



Interpreting Archaeology: Finding Meaning in the Past

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There has been a profound shift in the direction of archaeological activity in the last fifteen years, a change reflected in this volume. While excavation remains a professional priority, the interpretation of archaeological evidence is now attracting increasing critical study. In part this is stemmed from the public demand for explanation of archaeological evidence, which moves beyond the more restricted academic debate among archaeologists. But it also follows from a desire among archaeologists to come to terms with their own subjective approaches to the material they study, and a recognition of how past researchers have also imposed their own value systems on the evidence which they presented.

This volume provides a forum for debate between varied approaches to the past from leading archaeologists in Europe, North America, Asia and Australasia. It addresses the philosophical issues involved in interpretation, and the origins of meaning in the evolution and emergence of 'mind' in early hominids. It covers the ways in which material culture is understood and presented in museums, and how the nature of history is itself in flux.

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