aspect of emotional worlds that emerge at the intersection of people, places and things, and typically in architectonic settings. We may take our clue here from philosopher Otto Friedrich Bollnow and his understanding of atmosphere, summed up in the phrase 'tempered space' (Bollnow 1963, 230), which denotes the recursiveness of personal mood and architecture. This approach to atmosphere again plays on the ways in which people are attuned to or absorb the tension of a place and the people therein. Likewise, philosopher Gernot Böhme (1992, 119) argues that atmospheres exist in an intermediate position between subject and object. He defines atmosphere as 'spaces insofar as they are "tinctured" through the presence of things, of persons or environmental constellations' (ibid., 121–22). Thus it is in being attuned to people, places and things that atmospheres emerge.

A related approach comes from architect Peter Zumthor (2006), who argues that atmospheres emerge through the use of certain materials, their properties and their combinations, and the way they change over time. Atmospheres are thus outcomes of situated material agencies, specific spatialities and particular events. As such very dissimilar atmospheres can arise in the same environment, as is evident, for example, in the case of a church, where an atmosphere at a wedding can be significantly different from that of a funeral. Thus the agencies of people and things become blurred in the workings of atmospheres.

Atmospheres thereby become expressions of particular kinds of affective fields that can be induced through particular forms of assembly and architecture, and are not solely dependent on practice. Shopping malls and marketplaces may, for example, instantiate very differing degrees of durability in terms of social and material relations, even though they largely perform the same functions: commerce and exchange. Marketplaces in one sense can be more transitory (stalls change on a daily basis, are removed at night), yet at the same time they can have longer and more established histories than shopping malls. In turn, people relate very differently to the former (a symbol of more localized, specific social engagement) than to the latter (a representative of the broad powers of hypermodern capitalism). Thus despite the overlap in function, their material constructions form incongruent atmospheres. Atmosphere is thus dependent on the particular coexistence of people, places and things. Unlike the broader affective field, which exists regardless of people's awareness of it, atmospheres are only produced and revealed in their apprehension.

Mounting emotions in the Late Neolithic

These four categories of analysis offer us a range of terms with which to approach studying emotion in the past in the absence of text or ethnography. What we aim to do now is to deploy these terms in our case study. It is our contention that these terms can provide the initial sketch of an interpretive

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strategy which can open up new avenues for understanding the prehistoric past.

Furthermore, we want to go beyond what most studies of emotion in archaeology have focused on – the feelings of bereavement and grief that accompany death (Meskell 1998; Nilsson Stutz 2003, 81–100; Tarlow 1999). In each of these cases, the assumption is that death, burial and emotions are related. This reliance on a cultural recognition of links between certain material categories and emotional regimes is by no means limited to these works, but can be found in numerous studies, including our own (Harris 2006; Sørensen 2009). It is, we stress, not unreasonable at all to presume that funerary practices in any period were deeply emotional events. However, what has furthermore been highlighted is the failure to understand past societies more broadly as emotionally motivated and emotionally affected (Tarlow 1999, 26), especially in the light of the impact that emotions have on mundane social life, let alone on more dramatic events (ibid., 30). In this context we now wish to apply our terms to the site we began this paper with, Mount Pleasant. To summarise, they are:

- *emotion*: the embodied act of being moved to move;
- *affective fields*: the networks of people and things through which emotions are generated;
- *attunement*: the practice of attending to the material world and its emotional qualities;
- *atmosphere*: the emotional experience engendered by being in a particular place and situation.

Mount Pleasant Mount Pleasant has regularly featured in the discussions of processual and postprocessual archaeologists (Barrett 1994; Brück 2001; Renfrew 1973; Thomas 1996). Constructed in the Late Neolithic, it is one of several large henges in the broader region including Avebury, Durrington Walls, Knowlton and Marden. It is also contemporary with the building of the later phases of Stonehenge. More locally, Mount Pleasant is one of several Late Neolithic monuments in the area. Within two kilometres are the henge Maumbery Rings (Bradley 1975) and the palisade enclosure Greyhound Yard (Woodward, Davies and Graham 1993). The Alington Ridge on which Mount Pleasant sits had a long history of occupation in the Neolithic, furthermore, with a pair of broadly Middle Neolithic monuments in the form of the Flagstones enclosure and the Alington Avenue long barrow postdating Early Neolithic occupation represented by a number of pits (Davies *et al.* 2002; Harris 2006; Smith *et al.* 1997; Thomas 1996). Mount Pleasant thus shared broad regional connections to the great henges of Wessex as well as being carefully positioned in a rich historical landscape bearing the traces of over a thousand years of occupation.

The site itself is a truly enormous henge, 320 metres north–south by 370 metres east–west, enclosing almost five hectares (see figure 1). It dates to the second half of the third millennium cal. B.C. (Wainwright 1979, 4), and was defined by an external bank, which may have stood four metres high and 18 metres wide, and an internal, irregular, ditch, both broken by at least five

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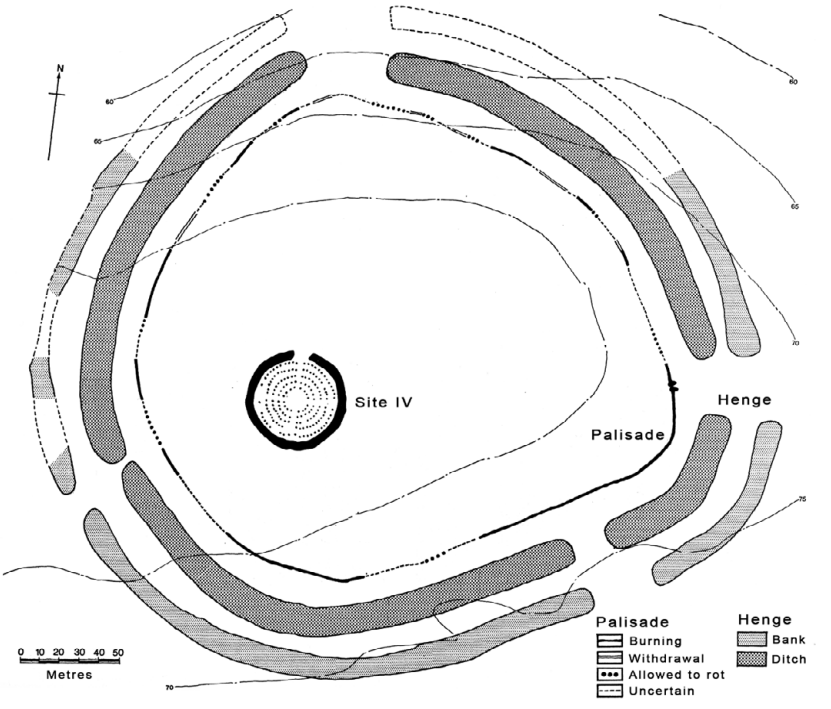


Figure 1 Plan of the henge monument, palisade and Site IV, showing the methods of destruction of the palisade (after Wainwright 1979, figures 20 and 99). This plan does not include recent reanalysis of the aerial photographs by Martyn Barber (2004; 2005) that demonstrates the existence of a fifth entrance at the southern extent of the bank and ditch, and other features including a hollow way approaching the site. The features in this plan, of course, were not all constructed at the same time, and the western entrance is depicted after it was narrowed. Reproduced by kind permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London, © reserved.

entrances (Barber 2004, 9; 2005; contra Wainwright 1979, 35). Within the henge a smaller enclosure called Site IV was excavated. This was revealed to be a second henge featuring a ditch 43 metres in diameter and containing a post setting made up of some five rings with an outer diameter of 38 metres, an inner diameter of 12.5 metres (Wainwright 1979, 9) and as many as 176 posts (ibid., 22–23). The rings are divided by four corridors into quadrants leaving access to the centre from the cardinal points (ibid., 11). The southern corridor was blocked, however, by a single post at the northern end. A possible later phase at Site IV was made up of a stone cove and a series of pits (Pollard 1992; Wainwright 1979).

As already noted, the site was transformed throughout its history. Although the sequence is not entirely clear due to the paucity of radiocarbon dates, suggestions can be made on the basis of existing evidence and comparison with other sites (Pollard 1992; Thomas 1996). The first construction may well have been the wood setting at Site IV. Alex Gibson (2004) has noted the tendency for the bank and ditch of similar monuments to be constructed after the timber settings inside them, something also recently supported by Julian

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Thomas (2010). This has previously been suggested at Site IV. Furthermore, Site IV may also generally pre-date the construction of the main henge bank and ditch, as suggested by Davies *et al.* (2002, 191). Other comparable sites certainly support this suggestion. The recent excavations at Durrington Walls have located houses stratified under the bank at the site and Thomas (2010, 11) suggests that the construction of this monument may well represent the sealing off of an area rich in past events. This sequence may well be roughly comparable with events here, although the broader history of Mount Pleasant suggests that the monument was not finished with when the bank and ditch were constructed, as further acts of transformation continued at the site. The stone setting at Site IV was erected at some point prior to the complete rotting of the timbers (Pollard 1992). Potentially, and highly provisionally, it may be that the cove was orientated towards the southern entrance recently identified by Barber (2004, 10) from aerial photographs. If so, this might suggest, as he indicates, that the date of the Site IV ditch might itself actually postdate the construction of the cove as well as the wooden settings (ibid.). In any case, each of these alterations almost certainly preceded the erection of the palisade. This latter act may also be contemporary with the stone cove's destruction (Pollard 1992), and it is certainly coeval with the narrowing of the western entrance to a width of five metres and perhaps other possible additions to the bank (Barber 2004). The ditches saw the deposition of objects including carved chalk objects, animal bone and flint tools, amongst other things, and notable quantities of pottery, including grooved ware, beakers, food vessels and collared urns. Thomas (1996, chapter 7) has conducted a detailed discussion of the way in which these processes were patterned across the site.

To facilitate our discussion we want to concentrate on three aspects of Mount Pleasant. In each case we will draw on the vocabulary defined above to better understand the sensibilities at play. The three areas follow the broad chronological sequence outlined above. First we consider the use of Site IV and grooved ware pottery. Second we turn to the building of the henge monument itself and finally to the transformation of the henge associated with the erection and destruction of the palisade.

Connecting community: Site IV and grooved ware Let us begin with Site IV. Here 176 posts in concentric rings created a space through which movement appears to have been closely guided (Thomas 1996). People could enter the space, turning perhaps to walk between the rings. As they did so, the centre of the monument and the outside world would move into and out of view. At Site IV movement was inseparable from the wooden posts that guided it, and the materiality of this process is central. The steady decay of these timbers would have meant that the atmosphere was slowly transformed as the monument itself changed through time. This atmosphere emerged through the way people's attention was attuned to the changing materiality and temporality of the rotting wood. This attunement to the space, guided by the wood, was what motivated movement; people were tied into an affective field by attending to the space, to the way the wood smelled, felt and looked, to the decoration that might have been carved on it.

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It was this attention to the materiality and temporality that guided movement through Site IV and disclosed to people particular emotional textures of experience. We have already noted the way movement and emotion are deeply connected. Differing kinds of bodily movement, therefore, would have helped to elicit emotions in people. By creating an architecture that engendered potentials for particular forms of movement and foreclosed others, particular kinds of emotion could also be called forth. Thus in moving through Site IV in the right way appropriate emotions could be felt. More broadly, we need to remember that Mount Pleasant was situated in a landscape replete with historical monuments that may further have helped to shape movement. Approaching Mount Pleasant itself may further have been channelled by the possible route identified by Barber (2004). Movement at Mount Pleasant and particularly at Site IV was explicitly directed through a landscape of memory to a site of potent materiality. Linking motion and emotion here allows us to perceive how the creation of a feeling of being-in-place is precisely engendered through the emotional qualities of embodied locomotion.

We can build in other connections. Thomas (2007; 2010) has recently linked the wooden circles and structures at Durrington Walls to the houses discovered there (see Thomas 2007; Parker Pearson 2007; a point also made by Pollard and Robinson 2007). Drawing on their structural similarities he argues that the northern circle at Durrington represented a building in a state of decay (Thomas 2010, 9; see also Bradley 2003, 13). Structures like the southern circle at Durrington Walls, which closely parallels Site IV in layout, are also tied into the schema Thomas suggests, through an architectural link to house perimeters. 'Entering the circle was like crossing the threshold of the house over and over again' (Thomas 2010, 9). Although no houses have been discovered at Mount Pleasant, they are known from Cranborne Chase to the north, and it seems likely that a similar architectural referent was at play at Site IV. This was not people building a house, but rather creating, through the temporal materiality of decaying wood, a level of sensuous proximity to an architectural form replete with associations to community and the past. Thomas has written powerfully about the performances such architecture can situate; however, we suggest that our terms allow us to go beyond the general notion of dramatization. To begin with, we can note that potentially the atmosphere Site IV generated could be intensified through the absence of houses around Mount Pleasant, because it thereby represented the only house for the whole community. This, of course, might change if future research discovers Durrington-type houses in the vicinity. The location of several unexcavated ring-ditches close to the site – at least one of which has potentially produced evidence for burning and late Neolithic flint work (Barber 2004, 13) – hints at the potential for houses to be uncovered here too. Regardless, community is a key term for understanding the events at Mount Pleasant, and central for us not least because it is a directly emotional concept (cf. Overing and Passes 2000). It is through generating a particular affective field through practice and work that a sense of community emerges. Because of the way affective fields generate disparate emotions in people we need not think of a single celebration of community, but rather of different people

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relating to and moving through this architecture, and thus associating with the community in different ways. The circular shape of Site IV is important here as a vehicle for creating an enclosed scene – a theatre in the round, if you will – with very different qualities compared to an elongated piece of architecture, which would have resulted in a more pronounced front–back and near–far relationship between actors at the scene. The round scene at Site IV is creative of a space that draws in its actors, stimulating movement precisely because it does not disclose its entire space visually due to the timber posts.

The quality of drama Thomas discusses hints at both participants and observers. Both of these two sets of people were incorporated within the affective field (one shaped by the post settings), but their emotional engagement with it could vary. The architecture itself thus generates an atmosphere that in turn tinctured the affective field, creating differences in feeling between people on the inside and outside, people moving and people standing still. The specific materials with their architectural referents to the house were required to generate this affective field that in turn engendered a feeling of community. The limited durability of the materials was central to this, a sense of temporality that called people to action that required them to return because things would be different. The atmosphere changed at the site not only through people's actions but through processes they could witness and monitor over generations. By attuning themselves to the material transformation of this communal house people were called back to the site; they felt they needed to return.

When we factor in some of the materials that were caught up in these processes another level of analysis emerges. In particular grooved ware, of which 657 sherds were found at Mount Pleasant (Longworth 1979, 84), plays an important role. Grooved ware, which is flat-based and often quite large in comparison to other styles of pottery (Thomas 1999, 113–14) seems to be associated with group consumption both in daily life and in more specialized contexts like Mount Pleasant (Jones 2002). Furthermore, its decoration, including grooves, lozenges, cordons and fingernail impressions, amongst other things (Cleal 1999), has long been noted to be similar to art that occurs in some Irish passage graves. Thomas (2010, 7) suggests that this drew attention to the pottery, embellishing and adding to processes of consumption in both domestic and more ritualized contexts. At Mount Pleasant we can note the specific associations between certain places and grooved ware with particular forms of decoration (Thomas 1996, 200–2). In the east terminal of the ditch by the northern entrance the grooved ware was dominated by many undecorated or simply decorated vessels. In comparison, Site IV has a much higher percentage of pots with herringbone and diagonal incisions and more complex motifs. These patterns, crucially, are maintained over time, showing that deliberate decisions were being made about what kind of grooved ware decoration was suitable for deposition in any one place (Thomas 1996, 202). These particular decorations not only embellished the pots, therefore, and contributed to the drama of consumption, they also linked particular designs to certain places at Mount Pleasant.

In the broader world away from the site, grooved ware would have played a central role in how communities sustained themselves through

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shared consumption (Jones 2002, 166–67). Additionally, because of the way material things can refer to other times and places (Jones 2007), the act of encountering, holding and using grooved ware would have allowed people to attune to the affective field constituted at henge monuments. Grooved ware in this sense may have become 'sticky' with the emotional and memorable textures of this broader scale of community (Ahmed 2004). The particular decorations, furthermore, could act to make these associations far more specific by linking acts of consumption in the wider world to particular parts of Mount Pleasant, reaching beyond a generalized feeling of community to the memories and emotions generated by precise relations of consumption and practice within the affective field.

Building the henge The act of building the main bank and ditch reveals that the practices at Site IV had produced a place of central communal importance. This act of construction would have required many different groups to come together, bridging potential conflicts and disagreements to work at and to support the construction of the site. Architecturally, the first point to note is the separation between the world on the inside of the ditch and bank and the world outside it. Writing about Durrington Walls, Thomas (2010, 11) has suggested that the ditch and bank may separate off the histories contained inside the monument. This suggestion is useful in our example as well. Mount Pleasant was a site located in a landscape replete with history from Early Neolithic occupation through Middle Neolithic monuments to Late Neolithic enclosures, of which this site was just one. It seems, then, that the atmosphere generated through the construction of the henge was not one of a generic past, but rather one that spoke to the specific practices that had taken place there. The different scales of community coming together to help build the monument were united through their associations with this place, so the space within the monument may have been the space of this broader community. It was here, in *this* architecture, that *this* community could exist, within an atmosphere engendered by the emotional memory of joint community enterprise. The potency of this architecture and atmosphere could have generated similar emotions in people across different subgroups, helping to sustain a feeling of community at the larger scale.

This atmosphere varied, of course, depending on the numbers of people who gathered there at any one time. It would have been very different being there in a small group or in mass communal gatherings. The architecture also suggests, as Joanna Brück (2001) has noted, the possibility for multiple ad hoc practices, rather than simply mass-monitored performance. Standing in the ditch would have hidden people from widespread observation and may suggest that the acts of deposition that took place here were more private than public, in contrast, perhaps, to the acts of feasting we can trace in the cattle and pigs consumed at the site. However, as we have already seen with grooved ware, patterns of deposition are maintained in places through time, so these were not random acts, even if they took place in an atmosphere quite different to that surrounding broader moments of engagement, including the building of the henge itself. Just as different communities must have temporarily united to build the monument before dispersing again, so the

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monument itself suggests different scales of atmosphere. Hidden and private moments of deposition contrast with public feasts; the architecture which goes high above and deep below the surface also suggests that different kinds of arenas of practice were available.

That the past was a crucial resource in creating an affective field that engendered a feeling of community is indicated by the fact that many of the objects at the site were curated and cared for and thus invested with history and the emotions that this could evoke. The evidence of beaker-sherd curation at Mount Pleasant has been demonstrated by detailed analysis by Anne Woodward (2002). She concentrates on the beakers found in segment XIII, layer 5 of the Site IV ditch, which contained not only the major assemblage of beaker sherds from Site IV but also a mixture of many different styles including All Over Cord (AOC), European, Wessex/Middle Rhine, Northern/North Rhine and Southern (Woodward 2002, 1042). Whilst the general sequence of beaker pottery design has been questioned following the dates published by Kinnes *et al.* (1991; cf. Case 1993), it can still be argued that AOC and European beaker styles are earlier than other types in Britain (Needham 2005; Woodward 2002). On this basis Woodward (2002, 1043) compares the size of sherds from segment XIII and argues that later beaker styles tend to occur as large portions, whilst the older styles tend to be found as sherds (see also Bradley 2000). From this she concludes,

> The overall impression is that large chunks of Beaker vessels were circulating or were temporarily deposited for many years, if not generations. Thus they may have functioned as heirlooms or relics before they eventually came to be deposited within the ditch around the focal timber and stone monument (Woodward 2002, 1043).

Beakers may have been extremely important artefacts, then, in terms of the ways in which they could embody particular biographies through their histories of use and exchange. These histories created an affective field through which people and things interacted, bringing each other into being (Battaglia 1990, 56). Thus Mount Pleasant's association with the past went beyond the histories of practice at Site IV. It was contained in the very materials people handled and deposited. There was a physical association linking past and present, and these curated materials allowed people to attune to these links. Indeed, this need not only apply to beakers. Some of the material, including animal bone, recovered from the much later palisade ditch was contemporary with the building of the henge, so a wide range of material was being curated and engaged with over time at Mount Pleasant (Wainwright 1979, 58). Using the concept of affective fields we can see how people, place and things were emotionally bound up. In the tensions that must have been present in building the henge, in gathering there together, it was the shared history that the site and the material things disclosed that allowed a larger-scale community to coexist. This does not mean that we see this as an idealized or idyllic community, rather we stress the active emotional practices that were required to make this work.

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Transforming the henge Around 2000 B.C., some centuries after the initial acts of building, Mount Pleasant was transformed. The west entrance was narrowed, and then swiftly blocked by the enormous construction of the palisade. This ran inside the ditch for 800 metres around the whole length of the monument and had only two entrances. The palisade was made of up to 1,600 oak posts, each perhaps nine metres in length and half a metre wide. These were inserted into a continuous trench and would have stood an imposing six metres above the ground. Potentially, at about the same time, the stone cove that had been erected within Site IV was destroyed (Pollard 1992) and remarkable acts of deposition took place.

This was clearly a dramatic change in the architecture of the site, whether we choose to view this as elaboration of the existing monument (Thomas 1996, 214) or as a more radical reworking of its design. Here we see the large-scale community stressed over and above ongoing ad hoc practices at the site. It would have taken people from a wide area to construct the palisade, both in terms of the number of people and for sufficient wood to have been gathered, especially as the landscape around Mount Pleasant was largely open at this time. The acts of deposition tell us more about this moment of transformation. One example is the deposit mentioned above in segment XIII of Site IV, where sherds from 28 beaker vessels were deposited (Wainwright 1979). This is half the total number for the whole of Site IV, which potentially saw deposition over the preceding 400 or 500 years. Although people already associated the ditch at Site IV with beakers, deposition at this scale was unprecedented. We have already noted how beakers were curated and carried specific biographies with them. As a result, interacting with them may have allowed associations, emotions and memories to return unbidden (Harris 2009; Pollard 2001). Depositing these pots, then, represented a clear transformation, a moment in which they were taken away from potential physical interaction and placed into the ditch. The material deposited with these Beakers included over 3,000 flint artefacts and considerable quantities of sarsen, perhaps relating, as Pollard (1992) proposes, to the destruction of the stone cove at Site IV. This indicates that the area around Site IV was transformed through the deposition of potent materials and the destruction of the cove.

The construction of the palisade and of these transformative deposits represents a moment of real change at the monument, we suggest, not only a renewal of communal engagement. The palisade did not just help to generate a new atmosphere at the site, nor did it merely create new ways of moving into and out of the site. Rather it seems as if this moment of transformation attempted to generate a new kind of affective field, a new range of emotional engagements. This was not just about making people experience the site differently, but rather about making them relate to it in new ways. Just as an urban environment might be transformed through a council initiative in an attempt to encourage people to care about it and feel more involved, so altering the site at Mount Pleasant, building the palisade and undertaking new forms of deposition helped to make this a place where people related to each other and the world differently. However, unlike the urban example, we do not posit the existence of a preconceived plan or single hand behind these transformations.

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This transformation was not by any means permanent, however. At some point after the palisade was constructed it was actively destroyed. Here was an event that interceded in the temporality of the monument. Whereas the wood, like that at Site IV, could all have been allowed to rot down at its own pace, much of it was instead worked upon and transformed. The place was *taken apart*, in three particular ways. The first saw the rapid destruction of parts of the palisade through burning, particularly on the monument's south side. This burning was by no means accidental, demonstrated by the extent and intensity of burning, which was sufficient to burn some of the posts right down to their bases, as in cutting XVI (Wainwright 1979, 60). People here attended to the fire, they attuned to it and worked at it, drawing on the latent potential of this materiality, the flammability of the wood. That a spectacular atmosphere would be generated by this seems likely – the intense heat, the roaring flames, the smell and the sights would have burned themselves into people's memories (Noble 2006; Thomas 2000).

The second form of transformation involved some of the posts being dug up and removed. The effort required to do this is quite remarkable when you consider that the posts were inserted up to three metres into the ground. These posts would have been associated with Mount Pleasant, with the palisade, with the atmosphere and practices of the site, and people may have wanted to relocate these relations (see Pitts 2001 for similar suggestions regarding the Late Neolithic site of the Sanctuary in Wiltshire). It seems unlikely that people pulled the posts up merely to throw them away, and it is noticeable that they were not merely cut off but actively extracted, suggesting that they were required whole. Material things both tincture and become tinctured through their presence within affective fields, adding to the properties these (decorated?) posts would possess. These tinctured textures of experience could be actively relocated by moving the wood from one place to another and it seems that some people felt this was appropriate (cf. Pitts 2001).

The final form of transformation is more familiar from Mount Pleasant as the remaining posts were allowed to rot down. A very different form of temporality of memory was associated here, one more reminiscent of Site IV than the spectacular acts of burning or transformation through relocation. The steady decline of the posts could have reminded people of the temporal gap between themselves and the palisade's existence and of the transformative potential of building and destruction. In a way, these posts would be reminders for the burnt and removed timbers; they made present their absence (Bille, Hastrup and Sørensen 2010) and ensured that people recalled the events of their destruction.

It seems, then, that the destruction of the palisade took place within a new relationship to the affective field that had bound people together despite differing interests. Instead of a united front, we may argue that the three different strategies in, or attitudes to, the dissolution of the palisade – destruction (by fire), disintegration (by pulling the palisade down) and abandonment (leaving the timber to rot) – suggest that a contestation was taking place at this time, building on conflicting emotional understandings of Mount Pleasant. Based on the appreciation of the building of the henge

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ditch in segments suggesting the presence of separate social groups (cf. Pryor 1998), and the massive scale of the palisade, it seems very likely that Mount Pleasant was built by communities coming together and negotiating differences. Similarly, the dissolution of the place through varying strategies could thus occur along the lines of disparate affective relations with the site; some groups might desire to dispose of the palisade in the instant of an event, while others could have appreciated the historicity of the timber for reuse elsewhere, and others in turn would see the gradual deterioration and organic decay of the wood fit for the dissolution of the place as a whole. In this light, contestation may be about issues other than power relations, social differentiation and claims of right (Bender and Winer 2001), but also relate to the unevenness of emotional relations to places and dissolving matter.

Emotion and material culture at Mount Pleasant Although we have touched on only some of the processes and practices that took place at Mount Pleasant, we suggest that understanding of the site can benefit from an appreciation of its emotional qualities. If we want to understand why a site like Mount Pleasant was repeatedly worked on and transformed, why these events took place here and not elsewhere in the landscape, we need to consider the site's emotional history. We have been able to show that people felt required to return because of the potent histories revealed in the site's architecture and materiality, a potency engendered through the textures generated by the people's emotional engagements and feelings of community.

Reaching this conclusion has been possible by drawing on the suggested vocabulary. The role of *emotions* has been illustrated to play a crucial way in which the site was textured. The investment of activities at the site testifies to an emotional sense of belonging, one that would have been re-experienced in the act of moving to and through the site. The use of the notion of *affective fields*, in contrast, has allowed us to explore the way the constitution of community at a greater-than-normal scale at Mount Pleasant could be both emotionally sustained and differentially experienced. *Attunement* allows us to consider the way in which people attend to the detail of the material world, and thus to the emotive textures these materials bear witness to, for example the way in which the decaying wood revealed the ongoing historicity of the communities engaging with the place. Finally the role of *atmosphere* may in turn be suggested to tincture or temper the experience of Mount Pleasant as a place through the wood, the pottery, the tools, the bodies, and their changing qualities through time. The powerful burning of parts of the palisade can be understood not merely as the product of tensions and disagreements, though it may well have been these, but also as a moment which produced a powerful, perhaps compelling, atmosphere, a heated, emotional, burning quality that transformed both the site and how people felt about it.

Conclusion: things in (e)motion

In this paper we have proposed and defined a set of terms that we believe will prove useful to archaeologists seeking to understand the ways in which

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people engaged with material things, places and each other in the past. We believe that such a move is important if we are to develop analytical strategies for identifying the role of emotion in past societies where we are denied access to written texts and ethnographic informants. As we have seen, the movement of bodies and things in relation to one another and in relation to the world around them creates and changes sensuous engagements with the tactile world. It may never be possible to specify exact emotions occurring in a person during an event like the burning of the palisade. What it is possible to do, we suggest, is to recognize how the movement of things and the movement of people caught up in this event generated an affective field which bound together the atmosphere of Mount Pleasant's architecture and the wider mood of people whilst they were attuned to this moment. The binding affective field would in turn have generated a range of potentially disparate emotions within people, and it makes no sense to ignore this point when we consider broader archaeological questions. Why did people carry out acts of deposition? Why did people move huge oak posts to this site? Why were some of them burnt down? What such questions address is the scrutiny of the emotional template of motivation behind certain actions and activities, or 'emotives' (cf. Reddy 2001).

More than this, archaeology may add a new perspective to broader debates around the role of things in people's lives, and explore the intersection of material culture and emotions in both the past and the present. This process has only begun, however, and our approach here is only one step on the way. In the spirit of this project of investigation we wish to conclude this article by suggesting two routes forward that might be beneficial. First, we suggest that further critique of our terms developed here will be necessary; can we be more specific about how they interrelate? Second, it has been beyond the scope of this article to develop a fine-grained methodology for the study of emotions through material culture (but see Sørensen 2010). We believe that such a methodology can be developed on the basis of the proposed vocabulary, offering avenues for practical analysis within the field of emotion studies, interpolating the role of emotion in the spatial setting of, for example, power manifestation or contestation, or in the negotiation of memory, forgetting and innovation. These potentials remain to be developed, and what we offer here is neither the first step towards engaging with emotion in prehistory (others began this journey long ago) nor an end point, merely the next part of the discussion.

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Emotional aspects of a fen

*Åsa Berggren**

Oliver J.T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sørensen have written an interesting and urgent paper, raising crucial points touching upon a question at the very core of archaeology: what can we learn about the lives of prehistoric people, based solely on the material remains? Or, rephrased, how far can we reach on the Hawkesian ladder? To tackle this question, Harris and Sørensen accept the ten-year-old challenge raised by Sarah Tarlow, and suggest a vocabulary that will enable archaeologists to include emotional aspects in their interpretations. As they point out, several studies in archaeology have focused on emotion during the last decade, using burials as their main material. But as they acknowledge that emotions were a part of mundane social life, and not limited to ritualized events such as burials, they want to broaden the span of their inquiry and include materials from other contexts as well. As they do this, they make an interesting point and take a step forward in the development of archaeological interpretation. However, I would argue that they could have explored the issue even further. It would, for example, have been interesting to see them apply their ideas to some of the more mundane archaeological materials, from, for example, settlements that would be more explicitly connected to everyday life. Instead they use a quite spectacular site, where dramatic events have taken place. Is it perhaps easier to make assumptions about emotions when they are suspected to have been intense and exceptional in some way? The mundane emotions still escape us. Nevertheless, the case study chosen by Harris and Sørensen still illustrates their arguments and serves as an example for how the suggested vocabulary may be used.

The theoretical perspective used by Harris and Sørensen, as well as the case study they use to illustrate their arguments, may be compared to my own work on structured depositions in a fen situated at Hindbygården in Malmö in the south of Sweden. Here depositions took place during a period of more than 3,000 years, from the Late Mesolithic to the Early Bronze Age and a few times during later periods (Berggren, forthcoming). The aim of my work is to discuss and evaluate an interpretation of wetland deposits alternative to the habitually used sacrificial category, which may be associated with problematic assumptions. Instead I explore practice theory and the conseqences it has for the concept of ritual, and I use the methodological tools found within this perspective, mainly the concepts of embodiment and objectification. To understand the processes of embodiment and objectification and how strategies of ritualization were used, I focus on the sensuous experiences that may have occurred during the activities at the fen. In a way this case study is similar to Mount Pleasant used by Harris and Sørensen, as the fen too was

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a place were groups from the local population negotiated their relations, to each other and within the groups.

I have focused on the claim of practice theory that practice generates relations, and I try to understand the structures that were created by, and at the same time formed, the people at the fen, through processes of embodiment and objectification. The environment at the fen, consisting of the changing vegetation and changing levels of dampness, plays an important role as a spatial structure in which people moved as they carried out the depositions. The people also created these structures as they placed the artefacts in certain patterns in and around the fen. The sensous experiences which were the results of these acts created relations between people and groups of people. Differences were created, for example, between those who could be seen and those who were hidden from view, between those who were experiencing the wet peat digging in the fen and those who performed their depositions still dry (standing on a footbridge built over the wettest part of the fen), and between those who made their deposits in the vegetation around the edge of the fen and those who made deposits in the water at the centre. The strategies of ritualization differed through time, and so did the social structures. It seems that the fen, during most of the period it was in use, was utilized by parts of the local population that negotiated their social relations by means of activities such as depositing tools and stones and eating meals. These negotiations were not a part of the competition for the more prestigious positions in society, and the population was probably not a part of the higher strata, but rather of a materially modest part of society. At times, the history of past events at the fen was an important component of the experiences, giving significance to the social negotiations that took place there.

Inspired by Tarlow (1999; 2000), Meskell (1996; 1998) and Nilsson Stutz (2003), I too have considered the emotional aspects of the relations created by the practices at the fen, but not succeeded in reaching any specific conclusions. The activities at the fen were probably of some emotional significance to the participants. I have not discussed the emotions that normally affected people at the fen, which is a shortcoming on my part, as the emotions that the place and the activities evoked in the participants are likely to have played an important part of the experiences. But I have been able to discern patterns indicating that some people, or some groups, at certain times have diverged from the current norms of deposition, a divergence that may be discussed in emotional terms. One example is a small group of people that kept using the fen for depositions during a part of the Middle Neolithic, at a time when the majority of society had turned away from wetland depositions and used other social arenas to create their social relations. The use of the fen in this situation may have been a strategy to separate oneself from the rest of society – some sort of resistance or contestation. I have discussed what this may have meant emotionally for the participants, but found it problematic to specify the emotions. This may have evoked such conflicting emotions as pride or shame, triumph or defiance, in different persons. Harris and Sørensen point to the fact that emotional experiences may differ from person to person, even though they participate in the same event. This is crucial. Tarlow has in her later work nuanced her view on empathy and cautions us to use it as a

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method, which would be a kind of naive empathy that assumes a universal emotional response in a certain situation. But there is a certain degree of universality in our bodily capacity to experience emotion, rather than the experience of certain emotions. Tarlow states that emotions may only be studied archaeologically on a societal level, as social, emotional values, rather than as individually experienced emotions (Tarlow 2000, 725, 728). So what can be concluded about emotions on a societal level?

The route taken by Harris and Sørensen, focusing on the material aspects of emotion, is fruitful for archaeology. The materiality of things and places is stressed in their four concepts. Things that are handled, and spaces that are moved through, are crucial for the understanding of emotions that are not 'exclusively subjective, individual and immaterial' (p. 146). The starting point of Harris and Sørensen also appears to be based on practice theory, as they concern themselves with practice and the outcome of practice: relations. They also use sensuous experiences as they try to understand the emotions that are created as people engage with the world. Their study and mine have these prerequisites in common. With this common starting point it is possible to discuss the emotional aspects of the experiences and the significance these emotions may have had for the social relations that were created. But is it also possible to discuss the emotional motivation behind certain acts using this theoretical perspective? Is this in accordance with the collapse of the mental and the bodily?

As I mentioned above, I found it difficult to interpret the specific emotional aspects of the activities that took place at the fen. Harris and Sørensen mention that it may never be possible to specify exact emotions. Instead, they say, we may recognize how the affective fields and atmospheres were generated, and I agree that this may be a productive path to follow. For example, they interpret in a credible way the atmosphere at Mount Pleasant as the creation of a feeling of being-in-place. They also make specific interpretations of these in their case study, for example the meaning of the affective field at Mount Pleasant as a feeling of community. Harris and Sørensen state that different people may have associated with this community in different ways. This is important, as we do not know whether some participation in building the henge was coerced, which may have created a different emotion compared to voluntary participation. This is why it may be too specific to interpret the feeling of community as something positive, and as a way of solving conflicts and disagreements as suggested by the authors.

Apart from these few critical points, I believe the vocabulary suggested by Harris and Sørensen could be very useful. Could it be applied to my case study, the fen at Hindbygården? Wetlands and other delimited places may have been a part of an affective field in society where people negotiated their social relations and created different social identities. The emotions experienced at those places were different depending on the participants and the social organizations they created. The place at the Hindbygården fen had an atmosphere created by the people performing the activities, the material things that were handled, the spatial structures that were created and experienced and the ritualization strategies that set the fen apart from other places. The atmosphere changed depending on how many people were present

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and what kind of activities they engaged in. The spatial structure of the fen guided the movement of people. During the Late Mesolithic they experienced the fen as an open glade in a dense forest and the fen functioned as a stage for the few people depositing axes there. An audience may have been standing on the edges. The structures were objectified in the spatial conditions and were embodied in the participants. The practice created relationships between the participants according to their experiences. Later, during the Early Neolithic, the edge vegetation, as well as depositions made between the plants, created a framing of the fen that may have functioned as a threshold between the inside and the outside. This created a difference between people, a relation between those who performed depositions inside this frame and those who stayed outside. During the Late Neolithic the fen was experienced as a grove in a more open landscape, with a less obvious frame, but still with a distinct border. These spatial structures created by the vegetation, the objects and the practice, as well as the relations and the social structures, may have been a part of the atmosphere at the fen. This atmosphere created emotional experiences in the participants through their attunement to the particular social negotiations they expected to occur at a place such as the fen. The specific emotions differed, during the long period of use, but also between participants active at the fen at the same time.

The vocabulary suggested by Harris and Sørensen is helpful, as it brings emotional aspects to light in archaeological interpretation. But, as I believe has been shown, both in their case study and in mine, the significance of emotions may only be discussed to a certain degree. We may conclude that emotions were an important part of experiences in a certain situation, perhaps at a societal or a social level, for example in the case of a divergence from a norm, but the specific emotions are difficult to specify.

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The matter with emotions *Susan Kus**

I 'full-heartedly' agree with Harris and Sørensen that archaeologists are in need of fuller 'appreciation of how the encounter with the material world is inherently affective' in order to more effectively understand 'how human beings and material things are co-constitutive' (p. 146). Further, but assuredly not 'foolhardily', I would argue that in refining our appreciation and understanding of these matters of matter and emotion and being, we can make an important contribution to contemporary dialogues on emotion beyond 'archaeological dialogues'; in particular, dialogues with psychological anthropologists.

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While 'the notion of emotion as something exclusively subjective, individual and immaterial' (p. 146) might very well be held by many archaeologists, this supposed precept is and has been a straw (wo)man for most psychological anthropologists since the first half of the last century. In the studies of BPS (basic personality structure) and MP (modal personality) of pioneering psychological anthropologists (e.g. Kardiner, DuBois) environment and the materials of subsistence strategies were recognized as crucial to the shaping of temperament (Bock 1999, 69–76). In addressing the question of 'learning non-aggression' among the Mbuti, Turnbull (1978) describes thickly and sensuously the material environment critical to this 'learning': sweet-smelling, clean and light-coloured bark cloth to wrap infants; shared beds of leaves; baths in sweet water from vines; encouraged explorations by toddlers of camp and forest edge, adolescent play of climbing trees and swinging from branches and vines, adolescent learning of ritual fire-lighting and of songs to keep the forest awake, and so on. More current works, including Lutz's on *Unnatural emotions* (1988) on the Micronesian atoll of Ifaluk, recognize the role of ecology and subsistence, as well as social discourse, in the crafting of indigenous theories of emotions. In some ways, the 'material turn' (p. 149) has always been part of psychological anthropology's discourse on emotions. Their material turn recognizes materiality as a critical context in the cultural crafting and expression of emotions. This should encourage us to continue to explore the work of psychological anthropologists in our discussion of emotions. Our current archaeological 'material turn', which recognizes that 'human beings and material things recursively shape each other' (p. 147), however, in turn, should incite the imagination of our non-archaeological colleagues who work on the topic of emotions. Further provocation to shared dialogue comes from archaeologists, such as Harris and Sørensen, who cleverly complicate the challenge of appreciating the archaeological twist on the 'material turn' by focusing on the differing scale of 'things' that must be attended to: from 'minimal' broken potsherds to 'maximal' megaliths, palisades and landscapes.

As we archaeologists continue to argue for the inclusion of 'emotion' in our discussions of all things cultural and material, I appreciate the efforts of the authors to push us to pay attention to vocabulary, and to push us to test out new vocabulary. Consequently, I find it interesting indeed that the term 'emotion' is left deliberately unfilled with emotion-terms. This, certainly, is a warranted cautionary move after the 'expression of *empathy*' (p. 147) and the employment of specific emotion-terms (e.g. 'grief') by archaeologists have been critiqued from within our very ranks. As we continue to circle around and spiral into the concept of 'emotion' I would urge us to look at the handling of this concept by psychological anthropologists so that we might be able to benefit from their more recent nuanced approaches to the topic. To begin with, Shore might offer us additional vocabulary as he argues that we need 'to distinguish clearly "physiological emotions" (emotion expressions), "psychological emotions" (subjective feeling states), and "emotion discourse," as three parts of an emotions system' (Shore 1993, 361). The key word here is 'system'. These distinctions are in some way echoed by Hinton, who borrows an analogy that likens emotion to weather classification, arguing that 'weather'

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is a 'superordinate category . . . used to describe certain "coherences" between wind velocity, humidity, temperature, barometric pressure, and type of precipitation' (Hinton 1993, 424). In analogous fashion the superordinate category "emotion" is used to "categorize particularly salient coherences between external stimuli, physiological changes, and evaluations" (Hinton 1993, 424). (For additional vocabulary to think about and play with, refer to Hinton 1993; to Shweder 1999; and to Middleton 1989, who suggests eight elements of 'emotional style'.) The vocabulary of Harris and Sørensen concerning 'affective fields', 'attunement' and 'atmosphere' is critical for carrying us beyond discussions focused on the individual experience of emotion, and in some ways may prove more satisfying in its immediate attention to social groups, material and space than the vocabulary I have signalled above. For the moment, however, I want to continue discussion of 'emotion'. I want to look at three points briefly: (1) the senses and sensuality, (2) the possible universality of emotions and/or adequate language to speak about emotions, and (3) indigenous theories of emotions.

The authors assert that 'emotion *has* to be viscerally experienced, yet it *can* be discursively cognized' (p. 150). (1) It is interesting that the authors choose the term 'viscerally'. In English we speak of 'gut reaction', whereas the Malagasy speak of the heart as being shaken (*nientana iray ihany ambavafoko*). Clearly, the body and the senses are critical sites for emotional experience and expression. Indeed, the authors speak of people at Mount Pleasant as being 'tied into an affective field by attending to the space, to the way the wood smelled, felt and looked' (p. 155). As we range across the sensual, we should pay particular attention to recent work on 'the anthropology of the senses' (e.g. Howe 1991; Classen 1993), and to Ong's remark (1991, 26) about the 'shifting sensorium': 'Cultures vary greatly in their exploitation of the various senses and in the way in which they relate their conceptual apparatus to the various senses'. This attention is necessary so that our bodies do not in turn become a problematic source of reference analogous to the 'empathy' of our souls.

(2) It is always interesting to revisit, from time to time, the question of 'psychic unity' and human and cultural universals, especially now that we continue to muster our courage to 'face' emotions 'head-on'. In 1980 Ekman published *The face of Man. Expressions of universal emotions in a New Guinea village*. In this study in Papua New Guinea (undertaken among populations notoriously taken to be radically 'other'), he suggested (and went on to study further) six basic emotions he declared identifiable from facial appearances. As the reader might suspect, Ekman's study has been criticized, in particular, with respect to the assignation of English emotion vocabulary (e.g. anger, joy, surprise) to the six basic emotions. As Wierzbicka argues (2003, 591), 'Because English-emotion terms like *grief* or *anger* stand for culture-specific bundles of semantic components they are not suitable as analytical tools for exploring emotions cross-culturally'. Pushing further, we might echo Geertz (*à la* Shweder 1999, 67; and others) in reminding ourselves that, in the same way that we do not speak language, but rather *speak a language*, it is also the case that we experience *fear of* something or someone and we experience *anger at* someone, something or some situation.

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The work of Lutz (1988) and others further draws our attention to the fact that these supposed universal emotions can become additionally highly qualified within a culture, so that on Ifaluk one can speak not only of 'anger', but of '*righteous* anger', an emotion neither accessible nor expressible by all. Nevertheless, despite Geertzianesque warnings and critiques of Western-centric labelling, there has been continued and renewed interest in universals among psychological anthropologists that we might want to pay attention to. This is not because these investigations ignore complicated cultural grounding, but rather because they offer a more sophisticated researched and theoretically grounded minimalist base from which to begin cross-cultural comparison. Levine, in a Society of Psychological Anthropology President's Forum in 1999, strongly advocated research to identify 'characteristics related to universals of subjective experience that can be translated into unrelated languages with overlapping if not equivalent terms' (Levine 1999, 21). Shweder alerts us to the fact that there is important contemporary work being done by psychological anthropologists in 'collaborative research with biologists, psychologists, linguists, and others on the translation of mental state terms and concepts' (Shweder 1999, 69). To say it loudly and clearly, I am not advocating universalism as a focus over rich, context-bound alterity. Rather, I am suggesting that deep and radical alterity can be brought into powerful relief if there is a base of possible comparison 'of apples and oranges' that encourages cautious generalizations. Perhaps Shweder offers an interesting mantra concerning this challenge: 'universalism without the uniformity' (ibid., 68).

(3) There exists additional fascinating work about indigenous theories of emotions. Levy (1973), a psychiatrist and an anthropologist, who was interested in the enduring labelling of Tahitians by the West as 'gentle people', has brought to our attention the fact that 'emotions' can be either hypocognated/hypocognized or hypercognated/hypercognized depending on culture. 'Under'-cognized emotions are often expressed more in physical and 'visceral' terms, while 'elaborately' cognized emotions involve more indigenous specification and labelling, echoing the remark of the authors of the article in question: 'emotion *has* to be viscerally experienced, yet it *can* be discursively cognized' (p. 150). (As an interesting side note for archaeologists, Middleton argues (1989, 197), 'In American culture … death and its attendant emotions have been hypocognized'.) Additionally, Lutz's (1988) work among the Ifaluk, *Unnatural emotions*, has brought our attention to the fact that individually labelled emotions, such as 'righteous anger', need to be understood within indigenous theories of emotion that designate the who, what, when, where and why of emotions. Lutz's work urges us to understand that age, status, gender and so on might render the crowd at Mount Pleasant a crowd of very interesting differences within an affective field.

In their abstract, the authors alert us to the fact that their focus is one 'exclusively on the relationship between material culture and emotions (as opposed to textually, verbally or iconographically informed approaches)'. The work of Lutz (1988) and Levy (1973), along with others, however, brings to our attention the fact that 'emotions' are often very much embedded in language and this renders them 'social' and 'cultural'. Indeed, some

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psychological anthropologists argue that 'the evolution of language provided a medium by which emotions could be cognized and transformed into cultural conventions, a momentous event in the natural history of emotions' (Shore 1993, 362). With that said, I would like to suggest that in some way we archaeologists might not be as 'deprived' and 'challenged' as we assume we are, despite the lack of texts and informants. It is the case that many of the societies we study archaeologically are non-literate, or, more correctly, oral. Leroi-Gourhan (1964–65) brought to our attention the intimate connection of (material) gesture and speech. Levi-Strauss's *La Pensée sauvage* (1962), Fernandez's appreciation of trope (1986), and the early works of Ong (1982) and Goody (1988; 1989), along with more recent works by others on 'oralities' and 'literacies', draw our attention to differences in 'orality and literacy' (Ong 1982). Collectively, these works allow us to appreciate the poetic and thick language used in societies of primary orality. This is language grounded in material and experiential trope; this is language that powerfully employs icon and index alongside symbols, if we use Pearcian vocabulary. In these societies, tropes are not limited to 'figures of speech'; they gain their shape and force by continued accretion in material and sensuous engagement with and in the world, and consequently speech, gesture and material object are often melded in dialogic encounters. In some way, archaeologists might actually be able to (name) their cake and eat it too. The fact that powerful tropes of reflective thought in primar(il)y oral societies are materially grounded in routine and ritual activity, in objects encountered and/or created, in persons, in space, in landscape and so on might make emotions 'legible' in material culture. Consider the following quotes from the article under consideration:

> the flammability of the wood. That a spectacular atmosphere would be generated by this seems likely – the intense heat, the roaring flames, the smell and the sights would have been burned themselves into people's memories (p. 161).
>
> The powerful burning of parts of the palisade can be understood . . . also as a moment which produced a powerful, perhaps compelling, atmosphere, a heated, emotional, burning quality that transformed both the site and how people felt about it (p. 162).

I want to make a suggestion, and I want to offer a warning.

The suggestion is that materiality as trope might be a very exciting entry point into our discussion of emotion in oral societies known only from their archaeological remains. It is also the case that poetic redundancy across the quotidian and the ritual is also a feature of these societies. However, we might not want to think in term of repetitive, replicated and recitative 'statements' as we attempt to break a symbolic code, but rather to think of interpreting a poetry of copious iconic and indexical cross-references (e.g. Raharijaona and Kus 2000).

The warning is not to become hubristic and/or Jungian in our interpretation of icon, index and symbol. Stone for the Oglala Sioux is (was) an element of chaos, for they consider(ed) all that is sacred and viable to be circular, whereas

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'stone is the implement of destruction' (Radin 1957, 277). For the Malagasy, stone is the most celestial of terrestrial materials. According to myth it is considered either fossilized lightning, the most powerful element lanced by the sky to attain earth, or stone, the most powerful element lanced by earth to attain the sky (for fuller discussion see Kus and Raharijaona 1998, 53–61).

By way of conclusion, I would direct our attention to the argument of Fernandez (1986) that insists that metaphor in daily practice and in ritual can be 'persuasively' transformative (cf. Kus 2006, 110–14). Daily routines erupting with significance in ritual acts can move us in 'quality space', as James Fernandez argues, and can accommodate us 'in many subtle ways to our condition in all its contrarieties and complexities' (1986, 20). Notice the embodied trope of movement that is shared between Fernandez and Harris and Sørensen. Emotion clearly 'matters' as a future dimension of archaeological exploration into other ways of being-in-the-world. I applaud and appreciate the authors' attempts to focus archaeological attention on the matter of emotions. I am honoured to have been included in this dialogue. I hope this dialogue will continue within our ranks and will continue to 'move' out into other fields (as the authors' bibliography suggests), but I think it would be interesting to sit down at a table with psychological anthropologists, in particular.

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Those obscure objects of desire

*Adam T. Smith**

'Everyday life is a life lived on the level of surging affects', posits Kathleen Stewart in her challenging experimental ethnography *Ordinary affects* (2007). Affects – public feelings that put intimate sentiments in broad circulation – are, for Stewart, the sinews of social life, an opaque circuit that simultaneously grounds experience in places and things and publicizes the personal. As such, affects are quintessentially archaeological in that they are both artefactual, embedded in what Bill Brown (2003) calls the 'object matter' of human relationships, and rooted in deep histories of material production and transformation. It is not surprising, then, that the intertwined problems of emotion and affect have re-emerged as potentially productive loci of research within archaeology itself. Indeed, as the discipline continues to extend its understanding of the social instrumentality of objects, landscapes and representations, it must, of necessity, come to terms with the affective efficacy of things, with the causes and consequences of our captivation.

Yet to come to terms with feeling, whether in the public form of affect or the traditionally more intimate terrain of emotion, demands a conceptual

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repertoire largely absent in contemporary archaeology. Harris and Sørensen are thus to be commended for clearly identifying a critical lacuna in archaeological thought and pushing the discipline to formalize concepts that might allow us to develop a better sense of the commitments of people to their things. Their basic contention, that emotion was and is a critical element of human social existence and thus must be opened to archaeological research, is indisputably correct. Archaeology's sense of past actors has often been so invested in unimpeachable rationality as to diminish subjectivity to an unrecognizably icy state of cold calculation. Indeed, the field spent much of the later 20th century struggling to evacuate the past of emotion in a quixotic effort to purge the last vestiges of antiquarianism. As a result, we find ourselves today poorly equipped to make sense of sentiments, of the dispositions that order and mould sensation. Harris and Sørensen's observation that we lack even a basic vocabulary for conceptualizing the emotional lives of the past is on target and hence any effort to develop our conceptual terminology is very welcome.

While Harris and Sørensen are certainly correct that emotion is underinvestigated in archaeology, a concern with affect, in contrast, is neither new nor, I suggest, so absent from contemporary theoretical reflection. In one sense, a concern with public sentiment is a kind of intellectual return for the discipline. As Leonard Barkan (1999) has demonstrated, a primordial form of archaeological reflection originated in the vibrant realist sublime forged in the encounter between Renaissance artists and classical statuary unearthed by construction projects in 15th- and 16th-century Rome. The subsequent impact of Kantian aesthetics on the humanist antiquarians of the 19th century, from Winckelmann to Schliemann, explicitly centred archaeological interpretation in the *frisson* of the encounter between subjects and objects. While the 20th-century drive to establish archaeology as an avowedly scientific enterprise elevated dispassionate encounters with things, and thus cast sentiment into disrepute, there is little evidence to suggest that this project succeeded in rewriting the central axioms of archaeological interpretation embedded in the very kind of ordinary affects described by Stewart. Indeed, as recent studies of archaeology's deployment in service of political nationalism make clear (e.g. Abdi 2001; Dietler 1994; Khatchadourian 2008; Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Meskell 1998), much of the field's analytical apparatus remains lashed to distinctly affective commitments to king, country and kin.

Hence an effort to re-engage archaeology with the domains of feeling circumscribed by the terms 'affect' and 'emotion' strikes me as less a matter of raw invention than of recuperation and extension. Nevertheless, Harris and Sørensen are quite right that formalized investigations exclusively centred on the recovery of emotions are few and far between. But it is worth asking whether that is really such a deplorable state of affairs. Indeed, each of the varied dimensions of social life that have recently (say, over the last decade) come into archaeological theory has entailed at least an implicit understanding of feeling. What are studies of personhood, identity, memory or religion (to use Harris and Sørensen's list, p. 145) if not investigations of the social ordering of emotional dispositions; which is to say, affects? In eschewing a formal engagement with emotion, these approaches maintain a rigorous focus on the social even if at the expense of letting feeling languish. So what are

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the costs of reorienting the balance, as Harris and Sørensen strive to do, by placing the emphasis most forcefully on emotion?

One concern is certainly that the pursuit of a theoretically discrete archaeology of emotion must necessarily cede an epistemological privilege to a generic sense of human experience over accounts of the social constitution of affect. The authors, to their credit, recognize this danger and work to mitigate it by collapsing interior feeling and exterior expression. Yet the model for the interaction of feeling and the world at hand remains one of evocation – 'the emotions that arise when [an object] attracts our focused attention' (p. 150). Thus knowledge of emotion, even emotion defined in the more visible public sense of being moved, remains dependent on generic universal pairs of sentiment and expression: sad/crying, happy/laughing, angry/yelling and so on. This collapsing of emotion and expression has some philosophical rewards in suggesting the simultaneity of mind and body, if not their wholesale unification. Lost, however, are the complicated layers of sublimation and dissimulation critical not only to emotional life – for what would neurosis be without sublimation – but also to the sociopolitics of affect. If emotion has traditionally captured the domain of feeling, affect has done considerable analytical work by describing the public expression of sentiment. By effectively equating the two, Harris and Sørensen's subjects are in considerable danger of becoming emotional naïfs, bereft of hidden feeling or the capacity to dissemble. The political consequences of reducing affect to emotion are perhaps the most concerning since in any kind of public, bodily accommodation to structures of authority (movement, in Harris and Sørensen's terms, p. 149) should not be taken as evidence of an emotional commitment to the ruling order.

Nevertheless, Harris and Sørensen are clearly aware of the sociality of emotion, noting how individual disposition can be scaled up to groups and crowds. However, this move is purely methodological, opening terrain for forms of mass public outpourings of sentiment. It does nothing to combat the problem that the now-collapsed concepts of emotion/affect remain solidly located in highly individuated dispositions. Harris and Sørensen are quite right that archaeology must account for the public mustering of sentiment, but to do so, it would seem advisable to work to make explicit the affective understandings at the heart of the varied dimensions of social life – the desires and fears mustered in service of politics, economy, social solidarity and distinction, just for example – rather than carve out a cross-cutting, too-easily-universalized archaeology of emotion. What seems to be missing, I suggest, is a sense of how emotions are mediated by affective regimes that are powerfully constituted by social institutions and practices. The conceptual vocabulary that Harris and Sørensen provide is a step in the right direction. Affective field (which is quite different from affect itself), attunement and atmosphere provide a potentially useful set of terms for describing the framing of emotion. But their social construction remains underspecified and thus the concepts float free as relations simply between bodies, rather than bodies always positioned within a sociopolitical field. Who claims the power to shape the affective field and through what forms of mediation? How are key locations critical to cultivating attunement – presumably pedagogical

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settings and ritual performances loom large in this regard – set within wider relationships of power and privilege? And what are the historical processes that shape atmospherics such that the properties of certain materials take on an almost onomatopoetic sense of their own capacity to signify? The utility of the concepts Harris and Sørensen offer will ultimately hinge on the answers to these questions.

Moreover, despite the titular centrality of material culture to the theoretical project of the article, there is surprisingly little effort to move beyond Gosden's (2004, 39) concise claim that 'emotions are materially constituted and material culture is emotionally constituted'. Such a powerful slogan certainly warrants unpacking through close scrutiny of exactly how things and feelings come to be co-constitutive. This necessarily entails both a historical project tracking the intertwining of objects and sentiments and a synchronic examination of the ordering of affects through the ordering of things, places and representations. Instead, Harris and Sørensen provide us only with the claim that our commitment to things is the result of 'an inherent human capacity to identify with and through material culture' (p. 148). Where, it must be asked, is the social construction of desire?

The core problem, I suggest, is that emotion for Harris and Sørensen seems to be counterposed to, rather than embedded within, instrumental social practices staked in a field of power relationships. This is particularly evident in the case study of Late Neolithic Mount Pleasant, where the settlement's sociology emerges from an account of the emotional capacities of the site rather than vice versa. In the discussion of Site IV, for example, the authors describe how by 'creating an architecture that created the possibility for particular forms of movement and foreclosed others, particular kinds of emotion could also be called forth' (p. 156). What is missing from the study is a sense of specifically who (in sociological terms) assembled these places and what was at stake in the shaping of the particular affective field. As a result, the emotional force of places seems to precede, rather than follow from, their constitution as locations of social or political significance.

This priority ceded to emotion does create a particularly odd line of argument regarding the transformation of the henge during its final phase. The authors suggest that the three different practices (or 'attitudes', to use their more passive terminology) that unmade the palisade – burning, razing and abandoning – 'suggest that a contestation was taking place at this time, building on conflicting emotional understandings of Mount Pleasant' (p. 161). That is, varied emotional dispositions toward the monument indicate 'the presence of separate social groups'. Yet this effort to back into the sociology of Mount Pleasant via emotion reverses the proper order of analysis. That is to say, it would be more persuasive to first establish the presence of distinct social groups (and their lines of distinction), understand what might be at stake in Mount Pleasant's palisade for each, and thus define the emotional resonance that the site's transformation practices might have had. For example, if the lines of social distinction were predicated on status, then one group's burning of the palisade takes on the character of an act of revolutionary defiance while dismantling – and perhaps curating? – the remaining timbers would appear to be driven by a reactionary sensibility of tragedy and loss. This is not

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to argue with the authors' contention that the site was powerfully structured by an affective field; rather that a sense of affect in the past follows from an account of the array of institutions and interests at stake in places and things.

Ultimately, although Harris and Sørensen provide us with a new vocabulary to argue over and work with, it is revealing that their analysis leaves us with little understanding of the sentiments shaping the site; there is no love or bitterness, fear or affection at play in the built landscapes of Late Neolithic Mount Pleasant, only a vague 'tincturing' (throughout but especially p. 161). People were bound to places, certainly, but the authors stop short of giving us a sense of the actual sentiments at play. The communities engaged with Mount Pleasant were clearly moved by their built world, but for emotion to be analytically productive, we need to be able to understand better what passions things and places inflamed or dampened. In the absence of that kind of specificity, emotions risk becoming simple proxies for underspecified social rivalries. Indeed, in the conclusion to the Mount Pleasant case study, we would seem to have simply rediscovered social negotiation through the lexicon of emotion in the absence of a clear account of the sentiments shaping commitments to the site. Contestation at the site may well 'be about issues other than power relations, social differentiation and claims of right' (p. 162), but the authors do not tell us what those issues are. Nor do they provide a convincing case that emotion should be understood as independent of social struggle.

The latter point is one perhaps best made by Luis Buñel in his 1977 film *Cet obscur Objet du désir*. The action of the film centres on Mathieu, a wealthy middle-aged Frenchman, and his tempestuous, yet unconsummated, affair with Conchita, a poor flamenco dancer from Seville. But the film is punctuated by muggings, bombings, hijackings and murders that force the geopolitical into the traditionally hermetic world of the cinematic love story. When a bomb explodes at the end of the film, killing Mathieu and Conchita after a climactic moment of reconciliation, the negotiations, promises and postponements of lovers are inextricably bound to the wider sociopolitical field of contestation and struggle. Harris and Sørensen are certainly correct that emotions remain obscure to archaeology's theoretical imagination due to an overly psychological understanding of sentiment and the lack of an analytical apparatus for describing the practical constitution of affect. These are both important contributions that warrant elaboration and further consideration. What is left unexplored, I suggest, is how emotional lives are constantly being shaped and reshaped by wider sociopolitical currents such that the objects of desire, like Conchita, remain tantalizingly beyond our grasp.

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Emotion reified. Lessons from the archaeology of ritual

*Edward Swenson**

Harris and Sørensen's critique of the archaeological inattention to emotion and their recognition of the material mediation of affect bring to the

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fore perennial epistemological problems defining the broader archaeological enterprise. The immediate citation of the long-discredited Hawkesian ladder of inference challenges the assumption that past emotional states are unrecoverable from archaeological contexts, just as an earlier generation of archaeologists rejected processual theory that meaning, conceptual schemas and symbolism fell beyond the pale of scientific inference. Of course, Hawkes was not a materialist in the strict sense of the term, and he recognized that value systems transcended the epiphenomenal and played a vital role in structuring social practice and shaping historical process. It was his contention, however, that conceptual and symbolic schemes and their role in social reproduction were simply too complex to be read satisfactorily from material remains (Hawkes 1954; see Fogelin 2008, 129–30). He wrote that 'there is nothing in North American ecology ... to compel either Iroquois institutions ... or the constitution of the United States' (Hawkes 1954, 163). To be sure, Hawkes probably would not have denied that *moved to move* is intrinsic to the human condition and that affective dispositions were a force in individual experiences and the collective fortunes and self-representations of past communities. At the same time, he probably gave little consideration to the dialectical interdependence of the material world and emotion, a relationship that has captured the imagination of recent scholars. Hawkes would no doubt have scoffed at the notion that emotion as ontological problem, cultural construct or variable of social interaction is amenable to archaeological interpretation.

I applaud the authors' endeavour to develop a heuristic package, an analytical 'vocabulary', as they cautiously refer to it, which will aid the investigation of emotion in past societies and contribute to our understanding of the inherent material conditioning of affect. Indeed, this article represents a valuable contribution to material culture studies and problems of deciphering how artefacts and the built environment were constituted by and constitutive of human emotion. Although I part company with Hawkes that emotion eludes archaeological inquiry, my main criticism of the article is centred on his acknowledgement of the complexity of behaviour and the fundamental theoretical challenges inherent in isolating affect as an independent variable. Just as ecology cannot predict Iroquoian institutions, the same could be said of emotion. Of course, Harris and Sørensen would emphatically agree with this premise, as made clear in their paper, but the thrust of their argument still tends to reify emotion in a way that elides the cultural and historical specificity of affective experience. I do commend the authors for venturing forth on the dizzying anthropological tightrope separating the chasms of extreme relativism on one side and reductive universalism on the other. In citing Rosaldo, Strathern and Lutz, Harris and Sørensen condemn notions of 'transhistorical humanity' and agree that emotions, like belief, are culturally constructed (see also Meskell 1999; Tarlow 2000). Nevertheless, they still recognize that embodied emotion constitutes a general condition of the human species and is a phenomenon amenable to comparative analysis and anthropological generalization – a position I fully endorse. However, the historical context of emotion in the Late Neolithic period is still sidelined in the paper, despite statements to the contrary and numerous caveats that assert the importance of just such a context. At the end of the paper, emotion reads

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to me as a nebulous, decontextualized, and somewhat free-floating 'thing' – even despite the authors' compelling argument that emotion implicates both mind and body and is inextricably tied to practice and specific sociohistorical traditions.

What I found particularly striking about the paper is that the theoretical critique closely mirrors recent exposés on the archaeology of ritual (Bradley 2005; Fogelin 2007; Kyriakidis 2007). If emotion were substituted by ritual performance, the thrust of the analysis would have changed insignificantly and our understanding of the emotional valence of Mount Pleasant would hardly be dissimilar. To provide an example, the analytical category of attunement is reminiscent of Renfrew's (1994) argument that ritual 'focuses attention', or Smith's (1982) contention that ritual serves as a 'focusing lens' that heightens consciousness and emotional sensibilities. Returning to the anthropological tightrope, certain scholars have also questioned the validity of ritual as a general category, and several archaeologists contend that the focus on ritualism distorts interpretation of past structures of practice and the existence of plural rationalities. If ritual is inseparable from instrumental action operating within specific cultural constructions of the world, and if it is irreducible to representation and communication, then its analytical worth as a cross-cultural category is thought to be compromised (see Brück 1999; Gerholm 1988; Goody 1977). Nonetheless, despite the myriad cultural permutations of ceremonial behaviour and constructions of the sacred, a majority of social scientists would contend that highly formalized, symbolically charged and rule-governed practices, occasioning a disconnect between action and normative intention, constitute a generalizable, if not universal, human phenomenon demanding archaeological scrutiny (Bradley 2005, 33; Bell 1992; 1998; Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994). In such perspectives, ritual is cast as a particular mode of embodied practice or action, and it has been touted as the trope that will enable the transcendence of mind/body and subject/object reductionisms and even of Eurocentric notions of the sacred and profane (Bell 1992; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Handelman and Lindquist 2004). Harris and Sørensen's take on emotion aims for a similar surmounting of such simplifying dichotomies. Certainly, the research of Houseman and Severi (1998), as well as of Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994), on the prediscursive aspects of ritual acts has shown that religious meaning is polysemic, ambiguous and paradoxical; ritual as action invites a multitude of possible significations with diverse political repercussions – where meaning is not simply a priori and mechanically reproduced in ritual but is variably generated in the structure and flow of rite. In other words, the primacy of mind (or mythopraxis) is countered and more attention is given to phenomenological issues and to questions of affect (Thomas 2002). Ritual is action in the subjunctive mood, as Turner argued (1967), and it normally involves the focusing and intensifying of attention, public or individual, which implicates distinctive frames of practice, thought, performance and, by extension, emotion (Lewis 1980; Tambiah 1979).

In fact, ritual is commonly viewed as practice that heightens or alters consciousness and induces intense emotional states (Bateson 1986; Turner 1967; 1982). It has been variably argued that the multisensory experience of

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ritual theatre is an effective tool in forging social solidarity, not so much by articulating shared belief among participants but rather through inculcating collective experience predicated on emotionally arresting action (Fernandez 1965; Kertzer 1988, 99–100). Kertzer (1988, 76) notes that

> the common reading of Durkheim that he identified solidarity with value consensus in his interpretation of ritual misses the strength of his argument. His genius lies in having recognized that ritual builds solidarity without requiring the sharing of beliefs. Solidarity is produced by people acting together, not people thinking together.

In truth, Sørensen and Harris's article is markedly, if unwittingly, Durkheimian in its theoretical stance, especially in its emphasis on the role of emotion in creating a sense of shared community identity at Mount Pleasant. Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence (1965) resonates directly with their statement that 'emotions can be experienced by social groups and at times by large crowds, sometimes even by an entire people or nation, or by large parts of the world' (p. 150). Highly pertinent to my appraisal, almost every example of emotion mobilized by Harris and Sørensen, both ancient and modern, conforms to what many would classify as ritualistic behaviour. This is apparent even despite their call to liberate emotion from the reductive framework of ritualism, as reflected in their referencing of Tarlow's critique of the distillation of death to the singular analytical framework of ritual (which ignores feelings of grief, sorrow and loss). Nevertheless, the immediate context for these emotions is still death itself, and emotions cannot be extricated from the situational, cultural and semantic framework in which mourning practices are embedded. In the same vein, the peculiar affective power of the henge monuments of Mount Pleasant is contingent on the practices expected or performed at the monument, including architectural construction, feasting, initiation, musical production, political posturing, intense self-reflection and even the possible ritual enactment of mythohistories. Harris and Sørensen analyse emotion in an exclusively ritual context, and it remains problematic that this context is explicitly downplayed and undertheorized in their analysis. They state their desire to move beyond Thomas's notion of 'dramatization', but I am not convinced that this is fully achieved, and it is hard to deny the dramatic and highly theatrical aspects of this impressive 'ceremonial' site.

This realization brings me to the heart of my critique: emotion cannot be divorced from specific historical, political and experiential contexts – ritual or otherwise, and traditional contextual–hermeneutic reconstructions must come first in archaeological interpretations of emotion (Meskell 1999; Tarlow 2000, 728–29). One might object that such a perspective relegates emotion to epiphenomenal *reactions* to traditional social, religious or material factors. However, stressing emotion's contingency does not necessarily imply such a simplistic or determinative chain of causation. Instead, what must be privileged is the social and phenomenal *framing* of past events and landscapes that jointly implicate the cultural, emotional and embodied, as Harris and Sørensen implicitly acknowledge. A particular context steeped in public ritualism or high theatre is clearly distinct from private arenas of domestic production and consumption. Whether Bourdieu's fields, Holland's figured

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worlds, or the ludic frame as theorized by performance theorists, emotion is dialectically propelled in specific, if changing, contexts of practice – that are at once cultural, political, economic and affective (but not strictly so in the latter case) (Bourdieu 1993; Holland *et al.* 1998; Köepping 1997). It is for this reason that I find the heuristic of the 'affective field' problematic; it could easily mire the analyst into circular reasoning and to the troubling reification of affect. Can diverse social activities, including an evening meal, a carnival, the harvesting of corn, the recitation of genealogies or the procession through a henge best be understood in terms of an affective field? Or are they more accurately culturally constructed social events of differing significance in which distinct modes and intensities of emotion are experienced, generated and performed (and, by extension, where these emotions are generative of future emotions, possible status distinctions, and changing conceptual categories)?

The authors argue that the affective field is the substratum in which variable and even 'incongruent' atmospheres are 'felt' and conceptualized by different groups of actors. This recognition of different emotional states parallels Gerholm's 'postmodern' analysis of a Hindu funeral ritual in Trinidad, wherein specific individuals were found to hold disparate understandings of the event despite a generally shared awareness of its emotional gravity (Gerholm 1988). Harris and Sørensen's 'atmosphere' also intends to overcome the common critique that phenomenological approaches in archaeology impose a singular and ahistorical sensual framework onto past subjects. The traditional phenomenological stance implies that built forms elicit shared affective responses, thus forging homogenous subjectivities and world views regardless of political and cultural differences (see critiques by Brück 2001; Johnson 2006). Indeed, the influence of the British phenomenological school of archaeology is strongly evident in the authors' explicit linking of movement to the etymology and experience of emotion ('to be moved'). In the end, the identification of differently constructed atmospheres at Mount Pleasant is far from revelatory and once again consists more of an exercise in semantic substitution. Making private offerings in the visually obscured ditch is contrasted with public feasting and the affective power and visually disorienting configuration of the henge rings, but the authors do not take into account that ritual events may have been sequentially integrated and that both emotion and meanings could have been embedded in a singular temporal unfolding of highly structured activities (both dramatic and mundane in nature).

As stated previously, context is all-important, and an inferential ladder will inevitably guide analysis (Tarlow 2000, 729). The henge, associated artefacts, feature emplacements, the perimeter stockade and so on must be interpreted as a contextual tableau in conjunction with the broader interrelationship of Mount Pleasant with neighbouring residential settlements and similar ceremonial sites (Hodder and Hutson 2003; Swenson 2008). In other words, emotion can only be inferred after meaningful social, historical and spatial contexts have been approximately delineated. Once again, this may reaffirm an inferential ladder, but it does not imply that emotion is interpretively more inaccessible or that it is socially epiphenomenal. Changes in the function and architectural configuration of Mount Pleasant, implying shifts in social memory and ecology, and possible transformations in religious beliefs and

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political affiliation, also must be considered before emotion can be effectively interpreted. Harris and Sørensen may maintain that they did grapple with contextual meanings in speculating on the possible symbolism of the house and the significance of the different strategies employed in dismantling the later palisade. However, this component of their analysis is underdeveloped and should have been given primacy in their exploration of the cultural and possible cosmological framing of emotion in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age context (see Treherne 1995; Van Dyke 2009).

How would Harris and Sørensen approach the intersection of emotion and materiality in a household setting (as opposed to an awe-inspiring monument and ritual context such as Mount Pleasant – a 'controlled environment', as Smith (1982) famously described built environments of a sacred nature)? In reflecting on quotidian spaces, Bourdieu's (1973) celebrated ethnographic study of the Kabyle house demonstrated that the spatio-temporal and material framing of the everyday plays a key role in socialization and the reproduction of unquestioned power relations. In contrast, ritual practice and its material expressions have often been differentiated from the material parameters of the domestic and quotidian (see Barrett 2001, 158; Inomata and Coben 2006; Van Dyke 2009, 238–39). Religious experience is equated with calculated ideological production, 'discursive consciousness' and active or contested subject formation, while the common household is identified with the taken-for-granted, 'practical consciousness' and the apolitical (although Bourdieu's notions of *doxa* and *habitus* are concerned first and foremost with the reproduction of misrecognized structures of power). The authors write that 'on occasions material things can stand out, demand to be noticed and defy attempts to ignore them; here they are "present-at-hand"' (p. 151) (as opposed to Heidegger's 'ready-to-hand'). In an archaeological context, the authors seem to imply that aesthetically and religiously charged items represent the default 'ready-to-hand' emotional stimulators. Of course, the dichotomization of consciousness and emotion within the framework of the mundane and ceremonial (and simplified archaeological–spatial domains of house and monument) is problematic; ritually enacted liturgies can be horrifically dull and emotionally understated, while social dramas involving heightened feelings (joy, conflict, satisfaction, fear) often unfold within everyday domestic contexts. At the same time, quotidian space can be highly ritualized and imbued with meaning wherein ceremony is incorporated into daily, practical routines. Discursive consciousness and heightened ideological awareness might normally find material expression in highly performative domains and public ritual spectacles, but this is far from universal; nor does it occur in a prescribed or ahistorical fashion.

So, then, where does this leave us in the archaeological study of emotion? Can inferences on 'emotively significant' landscapes only be made for monumental, ritual spaces (where distinct theoretical varnishes – say, a ritual bias or an analysis foregrounding intense emotion – precede comparable methodologies and interpretations)? Or are all landscapes emotively significant to the point that such an analysis is at once futile and pointless? As stated earlier, both ritual and emotion are amenable to analytical demarcation in archaeology, and the cynical question posed

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above is for the most part rhetorical. However, a hermeneutic analysis and attention to context will provide the only means to solve these very complex and important problems. For instance, future studies on the covariation of household design with shifts in the construction and use of henge monuments should prove illuminating in understanding the dialectic of place-making and the role played by human emotions at Mount Pleasant and neighbouring sites. Is there a notable continuity in residential architecture during periods of henge destruction or renovation? Are there any meaningful correlations between domestic structures and Mount Pleasant which might affirm that Site IV actually represented a 'communal house', thus allowing more robust inferences on the affective resonance of the household as symbol and setting of everyday practices? Were house lots also fastidiously curated spaces, and does a comparable trajectory of abandonment, burning or purposeful decay distinguish different types of site and structure? Or are residential villages and henges characterized rather consistently by distinct spatial biographies? I agree with the authors that the lack of houses at Mount Pleasant is likely relevant to deciphering the interpenetration of affect, meaning, built environments and possibly plural subjectivities in Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Wessex; clearly more research is necessary to examine the contextual disjunctures or interrelationships between archaeologically distinctive landscapes (as undertaken by Thomas (2007) at Durrington Walls). In a similar vein, did certain decorated wares mentioned by the authors both 'figure' worlds and promote emotional attunement given their particular and changing contexts (where emotion and consciousness are mutually constituted)? Does the deposition of ceramics in ditches express the emotional draw of communal events of festive consumption, or, rather, does it point to the consumptive destruction of the vessels themselves, as understood within a narrative of cosmic process and the emotions that the possible ritual re-enactment of cosmogonic myth might have invoked? Harris and Sørensen recognize the importance of archaeological context in discussing the differential deposition of grooved ware and decorated ceramics – but the affective field and its incongruous atmospheres are never satisfactorily connected to an underlying social and discursive matrix, beyond vague references to communal houses and moderated invocations of community solidarity in the spirit of Durkheim. I say 'moderated' because a sense of shared identity is inferred, but a sense of community is argued by Harris and Sørensen to have been 'felt' differently – as purportedly exemplified by the three distinct strategies of palisade destruction. Of course, Site IV, its concentric henge circle, and the placement and careful removal of the colossal wooden beams of the later palisade point to considerable planning, deep-seated beliefs and protracted labour investment, and not simply to 'embodied emotions'.

To conclude, Harris and Sørensen's article has forced me to rethink certain assumptions about the role of emotion in ritual experience, as briefly outlined above, and I feel obliged to follow up on their request to critically evaluate the heuristic vocabulary introduced in their article. Although I have little concrete to offer in suggesting how the four constructs relate, it is significant that an inferential hierarchy (ladder) is implied in their analysis despite claims to the contrary; the primacy of affective fields in generating atmospheres through

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processes of individual attunement is made explicit in their analysis. As alluded to above, I recommend the embedding or even sublimation of 'affective fields' within specific cultural-historical and performative 'frames', which will no doubt demand a delineation of distinct but possibly overlapping contexts – including public ritual arenas, living spaces, agricultural fields, symbolically bounded landscapes, gendered places, exchange locales and so on. A more explicit demarcation of the broader context will prevent the undesired reification of emotion as an autonomous and ahistorical agent. Finally, sensitivity to these more encompassing frames will demand a reconsideration of the argument that 'contestation' at Mount Pleasant was not a question of power, but of 'conflicting emotional understandings' of the settlement's monumental sense of place (p. 161). I am not sure what is meant by 'emotional understandings', a fascinating juxtaposition that encapsulates many of the unresolved tensions of Harris and Sørensen's article. Does emotional understanding simultaneously implicate meaning, discursive consciousness, cognitive and sensual attunement ('attending to the world'), as well as Heidegger's 'present-to-hand' or Lutz and White's (1986) 'embodied thoughts'? The idea that 'disparate affective relations' can account exclusively for the differential destruction of the palisade is thus rendered suspect; timber removal, protracted decay, and the immediacy of burning were likely motivated by different religious or political convictions (of varied emotional weight) or even by a more integrated cultural understanding of death and regeneration. Harris and Sørensen's notion of affective relations is reminiscent of Reddy's argument that 'neither the concept of discourse nor that of practice is adequate to capture the active power of emotion' (cited in Tarlow 2000, 717). However, the power of affect defies interpretation if its discursive, material and structural contexts are ignored (Meskell 1999; Tarlow 1999; 2000; Treherne 1995); I agree with Tarlow (2000, 725–28) that the search for emotion in past societies is impossible if this search does not include the exploration of past meanings and how they are jointly materialized. Although involving intense emotions (as does any explicit performative negotiation of power), contestation is irreducible to 'emotion', whether simply felt or fully understood.

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Pale reflections *Sarah Tarlow**

Harris and Sørensen's paper is a welcome attempt to address the question of 'finding' and interpreting emotion in the deep past. Their contribution to this emerging area of debate is particularly valuable in that it treats upon a prehistoric context, and is thus unaided by the rich contextual information provided by historical sources; and it moves the debate away

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from the mortuary context towards other areas of lived experience – here the processes of constructing, inhabiting, engaging with and ultimately destroying an architecturally defined space. These are more ambitious and less obvious contexts for constructing emotional pasts. Where the authors are most successful is in the identification of cultural loci where emotions are developed and are involved in the construction of experience – such as in the production and reproduction of 'sense of community'. Less convincing, for me, were the places where they follow the (mainly British prehistoric) 'phenomenological' tradition. My own view is that shared and expressed emotional values are more amenable to archaeological identification and analysis than personal emotional experience, and I shall try to explain why. I think by separating the social meanings of emotion from the physical experience of emotion the authors of this article might be able to pursue more fruitful kinds of enquiry.

The archaeological study of emotion cannot begin with the experiencing self. It has to begin, especially in prehistory, with the conditions through which experience is created, expressed and reproduced. The authors take the physical action of the human body, being inseparable from the experience of emotion, as the crucial juncture and the focus for much of their exploration. Accordingly, they invite us to consider the experience of entering the site, of moving through it, seeing new frames come into view, smelling the new wood of the palisade. In so doing they draw upon an established tradition of 'phenomenological' scholarship in archaeology which posits that the encounter with material conditions (landscapes, monuments and architectures, most usually) is a useful point of contact through the layers of insulation that separate contemporary archaeologists from their subjects of study and where windows of meaning can be opened up.

I think, however, that this line of enquiry is now close to being exhausted, in British prehistory, at least, for two reasons. First is the question of empathy, and the degree to which 'phenomenological' interpretations assume continuities and universalities between past and present. This has been amply critiqued elsewhere (e.g. Brück 2005). The limits of empathy in emotion research are encountered very soon. That might sound odd coming from me, since my work is here characterized as proceeding from my own feelings, and using them as 'proxy' for the feelings of people in the past. However, that is certainly not what I intended to say, and not what I believe! The search for emotion in the past is an intellectual challenge which requires rigorous thinking and sophisticated philosophical analysis; while the creative imagination is a key part of developing new theoretical insight, ungrounded and woolly exercises in imagining oneself into the past are not the province of academic archaeology. The ethnographic and anthropological study of emotion has demonstrated that emotions themselves are differently experienced and are variable cross-culturally, not just in terms of the cues which provoke particular responses, but in the nature of the emotional response itself. The lexicography of emotion tells us that emotion-words are not directly translatable, and that most languages have words for emotional states that are not recognized in other languages. Therefore using our own emotional responses can be no guide to understanding the emotions of others: as we mostly know from personal experience, even close family members can surprise us in their emotional responses, and they are people with whom we

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share (usually) a cultural background, a geographical and temporal context and a language.

Second, the kind of experience that is generally favoured by such interpretations seems to me to be curiously bloodless, to miss the most important and interesting aspects of human emotional (and experiential and intellectual) experience. Harris and Sørensen write of 'the emotional qualities of embodied locomotion' (p. 156), a rather mechanistic phrase for a rather bland experience – is this really the most exciting aspect of emotion? Walking through gateways, seeing new views open up, smelling fence posts? It sounds more like a touristic sightseeing trip than a three-dimensional fully meaningful part of human existence. I find here none of the euphoria of running or dancing, the physical pain and intense emotion surrounding the physical moments of birth and death – only a colourless and superficial engagement with the world.

This tendency towards the banal is a part of the authors' decision to bracket the actual meaning *content* of emotion and experience from these, concentrating instead on physicality. But that produces an account of the past which is strangely unmotivated and also, although I am sure this is not the authors' intention, ahistorical. The authors depend on a universal body as the interpretive space where past and present can meet – a body whose walking, seeing, (e)motion is not that different from their own. But what space is then left, in such a conception, for a past that might be different or unfamiliar? How does the experience of a person 4,000 years ago differ from that of 7,000 years ago, or from 500 years ago? Is it only in the changing spaces and places through which people moved? Are the conditions of motion deterministic?

I do not think the authors would accept such a contention. But the potential 'otherness' of the past, in cultural terms, arises from beliefs, understandings, meanings. This is not a hopeless situation for the archaeologist, and it certainly does not necessitate a retreat to empathy and a universal emotional self as the only approach. This is because meanings, values, understandings and beliefs are shared and social, as well as personal and interior. They are constructed, expressed and reproduced through discourses of material culture and practice, as shared traditions. I have suggested elsewhere (Tarlow 1999) that the development of a theory of metaphor in material culture would be one approach to meaning in the past. Whatever the methodological approach, it seems clear that some contextual, interpretive and historical way of looking at meaning is absolutely necessary in order to write pasts that are as deeply textured as Harris and Sørensen would like to see. In effect, meaning content can never be bracketed – but interpretive meanings always creep in. This paper, for example, suggests that destruction of the palisade by burning might offer an insight into the building and strengthening of community bonds. But destruction by fire does not, at first sight, seem good evidence of people being bound together. It would traditionally be interpreted as evidence of probable conflict, which I suppose could still be potentially a 'bonding experience' perhaps commemorated elsewhere in the putative relocation of the posts. But the construction of such an interpretation needs contextual evidence from contemporary sites which can be interpreted as suggestive either of heightened local conflict, or of a social value attached to communality, or both. Divested

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of such meaning context, the activities of erecting and burning the palisade are rather anaemic – just motiveless and meaningless action.

Harris and Sørensen's characterization of emotions stresses its bodily dimensions. Refusing, wisely, to prioritize the mental, they emphasize the sensual and physical aspects of emotional experience – sadness, they say, is not entirely separable from crying. While I accept that of course emotions have physical dimensions, I do not accept that they are not only or are primarily physical. I believe, in other words, that emotion can exist without motion, and that the thought dimensions of emotional experience give them as much weight as – and more specificity than – the active ones. One can feel sad without crying. While accepting that there is no boundary between physicality and emotionality, I do not accept that they are always indistinguishable.

To sum up, then, one of the valuable contributions of this paper is that it starts out with a recognition of the enormous importance and significance of emotion in human experience, and then, rightly, recognizes that an understanding of emotion as purely interior and subjective is not a productive direction for archaeological interpretation. Their solution to this conundrum is to elaborate the physical and material aspects of emotion. There is certainly methodological potential in this resolution: it gives us some way of proceeding other than empathy; it foregrounds the encounter with the material world, which has obvious attractions for archaeologists. Is it enough? I would still argue that we need to wrestle with the actual content of emotion and meaning if we are to get beyond the superficial.

From that standpoint, some of the most promising aisles of exploration here are the emerging consideration of sense of community, and the emotional significance of tradition/long-term timescales. The authors' consideration of how the meanings of grooved ware might attach to its long tradition of use and might promote something akin to, perhaps, nostalgia seems to me to capture some of the richness of human relations with the material past. Similarly, the curation of older pottery forms evidences the attraction of patina/age/tradition, and might point us towards a shared emotional value. Wearing black is indeed not necessary to show that particular kinds of emotion are being experienced. And wearing black does not mean that particular emotions are being experienced. But wearing black is part of the material discourse of an emotional value (social and shared).

I welcome Harris and Sørensen's truly original attempt to increase the ambition of an archaeology of emotion. I hope that their intelligent and optimistic explorations will encourage further debate and inspire others to work on this challenging and complex problem.

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Talk about the passion

Oliver J.T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sørensen

We would like to thank the five commentators for their thorough and stimulating reflections on, and criticism of, our article. The different

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comments raise various issues, and we appreciate their diversity of perspectives and their analysis of problems in our attempt at a rethinking of emotion in archaeology. The comments are each in their own way highly rewarding for us, and they certainly bring concerns to the fore that we have left out. Here we identify several issues that the commentators address in different voices and with varying intensities, and would like to examine these in turn. First, we consider the question of ritual at Mount Pleasant and the absence of the quotidian from our account. Second, we engage with the worry expressed over the lack of specificity of emotions in our given scenarios. Third, the phenomenological perspective in our article is given some critical thought. Fourth, we address the important point on which several of the commentators agree: that we leave out how emotions unfold in historically specific and context-dependent situations. Finally we turn back to the issue of our vocabulary to see how it stands the test of both application and critique.

Ritual and daily life

In our approach to emotions, we aimed to move beyond emotionally 'obvious' contexts, such as funerals, where a number of specific emotions might be expected to occur. Thus we turned to Mount Pleasant, a site at which a range of practices occurred, only a tiny minority of which have any connection to the dead. The practices at Mount Pleasant, as we see them, vary enormously to the degree to which they are structured, and, indeed, ritualized. Swenson, in his comments, urges us to consider the ritualized nature of the practices at Mount Pleasant, arguing that this would allow us to provide a more situated and contextualized understanding of the affective fields (to use our term). Whilst we acknowledge there is more to say about the temporality and intensity of the different practices at the site, we are reluctant to categorize Mount Pleasant as a purely ritual locale. The acts of building and consumption alongside the ad hoc practices of deposition, which Brück (2001) so accurately describes, do not have the feeling of a separated sphere of activity to us. We are deeply suspicious of attempts to segregate ritual from daily life, rather seeing the two as entwined and emergent from, rather than prefiguring, certain kinds of practice. Teasing out where ritual aspects emerged at Mount Pleasant, and specifying these, would undoubtedly have added to our account, but we would hold back from the more general reconsideration Swenson calls for. Equally an attention to more quotidian contexts (whether ritual or not, Mount Pleasant is undoubtedly out of the ordinary), something Berggren also recommends, would certainly add to our broader understandings (and see Harris 2009). In this context we can simply plead the defence of lack of space; we had room for one case study, and chose Mount Pleasant precisely for the breadth of contexts it offered at a single site.

The specificity of emotion

Several of the commentators, including Kus, Smith and Tarlow, are critical of our failure to identify specific emotions at the site. They would like us to specify the kinds of emotion and, particularly in Tarlow's case, to allow their intensity to emerge. For us, however, attending to emotions is not simply about looking for intense or particularly rich emotions, because many or

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most of the feelings that people experience may be trivial, familiar or fleeting. These emotional contexts are just as important to appreciate as part of an emotional reality, even thought they may be much harder to detect or deduct from archaeological data compared to stronger emotional contexts. Here we may recall how historian Eelco Runia (2006) describes the trivial and the mundane, that which has become clichéd, as an inherent challenge to the sense of presence, which is another affective occurrence or atmosphere that we might add to our address of emotion. Seeking to create a feeling of presence is certainly about attuning people's attention to a given occasion, situation or place.

'A sense of presence' may sound like a very indistinct emotional reference or feel, but we are wary of attributing more specific emotions to a prehistoric context, which we believe runs the risk of colonizing past emotions with our own. This may also be a reason why our analysis of emotions at Mount Pleasant can appear 'bloodless', in Tarlow's term, or dissociated from the emotional specificities that we would have been able to construct in an ethnographic or historical context, where living informants or text could have provided clues to the particular feelings and atmospheres that people experience. This, of course, highlights some of the inherent challenges when trying to approach emotions in a purely archaeological context; that is, from the perspective of material culture (Sørensen 2010). It is interesting to note here that Berggren too struggles to identify particular emotions in her case study. The potential to describe more vibrant and specific pasts is one we should all be aiming for, and to this extent we acknowledge that there is much more to be said in our account.

It may well be, however, that Kus's contribution indicates the way forward on this issue. Her use of psychological anthropology points out that a further development of vocabulary may be required in order to begin to talk about more defined and specific emotion-words. This offers the potential to identify areas of 'overlap' between different contexts, and to build from that overlap to recognize alterity both between and within emotion-worlds. Additionally, the potential of metaphor that both Tarlow and Kus stress seems to us a very promising way of developing further understandings of the way things and people constitute emotions within particular affective fields. Indeed, it may well be that affective fields are themselves constituted through material metaphors, as much as through practice, and this area of our thought demands further attention.

Phenomenology

If we are wary of essentialism in this regard, it is something we also take very seriously when it comes to the body. Thus we would like to take issue with the critique of the phenomenological disposition offered by Tarlow. More specifically, we would like to distance ourselves from the version of archaeological phenomenology she associates us with. Let us be explicit: we are in total agreement with critiques (most notably Brück 1998; 2005) that have demonstrated that landscape phenomenology often relies upon an essentialist version of a transcendent human body, that is the same in all times and places.

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Often, this version of phenomenology has been taken to be synonymous with 'experience', and 'subjectivity' has been reduced to 'personal experience'. We believe that such readings have only limited usefulness, and omit the cornerstone of phenomenology that can be summed up as the *epoché* or 'bracketing' of enculturated expectations to experience and – in our case – emotions. If we bracket – or, in other words, suspend – our personal expectations of emotions in our analysis, then we may be at risk of creating more abstract or even pale reflections of past worlds, but on the other hand, we may be less liable to project our own cultural context onto the other. In this connection, ritual may be a point of reference that deserves more critical scrutiny in order to avoid being framed by modern associations with what constitutes or characterizes a ritual situation or context.

Furthermore, our reading of Heidegger does not require us to hold an essentialist view of the body, because the body, like other aspects of being-in-the-world, is disclosed against particular and historically specific backgrounds. Thus the kind of body disclosed to *Dasein* varies. Similarly, kinds of emotions (or moods, to be Heideggerian about it) vary through the worlds into which a person is thrown. This version of phenomenology may privilege experience (as opposed to a truly symmetrical reading of things and people; see Latour 1993; Webmoor and Witmore 2008), but it does not demand a singular eternal body.

Historical context

To return to our article: the abstract rendering of past worlds that may be the consequence of a bracketed analysis could be at risk of overlooking the historical particularity of certain emotional contexts, as proposed by Tarlow, Swenson and Smith. We believe, however, that starting out on the basis of the archaeological material means that we are always historically anchored and consequently need to make culturally, historically and locally grounded interpretations of emotion-worlds. Being contextually grounded also means, in turn, that the proposed vocabulary can be refined, adapted to specific requirements and adjusted according the nature of one's analytical context.

However, part of our aim of setting up a vocabulary was also to allow the analysis of emotions to begin at the unprejudiced rather than the assumptive, whereby the predetermination of emotional implications of the analyst's expectations of the context may be suspended. This would offer the analysis a potential transparency, as our vocabulary does not subscribe to any notion of natural or universally recognizable emotions. In other words, analytically it might be necessary to free oneself of the prefiguration that, for example, a funeral is necessarily about a certain range of feelings (e.g. sorrow, sadness, tension). Analytically, we cannot sustain such a prejudice and maintain our academic credibility, which forces us to identify specific contexts before making interpretations of the emotions associated with them. So, in other words, the particularity of emotions in given historical contexts will remain a challenge to the researcher's gaze, and we believe that the starting point must be the archaeological material from which emotions should be extrapolated.

As the commentators point out, there is undoubtedly more to say about the specific historical setting of Mount Pleasant, and the world in which this

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and other henges were constructed in the third millennium B.C. An analysis of the broader context would have allowed us to discuss the development of this landscape in detail, to tease out the different kinds of material practice that constituted differing scales of community, alternative forms of identity, and the kinds of emotional regime implicated in this (cf. Harris 2006). We cannot, however, agree with Smith that we need to *begin* with institutions and the social setting, and allow emotions to emerge from that. As archaeologists, whilst we encounter the material first and foremost, our interpretive task is to recognize how different worlds are possible within these material conditions (Barrett 2001). Or, better yet, to explore how the social and material are never in fact separate from one another, but rather emerge together, in the worlds we explore. Therefore emotions should neither *precede* nor *follow* from the emergence of particular locales, but are rather *central to* this process of emergence, precisely because this is the very means by which places come to be recognized (Harris 2009; in press).

Vocabulary

Part of the reason that the historical contingency of emotion is not as foregrounded as it could be in our article is undoubtedly due to the dual task we set ourselves, and the limitations on space this created. We were certainly interested in the emotional and affective valences of a site like Mount Pleasant, but we also aimed to construct and test a vocabulary that would help us to access these aspects.

Within this vocabulary, Swenson is critical of our notion of affective fields. He suggests that the concept could easily be mired in circular reason and is wary that multiple different activities could be subsumed within a single affective field, reducing them all to the outcome of a reified set of relationships. Of course, he is right to be suspicious of this. But our point was never that these different activities (eating, processing, harvesting and so on) could be placed within one well-defined affective field. Rather, affective fields are always multiple and are characterized by fuzzy contours: affective fields are socially shared; hence their significance may differ from person to person. Thus whilst there are links across affective fields, particularly through the way they are materially instantiated, they cannot be reduced to the singular.

Metaphor here is crucial again, though certainly underexplored in our article. How do things move across and between affective fields? How might acts of harvesting, for example, resonate emotionally with gathering up the belongings of the dead, or the remnants of a feast? Without reducing these to singular affective fields the power of an approach rooted in metaphor and poetics, as Tarlow and Kus suggest, may well be to allow us to see how these fields allow emotions to resonate across contexts. If things can be sticky with emotion (*sensu* Ahmed 2004), why not metaphors as well? In fact, were we to collapse the divide here between concept and thing (cf. Henare, Holbraad and Wastell 2007; Holbraad 2007), we might find further ground for exploring the multiplicity of emotional responses in multiple forms of practice.

Similarly, Smith is critical of our assimilation of the difference between affect and emotion. Our aim in doing so (following Simonsen 2007) was to avoid the simplistic separation of affect being equivalent to body and

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emotion to mind, as Smith points out. His criticism that this potentially leaves the roles of sublimation and dissimulation underrepresented is well taken, however. Whilst this is an issue that requires further thought, we are reluctant to reinstate the gap simply to meet this lacuna. Instead we suggest this may be an area (alongside the specifics of emotion, as discussed by Kus) that requires us to refine our terminology, perhaps offering a fifth term to go alongside those we have already designed. This is not the place to outline such a term, but we are happy to acknowledge the importance of Smith's point here as we move forwards.

As a final point we were excited by Berggren's use of our terms. We are very hopeful that as her account shows, this vocabulary – augmented by other tools, no doubt – does offer us a way to begin tackling the questions of emotion and material culture in the deep past. We believe these questions are important. Swenson queries whether it is wise to separate out emotion from other variables. This, he suggests, runs the risk of reifying our approach and ignores the complexity of human behaviour. There is much to be said for this. However, like any area of study that has gone undervalued a necessary first step is to focus on it explicitly to move the debate forward. Much in the way in which memory, personhood, identity and so forth are not in fact separate areas of human lives, but rather part of the tapestry of life's rich pageant, emotion can benefit, temporarily, from our undivided attention. Once our theories and methodologies are sufficiently developed (as they are now with memory, we suggest) the time will come to reincorporate our approaches back into the mainstream.

There are many other important insights the commentators raise that we do not have space to do justice to here in our reply, but will continue to provide food for thought as we develop our perspectives on these issues. Once again, we would like to thank our interlocutors, the two anonymous peer reviewers and the editorial board of *Archaeological dialogues* for this opportunity. We hope that our proposal for an analytical vocabulary may help others thinking about emotion in purely material contexts. Despite work on the theme over the past two decades, we still believe that emotion needs to be integrated more intimately in studies of prehistory, and we suggest that a rethinking along the lines of our analytical tools for understanding emotions through material cultural analysis may help with this. Furthermore, notions of both material and affective 'turns' currently abound in the social sciences (e.g. Bennett and Joyce 2010; Clough and Halley 2007). By taking an approach that unites these two perspectives, archaeology has the potential to make a significant contribution to wider debates.

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