

Ideology, power, and prehistory

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Abstrak

This volume arises out of a symposium held at the third Theoretical archaeology Group conference, Reading, U.K. in December 1981. Most of the papers are, however, either extensively revised or use quite different examples from the original presentations. All but one of the contributors to this volume also wrote papers for an earlier publication in this series, *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology* (Hodder, Ed. 1982). The ideas that form the focus of this volume were one of a number to be tentatively explored there. A consideration of ideology and power means that we are no longer able simply to 'read off the nature of past societies from material evidence. Instead the archaeological record must be understood as actively mediated and manipulated as part of the social strategies of the individuals and groups that constituted a past society. Material culture can be used to express interests and ideas which may very well be contradictory. In order to understand ideology and power successfully a historical, particularist and contextual approach to the evidence is fundamental.