

Institution: University of Manchester
Unit of Assessment: 17b (Archaeology)
Title of case study: Social significance and authenticity in heritage conservation and management.
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The social significance of the historic environment is an increasingly important aspect of heritage conservation and management. Sustained primary research led by Professor Siân Jones has significantly advanced knowledge and understanding of the social significance of the historic environment in the UK. Evidence is provided of significant impact on the conservation policy, guidance and practice of state heritage bodies, including Historic Scotland and English Heritage. We give examples of wide-ranging impacts on practitioner debate and practice in the areas of designation, management and preservation of historic sites in the UK and beyond.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The impact is based on research that took place in Manchester from 2000-date, with the first major publication in 2004. Professor Siân Jones was the key researcher. Dr Angela McClanahan (PhD student, 2000-06) directly contributed to the body of research, and Jones' current research involves Dr Tom Yarrow (Durham Univ, 2010-date) and Dr John Hughes (Univ. of the W. of Scotland, 2013-date).</p> <p>The research aims to improve our knowledge and understanding of the social significance of archaeological heritage. Social significance is defined as a collective attachment to place that embodies meanings and values that are important to a community or communities. The concept encompasses forms of identity, distinctiveness, belonging, and social interaction. It also accommodates forms of memory, oral history, symbolism, spiritual association and cultural practice associated with the historic environment.</p> <p>Between 2001-06, Jones conducted research in collaboration with Historic Scotland, focusing on the social value of early medieval sculptured stones; an important class of monuments that play a prominent role in people's sense of place and identity [3.1,3.2,3.4,3.5]. The research included a detailed case study focusing on the internationally significant Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, which was the focus of conflicting local and national ownership claims. During the same period, Jones acquired funding for McClanahan's research, which examined the meanings and values surrounding the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site. Jones subsequently investigated how people experience and negotiate authenticity at historic sites in Scotland and Nova Scotia (2007-2010) [3.3]. Her research on authenticity continues with a major ethnographic study of conservation practice within Historic Scotland (2010-date, part-funded by British Academy), and an AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage research development project examining the effects of material transformation and scientific intervention on authenticity and value (2013-date). Jones led the way in applying ethnographic methods (participant observation and qualitative interviewing) to gain in-depth insights into the meanings and values surrounding the historic environment in the UK. A wide range of stakeholders was involved: local communities, government officials, politicians, heritage/museum professionals, and archaeologists.</p> <p><u>Key findings:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Archaeological monuments inform people's sense of identity and place in a complex and dynamic manner. Intangible metaphorical and symbolic meanings are particularly important [3.1,3.2]. 2. The long-term biographies of historic buildings and monuments are an important source of identity, memory and sense of place. Later phases in the life of a site are often very significant in terms of oral history, memory, spiritual attachment and symbolic meaning [3.1,3.5]. Consequently, places deemed to have relatively minor historical significance may be extremely important in terms of social significance. 3. Social significance may not be obvious in the physical fabric of sites, or accessible to cursory 'external' appraisal. Indeed, social meanings and values may not even be subject to overt expression within communities, remaining latent in daily practices and long-term associations with place until threatened [3.1]. 4. Contemporary communities make increasingly vocal claims to ownership of historic buildings,

monuments and places. Such claims are not restricted to perceived economic value, but usually involve feelings of inalienable belonging rooted in a sense of identity, continuity, and/or place [3.4].

Networks of relationships between objects, people and places are crucial to the experience of authenticity. These relationships are often conceived in terms of intangible relationships of belonging embodied in the materiality of historic monuments and places. The conservation and management of historic sites actively mediates these relationships [3.3].

3. References to the research (AOR- available on request)

Evidence of the quality of the publications includes Professor Jones' sustained track record of peer-reviewed funding, publication in international peer-reviewed journals and the reprint of one article in an important reader, *Cultural Heritage*. Funding was provided by Historic Scotland, the British Academy, and the AHRB/C (total: £162,207). This includes two AHRB/C Matching Leave Awards (£49,699), three British Academy Small Grants (£12,784, two with Dr Yarrow), and an AHRC Research Development Award (£98,611, with Drs Hughes/Yarrow). McClanahan's studentship was funded by Historic Scotland (£19,080), and managed/supervised by Jones. New funding has just been acquired for a project on 'Valuing the Historic Environment' (£36,701, AHRC Cultural Value strand, Sept 2013 – Jan 2014). Jones is also involved in a new AHRC Connected Communities project, 'ACCORD - Archaeology Community Co-Production of Research Data' (£167,731.05, Oct 2013 – Dec 2014), for her expertise on social value and authenticity.

Key publications:

1. Jones, S. 2004. *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place: the Case of Hilton of Cadboll*. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland. ISBN 1 903570 43 3, (AOR)
2. Sian Jones. 2005a. Making place, resisting displacement: conflicting national and local identities in Scotland. In *The Politics of Heritage: The legacies of 'race'*, ed. Jo Littler and Roshi Naidoo, 94-114. London: Routledge. Book Chapter, DOI: N/A. [By invitation, AHRB research project volume. Reprinted in *Cultural Heritage: critical concepts in media and cultural studies*, ed. L. Smith, London: Routledge, ISBN: 978-0-415-31831-0] (AOR)
3. Jones, S. 2010. Negotiating authentic objects and authentic selves: beyond the deconstruction of authenticity. *Journal of Material Culture* 15(2): 181-203. Journal article, DOI: 10.1177/1359183510364074. [Between Nov 2011 and Dec 2012 it has repeatedly ranked in the top 25 downloaded articles. It is number 29 in the SAGE citation list for JMC, and most of the articles above it were published 5-10 years earlier].

Supplementary publications:

4. Jones, S. 2005b. 'That stone was born here and that's where it belongs': Hilton of Cadboll and the negotiation of identity, ownership and belonging. In *Able Minds and Practised Hands: Scotland's early medieval sculpture in the 21st century*, ed. S. Foster and M. Cross, 37-53. Society for Medieval Archaeology. Book chapter. (AOR)
5. James, H., I. Henderson, S. Foster, and S. Jones. 2008. *A Fragmented Masterpiece: Recovering the Biography of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish cross-slab*. Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, ISBN: 0903903423. Monograph. (AOR)

4. Details of the impact

Context:

Social significance has been increasingly important in international heritage conservation charters and conventions over the last 3 decades. However, in the UK and other European countries, the social significance of the historic environment was poorly understood, and remained a negligible aspect in routine heritage management. Conservation decisions were primarily based on professional expertise regarding the historic and scientific significance of historic monuments and places. Whilst these aspects of significance are still privileged, Jones' research has led to important changes. The sustained body of primary research that she and her collaborators have carried out has transformed knowledge and understanding of social significance, and its implications, in the professional heritage sector. The research has also shaped and influenced conservation policies and professional practice, both in regard to specific groups of monuments (early medieval cross-slabs, carved stone, the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site), and

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more generally in terms of the wider treatment of social significance of the historic environment.

Pathways to impact:

The primary pathway to impact is the research itself, which has consistently combined 'pure' and 'policy-related' investigations. The original research on early medieval sculptured stones was grant-aided by Historic Scotland with the aim of increasing understanding of the forms of conflict surrounding such monuments. The results were published by Historic Scotland in their Research Report series [3.1] and widely circulated to professionals (since 2010 it has also been freely available electronically, and is also directly referred to in Historic Scotland's guidance on carved stone [A]). Likewise, McClanahan's doctoral research was funded by Historic Scotland with the aim of incorporating social significance into *The Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site Management Plan*. Jones' research has involved further sustained collaboration with Historic Scotland, as well as work with the National Museums of Scotland, the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum, and most recently the National Trust for Scotland. Discussions with professionals in these organisations both frame the research and provide a mechanism for discussion of the results and implications.

Seminar papers have been presented at Historic Scotland and English Heritage, and summary articles published in professional publications such as *The Archaeologist* and English Heritage's *Conservation Bulletin*. The research was also presented at leading national and international conferences (by Jones and collaborators) and used as a source of case studies by senior Historic Scotland managers. Jones' membership of two AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage Research Clusters, both of which included heritage professionals, provided additional pathways to impact. Finally, Jones recently produced a Discussion Paper on Social Significance and the Historic Environment for the Historic Environment Policy Review conducted by Historic Scotland on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

Reach and significance:

Early medieval sculpture and carved stone. The research [3.1, 3.2, 3.4] has had a direct impact on Scottish Government policy and guidance. In his Foreword to Jones' research report [3.1], the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments emphasized its importance for policy development, and "its wider methodological, practical and political implications". The Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) also stresses that the work "was paradigm-shifting in its effect on the Scottish historic environment sector"[J]. Jones' "innovative research on the social value of early medieval sculpture" is referenced in the current *Scottish Executive's Policy and Guidance on Carved Stones* [A]. Her work led to a change in emphasis from monuments being *in situ* to being in a *place of significance*, which can also be seen in Historic Scotland's current *Guidance Note on the Scheduling of Carved Stones* [B] and *Practice Note for Designation of Moved Monuments* [C]. The Head of Scheduling 2007-10, notes that heritage managers regularly use the research when making an argument for the importance of social significance in the designation and conservation of carved stone monuments (e.g. medieval market crosses). She also attests to regular discussion of the implications of Jones' work with the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments [D].

Wider impact on the assessment of social significance. The reach of Jones' research is demonstrated by its extensive impact on approaches to social significance in heritage conservation and management more generally. Here it has stimulated practitioner debate, as well as informed policy documents and practice guidelines. For instance, the research is widely cited in an internal review of the assessment of significance by Historic Scotland in 2009 [E]. former Head of Access and Understanding, emphasizes its importance: "This research fed through to the way we look at cultural significance and [...] the way we write and evidence the Statements of Cultural Significance that we have for the 345 properties that we have in our care. These are dynamic, functioning documents, which underpin our decision-making about actions, which have an impact on the properties. [...] Professor Jones' research was of direct relevance and improved that process" [F]. The research also "contributed to the intellectual context of English Heritage's *Conservation Principles*" particularly, as one Inspector of Ancient Monuments attests, in the guidance on social value and authenticity [G]. The impact is thus significant and wide-ranging, because *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* provides "a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment" [G], and guides English Heritage's work as the Government's statutory

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advisor on the historic environment.

Most recently, Jones' Discussion Paper on Social Value, produced for Historic Scotland's review of Scotland's historic environment policy (2012-13), "has been extremely helpful in taking forward discussion of a complex area, allowing a high level of debate "both at a philosophical level and at the practical level in terms of how we manage and interpret properties in the care of Scottish Ministers" [I]. The Head of Review and Development at Historic Scotland, attests that "the Policy Review was directly affected by the outcomes of Professor Jones' work" [I]. As the Chief Executive of the RCAHMS, puts it, "at the highest policy level, Professor Jones' work was important in making the case for intangible heritage to be accommodated in the very definition of 'the historic environment'", and "social values are therefore now destined to be firmly embedded within policy and delivery" [J, emphasis on original].

There has also been an extensive impact on operational practice. The former Head of Scheduling 2007-2010 notes that "a growing generation of policy makers and caseworkers is aware of, and would take into account, Jones' work in relevant casework", and that this permeates beyond archaeologists "to architects, interpreters and conservators" [D]. In terms of post-designation operational practice it has impacted on development control casework and approaches to properties in state care within both Historic Scotland and English Heritage. Specifically, it provides an evidence base that is used in debates and decisions relating to the conservation and management of monuments [D,F,G,I], many of which are of international significance and in some cases are designated World Heritage Sites (as in the case of McClanahan's doctoral research and the management of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site [H]). Most recently the international reach of Jones' research impact has extended as far as Japan, when she was consulted about the development of a World Heritage Nomination for a series of industrial sites associated with the Meiji Restoration.

Finally, through her research, Jones' work has been influential in terms of defining best-practice methodologies. The Chief Executive of the RCAHMS, states that "ethnographic and anthropological methods used by Professor Jones will be an important part of the mix [in future policy]; her outstanding research in this area has already won the argument" [J]. Furthermore, the Head of Review and Development at Historic Scotland, states that Jones' discussion paper provides important models for the development of resourceable methods for capturing and assessing social values [I].

Conclusions. The immediate beneficiaries of the research are heritage organizations, such as Historic Scotland and English Heritage, and their staff. These state organizations are responsible for safeguarding aspects of the historic environment that are of national, and often international, significance, and it is important that they develop robust and systematic conservation and management policies based on research findings. Jones' research has led to improvement in significance assessment, which is central to the informed and sustainable management of the historic environment, particularly in contexts of change. More broadly, by contributing to a greater recognition of, and emphasis on, social significance in heritage conservation and management, Jones' work has a wide-ranging public benefit. It means that the values people attach to heritage places are increasingly taken into account by professionals.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (All claims referenced in the text)

- A. Historic Scotland, *Scottish Executive's Policy and Guidance on Carved Stones*.
- B. Historic Scotland, *Guidance Note on the Scheduling of Carved Stones*.
- C. Historic Scotland, *Practice Note for Designation of Moved Monuments*.
- D. Letter from the Head of Scheduling 2007-2010, Historic Scotland
- E. Collins, A. 2009. *Review of Statements of Cultural Significance*. Historic Scotland.
- F. Letter from the Head of Access and Understanding 2005-2011, Historic Scotland
- G. Letter from an Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage
- H. Historic Scotland, 2008. *The Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Management Plan 2008-13*.
- I. Letter from the Head of Policy Review, Historic Scotland.
- J. Letter from the Chief Executive of the RCAHMS.