

Sharing Archaeology: Introduction

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I used to stay with Peter Ucko, and his partner Jane Hubert, on my frequent visits to London for work, and in the period between 2003 and 2007 we always discussed Peter's beloved 'China Project'. I had been Peter's PhD student years before in Southampton, and had worked closely with Peter and Jane since the mid 1980s, as we built and nurtured the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) (Ucko 1987, Stone 2006). My visits were a way of keeping in touch and I would always try to arrange meetings so that I could stay with them: we would talk of old times, and my children as they grew up; of how WAC was continuing to develop (during this time I was honorary Chief Executive Officer of WAC while Peter and Jane had stopped having any direct role in the organisation); of how our respective universities were dealing with the rapid changes in UK Higher Education; of our current projects and of our plans for the future.

Peter had taught me to think broadly about our subject and that inevitably meant thinking and acting internationally. He constantly wanted to see new places and meet new colleagues, not to teach those elsewhere (frequently in less economically fortunate parts of the world) about so-called 'best-practice', but to debate and learn from each other. Given our WAC perspectives, such colleagues were, of course, not only other archaeologists but academics from a wide range of disciplines, as well as indigenous experts and others with an interest in, and knowledge of, the past and its relevance both in the present and to the future. During this period my own work had begun to focus on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict (Stone 2005 & 2013, Stone & Farchakh Bajaly 2008), and on the management and interpretation of World Heritage (Stone and Brough 2013). Peter's personal focus (as opposed to his much wider vision for University College London's Institute of Archaeology [hereafter the Institute] of which he had become Director in 1995) was increasingly on China. This interest had been kindled in 1986 when one of the earliest and largest archaeological delegations ever to leave China had attended WAC-1 in Southampton. While, for essentially pragmatic and financial reasons, his immediate focus following WAC-1 had been on developing a long-term project with the St Petersburg Institute for the History of Material Culture in the Soviet Union, Peter later used his position as Director of the Institute to search for, and find, the funding to develop a project with China

and to create the International Centre for Chinese Heritage and Archaeology (ICCHA and see Foreword), a joint association between the Institute of Archaeology at UCL and the School for Archaeology and Museology of Peking University.

The ICCHA focus was, in the first instance, to open Chinese archaeology to the scientific and fieldwork advances that had taken place in the Twentieth Century while China had struggled with civil war, and had been isolated through the policies of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. One example of this was the Institute's conservation staff working with Chinese colleagues on the conservation of the terracotta army figures in Xi'an. This work culminated in ICCHA's first international conference: '*From Concepts of the Past to Practical Strategies: the teaching of archaeological field techniques*' that was published as an edited volume by Ucko *et al* in 2007. However, while being, as usual, the driving force behind this work (to the extent that Jane would sit on Peter's hospital bed helping to edit *From Concepts*... only a few weeks before he died) his mind had turned during the early stages of the project to the conference that he insisted should be the final part of the first five-year programme. This was to have in the background the question never far from his thoughts: "Why do we study archaeology at all?" and was to focus on how we share archaeological information within the discipline, between academic disciplines, with non-academics, and with the wider general public. It was this topic that became the focus of our evening conversations in the London flat as we discussed the most interesting and innovative approaches to 'sharing archaeology' of which we were aware. Peter spoke also of his mad dash around China, undertaken in 2006, when he had visited, with Jane and Wang Tao (then at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London), most of the major universities that taught archaeology, trying to ascertain what they were teaching, and crucially how and why. This initiative mirrors a pressing contemporary need for a similar review of the teaching of archaeology in South Africa (Pikiriya Chapter 13) and mirrored one of the first times Peter and I had worked together when, in 1982, as part of a research project on behalf of the British Universities Archaeology Committee (BUAC), he had sent me round all universities in the UK that taught archaeology. The research was undertaken in anticipation of the expected second round of financial cuts to be imposed on universities by the University Grants Commission and was intended to prepare the discipline, rather than any particular department, to defend itself from cuts as a whole (Stone 1983, Ucko 1983). I looked on these conversations as interesting and, as ever with Peter, stimulating discussions that were nevertheless mainly 'theoretical' as, at best, I expected to be only one of many participants invited to attend Peter's conference. This changed when Peter told me that he planned that I should continue to organise the conference if his health failed him. Sadly

Peter died in June 2007 and I was faced with the task of organising a conference that was, certainly in Peter's mind, the culmination of a five-year programme in which I had not taken part.

I had not even visited China, and knew nothing of the approaches to archaeological interpretation in that vast country. I was enormously grateful when Stephen Shennan, Peter's successor as Director of the Institute, made ICCHA funds available for me to visit China in 2008 to attend the Fourth Worldwide Conference of the Society for East Asian Archaeology, meet colleagues, and visit sites. As most first-time visitors to China, I was astonished by the sheer scale of the country, the depth of its past, the quality of its archaeology, and the scale and speed of its development.

On returning to the UK I sat down to plan the conference as discussed with Peter and to identify those who I wanted to participate. The conference was structured around four major themes that had been agreed by the ICCHA Executive at its meeting in London in May 2007:

1. Sharing information between archaeologists
2. Sharing information between various associated subjects, distinguishing
 - 2a. other "scientific" specialists
 - 2b. heritage-related specialists (tourism etc)
 Taking into account what other specialists want from archaeologists
3. Sharing information with the general public, distinguishing
 - 3a. those who visit archaeological sites and monuments open to the public
 - 3b. the majority of the general public who do not visit sites and monuments
 Taking into account what the public and the media want from archaeologists
4. The relationship between sharing archaeology and the protection of cultural heritage

It was to be held in China as part of the ICCHA project, but I was adamant that it was not to be seen as a meeting where international experts came into China to tell Chinese archaeologists how to work and how 'to do' interpretation. We had to learn from each other – to share our approaches to managing and interpreting the archaeological record. My first concern for the conference was to ensure that there were enough managers present to drive home the point that good management and good interpretation are two parts of an integrated and indivisible whole. Good interpretation has to be facilitated by good

management and there is no such thing as good heritage management that does not have as a central focus the provision of good interpretation.

The actual conference had roughly equal numbers of Chinese and international speakers; for a variety of reasons, most purely practical, this book has more contributions from the international contributors than our Chinese colleagues. There are, nevertheless, enough Chinese contributions to provide a flavour of the interpretation initiatives going on within China and to provide an understanding of the management regime and local circumstances under which colleagues work. I do not think any Chinese contributors would argue that they have explored all, or even many, of the ideas for management and interpretation described by others in these pages: the opportunity for doing so has simply not yet arisen. However, the debate and discussion that took place during the conference leaves me with little doubt that these ideas will be taken, modified, and tested over the next few years. Some may be rejected outright, others accepted in modified forms. Some will take longer to explore than others: but I have no doubt that all will be considered and debated further.

My intention for the conference was not to invite people because they were currently doing interesting or 'good' projects. While in almost all cases this would be true, my primary criterion was that their work reflected an approach to sharing archaeology that could be seen, understood, modified and adapted by others in different situations, with different experiences, in different countries, facing different, yet inherently similar challenges. In the film *Dead Poets Society* the main character, a somewhat eccentric teacher, gets his class to stand on their desks in order to make them look at the world from a new perspective, in a different way, and, hopefully therefore, to think and to learn with a more open mind. I wanted all participants, and not just our Chinese colleagues, to be challenged, excited, and stimulated by the different approaches on display rather than by any particular specific projects. It would be nonsense to think that, for example, Indian, Australian, or Chinese participants (to pick three nationalities of those present at random) could or would want to attempt to replicate precisely Mike Pearson's project at Esgair Fraith (Chapter 20) or to engage with communities in exactly the way suggested by Innocent Pikirayi (Chapter 13), when they returned home. However, I hoped that the underlying approaches might stimulate participants to think of interpretation in a new or innovative way. Given this, the book is certainly not a practical handbook of how to carry out good archaeological interpretation. Rather it reflects a conversation between a number of those, with very different backgrounds and experiences, involved in interpreting archaeology - as to the underlying importance and nature of interpretation.

A basic tenet that lay behind my planning was that, following Freeman Tilden (1977), sharing archaeology should provoke an audience to enjoy the experience but leave it thinking and discussing (Chapter 2). I tell my students that we study the past, in order to understand the present, in order to create the future. This is, or at least should be, relatively easy within academia but can, *in extremis*, open archaeological evidence to manipulation and distortion. However even what appears in theory to be easy may not always be so in practice. Thilo Rehren (Chapter 3) explains how, as a geologist and material scientist working in the UK being asked to contribute specialist reports to archaeological projects, the positive and open sharing of ideas and questions regarding the archaeological record was not always common practice. It was only after a number of years of his reports being gratefully received as being important for a given project's *publication*, but not for the project's fundamental archaeological *questions*, that Rehren began to question this unequal relationship and that he began to understand (and be able to convince others) how, by sharing knowledge and understanding of specialist areas, and specialist questions, better archaeological questions could be formulated and addressed.

Li Ling (Chapter 4) identifies three important questions that need addressing with respect to sharing in contemporary Chinese archaeology: how excavation reports are related to further research? How is archaeology related to other academic disciplines? How do archaeologists present their work to ordinary readers? He makes the analogy that archaeologists inhabit a "fortress" and are reluctant to allow others to have access - be they other discipline specialists such as Rehren, or the general public: "...people inside the 'fortress' have no wish to go out, and there is no reason why the people outside the 'fortress' should come in" (page 7). (Some readers may remember the time when archaeology in England was indeed managed from a large building in London that was actually called *Fortress House*. It was not until 1992 when Sir Jocelyn Stevens, on his appointment as Chairman of English Heritage, insisted the very mentality described by Ling must be addressed, that the headquarters of archaeology in England became known by its street number, 23 Savile Row, rather than its somewhat unfortunate building name.)

Ling argues that while archaeology is an academic discipline it "...is not the exclusive property of archaeological experts, but is an integral part of the study of human culture" (page 7). As it is paid for (in China) predominantly by the State (i.e. the people) "It involves everyone". Sharing in a meaningful way with other specialists therefore becomes an obvious and axiomatic step, as does disseminating archaeological information and

interpretation to the general public. The problem, according to Ling, is that archaeological writing leaves much to be desired. He suggests that "...specialists, let alone the non-professional reader, find [excavation reports] difficult to handle and digest" (page 5) and he goes on to counter criticism of interpreting archaeology for the general public by stating that "...popularisation is not dumbing down, or simplification" (page 13); it is simple a different - essential - skill.

Of course, different audiences will need and want their information and interpretation provided in different ways. Cao Bingwu (Chapter 5) characterises five different writing styles through which to share archaeology – all perfectly valid as long as the author identifies the different audiences for whom they are writing and writes in a suitable style. This is a fundamental point and Bingwu echoes Ling (Chapter 4) by noting that writing for the general public is no less important than writing a detailed technical specialist report, but it is a very different skill. Bingwu's message is clear: archaeologists in China put their discipline at risk if they fail to acknowledge the variety of equally important audiences and if they fail to master the range of writing styles. Bingwu concludes by seeing a direct relationship between the acknowledgement of the different audiences (and thus the need for these different writing styles); the growth of the discipline of public archaeology; and the development of more socially aware cultural heritage management – the "...manifestation of public awareness of sustainable choices" (page 11).

The public awareness of archaeology, and the need to ensure that archaeology benefits the public, is a theme continued by Shan Jixiang, the Government Minister responsible for the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (Chapter 6). Jixiang cannot be accused of not making his wishes clear:

"Cultural heritage belongs to people and was created by people, so it should be something that they understand. In order to achieve this, workers in the discipline need to get off their high horses and talk to the public on equal terms: they need to tell the public about the past, present and future of cultural heritage and explain the significance of the work in an accessible way." (page 5).

Jixiang argues that the successful preservation of large-scale ancient cities across China has not only "...made us realise more how closely the preservation of cultural heritage is linked to the benefit of the public" (page 3) but that it is "...visibly changing the living conditions of local people". The normal process appears to be that once such an ancient site

(of which frequently the majority is manifest as below-ground archaeology) is identified, anyone living on the site is relocated and the area turned into an 'archaeological park'. Jixiang notes these parks can be "...the most beautiful places in a city and most valuable in terms of enhancing the lives of local people" (page 3).

This is sharing archaeology *in extremis* and might better be termed 'returning archaeology': the aim not primarily to interpret the below-ground archaeology but to improve the lives of communities by providing better housing (on relocation), beautiful surroundings that benefit and enhance the environment, and economic stimulation through the inward investment brought by visitors while at the same time preserving, and interpreting, the archaeological remains. While such aims have obvious benefits (not least the fact that the open spaces undoubtedly provide much needed 'green lungs' for a number of Chinese cities which are growing at an exponential rate), one cannot but spare some concern regarding the implications of the dismantling and relocation of whole communities. There appears on the surface at least, to be a striking resemblance to the demolition of Victorian back-to-back terraced housing in many English towns, where the communities were relocated, at enormous social cost, to modern high-rise accommodation blocks. In a veiled acknowledgment that the creation of all such archaeological parks may not have been undertaken without controversy and not always with the best possible results, Jixiang notes that China needs to be "...proactive in creating the right conditions and proactive in providing correct guidelines" in order to pave the way to a "glorious future" (page 7).

Jigen Tang's description of the archaeological project at Yinxu site, in Anyang (Chapter 7) sheds a little more light on the complexity of actually delivering such a harmonious picture of heritage management, interpretation, and public benefit. Tang works from the premise that authenticity and integrity are the core of site conservation and the essence of site interpretation. His contribution emphasises the difficulty of achieving either, given the changes in archaeological understanding of the site over time, as early excavation conclusions are overturned as new data become available. He also hints at the difficulties of getting different organisations both within and outside archaeology to work to a common goal. This, of course, is by no means a problem unique to China (see for example Stone & Brough 2013 for the complexity and frustration associated with managing Hadrian's Wall in England). Time, good planning, funding, and patience in abundance are attributes required of all of those attempting to develop long-term, large scale archaeological projects that have the aspiration to leave a beneficial footprint in the form of an archaeological attraction.

What Tang, and others, have done at Anyang is extremely impressive and an exemplar of what can be achieved with tenacity. Rui Pang (Chapter 8) describes an altogether more depressing situation with respect to the management and interpretation of the ancient site of Han city in Xi'an, where "...interests diverge and where communications appear to have failed between local communities, site managers and developers, and the wider public" (page 1). Indeed, the situation has got so bad that the local community refer to the site as *Hai* (meaning harmful or destructive), rather than *Han*, city – a slight change that sounds almost the same in the local dialect. As with many of the ancient cities promoted by Jixiang, Han city is almost entirely a below-ground archaeological site, in this instance covering some 36 square kilometres. Above the archaeological remains are some 55 villages and over 200 factories supporting a population of over 55,000. Comparative statistics of average GDP show that the closer people live to the ancient city the more impoverished they are. The issue here appears to be that no-one in authority has taken a decision (or has the sole right to make the decision?) how to deal with the problem and so things drift. Local people who are trapped in relative poverty plant trees and dangerously extend their houses in the hope that they will be resettled and reimbursed more richly because of their larger premises. Protection has brought no increase in tourism because there is little or no interpretation for visitors to see – a classic example of poor management hindering the development of good interpretation. The situation has got so bad that Pang suggests that the "...unmet needs of a disaffected and uninvolved local community emerge as one of the major problems facing the management of the site" (page 7). The level of disengagement is graphically shown in that only one out of 512 school and university students to complete a questionnaire for Pang had ever visited the limited interpretation on site. Pang concludes that the present management regime risks failing all stakeholders.

Wang Tao's brief sketch of archaeology during the Cultural Revolution (Chapter 9) adds an interesting historical perspective on the relationship between archaeology, archaeological site management, and interpretation in China. While universities were closed and most academics and students sent for re-education during the Cultural Revolution, archaeology was one of the few academic disciplines to thrive - with even some clearly multi-disciplinary fieldwork projects, of which, at least on the surface, Rehren would have been proud. Unfortunately, the important question - and thereby crucially the importance of the discipline to the regime - seems to have been how archaeological excavation (carried out by factory workers, farmers, and ex-soldiers) could reveal the decadence of previous generations and

spread a more acceptable proletarian ideology. Tao notes how this period, through the blatant political manipulation of the past, served to alienate many senior archaeologists from sharing archaeology with the public after 1972, rejecting the “forced marriage” (page 7) at the end of the Cultural Revolution. The implication being that, for the next 30 years or so, archaeology in China became a specialised and introverted discipline – archaeology for archaeologists and archaeological sites managed for archaeologists: specialists unwilling to share in an attempt to avoid a return to the earlier overt manipulation by politicians of their subject. Tao ends positively suggesting that a new generation of Chinese archaeologists are increasingly ready to embrace the wider implications of what in the West we refer to as public archaeology. I would like to hope that any such acceptance is manifest by more of a willingness to adapt than to import wholesale any such Western notions of public archaeology.

As noted above, part of good interpretation is the development of good questions, and the willingness to make available the data from which answers can be drawn. This is epitomised by the Çatalhöyük project described by Shahina Farid (Chapter 10). Farid draws out the principles behind an approach which sees excavation data are made available almost as quickly to those not officially part of the project as to the site team. This approach is a real test of the specialist’s ability to ‘let go’ – to allow others the opportunity to reflect on and interpret their data – something that, understandably, archaeologists in China found difficult in much of the Twentieth Century. I note in my own chapter (2) that handing over responsibility to an expert from another discipline is a challenge that takes courage and trust on the part of the archaeologist and requires a commitment from the new expert not to incorrectly manipulate - or abuse - the evidence. To make the evidence available to anyone who has the time and interest to investigate it, as happens at Çatalhöyük, takes the challenge to another level and Farid provides a very diverse list of those using the data for their own ends – from installation artists to chemists: truly the use of evidence of the past in the present. The work at Çatalhöyük is interesting in many other ways, not least because it is a clear example of the constant need to balance aspiration with reality when managing sites and dealing with the public. For example, when it became apparent, for a number of reasons, that the site needed to be covered, the team wanted the most architecturally pleasing shelters. The design had, of course, to be balanced with the requirements of modern archaeology and health and safety and there is the clear sense that no-one was completely happy with the final result. The project also provides an excellent illustration of the varying needs of the different visitors - the different publics - who make their way to the

site. We can no longer provide a 'one size fits all' approach to interpretation. Each type of visitor, if not each individual, needs, to a greater or lesser extent, a tailor-made interpretation. The team at Çatalhöyük appear to balance these differing needs within the wider context of national and local politics and sponsorship requirements. No mean feat and an example to us all. Furthermore, Farid's chapter leaves us with a strong feeling that while sharing archaeology is rarely simple or straightforward it is almost always rewarding and is frequently instructive.

For many archaeologists, and academics generally, sharing their subject knowledge is an activity primarily carried out in the lecture theatre. An underlying concern of the BUAC research into teaching archaeology in UK universities mentioned above was that there were too many universities attempting to teach archaeology without the staff to address fully the rapidly increasing scope of the discipline. In 1982 the whole Archaeology Department in Southampton boasted one desk-top computer and I remember vividly typing my report on an old portable typewriter, inherited from my grandfather. Peter Ucko and I discussed at the time how departments that were close to each other might share specialist staff, or that students from one department might be allowed to attend lectures at another, but neither of us could have dreamt of the potential of the internet to support teaching in departments that lacked particular academic expertise. While the Matrix Project described by Anne Pyburn and George Smith (Chapter 11) has now closed, it illuminated the way that the internet might change education for the better with the sharing of archaeological teaching materials between departments with different expertise. The necessary time and funding (and perhaps energy) required to maintain and up-date the original Matrix courses was not available, but during its relatively short existence it did reveal the potential of technology to help share archaeological information. Moreover, since the Matrix Programme was first introduced, the opportunities provided by the internet have increased almost exponentially, with an ever-expanding amount of information available for free. Most of this is accurate and well-informed - although care must be taken as archaeology perhaps suffers more than most disciplines from the use of the internet to promote more fanciful and less scientifically robust views.

A development that has taken place since the conference is the advent of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). This has confronted universities with one of the most exciting, and yet challenging, opportunities they have perhaps ever faced. MOOCs are (usually free) online courses, accessed via the internet, aimed at large-scale, non-specialist, audiences.

Most are produced currently at an introductory level and are structured in a similar way to university courses, but do not offer academic credit. Universities, certainly in North America and the UK, are scrambling to set up MOOCs in co-operation with a number of web-based organisations ('platforms') that will, almost certainly, see the number and range of MOOCs increase rapidly in the next few years. Universities seem unsure as to where this development will lead them: Are MOOCs essentially just a passing fad? Or are they an important new form of recruitment tool? Will they lead to a massive increase in accredited distance learning with a corresponding break in the monopoly currently enjoyed by established, residential-focused, universities? Might they signal the beginning of the end of residential universities as private companies and professional bodies tailor their own MOOCs to train and/or inform their own workforces and target audiences? Perhaps regardless of the answers to these questions, there is clearly a significant and almost immediate opportunity for MOOCs to make accessible (at least entry-level) university courses to huge numbers of people not enrolled on credit bearing programmes. This in turn provides the opportunity of creating a large cohort of archaeologically-informed, and one would hope archaeologically aware and supportive, members of the general public.

The opportunities offered by the internet are also explored by Zhu Naicheng and Qiao Yu (Chapter 12) who report on the development and expansion of the Chinese Archaeology web-site managed by the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The original goal of the site was to provide archaeological professionals in China and abroad with news of the latest archaeological discoveries in China. There are now both Chinese and English language versions of the site and its fourth iteration places increased emphasis on its 'public-facing' pages. Naicheng and Yu identify four distinct user groups: archaeologists and students; public enthusiasts; the media; and, specifically in China, other websites and organisations. They claim, perfectly reasonably, that the site has become the most important gateway for information concerning Chinese archaeology and that it provides an excellent interface between the general public, both in China and more widely, and Chinese professional archaeologists: an exceptional resource.

This interface between archaeologists and the public is extremely important, but it is also vital that archaeologists communicate with each other. Innocent Pikirayi (Chapter 13) echoes many of the concerns raised by Rehren about the failure of specialists to share their ideas and questions among themselves – and identifies the most pressing problem concerning the lack of communication as being *within* archaeology, with contract

archaeologists carrying out the majority of new excavations failing to share their findings with university colleagues. He goes on to show how the type of reservations about sharing archaeology held by Chinese archaeologists following the Cultural Revolution are, in southern Africa, most frequently held not by the specialists but rather by the public, who frequently see little relevance of what is commonly regarded as a colonial or Apartheid legacy in which archaeologists all too frequently ignore the local community's relationship with a site, and in particular the spiritual integrity of places (sites). In this way archaeologists render their work at best meaningless; at worst in direct conflict with the aspirations and views of the local community. Pikirayi observes that "...the relevance of archaeology lies not in what archaeologists do by themselves to understand the past, but also in what they achieve in the company of non-archaeologists..." (page 1) and he firmly places the future of archaeology in the region as a co-operative venture in which archaeologists are equal partners and learners and not the expert telling communities what to do. Such an altered relationship could result in a profound modification of the way in which archaeology is practiced in southern Africa and can be seen as sharing archaeology not only for better interpretation but to ensure the very future of the discipline.

Dominic Perring (Chapter 14) is equally concerned about the failure of archaeology to retain the interest of the general public. Just as much of the archaeology to which the Chinese population was exposed during the Cultural Revolution was actual excavation so, Perring argues, excavation is still the activity that most of the general public associate with archaeologists. He notes however that much excavation in the UK (and I would suggest in much of the world) has, over the past two or three decades, been taken out of sight of the general public. Most excavation is now carried out behind the health-and-safety closed doors of construction-led mitigation fieldwork, where frequently the goal is not to excavate a site but rather to establish how development can go ahead with the least impact on the archaeological site - that by implication is threatening the speedily completed and financially rewarding development. Such mitigation saves the construction company client time and money, and leaves the archaeological site to be preserved for some future idyllic epoch when time, funding, and interest will lead to its full excavation and interpretation. Perring suggests that the widespread development of construction-led fieldwork has led archaeologists to reinvent themselves as cultural heritage managers and that this focus on the needs of their clients (and paymasters) in the construction industry has led them to lose touch with local communities – many of whom used to be actively involved in the actual

process of excavation. Archaeological and public interests are no longer “aligned” and archaeology runs a serious risk of being forgotten as a public benefit.

This is a serious dilemma; manifest in different ways in southern Africa and the UK, and whichever way archaeology as a profession jumps it has the potential to alienate an important potential partner. Perring’s thesis is that we have already almost lost the public as a partner and the only way to reinvigorate the relationship is to introduce a stakeholder engagement plan, through the concept of “social impact assessment” (page 12), within the current construction company led situation. If we lose the general public before we have the chance to interpret the past to them we have lost the war before the first battle has been fought. Given the popularity, in the UK, of television programmes about excavation, Perring may be overstating the problem; although there is little question that the opportunity offered by construction company led excavation is missed more often than it is seized.

Jialing Fan (Chapter 15) also concentrates on the opportunities provided by excavation to share archaeological knowledge with the public, arguing that an excavation without a public programme is not only wrong, as (normally in China) the excavation has been funded by the public, but also a wasted archaeological opportunity. Fan discusses the sharing of information about, and interpretation of, the excavation for the public by archaeologists and suggests this should be done in such a way as to “...provide a social and cultural platform for [the public] to communicate and exchange their own opinions and feelings” (page 6). She also takes sharing a stage further by suggesting that the public can be encouraged to bring in objects found in the fields and to provide information on unrecorded archaeological sites: thus allowing the sharing to become a constructive two-way process. Thus sharing becomes a partnership – just as advocated by Pikirayi in relation to southern Africa.

Fan also raises two other important issues. First, that for many of the public, especially those without formal education, there is a clear need to explain the difference between the recovery of artefacts through scientific archaeological excavation and the digging (looting) of sites for objects to be sold-on to dealers trading in illicit antiquities. Second, and obvious but all too frequently overlooked, that the sharing of archaeology needs to be identified as an integral part of any project (perhaps through Perring’s ‘social impact assessment’?) from the outset and resourced and financed in the same way as the excavation or conservation of artefacts.

Lyn Leader-Elliott (Chapter 16) describes the impact that the wider general public's interest in archaeology and the past can have on specific communities – in this instance Aboriginal Australians. She observes that most visitors to Australia are particularly interested in the intangible heritage of Aboriginal communities, a fact that has been quickly taken on board by tourism authorities and companies. She echoes many of Pikirayi's arguments, noting that the distinction between tangible and intangible (Pikirayi's 'spiritual') heritage is meaningless to Aboriginal people in Australia (and almost certainly this is true of indigenous peoples world-wide). A problem arises, however, when intangible heritage is transmitted, through stories or images inappropriately passed on by those with no authority or right to do so, thereby provoking a not dissimilar anger and potential rejection by the indigenous/local population as faced by archaeologists in southern Africa. The problem here is twofold: who is doing the sharing (and do they have the right to do so) and who benefits from the shared heritage. The solution provided is again similar - collaboration, mutual learning, and mutual respect – based around a strong community partnership.

In Australia certainly, and perhaps in certain places in Africa, this not only requires specialists to make their knowledge available to others to use, as I discuss (Chapter 2) and as discussed by Farid (Chapter 10), but also to acknowledge and accept that they might not have access to all that is known about a place; that others may not, or will not, share with them. This is a difficult situation: the *raison d'être* of this book is to encourage the sharing of information, but here we are faced by a community that wants to, indeed believes it is obliged to, *withhold* elements of its knowledge. Part of this is because of the inappropriate use of intangible heritage by the tourism sector (and some archaeologists) and part is based on the deep spiritual beliefs of the local communities with regard to sacred sites. Regardless of the origin of the problem, we, as archaeologists, are encouraged to share everything; while they, as indigenous people, have the claimed right to withhold information: hardly a balanced or transparent situation. Does this matter? A few years ago I was privileged, with six or seven other heritage specialists, including staff from the World Heritage Centre, to visit the World Heritage site of Chartres Cathedral. As we walked around the building it became obvious that none of my colleagues, all Western trained scientists, had the faintest clue about the spiritual aspects of the building: the layout and associated meaning of the different parts of the church; the wall paintings and other iconography; the function of different spaces – the whole intangible heritage of the place was all completely unknown to them. And yet that did not matter as they were, or certainly appeared to be, perfectly happy to see the

place as having Outstanding Universal Value because of its antiquity and architectural features, even though the meaning of these features was such a complete mystery to them that they did not bother to mention, or reflect upon, it. A practicing Christian could never separate the tangible from the intangible in this way, just as an Aboriginal Australian (or indigenous African) could not separate the tangible and intangible aspects of their culture. I guess the difference is that, as far as I understand, no Christian would withhold information about their church or their beliefs; whereas in Aboriginal society such secrecy is a fundamental part of spirituality. For the interpreter this difference provides an interesting, but not insurmountable, dilemma.

Leader-Elliott also flags the importance of empowering local communities to make the most of their heritage resources through structured training – a point picked up and expanded on by Dougald O'Reilly (Chapter 17). For slightly different reasons, both argue for the empowerment of local communities to have not only social but economic control over the heritage. In a clear acceptance that the primary cause of looting is poverty, O'Reilly's work, through the non-profit organisation *Heritage Watch*, focuses on supporting local communities in order that they can break away from looting their past for selling on the illicit market and move to a position of using the past to provide them with economic stability, while at the same time making them champions of heritage protection. His work emphasises the importance of working locally, gaining trust, and providing tangible outcomes of real benefit. In addition to the training, *Heritage Watch* works to combat the trade in illicit antiquities in a wide variety of ways including: getting local people to monitor any new looting and providing a 'heritage hotline' for reporting of finds; developing a 'heritage friendly' tourism campaign through which local companies can be recognised as 'heritage friendly'; supporting the development of Cambodia's heritage police; setting up a database for regulations for the management of antiquities; and producing educational materials for use in schools.

The threat posed by the trade in illicit antiquities is addressed also by Surendra Pachauri (Chapter 18) who notes that it is a "rampant" and "growing" problem in India. Pachauri follows O'Reilly in identifying education as a key weapon in the fight against the trade and his contribution discusses not only the problem, but two educational initiatives intended to combat it. Much of my own career has been working to introduce archaeological education within school curricula (see, e.g. Stone & MacKenzie 1990; Stone and Molyneaux 1994; Henson, Stone, & Corbishley 2004) and I have great sympathy with the initiatives described by Pachauri: if we can instil an understanding of the multiple values of the past, that does not

require the sale of looted objects, in the next generation we will do more to protect the archaeological heritage than any contemporary management plan or legal instrument.

A common thread running through the work of Pikirayi, Leader-Elliott, and O'Reilly is that communities engage, or at least could engage, with the archaeological record in unique ways subject to local conditions and sensibilities. Matsuda (Chapter 19) sees this relationship rather in reverse: as archaeology relating to the public in a "unique fashion... [being] of universal interest because it informs everyone's view of their past and hence of their identity" (page 1). His contribution follows others in the book by looking at interpretation, in this instance in newspapers, when it has been taken out of the hands of archaeologists who he notes, echoing Ling and Bingwu (Chapters 4 and 5), write in impenetrable language "which the non-specialist reader cannot recognise or even pronounce" that actively discourages public access and interaction. This is perhaps one of the most difficult acts of letting go as newspapers, far more than interpretation panels or events at sites, have the ability to reach very large sections of society. The stakes are higher and so are the corresponding opportunities to get positive, and negative, messages across. Matsuda not only chronicles unhelpful exaggeration - sensationalism - by journalists but also, more worryingly, serious exaggeration by archaeologists. There are lessons for all to learn from the examples, both positive and negative, that he cites – but the need to learn lessons should not mean that archaeologists should shy away from the medium: far from it given the enormous opportunities and, if carefully managed, benefits. Good journalists will come back to their sources to check facts and nuances – one goal for archaeologists is to get to know the relevant journalists working on local and national titles and to build a relationship of trust. While large sections of the media are only interested in the immediate story that can be manipulated, sensationalised, and modified to make it more interesting for a day, many of the individuals working in journalism do so out of a commitment and passion for their subject areas as much as for their trade. Environment, arts, and heritage journalists do exist and should be sought out and nurtured.

Matsuda warns of the creation of the sensational - the oldest, the biggest – as it can only lead to a spiralling need for 'older', 'bigger' stories and eventually to the fabrication of the past. Mike Pearson (Chapter 20) focuses on the other end of the spectrum – places "saturated with meaning" (page 11) but of little physical importance in terms of national designation for protection. In essence he introduces the heritage of the 'physical ephemeral', of places full of meaningful memories for individuals, and perhaps, at a stretch, local

communities, but of no immediate relevance or value to society as a whole. This is, however, exactly where their real value lies: because they are not sacrosanct 'heritage sites' with an official, orthodox interpretation, they are open perhaps (or at least perhaps more easily open) to alternative, possibly even deeper and more meaningful - *provocative* (see Chapter 2) - interpretation and dare we hope therefore a deeper and more meaningful understanding. Once again the archaeological expert may have to let go and trust a performer to help interpret a given place – but, as Pearson argues, this may reveal the "...complementary processes of contemporary cultural production..." (page 12) bringing together those who use the past in the present to create community identity. *Because* the places are physically ephemeral their stories are equally ephemeral and personal: 'this is where I ...' 'that is where you ...' – stories of a personal past that will almost all disappear within the lifespan of an ephemeral generation or two.

And yet perhaps it is this personal past that we should be striving to capture at even the largest, most impressive, World Heritage sites. One thread that can be tracked through all of the following contributions is that, through sharing, we have the opportunity to discover such human stories - even at the grandest of sites. These stories should be woven from every scrap of available evidence: from cutting-edge scientific research and well as from scientifically unverifiable, but deeply held, spiritual belief. Such stories not only inform but *include* the wider public, giving them a sense of ownership and therefore a stake in, and a responsibility for, the protection of the sites and objects from where the stories come. Stories that open a tiny window on the past that help us to reflect on what has been, what is, and what is to come.

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