

November 18 2008, Medellín, Colombia

Workshop at the V National Congress of Archaeology

[WAC Workshop: Archaeology & Local Communities - Spanish](#)

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Presentation

In this workshop we want to get together some central actors in the relationships that archaeology has had with local communities. These relationships are multiple, the actors are positioned in different power *loci*, and several strategies of dispersion and escape are in operation; therefore, mapping their logic is futile. The study of such relationships must not be based on research topics but on narratives of what has been shared on time and space. This goal has an antecedent. In April, 2008 Kogi leaders of northern Colombia got together with a Nasa leader from the southern part of the country to share their ideas about “national archaeological areas.” In the event, attended by a wide audience at the University of Magdalena and supported by WAC, surfaced anew, not as a linguistic but as a political problem, the fact that neither the Kogi nor the Nasa have the idea of a national archaeological park in their languages.

These examples do not exhaust the diversity of situations experienced by local communities regarding their own landscapes. Recently the historic materiality of afro-descendant cultures has begun to emerge as a political and epistemological preoccupation. Now that decolonization and interculturality are frequently talked about in Colombia it is mandatory to solve the paradoxes obtaining between communitarism and statalization. This workshop pretends to problematize such a tension, to explore points of encounter, and to review common agendas. The participants are thus encouraged to present ethical reflections about how archaeologists should relate to local communities in the wider context of decolonization.

Methodology

The participants will present brief position papers about his/her experience on the relationship between archaeology and local communities.



