1. Traditional knowledge vis-à-vis indigenous knowledge

Over time, Indigenous peoples around the world have preserved distinctive understandings, rooted in cultural experience, that guide relations among human, non-human, and other-than human beings in specific ecosystems. These understandings and relations constitute a system broadly identified as Indigenous knowledge, also called traditional knowledge or aboriginal knowledge. Archaeologists conducting excavations in Indigenous locales may uncover physical evidence of Indigenous knowledge (e.g. artifacts, landscape modifications, ritual markers, stone carvings, faunal remains), but the meaning of this evidence may not be obvious to non-Indigenous or non-local investigators. Researchers can gain information and insight by consulting Indigenous traditions; this localized knowledgecontain crucial information that can explain and contextualize scientific data. Archaeologists should, however, strive to avoid interference with esoteric knowledge, sacred sites, ritual landscapes, and cultural property. Research consultation with local Indigenous knowledge-bearers is recommended as a means to ensure ethical practice and avoid unnecessary harm to sensitive sites and practices.

Traditional Indigenous knowledge can be defined as a network of knowledge, beliefs, and traditions intended to preserve, communicate, and contextualize Indigenous relationships with culture and landscape over time. One might distinguish "knowledge" as factual data, "belief" as religious concepts, and "tradition" as practice, but these terms are often used imprecisely and interchangeably to describe Indigenous epistemologies. Indigenous knowledge are conveyed formally and informally among kin groups and communities through social encounters, oral traditions, ritual practices, and other activities. They include: oral narratives that recount human histories; cosmological observations and modes of reckoning time; symbolic and decorative modes of communication; techniques for planting and harvesting; hunting and gathering skills; specialized understandings of local ecosystems; and the manufacture of specialized tools and technologies (e.g., flint knapping, hide tanning, pottery-making, and concocting medicinal remedies).

Indigenous communities have devised distinctive methods of encoding useful data within philosophies of thought and modes of activity that are linked to particular landscapes. This data includes geographical, genealogical, biological, and other evidence that maps human relations to flora and fauna, land and water, and supernatural forces. Knowledge is often passed on through regular Indigenous performances--
-including oral traditions, song, dance, and ceremony---that convey both literal and metaphorical truths about these relations. Skilled individuals and families are entrusted to maintain these traditions; some are specialists who protect esoteric knowledge. Although many aspects of traditional knowledge have been identified and recorded through ethnographic and ethno historical research, some are still unknown to outsiders. Individual ethnic and tribal communities, in different regions of the world, have preserved different versions of traditional knowledge. While this knowledge might share some things in common, they do not comprise a single (or simple) toolkit. Indigenous knowledge can be envisioned as an hereditary system of learned awareness and skill that enables wisdom to be gained and tools to be constructed, as needed, from the materials at hand. This knowledge are rooted in a particular place or ecosystem, but they are not necessarily static or fixed. Religious knowledge, for example, are quite portable, and can be used to mediate human encounters with ancestral spirits and other-than-human beings, wherever these encounters might take place. Ecological knowledge are also portable, in that they call for reliance upon local resources and careful observations of the interactions between living beings and natural processes within an ecosystem (any ecosystem) to ensure human survival.