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Community Involvement in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Management

An Assessment from Case Studies in Southern Africa and Elsewhere

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Community archaeology has conferred an alternative dimension on conventional archaeology and heritage management, empowering previously powerless peoples, particularly the indigenous and local communities that have lost rights to their heritage through colonialism. So important has its impact been that there has been only limited reference in the literature to its problems. Examination of case studies from various parts of the world reveals that problems associated with defining what a community is and who is indigenous, coupled with the existence of multiple communities with multiple interests, have sometimes diminished the utility of the approach. In some cases, archaeologists and heritage managers have been unwilling to give up some of their powers and have continued to view local communities as only passive partners. In others, local communities have considered their views and concerns more important than those of the archaeologists. As a result, the so-called equal partnerships between archaeologists and communities have disappointingly ended up as uneasy relationships. Without effective solutions to some of these problems, community archeology may remain a goal to be pursued rather than becoming standard practice.

Where and when community involvement in archaeology began cannot be answered with certainty. What is clear, however, is that the concept and practice of community archaeology in its various forms have been referred to in the literature for some time (McGimsey 1972; Fowler 1977; Cole 1980; Deacon 1996; Arenzi 1998; Sanday 1998; McManamon 2000*a, b*; Marshall 2002; Kuper 2003; Pope and Mills 2004; Damm 2005, 2006; Segobye 2005; Watkins 2005). Indeed, a whole issue of the journal *World Archaeology* (34 [2], 2002) has been devoted to the subject, offering definitions and fresh case studies drawn mainly from Europe and Australasia. As a new discourse, community involvement has steadily gained importance as archaeologists endeavor to increase the discipline's social relevance by engaging with local and indigenous communities, in particular the communities that own and have an interest in archaeological sites (Garlake 1982; McManamon

2000*a*; Marshall 2002; Kuper 2003; Watkins 2003; Damm 2005). This global trend has strongly impacted the indigenous and local communities of southern Africa (fig. 1), Canada, Latin America, the Pacific, and Australasia, where the practice of archaeology has often alienated them from their heritage (Ucko 1994; Ferguson 1996; Miller 1996; Kuper 2003; Clifford 2004; Delmont 2004; Damm 2005; Marshall 2006).

The flourishing of community archaeology can be attributed to a number of factors. Initially, archaeologists and heritage managers viewed local communities as reservoirs of cheap labor for fieldwork rather than consumers of knowledge of the past (Ferguson 1996; Ndoro 2001; Watkins 2003; Shepherd 2003*a*; Delmont 2004; Marshall 2006). This exclusion from the practice of archaeology was perpetuated by the publication of research results in esoteric language hardly digestible by some of the interested communities. In fact, archaeologists sometimes kept interesting sites out of the public eye to protect them from destruction (Ndoro and Pwiti 2001; Marshall 2002; Shepherd 2003*b*; Parkington 2006). Heritage managers and archaeologists understandably became alarmed to discover that the alienation of local interest and indigenous groups was also depriving them of valuable allies in the protection of sites. The World Archaeological Congress, the As-

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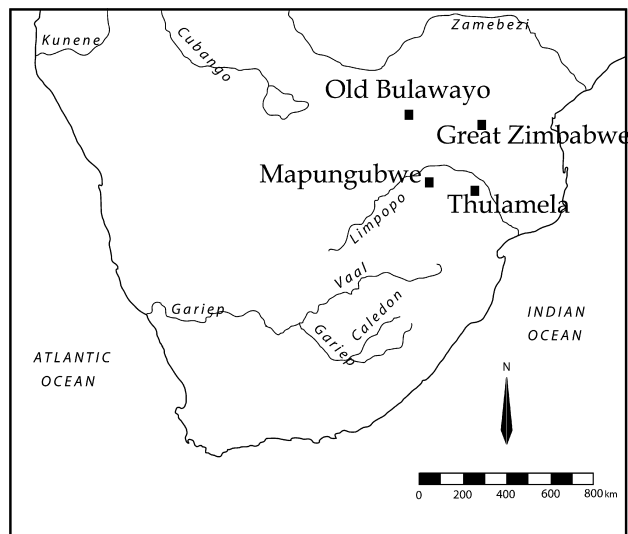


Figure 1. Southern Africa, showing some of the sites mentioned in the text.

sociation of Southern African Archaeologists, and the Canadian Archaeological Association have in the past few decades established codes of ethics that made community involvement an essential requirement of their work.

With time, the alienated local communities became increasingly activist, demanding a stake in the study and protection of their past (Pwiti 1996; Pwiti and Mvenge 1996; Ferguson 1996; Watkins 2000; Clifford 2004; Chirikure 2005; Lane 2006). In addition to direct and meaningful involvement, they insisted on benefiting socially and economically from archaeological resources. For instance, they pointed to the therapeutic potential of archaeology for addressing past wrongs and generating revenue through tourism (Marshall 2002; Rowley 2002; Watkins 2005; Meskell 2007). They called for empowerment and lobbied governments and donor bodies to enact statutes and policies designed to ensure fair treatment of local or indigenous peoples in archaeological work (Kuper 2003). It is against the background of earlier exclusion that the South African National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 was promulgated, partly to empower previously marginalized local communities (Delmont 2004; Hall 2005). Similarly, in an effort to make up for past mistakes, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990 was meant to empower and meaningfully involve indigenous peoples in the destiny of the funerary remains of their ancestors in the United States (Ferguson 1996; Clifford 2004).

Today the potential of community archaeology in increasing the discipline's public appeal is hardly questionable (McManamon 2000b). Nevertheless, given the euphoria with which community involvement has been embraced by the anthropological and historical disciplines, this contribution aims to evaluate the success of the approach by illuminating some of the gains and problems associated with it in archaeology and heritage management. In the end, it suggests some possible

ways for archaeologists to navigate their way into the future. Although we draw examples from various regions of the world, we give special attention to southern Africa because of our experience and intimate knowledge of the archaeology and heritage management of the subcontinent. We begin by discussing the definitions and controversies associated with the current discourse about communities and what is indigenous.

Communities and the Indigenous

A community is a body of people inhabiting the same locality (Appiah 2006; Johnson 2000). Such a community can be insular or cosmopolitan; insular community residents are usually bound by common ancestry, heritage, and culture (Wenger 1998), while diversity is a hallmark of cosmopolitan communities (Appiah 2006). Additionally, communities operate at different scales: local, national, regional, and global. In geographical terms, local communities reside close to archaeological and cultural resources, while national, regional, and global communities live far from them (Johnson 2000). The idea of a combination of global and local called *glocal* is becoming increasingly influential in archaeology (Damm 2005). Although they have a strong residential bias, communities of all types must be understood in relation to local meanings and history. This is critical because people migrate, leaving their heritage behind, while new groups settle in, creating new heritage and relationships with the old one. In the European settlement of various parts of the globe, for example, the newcomers evicted local and indigenous groups from their lands (Ranger 1999; Watkins 2000; Rowley 2002), sometimes excluding them from their heritage using property rights (Shepherd 2003a; Meskell 2007). In these post-colonial times, displaced peoples are claiming proprietary rights to sites and lands in their former home areas. Community involvement is consonant with this general movement towards empowering the previously disadvantaged.

Layers of complexity are entangled in the definition of "community." Whilst the contemporary discourse of community has an implicit residential bias, there are other forms of communities, among them those based on interests. Communities of interests are called "stakeholders" and transcend communities of place and geographical boundaries (Johnson 2000). They are strategically based, very powerful, heterogeneous, and ever-changing (Wenger 1998). Stakeholders such as professionals, landowners, politicians, tourists, descent communities, and others with an interest in the past typically coexist with communities of place, and they are often multiple and contradictory (McGimsey 1972).

Another central issue in community involvement is the meaning of "indigenous." There is some consensus in archaeological and anthropological circles that the descendants of the original inhabitants of an area are indigenous or native to that area (Kuper 2003; Watkins 2005; Lane 2006). Examples include the San of southern Africa, the Saami of northern Europe, the Inuit of Canada, the Native Americans, and the

Aborigines of Australia. The term has limited applicability, however, in other regions of the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, almost everyone claims to be indigenous (Shepherd 2003a), and this renders the term almost meaningless (Lane 2006). Given the regional and global population movements and the settlement of people in many regions of the world in the past 500 years, how much time needs to have passed before the settlers or newcomers are considered indigenous? In southern Africa, Late Stone Age hunter-gatherer peoples inhabited the landscape about 35,000 years ago. Black agro-pastoralists settled in the region only at the beginning of the first millennium AD. While these groups consider themselves indigenous to the region, some descendants of European settlers in the Cape region of South Africa now call themselves indigenous after about 400 years. Although this case is extreme, it implies that Americans of African and European descent might also consider themselves indigenous after this length of time. Despite these controversies, it is historically known that those centuries of occupation were characterized by the abuse and exploitation of the natives by the newcomers. Crucially, the questions of who is indigenous and when settlers become indigenous must not be allowed to distract us from correcting past wrongs.

Furthermore, it is not clear in indigenist discourse who defines "indigenous" and who controls decision making (Kuper 2003; Watkins 2005). While some Native Americans would classify themselves as first peoples (Watkins 2003), in southern Africa some descendants of the San or Bushmen shun such an identity because of the racism that it has historically suffered (Shepherd 2003b). Even in the independent nations of Botswana and Zimbabwe, the San have always been marginalized and viewed as inferior, with the result that not many semiacculturated people would want to be associated with San ancestry. Therefore, the challenge of community archaeology in southern Africa is to inculcate a sense of pride and equality in those indigenous peoples. In this paper, we use the term "indigenous" to refer to native communities *sensu stricto*, while "local communities" is applied to those who live in close proximity to the archaeological site in question, including indigenous communities and other stakeholder groups.

Community involvement in archaeology is the inclusion of indigenous people and other communities in various areas of archaeological practice and interpretation (Marshall 2002). It takes various forms that are context-dependent, including public outreach, involvement of school groups and local communities in archaeological excavations, site management, and conservation (Sanday 1998; McManamon 2000b; Watkins 2003; Clifford 2004; Segobye 2005). When it involves local communities in the design, implementation, and control of projects, it is a way of empowering previously marginalized groups. It underscores the importance of using local sources of knowledge such as oral traditions, myths, and legends as well as ethnographies to gain insight into local perspectives (Damm 2005). By conducting research with rather than for

local people, community archaeology strikingly contrasts with the elitism of conventional archaeological practice (Ferguson 1996; Greer, Harrison, and McIntyre-Tamwoy 2002; Marshall 2006). However, the fact that it is mostly the success stories that have been documented in the literature on community involvement is cause for concern. There is need for an audit of the approach, whose gains may be more visible in principle than they are in practice. The next section presents case studies in which community archaeology has been practiced, focusing on both its successes and its failures.

Community Archaeology and Giving Voice to the Voiceless

Community archaeology has given local communities and indigenous groups around the world a voice in archaeology and heritage management (Pwiti and Mvenge 1996; Bender 1993; McManamon 2000b; Marshall 2002; Hodder 2000; Damm 2005). It has also restored access to their heritage to groups that have been denied it. The case of Domboshava in Zimbabwe is an example of this denial and restoration. Domboshava was declared a national monument by the colonial government in 1936 because of its spectacular rock art (fig. 2) (Cripps 1941). The painted rock shelter at Domboshava contained a geological tunnel that was used by the locals to communicate with their ancestors during rainmaking ceremonies and in times of social stress (Pwiti and Mvenge 1996). The creation of the national monument gave the rock art priority over the living traditions because the traditional ceremonies produced smoke that was thought to be affecting the art. For some time local communities defied this exclusion, secretly offering sacrifices to their ancestors at the site. This created a series of clashes which prompted the colonial antiquities authorities to block the mouth of the geological tunnel with concrete.

The democratization of the political process after independence did not immediately involve the inclusion of local communities in protecting their past. The National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) continued with the colonial policy of valuing tangible heritage to the exclusion of intangible heritage, and the colonial heritage legislation inherited by the new government did not provide for community involvement in archaeology and was not amended to reflect new realities (Pwiti and Mvenge 1996; Pwiti and Ndoro 1999; Manyanga 2000; Chirikure 2005; Chipunza 2005). In the 1990s, the NMMZ decided to use the site for revenue-generating activities through cultural tourism without involving local communities (Collett 1992). What the authorities failed to realize was that even though the rock art in and around Domboshava belonged to the ancestors of the San people, who no longer lived in the area, its preservation demonstrated a concern on the part of the present inhabitants for other people's heritage. The antiquities authorities remained intolerant of the local communities' rainmaking, and, not surprisingly, the local communities became increasingly agi-



Figure 2. Rock art at Domboshava before vandalism.

tated and confrontational, committing several acts of vandalism in protest of their exclusion. These acts included burning down the curio shop and splashing oil paint on the most impressive rock paintings at the site (fig. 3). What must have been an eye-opener for the authorities was that it was only the contested site of Domboshava that was vandalized; other rock art sites in the region were left untouched. Thus, from the local communities' point of view, the message was clear—if they could not benefit from the site spiritually and economically, then archaeologists and the NMMZ would not benefit from it either.

These events precipitated a policy change by the NMMZ, which began an active programme of community archaeology, including local values, traditions, and belief systems. Local communities were permitted to conduct rainmaking ceremonies under the watchful eyes of museum officials. Local people were employed as tour guides and allowed to benefit economically from the site by selling curios to the visitors. Myths and legends were incorporated into the interpretation of the site in the site museum. The community participation project functioned without problems for some time until the local communities thought that they were being treated as passive agents and, through their chief, started to demand more control as well as 50% of the revenue from the site (G. Bvocho, personal communication). The chief's position had been strengthened by the fact that the government was returning power over land distribution and traditional magistrature to traditional chiefs. In line with this, he had authorized developments at Domboshava that from the NMMZ point of view were threatening the sacred forest (known as Rambakurimwa) at the national monument. When the NMMZ protested against the development, the chief argued

that he was simply sacrificing part of the forest to generate employment that the NMMZ was failing to provide. During one stakeholder meeting, he said that community values changed, and now the community valued development rather than the forest. Because Domboshava is a national monument important to all Zimbabweans and humanity, the antiquities authorities were faced with a dilemma.

Another project in southern Africa which has actively sought to give voice to local communities in the production of knowledge of the past is the Living Landscape Project of the University of Cape Town (Parkington 1999, 2006). This project is based in Clanwilliam, 250 km west of Cape Town. Over the past eight years, it has exploited the local landscape as a learning resource in reclaiming a past and an identity for descendants of indigenous peoples (mainly Khoi and San) eroded by colonialism. Local knowledge of the landscape, oral traditions, myths, and written records have been used in environmental and archaeological conservation programs and in developing a curriculum for schoolchildren. This has led to the achievement of two of the project's main aims: reclaiming an identity and history for local peoples (Parkington 2006) and meeting the aspirations and needs of academic archaeology, which is often criticized for alienating its constituencies by being theory-oriented. A review of the Living Landscape Project by Ferreira (2006) has pointed out the important achievements made in promoting community-based archaeological and environmental conservation, shared learning, and job creation in an underdeveloped area of South Africa.

The use of archaeology to empower and give voice to previously disadvantaged groups has resonance in other parts of the world. For example, Norwegian archaeologists working



Figure 3. Vandalized rock art panel at Domboshava.

among the Saami have used oral histories, myths, and legends in understanding the past from a purely Saami perspective (Damm 2005). In the end, this local knowledge has been important in creating Saami identities and land titles. British archaeologists and anthropologists have practiced community involvement with encouraging results in the study and management of the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage sites (see Bender 1993; Wallis 2002). Researchers working at the two sites involved stakeholders such as the Druids, who view the places as important religious centres. The Druids had previously been dismissed as queer shamans whose use of the site was based on feeble connections with the past (Wallis 2002). Through community involvement, their interpretations were taken into account alongside the reconstructions of academic archaeology. Across the Atlantic in the United States, the NAGPRA has given Amerindians an important voice in the study and reburial of their ancestors. According to Watkins (2003), it has redefined the relationship between researchers and Amerindian communities with the result that indigenous communities are now viewed as partners and actors in the study of the past. In Canada, the Canadian Archaeological Association has made community involvement mandatory for archaeological projects carried out by its members, and Inuit and Nunavut populations have increasingly taken centre stage in the management of sites and the practice of archaeology in the country (Rowley 2002; Pope and Mills 2004). In summary, community archaeology has linked the need for making heritage accessible to the public with the promotion of conservation and learning about the past from many perspectives (Damm 2005).

Community Archaeology and Economic Empowerment

In recent years there has been a healthy tendency to use archaeological sites for the economic and educational benefit of local communities around the world. A good example is the site of Great Zimbabwe (fig. 4), which represents a success story of local economic empowerment through the promotion of cultural tourism (Ndoro 2001; Fontein 2006). The economic potential of Great Zimbabwe was recognized as far back as the early twentieth century. It is Zimbabwe's most popular tourist destination after the Victoria Falls, generating revenue for the NMMZ and the national coffers. Even though tourist revenue is controlled by NMMZ, it has created opportunities to benefit local communities economically. In particular, the descendants of the Mugabe clan that occupied the site in the nineteenth century are being employed as stonemasons (Fontein 2006), using their traditional knowledge of stonemasonry to restore the collapsed walls. Also, traditional ceremonies are being performed at the site (fig. 5). Until recently, some members of the local community lived in a theme park known as the Shona Village, which was created to add an extra attraction to the monument (Ndoro and Pwiti 1997). Here, they exhibited Shona "traditional" lives to visiting tourists and performed traditional dances. Other local communities sell curios to tourists and earn a decent living.

Although creating local dependency on the tourist world, these platforms have provided employment in a country where unemployment rates oscillate between 80 and 90%. Even during current times of decreased visitor numbers, Great



Figure 4. The interior of the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe remains the lifeblood of both the NMMZ and the local communities.

Elsewhere in southern Africa, the site of Thulamela, located in the Kruger National Park of South Africa, provides another example of the economic and educational empowerment of local peoples (Miller 1996). In the 1990s a decision was made to rebuild the stone walls of this Zimbabwe-culture site. From the beginning, local communities were involved and had important decision-making powers. Schoolchildren were often brought to the site to learn more about its archaeology and cultural significance. The excavations produced burials believed to belong to the original occupants of the site. In consultation with members of local communities, most of whom are now Christians, the skeletons were reburied following Christian rituals and the graves marked with Christian crosses (Nemaheni 2002). This was done despite the fact that these original inhabitants of the site were unlikely to have been Christians. Whatever one thinks of this invention of the past, it does bridge the chasm between academic archaeology and the communities by creating connections between the past and the present. The site receives a sizeable number of tourists and is an important cultural and educational resource.

For almost a decade, Thulamela has been celebrated in the local and international media as a success story in community participation. Recent research in the area has, however, revealed the existence of many disgruntled parties among the local Venda and Tsonga communities. This is because, while Thulamela is known to be a Venda ancestral site, most Venda were only marginally involved and were largely required to

rubber-stamp decisions made by the scientific committee (Nemaheni 2002; Meskell 2007). Additionally, the Venda people deplore the treatment of the graves from the site because in their culture the dead command more respect than the living and their remains should not be interfered with. Further, the main beneficiaries from the site through employment seem to be Tsonga people (Meskell 2007). These problems worry some important sections of the local communities, and often they do not find avenues for expressing their concerns. With sensitive issues such as these, the authorities must labour to ensure that the benefits from heritage sites are transferred in a transparent and equitable manner. One way of achieving this is giving all local ethnic groups the chance to become self-employed by selling curios, providing accommodation to tourists, and forming dance companies. This can temper accusations of ethnic chauvinism and improve community relations, as the Great Zimbabwe story shows (Ndoro 2001).

In the Middle East, the activities carried out at Çatalhöyük, on the Könya Plain of Turkey, represent yet another example of economically empowering local communities through promoting cultural tourism and education about the past (Hodder 2000). Although archaeological work at Çatalhöyük began with James Mellaart in the late 1950s, the site achieved international fame in the 1990s when Ian Hodder and his team initiated a long-term project to unravel its complexities. From its beginnings, this project has employed men and women from the surrounding villages and towns. It has also used local knowledge systems in understanding extant activities such as mud-brick architecture. The art from the site has

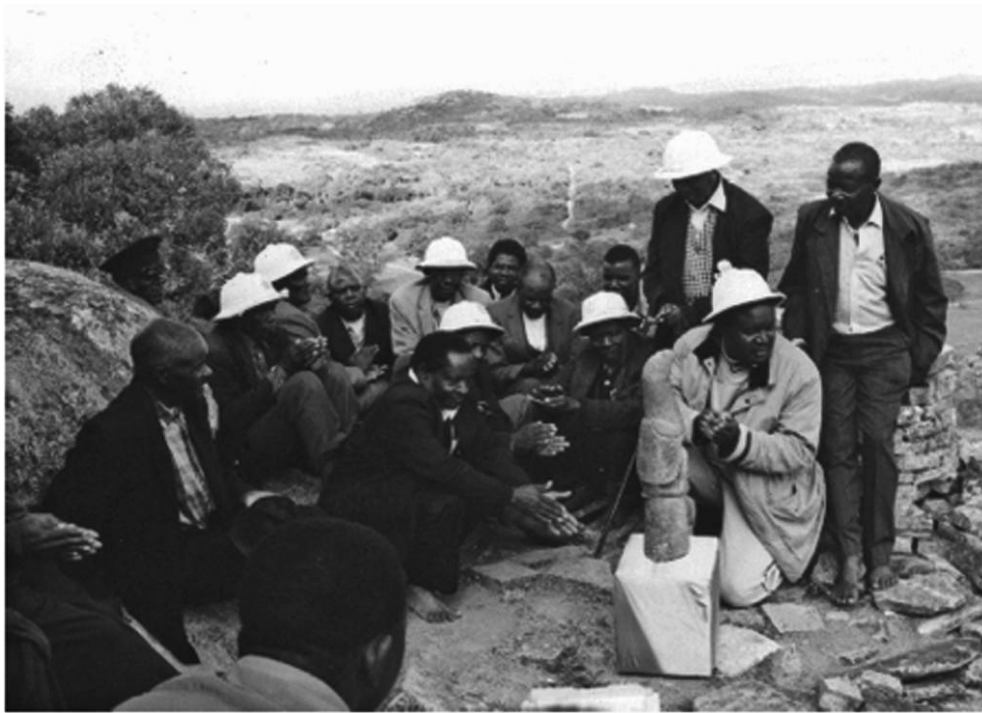


Figure 5. The ceremony marking the return of the Zimbabwe bird from Germany.

inspired contemporary artists, who have exhibited their work in various parts of the world. Furthermore, the fame of the site has attracted tourists who bring in much-needed revenue with positive effects on the local and national economy. On closer scrutiny, however, the record contains no mention of the local communities in the design and control of the project.

Community Archaeology and Multiple Pasts

Academic archaeology has been criticized for being intolerant of alternative versions of the past (Holtorf 2005). This generalization aptly applies to local histories, myths, and legends as well as the cult and fringe archaeology that is often rejected as unscientific. Community involvement has been seen as a way of achieving a broader-based and multivocal past. A good example is the Old Bulawayo Project, which was initiated in the early 1990s to reconstruct the first capital of King Lobengula as a theme park for education and tourism (see Hughes and Muringaniza 2003; Gaffney, Hughes, and Grater 2005). Located near the modern town of Bulawayo, the Old Bulawayo Project focused on rebuilding the enclosure in which the king had lived (Muringaniza 1998). The royal enclosure consisted of a wooden stockade surrounding several beehive houses and a European-style wagon shed built by traders. Archaeological, written, and oral data were used in identifying features for reconstruction. Partners in the project

included local and foreign professional archaeologists, the NMMZ, and the local community, and the partners had equal decision-making powers. The local community was represented by the descendants of the ruling clan, the Khumalo people. These representatives lived on the site and offered important insights into Ndebele worldviews and values. Because knowledge about constructing the traditional Ndebele beehive houses had almost vanished, Ndebele representatives were dispatched to their original home in Zululand, in present-day South Africa, to study traditional Zulu architecture (Muringaniza 1998). Nowadays the site is open to visitors as a theme showcasing life at Old Bulawayo during Lobengula's time.

The most important feature of the Old Bulawayo Project, when compared with other archaeological projects in the world, was that local communities and in particular the Khumalo people could veto decisions made by the archaeologists. The events surrounding the rebuilding of one beehive house demonstrate this (Pwiti 2005). Archaeological excavations and late-nineteenth-century ethnography suggested that this particular house faced the east. This interpretation was supported by the position of the back platform used for storing pots, a feature ethnographically known to be located at the rear of the house (Huffman 2007). During the reconstruction, community representatives argued that Ndebele houses historically did not face in that direction, citing taboos to that effect (Pwiti 2005). After protracted discussions, the archaeologists

reluctantly accepted the community's view (fig. 6). After more debate, however, the same local community admitted that it was wrong (Pwiti 2005). Perhaps, with the help of a plaque, the reconstruction is important in calling attention to the existence of multiple versions of the past.

The complex issue of community views' overriding archaeological evidence is important in the discourse of community archaeology in general. Normally, that archaeology has its own interpretations that may be at variance with local views alienates the discipline from local communities. Therefore, viewed from a community archaeology perspective, agreeing with the faulty community point of view was important in presenting the subject as a discipline that has contemporary relevance. In the process, the project leaders inculcated a sense of community ownership of the project that has helped to bridge the gap between academic archaeology and the local communities. The irony, however, is that the project achieved multivocality at the expense of interpreting material remains in ways faithful to the past.

The Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage sites in Britain provide yet another example of the achievement of multivocality in archaeology. The management plan and interpretive centre at Stonehenge recognizes the many versions and uses of the past (Bender 1993; Wallis 2002), including the interpretations of the stakeholders such as the Druids who use the site for religious purposes today. Similarly, at Çatalhöyük the perspectives of goddess groups are presented as

alternatives to academic archaeology. According to Rountree (2003), diverse interpretations enhance the participation of a wider audience and give them a stronger sense of ownership of the site. Because of this multivocality, Çatalhöyük has influenced various art forms such as a building reconstructed for a fashion show in 1997 and an exhibition of work entitled "Art in Prehistory" by Turkish artists (Hodder 2000)

Discussion: When the Thrill Has Faded

The above case studies from various parts of the world have shown that archaeologists are now genuinely taking local community sentiments and views into consideration. The end result of community archaeology has not, however, been without its problems, and this invites a deeper evaluation of the whole concept. Our review of the projects in southern Africa has shown that most of the problems are caused by archaeologists' tendency to treat local communities as passive agents. This has created conflicts at Domboshava, where the local community is calling for 50% of the revenue from the site and the power to authorize certain activities for its benefit. The NMMZ, considering this extreme, argues that it is an organization set up under the law and the communities should respect it. In a polemical defense of their position at a stakeholder meeting, local community members articulated that the law was made by parliament and the NMMZ should tell that parliament that the people no longer deemed the law



Figure 6. The reconstructed hut at Old Bulawayo facing in the "wrong" direction.

necessary. Furthermore, they said that if changing the law to reflect their needs was a problem, the NMMZ should relocate Domboshava Hill to Harare, where it could do whatever it wanted without community interference. Our interviews with representatives from the NMMZ showed that most of them thought that the communities were troublemakers and that the organization should go back to its pre-community-participation policy. What they failed to realize was that community involvement means more than telling communities what to do.

Domboshava is not the only place where calls have been made for more for local communities. Similar sentiments are summarized by a statement made by Chief Charumbira, President of the Zimbabwe Council of Chiefs, at a stakeholder workshop convened to look into amending Zimbabwe's cultural heritage legislation in 2005. He objected to having been invited to the workshop as a stakeholder, saying, "We are not stakeholders; we are the owners of this heritage." What Chief Charumbira seemed to be underlining was the role of traditional leaders and local communities in the management of cultural resources. Presumably, he was advocating that more power be given to local communities in protecting and managing their heritage. Traditionally, chiefs had custodial rights over important archaeological sites. Giving them back those powers would ensure more meaningful involvement beyond the cosmetic participation that the chief deplored. The situation is very much the same at Thulamela in South Africa, where the Venda communities complain that they have been given no decision-making powers in developments taking place at the site and that their views with regard to human remains have not been respected (Meskell 2007). Therefore, what has been presented to the world as a wholly owned community project, with ancestors showing their happiness through magical signs, has created unhappiness in the local community. Again, at Çatalhöyük and Stonehenge, most of the involvement is centred on incorporating different views to achieve multivocality, with limited meaningful power and control being given to the local communities (Hamilton 2000).

The situation in the United States and Canada is somewhat different because here at least there are very strong laws that bind archaeologists to meaningful involvement of local communities. NAGPRA is a very strong piece of legislation that gives Native Americans power to defend themselves against excesses, but archaeologists can appeal if they feel that their right to pursue knowledge is being undermined, as happened with Kennewick Man (Watkins 2003, 2005). The antiquities laws in Zimbabwe must be replaced by others that take community sentiments into consideration. In pre-colonial times, chiefs and spirit mediums were custodians of important heritage sites, and unwritten laws called for members of the community to respect the heritage of others in much of southern Africa (Ranger 1999). Because traditional land rights are linked to heritage ownership and access, the new laws must return some traditional custodial rights to the community.

Also, there must be a change in attitude on the part of the antiquities authorities, who must come to view local communities as genuine in their claims rather than troublemakers.

It seems clear that local communities want more power and archaeologists are reluctant to give it to them. At first glance, community archaeology would seem to challenge the epistemological basis of archaeology, which is often associated with bureaucratic restriction and a standardized set of practices (Marshall 2002). It is our contention, however, that what is needed is coexistence, and most of the current involvement does not go far enough to satisfy the communities. If there were meaningful involvement as in the case of the Living Landscape or the Old Bulawayo projects, then there would be no calls for more power. However, a top-down approach of some kind is unavoidable, for there must be a regulating body or authority. In traditional African situations there was some hierarchy in heritage protection, with chiefs and spirit mediums regulating the conservation and use of important sites and shrines (Ranger 1999; Ndoro 2001; Joffroy 2005). In fact, democratizing at the bottom has worked very well in the KwaZulu-Natal area of South Africa, where archaeologists have a long history of consulting local communities on legislation and heritage protection activities. The South African Heritage Resources Act was largely influenced by practices in KwaZulu-Natal (Hall 2005).

At this point, it is important to look at the other side, that of archaeologists. First, the major problem is that there are so many communities surrounding a single archaeological site that, even in cases of meaningful involvement, it is difficult to satisfy everyone. For example, at Domboshava, some groups believed that the NMMZ was correct in objecting to plans to build a restaurant that threatened the integrity of the sacred forest. At Great Zimbabwe, the local Mugabe and Nemanwa clans have increasingly seen the traditional custodianship being appropriated by Chief Charumbira (Fontein 2006). At Thulamela, most Venda people claim that they were not consulted and that the Tsonga should not benefit from the Venda heritage. At Çatalhöyük, some local Muslims are worried by the prominence given to the goddess followers. It is difficult for archaeologists and cultural heritage managers to decide whose side to take. Compromising with one community creates conflicts with another. This suggests that community archaeology may sometimes create more problems than benefits.

Because of the value of heritage to all humanity, there are no legitimate or illegitimate communities in archaeology and heritage management (Appiah 2006). The concept of the universal value of heritage has been criticized as a form of neo-colonialism and cultural imperialism whereby researchers and others exploit host communities in the name of science (Hamilton 2000; Watkins 2003). Considering the need to understand the past, whether from an archaeological or a local community perspective, we tend to accept the idea, but we strongly feel that the local communities and indigenous groups that own and have an interest in the heritage should

benefit more from the resources and should play an important role in their management and in the conduct and practice of the discipline.

Conclusion

Community participation is one of the most potent ways of including owners and stakeholders in the protection of archaeological heritage. As we have seen, the merits of this include promoting education about the past, increasing archaeology's relevance to the present communities, and bridging the gap between fieldwork, local communities, and lecture halls. However, our case studies have shown that these successes are sometimes overshadowed by the creation of unforeseen problems. For example, almost all the archaeological sites discussed are associated with multiple communities with multiple interests, and it is difficult to please them all. On a positive note, however, the existence of multiple communities is conducive to multidisciplinary cooperation, and it can be seen as a way of balancing archaeological perspectives with different views, thus creating an even larger constituency for the discipline. Not all projects are endowed with sufficient resources to make conflicts avoidable. More important, money cannot buy unity in diversity. The challenge is to make decisions that do not exclude or marginalize any interested party. Whether that is achievable is open to debate.

One of the most interesting points to emerge from this review exercise is that, after involving communities and raising their hopes, archaeologists seem reluctant to give them power. This is understandable, given that they are trained specialists; ceding power is not expected of other professionals who use their specialties with great effect. If advocating that more power be given to communities means that they lack confidence in themselves, they should abandon the profession to those communities. However, that not even the goddess followers at Çatalhöyük have been given complete powers suggests that ceding control to local communities is difficult to achieve and therefore an unrealistic goal. Advocating that more powers be given to untrained communities creates the impression that archaeology cannot work without those communities, and this can be counterproductive. Who can blame Chief Chinamhora for demanding control of half of the revenue generated at Domboshava when he was led to believe that his views were important? Sacrificing heritage for development is not, alas, the goal of archaeology. The NMMZ's mandate is to protect cultural interests in the face of ever-changing societal values. Where, then, does community archaeology begin and end?

The idea of multivocality is important, but if not controlled it can lead to a free-for-all. Cultural values and interpretations change, but should the goals of the discipline change with them? Local communities are not always right; while the same can, of course, be said of archaeologists, they have a moral duty to safeguard the interpretation of the past. Archaeology should be true to the material evidence; otherwise it can be

manipulated to suit ideological ends, as was demonstrated by the infamous claims of Phoenician authorship of Great Zimbabwe during colonial times. Given their moral obligation to interpret the past, how much should archaeologists open up to local communities, and are the problems worth it?

Leaving these complexities aside, community archaeology requires a huge investment of resources that are not always available to researchers who are under pressure to publish and produce academic publications rather than items for popular consumption (McManamon 2000*b*). It is unfortunate that the magazine articles and other products essential for community archaeology do not count much in an academic's life. Perhaps academic institutions should reduce their research demands to enable archaeologists to practise their profession fully. This is problematic in South Africa, where peer-reviewed journals earn subsidies from the government. This leaves cultural resource management projects as the only viable opportunities for practicing community archaeology (McManamon 2000*b*). These projects, however, have their own demands, which are developer-driven, with the result that there is no time for community involvement or giving power to local communities.

The potential of the approach is considerable, but archaeologists have failed to comprehend and deal with the fraught relations between archaeology and local communities. While some of the problems seem to be the same around the world, they all require context-dependent solutions. We hope that this contribution will stimulate more reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of the approach.

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Comments

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While still a fairly recent development, community archaeology is receiving increasing attention worldwide. Chirikure and Pwiti argue that publications on the topic so far may

have overemphasized the positive aspects while playing down the difficulties. This is probably a correct observation. Most likely it can be ascribed to a wish to promote community archaeology by focusing on its positive implications. Chirikure and Pwiti present a number of very illuminating examples that partly demonstrate the potential but certainly also point to some of the problems inherent in such approaches. The fact that we are now beginning to discuss the difficulties of community archaeology in print suggests to me that it has matured to the extent that we are ready to accept it as an integral part of archaeology and consequently must face the challenges it presents.

As is evident from the examples presented, multivocality, in the sense of presenting both academic and local interpretations and stories, would appear often to be the first step taken when trying to bridge different knowledge reservoirs. This really ought to be a self-evident requirement in cultural heritage management: why should only one aspect of a monument or site be presented? This may be compared to digging through and throwing away finds and information from medieval layers in order to get to the prehistoric levels. As academics we should find it easy to agree that all aspects of an issue under investigation must be presented and evaluated, and as academics we are familiar with the possibility of different interpretations even within the discipline.

Multivocality may be a manageable solution when it comes to presentations at a particular site. I would agree with Chirikure and Pwiti that as long as the role of the local communities is a fairly passive one, confined to “also-ran” or alongside interpretations and perspectives, academics and bureaucrats are increasingly forthcoming. As their examples show, the difficulties increase as we move towards more practical issues such as the actual management of sites, not to speak of active involvement in research issues such as what and where to excavate and what issues to focus on.

Chirikure and Pwiti call for meaningful involvement, and in the cases of Domboshava and Old Bulawayo this has been successful. Such involvement may cover a wide range of activities from running souvenir shops through local guiding to active involvement in reconstructions (e.g., providing knowledge of building methods and layout). For collaboration to be anything more than a politically correct exercise, all the involved parties must have something to contribute and must mutually recognize this knowledge or expertise. As archaeologists we can benefit greatly from local knowledge in many forms, be it building techniques, environmental issues, or cultural traditions, but at the same time we should ask for recognition of our academic knowledge and skills. The major part of the actual archaeological research should therefore be planned and directed by competent scholars. This, however, does not exclude active involvement of the local communities even in this process.

As archaeologists we approach a site with specific research questions. Increasingly these are being formed in part by requirements from various research councils enforcing political

strategies. This is of course part of making archaeology relevant to the society at large. But responding to such larger issues does not necessarily prevent us from incorporating local issues as well. One of the most important challenges in community archaeology is to be sensitive to local interests and questions when outlining our research strategy. This of course requires that we approach and involve local residents and stakeholders in an early phase.

While I agree that the past as stories and physical sites in many respects has universal value, we must also recognize that at present the best protection sites can get is a sense of ownership from the local residents. In general, monuments, local communities, and society at large benefit from open access to information on the location of sites. Culture heritage management in my opinion is not just about protecting sites but about the dissemination of knowledge at all levels.

Community archaeology has a long way to go before we can genuinely talk of collaboration between academics and locals. Yet, it is essential that we keep expanding the frame of interaction. No academic discipline should be pursued purely for its own benefit, and archaeology can make an impression on people if we allow them to participate actively.

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There can be no single definition of “community archaeology,” and while it is desirable that communities be involved in the activities of archaeologists, “community archaeology” should not mean that archaeologists abandon their initiatives and share their responsibilities and roles with communities as Chirikure and Pwiti seem to suggest. This would threaten the essence of archaeology, which involves objective study and the conservation of the past. The examples they provide are testimony to this unfortunate trend. My understanding of community involvement is that archaeologists should not exclude the community from their research; they should seek the express permission and cooperation of communities, respect their customs and traditions, and not exploit them in any way. “Multivocality” should not mean imposing the community’s interpretation on a scientifically derived interpretation as was done at Old Bulawayo. Community interpretations and views are to be represented in the results of our researches but not substituted for our own interpretations. The monumental error in reconstruction at Old Bulawayo was the direct result of the flawed premise that “community participation strikingly contrasts with the elitism of conventional archaeological practice.” The error cannot be justified by merely stating that “agreeing with the faulty community point of view was important in presenting the subject as a discipline that has contemporary relevance.” This is not a good practice, and it turns archaeology into mere narrative.

Experience shows that in archaeological and heritage management research we are often confronted by varied communities, some very cooperative and some very unruly. The definitions of “community” and “ownership” in relation to archaeological sites therefore become important. While Chirikure and Pwiti eloquently describe various forms of communities, they seem to have restricted themselves to residentially based ones. I have observed that where communities have close links with archaeological sites they tend to be very supportive, providing archaeologists with financial, accommodation, and intellectual assistance. There are, however, instances in which they have refused to allow excavations of particular sites. Where there is no link, archaeologists are usually frustrated and exploited by the community, and in some cases the sites are looted and destroyed (Nigerian examples are the Nok Valley and the Kwatokwashi area, and Domboshava may be a parallel in Zimbabwe). In such cases the future of the sites depends on the community of stakeholders rather than on a local residentially based community that has no sentimental link to or intellectual interest in them. The determination of ownership of heritage can be a very contentious issue and cannot be based on residential proximity. The claim of being owners and not stakeholders has no meaning, since we are not dealing with local and foreign (colonial) contenders.

Chirikure and Pwiti seem to support the turning of heritage resources into economic assets when they say that “community involvement is consonant with this general movement towards empowering the previously disadvantaged.” Disadvantaged in what? Empowered to do what? To mine and exploit archaeological sites? They do not explain these issues. More disturbing is the way in which they describe the relationship between NMMZ and the local community at Domboshava: “The traditional ceremonies [conducted in the tunnel] produced smoke that was *thought* [my emphasis] to be affecting the art.” Was the art not affected? There can be no justification for vandalism on the part of the local people. NMMZ has the responsibility under the laws of the country to protect its heritage, and it should not compromise because local people want to appropriate or misappropriate the national heritage in their neighbourhood. It was easier for the community leader to claim a change in community values than to protect the integrity of the collective heritage.

Chirikure and Pwiti seem to be biased towards the position of the local community at Domboshava. They also advocate views that may be dangerous and destructive on how best to protect the past. It is bizarre for them to expect NMMZ to change legislation it did not make. Archaeologists are experts in their field as viewed by NMMZ, and it is difficult to see what is colonial about its insisting on standard practice and procedure. The American example of the NAGPRA does not apply to the case of Zimbabwe because, as Chirikure and Pwiti themselves have said in discussing what is indigenous, we are dealing here with different contexts.

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11 I 08

My comments address not the specifics of Chirikure and Pwiti’s judicious intervention into the policy of Zimbabwean and South African archaeology but its general principle: deference to “community.” According to the logic of this principle, those possessed of technical expertise should treat the poor and disenfranchised with humility and respect. Since it took hold in the 1980s, this graceful attitude has blunted much of the “authoritarian high modernism” (Scott 1998) so characteristic of development and modernization. Chirikure and Pwiti recommend such deference to those academics who still practice a purely extractive form of fieldwork. Few will quarrel with their case-by-case judgments. Yet, as it has been extended over the past decade or so, their principle of deference to community may have reached its limit. Two broad shortcomings have weakened its appeal among scholars and activists. First, “communities” rarely correspond to neatly bounded geographical places. More often than not, “community” exists as a feeling, a hope, and an idea rather than a place. Second, this conflation of the ideal and the real leads to a certain political inattentiveness. The study of a community, as a concrete thing, shades imperceptibly into advocacy for community, as a desired state. “Community,” in other words, can become a coercive concept—one that warrants careful handling especially in Zimbabwe’s current context of violent nationalism. The standards for such care—as caveats to the deference to community—still need to be fleshed out.

To begin with its geographical flaws, the notion of “community” suggests an unwarranted spatial concreteness. Few people now live in isolated villages, if they ever did, and movement and hybridity are the order of the day. This is not to say that all people are or wish to be transnational. Still, the opposed model of static communities of place gives us less and less purchase on this increasingly fluid social world. Individuals associated with any of the Zimbabwean sites have likely worked in other parts of Zimbabwe and/or in South Africa. Many have certainly fled to South Africa now, along with close to a quarter of their countrymen. To grant them authority over local archaeological sites makes no more or less sense than enfranchising them in national and regional politics. Unfortunately, the emphasis on the former has dampened any potential for the latter. In the 1990s, “community-based” activities—in conservation and development rather than in archaeology—helped close discussion on more far-reaching political transformations (Hughes 2006). With respect to archaeology itself, the emphasis on community risks fostering parochialism and possessiveness, as if heritage were local and an object to be owned and controlled. One might choose to treat artifacts as such where survivors of genocide and cultural theft seek redress from the still-dominant per-

petrator society (as some have through the U.S. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act). Also, as Chirikure and Pwiti suggest, people whose contemporary belief and practice involve a site surely deserve special rights to it. Other contexts—notably that of the Parthenon Marbles—offer less moral clarity. In a nod toward such pervasive messiness, Chirikure and Pwiti mention Appiah's (2006) call for "cosmopolitanism," but they do not indicate how to apply, in engaged archaeology, his notion of unbordered relatedness. The attachment to "community," in sum, exaggerates essence and difference at the expense of commonality, fluidity, and flow.

This distortion incurs a political as well as an intellectual cost. To turn to the second concern regarding "community," the concept frequently crosses the threshold from a unit of analysis to an activist agenda. Rather than detecting a unity among people, scholars all too often try to manufacture one—without always signaling this applied turn. With relative forthrightness, Chirikure and Pwiti recommend "inculcat[ing] a sense of pride . . . in those indigenous peoples." Such efforts frequently fail. Shortly after Zimbabwe's independence, Parliament invited the late David Beach, dean of precolonial Zimbabwean history, to testify on African society before conquest. He gave the MPs much to glory in but, to their chagrin, also mentioned forms of clientage akin to slavery (cf. Beach 1980). Honest scholarship just as often wounds as it heals cultural pride. National pride is even more fraught. Chirikure and Pwiti urge the managers of archaeological sites to promote identity and nation building among a country's citizens, but can archaeologists do so while also "inculcating cultural pride" with respect to smaller and crosscutting social units? Perhaps they can, but then they must also avoid the type of "patriotic history" and "primordiality" to which Zimbabwe—20 years after Beach's lecture—has fallen prey (Ranger 2004; Muzondidya 2007). Since 2000, the ruling party has reshaped nationalism around a narrative of Shona virtue and exclusivity, invoking the past when convenient. Here is "community-based archaeology" at its worst. Chirikure and Pwiti—to substantiate their approach—would do well to find a more systematic way of sorting this chaff from the wheat in the principle of deference to community.

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Chirikure and Pwiti's aim is to examine community involvement in archaeology, highlight some of the problems that have arisen, and propose possible solutions. They base this discussion primarily on their 20 years' experience in southern Africa. In this regard, they provide a perspective that is not usually heard (the 2002 *World Archaeology* issue dedicated to this topic had one contribution from Egypt but none from

elsewhere on the African continent). Unfortunately, they do not make the most of their opportunity. They begin by debating the different communities of interest, but their definition of "community archaeology" varies, sometimes including archaeologists and sometimes not. In this case it would have been appropriate to use Marshall's (2002) definition throughout.

The main part of their text is a description of southern African case studies, principally the sites of Domboshava, Great Zimbabwe, Thulamela, and Old Bulawayo. They subdivide these studies into three subsections that do not work particularly well because of the degree of overlap and the repetition in the following discussion. Their attempt to contrast successful examples with those that expose various failings is not aided by the fact that the successes (the Living Landscape Project and the KwaZulu-Natal area) are so briefly mentioned as to be meaningless without prior knowledge. The article would have been far stronger if they had explored four case studies in much greater detail and then reviewed the issues arising from them.

The weakest part of the article is the comparison with international examples. The authors refer to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act in an unproblematic way that is in contrast to the recent heated debates in the World Archaeological Congress web-based discussion forum and elsewhere with regard to proposed federal rule changes. They include modern goddess and druid cults as part of the communities of interest in the heritage sites of Avebury, Stonehenge, and Çatalhöyük. With regard to Çatalhöyük they recognize that some local communities are uncomfortable with the use of the site by goddess-cult followers. However, despite acknowledging their lack of detailed information, they present the inclusive archaeology at Çatalhöyük as the best example of an interdisciplinary team approach.

On the positive side, Chirikure and Pwiti do raise interesting issues about community involvement in archaeology, including the differences between cultural resource management and research archaeological programmes, the purpose of community involvement, and the relationship between archaeologists and the community.

The projects described by Chirikure and Pwiti all seem to fall under the broad heading of cultural resource management archaeology. Some are located at existing structures or monuments, such as the rock art site at Domboshava, the stone-walled citadels of Great Zimbabwe and Thulamela, and the reconstructed buildings in the Royal Enclosure at Old Bulawayo. The community involvement in these sites is focused on interpretation and management for the purposes of cultural tourism. The Living Landscape Project is based on traditional knowledge and is an educational facility. Although many of these places were originally investigated as part of research archaeology, this no longer seems to be the case. It would be interesting if new academic southern African archaeological projects could work alongside communities keen to know more about their past.

The type and purpose of community involvement in cultural resource management can include various areas of archaeological practice, such as excavation, interpretation, education, site management, and conservation. However, in research or academic archaeological projects, community involvement can be much wider than this, with community input into the research questions, project design, and application. I have experienced an example of this as part of a multidisciplinary research team working with the Ngati Mutunga Maori community in a project investigating the cultural significance of Taranaki wetlands in New Zealand (Allen et al. 2002).

The relationship between archaeologists and communities can be difficult at times because of their differing principles. Chirikure and Pwiti outline some of these, such as the proposal to cut down ancient forests and continue cultural practices that could damage the rock art at Domboshava, the reconstruction of a royal house facing in the wrong direction at Old Bulawayo, and the reburial of pre-Christian remains according to Christian beliefs at Thulamela. The rebuilding of partially ruined stone walls at Great Zimbabwe could also be seen as compromising the archaeological heritage. These represent some of the problems encountered by archaeologists, while the success stories are those in which communities have been empowered and employed and both the tangible (based on archaeological data) and intangible (based on traditional knowledge) aspects of the past have been honoured, as in the Living Landscape Project and the KwaZulu-Natal area.

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This article provides insight into issues relating to communities and heritage management, but it falls short of providing an in-depth analysis of the facts and the socioeconomic contexts of case studies such as Domboshava. Issues such as who represents the community, given its diverse composition, the inescapable political environment of each site, the manner in which the local communities should participate, the balance between varying and sometimes conflicting community interests, the balance between the use and conservation of non-renewable cultural resources, and other processes that empower local communities should have been considered. Domboshava has an interpretive centre and community-initiated market-driven activities and has been adopted by a local school, and National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) is contributing to the electrification of rural homesteads—all of which could have been discussed. Critical to all this is maintaining the integrity and authenticity of the sites (Lowenthal 2003; Ndoro 1996; Pwiti and Ndoro 2001; Taruvinga 2007).

Cultural heritage is created and owned by the people themselves, but one should recognize the matrix of custodians closely connected with sites: (1) traditional custodians, those with a direct link with the site, whose traditional rules and regulations have always protected heritage places (Taruvinga 2007), (2) local custodians, people without direct link with the site but residing close to it, and (3) professional custodians, institutions empowered by central governments to manage heritage places. This matrix determines the relationship between communities and heritage institutions and the level of empowerment. The three kinds of custodians apparently hold the same values for the site, but in reality sites have become contested landscapes given this custodianship matrix (Colley 2002; Loubser and Laurens 1994). Also, during the colonial period indigenous communities lost control of their heritage places because of forced relocation to marginal lands. The post-colonial land-reform process in Zimbabwe has further alienated indigenous communities from their heritage, as the land allocated to them is not necessarily in their original or historical areas. Thus indigenous people continue to be local custodians whose main priority is economic development.

Colonial heritage legislation did in fact leave a legacy of alienation, but this has been perpetuated in most African countries because of inescapable political factors (Mumma 2002; Taruvinga 2007). On attaining independence, most African governments undertook legal reforms to address the immediate needs of the electorate (e.g., constitutional, labour, land-reform, and economic-empowerment issues). Often, heritage legislation was considered of low priority. Where reforms were undertaken, they were cosmetic. The communities themselves have not played their role by lobbying for reforms through established political structures, nor have the heritage institutions aggressively lobbied for them. Therefore heritage legislation remains cast in a colonial framework. However, efforts are being undertaken to address this legacy.

Although legal reform has been slow, heritage institutions now recognize indigenous heritage values and have deliberately empowered local communities. NMMZ empowered the traditional custodians of the Domboshava site without the backing of NMMZ Act 25:11. The colonial government had barred the custodians from performing their rain-making ceremonies at the site by sealing the tunnel associated with this rite and denying them access to the site (Taruvinga 1995, 2007). In the late 1980s NMMZ negotiated with the custodians, leading to the unblocking of the tunnel, the granting of access to the site for ceremonies, and the holding of a cleansing ceremony at the site in 1997. Today the traditional custodians have full access to the site. Therefore, it would be erroneous to conclude that the vandalism of the site in 2000 and the burning of the curio shop were related to alienation issues. It was established that this was a simple act of vandalism by a former employee who had been dismissed for work-related misconduct and was covering up a theft in the shop (Taruvinga 2001, 2007). Finally, heritage institutions are redefining national-monuments lists by recognizing values

that were originally not protected. NMMZ has provided a clear example of community empowerment by declaring Mazowe Valley and Nharira Hills national monuments. The former is associated with the legendary spirit medium Mbuya Nehanda, who was instrumental in the first Chimurenga (resistance against colonizers) and provided inspiration for the armed struggle for independence. The Nharira Hills are renowned for the rain-making ceremonies of the Nyamweda people. Both proclamations have involved the empowerment of traditional custodians to look after these sites. This demonstrates how heritage institutions are putting pressure on governments and the communities themselves to reform the heritage legal instruments.

Contrary to community perceptions that heritage institutions are making colossal profits, cost-benefit analyses show that no profits are being realized at all. Apart from employing local people, heritage institutions have actually devolved “downstream” tourism activities to communities. For example, NMMZ deliberately stopped marketing curios at sites in order to pave the way for increased community-based activities. Therefore, revenue sharing must be viewed against all these efforts and the unavoidable legal mandate that heritage institutions charge fees for the management of sites. Thus, heritage institutions are catalysts promoting consumption, sustainable use, and conservation of the sites.

Africa is slowly shaking off the influence of colonialism, and the challenge is to bridge the gap between the colonial legacy, the underlying factories, and the need to empower traditional custodians towards achieving “custodian-based management systems.” Disentangling this mosaic of intertwined and sometimes conflicting factors and the legacies remains a challenge for Africa (Munjeri 2002; Muringaniza 1998 Pwiti and Ndoro 1999; Ndoro and Pwiti 2001; Pwiti and Mvenge 1996; Taruvinga and Ndoro 2003). African countries must also domesticate all ratified international conventions to ensure the recognition of traditional protection systems.

Reply

Generally, two themes pervade these comments. The first is that there is no single definition of “community archaeology” but, whatever definition is used, archaeologists and cultural resource management practitioners should not compromise the goals of archaeology or those of the interested communities. The second is that, while related, cultural resource management and archaeology are not the same. Obviously, one cannot practice cultural resource management without archaeological knowledge and vice versa. Therefore, community involvement in archaeology and community involvement in cultural resource management are bound to differ. Indeed,

these differences have to a large extent stimulated the varied responses to our paper.

Our decision to approach community archaeology on the conceptual level was based on the belief that this would enable us to evaluate its practice and theory. Obviously, this approach sacrificed some detail, but we felt that this did not fundamentally affect the concepts under discussion. While this distinction has eluded some commentators, others see our approach as an opportunity to reflect on the health of the subject. In particular, we agree with Damm that now that community archaeology has matured it is necessary to evaluate it if archaeology and local communities are to benefit from it fully. This requires honest self-evaluation on the part of archaeologists rather than polemical defenses of their conduct (e.g., Folorunso’s and Taruvinga’s responses). What we find most appealing in Damm’s comments is her insistence that multivocality should play a central part in archaeology and heritage management. Just as there is no single important part of the past, there is no single important version of the past. Essentially, this multivocality emerges when communities are involved in the design and implementation of research projects. Failure to achieve this leads to the alienation of archaeology from the communities it is intended to reach.

It would have been surprising if no commentator had been alarmed by the need to cede more power to local communities. Folorunso’s sentiments are therefore not entirely misplaced. Indeed, he rightly sees it as dangerous for archaeologists to abandon their responsibilities. Because our main aim was to evaluate the concept of community involvement, we presented two extreme cases, one in which the community imposed its own interpretation (Old Bulawayo) and another in which the community clamored for the destruction of heritage in the name of development (Domboshava). The question is whether we can find a middle way that benefits communities without disadvantaging archaeology as a discipline. Many academic papers have given the impression that community archaeology is problem-free and solves most of the problems affecting archaeology and its relationship to communities. Therefore, these case studies are cautionary tales. Folorunso is absolutely right; sometimes we are confronted by unruly communities. Very often they are considered unruly because their values are at variance with those of archaeologists. Yes, the art at Domboshava was being affected by the smoke, but does that mean that the local people were supposed to stop using the site? The truth is that archaeologists came with colonialism and found those people using the site for rain-making ceremonies. They ought to have respected the community’s beliefs and looked for a compromise. Elbowing the local community out of the picture created the conflicts that we described (see also Pwiti and Mvenge 1996). Western-style heritage management has no appeal for the local communities, which have their own heritage protection regimes (see Joffroy 2006). Where the Western and the traditional clash, local people sometimes prefer traditional systems to the often arrogant prescriptions of so-called professionals.

The concept of a community is important in this connection. We agree with Hughes that “as it has been extended over the past decade or so, [the] principle of deference to community may have reached its limit.” Worse, the concept of a community can be manipulated for ideological ends, as is manifested by the upsurge of patriotic history in Zimbabwe. There is a version of patriotic heritage that is associated with the liberation struggle and the communities that sponsored it. Over the past few years, patriotic heritage projects have been the focus of the NMMZ, with the result that little research money is being ploughed into other types of heritage. Three-quarters of the exhibitions mounted by the Museum of Human Sciences in recent years have been designed to commemorate fallen heroes of the struggle. What is surprising is that the NMMZ has published so little information regarding this heritage. We should have been seeing academic papers on its interpretation and management. Other organizations operating under austere conditions, such as the University of Zimbabwe, are producing academic papers whilst the NMMZ, which receives generous government funding, is not. To sum up, rather than seeing the limit as Hughes does, we think that it is time to reflect on and change our course of action on the basis of what experience has taught us.

Perspectives from other regions of the world are always welcome, and Phillips’s comments are very useful. She begins by pointing out the faults in our piece, but what she views as our weakest point is probably our strongest. At least we attempt to throw light on what is happening outside the African continent. Originally, our paper dealt only with southern Africa, but most of the referees felt that we should include examples from other regions, unfamiliar with them as we were. Community archaeology is not a homogeneous entity, and the best community archaeology for New Zealand may not be the best for Africa. To her credit, Phillips recognizes that we should not throw out the baby with the bath water. She notes points of academic interest in our piece such as the difference between cultural resource management and archaeology, the purpose of community involvement, and the relationship between archaeologists and the community. With regard to her example of including local communities in the design of archaeological research, we can report that in a project on the archaeological correlates of rain-making in eastern Zimbabwe, local communities in Zimunya played a leading role in designing the research and guided archaeologists from the University of Zimbabwe. Their joint effort led to the production of a DVD called *Makasva*. The Zimunya people’s interest was nurtured by a desire to preserve knowledge of their traditions rather than the prospect of economic gain.

Taruvinga’s comment should have been the most informative, but unfortunately it takes the form of a public relations piece on Domboshava. We chose to emphasize the recent stand-off between the NMMZ and the Domboshava communities regarding the construction of a restaurant in the sacred forest rather than events that took place ten years ago

such as the largely unsuccessful rural electrification project. Domboshava does not strike us as an archaeological site with massive income-generating potential such as Great Zimbabwe, and therefore it seems to us unlikely that the local communities are interested in heritage only for the money. The records of meetings show that they feel that they are getting a raw deal from the NMMZ. Therefore, the question that the NMMZ ought to be asking itself is why, despite all the “achievements” outlined by Taruvinga, the communities are making what would appear to be unreasonable demands. Clearly, the NMMZ’s version of community archaeology is, as Chief Charumbira puts it, only halfhearted.

Also, we are told that the NMMZ is proclaiming sites national monuments, but we are not told how local communities have been involved in the process. Given that these heritage sites (e.g., the Mazowe Valley) are located on commercial farms, what communities are involved and with what results? What is most worrying in Taruvinga’s piece is the implication that local communities are concerned only with economic gain. Clearly, he forgets that the heritage belongs to them. The claim that communities may be destroying nonrenewable resources is unfounded, for the existence of these resources suggests that people have been looking after them (see Joffroy 2006). Furthermore, the NMMZ was created by an act of parliament, and the powers of traditional chiefs were endorsed by that same parliament. Therefore, at times chiefs can operate under the law to solve problems affecting their heritage and their people. This is why Chief Chinamhora supported the building of the restaurant in the sacred forest and the NMMZ was powerless to stop the development. How can conflicts in a dual management regime be resolved? Current plans for turning over the management of Great Zimbabwe to the local authorities suggest one answer to this question.

In summary, community involvement is very important, but we should take note of its many forms and its limitations in navigating our way forward.

—Shadreck Chirikure and Gilbert Pwiti

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