Article:
Spikins, Penny (2008) The bashful and the boastful: prestigious leaders and social change in Mesolithic Societies. Journal of World Prehistory. pp. 173-193. ISSN: 0892-7537

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10963-008-9015-x

‘The Bashful and the Boastful’:

Prestigious leaders and social change in Mesolithic Societies.

Penny Spikins[1]

Mailing Address:

Department of Archaeology

The King’s Manor

University of York

YORK YO1 7EP

Tel. 01904 433962

[1] Department of Archaeology, University of York, York, UK.

Abstract

The creation and maintenance of influential leaders and authorities is one of the key themes of archaeological and historical enquiry. However the social dynamics of authorities and leaders in the Mesolithic remains a largely unexplored area of study. The role and influence of authorities can be remarkably different in different situations yet they exist in all societies and in almost all social contexts from playgrounds to parliaments. Here we explore the literature on the dynamics of authority creation, maintenance and contestation in egalitarian societies, and discuss the implications for our interpretation and understanding of the formation of authorities and leaders and changing social relationships within the Mesolithic.

Key words

Mesolithic, social relationships, leaders, authorities, prestige, influence, dominance

'When a young man kills much meat, he comes to think of himself as a chief or big man, and he thinks of the rest of us as his servants or inferiors. We can't accept this. We refuse one who boasts, for someday his pride will make him kill somebody.'

A respected elder amongst the !Kung, recorded by Lee (1979: 246)

Authorities and leaders

Our attitude towards 'authorities' is often ambiguous. Within small scale social groups the roles of leaders and authorities are naturally dynamic and constantly contested. We may be happy to follow a charismatic leader at one time or respect and emulate an acknowledged specialist or authority in a certain domain, yet at another time feel dominated, exploited or resentful, and moved to act to contest authority. The rise and fall of those with influence is a colourful dynamic in all societies. Nonetheless discussions of the rise of authorities within the archaeological record tend to focus on the emergence of monument building in the Neolithic (Brück 2001; Thomas 2001), overshadowing the Mesolithic as a period in which to study authority creation and contestation. Here, group leaders (the respected elder or charismatic individual forging group solidarity facing difficult times) and authorities (the recognised or respected expert on flint knapping or the properties of plants), appear to be invisible.

However, it has begun to be appreciated that certain political and social dynamics, previously assumed invisible in the archaeological record, do indeed leave faint archaeological traces. Hunting and gathering societies which were once seen as passive (Kelly 1995, Barnard 2004) are beginning to be seen as displaying social relationships that were as much contested as in any other period, albeit in subtly different ways. Those of the British Mesolithic provide a particularly

good illustration. Warren (2005) suggests that we need new constructs to use in interpretations of social relations and social change in this region which can replace simplistic concepts in which societies are divided into ‘simple’ or ‘complex’ or ‘immediate’ or ‘delayed’ return hunter-gatherers. In this context approaches such as distributed personhood (Fowler 2004) and a subtle appreciation of gender dynamics have provided useful avenues for aiding our understanding. Cobb (2005) for example, draws on queer theory, while Finlay (2000), Sternke (2005), Pugsley (2005) and Janik (2005) consider gender relations. In much the same way that discussions of social conflict and internal social dynamics were extended into the Neolithic in the 1980s (Bruck 2001, Thorpe and Richards 1984, Bradley 1991, Barrett 1994, Thomas and Tilley 1993; Thomas 1996), dynamic social relationships are beginning to be discussed for earlier societies such as in the Mesolithic. Within these developments however, an explicit understanding of authority creation, maintenance and contestation remains to be articulated.

Theoretical concepts to approach the social dynamics of authorities and leaders

From our first understanding of parental 'authority', authorities lie at the core of human relationships. We readily seek to understand the authorities around us and so who to admire, respect or acquiesce to. Yet understanding the dynamics of respect, prestige, influence, coercion and the social politics of leaders, followers, authorities and apprentices is challenging. Nonetheless the social dynamics at the heart of the processes underlying the creation, acceptance or contestation of influence and that between individual and group identities are some of the most interesting in prehistoric societies. At the heart of these relationships lie key emotional responses such as of trust, respect, pride, anger, and fear.

Where might we look for the constructs to approach Mesolithic leadership? Authority creation has traditionally been approached through purely archaeological or through philosophical directions. Typical concerns have thus been with interpretations of status and material wealth in burial (Parker Pearsen 1999) or power and agency in monuments or technology (Dobres 2000, Dobres and Robb 2000). However there are potentially other approaches to this issue which might complement our existing concepts. Both social psychology and anthropology have developed an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the complex emotional and social relationships emerging in small scale egalitarian groups. Social psychological discussions of 'authority ranking', or the creation, maintenance and contestation of 'authorities', people whom we respect, admire, listen to, emulate or obey, those who we 'defer' to (Boehm 1993, Bass 1990, Van Vugt 2006, Fiske 1991; 2002) and their applications in anthropological contexts may provide a useful approach to focusing on past hunter-gatherer societies.

The social psychology of affiliation and dominance/submission

As individuals we are all to aware that a tension exists both in ourselves and in all societies between the desire to feel warmth, openness and connection with others, and that either to achieve, be better than others and reach a higher status. Indeed, humanity has a past history and prehistory of both a remarkable collaboration, commitment and compassion to others within our species, and of a remarkable capacity for individuality, dominance and even cruelty to others (Evans 2001, Frank 2001, Gilbert 2005). Psychologically we know that affiliation/collaboration strategies provoke different attitudes, behaviour, beliefs and hormonal responses than do dominance or submission ones (Gilbert 2002, 2005). When we feel close to others, tenderness, sharing, compassion and that we are part of our group we feel warmth and a hormonal response linked to the release of opiates. When we are achieving, are successful and better than others we feel powerful and experience a serotonin linked response. When we are dominated and fearful we close up emotionally, feel anxious and respond to perceived threats through stress hormones such as cortisol. If we are repeatedly dominated, we can even become powerless to act and emotionally unable to resist being compliant, developing ‘learnt helplessness’ and unable to conceive of, or believe in, changing the power dynamic (Seligman 1975, Garber and Seligman 1980, Petersen, Seligman and Maier 1995). In such a state we become emotionally numb.

The transition between responses of affiliation and those of dominance or submission are particularly relevant to discussions of social change. Such a transition can be related to context and the individuals we are dealing with, and can be a transformation within an individual or a transformation can occur on a wider scale within group dynamics. We are all too familiar for example with how easily personal ‘affiliative’ (warm, tender and giving) relationships can ‘tip’ to competitive dominance (or submission) in which someone will be ‘the winner’, the holder of ‘moral high ground’ or ‘the better’. Indeed in modern western society. The end of love relationships provide well known examples of such a ‘tipping point’. Though we tend to be collaborative and compassionate, even to strangers (Mikulincer and Shaver 2001, Mikulincer et al 2005) equal ethics of collaboration within small groups can also easily ‘tip’ into competitiveness if we feel threatened or exploited or attracted by the possibility of success or being ‘better’.

‘Prestige’ and leadership in egalitarian societies

One of the elements that has drawn so much attention to small scale groups of hunter-gatherers their ideological focus on egalitarianism, affiliative responses and giving and sharing (Bird-David 1990: 1992) which creates a sense of ‘oneness with others’ or ‘dividuality’ (Fowler 2004). Their egalitarian ethic can be one reason why it can be all to easy to overly idealise societies such as the !Kung (Barnard 2004) but nonetheless there is a real truth in the lack of anxiety, emotional wellbeing, and sense of sharing and emotional support of such societies compared to our own (Charlton 2000, Bird-David 1990; 1992). Indeed Fowler has explored the extension of self into others in small scale societies in depth (Fowler 2004) with complimentary concepts found in discussions of the evolutionary development of emotional investments and compassion for other’s wellbeing (Spikins in press, Spikins and Rutherford in review).

The focus on sharing (Sahlins 1972, Bird-David 1990) and distributed personhood (Fowler 2004) within small scale hunter-gatherers can lead to the appearance that leaders or authorities do not exist since their presence is far from apparent. It might even seem that without individual power there might be little in terms of individual influence. As illustrated by the opening quote even ‘boastfulness’, the verbal expression of being better than others, is not tolerated by societies such as the !Kung. Nonetheless, anthropological and psychological research illustrates that authorities and ‘leaders’ if they can loosely be termed such, do exist in such societies.

Heinrich and Gil-White (2001) introduce the concept of ‘prestige’ to explain the construction of such authorities. ‘Prestige’ in this sense carries a very different connotation than that typically associated with archaeological discussions of explicitly symbolized ranking or exchange mechanisms. ‘Prestige’ is associated with influence and respect and is earnt through recognized skills, knowledge or, effectively, wisdom. Those with authority based on prestige provoke behaviour in others which follows a distinct pattern of relaxed and direct communication. Others

are attracted to those who are seen as prestigious, seek their eye contact, directing their posture towards them. Prestigious individuals are respected, listened to, emulated, and publicly praised (Heinrich and Gil-White 2001). Though they have ‘authority’, and so influence, there is no associated ‘power’ to dictate behaviour, and prestigious authority in played out in the context of warm and open ‘affiliative’ responses. Prestige plays a key role in the spread of knowledge and ideas as we feel pleasure at learning from, and being with, those with prestige. Someone prestigious may in fact be more influential in changing thoughts or beliefs than someone who attempts to dominate us and has power over our actions. When relating to someone prestigious we are relaxed, we listen, we feel free to disagree but we are nonetheless subtly influenced by their views. Indeed ‘prestige’ in egalitarian leaders echoes the ideological relationship to the environment and spirit world in such societies (Bird-David 1992) in which the environment is seen as a wise and caring ‘parent’ figure who can be trusted to provide what is needed.

Prestigious authorities in hunter-gatherer societies may be recognized in any area of skill, such as flint knapping, a knowledge of plants or animals, or spiritual realms, indeed shamans can be a specific ‘authority’ with supernatural influence. Such authorities are respected for their skills and have a powerful influence over the spread of knowledge. However though skills, knowledge or moral wisdom are recognized, within an ethic of self –derogation and humility they not used to explicitly ‘mark out’ or separate certain individuals. Amongst the Semai for example the rhetorical technique of self derogation ensures the listeners of someone with influence that he/she will not attempt to force their views (Dentan 1979) ensuring that the listeners feel ‘safe’. As well as those defined as knowledgeable within a certain domain certain individuals may at times carry a more explicitly defined role within the group and may be acknowledged as a ‘leader’ or ‘chief’. For the Netsilik, ‘Where there are named roles, the leaders, whose leadership role is taken by the ‘inhumataq’ or ‘thinker’, are not ‘obeyed’ but rather ‘listened to’ (Riches 1982:74 in Erdal & Whiten 1996). Humility and a humble attitude to skills, prowess or knowledge is an important structuring principle, such as amongst the Selk’nam for whom humility is a key ethic taught to children (Bridges 1948). ‘Prestige’ is not only earnt, but earnt through effort and wisdom and has to be

carefully cultivated. It carries influence and respect and is sought after, but is inherently fluid, context dependant and negociable. As Dentan (1979 cited in Heinrich and Gil-White 2001) notes ‘there is nothing permanent about respect’. Though their position is not guaranteed or overtly displayed prestigious leaders can nonetheless play an important active role, sometimes being critical in motivating group action and encouraging group cohesion (Van Vugt 2006: 356).

The mechanism by which prestigious authority is created and maintained is not unfamiliar in modern contexts. Indeed the same mechanisms operate even in modern western society in small scale groups of individuals and where an institutionalised dominance hierarchy is unclear. School teachers provide a good example of individuals with an institutional position which provides power and the potential for dominance, but for whom individual differences structure whether relationships with pupils are in reality based on prestige, warmth and respect or on dominance and fear (Heinrich and Gil-White 2001). Unsurprising we all remember (that is to say that we were ‘influenced by’ and ‘listened to’) the teachers whom we most respected as children as they may have been particularly influential people in our lives. Large scale cross-cultural psychological studies even demonstrate that in Western society prestige plays a key role in our own choice of leadership, with leadership success being unrelated to dominance or aggression and predicted by character traits such as fairness and generosity (Boehm 1999; Van Vugt 2006).

The ethnography of prestige

The immediate and personal dynamics of prestige and dominance

Our relationship to prestigious figures is both an emotional one, and has a physical component which particularly relates to the immediate and personal scale of interactions. When we relate to prestigious figures we listen openly, maintaining an open body posture and eye contact (Gil-White et al 2001). We feel free to express our ideas without fear of retribution or control, and as a result are more innovative and creative (Hogan and Kaiser 2005; Sy, Côté and Saavedra 2005; Goleman 2006: 277). Our relationship to dominant figures is equally both emotional and structured by physical patterns of behaviour. When we feel dominated we react very differently to the dominating figure, we avoid eye contact and use a submissive body posture (Heinrich and Gil-White 2001). We don't want to risk asserting our own views or taking risks of drawing attention to ourselves with an innovative or different idea (Hogan and Kaiser 2005; Sy, Côté and Saavedra 2005; Goleman 2006: 277). We even 'close up' not expressing our emotions (for fear of being vulnerable to exploitation), and though we may seek help or retialiate defensively if under threat of attack, we may also disengage from others and make all attempts to avoid any threat (Gilbert 2005).

Different types of behaviour and emotional reactions to different types of authority can be seen ethnographically. Figure 1 (provides an illustration of a prestigious authority in the form of a renowned flint knapper amongst the Selk'nam. The group watching this individual are relaxed and informal, directing their eyes and body posture towards the 'prestigious' authority. Figure 2 shows a similar group, this time of indigenous women at the Salesian mission at San Rafael, Isla Dawson, Tierra del Fuego in the early 1900s (McEwan, Borrero and Prieto 1997:123). The body postures and expressions of the individuals appear quite different, with facial expressions apparently blank and 'giving little away'. Such late 19th century missions both provided supposed protection from colonial violence and an authoritarian means of subduing and appropriating

indigenous culture. Photographs such as this were intended to convey the success of the mission's civilising influence to European audiences, but in reality illustrate well the effect of dominating authorities.

Even photographs, which are a very distant representation of such distinctively different situations may evoke powerful emotions in us. Whilst figure 1 may make us feel relaxed, maybe even 'warm', figure 2 is distinctively different. The women here, who were once actively part of trusting and affiliative social relationships are now in a state of helplessness. Our feelings of discomfort when confronted with the effects of dominant behaviour may even motivate us to want to act. Were this situation one in the present we might wish to act to curtail such distressing dominance (Goleman 2006; Mukulincer et al 2005,Parkinson, Fischer and Masted 2005).

Dominating influences within egalitarian groups are not limited to external influences or those due to colonial impact. Anthropological accounts demonstrate that even in the most 'egalitarian' of groups, dominance behaviour may be acceptable in certain contexts or roles even whilst it is rejected as broader principle. The relationship between prestige and dominance relationships and gender, and how personal gender relations play out may be complex for example, and the concept of egalitarian societies clearly covers much variation in the social construction of gender. Women may respond to dominance from men in some societies or contexts with submissive behaviour, whilst gender relationships may be affiliative in others. Indeed men in some societies may be seen to have a dominant role over women and children within the family group, whilst taking pains to not assert dominance within the wider group (Boehm 1999: 2-9). Marriage rules, certain gender relationships or physical disciplining of children (such as within the !Kung of Nisa!, Shostak 1981) are other situations within 'egalitarian' societies (Boehm 1993: 234) where coercion may be situationally accepted.

Examples of women who are leaders are very rare (Boehm 1993; Van Vugt 2006), and female leadership is very poorly researched, but women play an active role in the construction of

authorities, and are typically recognized authorities within certain domains. Women may be shamans for example, such as amongst the Selk'nam (Bridges 1948). Woman may equally be aggressive and dominating and evoke resentment from others. Aggression and responses in female contexts is only recently being brought into psychological focus. Partly through physical differences with men, dominance behaviour in women tends cross culturally to be mediated more frequently through indirect rather than direct aggression (ie rumours, gossip, ridicule, complex threats rather than overt aggression), with women being as 'aggressive' as men when indirect aggression is taken into account (Hadley 2003, Richardson 2005). Such complex dominance attempts (and counter-dominance) may be largely invisible ethnographically, particularly to a male ethnographer, and gender based dominance and counter-dominance strategies remain to be studied.

The interplay between dominance and prestige can take place within society in different contexts or roles, and can even change with any individual authority according to context. Within the ritual initiation of the Chiexaus of the Yamana of Tierra del Fuego for example certain shamans were given special privileges to control others, as described by Gusinde (Gusinde 1986, McEwan, Borrero & Prieto 1997). Rights to be dominating and coercive were negotiated in a sensitive and complex way to a shaman who was trusted and respected, that is a 'prestigious' authority, who would be marked out as different through dress and body paint during the ceremony. During a Chiexaus unwilling initiates would be forced into the initiation hut by these shamans (such as by pulling their hair). Such power to physically dominate others was lost after the ceremony. Nonetheless whether a Chiexaus took place was context dependent and also negotiated according to the willingness of the group to accord such potentially dangerous privileges. Such temporarily investments of dominance/power in authorities echo some of the discussion of monument building in the British Neolithic (Thomas 1996, 1999).

The material expression of prestige

The material expression of 'prestige' is particularly interesting, through perhaps also frustrating in its archaeological invisibility. Indeed we might consider the material expression of prestigious authority to be an *active* use of material culture to show a non-dominating attitude. A prestigious leader or authority will be careful not to make over assertions about their role or show that they are different or better than others. A respected flint knapper for example will not make an overt assertion of their position, nor a clear symbolic or material representation. Indeed wise, respected and influential individuals commonly make a deliberate assertion of commonality or humility in a display of a lack of material symbols of status. Such an overt use of a *lack* of material symbols might be compared with certain historical prestigious leaders, such as Mahatma Gandhi for example, who at his death owned only his dhoti and glasses. One of the reasons Gandhi inspired such respect and admiration was that he fitted our 'prestigious' ideal. Self-derogation occurs in many different realms and anthropological studies commonly relate the tendency of skilled hunters to even take great pains to verbally denigrate their catch – which as a material declaration of their skill could be dangerously interpreted as assertion. The Inuit and the Cree for example may represent the results of a substantial hunting trip as small and insignificant (Brody 2001, Tanner 1979).

Boehm (1999: 72) comments

The widespread reports of leaders acting in an unassuming way, and of leaders being so generous that they themselves 'had nothing' do not necessarily mean that bands are choosing as leaders unaggressive individuals who just naturally tend to give away all of their resources. In this type of small society, in which the ethos is shared so uniformly, politically sensitive leaders know exactly how to comport themselves if they wish to lead without creating tension. Appropriate ways to assuage the apprehensions of watchful peers are never to give orders, to be generous to a fault, and to remain emotionally tranquil, particularly with respect to anger as a predictable

component of dominance. Basically, one needs to avoid any signs of assertive self aggrandizement.

It may be that the very active social dynamics in past egalitarian societies have been easily overlooked because the means by which the social competitions are played out materially are so subtle and complex. There are, of course, many areas of archaeology in which sectors of society seem invisible to interpretation. After all, women in prehistory, only started to become 'visible' in the 1980s and 1990s (Ehrenberg 1989; Gero and Conkey 1991), with the urban poor in Late Antiquity (Roskams 2006) and children in prehistory (Finlay 1997; Derevenski, 2000; Kamp 2001; Shea 2006) even later. Yet unlike the apparent invisibility of apparently politically marginal groups, authorities and leaders in much of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic appear archaeologically 'invisible' through a *deliberate* use of material culture to symbolize a social relation of respect and non-dominance. Material invisibility in this sense is particularly interesting as it represents not merely a poor archaeological record but a deliberate rhetorical technique.

The long term dynamics of prestige and dominance

Certain patterns accompany the expression of leadership and authorities through prestige in the long term, particularly in relation to the tension between maintaining a position as a prestigious leader and a desire for individual power. Since prestige may easily be gained or lost, not surprisingly there is almost always a temptation for a prestigious authority to 'boast', attempt to be better than others, or make threats to ensure their position. Indeed dominance behaviour might appear to be a short-cut to immediate influence and control.

Groups responses to domination or threats are based on a motivation to maintain affiliative relationships and egalitarianism, and usually keep such leaders 'in check'. Such so-called 'counter-dominance tactics' are widespread (Erdal and Whiten 1996, Boehm 1993; 1999). Reactions to dominating behaviour can take different forms depending on the extent of transgression from the prestigious ideal, and on the group itself. Initial relatively subtle 'levelling

behaviour' such as group disapproval is often effective, as leaders and authorities are dependant on group support and are normally sensitive to staying in tune with the group. Further tactics include criticism, ridicule and disobedience (Boehm 1993). Anthropological accounts of such tactics are numerous (Erdal and Whiten 1996, Boehm 1993). Lee notes for example that 'The !Kung are a fiercely egalitarian people .. .cutting down to size the arrogant and boastful' (Lee 1979: 244). Turnbull (1965: 183 in Erdal & Whiten 1996) noted for the Mbuti that ' Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disrespected, but if they try to force these views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule'.

The tense dynamic between individuality and attempts at dominance and collaboration and enforcement of prestige is well illustrated by the traditional Inuit tale of Atanarjuat (Huhndorf 2003). In this traditional story an initially fair and egalitarian Inuit society tolerated several unhappy years of 'evil' aggressive behaviour by a leader who rapidly took control and became unpopular (by ridiculing poor hunters, being lazy, not sharing food, and playing a part in the murder of one of the group). The group eventually united under the kind and prestigious Atanarjuat (who eschewed violence) and expelled the selfish and dominant leader. Prestigious leadership in this narrative was transformed into dominant leadership before being socially contested by the whole group and transforming into prestigious leadership once again. 'Thinking' about dominance through such stories forms an integral part of emotional development in such societies (Briggs 1999).

Despite initial 'levelling' mechanisms it is not uncommon for dominant coercive leaders, as in the story of Atanarjuat, to find it hard to 'let go' of their position and to intensify their dominance and threats. In such cases reactions to dominance tend to eventually reach similar final extreme sanctions which include not only exile as in the Inuit myth, but even assassination. Assassination, as the ultimate sanction for aggressive or dominant leadership, is reported in 11 of the 48 societies studied by Boehm (1993). Woodburn points to lethal retialiation as a leveling mechanism amongst the Hadza (Woodburn 1982: 436, cited in Boehm 1993: 230) and Spencer

and Gillen (1976: 263) even recount that the Iliaura disposed of a man who was said to be ‘very quarrelsome’ by handing him over to an Arunta vengeance party.

In certain situations, and perhaps of particular interest to archaeology, a transformation from leadership by respect and influence to that through coercion may take place for some length of time, particularly at times of particular stress. Natural disasters or other emergencies may stimulate followers who would normally resent and act to overthrow a dominant leader (Van Vugt and De Cremer 2002; Van Vugt 2006: 363) to tolerate coercive leadership. Contested relationships may in such cases give way to more fundamental social change. Boehm (1993: 233) even refers to the existence of ‘war’ and ‘peace’ leaders, the coercive behaviour of the former being unacceptable in peaceful times. The emotional and social context of a transformation to a coercive leader is substantial (Sy, Côté and Saavedra 2005; Hogan and Kaiser 2005). Dominant leaders use fear and attempt to be controlling, limiting behaviour and creativity, moreover accepting dominant behaviour is known to have significant emotional affects (Seligman 1975, Garber and Seligman 1980, Petersen, Seligman and Maier 1995), not to mention, of course, the potentially extraordinarily destructive effects of coercive leaders such as seen in modern society (Hogan and Kaiser 2005). Boehm (1999) describes how a single individual shaman amongst the Greenland Inuit was feared to the extent that followers felt helpless to overthrow them and accepted intimidation (Mirsky 1937). He also illustrates how outcast males (murderers or aggressive individuals who were exiled) amongst the Inuit formed a collaborative group with a dominant aggressive ‘leader’ (Freuchen 1961). At certain times and places dominance appears to be ‘worth the price’ paid in emotional terms, at least temporarily, and in other situations subordinates accept dominance as a temporary solution only to find themselves helpless to contest such power. We might speculate that it is through the conditions which stimulate a temporary acceptance of dominance that more permanent social stratification may develop, though this might remain to be explored archaeologically.

Prestige and dominance in the archaeological record

The concept of ‘prestige’ presents a challenge for archaeological interpretation. Interpreting the archaeological record would be straightforward were we to believe that material symbols directly denoted ‘status’ in the past, yet such is clearly not the case. ‘Invisible’ leaders may in reality be even more influential than those who materially and physically assert their role. Though such ‘prestigious’ leaders do not dictate action, they are listened to and their wisdom is disseminated, and they promote innovation, creativity and freedom of thought.

Mesolithic Europe provides a potentially interesting case study in which to assess the utility of ‘prestigious leadership’ as a concept which might aid our interpretation of the archaeological record of social relationships and social changes.

Immediate and personal scale dynamics of prestige and dominance

Perhaps the most obvious area to consider within the archaeological record for evidence of ‘prestige’ is at the immediate and personal scale of human interaction. Evidence for such interaction may be found at short term high resolution sites where we occasionally recover a ‘direct’ record of immediate behaviours. Indeed short term open air sites with a high definition (Kroll and Price 1991; Gowlett 1997; Enloe 2006) showing practices such as flint knapping and butchery have been seen as potentially a particularly rich source of evidence for intimate social relationships (Dobres and Hoffman 1994, Dobres 2000). Whilst such evidence has traditionally been interpreted in terms of patterns of food processing, knapping sequences and technical learning (Kroll and Price 1991), the positions of individuals in relation to each other, with levels of eye-contact, body posture (open or submissive) might give us important clues as to the nature of relationships of influence.

There is indeed something distinctive, and almost 'intimate' about those rare high definition patterns at past hunter-gatherer sites, which can be almost 'snap-shots' in time. Refitting at high resolution sites such as Solvieux (Grimm 2000), Verberie (Andouze and Enloe 1997) in the Upper Paleolithic of the Paris Basin and March Hill (Spikins et al 2002; Spikins 2003), figure 3, in the Late Mesolithic of Central England suggest engaged eye contact, fluid relaxed body postures directed towards others and imitative, self explored, rather than directed learning (Hawcroft and Dennell 2000). Certainly these patterns fit the material evidence we would expect from dynamics of respect, prestige and influence. However high resolution sites, though fascinating, are perhaps too few and far between to draw many conclusions.

Other evidence for the nature of day to day relationships and ways in which people face each other and interact may come from the longer time scales illustrated by the spatial structuring of occupation sites. We are already aware, of course, of the ways of interpreting spatial structure in dwellings (Whitelaw 1990, Kroll and Price 1991). However an understanding of prestige might add a further dimension to the interpretation of structures within hunter-gatherer sites, with examples coming from sites such as that at Howick in Northumberland in northern England (Waddington 2007) or to structured patterns within southern Scandinavian sites (Grøn 2003). Large round open and unsegmented structures such as that recovered within Early Mesolithic deposits at Howick certainly imply that social relationships were open and relaxed within the larger group, with no apparent requirement to be physically (or emotionally) 'protected' from others by divisions and fit the interpretation of prestige based dynamics. Other structures in Scotland follow a similar pattern (Wickham-Jones 2004).

Making interpretations of the less immediate or physical effect of prestigious leadership can be more challenging. There can be little *direct* evidence for 'freedom of thought' in the archaeological record for example. However whilst flint knapping techniques remained conservative (and potentially restricted by subsistence requirements) there are clear areas of creativity and innovation in the Mesolithic record which suggest that authorities and leaders maintained a

relaxed attitude to new ideas. The most obvious area of innovation lies in the Mesolithic burial record. Mesolithic burial practice is widely noted for its remarkable variability, including burials as cremations, disarticulations, defleshing, skull nests, individual burial, burial of dogs, canoe burials, burials with or without grave goods, multiple burials and the relatively new practice of defined burial grounds or cemeteries (Schulting 1998, Thorpe 2000, 2003a, 2003b, Valdeyron 2008). Methods of burial even defy any overall generalisation, and we almost get the impression that 'anything goes' in burying the dead in Mesolithic times. Though we are aware of the influence of social context and of particular techniques of learning and instructions on patterns of innovation (der Leeuw and Torrence 1989, Mithen 1998Hawcroft and Dennell 2000, Heinrich and Gil-White 2001) the shared role of 'prestigious' authority perhaps provides a useful concept to explain such particular diversity across all of the regions of Mesolithic Europe.

It is perhaps not insignificant that in certain situations, for example cemeteries such as Olenii Ostrov in Karelia, or Zvejnieki in the East Baltic where overt displays of 'status' in seen in elaborate headdresses buried with the deceased, we see that 'ways of doing things' in burial become more clearly proscribed. Zvelebil suggests that though the ideology may remain one of 'giving and sharing' in these contexts, tension exists between this ideology and overt displays of status or wealth (Zvelebil 2008: 51)

Material evidence for prestigious and dominant authorities

Evidence for elaborate burial or grave goods is the traditional realm of discussions of 'status' in prehistory. Mesolithic burials, such as the famous 'cemeteries' at Skatelholm (Larsson 1985, 1995, 2004), attract much archaeological attention however the period as a whole is not one marked by overt displays of 'status' or identity and such burials are very rare. In fact most 'burial' in the period appears instead to reflect a clear assertion of the 'prestigious' ideal, with random disarticulated remains found in habitation layers or middens being the most common disposal of the dead in the Mesolithic (Brinch Petersen and Mieklejohn 2003: 485). Finger bones found in the

Late Mesolithic at the Oronsay middens in Scotland are a typical example (Conneller 2006). In such subtle and less visible traces of treatment of the deceased deliberate material attempts to demonstrate a *lack* of assertion of individuality may be the most common practice.

How then might we interpret signs of what we term ‘status’ in burial? Interpreting the burial record is perhaps one of the most challenging areas of the archaeological record (Parker Pearsen 1999, Taylor 2002). Traditionally burial was approached with a straightforward attribution of assertions of ‘status’ to rich burials with grave goods. In the 1980s discussions centred around the potential distinctions between horizontal and vertical social differentiation, or achieved and ascribed status, within burial practice (Parker Pearson 1999). Large Mesolithic ‘cemeteries’ such as in the Iron Gates, southern Scandinavia and the Baltic were seen as evidence of the rise of ‘complexity’ in these Mesolithic communities, with possible sedentism and definitions of social status or ranking analogous to ‘complex’ non-egalitarian hunter-gatherers such as the Kwakiutl (Brown and Price 1985). The presence of ‘cemeteries’ appeared to imply social demarcations and relationships of status in certain Mesolithic societies, particularly in coastal or lakeside environments (Mithen 1994; Bailey and Milner 2002).

Grave goods in cemetery sites in southern Scandinavia, the Baltic and the Iron Gates appeared to support the concept that certain individuals in these societies were clearly ‘better’ than others. Differentiation of grave goods with male and female graves (with apparently preferentially men buried with tools and women with decorative items such as beads) were seen as evidence of gender distinctions, such as at Vedbaek (Albrethson and Brinch Petersen 1976). Burials at Skateholm were interpreted in terms of further ranked gender distinctions with distinctive ‘wealthy’ grave goods occurring with younger women and older men (Constandse-Westermann and Newell 1988). Interpretations of the Mesolithic cemetery at Oleni Ostrov at Lake Onega in Karelia with over 300 internments showed levels of clearly demarcated status according to sex, age and personal wealth (O’Shea and Zvelebil 1984; Zvelebil 2004; Zvelebil 2008). Here, potentially important authorities or leaders or so called ‘shamans’ were buried in distinctive shaft graves.

Certain individuals also appeared to be buried with particularly rich or distinctive grave goods denoting high status in cemeteries in southern Scandinavia and the Iron Gates. Grave 8, at Vedbaek, that of a woman buried with a child on a swan's wing, and 190 beads of drilled red deer and wild boar teeth, was interpreted as a 'rich' grave for example (Albrethson and Brinch Petersen 1976). Larson (1985: 373) interpreted grave XXI at Skateholm, that of a dog with grave goods indicating wealth as a cenotaph for a man, probably of high status. Schulting (1998: 219) indeed comments of the burial record of the Mesolithic that 'Once the more egalitarian principles typical of many hunter-gatherer societies are eroded, there comes into existence an incentive to enlist funerary rites for display and for competitive behaviour'.

'Cemeteries' with burials incorporating grave goods are not however as clear a sign of the erosion of egalitarian ethics as they might appear. Recently there has been an increasing recognition of the complex relationship between human emotions of grief, and loss, fear of the rather 'liminal' world of relationships to the dead and a need to maintain social order, and material representations at death. We have begun to be more cautious of interpreting grave goods as displays of overt status. Gender relationships have already been seen to be complex. Additionally 'rich' graves can defy simple interpretations of dominant or 'boastful' individuals, particularly as the identity or status symbolized in death may not be that in life. The Vedbaek cemetery provides a particular illustration where several young infants and dogs are buried with tools (Fowler 2004: 134). Attention had recently focused on grave goods as symbols of group, rather than individual, identity. Fowler for example re-interprets grave 8 at Vedbaek in terms of relationships and interactions between people, and constructions of the 'partible' person through social relationships (2004). The nature of material objects which are supposed signs of 'status' is also relevant. Bonsall (2008) refutes any clear evidence of ranking at Schela Cladovei in the Iron Gates since most interpretations of 'status' are based on the numbers of beads within grave goods and such beads may be decoration rather than an indication of authority. Certainly concepts of beauty, and elements of personal adornment, are seen as aesthetic and outside concepts of social competitiveness in many hunter-gatherers, such as the !Kung (Shostak 1981),

and beads have been shown ethnographically to commonly symbolise supernatural protection rather than status (Bar-Yosef Mayer and Porat (2008) after Morris and Preston-Whyte 1994: 55)). Beads might also symbolize the coming together of different relations of the animal and human world and the community of humans through their circulation. In graves 19c at Vedbaek human teeth form part of the supposed 'pendants' associating deceased 'dividuals' with animals and living people (Fowler 2004).

Times and places where 'boastful' displays in burial come more clearly into focus do exist, with Zvelebil's example of the shamans burials in the Baltic being one case. However, evidence for a progressive acceptance of demarcated authority in the Mesolithic is widely being re-considered. Blankholm (2008) illustrates that a closer consideration of the possible evidence for social stratification and 'complexity' in southern Scandinavia reveals that there is no clear picture of any progression to sedentism or symbols of status.

The contested interaction between prestige and dominance in egalitarian societies perhaps provides one way of moving beyond the concept of a progressive move to 'stratified society' (Rowley-Conwy 2001) in which any sign of dominance or status is taken as a permanent change, to a more subtle understanding of social changes and social dynamics. Rather than being signs of a decline in 'prestige', the presence of grave goods in certain burials throughout Mesolithic Europe may be alternative means of expressing commonality, expressions of other distinctions such as beauty, or part of a supernatural belief, of equally expressions of a social dominance which were either short lived or restricted to certain situations.

Long term dynamics and prestige and dominance

Egalitarian societies work on egalitarian principles, however this does not imply that everyone was always equal all of the time. Egalitarian principles are clearly part of a tense dynamic with egalitarianism and the maintenance of prestigious leadership ideals which are fought and won, or gained and lost (at least temporarily). In different times and places, different individual 'leaders'

fought their own personal battles either accepting humility or attempting coercion and were accepted or contested by others. At times dominance may have been accepted on a longer term, and later replaced once again by relationships of prestige.

The emergence of dominant authorities and leaders

An understanding of prestigious leadership and authority creation perhaps allows processes of social change to be brought into clearer focus during the Mesolithic. In Germany for example, a particularly 'rich' grave in the Late Mesolithic of Central Germany provides a good illustration of an individual who may have wielded the power to be 'boastful'. The unusual burial at Bad Dürrenberg in the Late Mesolithic of Central Germany has been interpreted as that of a shaman (Porr and Alt 2006). The only individual burial within the region, it is rich in grave goods, with over 140 artefacts and animal bones, including 50 pendants. The woman (buried with an infant) is likely to have suffered a neurological condition which would have given her convulsions, perhaps similar to those typically induced in shamanic traces. Porr and Alt (2006) suggest that her unique abilities may have given her respected supernatural authority and that these grave goods perhaps reflected her status in this realm. The sudden and isolated appearance of such a burial within a record of commonality might reasonably be taken to denote some level of temporary accepted 'boastfulness' due to her perceived unusual powers, and perhaps fear of reprisals by the spirit world should a burial not be appropriately ceremonious.

Other cases of apparent dominance relationships emerging spontaneously within the archaeological record are also known. Famously the Ofnet Cave skull pit in Bavaria (containing the skulls and vertebrae of at least 38 individuals) is interpreted as a bloody and violent attack on a whole group, with half the individuals, including men, women and children being wounded by mace like implements (Thorpe 2003a). Indeed Ofnet has even been interpreted as potential evidence for constant violent feuding in the period (Thorpe 2003a: 157). There is nonetheless nothing to suggest that Ofnet was 'the norm' but perhaps rather more a sudden upsurge of violent dominance behaviour for whatever individual or external reasons. We can only speculate whether such acts were a fearful response to perceived threat or an opportunistic drive for power.

A further example of evidence for spontaneous aggression comes from Les Perrats Cave in Charente (Valdeyron 2008:201) where human bones from eight individuals including children which showed evidence for disarticulation and defleshing were recovered from domestic refuse deposits. Patterns of aggressive violence can appear within an otherwise peaceful record and like the burial record itself follow no particular rules and appear to show no particular socially dictated 'way of doing things'.

The archaeological record also provides evidence that tensions may at times make such patterns more permanent or widespread. In the Baltic, Zvelebil (2008) attributes the overt displays of 'status' in the unusual shaft 'shaman's' graves at Olenii Ostrov and those with elaborate ornamental head gear made of animal teeth at Olenii Ostrov, Zvekjnieki and Donkanis (discussed above) with the increasing power of shamans at a time when tensions built up with Neolithic societies. Such tensions, and the unique position of shamans as ritual specialists and agents of change may have allowed such authorities to adopt and feel safe in displaying dominance, a way analogous to the shaman amongst the Inuit who became dominant as described by Mirsky (1937, described in Boehm 1993).

Patterns of conflict and dominance

The burial record also provides a further line of evidence which might contribute to our understanding of social relationship in the form of interpretations of long term patterns of conflict, violence and confrontation through interpretations of skeletal trauma patterns. Indeed, the Mesolithic period has even been seen as illustrating the first sustained evidence for serious violence and widespread evidence of traumas in the form of projectile wounds in the prehistoric period (Vencl 1991; 1999, Chapman 1999, Thorpe 2003a; 2003b, Hoffman 2005). The 15% of adults at Schela Cladovei who died violently in the Iron Gates, has been seen as evidence of 'warfare' (Thorpe 2003a, 2003b). Once again our first impressions of the most obvious elements of the archaeological record may not be particularly well founded however. The most typical examples of Mesolithic violence are individual, including for example flint points embedded in the spine of a male burial at Téviec in Brittanny (Péquart and Péquart 1931), or bone points in the

chests of individuals a Backaskog and Stora Bjers in Sweden (Albrethsen and Brinch Petersen 1976, cited in Thorpe 2003a: 155). Though drawing archaeological attention, the overall level of recorded violence in the Mesolithic is actually very low (Roksandic et al. 2006, Peter-Röcher 2002) and appears to match that of ethnographically recorded egalitarian hunter-gatherers (Knauft et al 1991). It is not markedly different from that in the Upper Palaeolithic where not only is individual violence equally recorded but large scale cemeteries with substantial evidence of violence also exist (at the unusual site in Jebel Sahaba in the Sudan, dating to 12,000 years ago, Wendorf 1968).

Occasional periods of intense conflict and group violence appear to be typically sporadic and situational. In the Iron Gates, Bonsall (2008) suggests that the incidence of 'warfare' (if such it is) may relate to a specific context of competition over ownership of prime fishing spots for the seasonal exploitation of sturgeon, a potentially very important subsistence resource. The evidence from the Iron Gates sites seems to fit much better the notion of incidents of larger scale conflict within or between groups, rather than a sustained pattern of socially acceptable warfare. Rocksandic et al (2006) finds no evidence to support endemic warfare within the region, with the high levels of violence at Schela Cladovei apparently tightly clustered in time, and later contexts in the same region at Vlasac and Lepenski Vir showing very low levels of interpersonal violence. There is no clear picture of an increase in social complexity, social stratification, or warfare, and no construction of perimeter defence in the Iron Gates (Bonsall 2008). Like the violence at Ofnet Cave, that at Schela Cladovei may also represent a unique social situation (Hoffman 2005). Even at Schela Cladovei where we have perhaps the clearest evidence for intense competition and conflicts over dominance, there is little to display overt status in burial and different 'ways of doing things' are still expressed (see figure 4).

There is also evidence for mechanisms of dealing with serious conflict to prevent the escalation of violence, such as the ritualised combat suggested by Thorpe (2003a) as the explanation for healed head wounds at Ertebølle sites of Tybrind Vig, Møllegabet and Gøngehusvej,. Ritualised

combat is a common mechanism recoded ethnographically as a means of limiting the potential for large scale conflict. Indeed Knauft et al (1991) have shown that a low level of violence is common in the maintenance of ‘egalitarian’ societies. Violence in such societies tends to be the result of the maintenance of prestige through extreme ‘levelling’ of leaders by followers or conversely enacting by one attempting dominating control, or as ritualised combat to prevent violent escalations. Other causes are more individual arising from individual disputes, sexual jealousies or reprisals for adultery. The pattern of flint or bone points in the chest or spine of individuals at Téviec or Backaskog and Stora Bjers (as illustrated above) would in fact be entirely typical of such ‘shot in the back/in the night’ type of aggressive conflict rather than any more widespread acceptance of dominance behaviour as a principle.

Conclusions

Though there may be others areas of the archaeological record which could be explored, those considered here - the record of high resolution sites, innovative ideas, violent confrontations and material expressions in burial in Mesolithic Europe - support the concept that social relationships and the spread of ideas in Mesolithic societies were mediated through the dynamics of 'prestigious' leaders and authorities.

At certain times and places in Mesolithic Europe it appears that the delicate balance of 'prestige' was tipped in favour of competition and dominance in similar ways to those seen ethnographically. At times 'dominance' may have constituted simply the tolerated 'boasting' of an individual with power which remained uncontested through fear of reprisal, the Bad Dürrenberg shaman in Central Germany being a possible example of such a situation. At other times, fear or a quest for power might make the affiliative relationships with other groups tip into over competition, dominance and aggression. Possible examples of such emerging group violent interactions are provided by sites such as Ofnet Cave in Bavaria and Les Parrets in Charente. It also appears that more sustained fears over access to resources may have led to sporadic emergence of intense intergroup competition as in evidence at Schela Cladovei in the Iron Gates, with a later return to more typical largely cooperative relationships. At other times external stresses may even have created sufficient anxiety to drive a more sustained acceptance of power and dominance in certain authorities, such as may have been the case with the role of shaman in late periods of the Mesolithic in the Baltic. By and large however it appears that in Mesolithic societies, as we see in ethnographically recorded egalitarian groups, tips of the delicate balance of prestige were temporary, with humble and largely materially 'invisible' leaders being part of the processes which reinstates the hard won balance of equality and 'prestigious' authority.

An understanding of ‘prestigious’ leaders, humble individuals who are largely archaeologically invisible yet deeply influential, may provide some potential avenues to improve our understanding of social dynamics in past hunting and gathering societies. ’Prestige’ may add a further dimension to our understanding of such societies through a theoretical approach to the emotional context of their openness, warmth and sharing behaviour, and also an explanation of the mechanisms creating the tension between ‘sharing’ and dominance in the past, and how these might generate the long term dynamics which we see archaeologically.

References

Albrethsen, S., & Brinch Petersen, E. 1976. Excavation of a Mesolithic cemetery at Vedbaek, Denmark, *Acta Archaeologica* 47. 1-28

Andouze, F., and Enloe, G. 1997. High resolution archaeology at Verberie: limits and interpretations*, World Archaeology* 29 (2). 195-207

Bailey, G. 2007. Time perspectives, palimpsests and the archaeology of time, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 26.198-223

Bailey, G.N. & Milner, N.J. 2002. Coastal hunters and gatherers and social evolution: marginal or central? *Before Farming: the Archaeology of Old World Hunter-Gatherers* 3–4 (1): 1–15

Barnard, A. (ed.) 2004. *Hunter-gatherers in history, archaeology and anthropology*, Oxford: Berg.

Bar-Yosef Mayer, D. E., & N. Porat. 2008. Green stone beads at the dawn of agriculture. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 105: 25. 6548-8551.

Barrett, J.C. 1994. *Fragments from antiquity: an archaeology of social life in Britain*, 2900-1200BC, Oxford. Blackwell.

Bass, B.M. 1990. *Bass and Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research and managerial applications (3rd edn)* New York: Free Press.

Bender, B. 1998. *Stonehenge: making space.* Oxford

Bevan, L & J. Moore 2003. *Peopling the Mesolithic in a northern environment*. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, Archaeopress.

Bird-David, N. 1990. The giving environment: another perspective on the economic system of gatherer-hunters, *Current Anthropology* 31 (2): 189–96.

Bird-David, N. 1992. Beyond 'The Original Affluent Society': A culturalist reformation. *Current Anthropology* 33(1): 25–47.

Blankholm, H.P. 2008. Southern Scandinavia. In Bailey, G and Spikins, P (eds) *The Mesolithic in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boehm, C. 1993. Egalitarian Behaviour and Reverse Dominance Hierarchy, *Current Anthropology* 34, 3, 227-240

Boehm, C. 1999. *Hierarchy in the Forest*. London: Harvard University Press.

Bonsall, C. 2008. The Mesolithic of the Iron Gates. In Bailey, G and Spikins, P (eds) *The Mesolithic in Europe*, : Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bradley, R. 1991. Ritual, time and history. *World Archaeology* 23, 209-19

Bradley, R. 1998. *The significance of monuments: on the shaping of human experience in Neolithic and Bronze Age Europe*. London: Routledge.

Bridges, E.L. 1948. *Uttermost part of the Earth*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Briggs, J. L. 1999. *Inuit Morality Play: The emotional education of a three year old*. New Haven: Yale University Press

Brinch Petersen, E., and Meiklejohn, C. 2003. Three Cremations and Funeral: Aspects of Burial practice in Mesolithic Vedbaek, in Lars Larson, *Mesolithic on the Move*.. 486-493. Oxford. Oxbow Books.

Brody, H. 2001. The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, farmers and the Modern World. London: Faber and Faber

Brown, J.A. & T.D. Price 1985. Complex hunter-gatherers: retrospect and prospect. In T. D. Price and J.A. Brown (eds.). *Prehistoric hunter-gatherers: the emergence of cultural complexity*. New York. Academic Press. 435–42.

Brück, J. 2001. Monuments, Power and Personhood in the British Neolithic, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 7. 649-667

Chapman, J. 1999. The origins of warfare in the prehistory of Central and Eastern Europe. In J. Chapman and A. Harding (eds.) *Ancient Warfare*. Stroud: Sutton.101-42

Charlton, B. 2000. *Psychiatry and the Human Condition*. London: Radcliffe Medical.

Cobb, H. 2005. Straight Down the Line? A queer consideration of hunter-gatherer studies in north-west Europe, *World Archaeology* 37: 4. 630-636

Conneller, C. J. 1996. March Hill Lithics Report, in Spikins, P. A. (ed.) *West Yorkshire Mesolithic Project Report* 1995, Wakefield: West Yorkshire Archaeology Service.

Conneller C. & Warren G. (eds.) 2006. *Mesolithic Britain and Ireland*. Stroud: Tempus.

Conneller, C. 2006. Death in C Conneller and G Warren (eds) *Mesolithic Britain and Ireland.* Stroud. Tempus. 139-164

Constandse-Westermann, T., and Newell, R. R. 1988. Social and Biological Aspects of the Western European Mesolithic Population Structure: A Comparison with the Demography of North American Indians. In Bonsall, C., (ed.) *The Mesolithic in Europe*, 106-115. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Crass, B. 2001. Gender and mortuary analysis: what can grave goods really tell us? In Arnold B and Wickler N L (eds) *Gender and the Archaeology of Death*. New York: Altimira Press, 105: 118

Dentan, K. 1979. *The Semai*. New York. New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston

Der Leeuw, S, E., & Torrence, R. 1989. *What's New? : One World Archaeology*. Unwin Hyman.

Derevenski, J. S. 2000. *Children and Material Culture*, Routledge: London

Dobres, M. A. 2000. Technology and Social Agency: Outlining and Practice Framework for Archaeology. London: Blackwell.

Dobres, M. A. & Robb, J. 2000. Agency in Archaeology. New York: Routledge

Dobres, M-A., & Hoffman, C. R. 1994. Social agency and the dynamics of Prehistoric Technology, Journal of Archaeological Methods and Theory 1 (3). 211-258

Edmonds, M. 1999. *Ancestral Geographies of the Neolithic: landscapes, monuments and memory.* London: Routledge.

Ehrenberg, A. 1989. *Women in Prehistory*. London: The British Museum

Enloe, J. G. 2006. Geological Processes and Site Structure: Assessing Integrity at a Late Palaeolithic open-air site in Northern France

Erdal, D & A. Whiten 1996. Egalitarianism and Machiavellian intelligence in human evolution. In P. Mellars & K. Gibson (eds.) *Modelling the Early Human Mind*. Cambridge: MacDonald Institute for Archaeology.139–150.

Evans, D. 2001. *Emotion: The Science of Sentiment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Finlay, N. 1997. Kid-knapping: the missing children in lithic analysis. In J. Moore & E. Scott (eds), Invisible People and Process. Leicester: Leicester University Press. 203-212.

Finlay, N. 2000. Deer Prudence, in C. Conneller (ed). New Approaches to the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, Archaeological Review from Cambridge 17: 1, 67-79

Finlay, N. 2003. *Microliths and multiple authorship.* in L. Larson, H. Kindgre, K. Knutson, D. Loeffler and A. Åkerlund (eds) Mesolithic on the Move, 169-76. Oxford: Oxbow books

Fiske, A. P. 1991. *Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations*, Maxwell Macmillan International

Fiske, A. P. 2002. Socio-moral emotions motivate action to sustain relationships, *Self and Identity* 1 (2), 169-175

Fowler, C. 2004. *The Archaeology of Personhood: An anthropological approach.* Routledge: London

Frank, R. H. 2001. Cooperation through Emotional Commitment, in R. Nesse, *Evolution and the Capacity for Commitment*, Russell Sage Foundation Series on Trust: New York, 57-76

Freuchen, P. ed. 1961. *Peter Freuchen's book of the Eskimos*, Greenwich Conneticut; Fawcett Crest books.

Garber, J and Seligman, M. E. P. 1980. *Human Helplessness, Theory and Applications*, Academic Press

Gero, J. M., and Conkey, M. W. 1991. *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*, Blackwell: New York

Gilbert, P. 2002. Evolutionary approaches to psychopathology and cognitive therapy, Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy: An International Quarterly 16 (3). 263-294

Gilbert, P. 2005. Compassion and cruelty: A biopsychosocial approach, in P. Gilbert (ed.) Compassion: Conceptualisation, research and use in psychotherapy, Routledge: London and New York. p 9-75

Goleman, D. 2006. *Social Intelligence*. Hutchinson: New York

Gowlett, J.A.J. 1997. High definition archaeology, ideas and evaluation, *World Archaeology* 29 (2). (152-171)

Grimm, L. 2000. Apprentice Flintknapping: Relating material culture and social practice in the Upper Palaeolithic, in J. S., Derevenski (ed.) *Children and Material Culture*, Routledge: London, pp53-71

Grøn, O. 2003: Mesolithic dwelling places in south Scandinavia: their definitions and social interpretation. *Antiquity* 77 (298), 685-708

Gusinde, M. 1986. *The Yámana: The life and thought of the Water Nomads of Cape Horn*, 5 vols, Buenos Aires: Argentina. Centro Argentino de Etnologia Americana

Hadley, M. 2003. Relational, indirect, adaptive or just mean: recent work on aggression in adolescent girls – Part 1, *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 4: 367-394

Hawcroft, J and Dennell, R. 2000. Neanderthal cognitive life history and its implications for material culture, in J. S., Derevenski (ed.) *Children and Material Culture*, Routledge: London, pp89-99

Heinrich, J & F.J. Gil-White 2001. The evolution of prestige. Freely conferred deference as a mechanism for enhancing the benefits of cultural transmission. *Evolution and Human Behaviour* 22: 165–96.

Hofmann, D. 2005. The Emotional Mesolithic: Past and present ambiguities of Ofnet Cave, in N. Milner and P. Woodmand *Mesolithic Studies at the beginning of the 21st century,* Oxbow Books: Oxford. 194-211

Hogan, R and Kaiser, R, 2005. What we know about leadership. *Review of General Psychology* 9, 169-180

Huhndorf, S., 2003. Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner, Culture, History and Politics in Inuit Media, *American Anthropologist* 105 (4), 822-826

Janik, L. 2005. Redefining Social Relations – Tradition, Complementarity and Internal Tension N. Milner and P. Woodman, *Mesolithic Studies at the beginning of the 21st century*, Oxbow Books: Oxford. 176-193

Kamp K. A. 2001. Where Have All the Children Gone?: The Archaeology of Childhood, *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 8: 1, 1-34

Kelly, R. L. 1995. Hunter-gatherers and anthropology, Chapter One of *The foraging spectrum: diversity in hunter-gatherer lifeways*. Washington & London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1-38

Kent, S. 1993. Comment to Boehm, C. Egalitarian Behaviour and Reverse Dominance Hierarchy, *Current Anthropology* 34, 3, 243

Knauft, B. M., Abler, T. S., Betzig, L., Boehm, C., Dentan, R. K., Kiefer, T. M., Otterbein, K. F., Paddock, J., Rodseth, L., (1991). Violence and Sociality in Human evolution, *Current Anthropology* 32, 391-428

Kroll, E.M and Price, T. D. 1991. (eds.) *The Interpretation of Archaeological Spatial Patterning*. Plenum Press, New YorkLarsson L 1985 Late Mesolithic Settlement and Cemeteries at Skateholm, southern Sweden, in C. Bonsall (ed) *The Mesolithic in Europe*: Papers presented at the Third International Symposium, 367-278 Edinburgh. John Donald.

Larsson, L. 1995. Man and Sea in southern Scandinavia during the Late Mesolithic: The role of cemeteries in the view of society. In A. Fischer (ed.) *Man and Sea in the Mesolithic*. Oxbow Monograph 53. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 95-104

Larsson, L. 2004. The Mesolithic period in southern Scandinavia with special reference to burials and cemeteries, In A. Savile (ed) *Mesolithic Scotland: The Early Holocene prehistory of Scotland in its European context*. Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 371-92

Lee, R. B. 1979. *The !Kung San: men, women and work in a foraging society.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McEwan, C., Borrero, L., and Prieto, A., 1997. *Patagonia: Natural History, Prehistory and Ethnography at the Uttermost Part of the Earth*, British Museum Press: London

Mikulincer, M and P. R. Shaver. 2001. Attachment theory and intergroup bias: Evidence that priming the secure base schema attenuates negative reactions to out-groups. Journal of *Personality and Social Psychology* 81. 97-115.

Mikulincer, M., Gillath, O., Sapir-Lavid, Y., Yaakobi, E., Arias, K., Tal-Aloni, L., and G. Bor. 2003. Attachment theory and concern for others' welfare: Evidence that activation of the sense of secure base promotes endorsement of self-transcendence values. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 25. 299-312.

Mikulincer, M, Shaver, P. R., Gillath, O., Nitzberg, R. A., 2005. Attachment, Caregiving and Altrusim: Boosting Attachment security increases attachment and helping. *Journal of Personal and Social Psychology* 89 (5), 817-39

Milner, N & P. Woodman (eds.) 2005. *Mesolithic studies at the beginning of the 21st Century*. Oxford: Oxbow.

Mirsky, J. 1937. *The Eskimo of Greenland*, in M. Mead. Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples, p 51-66, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Mithen, S (ed.) 1998. *Creativity in human evolution and prehistory*. London. Routledge.

Mithen, S. J. 1994. *The Mesolithic Age.* In B. Cunliffe (ed.) *The Oxford Illustrated Prehistory of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 79–135.

Morris, J., and E. Preston-Whyte. 1994. *Speaking with beads: Zulu arts from Southern Africa.* New York: Thames and Hudson.

Nesse, R. M. 2001. *Evolution and the Capacity for Commitment*, Russell Sage Foundation Series on Trust: New York

Nilsson Stutz, L. 2003. *Embodied Rituals and ritualised bodies*. Lund: Wallin and Dahlholm Boktryckeri

O'Shea, J and Zvelebil, M. 1984. Oleneostrovski mogilnik: Reconstructing the social and economic organization of prehistoric foragers in northern Russia, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, 3 (1), 1-40

Orschiedt, J. 1998. Ergebnisse einer neuen Unterschung der spatmesolithischen Kopfbestattungen aus Süddeutschland. In N. Connard (ed) Aktuelle Forschungen sum Mesolithikum Tübingen, *Urgeschichtliche Materialhelfte* 12, 147-160

Parker Pearson, M. 1999. *The archaeology of death and burial*. Stroud: Sutton publishing.

Parkinson, B., Fischer, A.H. and Manstead, A. S. R. 2005. *Emotion in Social Relations*, Psychology Press, New York

Péquart, J-F. and Péquart, M. 1931. Sur une vertèbre humaine mésoltihique percée d'une fleche. *Association Française pout l'Avancement des Sciences* 55: 321-4

Peter-Röcher, H., 2002. Krieg und Gewalt. Zu den Kopfdepositionen in der Großen Ofnet und der Diskussion um kriegerische Konflikte in prähistorischer Zeit. *Praehistorische Zeitschrift* 77, 1-28.

Petersen, C., Seligman, N. E. P., Maier, S. F. 2005. *Learnt Helplessness: A theory for the age of personal control*,

Porr, M., and Alt, K. W., 2006. The Burial of Bad Dürrenberg, Central Germany: Osteopathology and Osteoarchaeology of a Late Mesolithic shaman's grave, *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 16: 395-406

Pugsley, L. 2005. Sex, gender and sexuality in the Mesolithic, N. Milner and P. Woodman, *Mesolithic Studies at the beginning of the 21st century*, Oxbow Books: Oxford. 164-175

Richardson, D. S., 2005. The myth of female passivity: thirty years of revelations about female aggression, *Psychology of Women Quaterly* 29 (3), 238-247

Riches, D. 1982. *Northern nomadic hunter-gatherers: a humanistic approach*. London: Academic Press.

Roksandic, M., Djuríc, M., Rakočevíc, Z., and Seguin, K., 2006. Interpersonal violence at Lepenski Vir Mesolithic/Neolithic complex of the Iron Gates Gorge (Serbia-Romania), *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 129: 339-348

Roskams, S. 2006 *The urban poor: finding the marginalised* in W Bowden et al. (eds) Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity. Late Antique Archaeology, Vol 3.1. Brill. Leiden/Boston. 487-531

Rowley-Conwy, P. A., 2001. Time, change and the archaeology of hunter-gatherers: how original is the 'Original Affluent Society'? In C. Panter-Brick, R. H. Layton and P. Rowley-Conwy (eds). *Hunter-gatherers: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, Biosocial Society Symposium Series, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 39-71

Sahlins, M., 1996. The Sadness of Sweetness: The Native Anthropology of Western Cosmology, *Current Anthropology* 37: 3, 395-415

Schimdt, R. A. 2000. Shamans and northern cosmology: The direct historical approach to Mesolithic sexuality, in R. A. Schidmt (ed) *Archaeologies of Sexuality*, 220-234). Florence: Routledge.

Schulting, R. J. 1998. Creativity's coffin: innovation in the burial record of Mesolithic Europe. In S. Mithen (ed.) *Creativity in human evolution and prehistory*. London. Routledge, 203–26.

Seligman, N. E. P. 1975. *Helplessness*, Freeman

Shea, J. J. 2006. Child's Play: Reflections on the invisibility of children in the palaeolithic record, *Evolutionary Anthropology: Issues, News and Reviews*, 15, 6, 212-216

Shostak, M. 1981. *Nisa: the life and words of a !Kung woman*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Spencer, B., and Gillen, F. J. 1976. The Avenging Party in Central Australia, in J. Poggie., Jr., G. H. Pelto and P. J. Pelto, eds. *The Evolution of Human Adaptations: Readings in Anthropology*, p 262-264. New York: MacMillan.

Spikins, P.A. 2003. *Nomadic People of the Pennines: Reconstructing the Lifestyles of Mesolithic People on Marsden Moor.* West Yorkshire Archaeology Service and English Heritage.

Spikins, P.A., Conneller, C.J , Ayestaran, H. and Scaife, B. 2002. GIS based interpolation applied to distinguishing occupation phases of hunter-gatherer sites. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 29: 1235-1245

Spikins, P. A. in press. Autism, the integrations of difference and the emergence of modern human behaviour, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*.

Spikins, P. A & Rutherford, H. in review. Of trust and tenderness: the archaeology of compassion, submitted to *Current Anthropology*

Sternke, F., 2005. All are not hunters that knap the stone – a search for a woman's touch in Mesolithic stone tool production, N. Milner and P. Woodman, *Mesolithic Studies at the beginning of the 21st century*, Oxbow Books: Oxford. 144-163

Suzman, J. 2004. Hunting for Histories: rethinking historicity in the Western Kalahari. In A. Barnard (ed.) *Hunter-Gatherers in history, archaeology and anthropology* Oxford: Berg. 201–16.

Sy, T., Côté, S., and Saavedra, R. 2005. The Contagious Leader: Impact of the Leader's mood on the mood of group members, group affective tone, and group processes, *Journal of Applied Psychology* 90, 295-305

Tanner, A. 1979. Bringing Home Animals: Religious Ideology and Mode of Production of the Mistassini Cree hunters. St John's, Newfoundland: Memorial Universtiy Press.

Tarlow, S. 2000. *Emotion in Archaeology.* Current Anthropology 41, 13-46

Taylor, T., 2002. *The Buried Soul; How Humans Invented Death.* Fourth Estate. London.

Thomas, J. & C. Tilley. 1993. The axe and the torso: symbolic structures in the Neolithic of Brittany. In *Interpretative archaelogy* (ed.) C. Tilley, 225-324. Oxford: Berg.

Thomas, J. 1996. *Time, culture and identity: an interpretative archaeology.* London. Routledge.

Thomas, J, 1999. *Understanding the Neolithic.* London: Routledge.

Thomas, J.. 2001. Comment to Brück, J. Monuments, Power and Personhood in the British Neolithic, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 7, 763

Thorpe, I. J. N. 2003a. Anthropology, Archaeology and the Origins of Warfare, *World Archaeology* 35 (1), 145-165

Thorpe, I. J. N. 2003b. Death and Violence – The Later Mesolithic of Southern Scandinavia, in Bevan and Moore (eds) *Peopling the Mesolithic in a northern Environment* British Archaeological Reports.

Thorpe, I.J.N. 2000. Origins of Violence: Mesolithic conflict in Europe. *British Archaeology* 52: 8–13.

Thorpe, N and C Richards 1984 The decline of ritual authority and the introduction of Beaker into Britain. In Neolithic studies: a review of some recent work (British Series 133) (eds) R. Bradley and J. Gardiner, 67-84, Oxford. *British Archaeological Reports.*

Tilley, C. 1996. *An Ethnography of the Neolithic: Early Neolithic societies in Southern Scandinavia.* Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Turnbull, C. 1965. *Wayward Servants*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode.

Van Vugt, M and De Cremer, D. 2002. Leadership and cooperation in groups: Integrating the social dilemma and social identity perspectives, *European Review of Social Psychology* 13, 155-184

Van Vugt, M. 2006. Evolutionary Origins of Leadership and Followership, *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 10, 4, 353-371

Valdeyron, N. 2008. The Mesolithic in France, in G. Bailey and P. Spikins (eds.) The Mesolithic in Europe. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Vencl, S. 1999 *Stone Age Warfare*. In J. Carman & A. Harding (eds.) Ancient Warfare. Stroud: Sutton, 101–42

Vencl, S., 1991. Interprétation de bléssures causes par les armes au Mésolithique. *L'Anthropologie* 95: 219-28

Waddington, C. 2007. *Mesolithic Settlement in the North Sea basin*, Oxbow Books: Oxford

Warren, C., 2005. Complex Arguments… N. Milner and P. Woodman, *Mesolithic Studies at the beginning of the 21st century*, Oxbow Books: Oxford. 69-80

Wendorf, F. 1968. Site 117. A Nubian Final Palaeolithic graveyard near Jebel Shaba, Sudan. In *The Prehistory of Nubia*, vol 2 (ed. F. Wendorf). Dallas, TX: Southern Methodist University Press, 954-1040

Whitelaw, T. M. 1990. *The social organisation of space in hunter-gatherer communities: Some implications for social inference in archaeology.* Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of Cambridge.

Whittle, A., 1999. The Neolithic period, c 4000-2500/2200BC: Changing the World, in J. Hunter and I. Ralston (ed). *The Archaeology of Britain*. Routledge, 58-76

Wickham-Jones CR. 2004. Structural Evidence in the Scottish Mesolithic, in Saville A (ed.) 2004 *Mesolithic Scotland and its Neighbours: the Early Holocene Prehistory of Scotland, its*

British and Irish Context, and Some Northern European Perspectives. Edinburgh, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 229–42.

Wobst, H. M. 1978. The Archaeo-ethnology of hunter-gatherers or the tyranny of the ethnographic record in Archaeology. *American Antiquity* 43: 303-9

Woodburn, J. 1982. Egalitarian Societies, *Man* 17: 431-451

Zvelebil, M. 2004 Social structure and ideology of the late Mesolithic communities in north temperate Europe. In G.A. Clark & M. Gonzales-Morales (eds.) *The Mesolithic of the Atlantic façade*. Arizona State University, Anthropological Research Papers 35, 23–37.

Zvelebil, M., 2008. Innovating Hunter-Gatherers: The Mesolithic in The Baltic, In Bailey, G and Spikins, P (eds) *The Mesolithic in Europe*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those at the Cardiff conference in honour of John Evans, particularly Nicky Milner, Julian Thomas and Alastair Whittle for comments and discussion of the initial concepts presented there. I would also particularly like to thank Steve Roskams, Terry O'Connor, Geoff Bailey, Nicky Milner, Wendy Romer, Ivan Briz, Sven Feldmann, Laura Murray, Andy Needham, Wayne Britcliffe and Maurice Griffiths for all their 'wise words, humbly given' to which I'm glad to have had the chance to listen to, reflect on and explore creatively. Thanks in particular go to Steve Roskams, Geoff Bailey and Terry O'Connor for comments on drafts of the paper.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. *A group of Selk'nam watching a prestigious flint knapper making arrows (The Royal Geographical Society, photograph by W.S.Barclay c1901-3)*

Figure 2. *The Salesian Mission at San Rafael, Isla Dawson. Royal Geographical Society London (photographs by Wellington Furlong, c 1906-7).*

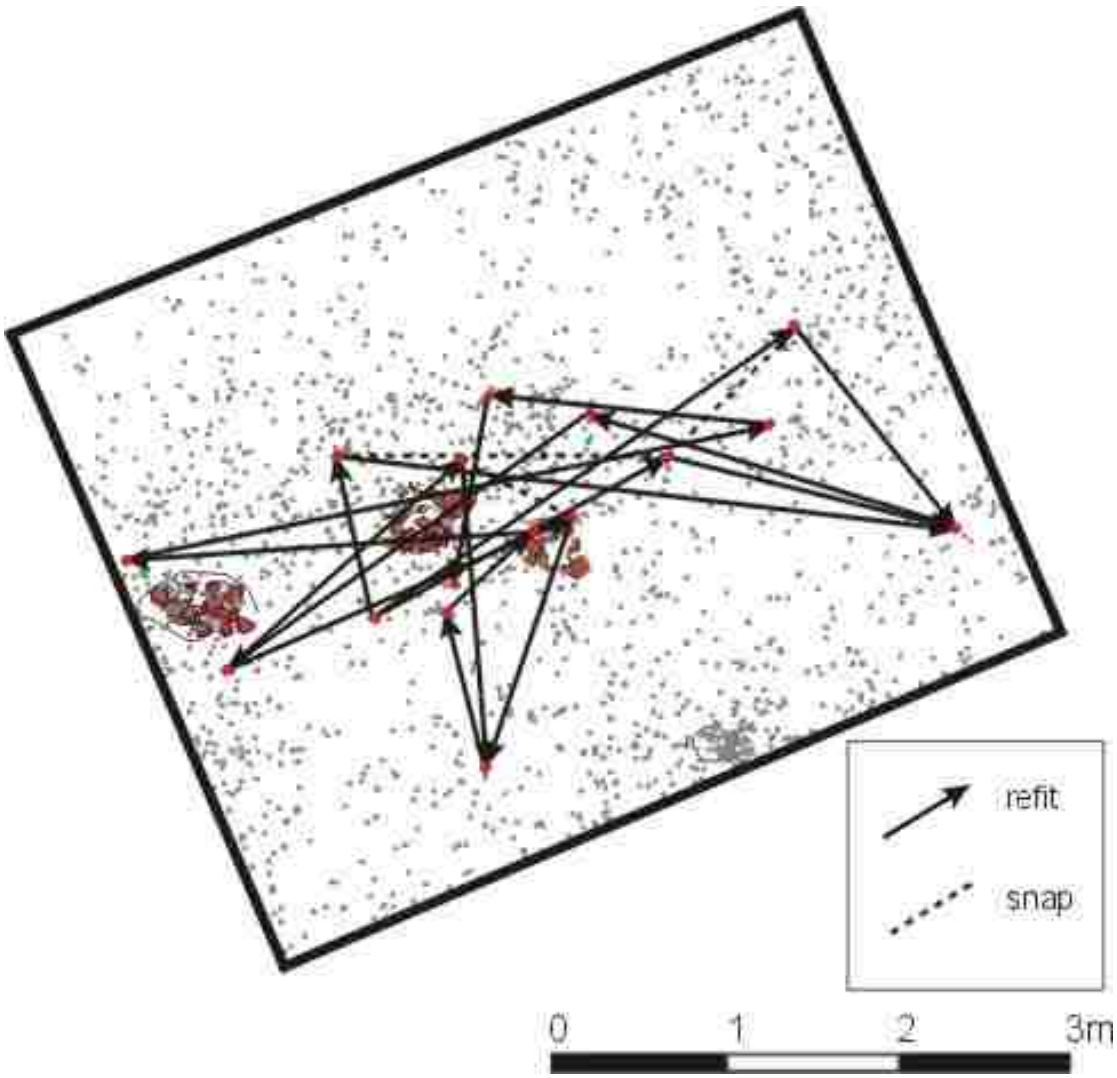

Figure 3. *Distribution of refit patterns at March Hill, Central Pennines dating from the Late Mesolithic (author's own). The lithic distribution and refitting suggests a pattern of seated individuals, marked by the gaps in the distribution, around two central hearths (Conneller 1996). For further description of the interpretation of this distribution see Spikins 2002.*

Figure 4. A Late Mesolithic inhumation burial from Schela Cladovei, Romania. Even in a period where intense conflict was known, there is no set method of burial practice, with other human bones interpreted as having been excarnated visible along the left side of the burial (copyright Clive Bonsall).