

This collection considers the relevance of the *Annales* “school” for archaeology. The *Annales* movement regarded orthodox history as too much concerned with events, too narrowly political, too narrative in form, and too isolated from neighboring disciplines. Annalists attempted to construct a “total” history, dealing with a wide range of human activity, and combining divergent material, documentary, and theoretical approaches to the past. *Annales*-oriented research utilizes the techniques and tools of various ancillary fields, and integrates temporal, spatial, material, and behavioral analyses. Such an approach is obviously attractive to archaeologists, for even though they deal with material data rather than social facts, they are – just as much as historians – interested in understanding social, economic, and political factors such as power and dominance, conflict, exchange and other human activities.

Three introductory essays consider the relationship between *Annales* methodology and current archaeological theory. Case studies draw upon methodological variations of the multifaceted *Annales* approach. The volume concludes with two overviews, one historical and the other archaeological.

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## NEW DIRECTIONS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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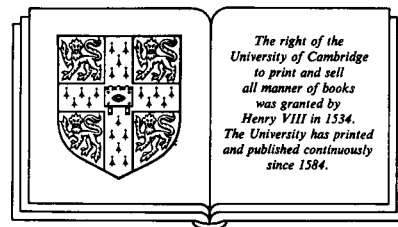
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# Archaeology, *Annales*, and ethnohistory

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For Christina

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## *Preface*

Certain complex societies in the Old and New World alike generated numerous documentary records or prompted diverse ethnohistoric accounts. As a result, written evidence tends to dominate sociocultural interpretation, frequently at the expense of material evidence. In the study of past politico-economic or sociocultural processes, it is important to create a dialogue between material and written evidence, neither of which logically supersedes the other. In this regard, *Annales*-oriented research has been exemplary in its attempts to combine material, documentary, and theoretical approaches to the past into a single human science approach.

A series of seminars presented at the University of Sydney – Rhys Jones, Roland Fletcher, Bernard Knapp (Prehistory); I. Wallerstein (History and Economic History) – first suggested the possibility of producing a volume that would explore the concept of time in archaeology, and the *Annales* approach to the study of the past. Subsequently, at the First Joint Archaeological Congress (Baltimore, MD, January 1989), seven papers in this volume were presented in a symposium entitled ‘Archaeology and *Annales*: Towards Resolution of the Archaeological–Documentary Dilemma.’ Two papers presented in Baltimore (J. G. Lewthwaite, J. A. Greene) are not included in this volume; studies by P. Duke and A. Sherratt have been added, and R. Bulliet contributed the historical overview.

An *Annales* approach demands that equal consideration be given to continuity and change, whatever the medium that reveals them. It also forces the archaeologist, social scientist, or historian to realize (1) that certain variables must be weighed on different spatial or temporal scales, and (2) that such “objectivity” as is possible resides in the use of appropriate theory and

method to elicit and elaborate on sociocultural or politico-economic issues. The goal is to generate an interdisciplinary, multivariate, human science that incorporates a broad spectrum of material, documentary, and behavioral variables.

Three introductory essays consider – from widely differing perspectives – the relationship between *Annales* methodology and current archaeological theory. Case studies draw upon methodological variations of the multifaceted *Annales* approach in order to examine the uncritical, often unquestioned comparison or contrast of archaeological and documentary evidence, and in order to bring together a range of data that bears upon issues of continuity and change in prehistoric, protohistoric, or historic-period society. Two overviews – one historical, the other archaeological – conclude the volume.

Individual acknowledgements and references are presented at the end of each chapter. In addition, I should like to thank Jessica Kuper, Editor for Anthropology and Archaeology at Cambridge University Press, for support and encouragement, but above all for insisting on firm editorial intervention in order to ensure a more integrated volume. The individual contributors I must also thank for enduring that repeated intervention, and for meeting a series of somewhat unrealistic deadlines. I am also grateful to Margaret Deith for her copy-editing and for the cordial correspondence that facilitated it. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the support of my wife, Christina Sumner (Powerhouse Museum, Sydney), who has sanctioned my pursuit of the past over three continents during the past decade: to the extent permissible in a multi-authored volume, I dedicate my contributions, at least, to her.