The articulation of a "New neolithic"
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2   Interpretative context

2.1   Archaeology and analogy

In this study, social theory in general and anthropological references in particular are incorporated into the analysis of archaeological data. In my opinion, this requires an explication of the methodology of this incorporation, which focuses on the concept of analogy. One could state that archaeology is a humanistic science which only through its material object (material culture in its geographical and chronological contexts) seems to differ from the other humanities.

By means of an analysis of this material object, a construct of past societies forms the formal object of archaeology.

In other words, archaeology is a humanistic science, whose methodological relations with other humanities requires reservedness and care because of the specific character of the material object of archaeology. Since the method of participant observation is impossible in archaeology (no direct observations of past human behaviour are possible), the meaning of the material object of archaeology in behavioural terms is derived implicitly or explicitly from the other humanities. This precarious but fundamental relationship of archaeology with other sciences, and anthropology in particular, requires that special attention be given to the concept of *analogy*: how are notions from other sciences (to be) incorporated into the archaeological discourse?

The traditional discussion about the nature of analogical reasoning centres on two sets of concepts. The first set of concepts is that of *formal analogy* and *relational analogy*. In a formal analogy, "it is suggested that, if two objects or situations have some common properties, they probably also have other similarities" (Hodder 1982b, 16). As the observed similarities may be accidental (a knife and a letter opener have similar shapes and are of the same material, yet their functions differ), this type of analogy is not very useful. In a relational analogy, the strength of the analogy is enhanced through additional arguments, which reveal causal relations between the observed phenomena in the ethnographic present. These causal links may then be interpreted as functioning analogously in the archaeological past (Hodder 1982b, 16; Wylie 1982, 394).

The second set of concepts is that of the *direct historical approach* and the *general comparative approach*. The first concept refers to those archaeological situations in which cultural continuity between the archaeological past and the ethnographic present may be assumed. In these situations, the ethnographic present is often an obvious source for analogy, thanks to many common traits. The second approach, the general comparative approach, is used in those areas where no cultural continuity may be assumed. According to many authors, the direct historical approach should provide the most insightful and reliable analogies (Stiles 1977, 95; Hodder 1982b, 16). Nevertheless, one has to be aware of structural differences between the archaeological past and ethnographic present, particularly in those areas where the direct historical approach seems to be justified. If the analogy is constructed on the basis of formal characteristics alone, its interpretative value is seriously constrained.[1] All in all, it seems clear that the difference in validity of general comparative and direct historical analogies is one of degree rather than kind.

After this discussion of the terminology pertaining to the concept of analogy, it is time to deal with the key question: how may information from other humanities be incorporated into archaeological practice? I feel that the concern with methodology in processual archaeology prohibits the incorporation of extraneous ideas, models and hypotheses into the archaeological discourse. Of course, relational analogies are to be preferred over formal analogies, while the difference between direct historical and general comparative approaches is often over-estimated. These concerns have to be allayed with an insightful use of analogies from reference sources in the humanistic sciences. The methodology of analogy proposed here is to use analogy to enhance our understanding of archaeological phenomena with a focus on the content of the analogy rather than the methodology: if an analogy provides new insights in archaeology, it is not important where it comes from. Other humanities may thus provide not only examples of the broad range of explanations, but also new questions or hypotheses to be confronted with the archaeological remains at hand.

At first glance, the discussions about analogical reasoning seem to be restricted to processual archaeology: various post-processual textbooks do not cover the subject, and neither the methodological problems of analogy nor methodology in general are as extensively discussed as they are in

processual archaeology. The methodological tool kit of post-processual archaeology seems to consist of hermeneutic reasoning, (post-)structuralism and the concept of metaphor; analogy seems to be absent (for example see Shanks/Tilley 1987; Thomas 1996a; various contributions in Tilley 1990b and Tilley 1991). However, this is not the case. First of all, the tenet of *material culture as text* suggests that material culture should be studied like a text: meaning is written into it, it may be read in different ways. In other words: material culture is analogous to a text. On a second level, analogical reasoning is incorporated into the meaning of material culture. The encoded material culture derives its meaning through references to the natural or supernatural world, which allows the transposition of properties ascribed to these reference sources into the constructed material world. This means that material culture is encoded analogously to the reference sources. The use of metaphor in this kind of archaeological discourse is extremely important. By means of metaphor, the structural relationships (oppositions) of a society are encoded in its material culture. Therefore, this attribution of reference-source attributes to material culture may be interpreted as *metaphorical analogy*. Thirdly, the 'classic' ethnographic analogy is also found in some post-processual studies, such as Tilley's re-analysis of Swedish rock art (1991). In order to create a meaningful interpretation of the observed patterns in the rock carvings, Tilley explicitly refers to both Saami and Inuit groups (Tilley 1991, 126-148). One might argue that while processual archaeology focuses on the methodology of analogy, post-processual archaeology is more concerned with the content of analogy (Van Gijn/Raemaekers in press).

2.2   Material culture

Introduction
The study of material culture is essential in archaeology. It is the only direct source of information available for the prehistoric past which, in combination with general social theories (analogies), provides insight into prehistoric behaviour. The central place of material culture in archaeology makes it the obvious theme in a history of the archaeological discourse, which successively adopted a culture-historical, processual and post-processual approach.

The culture-historical approach to material culture
In the culture-historical approach, stylistic traits equalled prehistoric peoples: dramatic changes in material culture were interpreted as resulting from migration, while more subtle changes through time were assumed to be caused by fashion, innovation or accidental deviations from the norm. Stylistic characteristics which were limited in time and place were proposed as markers of groups of people. In this interpretation, variability in ceramic design is crucial. The con-

struction of regional sequences in which stylistic developments and breaks subdivided the prehistoric past of a region was, in general, perceived not as a first step towards further analysis but as a goal in itself (Conkey 1990, 8; Jones 1997, 15-26; Shanks/Tilley 1987, 138-139).

Processual approaches to material culture
The *New Archaeology* produced two new perspectives on material culture, which may be characterised as the theory of social interaction and that of information exchange. These are illustrated here by two ethnoarchaeological case studies. The first is the research by Hodder in Kenya and Zambia, which was conducted specifically to answer the basic archaeological question of interpreting spatial patternings of various artefact categories in terms of social relations (1981, 1982a). What does it mean when boundaries occur in material-culture categories? How are these maintained?, etcetera. In one of his research areas, the Baringo district in Kenya, a series of artefact categories were studied to assess which categories were used to mark the boundaries between the three groups living in the area, and which artefact categories produced a different spatial patterning. This ethnoarchaeological pattern could subsequently be interpreted on the basis of anthropological observations that accompanied the ethnoarchaeological research. This enabled Hodder to produce a lively account of the social relations structuring the spatial patterns. He concludes that in those areas where environmental constraints are heaviest, group identities are expressed the most clearly in material culture. In other areas, where thanks to a more favourable natural environment or lower population density there were few or no problems in making a living, but where groups of the same people lived side-by-side and interacted equally intensively, the boundaries between ethnic groups were expressed much less distinctly. These observations suggest that the existence of boundaries between groups is not to be interpreted in terms of the intensity of social interaction between them (one would then expect similar patterns in the two areas), but rather as a result of information exchange: when resources are limited, it becomes important to establish the difference between 'us' and 'them' to ensure the support of one's kin in case of cattle theft or famine. If there is no environmental stress, the need to express one's identity is limited and the visibility of boundaries between ethnic groups is accordingly diminished (Hodder 1982a, 13-57).
A different point of view is provided by the research in the Kalinga Ethnoarchaeological Project in the Pasil river valley of the Philippines (see Longacre 1981; Longacre/Stark 1992; Stark 1992 and various contributions in Longacre/Skibo 1994). While Hodder's conclusions about the ethnic information exchanged through stylistic attributes in the Baringo district may be duplicated in the Pasil river valley on a regional

Wiessner 1983	emblemic style	⇔	assertive style
	⇓		⇓
Sackett 1985	iconological style	⇔	isochrestic style
	⇓		⇓
Wiessner 1985	stylistic behaviour	⇔	isochrestic behaviour
	⇓		⇓
Sackett 1990	adjunct form active	⇔	instrumental form passive
	information exchange theory	⇔	social interaction theory

Table 2.1. The development of jargon in the Wiessner-Sackett debate and the relation with the theory of information exchange and theory of social interaction.

scale (Graves 1994), other processes are found to be at work on a local scale. In one Kalinga village, Dangtalan, the female potters produce pottery in small work groups consisting of mothers and daughters and their immediate neighbours. As daughters acquire the skills of pottery-making from their mothers, there is a persistent and typical style for each household, which can be identified by the other potters, even after the pots have been stored for a couple of months. On the next level, that of the village, the pottery from Kalinga as a whole is distinctive when compared with that from neighbouring villages (Longacre 1981). These observations support the social interaction theory: those who are most closely related produce the most similar pottery.

The results of the above ethnoarchaeological studies show that both theories are based on ethnoarchaeological observations. In other words: both information exchange and interaction may explain an observed archaeological spatial pattern. If one is to choose either of these two models for an explaining an archaeological pattern, the archaeological context in which this pattern is embedded should provide additional information. At this point, the scale of the spatial pattern may be an important independent variable. The conceptual relation between the interaction and information exchange theories is clarified below by means of a résumé of the Wiessner-Sackett debate on style (see table 2.1).

In 1983, Wiessner published an article on the stylistic interpretation of metal arrowheads of the Kalahari San in which she posits that there are basically two different types of style: *emblemic* and *assertive*. In Wiessner's words, emblemic style is "formal variation in material culture that has a distinct referent and transmits a clear message to a defined target population (Wobst 1977) about conscious affiliation or identity" (1983, 257). The 1977 article by Wobst to which she refers, is certainly one of the most often cited on the

meaning of style. He argues that through style, people identify one another as being similar or different. This leads to the prediction that style resides in aspects of material culture with a high visibility, such as garments. In his Yugoslav case study, this prediction is affirmed. Wiessner's reference to Wobst equates her emblemic style with information-exchange theory. By contrast, assertive style is, again in Wiessner's words, "formal variation in material culture which is personally based and which carries information supporting individual identity" (1983, 258). While the quotation notes that the scale at which the two aspects of style manifest themselves varies, Wiessner also suggests that assertive style may be interpreted as style from the social interaction point of view. Assertive style is not produced in order to identify its maker *per se*, but rather is the product of the personal tradition in which an artefact is produced (Wiessner 1983, 258-259).

While Sackett's reply to Wiessner was probably triggered by the case study she presented, Sackett's considerations are clearly of a more fundamental import (1985). Wiessner's emblemic style is termed an *iconological approach* in which "style is viewed as a kind of iconography purposefully [...] created and manipulated by artisans for social ends" (1985, 154). According to Sackett, style is often not purposely produced, but instead is latently present in what he terms *isochrestic behaviour*: "normally there exists an appreciable range of equivalent alternatives, of equally viable options, for attaining any given end in manufacturing craft products" (1985, 157). The choice between these equivalent alternatives is isochrestic behaviour. In this perspective, style is not limited to specific ('non-functional') attributes of an artefact, but may also be detected in technological choices made in the production process. Moreover, this isochrestic behaviour is not restricted to the material expression of people, but

may be seen as a fundamental structure in life: "isochrestic behaviour permeates all aspects of social and cultural life. [...] Life would simply be chaotic or altogether impossible without it" (1985, 158).

The debate continues in the same issue of *American Antiquity*. While Wiessner's comments on Sackett 1985 are primarily related to the study of San projectile points, she rephrases the two different aspects of style. The term isochrestic behaviour is maintained, while the emblemic-iconological approach is now redefined as *stylistic behaviour*. While the importance of isochrestic behaviour is acknowledged as "forming the foundation of a society by providing order, skill, facility, predictability, and effectiveness in human relations and technology" (Wiessner 1985, 161), the issue of style is now restricted to the purposefull production of standard artefact types (*ibid*., 161).

In the final contribution to this debate, Sackett introduces new terminology yet again (1990). Emblemic-iconological-stylistic behaviour constitutes one aspect of style focussed on *adjunct form*, that is the variation that is added to and supplemental to the utilitarian *instrumental* form (1990, 33). The emblemic aspect of style is conceived as being actively involved in "ethnic messaging [which is] generated by what is essentially self-conscious, deliberate, and premeditated behavior on the part of the artisans" (1990, 36). This *active* aspect of style clearly follows the information exchange theory. The second aspect of style, assertive-isochrestic style, is here renamed *instrumental form*, which is "built in, rather than added on, to the pot" (1990, 33). This facet of style is named *passive* and clearly lies at the basis of explanations of material remains in terms of social interaction. In this final statement of the Wiessner-Sackett debate, the yield of jargon is again impressive, but moreover one important interpretative step is taken, which implicitly brings together the theories of social interaction and information exchange. Sackett shows that both theories may be used simultaneously to explain the same attribute of an artefact: "the choices involved in isochrestic behavior create the raw material of style, that style which informs upon ethnicity is an etic perception of the observer, and that style which mediates ethnicity is an emic phenomenon involving the operation of symbolic behavior upon the products of isochrestic choice" (1990, 37). To take this argument one step further than Sackett does: if isochrestic behaviour creates the raw material for emblemic observation (as suggested above), one could argue that the social interaction theory may explain those attributes of material culture which are not actively used to produce identity (*isochrestic behaviour*). The same attribute may subsequently be incorporated into a new reproduction of material culture in which it does play an active role. It then functions in the realm of information exchange (*emblemic behaviour*).[2] Clearly, an attribute may be explained first in

terms of interaction and then in terms of information exchange (see Jones 1997, 122).

Post-processual approaches to material culture
Structural analyses were introduced into the humanities by Lévi-Strauss, who stressed the similarities between linguistics and the humanities in their formal object: signification, symbolism and meaning of human societies, in other words: communication. On the basis of this similarity, the methodology of linguistics was transplanted onto the social sciences, cultural anthropology in particular. The principal set of concepts derived from linguistics is that of *parole* and *langue*. While the latter is used to refer to the structure of language (grammar), the former refers to the implicit use of this structure in daily speech. This means that *parole* is not only derived from *langue*, but *langue* is also created by *parole*. Both concepts are therefore dialectically related. While the study of *parole* would not easily reveal the underlying structures, a focus on *langue* enables an understanding of the studied language. In social studies, these concepts might provide insight into the structural relations within society. By means of these concepts, attention is shifted from the particular to the general, providing a framework for further interpretations. Such an interpretation focuses on the interrelation of the structuring elements, on the 'rules' of society rather than the behaviour derived from them (Tilley 1990a, 6-20). In Lévi-Strauss's perspective of structural anthropology, society is structured by means of oppositions, the major one of which is that between nature and culture. The opposition between nature and culture is defined in two ways. First, nature is non-culture; that is, all aspects of the world outside humanity and its influence. Secondly, human nature is determinant of human culture. A combination of these two definitions makes it clear that culture is outside nature but determined by it. This leads to a meaningful incorporation of natural characteristics in human culture: culture is constructed in reference to the natural world. An example of the incorporation of nature in cultural meanings are totemic systems, in which characteristics of totemic animals are ascribed to segments of society (Lévi-Strauss 1962; Descola 1992, 114). Another example of the strong conceptual tie between nature and cultural life is animism: "the elementary categories structuring social life [are used] to organise, in conceptual terms, the relations between human beings and natural species" (Descola 1992, 114).

The issue of style is not widely discussed in those studies in which material culture is interpreted like a text. This is not the result of a lack of interest in the subject, but instead reveals the identification of material culture with *meaning*, rather than with a set of attributes to be correlated with stylistic and functional interpretations. In this perspective, material culture does not reflect the degree of social interaction or

information exchange, but has a structuring role in society: "material culture is itself an active constitutive element of social practice" (Conkey 1990, 13). The dialectical nature of material culture (produced by people, structuring their lives) is reflected in the three 'levels' of the production of material culture as described by Shanks/Tilley (1987, 148-155). In the first place, material culture is produced within the conceptual framework of a society, which to a large extent determines the outcome of the production process. Secondly, the production of material culture is an active process in which the producer imposes his or her perception of social reality on the artefact. This perception may differ from other participants' perceptions and thus result in new material representations of social practice. In the third place, material culture may play an important role in the (re-) production or transformation of social contradictions. When these notions regarding the meaning of material culture are compared with those from the processual approach, it may be clear that the consequences for the interpretation of archaeological material are considerable.

A case study of arrowheads and spears
The following case study fulfils two purposes. First, the discussion of a specific category of material culture may help to appreciate the practical consequences of the theoretical stances presented above. Moreover, the meaning of material culture as envisaged on purely theoretical grounds is intimately related to the conclusions drawn from practice. A second reason to present this case study is that it provides a clear example of the wide variety of meanings simultaneously attributed to a specific category of material culture: weapons. It shows that there are not only multiple etic perspectives on the meaning of material culture, as described above, but also multiple emic perspectives on the meaning of material culture categories.

First, the metal arrowheads of the San Bushmen of the Kalahari desert are discussed. The interpretation of the stylistic traits of these implements is central in the Wiessner-Sackett debate presented above. The importance of the arrows in San society is clear: not only do they play an important positive role in the acquisition of meat and does the arrow-maker enjoy privileges in the distribution of the meat procured by means of his arrows, but there is also an important negative association with arrowheads, since poisoned specimens form the principal instruments of murder (Wiessner 1983, 261). Wiessner's study reveals that there are no significant differences in arrow morphology at the level of the individual, the band or the band cluster. It is only when the arrows from different language groups are compared that significant differences are evident (Wiessner 1983, 265-269). According to Wiessner, these differences should be interpreted in terms of emblemic style: "if a man makes arrows in the same way,

one could be fairly certain that he shares similar values around hunting, land rights, and general conduct" (1983, 269). The large scale at which these significant differences occur (different language groups) is explained by the extreme environmental conditions, which require strong and reliable social ties over large distances. It is the language group that pools risks and whose the arrow type is emblemic (Wiessner 1985, 165). A contrasting view is presented by Sackett. According to him, "it is difficult to believe [...] that their language groups [...] regard one another as target populations for ethnic messaging when we are told that San living in the interior of one group are only vaguely aware that other such groups even exist" (1985, 156). He interprets the differences occurring at the level of the language group as passive (isochrestic behaviour), as the result of different regional traditions in production processes. Only at the borders of the regional (technical) traditions may the differences, which are essentially of an isochrestic nature, be interpreted in emblemic terms (Sackett 1990, 37; Conkey 1990, 13).

The second part of this case study deals with spears from northwestern Kenya. The communities may be characterised as gerontocratic: only the older men are able to accumulate wives and other forms of wealth, especially cattle. The young male adults are warriors, herding their fathers' livestock and defending the group and its animals. To these warriors, the social significance of the spears is considerable, as they are used in military actions, to protect the people from wild animals and to define the symbolic role of the young warriors within the society. This last point is illustrated by the stylistic attributes of the spears. To display the experience derived from the distant journeys undertaken during wars, cattle-herding and cattle-raiding, the stylistic characteristics of the spears include elements derived from other groups. In the example presented by Larick (1991), the Pokot warriors of one age group carry spears seen as typical of the neighbouring Turkana group. It is the exotic which is considered appropriate for establishing of an emblem for a specific sub-group in society. The creation of a specific style of spear for an age group of warriors is dictated not only by the concept of the exotic in itself, but also by the ascribed prowess of the group which provides the stylistic reference. In the case of the Pokot, the Turkana style was preferred over that of the Boran, another neighbouring pastoralist group, because the military abilities of the Turkana were considered superior. Through the emulation of their spear style, the supposed strength of the Turkana would be projected onto the Pokot warriors of one age group (Larick 1991, 325). This is one of the social strategies of young Pokot warriors to display their unity and strength and thus their suitability to be accepted into full male society (Hodder 1982a, 67).

These same case studies may also be analysed in a post-processual perspective. In the case of the San arrowheads, this would certainly encompass the cultural setting and the role of the arrowheads in the (re-)production of oppositions. It might be concluded that the large-scale spatial patterns at which they occur are in clear contrast with the small-scale patterns of women's ornaments (Wiessner 1984), which in its turn might suggest that there is a structural opposition between men, arrowheads and 'outside' on the one hand, and women, ornaments and 'inside' on the other: men:women :: arrowheads:ornaments :: outside:inside. In the East African setting, the interpretation of the spears in structuralist termi-nology is more straightforward than that pertaining to the San arrowheads. This is mainly the result of the attention given to the social context in which these items function, provided by both Hodder and Larick, but it is also possible that the social significance of the San arrowheads is smaller. It is clear that in northwestern Kenya the spears function in a number of oppositions: they symbolise young (:old), male (:female), wild (:domestic), outside (:inside) and war (:quies-cence). In these societies, spears thus appear to be a power-ful tool in the analysis of the structural layout of society, with a large series of oppositions which may subsequently be studied in order to provide new insights into the social structure of the society concerned.

This case study does not only exemplify the practical value of the theoretical stances presented above, it also reveals that material culture functions in many ways. It may express ethnic differences in both active (emblemic) and passive (isochrestic) ways, while it may also be used to represent various sub-groups, resulting in a material culture pattern which cuts across ethnic boundaries. From a structuralist perspective, this active role of material culture may be fur-ther extended, in such a way that an archaeological analysis in terms of oppositions may reveal important oppositions structuring society, which otherwise would remain unnoticed. This case study made it clear that the spatial patterns of items associated with men and women may be of different magnitudes, while it was also shown that the morphology of artefacts may be determined on the basis of attributes ascribed to outsider groups. At a more general level, the symbolic role played by material culture in social strategies has become apparent. These ideas will be incorporated in the archaeological study at hand (see sections 3.8.5 and 3.8.6).

Style and function
So far, the difference between style and function has not been dealt with extensively. Whereas in processual approaches the question of which attributes of an artefact are stylistic and which are not is clearly considered important (the Wiessner-Sackett debate), the post-processual approach by-passes the question altogether. Sackett's notion that function

and style are not distinguishable attributes of an artefact, but together create the morphology of an artefact, finds better parallels in post-processual studies, which focus on the meaning of material culture rather than an explanation of attributes in terms of style and function. The active role of material culture in social practice, advocated by post-proces-sual archaeologists and adherents of the information exchange theory alike, does not agree with Sackett's notion that mater-ial culture also plays a passive role (Conkey 1990, 1-3; Lemonnier 1986; Shanks/Tilley 1987, 142-146). It should be remembered that the distinction between stylistic and isochrestic behaviour has to be correlated with the etic/emic discussion. While the morphology of an artefact may very well be the result of isochrestic behaviour (emic), outsiders (etic) may, on the basis of observed differences to contempo-rary other artefacts, interpret the distinctiveness of this artefact in terms of active, stylistic behaviour. In this view, the etic perspective is not only that of the archaeologists, but also that of the outsiders living at the same time as the producers of the artefact.

The archaeological culture concept and society
A further topic that has been left undiscussed so far but certainly needs attention is the concept of *archaeological culture*. This concept was explicated by Childe, who states that "a culture must be distinguished by a plurality of well-defined diagnostic types that are repeatedly and exclusively associated with one another and, when plotted on a map, exhibit a recognizable distribution pattern" (Childe 1957, 123). Since then, this notion has been refuted on two grounds. First, it became clear that archaeological data do not fit this model: the 'boundedness' of Childe's archaeologi-cal culture could not be reproduced. Instead, archaeological data displayed various overlapping and distinct spatial distri-butions, which led Clarke to propose a polythetic definition of culture (1968; for an extensive discussion of the culture concept see Shennan 1989). A redefinition of the culture concept as being polythetic may seem to be an improvement, but how is this technical description to be translated into behavioural terms?

This brings us to the second problem pertaining to the archaeological culture concept. It brings to light a more general problem in the humanities. Not only does the archae-ological record fail to agree with a bounded definition, in other sciences too, the 'boundedness' of concepts such as society is being questioned. According to Wobst (1978), the bounded social unit of anthropological studies is more the result of research strategies than of any 'real' situation:

ethnographic fieldwork may dichotomize the continuum of spatial process among hunter- gatherers into populations surrounded by boundaries, regardless of whether these boundaries have behavioral significance or not [since] new fieldwork in a region usually

The bounded archaeological culture concept, dismissed on empirical grounds, may be replaced by a polythetic definition, but this new concept requires an 'open' definition of the concept of society for an interpretation of the archaeological data in terms of human behaviour. In perspectives which stress the open character of society, the social processes which (re-)produce society are placed centre stage. As a result of their different backgrounds (age, gender, intelligence, experience), people have different perspectives on society which determine their social action. In other words, perspectives are created as a result of personal and group relations based on exchanges of gifts, people and information and encompassing long-distance relations for exotic materials or spouses and local intra-group relations alike. The differences in world view originate in the differences in *social personae*: different networks (Mann 1986; Osborn 1989; Shennan 1989) or fields (Bourdieu 1977; Mahar *et al*. 1995, 8-10) in which people operate. These different perspectives and social actions are embedded within a social structure based on intersubjectively experienced 'rights and wrongs'. As a result, the social structure influences potential social action (see below, the discussion on *habitus*). The limits of society may be defined in both social and spatial terms: society is a territorially confined, emically defined social group (Giddens 1984, 162-165).

An archaeological analysis incorporating these notions should take into account that the archaeological record is the result of these differences in perspective and social action, a material record of the various fields/networks in which people operated. Nonetheless, it has to be realised that the archaeological record is neither necessarily nor continuously rich in emic meaning: behaviour in which (material or social) norms are reproduced is in the emic perspective often seen as unintentional or isochrestic, but from an etic perspective may be interpreted as meaningful and distinctive. In these instances, the position of an outsider is not restricted to the archaeologist, but also includes contemporary outsiders, who were not involved in the production of emic isochrestic behaviour (see the case study on the San arrowheads). This allows a meaningful interpretation of isochrestic behaviour, as will be demonstrated in section 3.8.5.

2.3 Tradition and transformation

The active production and reproduction of society indicates that society is not static but dynamic, not synchronous but diachronous: it is always in the making but never finished. This active definition of society agrees well with the focus of this study on the process of neolithisation: how did this societal change take place? Before presenting an idiom by

which change may be understood, it is necessary to discuss the precondition of change: time.

The notion of time underlies change, or rather makes temporal development possible. Although the practice of archaeology is clearly dependent on the possibility of distinguishing synchronous and diachronous differences, the issue of time is hardly touched upon. The major question is: what factors are plausible explanations for change at what kinds of time scales? In the 1990s, archaeology frequently turned to the *Annales* school for an interpretative framework of historical time. F. Braudel's tripartite scheme of short-term events, medium-term conjunctures and long-term structures (*longue durée*) may be a valuable model for archaeological research, as long as it is realised that this merely focuses attention on the different time-scales at which change occurs. The short time-span relates to events caused by small-scale actions of individuals or groups and politics. It is the domain of the traditional history of great men and wars and as such of limited relevance to (prehistoric) archaeology. As a rule, the event history is too ephemeral to be observable in the archaeological record, unless events have a detectable influence on the other distinguished levels of analysis. This is meant by the notion of *structure-event-structure*, which expresses the possible influence of an event on the long-term structure of society: in specific instances, an event may result in the production of a different structure (Knapp 1992, 13). In such cases, an event has such far-reaching effects that an archaeologist might infer it from the difference between two successive structures. The medium-term and long-term changes, together known as structural history, are of more direct relevance to archaeology, because these are more often reflected in the archaeological record. Whereas the conjunctures comprise social and economic developments and changes in demography and ideologies, the structures pertain to developments in the natural environment and the life-span of civilisations and technologies. It is important that these temporal scales of analysis are not seen as absolute and separate, because it is analysis of the dialectical relation between these temporal structures that will produce a complete image of tradition and transformation (Bintliff 1991; Knapp 1992; Last 1995).

How does change take place? To describe the social practices which underlie (lack of) change, I like to employ Bourdieu's terminology of structure, *habitus* and social practice (1977). By means of this set of concepts, it is possible to discuss the 'location' of change in a non-binary way, that is without stressing on the possibility or impossibility of individuals to shape their own lives. As such, it strikes a balance between the 'Malinowskian' view of society in which individual agents are presented as dominant and a 'Durkheimian' view in which society is seen as a collective representation (Kuper 1992, 5-6). In other words, Bourdieu's terminology allows a
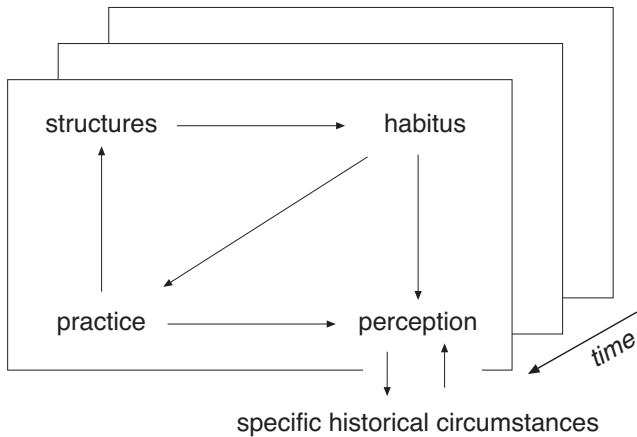
Fig. 2.1. Model of social practice (after Harker 1995, fig. 4.4).

contextual approach in which the historical situation rather than a presupposed view of society is a starting point in the analysis. Bourdieu's terminology is presented in the form of a diagram from Harker (1995) (fig. 2.1). The concept of *habitus* is the starting point in this presentation. It relates to the background of a 'player' in society: his or her personal history, knowledge, intelligence, social experiences and *social personae*. While the *habitus* in an abstract way is based on the structure of society (in which the societal 'rights and wrongs' are embedded), differences between the backgrounds of 'players' lead to different perceptions of 'reality' and to differences in social practice. As a result of social practice, the structure of society may or may not be changed, which may lead to a new *habitus* (Mahar *et al*. 1995). Outside this systemic model of society are the specific historical circumstances. This addition to the model not only brings the internalistic model into contact with the outside world (an important aspect of the experiences embedded within the *habitus*), it also injects a temporal aspect into the model. In other words, specific historical circumstances may change over time, resulting in different perceptions and different social practices and altered possibilities of societal change. So, under the historical circumstances of time x, change is impossible, whereas at point in time y, societal change is sanctioned.

This terminology makes it clear that the *habitus* of players may be a determinant of change. This raises to two questions: how different are people's perspectives in the small-scale and basically egalitarian societies to be presented in this study, and how great is the influence of the influential players? If a distinction is made between influential and less-influential players, one might suggest that these categories are based on differences in social skills, intelligence, age and gender. Change springs from non-normative social action,

behaviour which is outside the social order, but is accepted and subsequently incorporated within the structure of society. While non-normative behaviour from the less-influential players will generally not be accepted, the scope for the influential to 'implement' non-normative social action may be considerably greater. The acceptance of such behaviour may depend on the specific historical circumstances (which influence the perception of socially acceptable behaviour) and people's capability to achieve consensus on the new social action. In other words, while individuals may initiate societal change, social consensus is needed to sanction and implement this non-normative social action (Barth 1992, 24; Giddens 1984, 14-16). As such, this model of change unites the two opposing views of society presented above: it does not include dominant individual agents, while at the same time the role of individuals as catalysts of change is maintained, although restricted by the social group.

An specific form of change is *bricolage*. This term generally refers to the way in which tasks are carried out with a simple set of tools (*contra* science). According to Lévi-Strauss, it is also a metaphor for the creation of new structural relations in society. In other words, change is created in social practice, with all existing structural relations serving as raw material and within the conceptual framework provided by the existing structure (1966: 16-35; Tilley 1990a, 26-28). This form of eclectic creation of new structural societal relations may serve as an analogy for the production of new material culture. In this perspective, new material culture is constituted out of the available raw material, in its technological, morphological and decorative aspects, which all have their specific conceptual connotations. I would like to propose that these connotations are the primary criteria for the selection or rejection of raw material: are the connotations sought after or avoided? In other words, the new expressions of material culture embody meaningful information on the perceived value of the connotations of the old material culture. When aspects of material culture are maintained, then the old connotations are actively incorporated into the new material culture. If aspects of material culture are abandoned, their specific connotations are probably deliberately excluded from the new material expressions (see sections 4.3.5, 4.4.5, 4.5.2.3 and 4.5.3).

notes

1 An example may clarify this position. In the archaeology of the Near East, the direct historical approach is often practised, which seems justified on the basis of the striking similarities in for example house construction, natural environment and artefact types. When one studies house construction techniques, perhaps such a direct historical approach is indeed allowed, but a study of many

other traits would be cut short because of the strict cultural practices embedded in Islam, which was of course absent in the prehistoric past. A general comparative approach which uses non-Islamic populations in a similar natural environment as a reference would perhaps be better suited to provide insight into many aspects of the prehistoric society.

2 This notion of the production and reproduction of (material) culture will be discussed further in the final part of this section. The best example of passive style turned active, is the *swoosh* of Nike. Though initially it was placed on the shoes to strengthen them (a purely functional aspect of the shoe), it developed into an emblem of Nike footwear.