

AN INVESTIGATION ON HOW ARCHAEOLOGIST INTEGRATE WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES, CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS

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The National Institute of History and Anthropology was created to preserve the patrimony of Mexico's rich prehistory. In many cases, the excavation of these sites was done with little regard for the impact this would have on the communities whose lands were confiscated in the process, as once declared national patrimony the title to these lands was converted to the state. In addition to lost land by local communities, archaeologists and the larger scholarly community lost as well when data on how these local communities had been negotiating ancient cultural frameworks and use patterns was not captured. Over the last twenty five years, communities within Oaxaca have worked with the INAH to create community museums that incorporate their prehistory, history and local lives with these ancient sites. This allowed for both entities to benefit from the excavation of ruins that were located on community lands. This research explores this phenomenon and analyzes its intended and unintended benefits and implications.