

# Leveraging the *jua kari* rather than the Ivory tower to situate the Sangoan Techno complex at Sango Bay

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## Abstract

The paper evaluates the concept of public archaeology practices in relation to archaeological work undertaken in Uganda, especially at Sango Bay. The article explores the forms of engagement between academia (ivory tower) and the local community (*jua kali*) to establish if archaeology was done for, by, and with the communities in Uganda. Three specific objectives guided the paper, namely; to discuss the concept of community archaeology based on work done at Sango Bay; to historicise the Ugandan community's participation in archaeology outside Sango Bay, and) to discuss the importance of community engagement and why the ivory tower relinquished its mandate to the *jua kali* in archaeology. Using primary data from archaeological surveys, excavation, archival data, field notes, interviews, and modern plant sample collections; and secondary data from documentary reviews, it is clear that the non-professional archaeologists or the *jua kali* determined the agenda. The results suggest that the Ugandan *jua kali* participated in archaeological work as either individuals or as part of institutions, such as the Uganda Museum and the Uganda Geological Survey Department. Ugandans prior to the 2020 Sango Bay field work mainly constituted the lower cadres in the archaeological fields serving as interpreters, sieving, trowelling and cooking. University students, especially, from Makerere University formed the bulk of the ivory tower locally in Uganda's archaeology fieldwork. In conclusion, the nonprofessional archaeologists or *jua kali* determined the agenda before the full involvement of the ivory tower staff.

**Keywords:** community archaeology, public engagement, Sangoan, Stone Age, Uganda

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## Introduction

This paper results from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences symposium presentation, whose theme was “*The Ivory Tower Meets jua kali: Reflections on Theorising the Profound from the Ordinary*” (CHUSS website) which took place in September 2020. The PhD project from which this paper is derived entails situating the Sangoan Techno-Complex into the Stone Age context at the type site of Sango Bay in southern Uganda. While undertaking research at Sango Bay, as Gemma Tully stated:

It is imperative that you talk with people here because it will mean nothing if you make an excavation without talking to people. It would be useless ... but people trust you now because they see that you are not trying to hide anything from them. (Resident of Quseir, Egypt; cited in Glazier, 2003, p. 26 and cited by Tully, 2007, p. 155).

The above citation illustrates the importance of the collaboration between the professional archaeologists herein taken as the *Ivory tower* and the non-professional archaeologists who are either the community or *jua kali*. This paper, therefore, examines the interface between professional archaeologists and non-professionals in undertaking archaeological knowledge generation in Uganda. The ivory tower kind of archaeologists were mainly foreign to Uganda. In this case, the foreigners were mainly from the Europe and

America, while the non-professional archaeologists were Ugandans.

This paper starts by examining the concept of community archaeology and the various terminologies used to mean the same. A brief history of archaeological research regarding community participation in Ugandan archaeology follows. The conceptualisation of the Sangoan and the role and importance of community involvement at Sango Bay form the basis of the discussion.

## Background to the study

Unlike in other parts of Africa where archaeology was developed by trained archaeologists (ivory tower type), the story in Uganda is a bit different. This is because many prominent promoters of archaeology in Uganda were outside the academic institutions or ivory towers, who in this paper are regarded as the community or *jua kali*. The term *jua kali* is a Swahili word that means *hot sun*. It is popular in Kenya, where it refers to an informal sector of mainly artisans who are too crafty that they can make anything that is demanded. In this paper, *jua kali* is taken to embrace the Ugandans who participated in archaeology without formal professional training. It should be noted that before 2007, many Ugandans were not trained as archaeologists but worked alongside foreign-trained archaeologists. Therefore, *jua kali* also represents people from institutions, such as the Uganda Museum who participated in archaeological research without professional training.

On the other hand, *ivory tower* means a university. In the case of Uganda, any mention of the ivory tower is synonymous with Makerere University. As the first premier university in Uganda, it is expected to have taken the lead in teaching, research, and community engagement as far as archaeology is concerned as part of its triple mandate as a higher institution of learning. Makerere University was established in 1922, almost at the same time when the pioneering archaeologists in Uganda led by E.J. Wayland started work related to archaeology. The start of Wayland's appointment coincides with the discovery of stone tools at Sango Bay that later came to be named Sangoan, the focus of the primary research. Despite its long existence, Makerere University embarked on formal training of archaeologists in 2013.

This paper's interest is to examine which Ugandans have participated in archaeology even without formal training as archaeologists. In their participation, what roles were they allocated by their foreign professional counterparts, especially during fieldwork? This means an analysis of Ugandans' functions in archaeological surveys and excavations since the 1920s. The intent is to highlight that despite the start of formal teaching in 2013, archaeology in Uganda has a long history rooted in the works of the Ugandan Geological Survey Department's activities, starting with the time when they employed a pre-

historian (Edward James Wayland) on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1918. However, Wayland took up office in 1919 that he held for 20 years as the Director of the Geological Survey Department at Entebbe (Archival data summary of progress of the geological survey of Uganda for the years 1919-1929 by E. J. Wayland, page 2).

This paper entails interrogating the definition of public archaeology. The situation in Uganda is presented herein to examine how communities are involved in archaeology and why. If community archaeology is supposed to be archaeology with the people, by the people and for the people, does the Ugandan case represent this? If professional archaeologists indulge in archaeological work without proper consultation with the people, does that not affect the nature of interpretation given to the archaeological materials? This takes us to the question of who interprets our past and if community archaeology is relinquishing partial control of the archaeology projects to the people (Marshall, 2002) or dialogue between the professionals and amateurs (Simpson & Williams, 2008, p 69). How was the Ugandan case? Community archaeology is also taken as an 'interactive approach where the community is involved in interpreting and understanding the past' (Simpson, 2008, p. 4). The professionals are supposed to be groomed in the ivory tower, but the Ugandan ivory tower for long did not take on its role and left the non-professionals taken in this paper as

the community or *jua kali* to direct the course of archaeological research in the country. This, thus, redefines the concept of the community which are the archaeology communities, since, in Uganda, people who constitute the community do not necessarily trace descent to the areas where the archaeological work is done. However, as long as they were Ugandans, they would be assumed to represent the community. Therefore, can we have a community of people in isolation from the place of archaeological work? Why take university students from various parts of the country to work in areas outside their homes of origin and then regard it as community participation? And what are the benefits of community archaeology? These and other questions are at the centre of this paper.

### **What is community archaeology?**

Community archaeology is a set of practices where some archaeological research practices are relinquished to the local community (Marshall, 2010) and thus “breaks away from the top-down power relations” (Schmidt, 2014, p. 39). Therefore, it should be every archaeologist’s principle to “involve the community as much as possible. History is not the preserve of the investigator, but it represents the identity and integrity of the people most involved whose ancestors we disturb” (Posnansky, 2017, p. 77).

The statement made by Posnansky above suggests that archaeology

should not be the preserve of the professionals from the ivory tower but even the non-professionals seen as the *jua kali* here. While community engagement should start from the inception of the project, including “developing the research questions, setting up the project, field practices, data collection, analysis, storage, dissemination and public presentation” (Marshall, 2010, p. 211), this paper focuses on how the community was engaged in the archaeology field practices, data collection, and presentation at Sango Bay. The critical question is how and what constitutes a community in archaeology. Two forms of the community are precise. The first part is the community residing close to or at the site or residents and those who trace descent from the archaeological work site. The second category of the community refers to the nationals who may hail from different parts of the county, working alongside foreign professional archaeologists. The latter type formed the bulk of the Ugandan community.

However, the community is taken differently by different scholars, as shown in the different terminologies given to the practice of involving non-professionals (*jua kali*) in archaeological work. The terminologies used in archaeology to imply involving the communities (*jua kali*) include public archaeology, archaeology from below or democratic archaeology (Faulkner, 2000, p. 30); archaeology by the people for the

people (Reid, 2012, p. 18); outreach aspect of archaeology (Thomas, 2017, p. 16); indigenous, community, or post-colonial archaeology (Tully, 2007, p. 158), and participatory archaeology (Schmidt, 2014, p. 38). The terms used depend on one's conceptualisation of community involvement. The multiplicity of terminologies about community participation points towards the fact that "although the subject has been evolving since the 1970s and 1980s, community archaeology still lacks a clear sense of research focus, a sound methodological structure and a set of interpretive strategies" (Tully, 2007, p. 155).

The different terminologies associated with integrating non-professional people in archaeological work imply that the issue of the ivory tower meeting the *jua kali* is not new in archaeology. Although the definition of the community in archaeology remains controversial, the practice of "community archaeology is greatly affected by the social, cultural, economic and legislative setting of a country" (Tully, 2007, p. 155). Girma (2016, Pg.51) suggested that "public archaeology is derived from the ivory tower model in which archaeologists see themselves in relation to the public as insiders and specialists with privileged access to knowledge as opposed to the wider public". Therefore, "public archaeology presupposed private archaeology" (Schadla 1999, pg. 148) and yet all archaeology is public. It is against

this background that this paper uses community archaeology and *jua kari* rather than public archaeology.

Therefore, there is a need to interrogate what constitutes the community in the archaeological fieldwork and, in this case, the non-professional archaeologists or community members involved at Sango Bay. If applied, what were their roles, and at what level was the engagement and the community's importance in documenting the Sangoan at Sango Bay?

## Materials and Methods

The data for this paper was generated from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources entailed an archaeological survey and excavation in the Sango Bay area. The archaeological survey entailed pedestrian foot walking unsystematically due to the nature of the terrain being hilly and the water body, that is, Lake Victoria. The survey was also determined by the nature of anthropogenic activities in the area. Therefore, all the portable diagnostic materials were collected in labelled bags during the survey, while the others were recorded, photographed, and left onsite. The excavation involved four units at Kateera, Simba, Sikaningu, and Musambwa. Excavation followed 10cm arbitrary spit levels where all the soils from the excavation units were sieved through a 5mm wire mesh. All materials obtained were bagged in labelled bags. After the

excavation unit got to the sterile layer, a wall profile was drawn and then the unit was backfilled.

Primary data was also obtained from the archives at Entebbe and Wandegaya, emphasising the Uganda Geological Survey reports and pre-history of Uganda. Oral interviews and community engagement were also used to get primary data. Current plant samples relate with the phytoliths from the soil samples intended to establish the environmental conditions of the Sangoan.

A review of written documents online and hard copies formed the basis of secondary data. Analysis of the archaeological and plant materials was done in Kampala and Mbarara, and this involved the principal investigator with the guidance of the supervisors.

## **Geographical Location of Sango Bay**

The Sango Bay archaeological site is a forest reserve located in southern Uganda near Lake Victoria that consists of Kaiso, Malabigambo, Namalala, Tero West, Tero East, and Kigona forest blocks. The forest ecosystem stretches from the Tanzania-Uganda border in Rakai District in the south to the Masaka District boundary in the north, westward from the Lake Victoria shores close to the main Kyotera-Mutukula Road (Ssegawa & Kasenene, 2007). The Kaiso and Malabigambo blocks are contiguous with the Minziro forest blocks in Bukoba District, Tanzania. The Sango

Bay Forest Reserve is situated in the sub-counties of Kabira, Kasasa, Kakuuto, and Kyebe in the Kyotera and Rakai districts. The total area of Sango Bay is 2,500 square kilometres (Mwiturubani *et al.*, 2014). In addition, archival data from Wayland and Smith (1923) revealed that Sango Bay has prominent hills with artefacts of archaeological importance, especially Msozi, Katale, Lukuli, Kigalama, Kalema, Musambwa twin island and Simba hills, and it is these dissected highlands that make up the Sango Bay region. However, respondents, such as K2 and K13 expressed that Kigalama is an island in Tanzania no wonder the name Kigalama was unheard of by the current residents. It was later realised that, despite the spelling and pronunciation errors, the proper names of the sites investigated were Kateera, Misozi, Simba, Lukunyu (King's Palace). This paper is based on research undertaken at Sikaningu (part of Misozi hills), Kateera, Simba hills and Musambwa twin island.

## **History of Community Engagement in Ugandan Archaeology**

During the pioneering phase of archaeology in the 1920s, archaeology was promoted by geologists led by Wayland, the Director of the Geological Survey Department, from 1919 to 1939. Other directors who followed Wayland, such as Bisset, did commendable work in archaeology. Other contributors to archaeological research in Uganda

include Peter Robertshaw; Van Piet Lowe; J. Humphris; S.T Childs; L. Iles; Andrew Reid; G. Connah; M. Posnasky; C. Ashley; P. R Schmidt; Kiyaga-Mulindwa; Lwanga-Lunyiigo; E. Steinhart; Solomon J.D; and Sonia Cole before 2007. Thereafter, Ugandans joined the professional cadres in archaeology after 2007. Institutions, such as the Uganda National Museum, Geological Survey Department and the British Institute in Eastern Africa equally played pivotal roles in studying the archaeology of Uganda. Uganda was the first country in eastern Africa to undertake archaeology knowledge generation (Cole, 1963, Robertshaw, 1990b) under Wayland. The years of Wayland's service (1919-1929) in Uganda made him and other geologists travel widely within the protectorate, discovering multiple sites, including Sango Bay.

Community and public archaeology were coined in Anglophone settings, such as the United Kingdom in the 1970s (Thomas, 2014) and in Australia, where community-centred approaches first appeared in the 1980s (Greer, 2014). The Americans started involving communities in archaeology beginning in the 1980s and the early 1990s. Community archaeology is different from public archaeology. In community archaeology, the community is involved from the beginning of the research until the end. Community archaeology entails practising archaeology that unites rather than separates archaeology and the local people and privileges

local participation over the scientific goals of the research (Schmidt, 2014) while public archaeology distances the non-professional archaeologists from the ivory tower archaeologists. An examination of archaeological research in Uganda shows that the community has been involved differently even before coining the term public archaeology in the 1970s, as detailed below. "The past is perceived differently by different people as dictated by factors such as socio-cultural background and level of education. It is therefore important when archaeologists present the past to any given audience, say for purposes of public archaeology, to take such factors into account." (Mapunda, 2013, p. 75)

Despite regarding the community as non professional in Uganda they have played a key role. For instance, in the 1920s at Luzira, when part of the top of Luzira hill, near Port Bell (Uganda) on Lake Victoria, was being removed during building operations in connection with the prison, consternation was occasioned among the prisoners when felling a large chunk of earth from the face of the low artificial cliff, because of the uncovering of what appeared to be a human face. On examination by a European police officer, this remarkable find proved to be a head of a pottery figure and continued excavation revealed fragments of other figures (Wayland, Burkitt, & Braunholtz, 1933, p.29).

The pottery figurines discovered at Luzira are termed as the Luzira to date. However, despite the role of the prisoners who were non-archaeologists, in the discovery of the famous Luzira Head, as termed in Ugandan archaeology, it was instead attributed to Wayland, who only visited Luzira Prison on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1929 after its discovery. Since archaeology is synonymous with excavation to many people, it is an essential component of community archaeology (Thomas, 2017), as the case was at Luzira. Unfortunately, this important discovery is still in the British Museum to date. That is why decolonisation is at the centre of community archaeology. Although Uganda attained independence in 1962, the original Luzira head is still in the British Museum but attempts at restitution for Uganda as a country have not taken a centre stage and we don't seem to even know which archaeological artefacts are still colonised.

In a related scenario the ivory tower met the *jua kali* in 1952 and 1959 when:

...the Department of Sociology at Makerere University carried out research on the museum visitors to inform the Uganda National Museum, on how to improve. Similarly, the Uganda museum linked with the Extra-Mural Department at Makerere College undertook outreach focused on land and people of particular areas showing films of archaeological sites.

This led to the development of folk museums in Mbarara and Soroti in 1959 as centres of cultural heritage and archaeological preservation (Mehari 2015, p. 103).

Posnansky emphasised teamwork beyond the field, including social interactions based on his experience at the Bweyore capital site in 1959 as follows:

At Bweyore in Uganda, the first field school in 1959 was conducted by the Uganda Museum for African students from Makerere University College, attended by several University teachers. These schools provided basic recording methods, field surveys and preliminary analysis, conservation and interpretation of the findings. The students also provided the labour, and the whole group lived and ate together (Posnansky, 2017, pp. 78-79).

The 1960s were dominated by archaeological work by W.W Bishop at Karamoja, Posnansky at Bigo and E.C Lanning surveyed Later Stone Age (LSA) sites in western Uganda. In all such fieldwork, they employed the local people mainly as labourers and usually promised to give them feedback about the findings since the reports were written in a language that the local people could not understand. They did not make sense to the layperson. Hence, "the complicated archaeological language in the reports alienates people whose history is being studied" (Schmidt, 2014, p. 39).

Political upheavals from the 1966 Buganda crisis in the country impaired archaeological research progress in the country in that archaeological surveys in Uganda resumed in 1987 with excavations at Ntusi, Bweyore, the Ankore capital site by Reid and Robertshaw, as well as in Kibiro-Bunyoro by Graham Connah (Reid, 1990; Reid & Robertshaw, 1987; Connah, 1990). Research in these areas involved mainly museum staff. Schimdt (2016) even suggested that oral traditions, ethnographic information, and written records are at the centre of the ivory tower meeting the *jua kali*. Based on this, he supports the approach used by Posnansky at Bweyore, Jan Vansina in his 1965 volume and John Sutton at Sirikwa holes in Kenya and Roland Oliver's work at Bigo earthworks where they married archaeology and history.

The 1980s to 1990s were dominated by the activities of the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA).

In 1985, the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) introduced one-year fieldwork in Uganda on the Later Stone Age initiated by the then Director John Sutton. They organised field trips to Uganda every year. They teamed up with the Department of Antiquities to go with the staff to the field (Kyazike Elizabeth's Interview with Ephraim Kamuhangire on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020).

The BIEA, in many cases, involved Makerere University students who

were not professional archaeologists. Robertshaw and others acknowledge several Makerere University students besides the local and foreign participants in the 1994-95 fieldwork as follows:

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of all those who participated in the fieldwork: Paul Mutunga; Charlotte Karungi; Pamela Khanakwa; Patrick Mwase; Jonah Walusimbi; Patrick Ssemambo; Abdu Basajabaka; Peter Bisasso; Eva Lule; Agnes Khabaikya; Jesphy Kiwaneka; Richard Kyambadde; Betty Kyazike; Amy Lawson; Dennis Stephen; Michelle Walch; Denyse Robertshaw; Simon Robertshaw; Mia Robertshaw; Vicky Barnercutt; Laura Basell; Stephen Manoa; Kepha Mbouri; Mark Ikeda and Gilbert Oteyo. We also thank our cooks – Phyllis Mbaziira, Patrick Outa, and their assistants. Finally, we salute the efforts of our numerous locally hired labourers, who worked hard and offered friendship. Among these, we should single out Isaac Senfuma. He acted as the headman at Munsu and freely gave his intimate knowledge of the Munsu earthworks, thus enabling NP to undertake his survey (Robertshaw et al., 1997, p. 77).

This means that there were two levels of the *jua kali* in most of the Ugandan archaeological fieldwork. The first level was that of the Makerere University students, primarily from the Department of History then; and the second level was for the people

residing close to the site. In the two categories, the roles were different. The latter was mainly employed to do the manual work while the former would excavate alongside the international students in the archaeological field.

In all these BIEA fields, museum staff were involved, especially Dr Ephraim Kamuhangire, who narrates his ordeal as, “since I had done oral traditions, I became an easy target, and every year I would go to the field. They brought their students to go back and write masters and PhDs instead of supporting Ugandans” (Kamuhangire’s interview with Kyazike Elizabeth, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021). The expression by Kamuhangire suggests the use of Uganda as a training ground for foreign archaeologists.

Still, between 1994 to 1995, Terry Childs, who was associated with the research of Peter Robertshaw in her work concerning iron working in Tooro, worked with a Makerere University student then as an interpreter and alongside the community as she elaborates:

My ethno-archaeological work exclusively involved Ugandans. Ms Karungi and I lived together in a small house in a village and visited Adyeri almost every day. We bought our food at the local markets. During most of our research, we did not have a vehicle, so we depended on locals for assistance when needed (Terry Child, email communication to Kyazike Elizabeth, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021).

This statement made by Terry Childs suggests that in terms of archaeology, the ivory tower encountered the community not necessarily through the teaching staff but, in most cases, through the students, such as this case in Tooro.

The 2000s were dominated by the African Archaeology Network (AAN) under Felix Chami’s activities that organised field schools in 2008 and 2010 that involved students from the University of Dar es Salaam and Kyambogo University in Uganda. These culminated in archaeological fieldwork by Ugandans, such as Herman Muwonge at Koba (Muwonge, 2009) and Kyazike at Kansyore Island (Kyazike, 2013), who, as students, had less involvement with the community. This could be explained by Schmidt (2014, p. 39), who suggested that “inclusive archaeology is more demanding... need for the expeditious research results” limits entirely involvement of the community in archaeology.

Before the AAN took on the training of Ugandans, many were like Peter Shinnie (1990, p. 221), who noted that “my entry into Archaeology was different from that of Thurstan Shaw and Diamond Claniz. Peter Shinnie stated that, “I had no proper training in Archaeological techniques and artefact study... I learned on the field by joining Mortimer Wheeler between 1934 and 1938”. That means that though no formal instruction was given that they learnt archaeology by watching, listening, and the

occasional informal demonstrations. This is no different from the career of people, such as Peter Bisaso. He was a Ugandan who worked with the Uganda Museum until his death. This gave him great exposure to archaeology, especially working with the BIEA.

Following the AAN activities, Ugandans pursued academic training in archaeology. Since many did it at the graduate level, it was mandatory to undertake fieldwork and work with the community. These include: Tibesaasa Ruth – Busi; Wamutu Godfrey – Paya; Muwonge Herman – Koba; Mirembe Fatumah – Kaiso; Nakaweesa Esther (RIP) – Nyero; Kyazike Elizabeth – Chobe; Kikubamutwe, Nsongezi, and Kansyore Island; Ssemulende Robert – Sango Bay, Kinyera Charles — Fort Patiko and Palabek. The modus operandi shows that the community was commonly involved as casual labourers employed to sieve and carry equipment, though limited attempts were made to explain the project, especially to school children in the project areas. At times, some did excavations with school children. Each of these Ugandans has their story of community archaeology, but this paper concentrates on the story of Ssemulende Robert.

Other attempts to involve the Ugandans in archaeology can be traced from the project undertaken by Posnasky, a Fulbright scholar that involved students and staff of Makerere University, such as Associate Professor Godfrey Asiimwe. The

field work was at Dufile from the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2006-7<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Posnasky also participated in the Karugire Memorial Lecture on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2007. He also gave a lecture on the “Northern Factor in the History of Uganda” that exposed the value of history to society in general and Uganda (Walz, 2010).

Other than Posnasky was Peter Schmidt who “in the years 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2019, collaborated with the Uganda Museum, Kyambogo University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) and Makerere University in the Ndali Crater Lakes Region research” (Schmidt Peter email interview with Elizabeth Kyazike 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021). This entailed a detailed collaboration with the community where community members were sieving and efforts to explain each step of the fieldwork made. Regular visits were made every Sunday to the churches to explain to the community, and posters were designed (Kyazike Elizabeth, observation in the 2014 season at Ndali).

The above scenarios given as part of the history of archaeology show that, the community is diverse and does not necessarily involve the residents at the archaeological site. The site residents are mainly involved in manual work that is not very technical. Since archaeology in Uganda was re-introduced in the Ivory tower in 2013, and the first Doctoral archaeologist who graduated from Makerere University was Okeny

Charles Kinyera in 2020, other than that Ugandans were for long in the category of non-professional archaeologists.

## **Sangoan Lithic Industry**

The Sangoan industry is a transition stone (lithic) industry within the Stone Age Nomenclature that lies between the Early Stone Age (ESA) and Middle Stone Age (MSA) that was named after the type site of Sango Bay in southern Uganda. The characteristic archaeological composition of the Sangoan in terms of its technology and typology is part of the unresolved debates (Mehlman, 1989). Furthermore, the methodology utilised in naming the Sangoan cast doubts among archaeologists. For instance, Wayland's initial chronological and age estimations of the Sangoan in the 1920s lacked scientific authenticity because they were defined based on surface collections and named after a local place (Sango Bay) where they were first recognised. This was not sufficient to explain intra- and inter-assemblage variations. The realisation that the controversy surrounding the character of the Sangoan stemmed from the preliminary research that has so far been carried out on the type site (Sango Bay) explains the choice of the geographical scope of this paper and the more significant ongoing PhD project. The centre of the article is the need to integrate the communities in interpreting their past. Schmidt (1983) emphasises that when communities in Africa interpret

their history, we begin to build a self-enriching tradition of archaeology free from the domination of Western paradigms and appropriate to the African setting.

Furthermore, to Ticktin and Johns (2002), local knowledge and practices have to be understood to develop appropriate management practices based on scientific and local knowledge. "Community-based research aims at empowering communities by contributing to the construction of local identity" (Greer, 1995, p. 5). It is against the above background that the community played a key role while examining the Sangoan technology and typology and the other cultural heritage at Sango Bay. Hence, the Ivory tower met the community in Sango Bay in characterising the nature of the Sangoan technology and typology and other forms of cultural heritage in Sango Bay.

## **Public Engagement at Sango Bay**

This section discusses the forms of public engagement that were part of the two phases of fieldwork at Sango Bay. The first phase in January 2020 was a preliminary survey to establish the nature of the site, where to stay, the people to work with and introduce the research to the local authorities. The second phase was the detailed research at Sango Bay that started on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2020, for three weeks. This section navigates the forms and results of community engagement

during the Sango Bay fieldwork in the two phases.

Two categories of community members were identified from the research participants as follows: the first category of the research team were not residents nor did they trace any descent at the site, including Makerere University graduates of the archaeology programme (Kiwanka Paul Batwerinde, Ssebuyungo Christopher and Mutudi Gonza), Kyambogo University archaeology major (Ibrahim Ssemwogere), National Museums of Kenya (Gilbert Oteyo), supervisors (Kyazike Elizabeth and Julius Lejju Bunny), a botanist from MUST (Naome Ashaba), and the principal investigator (Ssemulende Robert). The second category comprised of the Sango Bay residents, who included: local council chairpersons (LCs), police officers, elders, school-going children and residents generally.

The community had academic and non-academic residents, as depicted by those who participated in the preliminary survey. These included the local council chairpersons, elders, and resident district commissioners of Kyotera and Rakai. The second phase involved visiting schools, such as God is Able Primary School in Sikaningu and inviting students of different secondary schools residing around Kateera through their LC1 chairperson and officer in charge (OC) of the police post in Kateera Town.

The chairperson led the researcher to the older people in Sango Bay who had stayed in the area for over 50 years, as they were our interviewees at the end of the conversation, the elders could also cite out names of informative members they have been with in the area during that time. The fishermen of Musambwa twin island briefed us on the rules and regulations of the island, and we also briefed them about archaeology and heritage. They were also around during the entire survey and excavation process. Outside the island at Kateera, Sikaningu, and Simba, community members were involved in the archaeological survey and the actual excavation. Initially, we explained to them the nature of archaeological materials they joined the survey team to look for the artefacts. They also led us to different Sango Bay spots with archaeological materials. For instance, Mugerwa led us to three caves on Sikaningu Hill and the Sango Tree. Community members participated in sieving and backfilling the excavation units during the excavations. We shared breakfast and lunch with them, but they were commuting as we also stayed in another village called Mityebiri, about 70 km from Sango Bay.

The above concurs with the assertion by Clark (1988) that, to establish the typological and technological characteristics of the Sangoan lithic industry at Sango Bay, the community plays a significant role. The community was involved from the start of the survey, and they formed the survey team. They were instrumental in directing the

research team to several aspects of the Sango Bay cultural heritage other than its Sangoan lithic archaeology as described below.

Sango Bay heritage is endowed with various herbal medicine that calls for future conservation for sustainable utilisation (Katende *et al.*, 1995). Still, it is highly exploited by people from different regions other than the natives. According to Berkes *et al.*, (2000), the importance of traditional knowledge for conservation and understanding ecological processes has received much attention in resource management. This herbal medicine is collected from both forests and grasslands. Since the documentation of the Sangoan industry entailed examining the environment inhabited by the Sangoan tool makers, there was a need to collect a comparative sample of the existing plants. The community was instrumental in identifying some of the species used in medicine in the area.

Identifying the location of Musambwa twin-island would not have been simpler had it not been for the community. Yes, Uganda television news would broadcast an island with several snakes and birds but little did we know that this was the Musambwa Island. Wayland (1923) mentions Musambwa Island as a heritage site whose history has links with Sango Bay. Identification of this island and its access point to the Sango Bay landing site (Figure 1) was the work of the community. One of the members was quick to state that, “at Musambwa Island, snakes live in harmony with

humans, and women are not allowed to camp overnight” (K3 at Sango Bay, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020).

**Figure 1:** Sango Bay landing site on the way to Misambwa Island

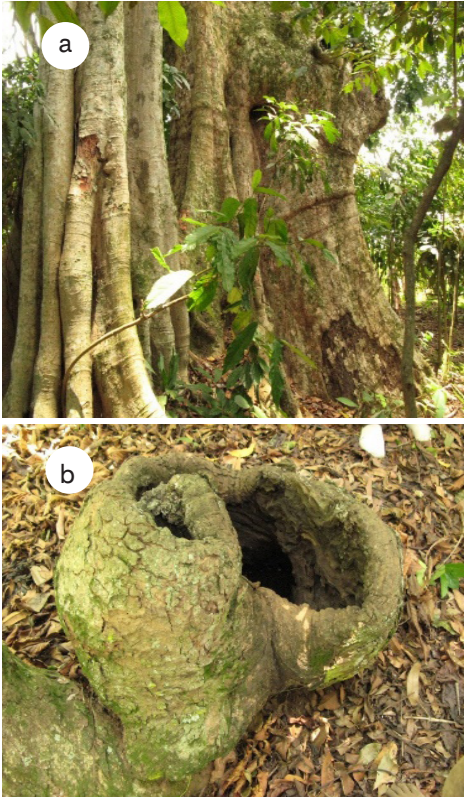


The importance of identification of rituals with the society is clearly stated by Vianello as follows:

Because rituals are encoded and formalised within a society, they reflect some aspects of the societies in which they were constructed. However, rituals are more than mirrors of the societies that constructed and performed them; they are used actively as political and social tools. Most importantly, they are tools used to handle collective memory and, therefore, they can provide useful information on how memory was perceived and used in the past (Vianello, 2004, p. 2).

The origin and justification of the name Sango Bay were also narrated by some elders in the region, especially the caretaker of the Sango Tree (Figure 2a). Sango is a unique tree associated with multiple taboos. The Sango tree is enormous, with over an eight-metre circumference and a hollow termed the Sango Lake (Figure 2b) that naturally never dries.

**Figure 2:** (a) The Sango tree and (b) Sango lake



In proximity to the Sango tree, there are other heritage features, such as the Cord Stone (Figure 3) for members seeking blessings. Still, if you come with bad intentions, the Cord Stone will disappear (Senkima Peter, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020).

**Figure 3:** The Sango Cord Stone



The board game (*omweso*) with two lithic chairs is another feature in the vicinity of the Sango tree. These heritage potentials could not be visible without the Sango Bay *jua kari's* assistance despite being the ivory tower's responsibility to publish them and sensitise the community of the benefits of this heritage if it is well preserved; hence, the Sango Bay *jua karis* met the ivory tower.

**Figure 4:** Board game (Omweso) at Misozi in Sango Bay



The mass grave that was made into a monument at Kasensero landing site after the Rwanda genocide, where River Kagera brought many bodies from Rwanda during the war between the Hutu and Tutsi, was also identified in the course of the research with the help of the resident community members. However, this is not the first memorial grave in the region, as we found the commonwealth grave for W, J. Lowing, who died on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1915 and was buried at Simba Hill. Lowing died in war as the British were fighting the Dutch, and his grave is currently abandoned though inscribed on the commonwealth monuments list. The above reveals that we need the community to appreciate the

value of this heritage such that it can be safeguarded for future generations and history as a subject.

Although the community was involved in the two field seasons of archaeological survey and excavation, this paper only focuses on the preliminary survey results since the other results are part of the forthcoming PhD thesis. The Sango Bay community’s involvement in the preliminary archaeological survey contributed to identifying 50 archaeological artefacts. The artefacts included 35 lithics, 13 ceramics, one metal object and one grave (see Table 1 below).

**Table 1:** Survey materials recovered from Sango Bay

Survey materials recovered	Total
Lithic	35
Ceramic	13
Metal	1
Grave	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>50</b>

For the fifty archaeological materials, analysis was done only on the 35 lithic artefacts based on the fact that the primary research focused on the Sangoan culture, which is a Stone Age (lithic) industry and estimated between 400,000-200,000 years (Mehlman, 1989; Clark, 2001; McBrearty, 2013). The Sangoan culture has multiple debates stemming from its composition or dating (Sampson, 1974; McBrearty, 1988, 2013; Bower, 2006). Since this study

aimed at situating the Sangoan culture in its Stone Age context and analyse how non-archaeologists or *jua kari* can be of great value in undertaking archaeological work, emphasis was on lithic technology and typology.

The analysis results take us into the debate of terminologies related to working with communities in archaeology. For instance, Nicholas (2008, p. 1660) suggests that indigenous archaeology refers to “the active participation or consultation of indigenous peoples in archaeology”. The question is, to what extent can the *jua kari* be involved in archaeology where complicated terms, as in the following analysis of the materials from Sango Bay, are engaged?

The analysis of the 35 lithic artefacts recovered at Sango Bay led to identifying of stone tool types that revealed the Sangoan typology<sup>1</sup> within Sango Bay without involving the resident community members. Despite the absence of the resident community members<sup>2</sup>, the non-resident community members<sup>3</sup> participated in the identification of the Sangoan typology that included two blades, two

<sup>1</sup> Lithic typology refers to the types of stone artefacts. In this case, the Sangoan lithic typology refers to the specific types of stone tools that were identified at Sango Bay.

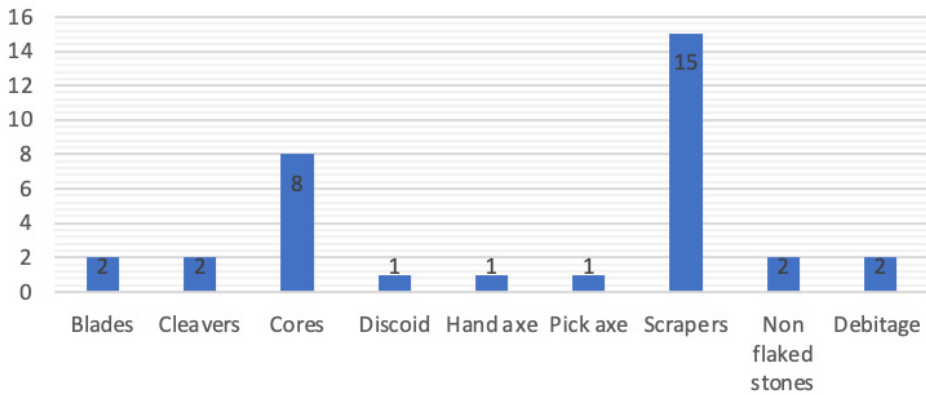
<sup>2</sup> The resident members of Sango Bay in this category refer to those members of the research that were recruited from within Sango Bay, such as the LCs, police, elders and the community members who participated in the surveys, sieving and backfilling during excavation.

<sup>3</sup> The non-resident members are those who were not original residents at Sango Bay all or who could trace descent to the site. These were the university students, the project team leader, and the supervisors.

cleavers, eight cores, one discoid, one hand axe, one pickaxe, fifteen scrapers, two non-flaked stones, and two debitage as reflected in Figure 5 below. The terminologies for the stone tool type (blades, cleavers, cores, discoid, hand axe, pickaxe, non-flaked stones, debitage, and scrapers) definitely require the expertise of the ivory tower, which means that there is a need for interdependence with the community. This definitely requires more time, as Schmidt (2014) emphasises the participatory archaeology approach. Hence, the ivory tower and the *jua kari* are inseparable as far as archaeology is concerned if we are to reconstruct the past truly. The heritage custodians must be involved to appreciate the work of the academia.

concerning the composition and position of the Sangoan in the Stone Age nomenclature. The study interrogates the views of scholars, such as Mehlman (1989), who suggested that in East Africa, the Acheulean Industry was overlaid by the earliest MSA, termed the Sangoan industry. Others, such as Sampson (1974) noted that the Sangoan industry consisted of Acheulean and MSA artefacts, such as hand axes, cleavers, knives, scrapers, and utilised flakes of *Levallois* cores. Although the Sangoan culture had been well studied in other areas (Basel, 2010; Tyron & Faith, 2013), information from the type site Sango Bay was lacking but was this the problem the indigenous or local community at the site would have preferred? Maybe not.

**Figure 5:** Sango Bay lithic tool typology

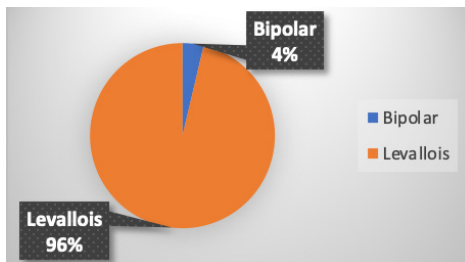


Other than the artefact types in Figure 5, the Sangoan tool kit elsewhere contains more types (Mehlman, 1989). The complicated archaeology typologies suggest that there is a need to research questions that are in the *jua kari's* interest. The research at Sango Bay conceived in the ivory tower aimed at examining the controversies

Would they prefer to examine the technological characteristics of the Sangoan lithic industry at Sango Bay? Several technological attributes discussed from Sango Bay included tool manufacture mechanisms, retouch type, the extent of retouch, and flake termination. These attributes are essential in establishing

an artefact's technological change and characteristics in an archaeological assemblage. For the case of the Sangoan lithic tool manufacture, the results indicated that the dominant technology was *Levallois*<sup>4</sup> technology represented on 26 (96%) lithics, followed by bipolar<sup>5</sup> technology with 1 (4%) artefact (Figure 5). The dominance of the *Levallois* technology can be attributed to the increasing mental capacity of the tool makers (Bower, 2006) because, with this technology, one can control the size of the flake required for a specific tool type. The dominance of the *Levallois* technology is supported by O'Brien (1939), who believes that this technology was invented in the Sangoan culture.

**Figure 6:** Sangoan lithic technology



Another attribute analysed related to technology is the retouch type which was either unifacial or bifacial

retouch<sup>6</sup> as identified from the Sango Bay survey. The latter dominated the assemblage on 17 out of the 29 artefacts that were retouched. Bifacial retouch is a secondary modification on both sides of the artefact edge and an in-depth reflection experienced on tool manufacture and increasing the tool's sharpness and strength. Hence, the analysis above required technical expertise. In such instances, the ivory tower guided the Sango Bay community in analysing the typology and technology of the Sangoan.

Therefore, the contribution of the community towards the custodianship of this great site at Sango Bay, where the Sangoan culture secured its name globally, is crucial. Schmidt (2014) emphasises that collaboration with the local communities will lead to joint research and heritage development that contributes new knowledge to African history, archaeology, and community well-being. The aim should be to refocus attention on research that emphasises the local historical identity (Atalay, 2006; Pikirayi, 2011) than ideas conceived in the ivory tower walls independent of the heritage custodians who are the *jua kari* who either reside or trace descent with the site.

In Sango Bay, Primary Seven children from God is Able Primary School at Sikaningu Hill became vigilant of our movements and were invited to acquire survey skills and

<sup>4</sup> Levallois is a place name in France that refers to the method of preparing the lithic (stone) platform before flaking. It has a number of advantages especially the production of lithic materials of a pre-determined shape.

<sup>5</sup> Bipolar technology involves the use of a hammer and anvil and then the core in the middle due to the force from both sides; hence, the term bipolar.

<sup>6</sup> Unifacial retouch involves secondary modifications from one side while bifacial retouch involves secondary modifications or retouches on the two sides of the edge of the lithic material.

watch what was taking place during the pre-historic excavation of artefacts within their locality (Figure 7).

**Figure 7:** School children participation



During the archaeological survey, we carried equipment, such as GPS machines and cameras; and yet, in the nearby landing site at Kyabasinga, an unidentified investor had just fenced off over three villages of land, initially communal, for his personal use. Our survey made the school community more interested based on the sensitivity of land matters in their locality; hence, the participation to understand what was going on clearly. The above scenario attracted more passers-by, including Musomesa Mugerwa, who later led the team to three caves and the Sango Tree. He narrated the origin of the name Sango Bay.

Using the snowball method, Musomesa Mugerwa led the team to other elderly and knowledgeable

people in the area that could inform the study. This also attracted secondary school students close to Kateera who were at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic-related lockdown (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8:** Secondary school students at Kateera learning about archaeological artefacts



The archaeological survey at Sango Bay made the residents appreciate the heritage of their area when they saw value in the stone artefacts they had been interacting with in the fields. Therefore, the ivory tower met the Sango Bay *jua kari* through community archaeology to trace the heritage potential of the region. This reminds us of the backbone of Uganda's archaeology

that came from a non-professional archaeologist, Wayland. Therefore, “public archaeology straddles the great divide within archaeology between the professionals, academic and amateurs, between the local and global and between science and the humanities” (Monshenska, 2017, Pg.3). There is a need to acknowledge that, the public intellectual and the scholar are not two different peoples but two sides of a single quest for knowledge. This was summarised as “In Africa, archaeology came as part of a colonial package whose aim was to govern and understand the “natives” in the process of “civilizing them” (Ugwuanyi, *et al*, 2021, p 42)

To pursue this quest is to bridge the gap between the public intellectual and the scholar” (Mamdani, 2019, p. 53).

The fears of involving the public as expressed by Leakey in response to Posnansky’s first field school at Makerere College in 1957 at Lanet as depicted from his words stated that: “if you teach people about archaeology they will find out where the sites are, and if they know where the sites are they will spoil the sites” (Mehari, 2015, p. 139). How meaningful is this conversation with the community that forms the last part of this paper? On the contrary, community archaeology is important as indicated in the next section.

## Importance of Community Archaeology

Marshall explains what the authors of the two volumes of *World Archaeology* regard as the gain from community archaeology despite the loss of power by academia as follows:

It enriches our discipline, encourages us to ask questions of the past we would not otherwise consider, see archaeological remains in a new light and think in new ways about how the past informs the present... collaborative research fostered by community archaeology will be crucial if archaeology is to have a future (Marshall, 2010, p. 218).

Therefore, the future of archaeological work, such as that at Sango Bay lies in working with the community. Other than that, “community archaeology diversifies the voices involved in interpreting the past and facilitates mutual education between the archaeologists (ivory tower) and communities” (*jua kali*) (Tully, 2007, p. 155 – emphasis ours).

Therefore, community archaeology brings about social cohesion as the people develop a sense of ownership of their local heritage. Schmidt credits history and ethnoarchaeology and also suggests that community archaeology has a long history in Africa based on the use of archives, archaeology and oral histories and, thus, the significance of community involvement is that:

when cultures in Africa participate in interpreting their past, we can begin to build a self-enriching tradition of archaeology free from the domination of Western paradigms and appropriate to the African setting (Emphasis ours Schmidt 1983, p. 75, cited by Schmidt, 2014, p. 38).

## Conclusion

The history of archaeological research in Uganda suggests that the Ugandans took a central role of the *jua kari* especially in the period from the 1920s to 2007. In this period since many Ugandans had not had formal archaeological training, they would assist the ivory tower archaeologists who were mainly from Europe and America to do the manual work for the experts. From 2007 Ugandans join the ivory tower archaeologists, especially with training from the University of Dar es Salaam and sponsorship of the African archaeology Network. Having realised the importance of the *jua kari* involvement the story of research at Sango Bay depicted the need to work closely with the people. As such the ivory tower experts undertook the technical aspects such as examining

the Sangoan technology at Sango Bay that was characterised by the *Levallois* and bipolar technology, while the Sangoan typology comprised of cores, scrapers, discoïd, cleavers, hand axe and pick axe. In the identification of the Sangoan technology, typology, and environmental conditions, the *jua kari* or community though involved in both the survey and excavation did not participate in the analysis of the findings. Attempts were made to engage primary and secondary schools but were initiated by the community's eagerness, not the ivory tower people. Prior to the research at Sango Bay, archaeology was dominated by foreigners who engaged Ugandans at the lower levels of the archaeology research. This implies that involving the community also entails decolonising the practice of archaeology in Uganda. Besides that, there is a multi-directional contribution between the community and the ivory tower. This is because while in some cases, the community led the ivory tower to identify cultural heritage sites, other technical cases, such as lithic analysis to establish its typology and technology were spearheaded by the ivory tower.

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