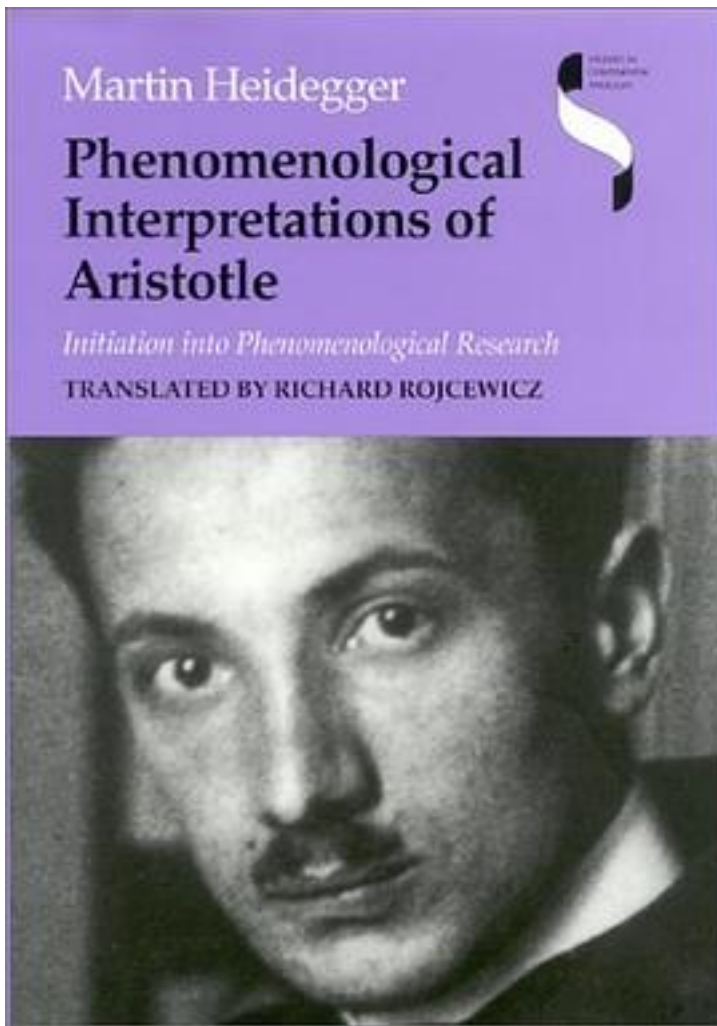


The Social Life of Things



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The meaning that people attribute to things necessarily derives from human

transactions and motivations, particularly from how those things are used and circulated. The contributors to this volume examine how things are sold and traded in a variety of social and cultural settings, both present and past. Focusing on culturally defined aspects of exchange and socially regulated processes of circulation, the essays illuminate the ways in which people find value in things and things give value to social relations. By looking at things as if they lead social lives, the authors provide a new way to understand how value is externalized and sought after. They discuss a wide range of goods - from oriental carpets to human relics - to reveal both that the underlying logic of everyday economic life is not so far removed from that which explains the circulation of exotica, and that the distinction between contemporary economies and simpler, more distant ones is less obvious than has been thought. As the editor argues in his introduction, beneath the seeming infinitude of human wants, and the apparent multiplicity of material forms, there in fact lie complex, but specific, social and political mechanisms that regulate taste, trade, and desire.

Containing contributions from American and British social anthropologists and historians, the volume bridges the disciplines of social history, cultural anthropology, and economics, and marks a major step in our understanding of the cultural basis of economic life and the sociology of culture. It will appeal to anthropologists, social historians, economists, archaeologists, and historians of art.

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Contributors

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标签

人类学

物质文化

社会学

物质文化史

文化人类学

Anthropology

Appadurai

社会史

评论

Appadurai和Kopytoff的文章，如何能和经典的政治经济学对于商品的解释对照起来想，会非常有启发。（商品经济的兴起，如果有一个rupture的话，究竟意味着什么？）

可以算作早期的物质文化研究的代表性文集之一，具有开创价值。尤其是其中Colin Renfrew的一篇，让我突然意识到，我们当成“新知识”普及的“中西青铜的差异”观念是错误的。绝非中国的青铜是礼器，西方的青铜是装饰。前者有误，中国的青铜当是“饮食器、酒水器、乐器、兵器、工具”等等，但是无论是饮食器之类，还是装饰，皆为“礼器”也！

from Marx's economistic "commodity" emphasizing the input of labor in the things, Appadurai emphasizes the social aspect of commodities, i.e. commodity as things for exchange. This liberates non Marxist-commodities and expands the field of economic analysis. Things come in and out of different arenas and their interaction with the social and politi

对commodity的再定义以及对政治经济学的理论贡献让这本80年代的书age better.

Brian
Spooner这篇写地毯的文章很不错，作者对本真性的理解是“去商品化、再独特化”，其实回应了本雅明的“灵晕”。重点在于物性与value到底是本质论还是建构论。

真应该早点重视这本书

very inspiring

上学期人类学原著选读课，老师深情款款推荐偶对这本。拖到开学才把读书笔记糊弄了交掉=。= 这学期老板的商业人类学，这本书又赫然在列了。。。

The most recommended part is its intro. Retracing to Marxian style of production of commodities, the author concerns more about its consumption and circulations in capitalism. The roughly three dimensions, namely the diversion, demand and knowledge, have been complemented to the new pattern of explaining the emergence of industrialization.

读完五十多页的introduction，将商品的价值放到社会中考量，指出其value最重要的是受到政治（tournament of values and calculated diversions that might lead to new paths）。思考深刻，赞！

“Following Habermas, we are used to thinking of crises of legitimacy in modern Western society as the product of a breakdown in the discourse regarding duties and obligations linking state and society.” @RUC

intro部分尤其好！可是每次读理论就会对本学科产生深深的identity crisis...

'The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process' by Kopytoff.被认为是material anthropology的奠基之作，强调商品化作为一个分类过程的复杂性与多层次。被大众文化形塑的市场标准价值会持续被个人或群体的审美偏好与singularization efforts挑战，因此商品域的边界是不稳定且可渗透的，物品的主体性也在商品化、去商品化和再商品化的游移交接中建构丰富。不过物品的agency是一个很可疑的概念，它作为一个社会概念必然需要人类的mediation，另外品味的争夺也涉及文化霸权的问题，且精细化商品类属与市场交换的multi-spheres并没有从根本上挑战商品化作为道德瑕疵的意识形态。

反复读了前两章，讨论了价值的政治、商品化（一般化）和文化之于社会的作用，两章对照着读，能够更好地理解Appadurai所说的“路径与偏移”。Appadurai几十页的intro列举诸多案例，有些真让人一头雾水，Kopytoff则写得精妙而工整。国内有几篇介绍的文章，这么有意思又重要的书为什么没有中译本？

Appadurai and Kopytoff. The fundamental basis for object biography and social life of things. Commodity exchange. Material culture studies.

Introduction和第二篇。

Appadurai的导言部分写得很好！

刚开始看没读懂，后来经过Joe点拨似懂非懂，这本书处理的关键问题是价值是如何产生的；与马克思主义认为的劳动创造价值不同，本书作者们告诉我们交换过程也产生了

价值。

马克思与齐美尔的分歧并不是一个强调生产一个强调交换，而是齐美尔只对商品的体验或表象感兴趣，因此他谈论的交换也只是这些体验与表象的交换。阿帕杜莱也是这样，他把价值和交换看作是纯然“文化”的东西。这种价值更像是索绪尔语言学中的价值（差异），因此是可以被协商合意消解掉的，客观上是对经济学等价交换原则的补充。

Appadurai and Kopytoff for final paper

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书评

Retracting to the Marxian framework of the politics of commodity production and departing from Simmel's argument that exchange creates value and not the other way around, the edited essays in the Social life of Things shed light on the specific trajectory ...

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