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Archaeologies of Listening

Beginning Thoughts

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Listening is a skill, an art, a means by which knowledge is gained. In anthropology, it is fundamental to evidence-based practice. From the beginning of anthropological practice, we have drawn on millions of years of selection for listening capacity. Our ability to listen effectively derives from our aural mechanism and our human orientation to face-to-face interaction. It is through our human communications that we go beyond our physical bodies into universes of discourse rich with compounded experiences, memories, and thinking. Listening to our fellow humans living at or near our sites, or to those descended from ancestors who once frequented what we call sites, provides a wealth of knowledge about pasts that we could not otherwise understand or even be aware of. We, as anthropologists who practice an archaeology that is both scientific and humanistic, are committed to examining as wide a spectrum of information as we can access. That is why we listen. Yet, as most of us are keenly aware, we archaeologists are so deeply involved in digging "telephone booth" stratigraphic columns, describing data, and comparing artifacts that we often forget the human side of our mission—listening and learning from others who may hold distinctive and important knowledge about the places and objects that we so highly value in the abstract world we inhabit. Indeed, one thing that Thor Heyerdahl got right was his observation that we cannot hear within university walls.

In this introduction, we explain how "archaeologies of listening" bring to the fore a postcolonial standpoint (see Karega-Munene and Schmidt 2010; Schmidt 2009). Its opposite, the imperialist colonial standpoint (not just Western), elevates the paradigm of knowledgeable imperial persons above allegedly igno-

rant barbarians living in the colonies. Hierarchies of power are simultaneously hierarchies of knowledge. Our familiar Western worldview developed along with Europe's early modern nation-states and the colonizing outreach that was central to our own history. Conventional history lauds Enlightenment principles, notwithstanding the poignant summation of philosopher Joseph Agassi (1981:386): "positivism, inductivism, pure rationality, scientific proof, and all that, are parts of a myth." The social charter myth for "modern society," allegedly superior because it is built on the practices specified by Agassi, denies these practices in subordinated societies.

As Fabian (1983) has argued, the processes of othering that prevail in anthropology carry ancillary baggage that makes the Other irrational, fails to appreciate scientific proof in all its ontological guises, and fails to admit inductive thinking. If that were not the case, those Others might have a claim to participate democratically in the dominant nations' governance. Postwar economics spurred the breakup of administered colonies, without breaking up racist opinions on their peoples' intelligence. Colonialist archaeological projects also continued. White men, funded by imperial nations, directed crews of manual laborers whose counsel, if listened to at all, was seldom acknowledged. Herzfeld (2010:302) addresses this colonial isolation: "these earlier scholars were perhaps blissfully unaware of taking directions from anyone. Anthropologists' failure to treat their informants as intellectual equals, however, makes little sense today." An archaeology of listening addresses what Herzfeld (2010:302) sees as a need to address "a lingering intellectual colonialism [as well as] demand respect for social actors as theorists of, at the very least, their own conditions of life." Accepting local actors as thinkers has yet to gain traction in archaeological practice.

Our position here is that archaeologists, and archaeology as a discipline, benefit from interchange with local and descendant communities through which their deep experience and historical knowledge broaden our base for inference to the best explanations. We address how calling for listening brings up issues of science versus history, focus versus breadth, and neutrality versus advocacy. Listening is much more than speech entering one's ears. Listening, for an anthropological archaeologist, is also perceiving the landscape, close and beyond, feeling the weather, hearing and seeing ambient sounds and activities, tastes of food and smells, tactile sensations of structures, bedding, tools, containers, clothing. Some of these sense receptions are conscious, while some may be stored subliminally, to rise into consciousness when triggered by more

listening or later reflection. In these essays, we hope to illustrate that archaeologists who listen evoke the diverse capacities that make us and the people whose residue we investigate fully human.

History and Science

Ethnographers of science recognize "epistemic cultures . . . the different practices of creating and warranting knowledge in different domains" (Knorr-Cetina 1999:246). This is more than differences between scientific disciplines; within a discipline, one sees national differences and "schools" following leaders' paradigms. We see the Western intellectual tradition as a broad, persistent epistemic culture valuing formal logic and classifications, authority in written documents, ostensible observation, and rejection of immaterial sources of knowledge. Within this Western tradition, battles raged between the ancients and the moderns, statisticians and empiricists, functionalists and symbolists, with the common limits less noticed. Listening to people living in communities maintaining non-Western epistemic cultures illuminates those seldom-remarked conventional limits. That other societies have their own limits is not the point: listening to these others adds to our knowledge. Our project is to crumble arbitrary limits to archaeologists' epistemic culture.

Among the fallacies about science that bedevil archaeology are notions that measurement is essential, that statistics reveal relationships, and that replication is the test of validity—all of which militate against recognizing singular occurrences. Regularities are sought, cross-cutting through sites and times, reducing complexity and eliminating particularities. A moment's reflection leads us to realize that cross-cultural regularities cut out huge amounts of information that potentially has significance, leaving us wondering what of importance was lost. Such elisions may hold great significance for recognizing communities that lived in our sites or for understanding ecological histories that may illuminate climate change and sustainable resource production; differences may be more crucial than regularities. Moreover, hypothesized or discovered regularities often arise, tautologically, from within the Western academic tradition, reinforcing its particular worldview.

Again, one way to crumble such reification is to listen, opening out knowledge to alternative epistemic cultures and their capacity to explain. It is informative that few archaeologists have analyzed their field from an STS (Science, Technology, Society) perspective (exceptions are Kehoe 1998; Patterson 1994).

In *Cultures without Culturalism: The Making of Scientific Knowledge*, Chemla and Keller (2017) describe how researchers usually form communities of practice that share a worldview and premises from which research problems are stated and methods made consonant. In archaeology, such analyses reveal a tight, cordoned-off worldview where the representations and conceptualizations of the Other remain deeply entrenched as a form of distancing, preserving the tenets of the discipline. This epistemic culture of distancing provokes much of what follows in this volume, as we seek ways to open attitudes, nurture a capacity to listen, and work toward a transformed practice.

However, we have some key hurdles to acknowledge on our way to implementing this program. First comes recognition that it is the culture of Cold War America and Britain that projects a conflict between history and science that rejects "culture histories" as worthwhile archaeological goals. Anyone who has been following archaeological history understands that change toward nomological science has come with myriad sacrifices imposed on historical sciences. One of our anthropological ancestors, E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1963:26), captured this conflict when he scathingly remarked:

> The concepts of natural system and natural law, modeled on the constructs of the natural sciences, . . . have been responsible for a false scholasticism which has led to one rigid and ambitious formulation after another. . . . Released from these essentially philosophical dogmas [anthropology] can be really empirical and, in the true sense of the word, scientific.

He further noted that some academics have "the feeling that any discipline that does not aim at formulating laws and hence predicting and planning is not worth the labour of a lifetime" (Evans-Pritchard 1963:27). Such hubris was enhanced during the Cold War by the National Science Foundation (NSF) when it became a principal source of funds for archaeology couched in natural science terms, only occasionally deigning to fund proposals intending to examine history and archaeology of local and descendant peoples.

Shifting government funding from NSF dominance toward more support for the National Endowment for the Humanities made history more feasible for archaeologists and conveyed a message that the reductionist approach mimicking the physical sciences is no longer uncritically accepted. Our insistence that we engage with culture histories, particularly as expressed by local interlocutors, uses the methodology of the historical sciences, an approach now widely accepted.

Focus versus Breadth

We would be remiss if we did not reflect on Franz Boas's focus on historical particularities, foundational to our archaeologies of listening. Importantly, his concern over history did not come from a humanities scholar. Rather, Boas was trained in scientific method and always considered himself a scientist (Müller-Wille 2014:134; Spier 1959). During his year with the Baffin Land Inuit (1883–1884), when he was wholly dependent for his very survival on his hosts' knowledge and skills, Boas saw, felt, heard, tasted, and smelled a rich and lively way of life. Despite his scientific training in Germany in physics and its search to discover general laws, he realized it was too narrow for studying human behavior.

Most importantly, as a scientist Boas appreciated sample size. The number of human communities studied by ethnographers is a tiny sample of all that exist, much less all that have existed. The task of anthropologists, including archaeologists, is to enlarge our sample of *well-studied* societies. Contingencies of place, resources, contacts and relations with other societies, climate episodes, and diseases all affect what we confront as archaeologists practicing ethnography. Boas had a keen understanding that community histories often incorporated discourses about these phenomena. To build scientific evidence sufficient for comparing human behavior in *all* its cultural manifestations, listening to the people we encounter in the field adds their knowledge to our own observations.

Simply stated, we find the postcolonial standpoint more fruitful than generalizations deduced from hypothesis testing. Imperial colonizing nations are relatively late in human history and in many respects well documented. Their denial of indigenous histories—propaganda that reifies domination—can be countered by listening to communities imposed on. We now recognize that marginalized peoples such as the San speakers of Botswana are not living fossils of a unilinear evolutionary stage (Denbow and Wilmsen 1986; Wilmsen 1989). What we learn from listening may unveil the stratagems of colonizing empires and the counterstratagems of accommodation, resistance, and resilience. From a strictly pragmatic perspective, since so much has been lost in archaeological sites, it follows that we need to be open to as much information as possible to build pertinent inferences.

Where We Made a Wrong Turn with Science

Many archaeologists who came of age in the era of processual and postprocessual approaches have failed to engage reflexively on how we were duped into

thinking that explicitly scientific archaeology is anthropology (Binford 1962). If we read Binford's seminal article closely, then we cannot help but realize that he omitted anthropology from his discourse. Perhaps this was the result of the hastiness with which it was written:

> Frustrated, sitting in my office in Walker Museum late at night, I decided I would fight. I took out a sheet of paper, placed it in the typewriter, and wrote "Archaeology as Anthropology." Before dawn it was finished. The next day I passed it among some of the students who offered the inevitable suggestions of translating my writing into English and encouraged me to publish it. That afternoon it was typed in final draft and mailed to *American Antiquity*. (Binford 1972:10)

A close reading of his hasty screed reveals that the central concept is adaptation and little else. It is chilling from any retrospective that anthropology was distorted into ecological determinism, ignoring how knowledge is acquired. By refocusing archaeologists upon a reductionist principle pulled from biology, Binford created a milieu in which purposeful deafness to the knowledge of others was valorized—a condition that undermines the very foundational principles of method in anthropology. Lest anyone think that we are overstating this observation, let us examine what Binford had to say about how he valued the knowledge of his Nunamiut interlocutors when he was trying to deal with significant data gaps about bone distributions in dog yards: "For a number of reasons I do not have spring output data or actual bone counts from around houses and remaining in dog yards for the contemporary village. I found it nearly impossible to collect such data under contemporary conditions . . . as the winter snow melts the village becomes a very unpleasant mess of mud, debris, and excrement" (Binford 1978:195).[1]

Binford goes on to say that during his absence he tried to set up collection barrels for bones, but residents inevitably hauled these away to the trash. This narrative reveals significant distance between the archaeologist and residents, who very obviously had not been persuaded to work toward Binford's research goals; one can only wonder how they reacted to his appraisal of their surroundings. By not remaining in the village to observe and to listen to local folks, it was he who trashed the data for that season of the annual round.

It is impossible to learn from local collaborators if one avoids entering into a dialogue to develop deeper understanding of cultural attitudes and knowledge (see Nicholas, this volume). Binford seems to have been unaware of this pro-

cess, again and again privileging his speculative positions over local knowledge, for example, when trying to develop a protocol for assessing which parts of animals would be transported to home residences:

> In order to obtain an accurate evaluation of part selection [of butchered animals] I asked eight Eskimos to rank order the anatomical parts of the caribou . . . into a sequence from 1 to 18 representing the sequence in which they would carry home parts if they carried only one part at a time. I stipulated that the kill was made in late fall, and that they were only to consider meat; they were to assume that they had plenty of marrow bones and bone grease at home. *The informants were not happy with this situation*. They wanted to know if the weather was freezing, if there was meat in storage at home, if their wives were pregnant, and so on—so I further stipulated that the weather was freezing, no meat was at home, and no wives were pregnant. *I must admit that I do not recall all my qualifying answers to their endless questions. At the time I thought that they were simply playing games, and I assumed that they really knew what I wanted to know.* (Binford 1978:40; emphasis added)

We quote this passage at length because it unveils a stony deafness, an incapacity to listen to local reactions to the arbitrary conditions imposed by Binford, who, oblivious to local values and nuanced hunting practices, reluctantly agreed to modifications to his arbitrary protocol. Most telling, though, is his degradation of local people and their invaluable knowledge—labeling it as game playing. His interaction drips with hubris and betrays a profound disrespect for anthropological methods and for learning in a host community. Such deafness speaks to an arrogance that for too long as been an unfortunate legacy among archaeologists.

> The three large cairns . . . *are most certainly* the insurance stores of extended households. The small caches . . . *might represent* partial stores, resulting from minimal success at this location, supplemented by caches located in other places. They *might also represent* late stores . . . , placed in the cairn during the summer. *Perhaps a situation arose* that made it necessary for a group already encamped for that summer to move to another camp. Meat *would be removed* from the meat racks and the most portable parts packed to the new camp. The rest of the meat *would be cached* in the cairn as insurance. (Binford 1978:242; emphasis added)

These speculations—arising within the imagination of the archaeologist—continue ad infinitum for pages, displaying a disregard for how local interlocutors felt about and knew about cairn features. Most instructive is how Binford squandered an opportunity to listen and to learn; to act as an apprentice to Nunamiut elders was contrary to the archaeologist as expert—anathema to someone who saw himself having the final word.

The deafness syndrome exemplified by Binford did not rise spontaneously out of an obsession with science in archaeology during the post-1960s period. Rather, it is a symptom of a deep colonial heritage in North American archaeology and the archaeology of many other world regions (see Weerasinghe, this volume, for examples from Sri Lanka). Disdainful of both history and local knowledge, Binford set an example for others, who, emboldened by his scorn for humanistic science, began to take positions that diminished indigenous knowledge. By the 1990s, we began to see an open challenge to indigenous constructions of history in the broadside launched by Clement Meighan (1992, 1995) against NAGPRA (the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) and other repatriation policies as "fall[ing] into the anthropological trap of cultural relativism" (Meighan 1992:704). In other words, local representations of history are dangerous abysses, perils to correct interpretations.

This kind of thinking opened a Pandora's box of colonialist thinking, led by Ronald Mason. Writing in *American Antiquity* (2000), Mason argued that there was no significant value in interpretations gained from listening to local or descendant people. He wrote to provoke and, in our view, to resurrect and amplify the nearly century-old denials of anthropologists such as Robert Lowie (1915:598), who once said with as much absolutism as he could muster: "I cannot attach to oral traditions any historical value whatsoever under any conditions whatsoever. We cannot know them to be true except on the basis of extraneous evidence, and in that case they are superfluous since the linguistic, ethnological, or archeological data suffice to establish the conclusions in question." Lowie's assertion foreshadows the cynicism of Mason, who later expanded his views into a book-length manifesto against oral narratives (Mason 2008).

Other, Mostly Ignored Perspectives

This deep-seated trend in North American archaeology, tinged with provincialism, blithely ignored the work of historians (e.g., Miller 1980; Spear 1981; Vansina 1965, 1985) and archaeologists of Africa (e.g., Maggs 1976; McIntosh and

McIntosh 1980; Posnansky 1966, 1968, 1969; Schmidt 1978, 2006, 2013; Wright and Kus 1979) who carefully labored to develop new methods of analyses that initially sought to verify oral traditions. They later used oral testimonies with a variety of ethnological, linguistic (Ehret and Posnansky 1982), and archaeological data, delving into the structure of narratives to trace out points of political and social origins. This school of thought accepts that the narratives of elders charged with centuries of learning provide critical evidence for understanding the full spectrum of extant knowledge about the past. It also acknowledges that when working in societies omitted from Western historiography it is often important to gain multiple views of the past through local testimonies. This truly multivocal approach leaves behind the notion that testimonies about the deep past are prehistoric or mythological, both labels created under colonial domination and early anthropology (see Schmidt and Mrozowski 2013).

One of the best illustrations of listening in an archaeological landscape comes from Great Zimbabwe. Long the focus of historians and archaeologists, Great Zimbabwe is an example of how the West denied local history and appropriated the materiality of the site and the contemporary Zimbabwe state for cultural, political, and racial motives (Hall 1984). These foci, closely wrapped in the colonial experience, submerged knowledge about how the site figured into local histories. With the considerable erasure of local meaning that occurred during its colonial and postcolonial histories, the site's inscription as a World Heritage Site reified professional and expert interpretation of its architecture and archaeology. Emphasis on the presentation of monumental remains within the central site was dominant until Joost Fontein's (2006) study of deep-time relationships between Great Zimbabwe and competing social groups. Fontein unveils how archaeological obsession with the materiality of Great Zimbabwe masked deeper and more profound meanings held by neighboring social groups. By patiently listening to the testimonies of Shona elders over a four-year period, Fontein exposed cultural dynamics that have been obscured for more than a hundred years of silencing beliefs, activities, and formal policies.

Apprenticing himself to Shona elders, Fontein—an outsider without Shona ancestry—unveiled the alienation of local communities. For example, the site's fencing prevented people's access to conduct sacred rituals and thus cut off ancestors from their communities. Fontein unmasked management policies, overseen by archaeologists, such as this diminishment of ritual life, so central to keeping ancestors engaged with history-making, that deny access and spiritual expression. Expert heritage managers/archaeologists emerge as deaf to the vital

and rich testimonies of groups that hold competing clans' claims to custodianship and ownership, steeped in generations of interaction with potent spiritual places at Great Zimbabwe. Great Zimbabwe is deeply embedded within multivocal systems of spirituality intimately connected to this landscape, a revelation that only emerged when someone took the time to listen, understand, and accept the significance of local knowledge.

Biographies of Listening

Fontein's research into the spiritual landscape of Great Zimbabwe is only one of the ways in which listening is germane to unveiling hitherto unknown empirical evidence for the past. One perspective that emerges in this book is an examination of testimonies in the extant archival record. For example, Catherine Carlson (this volume) digs deep into the archival records of the American Museum of Natural History to unveil why indigenous peoples of the Interior Plateau still regard archaeology with deep suspicion.

By reading closely and listening to the private testimonies of Harlan Smith, Carlson learns that the excavation of Native graves occurred without local permission and that skeletal evidence was secretly transported to New York—a legacy that continues to infect indigenous attitudes toward archaeological practice. Official reports privilege a different kind of listening. Smith solicited local interpretations of material culture objects, an approach that gives the false impression that local information was respected, when, in fact, Smith and his superiors were deaf to the desires and sensibilities of Native peoples.

Alice Kehoe (this volume) takes a similar biographical approach, bringing her focus to bear on Frank Speck, whose unorthodox fieldwork ignored the conventions followed by Harlan Smith. Speck's practice of anthropology was very much within a four-field approach with career-long devotion to the testimonies of linguistically marginalized Native Americans—a perspective that arose from this young man's friendship with Mohegan youths. Speck's "indefatigable and superbly documented collecting made him welcome in museums," a proclivity that meant that his documentation of material culture incorporated the worldview of archaeologists. What made Speck special in Kehoe's view was his ability as a "bedside ethnologist," someone who lived with, ate with, and absorbed the daily rhythms of people among whom he worked, a perspective that he passed on to Claude Schaeffer—one of Frank Speck's students at the University of Pennsylvania. When Schaeffer recommended to Thomas Kehoe

that he go around and talk to the elders about tipi rings, he was exercising Frank Speck's view of anthropology—live with those inside the family, talk to those whom others marginalized, to gain knowledge about their world.

Kehoe shares a poignant example of a legacy of listening that can be traced back through Tom Kehoe to his mentor Claude Schaeffer. We learn of Speck's radical perspective—listening attentively to the words and representations of forgotten pockets of marginalized First Nations—and the inspiration that this legacy afforded to a young white archaeologist searching for ways to unravel the meaning of landscape features in Blackfoot territory. Kehoe shares what is possible in archaeological practice when one assumes the posture of an apprentice in another culture. Tom Kehoe, who for years worked in an apprentice-like relationship with the Blackfoot people, learned from elders that the countless rings of stones found on the Great Plains were in fact tipi rings, stones used to hold down the bottom edges of tipis, left behind in ring shape once the community had abandoned the camp site (Kehoe 1960). Conventional archaeological wisdom had denied such a function until Kehoe and others brought it to light.

The power of listening is also vividly illustrated in Alice Kehoe's story about listening to a story of a local white resident, who, after working as an archaeological laborer, revealed that his mother's sweeping with a twig broom left behind a fine dust of the sort he had observed in part of the trading post being excavated (Kehoe 1978, 2000). Indeed, similar fine dust was observed in the quarters of what appears to have been the residence of a Native woman married to a trading post owner, suggesting gender markers for specific deposits. Apprenticeship takes on many guises, accepting that those with deep experience have lessons to teach. Vivid is the contrast between listening to those with local knowledge and what Binford did with stone cairns in Alaska.

Apprenticeship

Long-term apprenticeship is one of the themes that cuts across many chapters in *Archaeologies of Listening*. By accepting the mentorship of respected elders, one passes through several transforming stages that enhance listening ability. Kathryn Weedman Arthur's (this volume) exegesis of her transforming experiences is more than instructive; it conveys emotional lessons as well. Initially, Arthur was considered an immature person, arriving in the highlands of Ethiopia without a child—the strong marker for maturity. People accepted her presence, but it was tempered with recognition that she had not yet experienced

full adulthood; additionally, she realized that she had not become an apprentice under such conditions. Not until years later when she brought her daughter with her did she begin to gain acceptance as a person with whom serious conversations could be conducted concerning knowledge held by people respected for their mastery. By accepting her original diminished status and then coming to an awareness over time to building trust, Arthur arrived at a point when intimate knowledge about a ritualized landscape could be shared with her. The maturing of her perspective as an observer trusted by local actors meant that she developed the capacity to learn beyond technical studies of lithic manufacture. She began to see the life stages in the production of lithics as an ontology obscured by Western observers preoccupied with the strictly material world of mechanics of chipping, spatial distributions of debitage, and processes of discard. Her long-term interactions with people in highland Ethiopia occurred within a paradigm of learning "bit by bit," a local way of learning that extends over decades.

The value of apprenticeship emerges in Camina Weasel Moccasin's (this volume) narrative about rock art at Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park/Áísínai'pi National Historic Site in Alberta, Canada. Weasel Moccasin's identity as a Blackfoot working in the park is handled in a compellingly reflexive manner. She does not privilege her knowledge (some of which comes from her father's teaching) of the meanings of the rock art; rather, she listens closely to the spontaneous discourses of Blackfoot Elders who visit the park, learning of the reverence that they express for features of a larger landscape that encompasses the space memorialized in the sacred rock art. Patiently listening, she learns that sacred rock art is dynamic, not immutable. Accepting and understanding these indigenous principles of renewal and spiritual expression, she develops a protocol for contemporary inscriptions of rock art to allow an ages-old process of continuous practice to proceed—a controversial approach to some archaeologists preoccupied with conservation of the original at any cost but not an issue in this management approach. Her listening as an apprentice learner extends to Elders who express their desire to inscribe their historical experiences as part of their right to spiritual practice. Like Fontein at Great Zimbabwe, Weasel Moccasin brings us closer to recognizing that access to spiritual places is an integral part of making history—a recognition that now promises to open new interpretive horizons if we open our ears.

Another perspective comes from Peter Schmidt's (this volume) engagement with community heritage studies among the Haya of northwest Tanzania. He

entered the field with the goal to first understand how the Haya represented their past, talking with elders about a wide spectrum of traditional knowledge ranging from epic poetry to mythology and legends about the kings and clans of the region (Schmidt 1978, 2006). After several months, Schmidt came to realize that his conversations often went in the direction that the elders wanted, as they patiently led him beyond his original goals, patiently accepting his naivety and inability to see history through their lens, destabilizing his view of the world, and making him realize that his real professors were those daily working with him. In his tenth month of research, the elders embarked on a suite of tales related to the history of King Rugomora Mahe, the most powerful king in Haya antiquity.

King Rugomora was memorialized by the preservation of his burial estate along with a major shrine to iron working, Kaiija (the place of the forge). Oral traditions were tied strongly to place. Elders suggested that they visit the site with Schmidt to explain its characteristics; they wanted to see for themselves what might lie below the surface. From the beginning they framed the inquiry. They took him to the exact place where they believed smiths had forged iron to build an iron tower for King Rugomora. Schmidt took up this indigenous hypothesis in one of the first expressions of community archaeology in Africa, testing it with excavation on the site (Schmidt 2017). The results are now well known: an early iron age forge dating to the late first millennium BCE—a privileging of local knowledge that has led to significant rethinking of the quality of orally transmitted knowledge in contexts with long-term ritual processes.

Among the interpretative enigmas in northern Australian archaeology are large baked-earth mounds, a topic taken up by Billy Ó Foglú (this volume). Because of the presence of shell, they have long been misinterpreted by archaeologists as shell mounds or considered the result of natural fires because of their burned characteristics—rather than inquiring among Aboriginal peoples about their views of the landscape. Ó Foglú broke with archaeological tradition by listening to local views of these distinctive features. Adopting an apprentice role, Ó Foglú worked over a two-year period with traditional owners to understand the cultural and technological characteristics of earth ovens used for food preparation. By working alongside those who practiced food preparation in earth ovens, Ó Foglú brings significant insights into a domain of heritage practice that has long eluded archaeologists. Understanding practice, he is able to set up technological tests that distinguish these critical features from natural phenomena, a spectacular payoff arising from listening.

Jonathan Walz (this volume) also brings long-term apprenticeship to his practice of archaeology. His experience captures the importance of apprenticeship and, particularly, acute listening. As he worked with a local healer, he came to understand that it was critical to understand where the healer obtained the artifacts that he used in his healing protocols. This required Jonathan to apprentice himself to the healer and accompany him on a long trek to various sites along a caravan route discovered to be of great antiquity. As the healer traversed the landscape, he used sight lines, sounds, and other sensations to fix himself in space—all physical processes that Walz calls listening to the landscape, a potent metaphor for using multiple senses to locate caravan sites that the healer had visited on early collecting expeditions. Walz's apprenticeship afforded an opportunity not only to learn from the healer through constant conversation but also to pick up the clues that were used to locate sites. This distinctive apprenticeship expands the meaning of listening, endowing it with a capacity to understand a multivocality arising from actively "listening" with all the senses.

Patience and Epistemic Humility

We find patience to be a significant attribute in listening to our elders, peers, and collaborators. Sincere patience in our practice arises out an epistemic humility (Matthews 2006)—humility about our knowledge, about pronouncements about our practice of science, and about our capacity to reflect critically about the questions that we routinely ask. A state of epistemic humility carries with it a readiness to listen without privileging, referencing, or drawing on one's background and academic training. It is a capacity to subjugate one's "expertness," baggage that we all carry around as principal investigators of grants, expedition leaders, authors, and a whole host of elevated ways of thinking of ourselves. Larry Zimmerman (2005:306) brings this into our conscious practice through his important essay "First, Be Humble: Working with Indigenous Peoples and Other Descendant Communities": "More insidious troubles occur when archaeologists present their findings as truth and the archaeological accounts as the actual story of what happened in the past. Does archaeological truth undercut sacred history that is a foundation for identity?" He goes on to point out that disdain for indigenous oral traditions is one of these insidious problems: "It seem[s] to be a statement that indigenous versions of the past were not true, that oral tradition was limited, inaccurate and misleading. . . . By taking this position, archaeologists usurped Indigenous voice about the past"

(Zimmerman 2005:307). Under the conditions necessary for truly scientific archaeology, to listen requires, first, an acceptance of humility, which within our archaeological collective is about enhancing values of toleration, civility, and the capacity to nurture others and our own need to learn. This is new territory for many and requires the long-term application of patience writ large—not just while digging test pits and writing reports—but by bringing an open willingness to learn into our daily interactions and discourses with those whose pasts we are studying.

Laurajane Smith (2006) addresses epistemic humility indirectly in her analyses of the authorized heritage discourse. Smith finds that the domination of expert determinations of what constitutes and does not constitute heritage militates against local meanings. She argues that the best pathway to understanding how heritage is represented, conceptualized, and valued is to listen closely and patiently to heritage discourses in communities. This prescription challenges the power relationships that heritage experts have long used. The challenge is gaining recognition as it opens an alternative pathway to powerful local ways of understanding heritage that are historically contingent and locally legitimate. Those who adopt an approach that valorizes local discourse on heritage ipso facto embrace an epistemic humility, as they give up the role of expert, defer to local authorities, and listen with patience to learn alternative knowledge.

Let us turn to some additional examples from our contributors. Audrey Horning (this volume) is engaged in strife-torn settings of Northern Ireland, where narratives are highly contested and often an integral part of conflict. She is very much aware that such a setting "requires an ability not only to listen but also to hear and respect the strength of personal and community narratives." When archaeology is used to bridge conflict, it will sometimes contradict strongly held local narratives, a condition that calls for hearing people out, respecting their views and *not taking sides*, that is, *subjugating one's expert knowledge to gain other knowledge*. Significant patience is required, especially when people become angry at archaeological evidence and archaeologists who contradict sometime age-old narratives. Counternarratives are, in fact, critical to bridge building, for they introduce multivocality, a two-way bridge that accepts narrative traffic both ways. Horning observes that deconstruction of sacred narratives and local reaction to such destabilization may elicit anxiety and anger. Knowing the power of archaeology to create negative, hostile reactions requires epistemic humility—not privileging archaeological evidence above cross-collaboration inclusive of multiple identities and communities. Long-term engage-

ment carries with it building trust and appreciation for differing views, laying the foundation for exercise of patience and exacting ethical principles for the practice of archaeology when serious interpretative rifts develop over archaeological evidence.

Patience runs both ways. Communities may initially be reluctant to share their interpretative positions on landscape history, perhaps timid about juxtaposing it to guiding paradigms of expert archaeologists with whom they are collaborating. Stephen Mrozowski's experience with the Nipmuc people (this volume) illustrates this phenomenon. A representative of the Nipmuc, who for decades were represented as descendants of John Eliot's Praying Towns, challenged Mrozowski's acceptance of the narrative found in the historiography of New England. Eliot is said to have founded Praying Towns as new towns, a representation that fit Eliot's need to make Hassanamisco and other Praying Towns into something new and different from indigenous communities. Faced with this challenge to his professionally endorsed assumptions, Mrozowski realized that his way of recognizing community incorrectly accepted that the space these communities inhabited was new to the Nipmuc families, rather than a space occupied for many generations. When Mrozowski put his expert's hat aside and patiently listened to local knowledge about Nipmuc settlement, he learned that the survival of traditional practices alongside English material culture marked resilient communal practices over deep time. Embracing epistemic humility in this instance opened a significant way to recognize the Praying Indian towns as much older communities, a way of seeing and understanding the past that countered the idea that John Eliot's "founding" of these communities represented a historical rupture.

Patience is manifest in yet another guise in Innocent Pikirayi's (this volume) contribution about landscape history in Zimbabwe. Taught that one engages in conventional survey methods to discover archaeological locales, Pikirayi experienced considerable frustration when he could not locate a site mentioned in Portuguese records as a major trading post on the periphery of what was once Great Zimbabwe (Pikirayi 2016). He ended up in a local bar, talking with farmers who were amused at his odd way of doing research and shared their knowledge about locations they had noticed. Had Pikirayi dismissed such talk as the chatter of backward rural folk, he would have missed some of the most important discoveries of his career. Rather, he adopted a posture of epistemic humility and intently listened to the tales they told about their familiarity with the surrounding landscape. Eventually, he followed them through the bush to

a location that matched the elusive site described in Portuguese records. By being respectful and patient, he was able to transition into a new phase of his career that accepted local knowledge. Once he had accepted epistemic humility as a modus operandi, it was much easier for Pikirayi to listen to the landscape. By listening to the toponyms, he entered into a new dimension of landscape archaeology that revealed the political history of the region—an unexpected consequence of his transformation to a state of epistemic humility.

We find in the experiences of Jagath Weerasinghe (this volume) that epistemic humility figures significantly in unlocking new knowledge that changes how heritage is thought about and managed in Sri Lanka. Weerasinghe as director of the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology in Sri Lanka is a prominent member of the established expert heritage community. As one of many elders who are respected as the founders of modern archaeology in Sri Lanka, Weerasinghe's expert status is known to many people who work at and live around the World Heritage Sites of Sri Lanka. Convinced that heritage management of these sites suffered significantly from the exclusion of local governance, Weerasinghe and Peter Schmidt engaged with local heritage knowledge-keepers to learn about their local heritage practices as well as their ideas about reformation of management practices. As a nationally known heritage expert, Weerasinghe was keenly aware of a need to submerge his status and identity and open himself to alternative knowledge—a cathartic exercise in epistemic humility. Though his adoption of epistemic humility initially surprised some collaborators, he soon won trust and an open willingness to share heritage concerns, some of which have helped to reconceptualize how heritage is viewed in Sri Lanka outside of the community of experts.

When Peter Schmidt (this volume) was invited to return to a Haya village to assist the community with its research initiative into documentation of oral traditions and revitalization of sacred places, he recognized that his role as a heritage "expert" could quickly transform a local initiative into an expert-driven research project. Instead, he took a back seat to research conducted by Haya elders, adopting a posture of epistemic humility. Setting aside decades of running projects and being a professor, Schmidt became a supportive friend and eventually a co-producer of those engaging narratives about the past. Local researchers unveiled long-hidden testimonies by elderly women, heretofore masked by androcentric attitudes toward female-related histories. As he and his cohort learned of an important female ritual official who controlled vast burial estates and political power, they also came to understand that this powerful fe-

male ritual leader exercised far more power and influence than a "keeper of the jawbone" in the Kingdoms of Buganda and Bunyoro or a Queen Mother—the quintessential "power behind the throne" featured in anthropological literature. By sitting back and listening, he heard and learned of perspectives on history rarely spoken but significantly transformative—changing ideas about the political and religious roles of female ritual officials at ancient shrines, some of which have been documented archaeologically.

When George Nicholas (this volume) talks about listening, he shares how his consciousness expanded as he saw and heard what is considered to be heritage among First Nations peoples and other groups that participated in the IPinCH (Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage) project that funded a series of community-directed projects and special initiatives around the globe. Trained as an anthropological archaeologist, Nicholas reveals that a significant tension arose between his Western and indigenous conceptions of "heritage": the Western conception emphasizes the tangible, while indigenous concepts focus on the intangible as well as "relationships and responsibilities aligned with knowledge, objects, and places" as well as other societies, individuals, and nonhuman beings (Nicholas, this volume). This learning process required that he sit, listen, and learn through long meetings that cast him in the role of student learner rather than expert—an experience that should be seen in light of his renown as a heritage expert. His successful role as equal participant was impossible without his first accepting the practice of epistemic humility, the willingness to reconsider previous ideas and learning, to put aside his power as an expert in heritage and archaeology and to open himself to new knowledge.

Archaeologies of listening have diverse origins around the globe, ranging from the study of tipi rings on the Great Plains to African oral traditions linked to iron working. These are important threads to understand in the history of archaeology. We have also brought to the fore the role of "explicitly scientific" archaeology and its failure to listen to alternative explanations. The origins of Binford's deafness are not to be traced to the late twentieth century but rather to the culture of Western colonial dominance seen in the Jesup North Pacific Expedition to the northwest coast and interior plateau at the end of the nineteenth century (Catherine Carlson, this volume). Even Franz Boas, scientific director of the expedition, was deaf to the pleas of the subordinated communities.

On several occasions, Alison Wylie has argued that those on the margins, those stigmatized by the mainstream as unreliable or unorthodox, may have an epistemic advantage:

the range of resources used to address new questions and to assess the presuppositions that frame the history making enterprise must be substantially broadened. All "relevant" resources must be deployed, in particular, oral traditions and oral history should be credited not only as important sources of interpretative insight but also as historical accounts in their own right . . . but also in their potential to provide a basis for the reciprocal interrogation of documentary and archaeological sources. (Wylie 1995:266–267)

We follow Wylie's view, pointing to archaeologies of listening as a way to open taken-for-granted assumptions and interpretations about the past to reevaluated and more inclusive empirical assessments. If we adopt archaeologies of listening as part of our daily practice, then we are embracing ways to decolonize the discipline; simultaneously with opening our minds to richer multidimensional views of pasts, we leave behind the rigid and bounded views of a deaf science.

Note

1. We focus on Binford's disdain for the people who are, in his view, technicians setting up a laboratory to produce data. Readers can contrast the severe limitations that Binford imposed on his Nunamiut project with the rich data observed (and experienced) by ethnographers who lived in Nunamiut hunting camps, not in the government village: Helge Ingstad (1954) and Nicholas Gubser (1965). John M. Campbell (2004) records ethnography told by the man who was Ingstad's host in the Nunamiut camp, later than Binford's project (see Blackman 2004; Ingstad 1998; Kakinya, Paneak, and Ingstad 1987).

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