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Postcolonial Theory

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Post-colonial theory

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[–] Abstract and Keywords

Rather than agreeing to any one meaning or referent, most critics these days speak of ‘post-colonialisms’ to refer principally to ‘historical, social and economic material conditions’ and at other times to ‘historically-situated imaginative products’ and ‘aesthetic practices: representations, discourses and values’ (McLeod 2000: 254). Arising from subaltern studies, its theorists embrace hybridity, indict alterity, analyze colonial discourse, and employ strategic essentialism to promote identity politics. Under its influence, a strain of self-interrogation has for decades run as an undercurrent through much of anthropology and archaeology. Topics including looting, repatriation, stewardship, and the transformation of disciplinary identity are now persistent tropes in the field. Indigenous archaeology, emergent cosmopolitanisms, building up knowledge from below—these now occupy ongoing archaeological work. Limiting its applicability, though, are charges against its homogenization of colonial experience, its perpetuation of academic imperialism, and its relative neglect, until recently, of regions such as Latin America.

Keywords: Hybridity, subaltern studies, strategic essentialism, colonial discourse, alterity, identity

Introduction

Postcolonial theory has been contentious and continues to be so. Much has been written about the term itself, and particularly the multiple implications of ‘post’, since there is little that is uniform in the experiences in the post-colony: South American nations liberated themselves from Spain and Portugal in the early 19th century; India and Pakistan became independent of Great Britain in 1947; the many states of Africa gained independence generally in the 1960s and 1970s; those of the Soviet Union in 1991. Many conclude that there is nothing ‘post’ about the colonization of Africa, for example, and that many other supposedly liberated parts of the world are still held in thrall by the former colonizing powers. In fact, greater attention is paid these days to ongoing colonialisms (some would here list, for example, Tibet, Puerto Rico, First Nations in Canada and the United States). Thus, rather than agreeing to any one meaning or referent, most critics these days speak of ‘post-colonialisms’, and use the notion to encapsulate broadly a process ongoing around the globe, more advanced in some countries, and everywhere complicated by globalization. In some instances, the term is used to refer principally to ‘historical, social and economic material conditions’ and at other times to ‘historically-situated imaginative products’ and ‘aesthetic practices: representations, discourses and values’ (McLeod 2000: 254).

The theorization of post-colonial studies has centered on a number of concepts that do not, on the face of it, necessarily have much to do with each other, but have proven to be synergistic. Among these are alterity, dealt with notably in Edward Said’s (2003[1935]) discussion of orientalism; hybridity, associated with Homi Bhabha (1949–), and subalternity and strategic essentialism, associated with Gayatri Spivak (1942–). While rooting their analyses in literature and philosophy, Bhabha, Spivak, and Said have brought a cultural studies approach to their

topics, and post-colonial studies is therefore today recognized as an inherently interdisciplinary field, at least as comfortable in the social sciences as it is (sometimes controversially) in the humanities. Post-colonial theory's influence in archaeology has been limited (Gosden 2001; 2004; Pagán-Jiménez 2004; van Dommelen 2002) but has been conspicuous in Roman archaeology since the mid-1990s (see e.g. Webster and Cooper 1996; Mattingly 1997; Hingley 2005) and is growing in other regional archaeological studies (Hamilakis and Duke 2007; Liebmann and Rizvi 2008; Lydon and Rizvi 2010).

Hybridity

'Hybridity' refers to the transformations occasioned in inhabitants of the contact zone by the influx of colonizers, as well as to the changes that may occur in the colonizer through engagement with the exoticized other culture (Pratt 1992). This transculturalization prompts an ongoing ambivalence in inhabitants, however—an uncomfortable decentring of their sense of self and a concurrent explicit or implicit denigration of their values and culture by the colonizing power. Frantz Fanon (1925–61), a psychiatrist from Martinique, studied the impact of French colonization on Algerians, and not too surprisingly concluded that torture has its effects on a personality, and that violence meted out by colonizers would only be reversed by violence in kind—an assumption of the agency that the colonizer had sought to deny the colonized (Fanon 1961; 1965; 1967; 1968).

Short of violence, in the ongoing negotiation with the colonizer the individual may engage in so-called mimicry—an imitation of the invading culture that is never complete, and consequently often has subversive, rebellious elements. The colonizer generally resents and suspects the imitation, while demanding it. In any event, the mocking disguised as mimicry brings cold comfort to the colonized, since the result is the disconnection of the native culture from its moorings, replaced not by the colonizer's world but by an in-between world that Bhabha refers to as a 'third space' (Bhabha 1994: 37).

Bhabha generally valorizes the hybrid space, however, since it suggests an agency that can be overlooked by well-meaning but patronizing decolonizers (Young 1995). Arguably, all post-colonial writing takes place in this third space, in which the native uses the master's tools to subvert the maintenance of the colonizer's imperial stretch and in which there is a Derridean deferral of conclusive meaning while that meaning continues to be negotiated. This optimistic interpretation, however, is criticized as a naïve embrace of cosmopolitan men and women who would, in any case, have exerted their agency through the mobility, education, and financial good fortune that already sets them apart from the majority of their fellow citizens, most of whom recognize them as compradors (agents serving the mercantile interests of a foreign nation). In effect, in most cases they serve the purposes of the colonizer and in the process feather their own nest—a nest that, in many cases, has been set up in the metropolitan centres of the empire rather than in the periphery where the individuals were born.

Benita Parry is among those who argue from a materialist point of view that characterizes hybridity as the colonizer's placation of the native, an avoidance of the uneven exchange between the two cultures, and a face-saving or hypocritical pretence that will not admit the true level of opposition with which colonization on any cultural level (educational, religious, financial) is met. In fact, in its baldest form the critique of hybridity describes it as a prettified and modernized expression of the self-serving philosophy behind the White Man's Burden: to bring true civilization and salvation to the child-like (or, worse, barely human) native. In the process, the native informant, educated first at mission schools and then at Oxford, the Sorbonne, or Harvard, becomes deracinated—living in Paris, London, or New York, and strangely writing for the master about a romanticized, even prelapsarian, homeland far, far way. There can be no denying, though, that living away from the land of one's birth can shape a kind of commonality of experience that is dealt with at length in the writings of those in these various diasporas (Rajan and Mohanram 1995).

Archaeologists in the 21st century would not want to overlook the historical use of the term 'hybridity' by colonizers—a totally negative code for the dangers to racial purity threatened by sexual relations between the native and the colonizer (Gobineau 1856), nowadays sometimes given an interesting new valorization (Teng 2006). The supposed adulteration of an essentialist purity takes an interesting representational format in the question of authenticity: the notion that a hybridized individual can no longer be an appropriate or honest spokesperson for the native culture in which he or she was born. In the 20th century, with such a script, the well-meaning liberal academic seemed to want it both ways: a naïve native who stays untouched by the colonizer's

culture while exhibiting all the discursive skills that the colonizer recognized as academic analysis. As others have pointed out, such an unrealistic expectation is grounded in essentialism and in its companion, nativism (Griffiths 1994).

Subaltern studies

Subalternity draws its pertinence to post-colonial studies from Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* (1971[1929–37]) (Hoare and Smith 1971), and in particular from his analysis of cultural hegemony as an explanation for the pervasive control of the working classes by capitalism through its indoctrination of the concept that the goals of the rich in society are, in fact, the same goals shared by the impoverished. Thus, acculturation to those static norms, against all logic to clear-thinking revolutionaries, becomes the suicidal philosophy embraced by the masses. In South Asia, the Subaltern Studies Group subsequently sought to reverse that wrong thinking and, in the process, wanted to give voice to the heretofore silent and invisible masses, the 'subalterns' of society whose history had never been written or, for that matter, acknowledged (Guha and Spivak 1988). Gayatri Spivak, a member of the group, nonetheless raised a key question in an essay that has become pivotal in postcolonial theory: 'Can the subaltern speak?' (Spivak 1988a). Clearly, this not only engages in the consideration of the potential for agency among colonized populations that Bhabha's work considers, but also looks at those outside that culture who might wish to speak for them, to represent them descriptively and to claim to represent their best interests. Spivak's answer to her question comes down on the negative side: the subaltern is usually unable to find a voice as long as the conversation remains dominated by the hegemonic constraints of colonial discourse that devalorizes all but those in the metropolitan centres. Beyond that central silencing, though, the observer from outside, or the archaeologist studying the historical record, cannot with any certainty offer an objective accounting of the voice of that 'other', which we shall shortly discuss: instead, it is always the *observer's* voice that is inevitably speaking. Somewhat curiously, Lewis Binford, a founder of processual archaeology, offers analogous criticism of Ian Hodder, one of the energizers of post-processual archaeology (Hodder 2009, 32): 'The arbiter of the past,' writes Binford of Hodder's oversimplified views, 'is not the archaeological record, it is not the past as was, it is the past as imagined by the individual archaeologist' (Binford 2009: 32). The critique here roughly replicates Spivak's concern about post-colonial theorists who speak for cultures that may still be vibrant, though oppressed, but that are not their own. She does not say the attempt should not be made, but reminds her readers that the limitations of that attempt should be obvious.

Strategic essentialism

The corollary to Spivak's subaltern thesis is an increased effort to bolster the agency of the 'native informant', bringing into the discussion those who heretofore had been objectified, changing the rules of discourse where that will be productive of a more inclusive conversation, and doing so in terms that may well confuse the heretofore dominant colonizing voice. Part of that effort falls under the self-consuming term 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak 1988a)—self-consuming in the sense that anything that is truly of one's essence hardly seems accessible for an individually directed strategy. Any valorization of essentialism in this day and age, of course, seems counterintuitive. Discredited as the basis for the binary thinking undergirding racism (and even, some would argue, supporting nationalism), the notion that all the members of any group of people necessarily share particular characteristics had become taboo for post-structuralists influenced by Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, feminists, queer theorists, and others. Nonetheless, the politics of identity grounded in praxis rather than theory that brought about needed recognition and consequent legislation supporting the rights of African-Americans, women, gays and lesbians, and others in the West still gives shape to human rights struggles in the emerging world, and those essentialisms often do not completely align with those in the West. Many newer states have been the product of decisions to benefit the colonizer (the Berlin Conference of 1884–5, the formation of Iraq from 1914 to 1921, the Yalta Conference of 1945, etc.), whereby national borders often divided ethnic groups and enforced an uncomfortable new national identity that is still unstable in much of the world. The impetus for national groups to recover the heritage that was in many cases not only denigrated but also erased by colonization prompts what might be considered an essentialist identificatory movement that strikes some in metropolitan centres as anachronistic or naive. Within those national movements, of course, there is a similar hegemonic strain that demands that countercurrents be silenced or join the larger national essentialism (for example, the political demand that Kurds must align with Turkish or Iraqi nationalism). Thus, strategic essentialism describes an ongoing

attempt by otherwise disenfranchised populations to assert an identity distinct from the larger and (some would say) colonizing entity. This move has no doubt been politically helpful as a corrective to past universalizing strategies of the colonizer, but remains a thorny issue requiring ongoing scrutiny: at the same time as many archaeologists have sought to challenge certain essentialisms within 'western' narratives (especially ethnic, e.g. 'Celts', but also essentialisms related to gender), some have embraced essentialized indigenous identities in (former) colonial states—at least 'strategically', but sometimes with more profound epistemological consequences.

Colonial discourse and alterity

The very notion of a centre and periphery, though conceived as a metaphor, takes on significance as it ramifies in philosophies of cartography which enact a mapping that enables imperial self-positioning and aggrandizement (Rabasa 1993; Lewis and Wigen, 1997; Carter 1987; 1996). London and Paris represent science and culture; Delhi and Kinshasa represent superstition and chaos. Around this central image all colonial discourse circles. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) analyze colonial discourse and the Manichaean binary opposition (JanMohamed 1985) in which it imagines the object of the historic imperialist efforts of Europe's relations with the rest of the world. By speaking of 'the Orient' in a particular way, the West controls the reality and seeks to maintain that conception through force, and through cultural production. Said, therefore, uses the discourse with which the West discusses the Orient as an example of all the other forms of colonial discourse that the West has traditionally used to control, homogenize, and incorporate those cultures that it considers foreign. Not only in official governmental documents but also in the fiction of the 18th and 19th centuries, Europe sought to define itself in opposition to those it set out to conquer, describing these 'others' variously as 'inferior, passive, feminine, savage, lazy, marginal, simple, static, and primitive in contrast to the superior, active, masculine, civilized, industrious, central, complex, dynamic, and modern colonial Self' (Liebmann and Rivzi 2008: 6).

Here, discourse is meant quite literally, for an issue in post-colonial studies has always had to do with the language in which negotiations are conducted: rarely, if ever, in the local language; generally in English, French, Spanish, or Portuguese. Education is carried on in the colonizer's language, as is commerce, etc. Thus, it was a political act when Kenyan novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o decided in mid-career to switch from writing in English to writing in Gĩkũyũ. Complaining that 'the brilliant minds of a Chinua Achebe, a Wole Soyinka or a Kofi Awoonor went not to revitalize the African novel but to create a new tradition, that of the Afro-European novel' (Ngugi 1986: 70), he sought to 'decolonize the mind' by using a native African language to create not only a 'new' form of African literature but also a new audience for such writing. The response from those in the Orient, like the response from other colonized areas of the globe, has been mixed: often, the 'othered' find no alternative but to carry on in the discourse provided to them by the colonizer, and they enact the characterization imposed upon them from outside. Beyond mimicry, however, the othered also may instinctively form what might be considered the other 'half' in the binary equation, and falsely objectify the West in a discourse obviously called Occidentalism (Behdad 1994; Buruma and Margalit 2004; Carrier 1995).

Thus, the negative aspects of othering express themselves in exoticization—a celebration of difference, real or imagined, for its own sake—and a projection onto the other of suppressed desires and fears. These unrealistic parameters for engagement result in skewed understandings of the other that often lead to violence. On the other hand, alterity can replace othering with greater respect and more meaningful moves toward an egalitarian relationship. If Christopher Columbus inscribed an othering agenda in his reports (Greenblatt 1991), Bartolomé de las Casas might be said to attempt to move in a direction more respectful of the subject at hand (Las Casas 1909). As a central post-colonial concept, alterity seeks to move beyond the objectification of others (and beyond the objectively inaccurate imagination of them) to a moral leap of imagination that sees the distinction between oneself and the other, but also intuits enough similarity so that a true dialogue (which does not simply homogenize all difference) is truly possible.

Encounters with archaeological theory

In *Theory and Practice in Archaeology* (1992) Ian Hodder does not discuss post-colonial theory; but a decade later, in editing *Archaeological Theory Today*, not only does he dedicate a chapter to the topic but the author of that chapter, Chris Gosden, begins with the sentence, 'All archaeology today is postcolonial' (Hodder 2001: 241). To the extent that this statement is accurate—and various archaeologists might still demur—the developments in

that decade mark a shift from what the World Archaeological Congress in 1985 saw as an irresponsibly apolitical field to one that is now notably self-conscious of its possible role in having helped maintain unjust social structures controlling the lives of those it studied. In retrospect, the criticism may seem obvious; what may not be as clear is the strain of self-interrogation that has for decades run as an undercurrent through much of anthropology and archaeology. Even though he saw himself as more fit for the study than for the field, for example, the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009), in books such as *Triste tropiques* (1955) and *La pensée sauvage* (1962), demonstrates the natural alliance between anthropological research and what came to be known as post-colonial theory. In his application of structuralist techniques to explicate a stipulated common humanity that subverts those notions of the exotic and inferior traditionally used as a justification for subjugation, he partially prefigured the World Archaeological Congress and some of the post-colonial theory that it encapsulates.

The crisis that caused the break between WAC and the International Union of Pre- and Proto-Historic Sciences (IUPPS), founded in 1931, had to do with the breakaway group wishing to exclude apartheid South Africa from the annual conference. But this was just the occasion for a broader reinterpretation of what the goals of archaeology itself should be. As Joan Gero notes, WAC came into being in response to what was seen to be 'an increasingly exclusionary trajectory of professionalization, representing ever less diversity in the voices that speak for the past, an increased sidelining of the descendent groups whose ancestors and antecedents are of interest to archaeologists, and a greater convergence on single interpretive stances' (Gero 1999). The organization objected to the 'exclusive rights' of dominant nations to 'mine the pasts of poorer and less influential countries and... to tell the stories of these nations in generalized, rationalized, scientized terms', and to the proclamation of various sites as 'world patrimony... studied and reconstructed in non-native languages and non-native imaginations... locking out other interpretive voices'. One consequence of these practices, according to WAC, has been that indigenous peoples 'feel little affinity for the goals and methods of archaeology' (Gero 1999). Explicitly rejecting earlier claims that politics and archaeology must remain distinct realms, WAC's members condemned what they saw as a hypocrisy that blinded the dominant Euro-American states from admitting their biased understanding of non-Western cultures, and foregrounded the heretofore unacknowledged politics at the heart of every archaeological dig.

Their larger point was that the politics in question are grounded in a questionable ethics; and in recent decades there has developed a rich library of ethico/political archaeological writing that is central to the contributions that archaeology is making to post-colonial theory (Beaudry 2009; Wylie 1996). Specific areas that prompt academic concern, as suggested by the title of Wylie's essay, include looting, repatriation, stewardship, and the (trans)formation of disciplinary identity. These fall within the purview of the mission statement of the World Archaeological Congress, which seeks to promote:

the need to recognise the historical and social roles as well as the political context of archaeology... the exchange of results from archaeological research; professional training and public education for disadvantaged nations, groups and communities; the empowerment and support of Indigenous groups and First Nations peoples; and the conservation of archaeological sites.

(WAC website, accessed 28 May 2014)

The movement is of a piece with the call for a number of values-committed archaeologies made by Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley (1988), heavily influenced by the 'Marxist tradition and the Frankfurt school emphasis on the situated conditions of communication' (Hodder 1992: 165). In 1992, Hodder cautioned such proponents against what he characterized as an 'open-ended and purely political plurality' because 'while the contextual approach argues for multivocality, the different voices which are released will have no authority, except perhaps through the exercise of naked power, unless related to data' (Hodder 1992: 166). The implied conflict between values and the apolitical accessioning of clay pots continues to be negotiated, but the general arc of the argument is clear: archaeology is today a major force in post-colonial studies.

Recent proponents of the marriage between post-colonial theory and archaeological theory point to a number of areas where more contributions to post-colonial theory may be made by archaeologists (Lydon and Rizvi 2010). Among the areas in contemporary archaeological theory that any post-colonial theorist would recognize, even without knowing the field of archaeology itself, would be the emphasis on indigenous peoples (in this case, indigenous archaeologists) and other marginalized peoples and cultures, and so-called 'emergent

cosmopolitanisms' and the interest in building up knowledge 'from below' as an effort to adjust historic disparities in the production and evaluation of knowledge (Jeganathan 2005; Kahn 2005; Smith and Wobst 2005; Ivison 2006; Hawley 2008); traditional archaeology's troubled involvement with colonialism and nationalism, and the political implications for archaeologists presented by contemporary results of earlier injustices; and cultural heritage preservation, looting and the antiquities market (Brodie and Tubb 2002), the politics of the museum and of representation (Bennett 2004), and the concurrent discussion of restitution and repatriation (Merryman 2000; 2006; Bond and Gilliam 1994; Greenfield 1996). For others, the list includes other specifics while sharing common themes: 'an emphasis on the necessity of interdisciplinary research and the extension of the postcolonial critique to postnational and post-Soviet contexts... the investigation of the history of colonial discourses, the problems of essentialism, the importance of decolonizing practices, and the neocolonialism often inherent in the heritage strategies of global and neoliberal institutions' (Liebmann 2008: 19).

Contemporary archaeology and the ethical questions it poses have come to dominate some Anglophone archaeological conferences (Meskell and Pels 2005; Meskell 2009); Cornelius Holtorf, a recent president of WAC, champions 'a politically and ethically informed global perspective on archaeology' (2006: 87) that is alert to the ramifications of globalization:

One World Archaeology today can be nothing less than an attempt at enhancing, through the means available to archaeologists, the global solidarity among human beings on this planet and helping to reduce the striking inequalities and differential privileges that exist between different people, simply on account of where on this planet they happen to have been born and whether or not they may have had access to (higher) education. (2006: 88)

Arguing for solidarity and inclusiveness, Holtorf suggests that 'archaeologists are obliged to care whether or not their colleagues in poor countries have access to good academic libraries and to the Internet and whether or not their voices are being heard by their colleagues elsewhere', and must 'consider how their work affects the legitimate interests and rights of underprivileged human beings, wherever they are' (2006: 89). This means that 'fieldwork procedures and ethics instruction in archaeological education' is necessary, and that archaeologists must battle human suffering among those with whom they come in contact through 'proactive community work during fieldwork or through appropriate direct financial or other contributions to known people or projects' (p. 89).

'It is people,' Holtorf writes, '—and not artefacts or abstract values—to whom we are ethically accountable in the first instance' (2006: 90). In short, the application of post-colonial theory that WAC supports is 'solidarity and bottom-up democracy' (2006: 92).

Among the questions in Holtorf's manifesto that are of mutual interest to archaeology and post-colonial studies and that recent books have addressed are the following, many of which overlap:

- questions of memory, heritage, identity and conservation (e.g. the ethics of intervening to prevent the destruction of monuments, vs. allowing such destruction as a legitimate local use of their heritage), and struggles over the meaning of the past in post-colonial states; heritage studies; complexities surrounding World Heritage Site designation (e.g. developing the most 'appealing' parts of the city while destroying or neglecting other areas); and tourism (de Jong and Rowlands 2007; Dearborn and Stallmeyer 2010);
- agency and the impact of Europe on indigenous societies (Wolf 1982), registering the ongoing debate between those who 'see agency in a cross-cultural way' and those who contest even the application of a concept like 'agency' since, 'in historically contingent circumstances, the notion of the autonomous social agent was constructed in the Renaissance' (Gardner 2004: 245);
- subaltern studies, indigenous archaeologists. 'Since 2000 a large group of indigenous archaeologists has arisen but they have difficulty serving as representatives of both the scientific world and that of the local community' (Nicholas 2010; Bruchac et al. 2010);
- marginalized groups and their relationship with their cultural patrimony, their rights to the land, and to compensation for past losses; the eccentric and excluded in societies (Hubert 2000; Layton et al. 2006; Lilley 2007; Lovata 2007);
- cultural heritage management and the impact that conservation work has on people's lives; the commodification of sacred objects and places by Western conservationists; finding a balance between socially

responsible development and conservation (Sully 2008; Phillips and Allen 2010; Smith et al. 2010);

- competing epistemologies, and examination of how conventional dogmas or societal biases affect interpretation and even the recognition of what is to be understood as evidence (Lovata 2007; Kehoe 2008; Thomas 2004);
- archaeology as political activity, and as a public activity (McGuire 2008);
- feminisms and gender issues (Gilchrist 1999);
- texts interpreted as more than written documents; artefacts and how they are textually represented (Majewski and Gaimster 2009).

Undergirding these topics are a number of questions directed to archaeologists in the field. Who really represents the community (Marshall 2002)? For whom is archaeology undertaken, and by whom? As George Nicholson and Julie Hollowell recognize, 'the common element is the community's greater degree of control over the production of knowledge and objectives of research' (2007: 68). As discomfiting as it no doubt is for some, 'The question of "who controls the past?" is no longer a conundrum because it must be generally conceded that there are many pasts and they will be known differently from many views' (Gero 1999).

Limited applicability

Recent advocates of the deeper incorporation of post-colonial theory into archaeology have, at the same time, acknowledged the critiques that it has invited. Among these are its supposed 'homogenizing colonial experiences', 'perpetuating academic imperialism', 'divorcing theory from political realities', 'neglecting to account for the material aspects of colonialism', and 'failing to adequately acknowledge the role of history in cultural change' (Liebmann 2008). Until recently, the Eurocentric emphasis perpetuated by post-colonial theorists' grounding in European philosophy and in the history of European empires needs further interrogation that might be available through the eyes of archaeologists. There needs, as well, to be greater literacy within the post-colonial theory academic community concerning the work being done in the field by those in Latin America and elsewhere (Moraña et al. 2008). On the other hand, some internal criticism shows signs of nativism, a romantic view that the colonies were in much better shape before colonization and should therefore be restored somehow to *status quo ante* and represented solely by theorists from the emerging world. As some have recently suggested, 'the study of material culture can contribute to postcolonial theory by investigating the linkages between colonialist representations on the one hand and the material world on the other' (Liebmann 2008: 13).

The emphasis on discourse analysis evident in Said's work proliferates throughout classic post-colonial theory, prompting the enduring criticism that the approach remains a Western concept—an academic exercise that has, in effect, colonized legitimate ethical and political demands originating in formerly colonized parts of the world. What began as confrontation has been consumed, tamed, trivialized by becoming simply the new jargon required of those seeking tenure at Western institutions. Such concerns have been addressed from varying angles, many incorporating the challenge to post-colonial theory posed by globalization theory, for example Krishnaswamy and Hawley (2008). As post-colonial theory so far has found a home most comfortably in humanities departments, and globalization theory in departments of social science, it would appear that archaeology may be as important in the development of post-colonial theory, as a corrective, as post-colonial theory is increasingly seen to be in the development of archaeological methodology.

Further reading

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