

## ARCHEOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE ONTOLOGY OF THE DEWIL VALLEY LANDSCAPES (PALAWAN, PHILIPPINES)

### ONTOLOGIA KRAJOBRAZU W UJĘCIU ARCHEOLOGICZNYM I ANTROPOLOGICZNYM. STUDIUM PRZYPADKU DEWIL VALLEY (PALAWAN, FILIPINY)

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**ABSTRACT.** This paper is a discussion of the theoretical conceptualization of past landscapes and the limitations of archaeology in providing objectivistic interpretations. Analyzing a case study of the Dewil Valley landscape I will argue that the sciences about the past emerged based on the “Western” research paradigm. Therefore, local ontologies are often overlooked in archaeological narratives. In this article, I will present the ontologies of the indigenous Tagbanua people, contemporary beliefs related to the landscape, and theoretical approaches presented by researchers. I will argue that ontology can be complex and ambivalent, and that archaeological sources do not always indicate these dynamics.

**KEYWORDS:** landscape archaeology, ontology, indigenous ontology, Philippines

Archeology is derived largely from European and American intellectual traditions. Moreover, the archaeological research conducted in Africa, Asia, America, or Oceania in the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century was associated with colonial or imperialist discourses (Lydon, Rizvi, 2010, p. 39–41). And although nowadays we can observe the process of *Asianization* of anthropology and archeology (i.e. regaining voice by the local researchers and communities), the methodology and interpretations of the past are still dominated by Eurocentric visions (Bennagen, 1980, p. 3–5). Archaeological interpretations can be seen as one of many models of perceiving the world. However, one may ask some questions: is European ontology

applicable elsewhere in the world? What is the sense and purpose of its application? Do indigenous ontologies show a different perspective with a distinct interpretative potential? What role does archeology play in these local discourses? Are *Western* (I am writing this term in italics because it is in itself generalizing and Eurocentric) approaches applicable to the interpretation of past ontologies and/or to the creation of present-day landscapes?

The case study of the Dewil Valley is a starting point for a broader, humanistic reflection on landscape ontologies. In this paper, I would like to present some local and indigenous visions of the environment and juxtapose them with archaeological knowledge. I will also take a critical look at the concept of the *landscape* and the perception of space in the *Western* paradigm, and attempt to indicate some relationships between these ontologies and theoretical approaches. As a part of this project, I used a set of data collection methods and techniques: the phenomenological observation method, participant observation, and ethnographic interviews which I conducted in the Dewil Valley in April 2019.

This paper is divided into six sections. First, I will discuss the different approaches to landscape studies. Next, I will introduce the ontologies of the indigenous people of Tagbanua and modern peoples. Finally, I will present archaeological interpretations and their correlations with ethnographic data.

## THE CONCEPT OF LANDSCAPE IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

In the common discourse, landscape is often associated with the visual and material domains of the world. The word landscape in its modern form was first used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and it depicted a trend in Dutch painting of natural sceneries (Olwig, 1996). The landscape as an art form and landscape of scientific interest has common historical roots. According to Eric Hirsch (2006), the concept of landscape carries a range of culturally specific assumptions – it refers to a visual phenomenon, implies the existence of the *view* and the *viewer*, it has an aesthetic value. Hence, the definition introduced for example by Daniels and Cosgrove (1988, p. 1) that a “landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing or symbolizing surroundings”. Also in geography, for many years, the landscape has been equated with what can be seen. As with painted pictures, geographic landscapes and maps introduce a distance between the outsider and the insider (Smyrski, 2017).

The definitions relating to the visual landscape result in a physical and materialistic understanding of space. Thus, a landscape will be understood as a tangible image, something that can be drawn or mapped. Archeology is still dominated by this way of describing and studying the landscape. Topography, landforms, elevation models, outlines of architectural structures, the range of the sites, etc. are becoming the most important features of archaeological remains.

However, as a part of postmodern archaeology, several different concepts emerged in response to this visual and materialistic approach. The landscape appears as a con-

cept that includes non-physical aspects of the world. For example, Hirsch (2006) defines landscape as the ongoing *cultural process* by which people locate themselves in the world. He distinguished the foreground (*here*) that is experienced in relation to the background (*there*). These existential spaces are dynamic and changeable (Hirsch, 2006, p. 151–156).

Another concept was presented by Tim Ingold in his article *The Temporality of the Landscape* (Ingold, 1993). Ingold adapted the concept of *dwelling* from the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. People  *dwell* in the world, produce and reproduce relations through practically engaging with their physical surroundings. The landscape is *an array of related features*. This perspective allows us to view humans and the physical world as part of the same system, it breaks down the way of pictorial representation of the surrounding world, which focuses on the cultural image and ignores the social experience related to the landscape.

Another approach was presented by John Wylie (2007), who defines the landscape as the product of interactions between sets of natural conditions (e.g. climate, geological processes) and cultural practices (e.g. agriculture or religious beliefs).

Nature plus culture equals landscape in this account. What we witness when we examine landscape is a process of continual interaction in which nature and culture both shape and are shaped by each other. (Wylie, 2007, p. 11)

The *landscape* is understood by Wylie as a *tension* between different factors. However, Wylie notes also that thinking of nature and culture as distinct and independent realms is problematic in both theory and practice.

Bruno Latour raised a similar problem in his works. In the book, *We have never been modern* (2005) Latour argues that the modernist distinction between nature and culture never existed. He claims that natural and social phenomena as well as the discourse about them are connected and as hybrids, they should be studied as a whole. Therefore, the landscape would be defined as a network of non *a priori* ordered relations that exist despite the scale, space, place, and time. These relations involve both human and non-human actors (Latour, 2005).

Another perspective of landscape research is a phenomenological approach based on the rejection of the Cartesian model of cognition in which a human is reduced to a disembodied cognizing mind. The physical human body is an essential research tool because we are bodily immersed in a sensually experienced world (Tilley, Cameron-Daum, 2004, p. 14). This possibility of experiencing is universal to all people, however, the landscape is experienced in various ways, and thus filled with meanings. The intellectual sources of landscape phenomenology are the theories of Martin Heidegger (the concept of *dwelling*) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (the concept of the body as a medium in the process of experiencing the world, the role of subjectivity in the cognition process).

The phenomenological perspective, although includes the visual experience of the world, opens up the potential of other senses. One of the examples is Alfred Gell's research of Umeda at Papua New Guinea. He discovered that in this community hear-

ing and smell are much more reliable means of sensing distance and proximity than sight. When the first group of Umeda ever reached the coast, they perceived the sea horizon as a vertical wall of water. While living in a dense forest, they were not taught to orientate themselves based on visual features (Gell, 1975).

This example shows that the paradigm of vision in *Western* societies is historically and socially coded. One of its roots is the philosophy of Descartes who identified sight as *the noblest and most comprehensive of the senses*. Hegel championed it as *the aesthetic sense* (Kambaskovic-Sawers, Wolfe, 2014, p. 107–111). Nineteenth-century scholars identified taste and smell as *primitive and animalistic*. Early-nineteenth-century scientist Lorenz Oken, even identified a racial hierarchy of the senses in which the European was an *eye-man*, whose primary sense of cognition was a vision (Smith, 2015, p. 45). Such a hierarchy of the senses inscribes structures of power and value, placing non-Europeans at the bottom. It leads to a conclusion that, as Yannis Hamilakis claims, “the western sensorium in modernity is embedded within the colonial and national nexus of power” (Hamilakis, 2013, p. 13).

Such bias is very prominent in archaeology, in which landscape studies are based on material aspects. Visual features are considered to be either fossils or palimpsests. Also, the documentation and data presentation rely on visualizations, ranging from maps and plans, drawings, photographs, 2D and 3D models, graphs, diagrams, or tables. Although we often use touch in archaeological exploration, sight is still used for analytical purposes.

## ONTOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE LANDSCAPE

The variety of ontological approaches inspired me to take a critical look at the issues related to the perception of the landscape. The ontological turn moves away from focusing solely on epistemology and a notion, according to which people get to know one world in different ways. Instead, differences in the perception of the world are understood not as differences in worldview, but as (equally important) different worlds (Palecek, Risjord, 2012, p. 3–8). This view raises new questions: what kind of world are we trying to explore? How aware are we of our limitations? Are we trying to (re)construct the world of people from the past? Or are we rather creating a new one?

Moreover, Fredrik Fahlander (2017) raises the issue of the *absent subject*. In anthropology, it is possible to observe specific relations between humans and non-humans, while archaeology means working with things and material traces of the deceased’s actions. Thus ontological approach may lead us to question whether humans and non-humans are ontologically inseparable (Fahlander, 2017, p. 69). Landscape ontology includes the considerations of the dynamics of relations between humans and non-humans. It is also a discussion on the definition of the landscape, how such landscapes exist, what kinds of beings they are, and what entities are involved in them. In this paper, I would like to take a look at some ontologically different worlds, such as indigenous, local, and archaeological interpretations.

## TAGBANUA ONTOLOGY

One of the worldviews I would like to analyze is the cosmology and landscape perception of the Tagbanua community. This ethnic group, also called *Takbanuwa* or *Tagbanwa* is considered to be one of the oldest Filipino natives inhabiting mainly the Palawan island. Members of this group were the original population of the Dewil Valley until the 1960s. Internal migration from the Visayan and Luzon islands, Christian domination, and integration into the political and economic mainstream caused the Tagbanua to be marginalized in subsequent years. No ethnographic research has been conducted on the Tagbanua community of the Dewil Valley. This is why I mainly relied on the research of different Tagbanua communities by Robert Fox (1982), Manuel Venturello (1907), Shannon Thomas (2017), Nilo Ocampo (1996), Marcialina Menoro and Alicia Tablizo (2017), Charles Macdonald (1992), or Wolfram Dressler (2005). Therefore, I would not like to take these ethnographic data as a direct record of the beliefs of the Dewil Valley people, but rather as an inspiration to look at the landscape in an alternative way.

Traditional swidden farming of Tagbanua can be viewed as an integrative framework that establishes social relationships, structures a spiritual belief system, and defines people's identities (Cuevas, Fernandez, Olvida, 2015). Tagbanua ceremonies, festivals, and dances are based on this unique relationship with the land. Moreover, many ritual feasts are focused on the belief in a natural relationship between the living and the deceased (Menoro, Tablizo, 2017, p. 15–26). There is no simple dualism of the universe in the Tagbanua's conception of the world, no differentiation between the humans and deities worlds, *sacrum*, and *profanum*. These two realms pervade the human universe, and the Tagbanua's world is inhabited by *Diwata* – nature spirits (Fox, 1982).

Diwata inhabit specific places in the landscape. Forests, mountains, rivers, and the sea are full of powerful spirits who affect the weather and can even be dangerous to Tagbanua. This is why the community members are afraid of big trees and scared to cross the stream or sleep on the beach (Fox, 1982, p. 170–174). For example, *Kamamalas* are goat-like spirits living in the caves, they are dangerous, have a thirst for rice, and are attracted to parties and celebrations (Fox, 1982, p. 173–175).

It is believed that each Tagbanua has a true soul (called *kiyarulwa*, *kiaruwa* or *kurudwa*) and five secondary souls in different parts of the body that protect the person from diseases and wounds. *Kiaruwa* is given to a Tagbanua at the moment of birth. The way of death affects what happens to Tagbanua after death, for example, they can end up in an underworld that resembles the world of the living, but everything is inverted (for example, rivers flow from the sea to the mountains). After 7 deaths in the underworld, Tagbanua returns to the world of the living transformed into animals that are not edible and do not eat rice or green plants, such as flies, vases, frogs, or snakes. Moreover, the ancestral dead are causal agents. They may cause sickness and help with good harvest (Fox, 1982, p. 148–166).

These examples show that the world of Tagbanua is full of living entities that inhabit inanimate parts of the landscape. But can inanimate material elements also

possess some agency? As Robert Fox writes, Tagbanua collect certain specific items, treat them as some kind of amulets or charm stones, and call them *mutya* – it means a *precious stone* or a *pearl* (Odal-Devora, 2006, p. 2). They have “varying degrees of intrinsic power and they are manipulated to control situations fraught with uncertainty” (Fox, 1982, p. 177). Tagbanua believe that some of these objects may make you invisible. Fox also mentioned some archaeological artifacts, for example, glass beads, stone polished adzes, or Chinese stoneware jar that was believed to be indestructible (Fox, 1982, p. 177–185). The power of *mutya* does not come from the objects themselves but is connected to the specific social status and ritual power of the owner (Fox, 1982, p. 183).

The elements of Tagbanua ontology presented above show that in indigenous worlds there are different categories of actors than in European theoretical approaches (such as humans, non-humans, animals, and things). In Tagbanua cosmology, some animals personify deceased ancestors (such as snakes and frogs) and some have purely pragmatic meanings (such as pigs). Rice is considered a sacred crop, a divine gift, and a proper meal for humans and Diwata. On the other hand, sweet potato and cassava have no deeper meaning (Fox, 1982, p. 201). Subjectivity and agency are multi-dimensional and complex. Perhaps the correct term would be an *ambivalent ontology*, which indicates the lack of ontological stability, and observation that the agency may be modified.

## ONTOLOGIES OF CONTEMPORARY INHABITANTS OF THE DEWIL VALLEY

The contemporary inhabitants of Dewil Valley are only a small percentage of Tagbanua’s descendants. The majority of the population are internal (first, second and third-generation) immigrants, mostly from the neighboring Cuyo and Panay islands. These groups began to settle in the Dewil Valley in the 1960s during the internal migration movement in the Philippines. From densely populated areas, people began to move to other provinces, where there was a lot of unused land for cultivation (Flieger, 1977).

Such diversity in the population also means that the beliefs of the inhabitants of Dewil Valley are also not homogeneous and cannot be referred to as general. Even so, through the ethnographic interviews that I did in 2019, I was able to document several stories and local legends that point to the belief in ghosts in Dewil Valley. One of the most common motives was that people went missing under mysterious circumstances. I am going to quote here one of such stories that I heard from some community members.

One day Tatay Marco (names are changed), one of the elderly residents of New Ibajay, went to a banana grove near the Istar Karst Formation and went missing. The search was unsuccessful and the family was surprised as Tatay Marco knew the to-

pography of the valley and was a strong man with no signs of dementia. His nephew, guided by intuition, went to the waterfalls near the Istar karst formation, threw 5 pesos into the water, and said: "If you have my uncle, give him back. I'm throwing an offering". Suddenly the boy heard soft moans. After a short while, he found his uncle lying nearby. One explanation for this story was: "maybe Tatay Marco kicked Duwende" (a mischievous little creature from Filipino mythology), and the malicious spirit wanted revenge by making the man disappear. In another version of the story, Tatay Marco returned home but did not act as before because he was possessed by Engkanto, another kind of malicious spirit associated with the landscape (Ramos, 1971). There is even a legend in the Dewil Valley that on Holy Week, and especially Good Friday, it is better not to move because "Engkanto can hurt you and it will take a whole year to heal".

Another type of beings inhabiting the valley are the ghosts of deceased people buried near the caves in recent centuries. Before the archaeological research began, the local inhabitants did not know about the existence of the cemeteries there. Only with the discovery of the burials made by archaeologists did they learn that the spirits of the dead live in the caves of the karst formations. This is confirmed by the story told by one of the Dewil Valley inhabitants. One day Ille Cave was visited by a woman who "had a third eye" and was a well-known medium. When she reached the cave, she saw the spirit of a *datu* (a chief of the tribe) who lived here centuries earlier and was buried at the archaeological site. There are also several stories about the White Lady appearing in caves or near karst towers. Belief in the spirits that inhabit space probably is not related to any particular indigenous cosmology, but rather arose as a result of a combination of various influences. Filipino religious practices are individual in nature and usually consist of a mixture of native beliefs and folk Catholicism (Macdonald, 2004).

An important element of discourse in the Dewil Valley is the local names of the elements of the landscape. These names appear in different contexts and are understood differently by various local inhabitants. Some of them suggest that the landscape elements might have served a specific purpose and had a distinctive function in the past (e.g. a refuge). Others allude to the different physical conditions, as well as the material and visual elements of these locations, such as the shape of the cave or its features, sensory experience of the cave, or atmospheric conditions at the site.

Surprisingly, the root of the *Dewil* name is unknown, and some valley residents confess that they have no idea what it means. Others, on the other hand, believe it means *a devil*. One viewpoint, in particular, piqued my curiosity. According to one of the tourist guides, the valley was originally known as *Devil*. However, since it does not sound good, the locals changed it to *Dewil* by modifying only one letter. When I inquired as to why this place was called *the valley of the devil*, the response was that there were some mysterious tales about it being possessed by demons or bad spirits. There is also the possibility that *Dewil* is an older word with an unknown etymology, with *devil* being a secondary meaning.

## DEWIL VALLEY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS

One could describe the Dewil Valley as a plain located in the northern part of the Palawan island (Philippines) about 7 km long and 5 km wide, covered with rainforest, rice fields, banana groves, and small settlements (fig. 1). A meandering river Dewil crosses the valley and flows into the Sulu Sea. Distinctive features of the physical landscape are single limestone formations (called *towers*) scattered throughout the valley area. The white and gray monumental rocks are partially covered with vegetation and reach a relative height of 20–40 m. Most of them contain caves, crevices, shelters, and rock clefts. More than 20 archaeological sites (fig. 2) have been discovered in these caves dating from the Upper Palaeolithic phases (c. 12,000 BC) to the modern times (Paz, 2012, p. 133–162).

The above description of the Dewil Valley only refers to the visual and physical realms of the landscape and itself includes elements of classification and evaluation. In such a presentation, a certain status was imposed on the rock formations, making them a distinctive and meaningful object of interpretation. However, this way of studying the landscape seems to be *intuitive* for the researchers and embedded in the archaeological tradition.

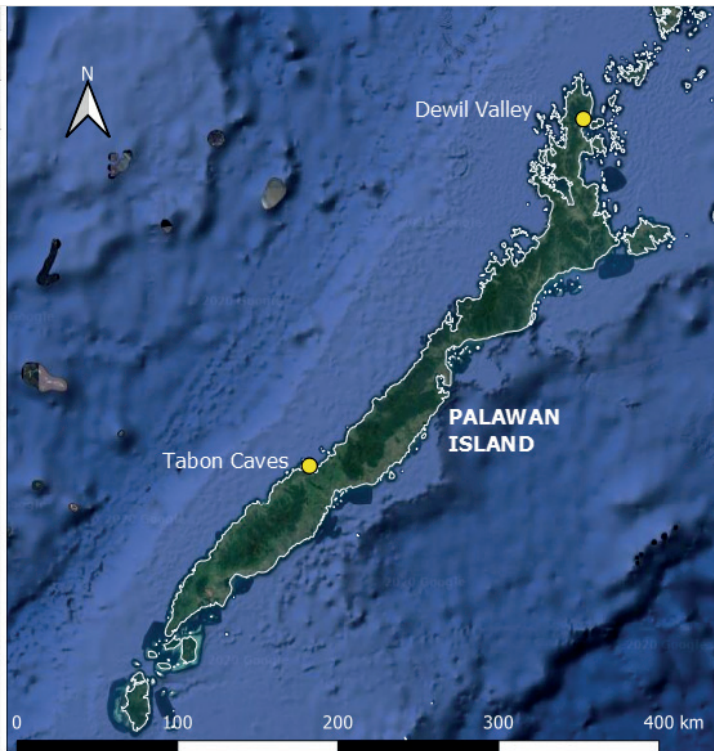


Fig. 1. The location of the Dewil Valley (author: Z. Kowalczyk, 2020)



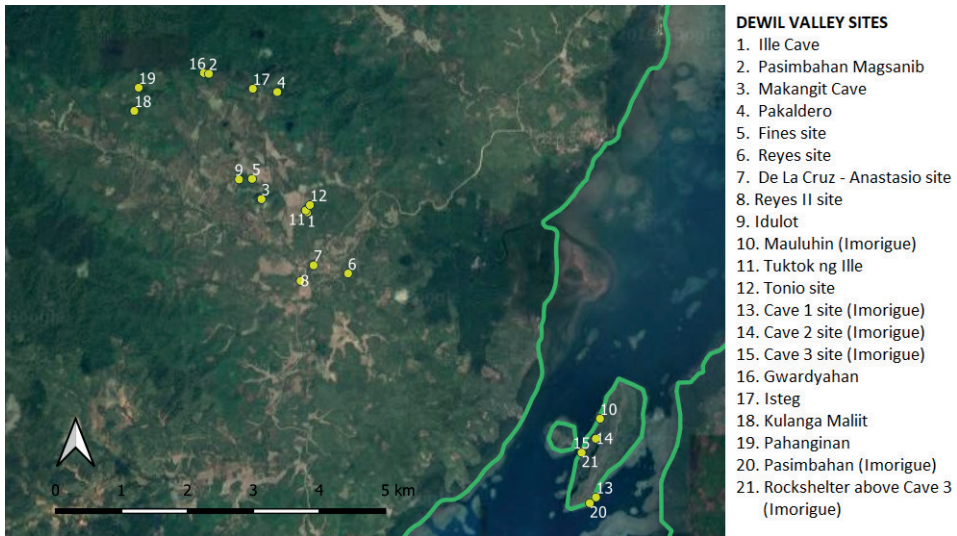


Fig. 2. A map of the Dewil Valley archaeological sites (author: Z. Kowalczyk, 2020)

The first archaeological discoveries in the Dewil Valley took place in the 1970s when the sites were subject to preliminary recognition by the American anthropologist Robert Fox (Paz, 2012). The first archaeological excavations took place in 1998 and led to the discovery of the inhumation burial site. The fieldwork is continued until now as a part of the Palawan Island Paleohistoric Research Project directed by Victor Paz (University of the Philippines) and Helen Lewis (University College Dublin). In the following years, older cremation burials, numerous votive offerings, and shell midden layers were discovered. All deposits are located mainly at the well-lit entrance to the caves. To this day, the most investigated sites are Ille Cave in the Ille karst formation (fig. 3) and Pasimbahan Magsanib in the Istar formation (fig. 4, 5).

One of the interpretation frameworks for the Dewil Valley landscape was created by Victor Paz (2012). The author presents his own methodological and theoretical perspective on the identification and interpretation of sacred sites (in the case of the Philippines). He believes that the karst formations and caves of the Dewil Valley are unique, meaningful, and *attention-focusing*. And this sense of their uniqueness is recorded and transmitted by the human subconscious (according to Jung's collective unconsciousness concept). These formations themselves have some features that make them *appropriate* and more likely to become places of worship. Paz emphasizes the importance of the contrasts between the darkness inside the cave and the illumination outside. Moreover, the meaningful elements would be the shape of the cave mouth, venting characteristics of the cave, and the presence of water sources nearby. Paz addressed the issues related to the ambivalent concept of consciousness that manifests itself on an individual and collective level. However, he claims that we can distinguish group cosmologies at certain points in time. In this way, Paz tries to capture the ele-



Fig. 3. The Ille karst formation with Ille Cave archaeological site  
(author: Z. Kowalczyk, 2016)

ments of landscape ontology from the past. Although the author refers to the physical landscape, he fills it with meanings and symbols (Paz, 2012, p. 133–162).

This is just one of the many visions of the landscape and one of the worlds created by the researchers. My approach is slightly different and draws inspiration from theories popular in contemporary humanities such as Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2004), New Materialism (e.g. Olsen, 2010), the temporality of the landscape (Ingold, 1993), phenomenology (Tilley, 1994; 2004), and *Geontology* (Povinelli, 2016). Some of these approaches open up the interpretative potential of indigenous ontologies. One of the key claims of the posthuman theory is a non-anthropocentric epistemology, rejecting the Cartesian dualism of the world, and extending subjectivity and agency to non-human entities, such as animals and things. In the case of the Tagbanua, such approaches allow for the inclusion of Diwata and other spirits as dynamic, labile, and causative actors involved in all kinds of relationships.



Fig. 4. The Istar karst formation with Pasimbahan Magsanib archaeological site (author: Z. Kowalczyk, 2019)



Fig. 5. Pasimbahan Magsanib archaeological site (author: Z. Kowalczyk, 2019)

One of the most suggestive theoretical concepts is by Elizabeth Povinelli (2016), who seeks to go beyond the dominant discourses of biopolitics and necropolitics. According to the author, most contemporary researchers are biontologists who maintain the distinction between the living and the inanimate – as active and passive. Povinelli investigates the case of a rock formation called *Two Women Sitting Down* which is a sacred mount for Australia's Kunapa people. The site was destroyed by a mining company and the extraction of manganese. Povinelli asks a provocative question: *can rocks die?* This slogan draws attention to indigenous ontologies and their very serious consequences for perceiving heritage. As Zoe Todd (2019) claims:

In Geontologies, Povinelli shows us, through the notion of geontopower, that it is not enough to merely recognize non-Western or Indigenous ontologies. We must engage with the consequences and implications of their erasure and capture [...] by Euro-American/ White supremacist/ colonial actors. And, we must reckon with the foundational violence of the forced imposition of the Life/Nonlife binary upon myriad worlds, existences, assemblages, and peoples. (Todd, 2019, p. 5)

This issue shows that using indigenous and local ontologies has more than just an interpretative potential. It may also have a moral dimension and can contribute to a certain extent to the decolonization of archeology by applying native concepts, using local terms to describe certain phenomena, and *giving a voice* to the local community by including their interpretations into the scientific discourse.

## DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

Although the above-mentioned concepts allow acknowledging the recent indigenous knowledge and beliefs, are they a response to the problems I presented in the introduction? Or are they rather examples of how *Western* thought drives the interpretation? The first problem appears already with the understanding of the archaeological records and the questions of how can artifacts help to interpret the perception of a landscape in the past and the meaning of its elements? To what extent can we infer about past cosmologies from archaeological data? Since archeology is based on a Eurocentric paradigm, aren't the archaeological data and sources also the result of *Western* thinking? Does such a way of conducting research open the field for reflection on *Non-Western* ontologies?

In the example of indigenous ontologies related to the Tagbanua ethnic minority, I have presented the complexity and ambivalent nature of the ontology. Since indigenous ontologies are so dynamic and ambiguous, can we capture similar dynamics in archeology? Or maybe we perceive and statically present the past reality? Does archaeological data not fossilize us in Eurocentric thinking? Are there any methods or ways to avoid this fossilization to some extent? How would this affect the methodology, interpretations, or classifications? Is there *a new quality* in research emerging from the confrontation of archaeological data with indigenous or local knowledge? What

could archeology based on indigenous or local paradigms be like? And what would be the significance of landscape research?

I am skeptical about the possibility of positivistic interpretation of the past landscape ontologies. The aforementioned theories, although they provide a certain explanatory framework, do not necessarily bring us closer to the way of thinking of people from centuries ago. The archaeological narrative still reflects the mindset of the researcher with several assumptions and cultural determinants. However, when creating these interpretations, archaeologists do not only undertake an academic discussion about the past but also give some meanings to contemporary space and pass them on to the local community. The karst towers, caves, and other components of the landscape are no longer just parts of nature. A new discourse, beliefs, or practices are created around these discoveries, although not always in line with what researchers believe. Perhaps in this aspect, a deeper understanding of indigenous and local ontologies can help in creating knowledge that is more sensitive to the needs of the community.

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#### ONTOLOGIA KRAJOBRAZU W UJĘCIU ARCHEOLOGICZNYM I ANTROPOLOGICZNYM. STUDIUM PRZYPADKU DEWIL VALLEY (PALAWAN, FILIPINY)

##### Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł jest humanistyczną refleksją nad różnymi koncepcjami ontologii krajobrazu. Archeologia powstała w europejskim i amerykańskim paradygmacie naukowym, zatem sposób prowadzenia badań i interpretacje związane są ze specyficznym postrzeganiem świata. Również koncepcja i definicja krajobrazu zdeterminowana jest przez szereg uwarunkowań historycznych oraz kulturowych. Tradycyjnie krajobraz postrzega się jako przede wszystkim byt wizualny i fizyczny. Koncepcje postmodernistyczne odchodzą od takiego modelu, poszerzając definicje krajobrazu o cechy sensoryczne lub znaczeniowe. Podejście ontologiczne pozwala spojrzeć na krajobraz z jeszcze innej strony, czyli jako na pewną wersję świata, która może być odmienna dla każdego odbiorcy.

W ramach niniejszego artykułu opisuję kilka wersji ontologii krajobrazu Dewil Valley (Palawan, Filipiny) z punktu widzenia mniejszości etnicznej Tagbanua, współczesnych mieszkańców oraz archeologów. Na podstawie danych etnograficznych pokazuję złożoność i niejednoznaczność postrzegania krajobrazu, a następnie zestawiam go z interpretacjami archeologicznymi. W dyskusji postawionych zostaje kilka pytań o potencjał danych archeologicznych i współczesnych teorii w humanistyce do interpretowania przeszłych ontologii, a także w jaki sposób można wykorzystać namysł nad ontologiami do prób zrozumienia dzisiejszych krajobrazów.

