



The Archaeology of Contextual Meanings (New Directions in Archaeology)

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This companion volume to *Archaeology as Long-term History* focuses on the symbolism of artefacts. It seeks at once to refine the theory and method relating to interpretation and show, with examples, how to conduct this sort of archaeological work. Some contributors work with the material culture of modern times or the historic period, areas in which the symbolism of mute artefacts has traditionally been thought most accessible. However, the book also contains a good number of applications in prehistory to demonstrate the feasibility of symbolic interpretation where good contextual data survive from the distant past. In relation to wider debates within the social sciences, the volume is characterised by a concern to place abstract symbolic codes within their historical context and within the contexts of social actions. In this respect, it develops further some of the ideas presented in Dr Hodder's *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology*, an earlier volume in this series.

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