

Archaeologies 2.1 ABSTRACTS

Papers:

A Rediscovery of Caddo Heritage

Robert Cast, Timothy K. Perttula, Bobby Gonzalez, and Bo Nelson;

Caddo Nation of Oklahoma and Archeological & Environmental Consultants, LLC

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to show the importance of partnerships between tribal governments and the archeological community. One aspect of this partnership is investigating Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) claims. To the Caddo, working together with the archeological community can only strengthen any claims they might have to human remains and the associated funerary objects, unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and items of cultural patrimony that are defined by the NAGPRA. Arqueología Maya e identidad política y cultural Maya en Guatemala

Dreams at the Edge of the World and Other Evocations of O'odham History

Chip Colewell, American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

O'odham peoples, the Tohono O'odham and Akimel O'odham, have a long history in the stark deserts of North America's Greater Southwest. Drawing on a collaborative ethnohistory project with O'odham elders and cultural advisors, this work presents a study of the ways in which ancient and ancestral places are fundamentally part of the O'odham experience today. Focusing on the San Pedro Valley, a traditional area no longer controlled by O'odham descendants, we may begin to unravel the complex relationships that link Native Americans to the material landscapes their ancestors created. In the context of Indigenous heritage claims and the growing need to balance the values of multiple stakeholders in Cultural Resource Management, these issues take on added importance and immediacy. I argue that scholars need to better understand archaeological sites and objects not only for what they say about the past, but also what these places and things say about our contemporary world. (Keywords: O'odham, ethnohistory, heritage, archaeological landscape, San Pedro Valley)

Divide Commons: The Political Economy of Southern Africa's Cultural Heritage Landscapes

Alinah Kelo Segobye, University of Botswana

Abstract

The cultural heritage of southern Africa provides some insights into how dissonant heritage and its management can reflect more systemic tensions in the way identities are

constructed. Such conflicts can in part be attributed to ways in which the past has been constructed in society. Some of the legacies of contesting claims to resources, particularly land, are evident in contemporary conflicts in the identification with, value of and use of cultural landscapes in southern Africa today. The debates over indigeneity and use of heritage places in Botswana and southern Africa suggest that archaeologists and heritage practitioners still have to engage with the writing of the past particularly how the past is packaged for public consumption. This discourse needs to be contextualized within the global discourses of indigenous and other archaeologies, African archaeologists can share their experiences on how the changing political economies of the places where they work impact on public access to the past. In the same vein, a world archaeology conscious of some of the challenges faced by practitioners and the public in Africa can provide vigilance in the protection of heritage and citizenry for the future in keeping with the broader aspirations of a world archaeology with integrity.

Maya Archaeology and the Political and Cultural Identity of Contemporary Maya in Guatemala

Avexnim Cojti Ren, First Nations University of Canada

Abstract

Colonization left Maya People in an unequal position compared to Ladino people in the economic, social, political and cultural arenas in Guatemala. This experience is not different from the experience of other Indigenous Nations in Latin America. Like these other Indigenous Nations, Maya People have a history of resistance that has continued to develop as every generation creates new strategies to overcome their disadvantaged position.

Archaeology can be used to write history providing essential benefits or detrimental stereotypes of Maya communities. Archaeologists who practice in Guatemala have a call to be more ethical towards the descendant communities that they work in, especially in the field of interpretation and creation of theories about Maya history. Maya people are affected by the knowledge produced in archaeology and they have an inherent right to forge their own identity through history.

Forum papers:

The World Archaeological Congress from a Critical and Personal Perspective

Pedro Funari, Campinas State University, Brazil

Abstract

The paper deals with the epistemological and political context leading to the organization of the World Archaeological Congress and to the ensuing history the discipline. WAC introduced a series of groundbreaking political stands, such as a code of ethics, regional and indigenous representatives, moving archaeology to a new, world stage. As former

WAC secretary, the author argues for a deepening of the democratic features of the organization.

Celebrating Differences

Robin Torrence, Australian Museum, Sydney

Abstract

The large congresses are an integral part of what defines WAC. Despite controversies and disruptions they have been highly successful at bringing together a wide mix of people to share a wide range of knowledge and viewpoints. Times have changed, however, and I now question whether WAC should seek alternative approaches. I propose that WAC consider putting more effort into the support of local initiatives and small, focussed and highly diverse gatherings because they have better long-term potential to involve a wider group of people, promote diversity and foster intense and productive interactions.

Liberating Archaeology, Liberation Archaeologies and WAC

Larry Zimmerman, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and the Eiteljorg Museum

Abstract

As much as anything, WAC challenged processual archaeology's insistence that archaeology was objective and apolitical, which had alienated Indigenous people because it tended to dehumanize them and their ancestors. WAC brought to the forefront a recognition that archaeology exists in a political context that must be considered in any construction and use of the past. WAC structured an organization that gave voice to those whose pasts largely had been excavated, interpreted, and "owned" by others. WAC also advocated direct collaboration with Indigenous and other descendent communities. In essence, WAC sought to liberate archaeology from its practice of scientific colonialism, a history this paper briefly reviews. Work still remains. Archaeologists carefully need to work out the epistemologies of collaboration and what they mean for our understanding of the pasts that are created in the process. A more difficult task is to be certain that archaeologists and communities with which they work understand how important archaeology can be to community building and maintenance of cultural identity.