

'Megalithic' tradition of the first millennium BC in peninsular India has come to be seen as developing out of the preceding neolithic/chalcolithic cultures, rather than the product of iron-wielding invaders (e.g. Allchin and Allchin 1982: 340-3; Moorti 1994).

In other contexts of Indian archaeology, local developmental sequences became increasingly popular as an explanation of culture change. In the West, a focus on culture change as adaptation encouraged the investigation of the origins of agriculture where cause was sought in terms of climate change or population pressure (e.g. Binford 1968; Hole et al. 1969; Cohen 1977). The Allahabad University research programme in the Belan and Son valleys attempted to outline similar evidence by combining regional survey with stratigraphic investigation to suggest a gradual settling down in the Early Holocene which led to the use of wild rice and subsequently the cultivation of domesticated rice and animals (Sharma et al. 1980). However, this study did not pursue the kinds of environmental correlations and causes, discussed in the sections above, but left change unexplained. The available evidence, especially in terms of gradual evolution of technology, does raise the possibility of some local domestication processes (Allchin and Allchin 1997). However, the plant and animal remains thought by some to indicate local domestication of rice, cattle, pig, sheep and goat were analysed in a decidedly non-processual framework of apparently sudden change (Sharma et al. 1980: 20-4). This saw none of the gradual trends of change from 'wild' to 'domestic' which were the mainstay of many domestication studies conducted in Southwest Asia (e.g. Higgs and Jarmon 1969), of which Meadow's work on Mehrgarh mammals provides a South Asian example (Meadow 1984a and b). In addition, wide discrepancies in radiocarbon dates promoted disputes over the antiquity of these sites (Sharma and Sharma 1987; Chakrabarti 1988; Clark and Khanna 1989; Possehl and Rissman 1992). For these reasons, Sharma's conclusions have not been widely accepted in discussions of early rice agriculture (Glover and Higham 1996).

The interest in general evolutionary stages encouraged cross-cultural comparisons, in order to find regularities of culture process. An important aspect of developing theoretical interests, therefore, was increased use of ethnographic evidence by archaeologists. Archaeological use of ethnographic parallels was nothing new, but the traditional uses of ethnographic analogy were largely limited to inferring function of enigmatic archaeological objects and features, such as vessel form-function correlations (e.g. Allchin 1960; Nagar 1969), or house construction techniques (e.g. Rao 1965; Nagar 1975; Cunningham 1994). Such analogies have certainly been useful in opening archaeologists' eyes to the possible practices which are absent from modern urban life, but they often came with certain assumptions of changeless continuity which need to be explicitly argued for individual cases (as did Allchin 1960; cf. Allchin 1985; Sinpoli 1991; Boivin and Fuller, this volume). However, ethnographic analogies within neo-evolutionism focused on more general parallels for social organization and subsistence patterns. For example, Bridget Allchin (1966) in the *Stone-Tipped Arrow* brought into comparison societies from the band stage, hunting and gathering cultures, from three continents and numerous islands, including Africa, Australia and India. In her regional surveys, she discussed both the 'last hunters' of modern relic band societies and the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology of each

region. Her survey revealed some patterns which went against a strict unilinear evolution, such as the reversion or rejection of microliths or blades in favour of older flake technologies (ibid.: 187). She was also able to suggest possible environmental factors in the evolution and diffusion of technology such as the apparent conservatism of areas of particularly high or low rainfall. Other archaeologists increasingly turned to ethnographic evidence in interpreting their archaeological findings, in attempts to trace the systemic relationships between variables, such as resource availability and settlement pattern, as models for past systems (e.g. Murty 1981, 1985; Nagar 1983; Paddayya 1979, 1982; Raju 1988). For example, Paddayya (1982) drew on ethnographically documented seasonality of wild foodstuffs in the Hungsi valley to develop a hypothetical annual schedule for interpreting the Palaeolithic site distribution he had mapped. Similarly, Raju (1988) studied the Yanandis, as a comparison to Upper Palaeolithic evidence in Andhra Pradesh. Although these studies tended to compare recent hunter-gatherers with archaeological evidence from the same or a nearby region, the analogies did not rely on an assumption of historical continuity but rather one of similar environmental constraints and potentials (Paddayya 1979, 1982; Sinpoli 1991). Nevertheless, a persistent uncertainty in Indian ethnoarchaeology is whether a given comparison relies on homology (i.e. actual historical descent) or analogy without historical connection.

CHIEFDOMS, STATES AND THE INDUS VALLEY DEBATE

A pervasive issue in archaeology, and the focus of much theoretical discussion, is the rise of complex societies. Processualism, through its emphasis on general explanatory frameworks and adaptation, provided a new way of understanding early civilizations which was more realistic than claims that the 'idea of civilization' had diffused or that complex societies were an inevitable result of inherent human progress (Morrison 1994). Two approaches to studying complexity came into use during the 1960s and 1970s, one focusing on *change* in settlement pattern and layout, and the other comparing a given period against a list of traits derived from an evolutionary classification, such as the Service-Sahlins scheme. Studies of settlement pattern change have been employed since the late 1970s in Harappan studies and somewhat more recently in studies of urbanization in the Ganga valley (e.g. Lal 1987; Erdosy 1988; Chakrabarti 1995; Allchin 1995). For example, comparisons of pre-Harappan and Harappan sites have been discussed (e.g. Mughal 1982, 1990; Possehl 1982, 1990; Chakrabarti 1995) on the basis of site size categories, visible features and finds. Mughal divided sites into campsites, 'pure' settlement sites, and sites with 'specialized/industrial activities' such as those which had kilns (Mughal 1990). A comparison of the Mature with the Early Harappan phases, showed an increase in the quantity of sites, their average size and height, and maximum size, and a large increase in the number of industrial sites (ibid.). Mughal concluded therefore that there was intensification of specialization beginning during the Early Harappan, coupled with the development of inter-settlement exchange, in addition to social stratification (ibid.).

The other approach to the study of social complexity relied upon anthropological

generalizations to produce a trait list of a particular level of social organization, either based on modern societies or better known ancient cultures, such as the early states of Mesopotamia and Egypt. The first step towards complexity within the Sahlins-Service scheme is the problematic category of 'chiefdom'. For example, chiefdoms are supposed to have hereditary theocratic chiefs, and kin-based ranking, traits which are likely to be archaeologically invisible. None the less, other chiefdom characteristics such as central accumulation and redistribution and craft specialization are traits that should be recognizable archaeologically. From such archaeologically recognizable chiefdom traits it was assumed that other aspects of a past society could be extrapolated. When the 'New Archaeology' (processualism) was adopted at Deccan College, the identification of social complexity became a major interest and several chiefdoms were found amongst various chalcolithic societies, including the Malwa Culture in Maharashtra, represented by Inamgaon and Daimabad (Dhavalikar 1983, 1985, 1988; Shinde 1994), and the Ahar Culture, as represented at Balathal for example (Misra 1997). Chiefdoms in these cases were identified on the basis of evidence of hierarchy in the settlement pattern: This two level site hierarchy indicates a chiefdom because in such a society some settlements dominate the entire society as they are the loci of the regional socio-political authority (Dhavalikar: 73). In addition, evidence of within-site differentiation was found in terms of house size and specialist craftsman, as well as 'public works', such as embankments. In chiefdoms, the regional centre is also traditionally identified as being a religious centre ruled by a 'chief-cum-priest' (ibid.). Relying not on settlement evidence as much as differentiation in burial goods within Megalithic tombs, Moorti (1994) argued for chiefdom level societies in southern peninsular India during the first millennium BC.

What is intriguing about the chiefdom concept in the Indian context is the way in which it has been applied in vastly different contexts. Dhavalikar, Moorti and Misra drew on the writing of American processualists of the 1970s for their definition of a chiefdom. They did not, however, draw on previous discussions of chiefdoms in South Asian archaeology, such as by Malik (1968: 103ff., 1979) and Fairservis (1961, 1967, 1971). Malik, based on his own reading of Service, suggested that Harappan society falls into this 'transitional society' in particular because it has a centralized, redistributive system without any evidence for kings or a 'political class'. Malik saw ideology as central in maintaining the Harappan centralization: 'This central "agency", once it had come into existence, in the absence of legal or physical force, could only have continued through sanctified, legitimized and codified rights, privileges, etc.' (Malik 1968: 10). Thus he saw the religious system as crucial in maintaining social order. Malik and Fairservis both argued that there was no evidence for a separation of priests and kings in the Harappan civilization and hypothesized that these roles would probably have been combined within a single elite social group. Fairservis (e.g. 1989) has further emphasized the centrality of pastoralism to Harappan society, implying that such may be incompatible with a 'state' (for a critique of such assumptions see Guha 1994). The fact that the Harappan Civilization and the small villages of the second millennium BC elsewhere in India might be seen as being at the same stage of development, raises serious doubt about the actual utility of

trying to identify 'chiefdoms' on the basis of a checklist of traits. Surely, the differences between the Harappan society of the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra valleys and those other, smaller-scale cultures is greater than their similarities, and it is precisely an understanding of the nature of those differences which should be the focus of archaeological understanding. Even Service has admitted that the distinction between chiefdom and state is not clear-cut:

archaic civilizations seem to have grown out of earlier chiefdoms. All are much larger and commensurately more complex than chiefdoms, but other than that there seem to be no single diagnostic feature in their social and political makeup to set them off qualitatively from the chiefdoms. (Service 1993: 130)

Although it may remain heuristically useful (cf. Earle 1987), the chiefdom concept in general has come under attack (e.g. Yoffee 1993; Trigger 1993). Another difficulty at work is the fact that the 'state' as a category generally has been defined without reference to Asian history or prehistory, creating a problem of the implicit difference of Asia (Morrison 1994). In this light, the debate about whether the Harappan Civilization is a 'state', as traditionally defined (and as argued by Jacobson 1986; Possehl 1990; Ratnagar 1991; Kenoyer 1991; Dhavalikar 1995a: 177; Allchin and Allchin 1997: 187-91), or not (Shaffer 1982; Miller 1985; Fairservis 1991), may be no more than terminological hair-splitting.

Nevertheless, the Harappan state debate raises important issues about the nature of urbanization and social complexity. In part, different opinions have resulted from the decision to emphasize either similarities or differences with other early civilizations like Mesopotamia. The apparent similarities in terms of settlement hierarchy based around large urban centres with specialized craft production have been recognized from the earliest Indus valley excavations (e.g. Wheeler 1947: 74; cf. Jacobson 1986; Lamberg-Karlovsky 1989b; Ratnagar 1991). The question raised by Shaffer (1982: 43) is whether these similarities necessarily 'reflect a highly stratified society with centralized authority'. Shaffer (1982) drew attention to an apparent lack of difference between urban centres and small sites like Allahdino and the apparently broad distribution of 'wealth' items within Harappan society. Malik (1979) noted the possibility that religious monuments might be produced by less complex societies, while Kenoyer (1991) discusses the possibility of a value system which suppressed the monumental expression of power (cf. Miller 1985, who argues for an ascetic elite).

A simplistic reading of the neo-evolutionary framework for understanding complex societies also tends to overlook the importance of interaction between social groups at different stages of complexity. As numerous ethnographic examples in South Asia demonstrate there is important scope for a degree of symbiosis and interdependence between hunter-gatherers, nomadic pastoralists and settled agriculturalists, and thus between groups that could be considered bands, tribes and states. The role of pastoralists or hunters in trade and the supply of raw material to more hierarchical and urbanized groups has been explored in numerous reviews of ethnography (e.g. Allchin 1977; Allchin and Allchin 1997: 186; Murty 1981, 1985; Hooja 1988; Nagar and Misra 1989). This has

led to a reconceptualization of the Harappan Civilization to include not just urban and agricultural village populations that fit the traditional neo-evolutionary model for states, but also a significant population of possibly non-agricultural pastoralists and hunter-gatherers (Shaffer 1974, 1979; Possehl 1979; Rissman 1986; Guha 1994). Murty (1981, 1984) and Hooja (1988) both explored apparently contemporary Mesolithic and Neolithic/Chalcolithic sites in terms of such interactions, while Chakrabarti (1995) has attributed the spread of agriculture and ultimately Indian urbanism of the Early Historic period in part to interactive relationships between sedentary and hunter-gatherers. Indeed, Indian history has often been discussed in terms of the incorporation of various tribal groups without full assimilation (cf. Thapar 1984).

SOCIETY AS SYSTEM: FUNCTIONALISM

Interest in the categorical change of societies through social evolution necessitated more explicit models of past societies. The older, cultural-historical view looked at material culture in terms of typological similarities and distinctions. Material culture was interpreted as a simple reflection of people with shared mental templates. Cultures were seen as normative blocks filling space and time. With neo-evolutionism and ecological archaeology, cultures came to be seen as internally-differentiated and systematically integrated societies. Within such societies there were interactions between different components between which there was information flow. Different sites within a landscape came to be seen as integrated into settlement-subsistence systems. Aspects of societies such as resource use, subsistence, trade, and impacts on the environment could be visualized as inputs and outputs, and borrowing conceptually from the then predominant paradigm in ecology, societies came to be understood as ideally homeostatic systems. With such a model, different aspects of societies interacted, and change in one area led to changes in other areas. Societal change was generally seen as adaptation to external change.

A popular framework which was adopted by many archaeologists to visualize functional connections was General Systems Theory, a general theory proposed by the biologist Bertalanffy (1969) which abstracted diverse entities, including organisms, ecosystems, computers and societies, as wholes of interacting parts. Malik (1975, 1979) discussed the potential of this framework in an Indian context, whereas authors such as Clarke (1968) and Flannery (1972) promoted it in the West. From this perspective, Malik (1979) argued that religion functioned to make societies adaptive, while Atre (1989) outlined the interdependency of long-distance trade and the Harappan religion in promoting and sustaining Harappan urbanism. Perhaps the most important aspect of this framework is that it provided a set of terms for describing the relationships between different aspects of society, such as positive and negative feedbacks. However, coupled with an ecology-inspired view of societies in adaptation with their environment, negative feedbacks tended to be emphasized, as these maintained the system and resisted change. Positive feedback mechanisms were most often employed in the narratives of catastrophic change (e.g. Dhavalikar 1984). Although the ways in which societies were broken down into subsystems

was anything but empirical, and reflected the interests and biases of particular authors, the general orientation of systems theory was important for stimulating the identification of the plethora of ramifications of cultural processes. Thus, in principle, changes in material culture were linked to changes in social organization, economy and ideology. This provided theoretical justification for seeing the material remains of the past as a reflection of the functioning of ancient societies and as useful for study of more than just typology.

As the product or by-product of functioning social systems, material culture drew more detailed, quantitative attention in order to infer past social processes. The detailed analysis of variation in artefacts became an important component of research, such as the study of variation in Jorwe pottery forms from different sites (Dhavalikar and Marathe 1979), or stylistic variation (Miller 1983). Dales and Kenoyer (1986) produced an authoritative reclassification of Harappan ceramics with the intention of deriving 'a set of procedures by which mutually exclusive comparable classification systems and analyses can be established at each site' (Dales 1986: 130). Such studies drew attention to the internal differentiation of archaeological culture areas. For example, in Harappan studies it became evident that there were important and consistent regional differences in material culture (e.g. Possehl 1982, 1992, 1997; Kenoyer 1991). For example, Rissman (1989) identified different regional stylistic 'schools' in Harappan stamp seals which he attributed to a 'decentralized economy'. Possehl (1989, 1992) discussed the differences of the Harappan variants as determined in part by different cultural ecologies.

Shaffer and Lichtenstein (1989) developed these observations further in order to theoretically justify the archaeological identification of ethnic groups. They made an explicit attempt to move away a 'model of linear culture change ... that assumes cultures are closed systems' (ibid.: 117) to one which accounts for diversity. Accordingly, they proposed that regional variation, especially of the Pre-Harappan period, could be considered to represent ethnic groups. Drawing on the ethnicity theory of Barth (1969), which argued that ethnic groups signal boundaries, they identified ethnic groups much as traditional archaeology recognised cultural-historical phases, that is on the basis of characteristic artefacts assemblages and styles but argued that 'such salient cultural traits are material culture symbols ... [that are] used to indicate membership in co-operative social units' (Shaffer and Lichtenstein 1989: 199). Distinct groups of the pre-Harappan period were suggested to have become integrated during the period of urbanization. Certainly early civilizations, including the Indus, have been seen as 'amalgams of interacting ethnic and linguistic groups' (Lamberg-Karlovsky 1989b; cf. Service 1993). In the Shaffer and Lichtenstein model, ethnic groups were formed by shared ecological circumstances, such as those reflected in the different Harappan regions. While this model failed to escape the pots-peoples equivalence, it did introduce a starting point for discussions of the significance of style and the recognition of ancient ethnicity, both heavily discussed topics in archaeological theory (e.g. Conkey and Hastorf 1990; Hegmon 1992; Hooja 1996; Erdosy 1995a; Jones 1997).

Many now argue for a more sophisticated view of the Harappan Civilization, in which what we recognize in the archaeological record as Harappan in fact represents the intensive

sharing of numerous essential stylistic and organizational features which could just as well be the product of a set of regional polities as of a unified state (cf. Kenoyer 1991; Possehl 1997; Lal 1997). This brings us to a somewhat more post-processual outlook, in which the ideological aspects of what is recognized archaeologically as the Harappan style become a major focus of interest in terms of how they organized both the structure of sites and the production of material culture (e.g. Kenoyer 1995a). Furthermore the enigmatic problem of selective continuity in social and stylistic traits between the Harappan and later Ganga valley urban periods has come under consideration (Kenoyer 1995b; Cunningham 1995; Erdosy 1995; Allchin 1995). The considerations of style and ethnicity have made it clear that societies are not unified wholes, that can be supposed to have functioned as superorganisms in adaptation, as General Systems Theory implied. Rather, the existence of multiple social groups, often with competing interests had to be recognized as an important component in change, as Malik had noted:

micro-studies give us points of reference against which different aspects of a 'total' society and culture may be examined. ... For example, an examination of the repeatedly emerging forms of 'protest', 'dissent', 'reformist' mass movements against any existing orthodox tradition will prove to be very useful not only from the processual viewpoint but also how in the general socio-cultural structure of India this characteristic of long-standing has made significant contributions to the 'totality', or the overall structural pattern. (Malik 1975: 10)

A systemic view of culture that saw societies as open systems had already begun to develop through studies of trade. During the 1970s long-distance trade between societies became an important focus for research, often within a framework of 'World Systems Theory' (e.g. Lamberg-Karlovsky 1972, 1982, 1989b; Tosi 1973, 1984; Ratnagar 1981, 1994). This drew attention in particular to the trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus valley, and the possible role this trade had played in driving the Harappan urbanization: 'from the Mediterranean to the Indus valley a network of interregional behaviour connected the elites of distant and distinctive cultures. Furthermore, this view assigns to Mesopotamia the role of the principle actor within this network' (Lamberg-Karlovsky 1989b; cf. Lamberg-Karlovsky 1972, 1982). Others, notably Chakrabarti (1977, 1995; also Kohl 1989) objected to this view, arguing instead for full urbanism in the Indus valley prior to its engagement in trade with Mesopotamia via the Persian gulf. In his review of Harappan trade, Chakrabarti saw the Baluchistan-Iran connections as a mere 'peddler's trade' (Chakrabarti 1990: 163). This work and others, drew attention to the primary importance of a well-developed internal trade network within the Greater Indus valley (e.g. Ratnagar 1981; Gupta 1982; Asthana 1984). Gupta (1982) and Ratnagar (1991) hypothesised that different sites specialised in given products and supplied much of the rest of the Harappan area. Kohl (1989) critiqued the application of world systems theory because ancient South, West and Central Asia differed by having multiple cores with 'peripheries' between them, creating the possibility that these peripheral regions sustained more complexity as central-places of trade. Indeed rather than being subjugated and dependent on the centres, during some periods, innovations may have radiated from these 'peripheries', including such developments as metal-working and horse-breeding. These general interests in trade were later extended into extra-Harappan contexts in India (e.g. Lahiri 1992).

STRENGTHENING INFERENCES: FROM ETHNOGRAPHIC
ANALOGY TO ACTUALISTIC RESEARCH

The first critiques of the processualist reconstructions of the past were of a methodological nature, focusing on how archaeological finds are actually to be related to past human actions. Processualism, it was argued, had oversimplified the archaeological evidence by fitting it into generalized categories derived largely from ethnography. The archaeological evidence was interpreted in terms of the fossilized residue of social systems, whether they were band, chiefdom, or state. Thus, for example, the function of buildings was assigned on the basis of their artefactual contents, and these different functions, such as the butcher, potter and carpenters identified at Daimabad (Sali 1986; Dhavalikar 1989a) were then used to generalize about social organization in terms of specialization and complexity. No detailed consideration was given as to how artefacts came to be where they were found, and whether what was actually used in a building had been left there or had been discarded there secondarily (Panja 1993). In some cases, open horizontal excavations produced spatial patterning in artefact assemblages which showed similarities to patterning encountered stratigraphically (Shaffer 1979). This called into question traditional layer-cake stratigraphy and highlighted a need for consideration of the unique cultural formation processes that contribute to the creation of archaeological sites. Thus 'occupational mounds are, by their very existence, totally a cultural artefact, and stratigraphic conceptions and assumptions developed in geology may, or may not, apply' (ibid.: 26). In Europe and America, criticisms and realizations such as these encouraged the consideration of formation processes (Schiffer 1972, 1987) or 'depositional and post-depositional theory' (Clarke 1973). These realizations promoted attempts to demonstrate constant relationships between material culture production, use and disposal and human behaviour. Paddayya (1980) drew attention to these concerns in India as part of his review of Western theoretical developments, with particular reference to Schiffer's *Behavioral Archaeology* (1976) and Binford's (1977, 1978) early writings on 'middle-range theory'. Paddayya (1980: 129) warned that:

the picture of the past that can be obtained through the framework of the New Archaeology cannot but be distorted, because it does not take into account the various processes involved in the transformation of the cultural phenomena into the static archaeological record and thus falsely assumes a close fit between the past behavioural system and the archaeological record.

These critiques of archaeology as simplistically inventing fossilized social systems encouraged what was dubbed by Binford and his followers 'actualistic research', including both experimental archaeology and ethnoarchaeology. Such research was meant to establish in modern observable situations rules that would allow the fragmentary archaeological record to be reconstructed. Within India this led to an increasing use of ethnographic data by archaeologists, and a growing number of archaeologists gathered their own ethnographic evidence. As noted above, the use of ethnography was in line with the neo-evolutionary view of cross-cultural stages and was already underway well before a concern with formation processes. What was new about 'actualistic studies' was that they showed an interest not so much in large social processes of economy and social

organisation, but rather in the details of how individual activities accumulated into archaeological sites and how these were subsequently modified. A concern with site formation processes was not entirely new to the India context either, as a few problem-oriented studies of site formation had been carried out earlier, notably by Zeuner (1959) and Allchin (1963) on the formation of 'ashmounds' in southern India. Their work drew on both scientific analyses (Zeuner 1959; independently confirmed by Mujumdar and Rajaguru 1966) and ethnographic evidence from India and elsewhere (Allchin 1963) to demonstrate that the mounds were the result of the episodic burning of large accumulations of cattle dung. In addition, ethnographic evidence raised the possibility that they may have been precursors for certain rituals or festivals involving cattle and fire. For the most part, however, formation processes research in India developed in the mid-1980s (e.g. Paddayya 1987). For example, in a recent discussion of Palaeolithic sites of the Hunsgi and Baichbal valleys, sites were divided into sedimentological types representing different natural post-depositional effects, and into three categories of cultural formation processes on the basis of differences in artefact material and form (Paddayya and Petraglia 1995). Such a breakdown of the sites represents a new conceptual development compared to earlier reports (Paddayya 1982).

Formation processes need to be considered on different spatial levels, including those processes affecting individual artefacts or assemblages, those operating on individual sites, and those affecting regions with many sites (Petraglia 1995). Wandsnider (1995), who has studied the ephemeral campsites of modern nomadic pastoralists in India, has discussed the need to classify sites along a spectrum of different time scales, relating to the duration and cyclicity of occupations as well as the 'grade', or potential chronological resolution, represented by a site. At the scale of landscapes, studies of formation processes have considered the effects of different kinds of transhumant settlement strategy (Panja 1996). In addition, there has been an emerging concern with the incomplete nature of archaeological settlement patterns (e.g. Panja 1996; cf. Possehl 1997: 459).

Considerations of formation processes affecting single sites or the assemblages on a site, have made important contributions to the understanding of subsistence, craft specialization, and social scheduling cycles. An explicitly taphonomic approach has developed within Indian archaeozoology that has allowed for the study of spatial patterning in bone assemblages and the delineation of various butchering practices (Thomas and Joglekar 1995; Paddayya et al. 1995; Meadow 1993). These studies not only draw on evidence of the archaeological context in which bones are recovered but also make inferences on the basis of the content of the assemblages as well, such as which anatomical parts are over- or under-represented. Similarly, the context of archaeobotanical assemblages is now beginning to be understood through a framework of human activities, including harvesting methods, crop processing, storage and trade (Reddy 1997).

The formation of residues from craft production has also come to be understood through ethnoarchaeology. Ethnoarchaeological studies of craft production, including shell bangles, beads, and pottery in South Asia have been numerous (e.g. Kenoyer 1985; Kenoyer et al. 1991; Miller 1985b; Wright 1989). In reviewing Harappan craft production, Kenoyer (1994) drew extensively on insights from ethnoarchaeological studies to critique