



Wringing Hands and Anxious Authority: Archaeological Heritage Management Beyond an Archaeologist's Ontology

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ABSTRACT

In Canada archaeology sits between colonial and contemporary reconciled notions of heritage, and relationships between the descendant colonial State and Indigenous sovereigns. State-regulated Archaeological Resource Management (ARM) has slowly begun to shift away from archaeologist-centric values, as that management becomes less about preserving the material past, and more about fiduciary State obligations towards Indigenous sovereign rights over this heritage. These changes are also slowly destabilizing the role and authority of archaeologists in ARM: from experts and value makers of archaeological stuff to servicing other societal values within this contested material heritage. These changes have significant implications for how archaeology is understood by Canadian society to “make meaning” of human–material experiences in the past and present. Feeding into both old angsts and new anxieties over archaeological authority and the “rightness” of an archaeological ontology, current discourse invites the question: Is there a place for an informed, reflexive archaeological meaning-making within a resituated heritage conservation regime, and can it contribute to a State/Indigenous Sovereign-based archaeological management? This paper considers archaeology at a time when that practice appears to be moving beyond archaeological sensibilities, and the limits of archaeological ways of knowing are being expanded by other ways of knowing.

Résumé: Au Canada, l'archéologie s'inscrit entre les notions d'un patrimoine réconciliant le colonial et le contemporain, et les relations entre l'état colonial descendant et les souverains autochtones. La Gestion des ressources archéologiques (Archaeological Resource Management - ARM)

réglementée par l'état a lentement commencé à s'éloigner des valeurs axées sur l'archéologue, alors que cette gestion s'attache moins à la préservation du passé matériel et plus aux obligations fiduciaires de l'état à l'égard des droits souverains autochtones sur ce patrimoine. Ces changements déstabilisent aussi lentement le rôle et l'autorité des archéologues au sein de l'ARM : d'experts et de créateurs de valeurs pour ce qui a trait aux objets archéologiques, ils en viennent à se mettre au service d'autres valeurs sociétales au sein de ce patrimoine matériel contesté. Ces changements ont des implications significatives sur la manière dont l'archéologie est perçue par la Société canadienne comme « donnant un sens » aux expériences matérielles humaines du passé et du présent. Puisant dans des angoisses anciennes et des inquiétudes nouvelles sur l'autorité archéologique et l'« adéquation » d'une ontologie archéologique, le discours actuel invite à poser la question suivante: y-a-t-il une place pour l'élaboration d'un sens archéologique éclairé et réflexif au sein d'un régime de conservation d'un patrimoine resitué, et peut-il contribuer à une gestion archéologique axée sur la souveraineté autochtone et l'état. Cet article examine l'archéologie à une époque où il apparaît que cette pratique dépasse les sensibilités archéologiques et que les limites des méthodes de la connaissance archéologique se voient repoussées par d'autres moyens d'accéder au savoir.

Resumen: En Canadá, la arqueología se ubica entre las nociones reconciliadas coloniales y contemporáneas del patrimonio, y las relaciones entre el Estado colonial descendiente y los soberanos indígenas. La Administración de Recursos Arqueológicos (ARA) regulada por el estado ha comenzado lentamente a alejarse de los valores centrados en los arqueólogos, ya que esa administración comienza a tratarse menos de la preservación del pasado material y más de las obligaciones del Estado fiduciario hacia los derechos soberanos indígenas sobre este patrimonio. Estos cambios también están desestabilizando lentamente el papel y la autoridad de los arqueólogos en la ARA: desde expertos y creadores de valor de materiales arqueológico hasta el servicio a otros valores sociales dentro de este patrimonio material en disputa. Estos cambios tienen implicaciones significativas para la forma en que la sociedad canadiense entiende que la arqueología “da sentido” a las experiencias materiales humanas en el pasado y el presente. Alimentando tanto las viejas angustias como las nuevas ansiedades sobre la autoridad arqueológica y la “rectitud” de una ontología arqueológica, el discurso actual invita a la pregunta: ¿hay un lugar para la creación de significado arqueológico reflexivo e informado dentro de un régimen de conservación del patrimonio resituado y puede contribuir a una administración arqueológica estatal/indígena basada en

soberanía? Este artículo considera la arqueología en un momento en que esa práctica parece ir más allá de las sensibilidades arqueológicas, y los límites de las formas arqueológicas de conocimiento se están expandiendo por otras formas de conocimiento.

KEYWORDS

Archaeological Resource Management, Canada, Ontology, Heritage

Introduction: Intellectual Angsts and Anxieties

A constant in global academic archaeology over the last century has been to grapple with the angst of just what it means to interpret and make meaning from a material record readily acknowledged as imperfect, incomplete, and only indirectly insightful of the multitude of ways humans experienced and knew the world in recent or ancient pasts. This core deficiency to the basic building blocks of archaeologically informed knowledge continues to fuel an underlying anxiety over how we can know this past authoritatively. In at least Anglo-Western academic contexts this anxiety has manifested a decades long epistemological debate over exactly how and why archaeologists come to know human pasts, and what this record of material waste, soil discolourations, and contexts in time and space can actually tell us. These debates have generated relatively positive assertions that things represent other things, people, cultures, or cultural systems, which can be known through the science, empathy, or just so meaning-making arising from within an internalist archaeology. Confined to a handful of intellectual schools or faiths at first, by the end of the 20th century this angst had splintered into a thousand “isms” (Schiffer 1996), or rather a robust and pragmatic pluralism of conceptual frameworks applied to archaeological interpretations of human lived pasts (eg. Preucel and Mrozowski 2010; see also Trigger 2006).

More recently this debate has occupied assemblages of archaeological communities practicing non-representational new materialisms of meaning-making that are relational, situational, and shaped from a symmetrical or flat ontological entanglement of self, species, and matter to articulate a meta-archaeology about people archaeologically, archaeologically people, and everything (eg. Gosden and Malafouris 2015; Harris and Cipolla 2017; Hodder 2012; Watts 2013a; Witmore 2014). This more ontological turn has invited calls to engage with multiple ontologies beyond a western

knowledge system's way of knowing, in order to improve interpretations from this imperfect record (Alberti 2016; Alberti et al. 2014; Cipolla 2018). Interpretations arising from multiple ways of being and knowing the world are seen as both bridging the limitations of an imperfect record, as well as acknowledging that those material states of the past arose from within, for example, ancient Indigenous-experienced and understood ontologies (eg. Baltus 2017; Natif 2018; Turner 2014).

This beyond-epistemological certainty in archaeology also entangles the researcher more directly with their interpretive gaze and practice. Historically in archaeology the practitioner demographic has been overwhelmingly made up of descendants of European colonizers. For example, Rocks-MacQueen (2013) notes that where demographic profiles of practitioners are available (from the UK and the USA), consistently between 98 and 99% of practitioners racially identify as white. Likewise, in descendant colonial states Settler society archaeologists also tend to come from middle class urban/suburban contexts and are uniformly trained in Western intellectual schools of thought. This narrow diversity means that most archaeologists are as removed from the realities contemporary Descendant and Indigenous communities—and other minorities in these Settler States—live within the present, as we are from the foreign pasts we examine.

Understanding practitioner limits along with those of the archaeological record invites theorized frameworks that value interpretation arising from a multiplicity of collaborative, community-based archaeologies (eg. Atalay 2012, 2019a; Cipolla et al. 2018; Lyons 2013; McNiven 2016). Scholars are quick to caution, however, that any enthusiasm for ratcheting multiple ontologies and Indigenous knowledge onto mostly western intellectual interpretive frameworks—a kind of “better” scholarly authority by adding Indigenous or non-western knowledge to interpretations—risks simply being another intellectual appropriation by academics affirming the “rightness” of that western intellectual authority (eg. Cipolla 2019; Stump 2013; Todd 2016; Watts 2013b). Indeed, there exists already a robust Indigenous scholarship advancing knowledge of the archaeological heritage and critiquing western constructions of archaeology by Indigenous archaeologists, offering a diversity of perspectives (eg. Atalay 2006, 2019b; Bruchac 2014a, b; Gonzalez et al. 2006; Harris 2005; Steeves 2017; Watkins 2011; Yellowhorn 2006; see also Bruchac et al. 2010; Wilcox 2010, 2012). This scholarship can be an integrative, collaborative, or distinct archaeology from Western-based knowledge systems and Settler society engagements with that same, imperfect material record, adding multiple knowings of past lives lived.

At its best, non-western and western-based scholarships, collaboratively or separately negotiating the limitations of the record and practitioners, underscore the mutability of “knowing the past” and the multiplicity of

realities to that past and to our present practice. Ironically, while this trend in scholarship is encouraged as a way for western-based knowledge systems to overtly stand aside to make room for non-western knowledge systems (Shiple and Williams 2019), the contemporary political and social decolonization implications to this conception of archaeology continue to feed an intellectual angst and anxiety (Williams and Shipley 2020; see also McGhee 2008). For these scholars, scientific enquiry benefits from accommodating multiple ontologies, but any contemporary political dynamics to that practice of science are not of benefit; in other words, archaeological practice should be content with an Indigenous archaeology “to perform research that is ‘with’, ‘by’, and (*in its reasonable form*) ‘for’ Indigenous peoples” (Williams and Shipley 2020:78, emphasis added).

Such an intellectual reluctance to acknowledge the broader, contemporary implications of practice when embracing multiple ontologies, and the suggestion practice only becomes political when wielded beyond western knowledge systems, to us underscores a disconnect among at least some academic archaeologists between their conception of how archaeology is primarily practiced today, and how far it operates beyond the academy in reality. From our limited standpoint—as archaeologists who collectively have or continue to experience archaeology as a way of being in the world through the academy, government regulation, and commercial practice—archaeology today operates primarily as a commercial conservation management practice worldwide (eg. Altschul and Patterson 2010; Dore 2018; Ferris 1998; Rocks-MacQueen 2014; Ulm et al. 2013). This is readily evident by the numbers of practitioners, sites consumed, and revenues generated within this distinct form of practice. Moreover, this practice is much more broadly consequential in society, as practitioners (regulators, consultants, and community advocates) daily negotiate a world where their authority is engaged beyond an internalist, archaeological ontology, and at the intersection of contested ways of knowing and valuing the archaeological heritage.

This broader context that archaeology operates within society today is where academic discussions on the limitations of archaeological ways of knowing and bridging multiple ontologies have most resonance for us. In our lived experience, that bridging captures a more consequential transformation to practice and to the archaeologist’s authority, and for thinking about whether archaeology is heading in the world today. So we offer here what, from our vantage point, we see as the general trends, personal insights, and informal anecdotal tellings gained from our interaction with individuals operating within this archaeological day to day. And while these insights notably arise beyond our home department/company and employers, it also emerges from our being situated in a practice occurring in Canada, as two males who are of the Settler society here, and through

our regular interaction with people embracing archaeological and beyond-archaeological knowings of the subject past and of being in the world. We are not trying or wish to speak for the many Indigenous and Descendant communities and individuals who operate within this broader form of contemporary archaeological practice and who are increasingly participating in the decision-making and meaning-making of archaeological practice as a heritage resource. They can and do speak for themselves, for their many distinct communities, and their knowing of the world and of the State's regulation of the archaeological heritage (eg. Budhwa 2005, George 2010; Hammond 2009; Klassen et al. 2009; Nicholas 2010; Welch et al. 2009). Rather we offer that academic discourse a wider context from which to think about conceptually transforming archaeology through multiple ontologies. This context is transforming a previously imagined archaeological authority originating from State-authorized applied practice away from an internalist archaeological ontology, sensibility, or archaeologist-centric logic to what archaeology should be into something that operates across multiple ontologies.

Industry Angsts and Anxieties

The rise in a reflexive angst over academic archaeological conceptual frameworks in the 20th century has played out precisely through the same time that the practice of archaeology was radically transforming beyond the academy, through the rise of State-regulated and shaped resource management regimes (eg. Carman 2015; Cleere 1989; Messenger and Smith 2010). This form of archaeological practice now represents what most people who call themselves archaeologists “do” in their day to day (eg. Everill 2007; Ferris 2002; McManamon 2018; Zorzin 2011). Variably referred to as Cultural Resource Management (CRM), this practice more practically encompasses an Archaeological Resource Management (ARM) design of consuming the archaeological record in collaboration with the State and development sectors, ostensibly to preserve vital dimensions of that record otherwise lost by construction or resource harvest impacts (Welch and Ferris 2014). This principal intent of a State-required imposition on capitalist land harvest and economic growth thus frames for ARM archaeologists a validation that their agency in these State-regulated requirements is about saving or rescuing the material property of archaeologists, in order to sustain archaeological ways of making-meaning while also making a living doing so.

The ARM industry operates in North America as a commercial practice where development proponents pay private consultant archaeologists to remove or otherwise account for the record in advance of land development processes. This imposition and leveraging of archaeology within land

development means that practitioners have had to negotiate a distinct set of critiques and challenges through the industry's growth over the last half century. Angsts and anxieties arose externally, for example from academic dismissals of ARM as a form of archaeology, as well as internally, in negotiating the realities of asserting authority over the archaeological heritage based on an obscure, normative, and jargon-heavy expertise imposed onto a generally reluctant client base, consuming ever more of the record to sustain, in effect, a commodification of that archaeologist's understanding of this heritage. Particular critiques of practice tended to focus on how archaeologists leveraged that expertise for revenue, for example operating dubious field practices and underbidding by competitors; lack of in-the-field training or even a basic competency across the range of practitioners encountering the diversity of the record in ARM contexts; practitioners' livelihood dependent on fluctuating economic times; limits of State bureaucratic regulatory oversight, quality control, or even adherence to conservation of the archaeological heritage despite regulatory regimes being in place; and a continual, chronic harassment and derision from clients and calls for rolling back conservation statutes since these seemed—at least to some development clients—to be little more than a “boondoggle” for archaeologists or bureaucratic red tape hindering economic growth (eg. Barker 2010; Breternitz 2004; Ferris 2004; Fitting and Goodyear 1979; Green 1984; King 2009; McGuire 2008; Wheaton 2006; Zorzin 2015).

Despite these chronic anxieties fuelling an ongoing, internal angst among ARM practitioners, in a remarkably short time this industry massively expanded, so that today it dominates practice and practitioners worldwide, and is part of a broader heritage compliance industry generating significant revenues annually, all in the name of archaeological conservation (eg. Aitchison 2019; Aitchison and Rocks-MacQueen 2013; HBI 2019a, b, c). In short, in a single generation's lifetime this shift has led to a staggering transformation to how, practically, archaeology functions in society.

But this growth, shaped through those distinct anxieties of practice negotiated through its early becoming, has arguably also transformed its original aim to prevent archaeological loss into something else. Exponential commercial growth, client-driven economics, and regulatory oversight operating within development-based practice have all encouraged much of this industry and its practitioners to necessarily focus on the mechanics of harvest and consumption: the moment archaeology, by force of removal through excavation, effectively meets the development proponent's obligation for heritage conservation. The degree of opportunity for practitioners to interpret and engage with the stuff of archaeology, or community interests beyond corporate economics, tend to be happy, coincidental and infrequent alignments of project, client, and archaeological finding, along with

the personal and corporate ethos of a consultant company and their employees. Otherwise, the day to day of heritage compliance practice tends to serve narrowly that focus on waiving or clearing archaeology at a minimal risk or cost to clients. The distillation of this applied practice down to the many acts of erasing the record from landscapes about to be transformed primarily for urban growth and infrastructure tends to belie an internalized orthodoxy that ARM archaeology “saves” the past for anything other than those moments of consumption and livelihood. Indeed, critiques of this industry as simply co-opting late-stage neoliberal capitalist values and corporatized heritage Statecraft lead to accusations of archaeology as crime or violence against the heritage value of this record and property of others, underscoring how far the resource management orthodoxy has drifted from “save the past” aspirations (eg. Baird 2017; Gnecco 2018; Gnecco and Dias 2015; Hutchings and Dent 2017; Hutchings and La Salle 2015, 2017; Smith 2004; Zorzin 2015, 2016).

ARM practice has also largely been divorced from academic anxieties—epistemological or ontological—over what archaeology is and how archaeologists make meaning and come to know that past. This should not be a surprise, since many ARM regimes and their supporting legislation, regulatory constructs, and standards of practice all tended to arise from within regional cultural historical understandings of what the record represents, and the heady early days of coming to think of archaeology as authorized science (Lipe 1974; McKay 1977; Schiffer and Gumerman 1977). Indeed, it could be argued that these normative constructs—so foundational to an archaeological orthodoxy—also helped advance ARM practice and their commodified expediencies, since an emphasis on objects for objects’ sake to define cultural heritage value allowed for a degree of predictability, such as defining when artefact yields from sites or the age of sites were not significant enough, from the archaeologist’s standpoint, to expend the capital necessary to document a site (eg. Ferris 2007a). ARM regulation thus tended to reflect rote practices focussed on predictability, ascription of value tended to reify cultural historical preoccupations with description and trait lists, and interpretation tended to be about equating material traits and archaeological cultures with historically defined ethnic designations (Beaudoin 2016; Smith 2004; Williamson 2011; Williamson and MacDonald 2015), all reinforced and validated back at practitioners through State-imposed standards, regulations, and site classifications (eg. Ontario 2011a; see Ferris 2007b). Reinforced through tens of thousands of property surveys and archaeological site excavations over the last several decades across at least North American jurisdictions, ARM fieldwork, analysis, and limited interpretation thus tend to reify a conception of ARM archaeology—an internal ontology—that the practice is about the interests, logics, and stuff exclusively important to, and known by, its practitioners

(Dent 2019). Other interests that come together over this practice, ranging from State bureaucrats, to developers, to Descendant peoples, to heritage activists, to general publics—are assumed to concur with or share this singular ontology of, by, and for archaeologists (Ferris and Welch 2014, 2015).

Multiple Ontologies and the Archaeological Heritage

The absence of an internal reflexivity in ARM over what practitioners do and how it becomes archaeological knowledge, beyond rote inventories and trait descriptions, has served ARM well in their core aim through the 20th century to convince the State that destruction of the record from development or looting was wrong, while harvesting the record by archaeologists was right (Welch and Ferris 2014). However, in the last few decades the authorized and exclusive access to the record these conservation regimes have afforded ARM archaeologists to access, accumulate, and evaluate is becoming a secondary or even tertiary priority when it comes to the rationale driving State-regulated management of this heritage. Change facilitated by the very act of ARM conservation has ensnared a wider range of societal interests and values playing out over the archaeological heritage and is increasingly confronting the limits of conceiving archaeological conservation as being for archaeology's sake.

The particulars of these other values and their role in revising State conceptions of conservation practice vary by jurisdiction and the many diverse Descendant and heritage communities actively engaged with the State over the archaeological heritage. In the descendant colonial state that is Canada, archaeology sits at the intersection between colonial and contemporary conceptions of what this place is becoming and operates along a continuum of past and present relationships between Settler society and Indigenous Sovereigns. Practically, much of the past chronicled in the archaeological record relates solely to the deep human history of the many Indigenous sovereigns who have been here since time immemorial. In ARM practice this means that most of the archaeological record recovered (eg. between 80 and 90% in Ontario; see Ferris 2007a) is readily recognizable as the material heritage of the many contemporary Indigenous peoples of this place. Contemporary First Nations, communities, and individuals increasingly engaging with this archaeological heritage point out that the archaeological record is their direct heritage and property, represents a vital vestige title, is their collective human right to access and control—which the State and a colonial archaeological practice interferes with, excluding Indigenous peoples from controlling their own heritage (eg. Chabot 2018; Nicholas 2017; Niezen 2017). At the same time, most archaeologists work-

ing in the ARM fee-for-service resource management sector, or as government bureaucrats or scholars for that matter, are overwhelmingly of the Settler society of Canada. This disparity between the archaeological record and the practitioners who recover that record in advance of development readily suggests to policy makers, development clients, and the public that the record does not personally “belong” or connect to archaeologists. This disconnect historically has been most readily perceived through issues related to the discovery of Indigenous Ancestors’ remains. Most provincial jurisdictions in Canada have tended to position discoveries of human bone within distinct regulatory regimes beyond archaeology, shaped in part by adjacent NAGPRA efforts in the USA through the latter part of the 20th century (eg. Burley 1994; Kelley and Williamson 1996; Kerber 2006; Stapp and Burney 2002; THMC 2018).

More recently in Canada, Indigenous defined and asserted rights outlined under the Canadian Constitution of 1982 and further affirmed through a raft of Supreme Court of Canada decisions have occasionally touched on matters of Indigenous heritage. These decisions increasingly imply that the archaeological record laid down by countless generations of Indigenous peoples represents Indigenous Sovereigns’ heritage property, or at least an asserted right clearly connected to their cultural traditions. And as such the Crown owes a fiduciary obligation to Indigenous sovereigns, including needing to consult on action affecting this property or right (eg. Bell 2000; Bell and Napoleon 2008; Ferris 2003). Notably, in an important recent decision, the 2017 *Chippewas of the Thames First Nation versus Enbridge Pipelines Inc.* (2017 SCC 41), the Supreme Court of Canada also framed archaeological conservation as the technical service industry regulated by the State to meet the State’s own “hard” fiduciary obligations to Indigenous Sovereigns, rather than to achieve any kind of “soft” State interest in preserving and protecting the stuff of archaeological enquiry. In other words, the State’s explicit logic for conserving the material heritage in Canada and imposing conservation regimes is becoming understood as something other than connected to original, archaeologist-centric logics that drove conservation efforts in the last half of the 20th century.

This shift is significant in re-situating what the archaeology heritage represents and why it is of relevance beyond any archaeological interest. In the last 3 decades, this shifting jurisprudence has led to a number of Federal and Provincial/Territorial jurisdictions increasingly recognizing the regulation of archaeological practice as not just about conserving the stuff of archaeologists’ intellectual curiosity, but also about caring for the Indigenous heritage of others. The degree to which this shift has occurred (and the degree to which it is being embraced) is quite variable, but increasingly Statecraft tends to suggest Indigenous communities and Sovereigns should, could, or will need to be consulted, participate, provide consent, or shape

the decision-making in archaeological heritage management practice (Dent 2016, 2017; Warrick 2017; see also Ontario 2011b).

This shift, in turn, has facilitated a degree of day-to-day engagement between ARM principals and crews with Indigenous communities and individuals through much more robust consultation and engagement related to both property and site management in development contexts. It has also led over the last 2 decades to Indigenous community members participating in and shaping ARM practice; either as council staff, archaeologists, heritage managers, inspectors, or consultation coordinators, and as direct members of field crews. These latter positions are paid for by development proponents and integrated with ARM company field crews. These individuals work as field archaeologists and as community monitors, representing on site the interests of their communities while participating in the day to day of fieldwork (eg. Devries 2014). Archaeological organizations and communities have also collaboratively worked with individual Indigenous communities to help train people to be employed as monitors in archaeological methods, regulations, and how archaeologists interpret the archaeological record. Infrequently to date, and variably across the country, Indigenous-run ARM firms are also undertaking field investigations or specializing in community representation within archaeological management practice (eg. Dent 2016; George 2010; Hunter 2008; Kapyrka 2010; Nicholas 2010).

This transformation of archaeology in applied contexts beyond the conventional logics of past practice reflects a tangible example of archaeology operating across multiple ontologies. Of course, this is also a fundamental, heterodox revision to archaeologists' understanding of their own being in the world. So, this engagement has been less a reflexive, academic discourse, and more a clunky shifting of gears through endless get-the-job done moments in practice where ARM archaeologists' certainty of what archaeology is is itself made relative through on-the-spot mediations of contested heritage values, feeding new anxieties in the face of change.

New Archaeologies and Old Anxieties

In Canada the shifting of applied practice to be about more than what archaeologists have understood that record and the aims of conservation to be is ongoing. Formal, informal, and anecdotal evidence suggests responses to the challenges and opportunities of practicing ARM today have been positive, negative, or indifferent, and individually as well as corporately variable. Positive responses include instances of facilitating more meaningful collaboration across shared work experiences with the broader diversity of individuals who now go to work and shake a screen as ARM field crews

and across that wider range of communities and interests shaping archaeological conservation practice (eg. De Paoli 1999; Connaughton et al. 2014; Hogg 2014; Hogg et al. 2017; Klassen 2013; Racher 2006). For example, with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission findings of 2015 broadly encouraging Canadian society to engage with and redress the hurtful colonial legacies of this country, archaeological organizations have sought to re-shape the ethical codes of its members, and acknowledge not just an Indigenous interest in the archaeological record, but their primacy to that heritage and an accountability of archaeologists to respect and fulfil that reality (eg. revisions to Statements of Ethical Principles, see OAS 2017; CAA 2018).

With increasing collaboration, interaction, and regularized shared workspaces, some ARM industry practitioners clearly have recognized that collaboration goes beyond just trying to more clearly convince Indigenous communities and individuals that archaeology is as archaeologists have understood it to be (Connaughton et al. 2014). Instead, ARM practitioners try to make room for the differing ways of approaching conservation and heritage management that community members, Indigenous field monitors, managers, and communities bring to archaeological practice. They are also appreciating, as Indigenous communities and advocates have long iterated, that Indigenous capacity to participate in archaeology has more to do with community priorities, interests, resources, and the ongoing realities of being in a descendant colonial Canada, than with what Settler society archaeologists' have understood the act and practice of archaeology to be (Dent 2016; Klassen 2013; Markey 2010; Supernant and Warrick 2014: 583).

When this space is created, Indigenous communities and Indigenous heritage professionals participate as collaborators and co-authors in cultural historical research, predictive modelling, and are asked for their insight and consent on caring for the recovered record. When this space is not created, ARM companies can find themselves struggling to even initiate a dialogue let alone work with Indigenous communities on behalf of development clients to address heritage conservation in a time, labour, and cost-efficient manner. In effect, at least some ARM practitioners to date, variably by jurisdiction, are beginning to perceive Indigenous communities and individuals as having an extra-to-State role, and even authority, in the continuing practice of conserving the archaeological record in advance of development. The practical day to day of doing archaeology, consuming sites, and amassing the outcome of conservation may still "look" the same as before (at least for the present), yet why practitioners do things the way they do is transforming, as those judicial framings of ARM as servicing the State's obligations to Indigenous Sovereigns' archaeological heritage lead to

changing logics in Statecraft, which in turn revises the logics of practice (Dent 2016).

In general, transforming ARM practice does not seem to have really revised the cultural historical norms that so entrench the logics of that practice. For example, in Ontario Indigenous communities have sought to rewrite the Provincial standards of ARM practice to reflect their own expectations for what the outcome of ARM fieldwork should be. A first such example, by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN 2018), was framed as building onto the existing the Ontario *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (Ontario 2011a) to articulate MCFN priorities. These priorities include the need for practitioners to acknowledge when they are working within Mississaugas of Credit traditional territory. It also emphasizes the many heritage values the archaeological record represents to the Mississaugas of Credit people, and expectations around ARM practitioner consultation with the MCFN throughout all stages of the archaeological process.

Likewise, the MCFN standards propose adjusted benchmarks for a number of in-the-field practices as defined by the 2011 Ontario document. Such adjusted standards include the Ontario requirement that ploughzone excavation of ancient archaeological sites could be considered complete when artefact yields drop below the recovery of ten lithic artefacts per excavation unit, or that for large sites the ploughzone could be mechanically stripped away in favour of recovering that portion of the site still intact below the ploughzone in cultural features. The logic of these practices reflects arbitrary notions of value from the same context (ie. ploughzone) by size and richness of the archaeological record at a site, and tie back to cultural historical norms that focus on things, and on types of things coming from a site. MCFN's (2018: 36–37) standards, on the other hand, propose reducing the minimum unit count threshold to 5. Moreover, the document identifies as problematic the abandoning of heritage material in stripped ploughzone backdirt piles and calls on the practice to be minimized. But if stripping is carried out, there is a clear expectation in the MCFN standards that those backdirt piles will be screened to facilitate full artefact recovery.

Interestingly, this revising of the ARM orthodoxy for these standards questions a longstanding disposition in archaeology that excavation is only ever the sampling of an imperfect record. The MCFN standards articulate a valuing of the recovery of all heritage objects, from all site contexts, as an important goal of conservation, rather than adequate sampling to facilitate analysis and interpretation. In other words, an ARM orthodoxy around the accumulation of things is enhanced. Of course, an emphasis on conservation being about recovering everything could also lead to unintended consequences, such as a proponent proposing to bulldoze and

stockpile soil from a site to be sifted en masse as a means of recovering all artefacts as a viable resolution of conservation requirements. This approach would gain the things of an archaeological site, just not the context for them. Whether that might be an acceptable ARM practice in the future or not depends on whether it is perceived by Indigenous heritage professionals and Settler archaeologists, working together and with clients, communities, and the State, as a methodology that better serves the collective aims the community has for the archaeological record. In other words, previously assumed logics for how archaeology should be done cannot be taken for granted. They would need to be validated from within the multiple ontologies working together in shaping what archaeology is coming to represent.

There have not been formal explorations of how Settler archaeologists in the field reflexively interact with their community monitor colleagues to make those in-the-moment decisions that shape the archaeological record; what Hodder (2004) has previously sighted as the locus for the beginning of archaeological interpretation “at trowel’s edge”. As such all we can offer here are limited anecdotal insights that suggest this interaction has given rise to a range of informal mediations over the “right” way to do fieldwork to fulfil conservation. One instance we are familiar with centred around below-ground features found on a site in a former agricultural field that conventionally trained archaeologists would typically have identified as non-cultural plough scars and other taphonomic “disturbances” not requiring investigation during excavation. However, in deference to the Indigenous community monitors on site who wondered if the features might be cultural, the crew chose to excavate many of these features, allowing for the possibility the features might be something other than what archaeologists may “know” them to be.

Such instances of in-the-field mediations and questioning of the experiential authority western-trained Settler archaeologists have assumed in the past might be seen as feeding into broader ARM practitioner anxieties over what this transformation of practice will bring. After all, it could be argued that archaeological knowledge as conventionally understood is increasingly relative and contingent in how, where, and from whom that knowledge manifests in ARM contexts, no longer authorized from a singular, western knowledge system of expertise and training. This is certainly how at least a few practitioners we have spoken to frame such mediations. However, those mediations are operating in an informal, mostly collaborative context, and monitors in the above instance were merely seeking the proof of things, rather than taking as unquestioned the authority of the ARM company crew. Excavating what may have been plough scars or cultural features simply accommodated the possibility the monitors raised. And likewise, the ARM company crew learns by engaging with the knowledge

that community monitors bring into the field, reflexively examining their own rote assumptions that otherwise remain unchallenged. In short, these in-the-field mediations are really the effective integration of a more robust way of knowing, in effect an applied example of that academic promise of integrating multiple ontologies to know and act differently.

As we noted above, however, in applied practice this intellectual transformation is not a reflexive discourse engaging with new conceptual frameworks. It is a rather messy, difficult, and consequential revising of why archaeology has relevance in society beyond archaeologists' intellectual curiosity. And while, from our standpoint, there is much in this transformation and sharing of an archaeological authority that advances the very reflexivity of cultural historical norms ARM practice should embrace, it is also the case that transforming practice and realizing your ontological way of knowing is not the only way of knowing invites a destabilizing anxiety. Is there a need, for example, for the archaeologist's gaze in the management and conservation of this Indigenous heritage? Some critics of the capitalist and neoliberal leanings of applied practice might well answer that no, there is no room, given the decolonizing and reconfiguring of power and leveraging of capital that would be realized by resituating the authorized voice to previously marginalized Indigenous Sovereigns. And if this is the case, then conventional archaeological knowledge pursuits, however retained as academic or avocational curiosity, can be divorced from a resource management mediated through the Statecraft of heritage fiduciary obligations operating beyond a concern for an archaeological way of making-meaning from things.

Nonetheless, to date early transformation of ARM practice into Indigenous sovereign heritage management, and the collaboration of practitioners with Indigenous heritage professionals and communities does suggest a vitality exists in bridging these distinct worldviews or ontologies through a kind of normative archaeology servicing a heritage conservation shaped by Indigenous community priorities. Certainly instances of Indigenous-directed heritage management have demonstrated a capacity to wield the intellectual authority of archaeology (Smith 2004) in shaping their own vision of what practice should be and the role of archaeologists in supporting those aims (eg. Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation 2018; Saugeen Ojibway Nation 2011; see also Stapp and Burney 2002). This approach also suggests an Indigenous heritage management could be something other than simply reifying existing ARM norms around what to document, excavate, and how much, in order to engage with the record to service community priorities and needs, such as Dean Jacobs' call for a "Stage 5"¹ in the ARM process to formally service Indigenous community needs arising out of the four archaeological stages of documentation, assessment, and excavation (Jacobs 2018, and personal communication 2018). These conceptions

of ARM practice suggest a continuing collaboration with and use of archaeological ways of knowing, if only to help service a reflexive transformation of conserving the Indigenous heritage values of the record beyond past flawed logics of archaeology as culture history, trait lists, and the harvesting of things. Indeed, such collaboration and working together to decolonize archaeological practice can in turn invite a more reflexive and interpretive archaeology that embraces the limitations of the archaeological record and improve the way archaeology can know past lived life, arising from practitioners regular interaction with and support of Indigenous community efforts manage their territorial heritage as they know it.

Discussion

The internalized doing and habitus of archaeology—that ontology by which archaeologists come to know human lived life—can be about much more than just collecting artefact types and traits. How archaeologists think about the archaeological record and the past represents a tradition and system of knowing built up over more than a century of practicing this craft globally. And as Deloria (1980) suggested many years ago, studying other people's garbage means that archaeologists are not quite right in the head, in that the unique, and arguably unrealized capacity of archaeology is that we collectively, and over a myriad of soft and hard conceptual logics, come to know human experiences across the deep time of material life, distinct from master narratives and particularities of conventional history, or the contextual resonances of oral histories. Archaeologists are taught, from the first class we take, and first shovel or trowel put in our hand, that we order the past through a classification of things through time and space for the sake of knowing the cacophony of interrelated human–material–animal experiences and negotiated relationships of being, not just to harvest more things. This way of knowing is a core dimension to the passion that variously has or is leading those of us who practice and devote large parts of our life to this practice, livelihood, and community—an archaeological ontology for exploring ourselves in the present as much as it is for knowing the world through time.

Coming to realize that an archaeologists' ontology is only one reality and way of knowing the archaeological record and past has been an anxiety-fuelled re-casting of a long-standing internal angst over *what archaeology is* negotiated by archaeologists in the academy and in ARM practice. But in ARM the collaborative engagement with Indigenous communities that is so becoming a regular part of the day-to-day practitioners experience is also showing how this practice braids differing ways of knowing together to advance a practice shared and in the service of Indigenous

community rights to shape the management of their heritage. This, perhaps, is a way to envision an archaeology practiced collaboratively that can discover and know the rich material heritage of lives lived beyond the narrow confine of a Settler society sensibility, while enabling an Indigenous management of the archaeological record of, by and for Indigenous Sovereigns and communities.

To conclude, the angst over what archaeology is remains a long lived and core disposition to reflexively knowing the limitations of the archaeological record and archaeological interpretations built from that record. The current anxiety over the transformation of archaeology in society from being the stuff of archaeologists to the heritage and property of Descendants in State-regulated resource management regimes is, we would argue, a compelling intellectual moment. This is a moment that reflexively can be engaged with by ARM practitioners who mediate the contested values of archaeology in society, and by scholarly practitioners conceptually and theoretically mediating the limits of an archaeological ontology, and by the wide diversity of Indigenous communities who have had to mediate Settler possession and management of their heritage. Perhaps from this transformation archaeologists and Indigenous communities will together transform the normative legacies still deeply entrenched in the logics of resource management and practice, which has masked the role an archaeological gaze can contribute to a wider diversity of knowing materially the archaeological record across time and space beyond Settler society logics and needs. If so, this existential rationale for what archaeology is can uniquely help service Indigenous Sovereigns further transformation of established heritage management regimes, without perhaps too much anxiety over what it all means to being archaeologists as that, too, transforms.

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Note

1. Regulated ARM practice in Ontario consists of four stages.

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