

The Legacies of the Repatriation of Human Remains from The Royal College of Surgeons of England



Final Project Report

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Summary

The repatriation of the human remains of Indigenous peoples collected within a colonial context has been the subject of debate within UK museums over the last 30 years, with many museums now having returned human remains to their countries of origin. Although the repatriation of human remains is often characterised as the 'journey home', there has been a lack of consideration of the physical presence and mobility of the remains and the meanings created as they move through different spaces.

This study uses the repatriations from The Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS) to Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii as case studies to consider three key areas: (i) the impact of repatriation on museum landscapes; (ii) the journey of the repatriated remains and how this mobility intersects with wider discussions about restitution, sovereignty, identity, relatedness, memory and memorialization; and (iii) the repatriation archives, how they are thought about by the institutions that hold them and their future potential and meaning within a post-colonial context. Taking a more-than-representational approach and engaging with the materiality, mobility and agency of the repatriated remains and the documentation that relates to them, this study bridges the gap between research considering the approach of museums to repatriation, and ethnographic studies on the meanings of the return of ancestral remains to individual communities.

Combining work on museum geographies, deathscapes and absence opens up new ways of theorising and discussing repatriation through understanding the process in terms of the tension between absence and presence, and human remains as being in or out of place. Through engaging with the materiality and agency of the remains and viewing repatriation through a spatial lens, this research deals with aspects of the process that have received little attention in previous studies, foregrounding the challenging nature of repatriation for communities, the issues around unprovenanced remains, and discussions about the control, management and meaning of information and data, identifying that a significant legacy of repatriation for RCS is the documentation the museum continues to hold.

What the journey of the ancestral remains repatriated by RCS illustrates is the emotive materiality of the remains, and agency that they, and the distributed repatriation archive, have as actors within social networks. It is therefore proposed that the concept of repatriation as having problematised human remains collections within UK museums is replaced with a nuanced and contextually sensitive understanding that recognises the role of the human remains in social interactions that impact on the emotional geographies of museum practice, and that rather than framing repatriation as post-colonial act that is either political or therapeutic, the return of ancestral remains be understood as part of a process of decolonisation in which there is space for discussion, disagreement and debate amongst all stakeholders.

Stich by Stich, Circle by Circle,
Weaving is like the creation of life,
all things are connected

Aunty Ellen Trevorrow, Ngarrindjeri Elder

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The author (second from right) with other participants attending the National Centre of Indigenous Studies Repatriation Course at Camp Coorong with the items created using Ngarrindjeri weaving techniques as taught by Auntie Ellen Trevorrow.

Image: M. Pickering June 2015

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1. Introduction

The repatriation of the human remains of Indigenous peoples collected within a colonial context has been the subject of debate within UK museums over the last 30 years, with the main focus being the arguments for and against repatriation. Advocates for repatriation suggest that the process fosters relationships and is therapeutic for Indigenous communities. Yet, despite the documentation of some of the initial impacts of repatriation, there has been little research on the longer-term impacts of the process on the different stakeholders involved.

In December 2001, The Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS) agreed to return all human remains of Tasmanian Aboriginal origin held in the College museum collections to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community. Since then, the College has repatriated human remains to Australia, New Zealand and most recently to Hawaii. In 2013, the Hunterian Museum at RCS celebrated its bicentenary and as part of reflecting on the development of the collections over this period was keen to consider the impacts of the repatriations, the current and future role of the non-European remains still in the collections and the potential for maintaining the relationships formed as part of the return process.

Therefore, the key aims of the Legacies of Repatriation Project research was to explore the meanings and values that RCS repatriations have created and to better understand the legacies of the process for both Indigenous communities and museum practice.



Figure 1.1: Museum Stores at The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Image: S.Morton July 2016

2. Repatriation at RCS



Figure 2.1 Edward Ayau from Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai'i Nei (left) with representatives from RCS at the repatriation of the Hawaiian ancestral skull.
Image: Royal College of Surgeons, September 2011

2.1 1986-2001

The first documented approach to the Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS) regarding the return of non-European remains was an inquiry made by Michael Mansell of the Aboriginal Legal Service in 1986. In her reply, Curator Elizabeth Allen explained that the College was not in a position to formulate a policy on repatriation, however in her personal opinion the remains in question were 'valuable teaching material and therefore to be retained for the benefit of mankind' but that 'human remains of ethnic groups which worship their ancestors should, however, be given special consideration'.¹ Within this statement are two of the elements that would come to frame the debate about the repatriation of human remains: (i) the conceptualisation of human remains as specimens and evidence; and (ii) the concept of the remains as ancestors. In stating that human remains from certain groups should be given 'special consideration', Allen also appears to indicate that by requesting that ancestral remains be returned, activists like Mansell were already having an impact on the way museum curators thought about particular groups of remains.

In the ten years that followed, the debate about repatriation at RCS continued, as it did in many other UK museums that held the remains of Indigenous peoples. Documents in the RCS archives suggest that a major concern for the curators dealing with repatriation claims was the lack of a common policy or approach to the issue and a reticence to discuss the issue publicly.² In response to a survey of repatriation policy carried out by the Museum Association in 1994, Curator Caroline Grigson replying on behalf of RCS stated that 'we do not wish to be drawn into public debate on these issues, but we have spoken privately to a number of people in various parts of the world who are concerned about this issue'.³

Having initially decided that requests for the return of Aboriginal Australian remains be rejected due to the 'outstanding scientific importance of the remains',⁴ in 1994 the RCS Acquisitions and Disposals Policy was updated to state that requests for repatriation of remains would be considered if claimants could provide legal evidence of their relationship to the remains. In explaining this policy to a delegation from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre visiting RCS in 1997, Curator Jane Pickering set out that the College had 'a clear policy which covers all of its human remains and makes no distinction between ethnic groupings'.⁵ However, in 2001 the RCS Acquisition and Disposal Policy was updated to read: -

4.3.3: So far as human remains and other artefacts of indigenous inhabitants of North America, Australia and New Zealand are concerned, the College Council will consider sympathetically requests for the return of material for which accurate geographical provenance exists

Royal College of Surgeons of England (2001)

This change demonstrates there had been a major shift in thinking in the seven years between the two policies, with the 2001 version reflecting Elizabeth Allen's view that some remains should be given 'special consideration'.

2.2 2001-2011

Following a series of discussions and meetings, in December 2001 RCS College Council agreed to the request from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) to return all human remains of Tasmanian Aboriginal origin without precondition.⁶ In correspondence with the TAC, the College President Sir Peter Morris, himself

Australian and a committee member of the *Working Group of Human Remains* established by the Department of Culture Media and Sport in 2001 (see Section 3.3), explained that the Council was not only persuaded by the cultural arguments but also that there was 'no meaningful research that the remains could be used for, that could not be done in Australia with the collaboration and permission of the original peoples'.⁷ The repatriation of the remains took place on the 3rd April 2002 and consisted of five bones that had been prepared and bound for traditional use, one skull and a slide of the hair and skin of Truganini.⁸

In July 2003, the repatriation of the Australian material from RCS, first requested by the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA) in 1990, took place. Representatives from FAIRA, acting with the authority of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), oversaw the repatriation of 59 items, or groups of items. A cranium and skull that the research prior to the repatriation had identified as lacking a secure provenance were included in the return as a loan, on the understanding that if a reliable provenance were later established, ownership would be transferred without precondition.

In 2003, the New Zealand Government mandated the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa to develop the the Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme. RCS received a formal request for the repatriation of the twenty Māori and Moriori remains they held in June 2006 and having now established a process for the repatriation of ancestral remains, swiftly agreed to the New Zealand return with the repatriation taking place in November 2007. As had occurred with previous repatriations, Indigenous representatives came to RCS and carried out a private ceremony before overseeing the transport and return of the remains.⁹

The next repatriation was initiated when auditing work on the collections brought to light a mandible of Tasmanian origin which had been previously been listed as missing. As the 2001 agreement to return all Tasmanian material still applied, Senior Curator Simon Chaplin initiated contact with the TAC regarding repatriation, and the return of the mandible took place in September 2009.¹⁰ Just over six months later, research by the voluntary organisation Four Directions found the skull of a Hawaiian woman listed on the RCS on-line database SurgiCat and informed native Hawaiian repatriation organisation Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai'i Nei.¹¹ Having established this was the only specimen of Hawaiian provenance in the College collections, Hui Mālama and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs sent a formal repatriation request in June 2010. Having considered this request, RCS College Council agreed to the return in March 2011 and the repatriation of the skull took place in September 2011 (Figure 2.1)

2.3 European Material

As well as the four repatriations of non-European remains from the RCS collections, there have also been two returns of European material, which although not the focus of this research are worth mentioning.

Following a five-year campaign, in 2004 the skeletal remains of the 'red barn murder' William Corder were returned to his relatives for cremation.¹² Prior to this, six pathology specimens removed at the post-mortems of Jewish victims that had been carried out by the Red Cross team working at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945, were handed over to the United Synagogue Burial Society. No longer used for teaching, the Bergen-Belsen specimens came to light in collections survey in 2001 and due to the sensitive nature of the material, RCS contacted Rabbi Professor Jonathon Magonet for guidance.¹³ The handover of

the specimens to the United Synagogue Burial Society for burial at Bushey Cemetery took place in September 2001.

Finally, the highest profile case of human remains subject to requests for removal from the RCS collections is that of Charles Byrne, also known as the Irish Giant. Born in Ireland, Charles Byrne had a condition (now known as acromegaly) that caused him to grow to seven feet seven inches tall. Arriving in London in 1782 he was celebrated as an extraordinary curiosity. However, Byrne was in poor health and this, combined with the loss of his life savings led to his death in June 1782 aged just 22. Byrne had been concerned that his body would be claimed by one of the anatomists with an interest in unusual specimens so he reportedly paid for his body to be buried at sea in a lead coffin, yet John Hunter managed to secure the remains for his collection. On display in the Hunterian Museum, the remains have been the subject of media attention and frequent requests asking that RCS honour Byrne's wish for burial at sea. Having considered the case, in 2008 the College Council and the Board of Trustees of the Hunterian Collection decided that retaining and continuing to display Byrne's remains was justified by their historical and medical importance and that the majority of visitors to the Hunterian Museum found their 'dignified and considered' display to be appropriate.¹⁴

3. Situating the RCS Repatriations

3.1 Creation of the Collections

The study of the human remains of Indigenous peoples in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries developed from an interest in the physical description of human kind and analysis of human difference which can be traced back as far as the ancient Greeks and the fourth century BC Hippocratic Corpus (Gieson & White, 2013, p. 14). In the mid-sixteenth century, the physical differences between European populations once again became a subject of interest with anatomist Andreas Vesalius describing the distinct skull shapes allegedly exhibited by inhabitants of different European nations (Fforde, 2004, p. 8). However, it was not until 1684 that Francois Bernier proposed the first system to classify human kind using explicit racial divisions, a development that Stocking (1988) suggests was prompted by increasing encounters with different Indigenous populations.

The debates on human classification continued in the eighteenth-century with the main approach being the use of discernible external physical features to define human variety (Fforde, 2004, p. 10). However this approach was rejected by a group of zoologists who in the mid to late eighteenth-century, pioneered the practice of comparative anatomy, a prominent member of this group being the English surgeon-anatomist John Hunter (Stocking, 1988, p. 5).

Born in 1728 near Glasgow, Hunter moved to London in 1748 to assist at his brother William's anatomy school.¹⁵ Having developed skills in dissection and anatomy, John Hunter trained as surgeon and went on to develop new ideas for the treatment of gunshot wounds and venereal disease while serving in the

military. During this time he also began his anatomical collection which by the 1780s would be one of the largest collections in Europe, consisting of 14,000 specimens (RCS, undated-b, pp. 8-9). Hunter's collection contained preparations showing healthy and morbid human anatomy, but also included comparative anatomy and zoological specimens that demonstrated animal physiology, reproduction and development and numerous specimens specifically to investigate racial variation (Alberti, 2013, p. 19).

John Hunter's fellow anatomist Petrus Camper was among the first to start collecting human crania for the purpose of analysing human difference, however his collection was soon surpassed in both size and variety by Hunter's own (Chaplin, 2008; Grey Turner, 1945, p. 360). According to Causey (1955, p. 3), Hunter's collection contained 'numerous specimens' collected to investigate racial variation, including a Māori skull and preserved head, five skulls of Australian Aborigines, one skull of a Tasmanian Aborigine and 'a series of adult skeletons showing racial types'. Following Hunter's death in 1793, his assistant William Clift cared for the collection until the British Government agreed to its purchase in 1799.¹⁶ Hunter's collection then passed into the care of the Company of Surgeons, soon to be The Royal College of Surgeons, and a board of trustees was established.¹⁷ Under the care of The Royal College of Surgeons, Hunter's original 'race collection' was expanded through individual donations and the purchase of other collections, notably the Joseph Barnard David collection in 1867 and the Anthropological Society collection in 1890.¹⁸

By the early twentieth century, the Royal College of Surgeons of England held one of the largest and most geographically varied collections of human skeletal remains in Britain (Fforde, 2002a). Driving the creation and study of these collections was the growing interest in human evolution and racial diversity.¹⁹ Following the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, natural

selection became an important topic of discussion and in response, physical anthropologists began to focus on locating evidence of human evolution in the bodies of modern people, increasing the demand for skeletal remains and soft tissue samples. As ideas of race became bound to the physicality of the body, for those attempting to understand racial variations, bigger sample sizes meant better statistics, creating a demand for specimens in vast numbers that fuelled a global market for human remains.

In *Collecting the Dead*, Cressida Fforde (2004, p. 153) discusses the collection of Indigenous human remains in Australia and the documented examples of public outrage caused by the desecration of Aboriginal corpses. What Fforde highlights is how the collection of Indigenous human remains was a violent interruption of normal cultural processes that, as with other examples of the taking and use of the bodies of poor without consent, demonstrates an inherent imbalance of power (Hallam, 2012; Harrison, 2010; Hurren, 2012; MacDonald, 2006, 2010; Richardson, 1987, 1997). Yet in attempting to give the ethnographic findings a physical basis in the properties of human crania, the remains of Indigenous people did not just have value as a site of information about humanity's past but were also used to materialise ideas about race.

Through categorising, studying and displaying of human remains according to views of racial difference, European superiority and national identity, were materialised in museums spaces. This use of Indigenous human remains to justify a colonial ideology of European superiority and their categorisation and display as 'other' means they can be understood as being the material representation of an Indigenous inferiority that was constructed with no reference to how living populations saw themselves (see Turnbull, 1991; Zimmerman, 1989).

3.2 Indigenous Rights and Changing Practice

In the late nineteenth-century anthropologist Franz Boas (1940, 1984) begun questioning the theory of defining race by physical features and by the 1930s the growing dissatisfaction with the approach to research into human difference was reflected in the reduction of the numbers of human remains collected by European institutions (Fforde, 2004; Haddon & Huxley, 1935; Stepan, 1982).

After the Second World War, shifts in thinking on human difference intersected with a wider discourse on universal human rights that enabled subjected people on the periphery to start challenging the arrogance of the 'centre' (Olick & Coughlin, 2003, p. 45). In Australia the Indigenous Land Rights movement that had emerged in the 1960s was followed by calls for the restitution of Aboriginal cultural heritage (Fforde, 2002a, p. 34; Turnbull, 2016). A similar pattern is seen in other countries with Indigenous populations, including New Zealand (Hole, 2007; Tapsell, 2002) Canada (Collison, 2007; Conaty, 2006; Phillips & Johnson, 2003), Norway (Harlin, 2008; Holand & Sommerseth, 2012; Schanche, 2002) South Africa (Bredekamp, 2006) and America, where by the 1970s, campaigns for repatriation and reburial of ancestral remains held in museums had started to gain momentum (McGuire, 1989; Trope & Echo-Hawk, 2000; Zimmerman, 1989).

Although issues of repatriation had arisen in specific national contexts, by the 1980s demands for the repatriation of Indigenous human remains and restitution of cultural artefacts were becoming international, with the debate often presented as a conflict between the importance of human remains for scientific and archaeological research, and the spiritual concerns of Indigenous peoples. On the 'scientific' side of the debate, human remains are a source of potential information about human origins, disease and past environments (see

Brothwell, 2004; Foley, 2004; Grupe & Peters, 2003; Jenkins, 2003; Morris & Foley, 2002; Mulvaney, 1989, 1991; Payne, 2004; Stringer, 2003; Walker, 2000), with the counter argument foregrounding the humanity of the remains and arguing they are not objects to be studied, but ancestors to be buried (for example Atkinson, 2010; Besterman, 2004; Fforde, 2004; Hemming & Wilson, 2010; Hubert, 1989, 1992; Hubert & Fforde, 2002; Smith, 2004; Turnbull, 1993, 2002; Weatherall, 2000; Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman, 2002).

3.3 Repatriation in the UK

Within the UK, the repatriation of Indigenous human remains needs to be placed within context of a wider shift in museum practice that had begun in the 1970s when the Enlightenment model of the museum as a space of cultural authority that communicated 'truth' started to be challenged (Bennett, 1995; Coffee, 2008; Harrison, 2005). As McCall and Gray (2014, p. 20) explain, the consequence of holding curatorship as 'central to the museum exercise' was that a narrow social group claimed exclusivity, defining the role of museums and how other cultures and peoples were categorised, studied, and displayed (Turnbull, 1991; Zimmerman, 1989).

By the 1970s museums were facing accusations of being isolated from the modern world, elitist and obsolete, and arguments were being made for the sharing of museum authority through engaging with community representation (Gorman, 2011; Hooper-Greenhill, 1992; Macdonald & Fyfe, 1996; Moore, 1997; Vergo, 1989). By the 2000s the framing of nationally funded and local authority museums as 'agents of social change' was part of a wider strategy for social inclusion (McCall & Gray, 2014, p. 22). Repatriation requests therefore fed into wider discussions around social, cultural, religious, and human rights and how to deal with legacies of colonial collecting practices (Carter & Orange, 2012; Gorman, 2011).

Following the recommendations made in the *Cultural Property: Return and Illicit Trade* report, in July 2000 the Prime Ministers of United Kingdom and Australia released a statement demonstrating a commitment to the return of Aboriginal ancestral remains:-

The Australian and British Governments agree to increase efforts to repatriate human remains to Australian indigenous communities. In doing this, the Government recognises the special connection that indigenous people have with ancestral remains, particularly where there are living descendants.

Report of the Working Group on Human Remains
(DCMS, 2003, Paragraph 4)

In 2001, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) established a Working Group on Human Remains tasked with examining the issues around human remains held within collections of publicly funded museums and galleries in the UK. The issues considered by the Working Group reflected the questions being raised around colonial collecting practices, consent, and the display of the dead in exhibitions such as *Body Worlds* (see Jagger et al., 2012). However both Jenkins (2011) and Swain (2013) point to the public 'scandal' caused by the retention of children's body parts at the Royal Liverpool Children's National Health Service Trust (Alder Hey) and Bristol Royal Infirmary as the catalyst for issues of respect and consent being high on the political agenda. This retention of organs without the proper consent caused a large-scale public outcry and in 2001, the same year as the Working Group on Human Remains was established, the Retained Organs Commission was set up to examine practices related to the donation and retention of human tissue. Seen within this context, it becomes clear that in the repatriation debates in the UK both influenced and became entangled in the shifting ethical and cultural

attitudes within wider society: a moral flux that created a climate of sensitivity around human remains (Hendry, 2004).

The *Report of the Working Group of Human Remains*, published in 2003, endorses the repatriation of Indigenous human remains wherever possible, acknowledging that a number of British institutions had already agreed to return remains (DCMS, 2003, section 1.4). The work of the Retained Organs Commission resulted in the 2004 *Human Tissue Act* and the establishment of the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) to regulate the use and storage of human remains less than 100 years old (HTA, 2010). It is also important to note that Section 47 of the *Human Tissue Act* gave nine national museums the power to de-accession human remains under 1000 years old, an action the British Museum and Natural History Museum had both previously argued was prohibited under the *British Museum Act 1963* (White, 2013, p. 45).

In 2005, DCMS published the *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums*. In this non-statutory guidance for museums in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, human remains are defined as ‘the bodies, and parts of bodies, of once living people and includes modified remains used in the creation of artefacts’ (DCMS 2005, 9).²⁰ Many UK museums with human remains collections have since developed their own human remains policies based on the principles of respect and consultation advocated by these guidelines (for example Manchester Museum, 2013; Museum of London, 2011; National Museums Liverpool, 2010; Natural History Museum, 2006)

4.The Meanings and Values

Repatriation

4.1 Identity, Belonging and Kinship

In *Collecting the Dead*, Jane Hubert and Cressdia Fforde (2002) suggest that the primary reason for Indigenous groups requesting the return of their ancestors is that the collection of the remains has disrupted the boundary between life and death for those ancestors so they would not be able to rest until accorded the appropriate funerary rights, yet they also acknowledge there are other dimensions to the repatriation process. As discussed in Section 3.1, the collection and transportation of the ancestral remains of Indigenous peoples to European institutions caused a geographical dislocation that interrupted normal social processes. Remains previously thought of as ancestors became conceptualised as objects and given new meanings and values as part of collections, and the measurement, categorisation and display of those remains legitimised the construction of Europeans as 'superior' and continued subjection of Indigenous peoples. Therefore, repatriation is also a means by which communities can lay claim to their own pasts and assert their right to control over the remains of their ancestors (Hubert & Fforde, 2002, p. 2).

Before going any further, it perhaps important to consider who the term 'Indigenous' encompasses. Although there is no universal and unambiguous definition of the concept of 'Indigenous peoples' the working definition put forward in Martínez Cobo's 1986 Report for UN has become widely adopted:-

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.

Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations
(Martínez Cobo, 1986, Paragraph 379)

Rather than focus on biological descent, Cobo's report foregrounds the importance of self-identification as an Indigenous individual and acceptance as such by the group as the essential component of Indigenous peoples' sense of identity preserving the sovereign right and power for communities to decide who belongs to them (Martínez Cobo, 1986).

In this understanding of indigeneity the biological grouping of race has been replaced by ethnicity which, as described by Littler (2008, p. 90), is the accumulated bonds of identification connected to ancestry and geographical area. An understanding of this kinship relationship with the environment and concept of geographical relatedness can be seen in the extracts from the RCS Acquisitions and Disposals Policy of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (see page 11) and demonstrates a change from having to prove direct descent, to a wider conception of who could claim ownership of human remains.

So far as human material derived from named individuals is concerned the museums will consider requests for its return received from close relatives sympathetically provided that (i) they can furnish legal evidence of the relationship.

Acquisitions and Disposals Policy
Royal College of Surgeons of England 1994

So far as human remains and other artefacts of indigenous inhabitants of North America, Australia and New Zealand are concerned, the College Council will consider sympathetically requests for the return of material for which accurate geographical provenance exists.

Acquisitions and Disposals Policy
Royal College of Surgeons of England 2001

In her study of repatriation, kinship and memory on Haida Gwaii, anthropologist Cara Krmpotich locates the motivations driving the Haida people to repatriate their ancestral remains within the broader context of Haida kinship.²¹ Through paying respect to the ancestors, the Haida created situations that fostered shared experiences between generations; for the Haida a sense of community comes not only from the land but also from family (Krmpotich, 2014). At a local level, repatriation and reburial ceremonies create a sense of belonging and revitalise local customs and tradition, but the development of the wider repatriation process also demonstrates the construction of an 'Aboriginal' identity at a national level (after Tonkinson, 1990, p. 193).

This suggests that repatriation is part of a wider process that involves the construction of group identity at various levels creating what Linnekin (1990, p. 170) described as 'nested identities'. Just as with other aspects of cultural heritage, repatriation can manifest the cultural identity of a group or nation at a local level (Barkan & Bush, 2002; Lowenthal, 1996), but the commonality between Indigenous communities fighting for the return of their ancestors and against the 'legacy of colonialism' (Hubert & Fforde, 2002, p. 11) also creates a common identity at national and even global scales (Atkinson, 2010; Hemming & Wilson, 2010).

4.2 Therapeutic Value

It has been well established that Indigenous peoples continue to experience the social, cultural, economic and emotional effects of colonialism, and links have been made between these effects and mental health problems (for example Chandler & Lalonde, 1998; Chandler et al., 2003; Duran et al., 1988; Durie, 1998; Durie, 1999; Gone, 2013; O'Neill, 1996; Salzman & Halloran, 2004). In her discussion of these issues, Simpson (2008, p. 67) cites Native American

psychologists Eduardo and Bonnie Duran (1995), who contend that colonial oppression 'wounds the soul of Native Americans'.

This language of trauma and group pain can be found in a number of statements on repatriation, in some cases linking it directly to socio-political problems. Anthropologist Russell Thornton (2002, p. 20) uses the phrase the 'trauma of history' to describe 'events in the history of people which cause a trauma to that group much in the way that events in the lives of individuals may cause trauma to them'. In response to this it has been argued that repatriation, and particularly the cultural revival that the process can stimulate, is healing (Alfred, 2008; Atkinson, 2010; Hemming & Wilson, 2010; Potts, 2015; Pullar, 2008; Simpson, 2008; Weasel Head, 2015). However, in her review of repatriation within a UK context, Tiffany Jenkins (2011) argues that while assertions that the issue was causing real harm were an important factor in making successful repatriation claims, there is little evidence for the benefits of repatriation, citing the testimony of an Aboriginal Tasmanian group (DCMS, 2003, p. 48) and the limited research done by Simpson (2005) and Batty (2005) as the only examples.

For Jenkins, the concept of repatriation as therapeutic gained broad cultural purchase due to the situating of the repatriation debates within the context of restitution culture and the politics of regret and recognition. An influential theory in the social sciences during the late 1980s and 1990s, the advocates of the politics of recognition argue that culture is as important as political representation as it deals with the individual's relationship to society and the need for affirmation or recognition of individual identity by the state and institutional bodies (Jenkins, 2011, p. 62; Taylor, 1992). For Nolan (1998) recognising and supporting the emotional needs of citizens has become an increasing important role of governments and this development of a therapeutic state can be seen reflected within museum practice.

Is there then a valid argument for reparation 'healing the wounds of history' (after Besterman, 2003)? Batty (2005), Nail (1994) and Foley (2003) have all suggested not, pointing to the repatriation of human remains as a distraction from the political and material solutions communities suffering poverty and declining health really need. Yet in Hemming and Wilson's (2010) consideration of the social, cultural, political and economic implications of repatriation for the Ngarrindjeri people, they argue that the complex local issues the process can create need to be considered. For Hemming and Wilson these issues centre around land and landscape, with the lack of government support and funding for communities negotiating for reburial space and managing reburial sites being highlighted as major obstacles to Indigenous communities repairing cultural, spiritual and social damage (Hemming & Wilson, 2010, p. 195). This positioning of repatriation as a financial and spiritual burden suggests that questions of the meanings, values and challenges of the repatriation process to different communities needs to be further explored if, as Hemming and Wilson (2010, p. 185) argue, a just approach to repatriation is to be developed.

4.3 Politics, Power and Control

The symbolic use of human remains and the body as a site of political struggle is a topic that has been explored by historians, anthropologists and feminist thinkers (for example see Chamberlain & Pearson, 2001; Foucault, 1973, 1977; Fuller, 1998; Hallam et al., 1999; Starr, 1982; Verdery, 1999). In her study of the political use of dead bodies in Eastern Europe, Katherine Verdery (1999, p. 27) gives various examples of the use of human remains to either question or reinforce authority, arguing this is effective because the materiality of the body means it can be used to physically represent ideas and values; 'a corpse can be moved around, displayed, and strategically located in specific places, their

corporeality makes them important means of localizing a claims'. Building on Verdery's work, Fontein (2010) considers the dead body as a site of power struggle within the context of post-colonial Zimbabwe. Based on his research on the resurfacing of the dead from unknown graves, Fontein illustrates how dead bodies can become a material manifestation of the legacy of colonialism and are therefore active in making the post-colonial struggle apparent.

Following this argument, the process of the collection, study and display of human remains can be constructed as a tangible symbol of the lack of political power of Indigenous peoples, meaning that the repatriation process is 'as much about the return of authority over the remains and objects as it is the physical return of those remains or objects' (Pickering, 2010, p. 171). In relation to repatriation, Watkins (2008, p. 100) identifies that as well as the physical return of the remains, the process is also a metaphysical act of social, political and symbolic recognition, in that returning remains to a particular community or organisation is a de facto recognition of legal standing. So despite the concerns raised by Watkins (2008) and Nilsson Stutz (2008, 2013) about the 'heritage of the past' being caught up in present-day political conflict, repatriation needs to be understood as part of a wider rights movement, in which cultural property is a medium for negotiating historical injustices, and also a means for Indigenous people to establish and take control of their identities at national and global scales.

4.4 Changing Practice

In challenging the traditional authority of museums and the meanings and values they place on remains, repatriation requests have both influenced and been part of the development of an issue based museology movement that aims to embrace community representation and advocates for a sharing of museum authority (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992; Macdonald & Fyfe, 1996). This shift

in practice has seen an increasing emphasis on museums building mutually beneficial relationships with source communities, and Peers and Brown (2003) have suggested that the trust built by repatriation is an opportunity for further collaborative working. Yet Jenkins (2011, p. 78) argues that the shift towards UK museums agreeing to the repatriation of Indigenous remains is a symptom of a wider 'crisis of cultural authority' within the sector and research into museum practice by McCall and Grey (2014) indicates that in the case of human remains, as with the wider social inclusion agenda, museums have been left to find their own route in applying ideas and approaches to practice.

Due to the controversial history of how Indigenous ancestral remains were collected, when requests for repatriation began to be made by Indigenous campaign groups, support came from within certain sections of the UK museum community who argued that amends should be made for the harm inflicted by colonial collecting practices (Hubert, 1989). In the heated debates that followed, human remains became polarized as either ancestors to bury or objects to study, with the idea that human remains are not objects eventually becoming reflected in guidelines and policy (DCMS, 2005; Teague, 2007). However, work in history of medicine (Alberti, 2011; MacDonald, 2010) and geography (Greenhough, 2006; Parry, 2008; Parry & Gere, 2006) has shown that body parts are materially complex and their meanings not static.

Following work on materiality (Anderson & Wylie, 2009; Law, 2002; Mol, 2002), it can be suggested that human remains can embody different meanings for different people at different times, allowing us to move past the polarised debate about person or thing and explore the issues that arise at the intersection of different meanings. Yet this approach leaves the concept of 'respectful treatment' that can be found in many museum human remains policies difficult to define and raises questions around how human remains are conceptualised and respect is materialized within practice.

The ambiguous nature of respectful treatment and situating of human remains as 'special' parts of the collection has, Jenkins (2011) argues, problematised the issue of human remains in museums. While agreeing that human remains collections in museums have been problematised, Swain (2013, p. 29) suggests the issue has simply been overcomplicated and needs to be seen as about human rights rather than respectful treatment.²² For Krmpotich and Peers (2011), modern training for museum professionals has been shaped by the crisis of representation and encourages alternative means of demonstrating and validating knowledge which, following Ashley-Smith (1999), suggests a profession that has become more certain about its own uncertainties. Yet is this really the case and if so, how have repatriation claims and engaging with changed concepts of representation and ownership impacted on practice?

Examining the impacts of repatriation on museums therefore offers a useful case study through which to explore these questions and examine how museums engage with their human remains collections, given the ontological indeterminacy of the remains themselves and the lack of clear policy guidance in relation to what constitutes respectful treatment.

5. Researching Repatriation

5.1 RCS Repatriation Case Study

What emerged from the review the current literature addressing the meanings of repatriations and legacies of the process is a complex picture in which repatriation intersects with issues of identity, kinship, restitution, politics and cultural understanding of the dead and the dead body. Yet although the repatriation of human remains is often characterised as the ‘journey home’, in focusing on the symbolism of the remains, their physical presence is often ignored and little attention has been paid to the mobilities of the remains and the meanings created as they move through different spaces.

The four RCS repatriations provide a naturally constrained case study for researching these meanings giving enough breadth to allow for contrast and comparison but also being limited enough in number for performance and practice in relation to the remains to be explored. The RCS repatriations have therefore been used to consider three key areas; (i) the impact of repatriation on museum landscapes, (ii) the journey of the repatriated remains and how this mobility intersects with wider discussions about restitution, sovereignty, identity, relatedness, memory and memorialization and (iii) the repatriation archives, how they are thought about by the institutions that hold them and their future potential and meaning within a post-colonial context.

Repatriations of Human Remains by Royal College of Surgeons of England			
Exit Number	Sets of Remains	Repatriated to:	Date
82	7	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	27 th May 2002
91 (Loan)	2	Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research	7 th April 2003
92	53	Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research	7 th April 2003
173	20	Te Papa Tongarewa	15 th November 2007
208	1	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	16 th September 2009
259	1	Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Hawai'i Nei	7 th September 2011

Table 5.1: Abbreviated list of RCS repatriations (see Appendix 2 for full list)

It is important to note that the aim of this research is not to present a general survey of the process and impacts of the repatriation of human remains, as each repatriation needs to be understood within its temporal and political context. Rather, the RCS repatriations have been used as case study to engage with situated research permitting for an in-depth examination of the networks in which the remains sit, and for the common threads to be drawn out. By drawing from work on museum geographies (DeSilvey, 2006; DeSilvey, 2007; Geoghegan, 2010; Geoghegan & Hess, 2014; Hill, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Patchett, 2008) and deathscapes (Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010a) a spatial lens has been applied to the process of repatriation allowing the meanings, values and challenges created by the mobility of the remains and their physical presence, or absence to be explored. Taking this approach to understanding the legacies of repatriation offers a different perspective as instead of positioning repatriation as *either* political, *or* a kinship obligation that will have a therapeutic outcome, the agency of the remains is foregrounded.

Therefore, rather than apply an overarching methodology, the concepts of materiality and agency have been used to frame this research, and the methods used have been employed as tools to produce grounded, situated research. The aim being to generate new insights into the process of the repatriation of human remains and explore the connections between the return of ancestral remains from RCS and broader themes around the control of heritage, political landscapes, post-colonial politics, identity, belonging and memorialisation.

5.2 Fieldwork and Data Collection

The research was undertaken using a combination of ethnographic observation, interviews, archival research and autoethnography. Following the concept of taking a more-than-representational approach, in-depth-qualitative interviews were combined with archival research and ethnographic observation. For the

interviews, a semi-structured or unstructured style was adopted dependant on the participant and the space the interview took place in. This allowed the approach and questions to be adapted to the participants, optimising the likelihood of gaining in-depth insight by abandoning attempts to gather comparable data and allowing free flowing discussion. Consent from all participants was gained prior to the interviews taking place and participants were given the option of having their name associated with their data or having their contribution anonymised.

Phase One: Research at RCS

The first stage of the project involved a period of archival research. The archival files relating to repatriation contained information on the repatriation requests, debates and discussions from the mid 1980s to the present and provided the background and context to the RCS repatriations. During this process the RCS repatriations became enlivened by people and the social networks in which the remains were situated and inspired by this, the meanings and agency of the documentation produced, duplicated and made mobile as part of the repatriation process became an important part of this project.

Working as an Assistant Curator in the Museums and Archives department at RCS also allowed for the observation of and participation in practices within the socio-cultural space of the museum and interactions with the collections and with the staff. To compliment this data, in-depth interviews with current staff and former members of staff and College Council who had been involved in the repatriation process were also carried out (for list of interviews see Appendix 1).

Phase Two: Research at UK Museums

To place the data from my research at RCS within a wider context, in-depth interviews with staff from four other UK museums that have experience of repatriation were carried out. Having included the Natural History Museum, as

the majority of the RCS race collections had been transferred there post WWII,²³ the selection of the other museums was based on the different types of collection, location and institutions they represented allowing for a comparison of the data from each site. Staff from Manchester Museum, Oxford University Museum of Natural History and the British Museum agreed to participate. The Pitt Rivers Museum were also invited to contribute but did not respond (for full list of participants see Appendix 1). To bring together representational and more-than-representational approaches and allow for the observation of spatial practices in situ whilst still accessing the participant's experiences and interpretations, visits with the interviewees to human remains stores and public galleries where human remains were on display were also undertaken (Figure 5.1)

An obvious limitation of this phase of the research are the number of UK museums represented and the variation of the number of staff that participated at each site. While three staff from the Natural History Museum and three from Manchester Museum took part, only a single member of staff from both the Oxford University Museum of Natural History and the British Museum participated. Observation of practice and visits to galleries and storage spaces was also uneven across the sites and the in-depth study of performance and practice that was undertaken at RCS was not possible at these other sites. Yet despite these limitations, the data collected does offer an interesting counterpoint to that gathered at RCS and framing the contributions as individual interpretations rather than representative of the institution, overcomes some of the unevenness in the data.



Figure 5.1: Pre-historic Europe Galleries, British Museum
Image: S.Morton January 2016



Phase Three: Fieldwork in Australia and New Zealand

The third phase of the research was undertaken as part of a five month Visiting Research Studentship at the National Centre for Indigenous Studies at Australian National University (ANU), Canberra. Having traced the journey the remains repatriated by RCS had taken (see Appendix 2), the aim was to speak to staff working on repatriation in the museums through which the remains had moved, or were currently stored.

Staff from National Museum Australia, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, Museums Victoria and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery participated in the research. The only museum that currently holds remains repatriated from RCS that did not respond to the invitation to participate was the South Australian Museum. Following the same more-than-representational approach taken in the UK, in-depth interviews were combined with informal conversations and observations from visits to museum stores and galleries. Notes from meetings with staff from the Australian Ministry of Arts Repatriation Team, Sydney University and the Victorian Aboriginal Council and discussions with members of the Australian Research Council funded *Return, Reconcile, Renew* (RRR) project also formed part of the research data collected.

Assisted by the staff from the repatriation units at National Museum Australia and Te Papa Tongarewa, the communities in Australia and New Zealand who have had remains repatriated by RCS returned to them were identified. After discussions and meetings with community representatives and Elders, in-depth interviews were carried out with representatives from the Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Corporation, the Ngāti Te Ata, the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and members of the wider Tasmanian Aboriginal community, plus a remote interview via Skype with a representative from the Hawaiian organisation Hui Mālama I Na Kupuna 'O Hawai'i (for full list of participants see Appendix 1). One of the communities identified as having

Figure 5.2: Auntie Ellen Trevorrow teaching traditional Ngarrindjeri weaving at Camp Coorong
Image: S. Morton, July 2015

had remains from RCS returned to them did not respond to the invitation to take part, so in order to respect their right to privacy in relation to the return of their ancestral remains, they have not been identified in this report.

It is important to note that the time spent with the different communities was not equal (a morning with the Ngāti Te Ata in comparison to over a week with the Ngarrindjeri at Camp Coorong), creating unevenness in the data collected. To mitigate this, contributions have been analysed as individual experience rather representative of 'community'. Interviews with community representatives are therefore neither intended or presented as in-depth ethnographic studies but have been treated as individual narratives that allow a better understanding of some of the issues related to repatriation to be reached, without essentialising experiences or speaking for communities.

6. Key Findings

6.1 The Impact of Repatriation in UK Museums

By opening out historical narratives and revealing the multiple, cohering and competing meanings human remains can hold, repatriation can be seen as having had a direct influence on the re-articulation of museum ethics that saw all human remains become unique and sensitive parts of museum collections. Repatriation has also contributed to current practices within UK museums that attempt to treat all human remains with respect through recognition of cultural sensitivities, application of professional standards and consideration of alternative views. Therefore, rather than simply being responsible for the ‘problematisation’ of human remains as argued by Jenkins (2011), repatriation can be seen as contributing to a range of new relations that have formed around human remains collections in museums.

People, Context and Collections

In the *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums* human remains are framed as having ‘unique status’ within museum collections (DCMS, 2005). The fact these remains were once part of a living person is what makes them categorically different to other objects. Yet although *all* human remains are positioned as unique and different from other objects, museums may regard some as culturally more sensitive than others and how human remains are categorised in museum policies can be influenced by museums thinking politically about perceived ‘threats’ to their wider collections.

At RCS, isolating the impact that repatriation has had on how the rest of the collection is thought about is complex as it is entangled with the impacts of the public scandal caused by the retention of children’s body parts by hospitals, the

subsequent questioning of medical ethics, and the ongoing relationship the museum has with the Human Tissue Authority. For example, the public display of foetal remains in the Hunterian Museum can be read as reflecting the balance between the perceived public sensitivity at the time the displays were created, and the interest of the public in seeing these types of specimens. This suggests that context not only impacts on how human remains are categorised within policy, but also on how the sensitivity of human remains is gauged and what the staff in a particular institution may consider as appropriate. However, what we also see from the planning of the foetal display at RCS, is there is also a concern that the sensitivity of this material as perceived by the museum staff may not be recognised by some visitors.

The museums at RCS are only a small part of an organisation whose main remit is ‘enabling surgeons to achieve and maintain the highest standards of surgical practice and patient care’ (RCS, undated-a). Placing the museum collections in this context is therefore key to understanding the impact of events such as the Retained Organs enquiry and Human Tissue Act that influenced changes in practice right across the organisation. It is also important to recognise the impact of individual human agency with staff, trustees and members of Council being social actors moving between the institution and outside society, and the impact of the wider collections on decision making.

So rather than being symptomatic of the ‘problematisation’ of human remains collections, a more nuanced approach is needed. Collections, institutional setting and individual actors are all influential and therefore local context is critical in understanding the differences in approach taken by museums. Museums are idiosyncratic, complex institutions with changing, multiple and competing identities, so while agreeing to repatriate remains may confirm a commitment to act ethically and respect diversity of belief, at the same time it

can be a threat to the articulation of the museum as custodian and educator (Di Domenico, 2015; Nilsson Stutz, 2013).

Behaving Respectfully

The connection between the types of activities and behaviours considered as acceptable and the respectful treatment of human remains of human remains at RCS is evident in how the museums request visitors to behave and the types of events allowed in the galleries. For example, at RCS there is a sign at the entrance to the Hunterian Museum that requests visitors not to take photographs or use video recording equipment. Respectful behaviour within the galleries is also discussed when the Hunterian Museum is hired for events. In this case what the staff are actively trying to avoid is allowing an event to take place that would leave them, and consequently RCS, open to accusations of not treating the human remains in their care with the respect they deserve.

Therefore, in framing certain types of behaviour as inappropriate, it is can be argued that the museum is publicly seen to be treating human remains with respect, establishing a link between the presence of human remains and the behaviours expected within public spaces in the museum.

What becomes evident is that museum is attempting to balance its role in engaging, informing and entertaining the visitor with that of being an ethical mediator. The tensions that human remains create between different parts of a museum's identity are similar to those found in the repatriation debate, where the museum's role in curating and preserving data can come into conflict with its emerging identity as a post-colonial institution that aims to incorporate other perspectives into its practice (Di Domenico, 2015; Nilsson Stutz, 2013; Rectanus, 2002).



Figure 6.1 (Upper): Event in the Galleries, Hunterian Museum, RCS

Figure 6.2: (Lower): Conservation Lab, RCS

Images: Royal College of Surgeons of England

Working with Human Remains

When asked to define respectful treatment, the museum staff interviewed all admitted it was a difficult and elusive concept, but was demonstrated in practice through high standards of collections care, both for those remains on display and the often much larger collections of remains held in store. In policies which set out standards of care, the most notable being the *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums* (DCMS, 2005), the concept of respect is linked with a set of particular professional practices. Yet since the publication of this guidance, there actually appears to have been minimal change in most areas of practice.

The human remains in the museum collections at RCS are primarily anatomy and pathology specimens; body parts that have been stripped of personhood to allow them to become medical objects (Alberti, 2011; Lock, 2002). Yet sometimes within the practice of caring and conserving these specimens, the scientific and clinical approach gives way to something else; interacting with material remains can sometimes bring forward the immaterial meanings they embody. The meanings remains embody are not static. Even for an individual, they can shift based on their feelings and circumstances at a particular time. Not only can human remains embody multiple meanings, and therefore mean different things to different people and within different contexts, those meanings are in flux with personal experience and current circumstances foregrounding different aspects.

Many of the staff spoken to in UK museums felt that repatriation and the wider socio-cultural shift that it was part of had made them think differently about human remains within the museum collections. For some, engaging with different world views had made them see all human remains as human beings rather than objects. Others felt it had not changed the way they conceptualised remains but that repatriation claims had brought ethical standards to the fore.

However, it was the need to respect alternative views and beliefs that was the most consistently articulated post repatriation impact cited

A Proper Place for the Dead?

As with public display, respectful treatment of human remains within museum stores is associated with performance of certain behaviours during the interactions between the remains, people and space. In their exploration of the stores at the Science Museum, Geoghegan and Hess (2014, p. 16) examine how museum professionals are affected by the collections they care for, concluding that it is the emotional bond between people and things that makes the museum store room an emotional, evocative and affective space. While the concept of the emotional connection between museum staff and their collections is useful in understanding the defensive reaction of some researchers and museum professionals to repatriation (for example see Brothwell, 2004; Foley, 2004; Mulvaney, 1989; Mulvaney, 1991; Stringer, 2003), the affective nature of the human remains store appears to come from a complex mixture of relationships, interactions and engagements with people as well as the remains themselves.

It is therefore suggested it is useful to think of the museum as a deathscape as this encourages what the human remains *do* within those spaces to be considered. Rather than viewing the dead body in the museum as having fallen outside of social relations (Hallam et al., 1999, p. 92), human remains within museum collections need to be thought about as being nodes within many different entangled social relationships. At RCS this maybe the connection of a specimen with a particular collector, surgeon or medical institution, yet the social networks in which the specimens sit are not just historical. Museum collections are both created and embedded within networks of social meanings and relations and store rooms as 'affective spaces are not only shaped by the

collections they house and the object love of the curators and conservators' (Geoghegan & Hess, 2014, p. 4) but also by engagements between people.

Through considering museum spaces in this way it becomes evident that within a Western tradition, museums are considered appropriate places for the dead; museum visitors not only want to see human remains in museums but expect to. However, this view is not universal, as seen through repatriation discussions that bring together those who feel the museum is a proper place for the dead, and those who think it is not. Yet, as the previous discussions have shown, views around the dead body are complex and socially situated, so although an individual may view the museum as an appropriate space for some of the dead, other dead bodies may be out of place, with the line between the two being diffuse and fluctuating.

Therefore, rather than discussing the 'sensitising' of human remains collections, it is perhaps more productive to consider repatriation as having played a part in making those who work with human remains within museums more alive to the different meanings they hold and alternative understandings of the dead body. Interacting with human remains can be affective but the meanings they hold are not fixed or static and the physical presence of the remains can foreground unexpected meanings and emotions. Unlike cemeteries and memorials, museums are perhaps not usually associated with loss, mourning and grief. Yet, through repatriation claims, museums not only become spaces of contested power but for some people, places of pain and grief with enactments such as protest or communing with the ancestors, creating liminal zones that impact on the emotional geographies of museum practice.

So while to some extent agreeing that repatriation has contributed to the problematisation of human remains in the UK, in that human remains collections have become regarded as culturally sensitive parts of the collection

that require particular consideration in relation to ethics and practice, it is argued that this is not symptomatic of the 'crisis of cultural authority' that Jenkins (2011) suggests. Particularly as under the current system museums still retain the authority to make decisions regarding the human remains in their collections. However, in challenging and problematising that authority, repatriation has contributed to a re-articulation of museum ethics, the development of new consultative approaches, and the formation of new relationships.

It is therefore argued that although it is difficult, if not impossible, to untangle exactly what impacts repatriation has had on each individual institution, the Indigenous agency of repatriation claims and the influence they have had on museum practice within the UK should be recognised and used to continue questioning, challenging and developing policies and approaches to human remains collections in UK museums.

6.2 Returning Ancestors to Country

As the research on the remains repatriated from RCS progressed, it became apparent that repatriated remains were often still stored in museums many years after their return. That communities have not yet had remains returned to them, in some cases many years after their repatriation, has been used to question the meanings of the repatriation and undermine claims for the return of ancestral remains (Batty, 2005; Foley, 2003; Jenkins, 2011; Nail, 1994). Yet the suggestion that the location of the remains in museums unmasks the repatriation process as being politically symbolic rather than therapeutic does not consider the entangled nature of repatriation, or the complex meanings and issues Indigenous communities have to face when dealing with repatriated ancestral remains.

Following the Journey

What the survey of the RCS repatriations found was that as of 2015 many of the remains returned to mainland Australia and New Zealand are held in museums (Table 6.1). One of the key reasons for this is that a number of the remains repatriated from RCS were of unknown provenance (an issue addressed in further detail in Section 6.3) but even when the areas the remains came from had been identified, the return could be a complicated process. When speaking to those who have been involved in the repatriation of ancestral remains, be that in museums or community organisations, a recurrent theme was the individual nature of each return. So even if dealing with a familiar organisation, it is not a case of mapping what worked previously onto the next occurrence, as the actors, protocols and circumstances are not static.

Sets of Remains	Destination listed in RCS Records)	Location in September 2015
Tasmanian Repatriations 2002 (exit no. 82) and 2009 (exit no. 208)		
8	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
Mainland Australia Repatriation 2003 (exit no. 91-92)		
5	North West Nations Clans, Victoria	Melbourne Museum (Not in database)
10	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
5	Victoria	Returned to Community
2	Victoria	National Museum Australia, Canberra
5	South Australia	Returned to Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
10	South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
2	South Australia	South Australian Museum, Adelaide
4	Northern Territory	National Museum Australia, Canberra
1	Australian Museum, Sydney	Australian Museum, Sydney
11	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
Dental Casts	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
New Zealand Repatriation 2007 (exit no. 173)		
1	Te Papa Tongarewa	Returned to Ngati Te Ata for burial
2	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te papa: To be returned to Chatham Islands late 2015
17	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
Hawaii Repatriation 2011 (exit no. 259)		
1	Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Hawai'i Nei	Returned to community for burial

Table 6.1: Locations of remains repatriated by RCS as of September 2015

In researching the journeys of the remains repatriated by RCS, one set proved particularly difficult to track down. The research done prior to the 2003 repatriation to Australia had identified one group of remains for return to the North West Nations Clans in Victoria. Transferred to the Australian Museum shortly after arriving at National Museum Australia in 2003, this set of remains were then moved to Museums Victoria, labelled as in transit to the North West Nations Clans. Yet these remains were never collected as when the remains arrived at the museum, the community were not ready to take them. Since then, the registration system for Aboriginal groups in Victoria has undergone a major restructure. As part of this process, the North West Nations Clans group was dissolved and the different communities it represented were not yet (as of 2015) a Registered Aboriginal Party, leaving the museum holding remains on behalf of an organisation that no longer exists.

Although the circumstances that have left these particular remains in limbo appear to be an unusual rather than common occurrence, this example does provide an interesting insight into the power relations, politics and agency involved in repatriation and impact they have on the movement, or lack of movement, of ancestral remains. One of the key points being that when the remains were transferred, the community was not ready to collect them. For museums, being led by the community means that the process is often not continuous, making it difficult to estimate when a repatriation will be completed. However, it is often the case that during the process community members will want to visit the remains and the descriptions of the visits made by community members to ancestral remains stores, combined with the practice observed in the stores at National Museum Australia and Museums Victoria, does not paint a picture of remains left gathering dust on museum shelves, their political symbolism drained away on completion of their international journey.

For Museums in Australia and New Zealand, best practice is for Indigenous ancestral remains to be kept in a separate store and repatriation has therefore created distinct spaces as Indigenous human remains are separated and placed within their own storage space (Museums Australia, 2005). Space has become active in the making of meaning as just as in the UK, levels of security and the limiting of access have become ways of showing respect and the physical presence of the remains impacts on who can access certain spaces.

The remains themselves are active in social networks. Their presence had the agency to affect the experiences and actions of the living, forcing discussions about repatriation and bringing people into museum spaces, in some cases for the first time. Repatriation has become part of a wider social relationship and continuing dialogue between museums and Indigenous communities; not just a briefly symbolic event, but an ongoing commitment and part of core practice (Pickering, 2006; Pickering, 2010; Pickering & Gordon, undated). It can therefore be argued that repatriation brings a particular type of deathscape into being in the form of the ancestral remains store.

As we looked out over the Coorong, Major Sumner and Tim Hartman talked about the reburial ceremonies that had taken place. Although we were some distance away from the reburial sites they did not appear to be marked or different from the other areas of country; these were not demarcated areas or easily recognisable places of burial, such as cemeteries. Luke Trevorrow who manages the heritage team explained that burials are found in many areas of the Coorong and that the number of burials in the landscape show how long the area has been occupied by the Ngarrindjeri.

At another site we visited, Luke [Trevorrow] talked about the work of the heritage team who are called out when remains are exposed or uncovered, so they can be removed and reburied as soon as possible. He pointed out the sand dunes on the opposite site of the Coorong and said that the burials there are under threat from the off-road vehicles that have been using the area so the heritage team are taking steps to remove or protect them.

Extract from research diary 8th July 2015



Figure 6.3 (Upper): Major Sumner and Tim Hartman, Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
Figure 6.4 (Lower): View across the Coorong, South Australia
Images: S. Morton July 2015

Returning the Ancestors

Shortly after the ancestral remains repatriated by RCS arrived at National Museum Australia, the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority collected five sets of remains and took them back to the Ngarrindjeri cultural centre at Camp Coorong, South Australia. Despite the return of these remains to the Ngarrindjeri they are, as of September 2015, stored at Camp Coorong alongside many other ancestral remains awaiting burial on country. So although the remains repatriated from RCS are recorded as having been returned to the Ngarrindjeri (see Table 6.1), not all of those remains have yet been buried despite the desire to do so (Hemming & Wilson, 2010; Wilson, 2006).

Finding burial space is a continual problem for the Ngarrindjeri. The Coorong is a highly agricultural region with many private holdings, so as well as not having the available land to rebury repatriated remains, new uses of the landscape continue to threaten Ngarrindjeri burials. The uncovering of ancestral remains is an ongoing reminder that the Ngarrindjeri are still unable to protect the burial sites of their Old People, creating a constant stress for the Elders and the Cultural Heritage Team who have to deal with the physical remains.

For the 2006 reburials at Warnung and Parnka, complex negotiations were required with local and state government agencies and the preparation coordinated by the Ngarrindjeri Heritage Committee took several months. The experience of these reburials led Hemming and Wilson to argue that funding needs to be made available to communities to support the research, community meetings, administration of the community organisations taking responsibility for repatriations, management of reburial sites, community training, and settling community disputes that arise as part of the repatriation process (Hemming & Wilson, 2010; Wilson, 2006).

Obligation, confrontation and loss

For the Ngarrindjeri, repatriation is a long-term process that has the potential to be healing, but also to be damaging, both emotionally and financially. Having participated in discussions with the heritage team what came across was the frustration, and in some cases resentment and anger that the Ngarrindjeri have been left to bear the cost for something that is not their fault. The return of the remains is not just symbolic; their materiality creates practical issues that can create and exacerbate community tensions.

In her study of the repatriation on Haida Gwaii, Cara Krmpotich found that understanding repatriation amongst the Haida required viewing the process through the lens of kinship. While not suggesting that Krmpotich's context-specific study should be used in a way that essentialises individual experiences of repatriation, her observation that 'time does not minimise Haidas' sense of family' is a useful way of understanding expressions of obligation towards ancestral remains (Krmpotich, 2014, p. 6).

For Tasmanian Elder Rodney Dillion, there is a connection between the repatriation of the Old People and the health and wellbeing of the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as well as his own identity. In speaking of the trauma carried by Aboriginal people due to not being able to protect their ancestral remains, Dillion's personal testimony (see page 28) appears to align with Thornton's (2002, p. 22) argument that repatriation can help communities achieve some closure on traumatic events of their history. Yet, as already discussed, the return of ancestral remains can also feed into community tensions, intersect with issues around land, protecting cultural heritage and create financial pressures. This suggests that repatriation cannot be understood as simply a therapeutic process, anymore than it can be understood as a purely political one.

The most powerful thing, most powerful thing you can do as an Aboriginal person is bring your remains, your families or your peoples remains, back home. [...] when you're coming home and you think, these Old People, you know when they went away they was...they had their land and they had all of these things and now they're coming home and they've got very little [...] no place even to bury some people, so trying to get places to do that is important as bringing the remains home so they're rested in the Country. When those Old People passed, they always thought they'd die and go back to the land that they'd come from and that's not the case with some of these people, and I think some of the trauma that all Aboriginal people carry is not being strong enough to hold our people.

I feel less of a person for not having our people home you know, and the way, the arrogance of museums [claiming it's] for the good of mankind [...] This is for the, we've got people dying twenty-five years less than anyone else, this is about healing and the spiritual belief to bring these remains home and rest them where they belong in an appropriate way. It's a very big responsibility and you're a lesser person if you don't, and the more you do it, the more important you become to yourself, physically I think, and mentally, you're fulfilling part of what those people couldn't do.

Interview with Rodney Dillion, 5th August 2015

Culture, Identity and Self Determination

Alongside the feelings of obligation and responsibility towards ancestral remains expressed by many of the Indigenous people spoken to and interviewed as part of this research, a narrative of repatriation as a burden in relation the pressure it puts on individuals, communities and future generations emerged. Yet although the repatriation of ancestral remains can be practically and emotionally challenging for communities, there is evidence that it can be a unifying process that brings connection to family (for example Fforde, 2004; Krmpotich, 2014; Palm Island, 2002; Simpson, 2008; Weasel Head, 2015); the key to which, Yorta Yorta Elder Henry Atkinson suggests is the role of ceremony (Atkinson 2010, 18).

Repatriation ceremonies often involve utilising complex Indigenous knowledge, expertise and skills and so the presence of repatriated remains can create an opportunity for the younger community members to learn more about their culture. While staying at Camp Coorong Ngarrindjeri Elder and Senior Weaver Auntie Ellen Trevorrow demonstrated Ngarrindjeri weaving techniques and explained that one of her roles in the repatriation of the Old People had been making woven burial mats (see Figure 5.2). The production of the burial mats honours the Old People and creates a connection to the past and cultural practice; a cultural practice threatened by the break in the family kinship system caused by governmental assimilation and integration policies. The weaving of the burial mats has become an embodied memory of the burials, but more broadly, cultural weaving functions in the construction of individual and collective identities showing how 'materials created for repatriation overlap with a range of practices and spaces that are already laden with existing memories' (Krmpotich, 2011, p. 157). Nor is it only the materials created for the burials that overlap with cultural practices as the repatriation process itself interacts with a range of other established cultural practices that construct and affirm identity (Fforde, 2002a; Wilson, 2008).

This understanding of repatriation as an interconnected cultural practice is evident in how the Ngarrindjeri leadership position repatriation as being part of a wider programme, all strands of which are about the ability to identify and act as a nation. For the Ngarrindjeri, positioning repatriation as part of enacting nationhood is an act of resistance that aims to decentre the coloniser and develop a Ngarrindjeri centred position linking the return of Old People to work in cultural heritage, health, education and natural resources that aim to restore healthy flows and allow Ngarrindjeri to be healthy (Rigney & Hemming, 2014, pp. 540-541). Yet, once the Old People are returned, reburials have to be organised within a landscape mapped and managed by regional government; a process Hemming and Wilson (2010) describe as a new form of colonialism and invasion of Ngarrindjeri Ruwe (also see Hattam et al., 2007).

The narrative of reconciliation within which national repatriation programmes operate places the therapeutic values of the process at the centre and in this iteration repatriated remains have the agency to heal the 'trauma of history' (Thornton, 2002, p. 23). Yet, in Rigney and Hemming's (2014) view, the reconciliation policies of the Australian Government, of which repatriation is one of the identified mechanisms for making reparations, can dislodge Indigenous political agendas and make reconciliation a site of struggle. An argument that makes positioning repatriation as being a post-colonial act problematic.

While it needs to be made clear that the experiences and challenges of repatriation will not be the same for every Indigenous community, issues relating to protecting burial grounds, native title and sustainable funding for land, and cultural heritage management projects were a common factor for all the community representatives spoken to as part of this research. This illustrates how the repatriation process is inextricably connected to politics and

power; who has the power to decide if remains should be returned, who has the power to fund the physical movement of the remains and who has the power to protect their final resting place.

Yet, by being alive to the materialities of the remains, their role as nodes in a complex set of relationships, in which they have the agency to be confronting, unsettling and the focus of community tensions, has also emerged. Just as the materiality of ancestral remains allows them to become political symbols of recognition and reconciliation, for communities they can also represent a loss of authority, security, opportunity, respect and responsibility. The very presence of ancestral remain can reinforce feelings of loss and absence; the powerlessness to protect the dead in the past being compounded by a continuing lack of control over land and cultural heritage in the present.

However, in exposing this agency, the aim is not to undermine Indigenous people's claims for the return of their ancestral remains, or suggest the process should be considered as harmful. Rather, it is argued that repatriation should not be framed as an undoing of a colonial practice but part of a wider process of decolonisation in which there is space for communities to discuss, debate and disagree and in which returning institutions better understand not just the benefits of repatriation but also the issues and challenges the process creates.

6.3 The Lost People: Dealing with Unprovenanced Ancestral Remains

Prior to the 2003 repatriation from The Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS) to the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA), a researcher from FAIRA and Simon Chaplin from RCS undertook detailed archival research on the remains. This was an important part of the process as it helped with the return of remains to the right communities and similar investigative work was undertaken prior to all of the RCS repatriations. Yet despite this, of the fifty-four sets of remains returned to Australia, at the time of their return the provenance of twenty-three was uncertain and a further six could only be provenanced to Australia. Lacking the interesting biographies that make named remains relatable (for example Fforde, 2002b; Henderson, 2014; Palm Island, 2002; Roginski, 2015; Suvendrini, 1996), these 'unprovenanced' remains are not well represented in the repatriation literature, but for Indigenous communities dealing with unprovenanced ancestral remains, this is a pressing and contested issue (ACIR, 2013; Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme, 2010).

Researching Provenance

In some cases, archival research can indicate that remains are likely to have come from a particular place, however the lack of certainty is still problematic for some communities. In her work with the traditional owners of Lakefield and Cliff Island National Parks, Marcia Langton (2002) found people had a belief in, and experience of the presence of the spirits of the ancestors in the landscape, an emotional effect that was both personally and socially experienced. In evidence given in a land claim tribunal, Elder George Musgrave explained the importance of speaking in the ancestor's own language as a demonstration of relationship, indicating that not being able communicate, and therefore

Aboriginal people are quite superstitious and spiritual and having the remains of strangers [...] buried on your traditional lands would...make people feel uneasy and may actually make people sick.

And if anything...bad in the communities happens to, particularly to an Aboriginal person then...there is a tendency for people to, well not put the blame, but sort of say 'well it's because of these strangers remains on our Country that this has happened'.

Interview with Lee Burgess,
National Museum Australia, 20th May 2015

mediate, with the ancestors would be a threat (Langton, 2002, p. 262). While it is not suggested this understanding of ancestral remains is more broadly representative, what it does illustrate is a belief in the capacity of the ancestors to act. This concern about the remains of 'strangers' being buried on traditional lands was reiterated in interviews with the Māori repatriation staff at Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand and by Edward Ayau of Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai'i Nei with reference to the return of ancestral remains to Hawaii.

Yet archival research is not the only option for provenancing remains. For those remains from RCS for which there is little archival documentation there are various scientific methods that can provenance the remains to geographical area or communities. While the use of these provenancing methods might appear to resolve the issue of unprovenanced remains, these techniques are not unproblematic in terms of their impact on the ancestral remains and living communities.

The most common approach used on repatriated remains is the non-destructive technique of biometric provenancing. Biometric provenancing is based on taking measurements of remains and takes account of the strong relationship between biology and geography, and given sufficient data it is possible to use statistical analysis to identify the group to which an individual belongs (for example Howells, 1995; Pietrusewsky, 1984; Willis, 1998; Wright, 1992).²⁴ However, as with a provenance based on archival research, for some communities the lack of certainty is a cause for concern. This concern is exacerbated by the mistrust of bio-anthropology as a discipline, a view that Pardoe (2013) and Nilsson Stutz (2008) argue has been fuelled by the negative stereotype of biological anthropology that has formed part of the repatriation debate.

Tensions between the use of scientific methods for provenancing and the concerns about future uses of the data are also found in the debates about the sampling of remains for DNA and/or isotope analysis. Used to provenance remains that are too fragmentary for biometric provenancing, both techniques require taking small samples, which for some people is unacceptable.

Along with the issue of destructive sampling, the type of information collected and its potential use is also an issue. While Isotopic techniques investigate the geographical locations a person lived in (for example Bartelink, 2014; Font, 2015; Holobinko, 2011; Lehn, 2015), DNA analysis looks for genetic relationships between the remains and living populations. Work in this area by Bardill (2014), Nash (2005, 2012) Tallbear (2013a, 2013b) and Weiss and Long (2009) has highlighted the issues raised by genetic testing, the dangers of overgeneralisation (for example see Zolfagharifard, 2013) and assumptions that science can provide definitive answers. For some, the use of DNA testing to provenance remains represents a potential threat to community and individual identity, demonstrating how a lack of provenance can create difficulties for individuals and communities as they attempt to balance cultural considerations with the potential benefit of gaining knowledge and being able to return their ancestors to country.

Scales of Provenance

In looking at the different ways remains can be provenanced, what emerges are not only different methods of provenancing, but also the different scales at which remains can become labelled as 'unprovenanced' or 'poorly provenanced'. Archival research that provenances remains to a place maybe questioned due to conflicting information, or evidence of historic alterations to the records,²⁵ or remains may be provenanced to an area, but the actual community they came from may not be known. Moving up again in scale,

remains may only have a provenance of a state or territory and in some cases, the only provenance for remains is at a national level.

In Australia under the *Indigenous Repatriation Programme*, 'where there is limited historical documentation and the community of origin is not known, the Office for the Arts facilitates the return of the ancestral remains to the care of Australia's major museums in the hope that further work can be done in the future to identify the rightful custodians' (ACIR 2013, 2). The standard practice has become for remains traced to a state or territory to be transferred to the relevant state museum to be cared for 'in trust' while consultations on longer-term options are carried out. While the storage of remains provenanced only to Australia comes within the remit of National Museum Australia who, as of 2013 had more than one hundred such ancestors in their care (ACIR 2013, 2-3).

Following Linnekin's concept of 'nested identities' (1990, p. 170), the different scales at which remains can be provenanced reflects the way identity can be constructed at different levels. As the remains move further towards the unprovenanced end of the scale they start to be seen as being from an area, state or country. While their meaning as specific individuals is still acknowledged, at the same time they come to be thought of as belonging to, and representative of all Indigenous people at that particular scale. In 2015, the remains repatriated by RCS that had only been provenanced to a state or country were all still held within museums and therefore contribute to the large number of unprovenanced remains whose physical presence within museums has instigated debates and consultations at national levels.

And...there was one women...she kept talking about...the dreams that she had and the faces of the people that she saw and they were clear in her head but she had never seen them before and she was asked questions like 'were you afraid of them?' And she said 'no but they look lost' and so we did a ceremony and everyone felt that those ancestors were reaching out her and so she called her community and asked whether or not a place could be designated in their community for these seventy ancestors, and whether her community would adopt them.

So the Hawaiian word is hanai, hanai is where a soul who is not a member of a family is taken in to become a member of the family. [...] So there's ways to deal with situations like this...on a cultural slash spiritual level.

Interview with Edward Ayau, Hui Mālama, 15th May 2015

Resting Places for the Lost People

In the example of a repatriation of unprovenanced remains to Hawaii given by Edward Ayau (see page 32), the community took the decision to adopt and take responsibility for unprovenanced ancestors, something all those involved in the repatriation felt that this was culturally the right thing to do. As Ayau explained, if anyone had felt it 'not to be the right decision', then 'it would not have gone ahead' (E. Ayau, Interview 15th May 2015). This raises questions around what unprovenanced remains represent to different people, who should take responsibility and who should have a voice in the discussions. These questions are particularly pertinent when dealing with remains that only have a state or country as their provenance, as where remains should be reburied or kept, who should be involved and how the site should be marked and memorialised have become sources of debate and tension.

The repatriation staff at Museums Victoria have been involved in two burials of remains that could only be provenanced to the state. The first in 1985 was at Kings Domain Gardens in Melbourne and the second at Weeroona Cemetery, Greenvale in 2012 (see page 34). At both the Kings Domain and Weeroona burials, the remains came to represent all Koorie people in Victoria as well as each individual community. Yet what emerges from a comparison of these burials are the differences between the memory sites they have created. Kings Domain is on hill overlooking the Queen Victoria Monument in Melbourne (Figure 6.5). For some it is a perfect choice as it is symbolic of the Ancestors reclaiming land belonging to the King and then 'watching over Queen Victoria and consequently the land of Victoria that is named after her' (Faulkhead & Berg, 2010, p. 35). This is a site that therefore be read as a challenge to the hegemonic memory that ignores Indigenous histories. The burial and site and memorial at Kings Domain are now registered as a significant Aboriginal site under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, but at the time the burial ceremony was being planned there were objections that the site held no significance for

the Koorie community (The Herald, 1985). Another issue was that Kings Domain is a public site, as Mark Dugay-Grist states; 'I find peace over there. But some others don't find peace. Some people say it's not private. Some people say that it should be in a more secluded area' (in Faulkhead & Berg, 2010, p. 35).

At Kings Domain, although the burial is explicitly marked the site has porous boundaries with the surrounding park, blending into and becoming part of the everyday landscape (Marshall, 2004; Szpunar, 2010). In contrast, at Weeroona the boundaries of the site are controlled by being situated within an established cemetery site (Figure 6.6). So, in choosing to bury the remains in a private cemetery and distinctly Aboriginal space, in some respects Weeroona is a counter memory site to Kings Domain.

What the repatriation team at Museums Victoria also made clear about the Weeroona burial was the length of time needed to work through the consultations with different communities, plan the ceremony and organise the event, which involved sending letters to between twelve and fourteen thousand people and holding meetings all around Victoria (L. Allen, Interview 27th May 2015). Yet even with this extensive consultation there were still dissenting voices, although, as Faulkhead and Berg (2010, p. xvi) argue, this should not necessarily be framed as problematic. The Indigenous nations of Australia are not homogenous and disagreements should be accepted as a reflection of the different cultures, beliefs and differences of opinion between individuals and communities.



Kings Domain 1985

In 1985 Gunditjmara Elder and former Chief Executive Office for the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Jim Berg discovered that Museum Victoria held ancestral remains that were from Victoria but recorded as 'not provenanced'. When Berg found out the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to the Museum were not making arrangements to have these remains buried, he approached the Melbourne City Parks and Gardens Committee about a possible burial site (Berg, 2010, p. 22). Once a site had been found at Kings Domain Gardens in Melbourne, and Melbourne City Council had agreed to cover the costs, Koorie communities through Victoria were invited to attend the burial. On the day of the burial a procession of two hundred people carried the thirty-eight sets of bark wrapped remains though Melbourne to the burial site at Kings Domain. The site of the burial was marked with a boulder with an embedded plaque that states that site is the resting place for the skeletal remains of thirty-eight Aboriginal people who represent of the thirty-eight tribes of Victoria listed on the memorial.



Weeroona 2012

The continuing repatriation of Aboriginal remains meant that by 2002 Museums Victoria held 130 sets of unprovenanced remains and began consulting with Koorie communities across Victoria about another burial. The burial finally took place 2012 in a dedicated area of Weeroona cemetery. On the day, those attending the burial decided to line the pits with fresh leaves and people brought elements from their own country to add to the graves. The remains, wrapped in hessian, had a fresh leaf added to mark the position of the head before being passed down a line of people to the gravesite (L. Allen, Interview 27th May 2015). These spontaneous acts demonstrated how people drew on customary knowledge to be able to resolve how to carry out the burial. Ceremony was an important factor, with the unknown provenance and physical presence of the remains prompting a combining of traditional knowledge and the creation of an unplanned hybrid practice.

Figure 6.5 (Upper): Kings Domain Gardens, Melbourne

Figure 6.6 (Lower): Weeroona Cemetery, Victoria

Images: S. Morton July 2015

Of the remains repatriated by RCS in 2003 there were six sets that could only be provenanced to Australia. If further archival research does not reveal more information or communities decide they do not want to accept remains based on the results of biometric provenancing, there are questions around the future for these remains and the meanings that they hold for both Indigenous and non-indigenous interests. In Australia, the notion of a National Keeping Place for unprovenanced ancestral remains was initially suggested when the first part of the Edinburgh University collections were returned in 1991 (Hanchant, 2002, p. 314). Between 1997 and 1998, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) held consultations that included the issue of unprovenanced remains, followed by another consultation in 2004 carried out by National Museum Australia on behalf of the Australian Government. Both consultations reflected the concern that museums, despite the best intentions of the staff, were not culturally appropriate locations for ancestral remains and the proposal of a National Keeping Place was supported (ACIR, 2014, p. 8).

What also came out of these consultations was importance of Indigenous control and ownership over the process of establishing any such place (ACIR, 2013, p. 3). In 2013 the Advisory Committee for Indigenous Repatriation (ACIR) sent out a discussion paper and survey to seek opinions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities about the location, form and function that a National Keeping Place might take.²⁶ Published in 2014, the results of the now titled *National Resting Place Consultation* recommended a site in Canberra, within sight of Parliament House. The aim being a site that would act as a resting place for the ancestors and be both a public and ceremonial space. The report also states the National Resting Place should be controlled and run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the extent of any further provenancing work should be a matter for the governing authority of the site, taking into account 'prevailing community opinion' (ACIR, 2014, p. 1).

In New Zealand, the Karanga Aotearoa repatriation programme at Te Papa Tongarewa are undertaking a similar consultation process. As in Australia, the discussions are still ongoing but the interment of unprovenanced remains in a Putunga Kohahi (mausoleum) in Wellington is one suggestion (Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme, 2010, p. 14). Yet although the results of the consultations in Australia and New Zealand indicate the idea of a National Keeping or Resting Place is viewed favourably, for some the fact the current conversation is being state driven is problematic, as they feel this could undermine Aboriginal autonomy and moves towards sovereignty.

Memorial and Memory

In the discussions and consultations on where a National Keeping Place or Resting Place should be, there have been suggestions based on the spiritual importance and meaning of particular places. In New Zealand, Te Rerenga Wairua, the area at the top of North Island where Māori believe the spirit travels back to its traditional homeland, has been suggested (Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme, 2010). In Australia, Uluru is one of the sites put forward for the burial of unprovenanced remains due to its spiritual nature and central location, and in Tasmania the scattering of cremated unprovenanced ancestral remains takes place at the symbolic site of putalina. Yet, as well as the previously discussed spiritual threat of having strangers on country, there are also practical issues around land ownership and continued management and protection of these sites.

In Australia, the recommendation of the Aboriginal Committee on Indigenous Repatriation (ACIR) is for the interment of unprovenanced remains in a National Resting Place located in Canberra. For the ACIR (2013, p. 4), the site would be a sacred, symbolic place to 'bring closure for the ancestors so that their dignity is recognised' but it would also act as a political statement by

I sort of envisage a National Keeping Place of sorts being like a memorial, a place where...people can come and the general public can come and learn about that history and sort of a respectful and quiet sort of a place with Indigenous involvement...and an educational aspect as well as...for teaching [...] the general public, or even school groups, about repatriation and why these remains ended up where they are.

Interview with Lee Burgess,
National Museum Australia, 20th May 2015

bringing a national focus to historic injustices and as such, be a vehicle for national reconciliation. However, in comparing the plan for a National Resting Place to other memorial sites, such as the Australian War Memorial at Canberra a fundamental difference emerges. The war memorial is a space where the absent dead are made present. In contrast, in a National Resting Place the remains of the dead would be present within the space, creating tensions between the space as a final resting place for the ancestors and as a site of public memorial.

As Dwyer and Alderman (2008) suggest, where the past is remembered actively shapes the process of commemoration and there is often a social negotiation and struggle over where is best to emplace that memory within the cultural landscape. While this concept of social negotiation and struggle can be applied to the debates about unprovenanced ancestral remains, the issue here is not just where to emplace memory in the landscape but where to emplace the ancestral remains; what must also be considered is the material presence of the remains themselves.

The Meanings of the Lost People

In lacking an identity, unprovenanced ancestral remains create a problem that needs to be resolved, while also foregrounding a history of forced removal and loss of cultural identity. Unlike examples such as the Unknown Soldier, whose body comes to symbolise universality through the stripping of identity (Ignjatovic, 2010; Wittman, 2011), the loss of identity that has allowed unprovenanced ancestral remains to become representative of all Indigenous peoples at a national scale has not been done by design. By becoming situated as the 'lost people' unprovenanced remains come to represent loss on many levels, and their ability to embody loss and a painful history at a national level has given them political agency and symbolic efficacy (Verdery, 1999).

In Australia and New Zealand, discussions about where to place unprovenanced remains have highlighted the absence of a memorial within the national memorial landscape and the consultations about a National Resting Place have become part of a narrative of restitution. Therefore, in lacking provenance, these remains have come to represent a period of difficult and confronting history. The argument for bringing them together at a National Resting Place is that this would be a space that would disrupt the idealistic view of a relatively uniform Australian heritage (Jones & Birdsall-Jones, 2008) and promote a better public understanding of what is currently a silenced history and past.

However, the idea of a National Keeping Place is not unproblematic, as in becoming representative of all Indigenous people and in memorialising that meaning as part of the national reconciliation agenda, there is the possibility of ideas about Indigeneity becoming a fixed body of knowledge (Russell, 2012). The other source of tension in the National Keeping Place discussions comes from the continuing affective presence of the remains as ancestors. In this debate, the ambivalent agency of ancestral remains becomes evident as the agency of the remains as unconscious material objects comes into conflict with their agency as ancestors who continue to make demands on society, require respectful treatment and have the potential to cause harm.

Having previously argued for the reframing of repatriation as part of a process of decolonisation in which there is space for communities to discuss, debate and disagree on how to proceed, it is now suggested that the discussions around how to deal with unprovenanced ancestral remains be understood in the same terms. These are discussions that will continue at local, state and national levels and therefore to understand the impacts of repatriation it is important to recognise the role of unprovenanced ancestral remains as social and political agents at different scales.

6.4 Mapping the Documentation

Within the museum sector there has been much discussion about the repatriation of human remains and restitution of cultural artefacts but less attention paid to the meanings, use and management of documentation once the objects to which it relates have left the collections.

RCS holds information about repatriated remains, and the history of their collection; information that has been duplicated and shared as part of repatriation practice. This information is held in the archives, in the museum accession registers, on record cards, in hard copy files and in the museum database. When items are deaccessioned from the collections, copies of this information, as well as the records of the deaccessioning process itself, are gathered together to create an 'exit file'.

As illustrated in the extracts opposite from letters relating to a request for the return of ancestral remains from Geoff Clark, Chairman of the Brambuk Cultural Centre, the exit files are a rich and detailed source of information from which to reconstruct the history of repatriation at RCS. Following work in historical geography that acknowledges the process of creating an archive is a social practice that affects the material itself (Gagen et al., 2007; Kurtz, 2001; Moore, 2010; Ogborn, 2003), these archives can also be read against the grain to explore how repatriated material was, and is conceptualised within the museum.

Absence and Presence

The information contained in the RCS exit files shows how repatriation drove the creation of an archive of material that as well as containing information about the remains, documents the repatriation process itself. What emerges

The Elders of this region have instructed me as their representative to write and request the return of these peoples remains so they may continue their spiritual pass.

Letter from Geoff Clark to Sir Terence English 13th July 1990
Royal College of Surgeons of England Museum Archive Exit File 92

I must be able to explain to Council what interests you represent and to check with other interested parties the validity of your claim. I am sure that you will appreciate our anxiety that these remains should not be placed in the wrong hands. There are well-known examples of this happening and you have already urged us not to release them to the Australian High Commissioner in London. Rest assured that we will give the matter the most careful attention and that the remains will thereby suffer no loss of dignity.

Letter from Sir Terence English to Geoff Clark 15th July 1990
Royal College of Surgeons of England Museum Archive Exit File 92

from the study of the RCS exit files is that the social networks in which the remains are enmeshed can be mapped through the information they contain. Furthermore, within the correspondence in the RCS exit files are examples of requests for information and the transfer of documentation, suggesting an enactment of social relationships through information about the remains, as well as through the remains themselves.

In retaining the information about the repatriations, the museum staff at RCS appear to have attached an importance to the discussions and process from its earliest stages. Yet the object record for each set of remains was deleted from the museums database after the repatriation of the remains. This is not to say this information was lost, hard copies travelled with the remains and are still present in the RCS exit files, but the transfer of the object records from live digital files to static records within the archive does raise some interesting questions about the perceived use and meanings of information relating to deaccessioned objects.

Considering the meanings of the documentation that RCS holds foregrounds the absence of those remains from the museum collections. In the museum, as in the cemetery, death is both absent and present with objects being the vehicle through which the absent is made present. Law (2004, p. 84) describes this as manifest absence and as such, as Meier et al. (2013) assert, absence is different from gone, erased or leaving no trace; absence is not a void and 'social relations are performed not only around what is there, but sometimes also around the presence of what is not' (Hetherington, 2004, p. 159). The absence of repatriated remains in the collections is therefore made present through their presence in object records and institutional documentation.

In his work on absence, Hetherington (2003; 2004) suggests that absence can have materiality, agency and be spatially located. Yet is it the absence of these specimens that has agency or is it the records and documentation that have the agency to make the absent present and meaningful? If we accept that absence comes to be present only when attended to, then to map the geographies of absence within museum collections attention needs to be paid to the traces that draw those absences into the present. Absence comes to be present only when it is attended to as being absent and is inherently interwoven with lived experience (Meier et al., 2013; Meyer & Woodthorpe, 2008). So, to frame the documentation in this way is to suggest it be considered as present and having its own agency and meanings.

Multiple and Mobile

Within UK museum practice, when items are transferred it is expected that the documentation about those items will travel with them, either as hard copies or digital versions. In relation to the repatriation of human remains, the documentation referred to usually relates to the information the museum holds on provenance, copies of biometric data, analytical results and collections records. As part of the repatriation process this information travels with the remains and is also retained by the returning institution. On the return of ancestral remains to communities, the community receive the information about the remains but the museum or organisations managing the repatriation also keeps a copy; the information is not only made mobile but also multiple.

Documentation can also move through institutions independently of the remains it related to. In discussing the repatriation to Australia with the Repatriation Unit staff at National Museum Australia it became clear that this was exactly what had happened to the documentation from RCS. Prior to the 2003 repatriation to Australia, museum staff and researchers gathered together all the available information in the RCS archives and created an information

sheet for each set of remains, but the journey of that documentation diverged from that of the remains on their return to Australia. Since the repatriation from RCS in 2003, the management of repatriation in Australia has changed and the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA) no longer oversee the process. Yet the National Museum Australia Repatriation Unit still hold remains from this repatriation have been unable to get hold of the documentation and suspect that even if FAIRA agreed to provide a copy, given the time that has passed it would probably be difficult to locate the information. It also appears that the changes to the repatriation process have not eliminated this problem, partly due to issues around the control of information.

Repatriation can be a long process, during which the remains need to not only be stored but also curated. The maintenance of registers, logs and databases of information allows for the identification of remains, research on their provenance, and details about their history to be passed onto the relevant community. Museums continuing to hold information once remains have been returned maintains a link with communities who have had remains repatriated to them and means information can be made accessible to communities. However as Fforde et al. (2014) call attention to, in other contexts information about repatriated remains is freely circulated within and beyond European scientific communities, with museums continuing to assume rights of curatorship and using information in a manner that may be contrary to the wishes of Indigenous communities. This then raises questions around who has the power and authority with regards to the custodianship of information about repatriated ancestral remains.

In framing repatriation as a returning of control, the control over the information about and gained from ancestral remains also needs to be

considered. The physical remains and the information about those remains are separate things; documentation and data can be reproducible and multiple, its presence can mark absence and be used to trace the journey ancestral remains have taken, but it can also take its own journeys, distinct of those taken by the remains to which it relates. As Michael Christie writes in relation to databases, '[they] are not innocent objects. They carry within them particular culturally and historically contingent assumptions about the nature of the world, and the nature of knowledge; what it is, and how it can be preserved and renewed' (Christie, 2004, p. 4). For some, if museums are retaining information related to repatriated remains, this is not the returning of control the process is purported to be. However, the difficulty of separating out information about particular remains from complex and entangled historical archives has to be recognised, as do the challenges of curating this type of information.

Documenting the Social

At RCS, the documentation of the human remains in the collections tends to focus on the anatomy or pathology of the specimen. Though sometimes the name and biographical details of the living person may be known, the majority of specimens are anonymous and associated with the surgeon or anatomist that collected them rather than the living person they came from (Alberti, 2011). The descriptions in the records are usually clinical with social details appearing only when needed as part of a medical explanation. Although some object records do contain historical and biographical narratives, for the most part the nature of the collections means the focus of the documentation is not on social histories or biographies.

Yet this does not mean that this rich social information is not retained. At RCS historical information relating to the collection of the remains and the collectors themselves is held in the archives. It is accessioned and catalogued, and as such is part of the RCS collections. Conversely, the position of the information in the

museum exit files is less well defined. Although part of the museums documentation, the documents in the exit files are not catalogued and so are not considered part of the RCS collections. It is information about the remains that has been prioritised, the documentation about the process itself and those involved is of interest but considered secondary and less important, and those left to curate it seem uncertain about the meanings of this information and its potential future use.

Matt Poll, Curator of Indigenous Heritage and Repatriation Project Officer at Sydney University provides an alternative view, stating that 'there is a younger educated and computer literate generation that is questioning about the past, for example artists have already started mining archives and using the information in their work' (M. Poll, Interview 23rd July 2015). Based on the response from the Indigenous community members spoken to as part of this research, there certainly appears to be an interest in not only documenting the repatriation process but also in interrogating that documentation to find new ways of understanding the process and the people involved. Yet in the current discussions around control and ownership of scientific data, the meanings of the social archive are in danger of being obscured.

Having recognised the need to reflect on how documentation about repatriated remains and the process of repatriation might be shared and utilised, the team involved with the Return, Reconcile, Renew (RRR) project are developing a central archive that will hold copies of the documentation returned with remains as well as repatriation information currently held in community archives.²⁷ Attending to the noted shortcomings of standard classification schemes to document relationships and the need for structures that support Indigenous ways of knowing, cultural protocols and control (Maina, 2012), the technological basis for the online archive will be the Online Heritage Resource Manager (OHRM) at the University of Melbourne Scholarship Research

I've been hounded by friends of mine for the last decade to write a book, but my answer always is, who has the time? We've kept really, really good records, our trip to the Natural History Museum in 2013 was intended to be our last repatriation so we got funding and brought a film crew [...] and we created a short, twenty, twenty-five minutes movie documenting the trip and then an article was written about the work that led to us getting there. [...] we had a public premier [...] and people were just like, I mean they were definitely moved by it.

In terms of is that story important to our community, I would say absolutely. I wish I had the time to work with someone else, I mean I could never write [a book] myself, I want to work with someone else to do it because we've done, I mean we've done over one hundred repatriation cases. [...] So telling the story is important but having the time to do so is probably more important

Interview with Edward Ayau, 15th May 2015

Centre. As Forde et al. (2014, pp. 3-4) explain, by documenting both the entities and their relationships in an open ontology using standard form, an OHRM project can be responsive to the information needs of a community while not compromising the evidential foundations of the knowledge captured in archives, records, testimony or other forms of community remembering and knowing'. Therefore, adding repatriation documentation to the *Return, Reconcile, Renew* online database puts the information together in new ways and different contexts, creating new nodes within social networks.

Eventually the RRR online database will hold information about the ancestral remains repatriated from RCS, as community and organisational archives that contain copies of the information in the RCS exit files are added. Through this information the link between RCS and the Indigenous communities who have had remains returned to them will be maintained and so understanding the documentation as an actor that has agency within social networks allows for the boundaries between the data about the remains and the records of the process of repatriation to be blurred. Yet, in recognising the agency of this information questions around the responsibilities of the organisations holding documentation that can be considered as containing Indigenous knowledge are raised.

Curating Indigenous Knowledge

To reach an understanding of what considering repatriation archives and the information about ancestral remains as containing Indigenous knowledge might mean for museums and institutions, a useful starting place is work that acknowledges the impact and importance of archives in the lives of Indigenous people in Australia. What has become increasingly recognised, is the proliferation of Indigenous knowledge housed within Western or 'Eurocentric' archives (Cawthorn & Cohen, 2013; Maina, 2012; Nakata & Langton, 2007), along with an understanding that documentation conventions can act as

pervasive structures of discrimination (Turner, 2015, p. 659). So while access to the information held in these archives has been shown to augment traditional forms of knowledge, other commentators have highlighted the issues that accessing archival material can raise for Aboriginal people (Ormond-Parker & Sloggett, 2012; Williams et al., 2006).

In *Reflections in a Cracked Mirror*, Richard Robins (2008) questions how mainstream museum spaces can be utilised as tools of cultural understanding that assist communities in accessing, managing or even safeguarding their cultural materials. The recognition that many museums in Australia hold cross cultural archives has led to projects to make this information, which is often relevant to the civil, political and legal rights of Aboriginal people, available to Aboriginal communities (McKemmish et al., 2010; Ormond-Parker & Sloggett, 2012; Scales et al., 2013). However, the practice of sharing and co-curating collections that has been developed in countries such as Canada, New Zealand and Australia, becomes more difficult at an international scale.

One area where the co-curation of collections has been successfully implemented is ethnographic photography collections. Elizabeth Edwards (2001, 2003), positions ethnographic photographs in museums as the visual legacy of sets of encounters and relationships, and challenges museums to consider the process required to open up those images to other readings. In providing insight on past experiences, collections such as photographs, documents and sound recordings can be sites of active engagement for the present and act as 'critical bridges to the future' (Stanton, 2003, p. 151).

What makes these types of collections different from objects is that they can be made multiple; digital versions of the images held by museums have an agency that relates to the original photographs but can also act independently of them.

It is therefore argued that applying this same understanding of the agency to the documentation held at RCS, has the power to enliven the repatriation archives through foregrounding them as agents within social networks. Yet this approach is not unproblematic as it raises issues in relation to the culturally appropriate management of information and the role of museums in facilitating engagement with communities. For although the responsibilities of holding images and information of Indigenous peoples have begun to be addressed in relation to accessioned collections (Edwards, 2001, 2003; Peers & Brown, 2009), museum records have not yet been considered in the same way.

When asked about the retention of documentation related to repatriated remains and the repatriation process, RCS Curator Sarah Pearson explained that to her knowledge, the information RCS retained was in consultation with the organisations to whom the remains were returned and that any use of the material would have to be driven by the wishes of the relevant community (S.Pearson, Interview 8th January 2015). Yet while this policy would seem to be the ethical approach for the museum to take, in practice the expectation of a homogenous Indigenous opinion is problematic as it can be perceived as a continuation of colonial control in which Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty are not recognised. Therefore, museum staff need to allow for discussion and differences of opinion and be aware there may be a difference between what community members state publicly and think privately. This means just as when repatriating remains, it can be difficult for museums to be sure they are doing 'the right thing' (Tythacott & Arvanitis, 2014, p. 9). For example, at RCS the concerns raised in relation to being sure ancestral remains were returned to the right people were resolved by the Australian Government legitimising the organisations involved. Yet, it was Western society that required a single voice to negotiate with, a group that represented a whole community, or in the case of FAIRA, many different communities.

Requiring Indigenous peoples to define themselves in opposition to the West is an identified trend within post-colonial identity politics (Forsyth, 2012), with similar issues also evident in relation to bio information, where there can be an expectation for Indigenous communities to generate and maintain protective biosocial ties with related samples. Coming from a legal standpoint, Forsyth (2012, pp. 2-3) argues that the complications of community ownership and rights are often glossed over 'with policy makers and legislative drafters making assumptions about the homogeneity and boundedness of local communities that overlook the complex realities of group dynamics'. This is an approach that risks disenfranchising those who lack power within those communities. A view supported by accounts of how local, state or international interventions can benefit some, while excluding others who believe they also have traditional rights (for example Brown, 2010; Cang, 2007).

This position is one that problematises the ability of museums to simply state they respect the views of 'community'. Even if museums set out in policy that static views or constructions of community and identity will be avoided through the inclusion of Indigenous voices within museum process, this policy is not always achieved in practice. There is therefore a need for museum professionals in the UK to be more alive to the tensions around the control, ownership and access to information about repatriated ancestral remains and the repatriation process, something that begins with the recognition of the agency of the information museums hold.

One of the questions that the Royal College of Surgeons wanted this research project to explore was the viability of maintaining the relationships with Indigenous organisations and communities established through the repatriation process. This interest was based on the view that although museums may lose human remains from their collections through repatriation, the process allows

new relationships to develop and brings different views and understanding of the collections into the institution (Besterman, 2004; Conaty, 2003; Conaty, 2006; Fforde, 2004; Peers, 2004). However, for museums like RCS that do not hold broader ethnographic collections, it can be argued that the potential to develop and maintain these types of relationships beyond the personal connection forged during the process of return, is limited (Scott & Luby, 2007). Yet, despite there not being the collections through which to maintain and develop relationships, the information the museum holds, both about the returned remains and the repatriation process offers similar, if perhaps less immediate potential.

In making the case for the documentation of repatriation and repatriated ancestral remains to be considered as containing Indigenous knowledge it is important to be cognisant of the issues this conceptualisation may raise for museums. As Nakata et al. (2008) highlight, there is a risk that in acknowledging them as stakeholders, Indigenous communities become a problem to solve rather than a relationship to be developed.

Recognising that museums continue to hold Indigenous knowledge post repatriation certainly raises some complex questions that require careful consideration and an approach that takes account of the idiosyncratic nature of museums and avoids homogenisation of Indigenous communities. In reframing repatriation as part of process of decolonisation, the agency of all forms of documentation and information related to the remains, their collection, their time as parts of museum collections and eventually their repatriation can be taken into account. I would therefore argue there is a need for further consideration and study of the materialities of repatriation documentation and ongoing developments such as the *Return, Reconcile, Renew* project if we are to understand the ongoing legacies of the repatriation process.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The Impact of Repatriation on Museums

With any attempt to understand what the impacts of repatriation have been on museum practice, there is a need to consider the wider socio-cultural shift around the conceptualisation of the dead body and the development of new theoretical approaches to museum practice with in which repatriation is entangled. Just as the study of Indigenous human remains was undertaken within a colonial ideology (Fforde, 2004), so repatriation is situated within a political context in which neither side is immune from socio-political influence (Gould, 1981; Turnbull, 2002).

Tiffany Jenkins (2011) has argued that the shift in thinking around the repatriation of human remains that occurred in the UK, is symptomatic of a crisis of cultural authority within museums and has resulted in the problematisation of human remains collections more broadly. In not only being the result of, but also contributing to a shift in museum practice that has created a role for museums as ethical mediators (Di Domenico, 2015), repatriation can certainly be framed as having problematised human remains collections as Jenkins suggests. At RCS, discussions about the repatriation of human remains were part of wider debates and shifts in practice related to the questioning of medical ethics that occurred in the late 1990s and the establishment of the Human Tissue Authority (Gieson, 2013; Jenkins, 2011; Swain, 2013). However, what has also emerged is the influence of people, place and the wider collections on both decision making and what is considered respectful in terms of storing, handling and displaying human remains. In understanding museums as heterogeneous, it becomes clear that the respectful

treatment of human remains is a cultural construct influenced by its context. What is therefore proposed is the replacement of the concept of repatriation as having problematised human remains collections within UK museums with a nuanced and contextually sensitive understanding of repatriation that recognises the role of the remains in social interactions that impact on the emotional geographies of museum practice.

Although in each museum visited what the staff regarded as appropriate behaviour in relation to human remains varied, what was deemed to be respectful within that context was demonstrated through performance and practice. So, although repatriation does appear to have foregrounded alternative understandings of the dead body, the meanings human remains hold are not fixed or static. In order to map the social interactions between museum staff and the objects they care for, Geoghegan and Hess (2014, p. 461) use the concept of object-love (Macdonald, 2002; Morrison et al., 2013) to interpret the sensory experience of the store room. For Geoghegan and Hess, object-love offers a way of understanding affect and emotion by taking into account the need to care for material heritage that underpins the form and function of the space. However, the affective presence of human remains and their agency to invoke immaterial meanings and emotions are not necessarily connected to those particular remains, time or place.

In relation to the corporeality of the dead body, Fontein and Harris (2013, pp. 116-117) ask whether in absence of personhood, identity and social relatedness, this material can be conceived as of as 'human' at all. The responses from the museum staff interviewed suggest that in this context the answer is yes, as demonstrated by the consideration of human remains as special and different from objects and even animal remains within the collection. So having argued that the emotional geographies of the human remains store cannot be understood through the concept of object-love alone,

it is suggested that work on museum geographies and materiality can be combined with the concept of deathscapes as places associated with and places for the dead (Cloke & Pawson, 2008; Hartig & Dunn, 1998; Kong, 1999; Maddrell, 2010; Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010a; Young & Light, 2013), to propose that museum spaces that contain human remains can be understood through this lens.

Understanding the museum as a deathscape foregrounds how for those making repatriation claims, their ancestral remains are out of place (Cresswell, 1996). However, for other stakeholders, the museum is a proper place for the long dead, although the meanings that these dead bodies hold are multiple and fluctuating; the boundary that separates subjects and objects is an unstable one. Acknowledging this spatial aspect therefore opens up a new way of theorising and discussing repatriation. Rather than a contest between science and tradition in which the remains are either object or ancestor, what repatriation claims can be understood to represent are the different views about the proper place for certain remains. As Maddrell and Sidaway (2010b, p. 3) point out, death being out of its proper place is 'at the heart of many of the individual and collective negotiations around death, dying, mourning and remembrance', and thinking about repatriation in this way opens up different ways of exploring the social and cultural meanings of human remains collections within museums.

7.2 The Process of Repatriation

Focusing on the materiality and following the journey of the remains repatriated from RCS has illustrated the complexities of the repatriation process and the intersection of the remains with issues of land rights, health, sovereignty and politics at local, national and state levels. This understanding of the meanings of repatriation as entangled and interdependent contrasts with

the presentation of the process as being somehow separate from wider concerns or issues communities face (Batty, 2005; Foley, 2004; Jenkins, 2011; Nail, 1994), and as being either political *or* therapeutic (Forsman, 1997; Nilsson Stutz, 2013) with the remains categorised as political symbols or a means to heal the 'wounds of history' (Thornton, 2002).

For the members of the Ngarrindjeri spoken with, returning the Old People (ancestral remains) to country is a burden and obligation which can also be therapeutic as part of a wider moves towards self-determination and sovereignty (Hemming & Wilson, 2010). In this example, the therapeutic and political meanings of the remains are entangled, suggesting that any study of the meanings of repatriation for the Ngarrindjeri needs to address the emotive materiality and affective agency of the remains at local as well as national and international scales. Speaking to representatives from communities, it became clear that ancestral remains can be confronting, challenging and feed into community tensions, suggesting that the framing of repatriation as therapeutic is overly simplistic and highlighting the importance of taking into account the material properties of the remains.

Following the journey of RCS remains has foregrounded some of the practical issues created by the material presence of the remains; the remains are material and as such require space for storage, land for burial, funding for transport and burial, and the time (from people) to carry out the process. In the case of unprovenanced ancestral remains, their corporality is what allows them to become symbolic of loss and a painful history at a national level. Yet it also means ongoing bodily interactions with the remains as provenancing work continues, and that the space they occupy has become a key component in discussions about where they will eventually come to rest; the material and symbolic cannot be separated.

Based on the experience of following the remains returned by RCS, it is argued that acknowledging the practicalities of dealing with repatriated remains is fundamental to understanding the meanings created by repatriation process. Following Hodder's (2012, p. 1) suggestion that we 'look more closely at things themselves' led to the discovery that the remains returned from RCS that had not yet been returned to communities were still active in an ongoing process of repatriation. At RCS, and the other participant museums in the UK, it was found the impacts of repatriation were entangled and difficult to isolate. In the museums visited in Australia and New Zealand, the impacts of the repatriation of human remains could be more clearly determined as the presence of the remains has led to the creation of ancestral remains stores, a particular type of cultural space more closely associated with loss and mourning than the human remains stores visited in the UK. Ancestral remains stores are liminal spaces in which the boundaries between museum and other cultural practices become indistinct. So, although remains may not be in their proper place, their presence in the ancestral remains store is not necessarily inappropriate.

Therefore, arguing that return of the ancestral remains from RCS should be understood as part of a process of decolonisation rather than a post-colonial act, is meant to highlight the complex and long-term nature of repatriation. Neither the process of repatriation or the remains themselves can be understood in isolation. In reframing repatriation in this way space is created within which to recognise the agency of the remains to confront, disrupt and challenge, and acknowledge that discussion, debate and disagreement are valid and important parts of the repatriation process.

7.3 The Control of Information

In following the journey of the ancestral remains repatriated from RCS, alongside the materialities of the remains, the complex meanings of the related

documentation has come into view. This is information about the remains held in museums and that has travelled with, and sometimes independently of those remains. It is also the information relating to the process of repatriation itself, the letters, emails, reports and photographs that document the network of individuals involved. The process of repatriation creates a distributed archive as information is added, reconfigured in new ways, and becomes multiple and mobile.

That material remains are a source of data, be that biometric, isotopic, or genomic, is an important topic of discussion, especially in relation to unprovenanced remains (Bardill, 2014; Pardoe, 2013; TallBear, 2013b). This links the discussions around repatriated ancestral remains with current debates about genetic research on Indigenous populations and concerns about the use of genetic research to define indigeneity based on a western way of understanding relatedness (Bardill, 2014; Kowal et al., 2013; Nash, 2012; TallBear, 2013a, 2013b). This unease around the potential uses of the data produced to aid the identification of the remains, highlights how information about repatriated remains can continue to be present and have agency, even in the absence of the its source.

The issues around use and control of the information derived from bodily components in the context of repatriation also echo those found in wider debates on bio-information (Bridge et al., 2003; Greenhough, 2006; Greenhough & Roe, 2006; Parry, 2004; Parry & Gere, 2006; Waldby & Mitchell, 2006; Widdows, 2009), and it is clear that further thought needs to be given to the management and control of information relating to repatriated remains. Influenced by feminist critiques of the unconnected individual (see Donchin & Purdy, 1999; Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000; Tong, 2001; Wolf, 1996) and supported by an understanding of the genetic individual as fundamentally connected, Heather Widdows (2009, p. 180) points to a shift from an individual focused

ethic, to one in which adopts broader models of consent. While advocating for ethical frameworks that ‘accommodate the right and interest of groups as well as individuals’. Widdows also acknowledges that communal models can be problematic. For example, there are difficulties around who speaks for the group, minority representation and the protection of vulnerable individuals. In relation to how museums work with Indigenous peoples, what Widdow’s consideration of the impact of genetics on ethical models provokes, are important questions around who is legitimate, who are the authorised and alternative voices, and who makes those decisions.

7.4 Agency, Absence and Presence

Just as human remains can hold multiple meanings that coalesce, compete and conflict, this is also true of their agency as actors within social networks. Krmpotich et al. (2010, p. 373) state that attempts to separate out the agency ‘accrued from the material property of the bone and that accrued from bones as parts of human beings’ are counter-productive. However, to understand the complex network of social relations in which repatriated remains are active there is a need to be alive to these different types of agency. For example, when dealing with unprovenanced remains, the agency of those remains as sentient ancestors, with potentially harmful will and intention, co-exists and sometimes conflicts with the non-sentient material agency of the remains. Although these types of agency are interdependent and interact to force conversations about land, ownership and memorial, it is proposed that identifying them as distinct allows for a more nuanced understanding of the different ways ancestral remains act in social relations and impact on social interactions.

In his work on absence, Hetherington (2003; 2004) describes an agency of the absent that resonates with Hallam and Hockey’s (2001) study of how the dead are incorporated into lives of the living through the objects they leave behind.

What Hallam and Hockey suggest is that traces in the socio-material world draw absences into the present situation and it would therefore seem logical to argue that absence goes with presence, in what Meyer (2012, p. 107) terms the ‘relational ontology of absence’. Yet, following Hetherington’s (2004, p. 162) premise that the absent is moved along rather than ever been fully gone, Meyer proposes a less dualistic approach in which absence is conceived as a trace. For Meyer this then raises questions around how we ‘follow and describe the movements, the attachments, the translations and representations through which absence becomes matter and through which absence comes to matter’ (Meyer, 2012, p. 107).

These theorisations of absence offer a new lens through which to view repatriation, as the process can be understood in terms of the tension between absence and presence; the presence of the remains in one place marking their absence in another. Thinking about the repatriation process in these terms also foregrounds the traces that draw the absence of the repatriated remains into the present. One of these traces is the information about the remains held by museums and communities which is a legacy of the restitution process not considered within the wider literature (for example Greenfield, 1989; Hitchens, 1997; Kendall, 2011; Tythacott & Arvanitis, 2014).

The consideration of the documentation related to the RCS repatriation has illustrated the agency of the information and role it can play within social networks, leading to the conclusion a significant legacy of repatriation for RCS is information the museum continues to hold. It is therefore through this information that RCS might maintain and develop relationships with Indigenous organisations and communities. Yet although the recognition of the RCS repatriation archive as containing Indigenous knowledge foregrounds its meaning and potential, it also highlights that UK museums need to be aware of

the agency of the information they continue to hold, recognise the responsibilities of this ongoing stewardship.

7.5 Informing Practice

In limiting the case study for this research to repatriations from RCS it is acknowledged the issues discussed will not reflect the experience of every organisation or community. However, what this approach has brought into focus are certain parts of the repatriation process that, although well understood by those working in repatriation, have received little attention in the wider literature.

Having set out to isolate the impacts of repatriation on policy and practice at RCS, it soon became clear this would be an almost impossible task due to their entanglement with wider discussions about the use of human remains in museum and medical practice. So in thinking about the impacts of repatriation on UK museums it is argued the scope should not be limited to non-European human remains, or even the social act of repatriation itself. The recognition of the ontological instability of human remains, sensitisation of the collections and need to mitigate tensions between different museum identities has created new forms of social networks and relationships in which human remains act as a nexus. While it is difficult, if not impossible, to untangle exactly what impacts repatriation has had on each individual institution in terms of practice, the Indigenous agency of repatriation claims and the influence they have had within the UK should be recognised and also used to continue questioning, challenging and developing our policies and approaches to human remains collections in UK museums.

The current DCMS *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums* states that '[t]raditionally in the United Kingdom human remains are treated with

respect' (DCMS, 2005, p. 8), but what respectful treatment means is not defined. Given the heterogeneous nature of museums, rather than trying to move towards such a definition, it is suggested that acknowledging the concept of respectful treatment as culturally constructed would support museums in developing policies that embrace ambiguity. For it is important to recognise that stating 'we treat human remains with respect' risks becoming a hollow platitude unless some attempt is made to explain what this means within the particular context under discussion. One of the procedural responsibilities listed in the current *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums* is that in handling human remains and claims relating to human remains, museums should demonstrate '[r]esponsible communication, openness and transparency' (DCMS, 2005, p. 14). Key to museums achieving this is for the contextual relationships between the remains, people, practice and buildings to inform future policy developments and the management, use and display of the human remains collection.

With reference to future repatriation practice, an important issue to emerge from the RCS case studies was the requirement for Indigenous people to work within a Western system. During the repatriation negotiations, RCS looked to the Australian and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) for assurance that the TAC and FAIRA were the organisations they should be dealing with. Born out of concerns about the risk of returning remains to the wrong people, it is evident that for RCS national government bodies had an important role in giving legitimacy to the organisations claiming remains. While this can be understood as the museum undertaking due diligence prior to return and could therefore be held up as an example of good practice, this approach can result in Indigenous organisations and communities having to present themselves as a homogeneous group due to the concern that any difference of opinion may undermine their claim.

In his consideration of the legitimacy of authorized and alternative voices in the restitution discourse, Piotr Bienkowski (2014, p. 49) suggests more beneficial than the 'essentialist process of establishing criteria of ownership and rights' is an open, transparent and deliberative process. Yet to move towards the type of deliberative dialogue Bienkowski advocates for there needs to be two fundamental shifts in understanding. The first being to move past the idea of human remains being object or ancestor and to understand repatriation debates as framed by differing views as to whether certain remains are in or out of place within museum spaces. Second, for the reframing repatriation as part of a process of decolonisation in which there is space for discussion and disagreement amongst all stakeholders. While neither of these changes in approach negates the need for discussion, debate and difficult decision making, thinking about repatriation in this way has the potential to foster a greater understanding and engender a more empathetic and nuanced approach to repatriation policy and practice within UK museums.

7.6 Future Work

Described by Tythacott and Arvanitis (2014, p. 1) as one of the 'most important, yet emotive and contentious issues facing Western museums in the twenty-first century' various different approaches to restitution have emerged in recent years. Yet although there are discussions around working with source communities (Conaty, 2006; Krmpotich & Peers, 2011; Scott & Luby, 2007) and different forms of repatriation (Bell, 2003; Peers & Brown, 2009), the legacies of the information and documentation that museums continue to hold post repatriation and the recognition of the implications and potential for the future use of this material has not been part of these conversations. Considering the multiple and mobile nature of the documentation relating to the RCS repatriations and the meanings and agency of this information has drawn attention to this important aspect of the repatriation process and in doing so,

added to the ongoing debates and opened up a new area for discussion in relation to the restitution of cultural objects from museum collections.

In approaching repatriation as an inherently spatial and making links to current themes in geographical research, notably work on bio-information (Greenhough & Roe, 2006; Nash, 2013; Parry, 2004; Parry & Gere, 2006; Parry & Greenhough, forthcoming), remembrance and memorial (Dwyer & Alderman, 2008; Hay et al., 2004; Petersson, 2010; Petersson & Wingren, 2011; Szpunar, 2010) and the development use and meanings created by digital archives (Rose, 2016) it is hoped this research will act as a springboard for future cross-disciplinary work on the repatriation process. For despite being a major achievement of the Indigenous rights movement and the subject of a broad body of work analysing the repatriation debate, the legacies of this global movement of human remains is currently under researched.

What this research has also highlighted are parts of the repatriation process to which cultural geographers could contribute, adding to the broader understanding of the local, national and international political landscapes in which the restitution of ancestral remains and cultural heritage takes place. Following calls for the re-materialization of geography, the interests of geographers in museum spaces and collections have tended to focus on what is present, observable and tangible (DeSilvey, 2006; Geoghegan & Hess, 2014; Hill, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Patchett, 2010) However, drawing on other areas of geographical thought that explore and draw force from absence, the geographies of deaccessioning present an interesting new area of research for cultural geographers interested in museum spaces.

Focusing on one part of the collection has also drawn attention to the potential for further work on the geographies of emotion and affect within museum spaces, particularly in relation to museum stores and the collections they house.

For as Geoghegan (2010) has pointed out, the affective and emotional aspects of behind the scenes museum practice remain under explored, and more-than-representational geographies that explore physical and emotional engagements with museum collections and examine how human remain collections are experienced within museum spaces have much to add to this area of research.

Examining museums with human remains in their collections through the lens of deathscapes has also opened up a new potential area of study, as although museums are spaces in which people encounter the dead and their corporeal remains, they are not sites considered by the current deathscapes literature (Kong, 1999; Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010a; Young & Light, 2013). Within museums the affective presence of human remains can prompt unexpected reactions, acts of remembrance and conversations about death, burial and loss and through considering the behaviours in museum spaces the meanings and social role of the dead body and death in the museum landscape can be explored. There is therefore scope for further cross-disciplinary research into the ways in which museums attempt to control the affective presence of the dead body and the role of the museum in social and cultural understandings of death.

Endnotes

¹ Letter from Elizabeth Allen to Michael Mansell, 4th July 1986. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 92.

² Letter from Corinne Duhig to Caroline Grigson 2nd January 1991. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 92.

³ Letter from Caroline Grigson to Moria G. Simpson 16th May 1994. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 92.

⁴ Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council, 11th July 1991. Royal College of Surgeons of England Minutes of Council 1987-1992.

⁵ Memo from Jane Pickering to Stella Mason titled *Australian Aboriginal remains: Background notes for the meeting with delegation from TAC*, 11th November 1997. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 92

⁶ Email from Simon Chaplin to Heather Sculthorpe, 21st December 2001. Royal College of Surgeons Exit File 92.

⁷ Letter from Sir Peter Morris to Heather Sculthorpe 25th March 2002. Royal College of Surgeons Exit File 82.

⁸ Having been labelled as the last full-blooded Indigenous Tasmanian, after her death in 1876, Truganini's remains were displayed in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the handing back of her remains to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people in 1976 therefore represented a particularly significant and politically symbolic event (Cove, 1995; Perera, 1996; West, 1987)

⁹ Letter to Sir Rodney Sweetnam from Dr Seddon Bennington, 17th December 2007. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 173.

¹⁰ Email from Simon Chaplin to Alan Bennett, 30th June 2009. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 208.

¹¹ Email from David Meanwell to the Royal College of Surgeons of England Museums, 24th May 2010. Royal College of Surgeons of England Exit File 259.

¹² In 1827 Maria Marten was shot and killed by her lover William Corder. Having fled the scene Corder later sent letters to her family purporting to be from Maria but the discovery of the murder created widespread public interest in the

case, with Corder becoming a notorious villain. On being captured and found guilty of the crime Corder was sentenced to hang. His body was then dissected and his skeleton eventually put on display in the Hunterian Museum at The Royal College of Surgeons of England (McCorristine, 2014).

¹³ Letter from Simon Chaplin to Rabbi Professor Jonathon Magonet 22nd August 2001, and Letter from Simon Chaplin to Syma Weinberg 4th September 2001, Royal College of Surgeons Museum Archive, Exit File 78.

¹⁴ Minutes of the Board of Hunterian Trustees, 6th February 2008. Royal College of Surgeons of England

¹⁵ Having studied medicine, William Hunter built up a reputation as a physician and man-midwife. William Hunter's own anatomical collection became the founding collection of The Hunterian Museum at the University of Glasgow.

¹⁶ In his will, John Hunter stipulated his collection was to be sold to the Government in its entirety, but on his death in 1793 Britain was at war and finances were tight. After several petitions to Parliament, in 1799 the government finally agreed to purchase the collection for £15,000 (RCS, undated-b, p. 21).

¹⁷ 'The Royal College of Surgeons in London' was established in 1800 on presentation of a new Royal Charter. In 1843, a new Royal Charter expanded the remit of the organisation beyond the city of London and changed its name to 'The Royal College of Surgeons of England'.

¹⁸ Joseph Barnard Davis was an English medical doctor who is best known as a collector and craniologist. As a polygenist, Barnard was a critic of human speciation and his belief that morphology would provide evidence of a separate origin for different races drove his collecting (Fforde, 2004; MacDonald, 2006). Beginning his collection with the purchase of two skulls in 1843, he accumulated over 1700 crania and 14 complete skeletons. In 1880 he sold his collection to The Royal College of Surgeons, with the transfer from Barnard Davis's home in

Staffordshire to the College in Lincoln's Inn Field, London taking twelve months (Larson, 2014, p. 182; Quigley, 2001)

¹⁹ Popularised by Franz Joseph Gall, the science of phrenology was based on the concept that a person's character was inscribed in their skull. By the mid-1820s phrenology had swept through northern Europe creating what Cooter (as cited in Larson, 2014, p. 169) described as 'craniological mania' and a market for human crania that rivalled that of the anatomists (Larson, 2014; Roginski, 2015; Turnbull, 2007).

²⁰ In line with the Human Tissue Act 2004 the term human remains as used in the *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums* does not include hair and nails, although it is acknowledged that some communities give these a sacred importance (DCMS, 2005, p. 9)

²¹ Haida Gwaii is an archipelago of the northern Pacific coast of Canada. As part of the Canadian province of British Columbia the islands were known as the Queen Charlotte Islands but were formally renamed in June 2010. Haida people have lived on the islands for 13,000 years and currently make up around half of the population.

²² Of relevance to this argument is that the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* to which the UK is a signatory states that Indigenous peoples have the right to the repatriation of their human remains (The United Nations General Assembly, 2007, p. Article 12).

²³ In May 1941 the Hunterian Museum was hit in a bombing raid destroying two-thirds of the collections. Post war it was decided the majority of the human osteology collections, with the exception of certain historical and teaching specimens, should be transferred to the Natural History Museum, a process that was completed in 1955

²⁴ At the Natural History Museum in London, biometrical provenancing is undertaken prior to all repatriations as the records of remains in the museum's provenance was sometimes changed to increase the scientific and monetary value of remains so biometric provenancing is complimentary to detailed archival research to ensure remains are returned to the right community with as much information as possible (M. Clegg, Interview 30th January 2015).

²⁵ This was often done to increase the scientific and or commercial value of the remains.

²⁶ The Advisory Committee for Indigenous Repatriation is an all-Indigenous advisory committee appointed by the Minister for the Arts to advise the Australian Government on policy and issues related to Indigenous repatriation.

²⁷ Beginning in 2013 with funding from the Australian Research Council, the *Return, Reconcile, Renew* project team consisted of representatives from the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC), the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority, Gur A Baradharaw Kod Torres Strait Sea and Land Council, and the Association on American Indian Affairs. The participating research institutions are The Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, The University of Tasmania, Flinders University, The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the University of Otago. The Australian Government's Indigenous Repatriation Unit was a partner and the National Museum of Australia and Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa are also represented.

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Seddon Bennington to Rodney Sweetnam, 17th December 2007, Exit File 173, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Simon Chaplin to Alan Bennett, 30th June 2009, Exit File 208, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Simon Chaplin to Heather Sculthorpe, 21st December 2001, Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Simon Chaplin and Heather Sculthorpe [email exchange] December 2001-March 2002, Exit File 82, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London
Simon Chaplin to Heather Sculthorpe, 5th March 2002, Exit File 82, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London
Simon Chaplin to Jonathon Magonet, 22nd August 2001, Exit File 78, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London
Simon Chaplin to Liz Edwards 27th September 2001, Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Simon Chaplin to Margaret Clegg 20th January 2010, Repatriation, Museum Files, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London
Simon Chaplin to Milly Farrell 18th August 2009, Exit File 208, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

Simon Chaplin to Rodney Dillon 31st October 2002, Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Simon Chaplin, to Syma Weinberg, 4th September 2001, Exit File 78, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London
Terence English to Geoff Clark, 19th September 1990, Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London
Unknown to Terence English, undated, [Draft Letter] Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
William Charles Osman Hill to Byron Josef 13th November 1933, File MS0521/2/32-34, Archives, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
William Charles Osman Hill to Byron Josef 6th December 1932, File MS0521/2/32-34, Archives, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
William Charles Osman Hill to Miss Green 7th March 1933, File MS0521/2/32-34, Archives, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
William Charles Osman Hill to W. Chanmugam 12th November 1932, File MS0521/2/32-34, Archives, The Royal College of Surgeons of England

Minutes and Briefing Documents

Council Minutes Attachment 3C: Skeletal remains 26th June 1991, Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Minutes of the Board of Hunterian Trustees, 6th February 2008. Royal College of Surgeons of England Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council 13th September 1990
(page 362). Royal College of Surgeons Minutes of Council 1987, Archives, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Minutes of the Heritage Committee Meeting 27th October 2000, Exit File 92, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council, 11th July 1991, Royal College of Surgeons of England Minutes of Council 1987-1992, Archives, The Royal College of Surgeons
of England
Royal College of Surgeons of England Briefing 7th July 2011, Exit File 259, Museum Archive, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, London

Appendix 1

Research Participants

Code	Participant	Association	Date	Data
LOR-001	Carina Philips Curator, Wellcome Collection of Anatomy and Pathology	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	14.11.2014	Recorded Interview
LOR-002	Martyn Cooke Head of Conservation	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	11.12.2014	Recorded Interview
LOR-003	Sir Peter Morris College President 2001-2004	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	18.12.2014	Recorded Interview
LOR-004	Bryan Sitch Deputy Head of Collections and Curator of Archaeology	Manchester Museum	06.01.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-005	Dr Campbell Price Curator of Egypt and Sudan	Manchester Museum	06.01.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-007	Sarah Pearson Curator, Hunterian Museum	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	08.01.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-008	Sir Terence English College President 1989-1992	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	19.01.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-009	Dr Margaret Clegg Former Head of the Human Remains Unit	Natural History Museum	30.01.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-010	Prof. Norman MacLeod Researcher & Former Keeper of Palaeontology	Natural History Museum	17.03.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-011	Dr John Jackson Head of Science Policy and Communication	Natural History Museum	18.03.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-012	Dr Paul Smith Director	Oxford University Museum of Natural History	30.03.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-013	Dr Simon Chaplin Former Director of Museums & Special Collections /Former Senior Curator	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	07.04.2015	

LOR-014	Phil Gordon Aboriginal Heritage Project Officer	Australian Museum	08.05.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-015	Dr Michael Pickering Senior Curatorial Fellow	National Museum Australia	12.05.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-016	Stella Mason Former Director of Museums and Special Collections	The Royal College of Surgeons of England	21.01.2015	Phone Interview Notes
LOR-017	Edward Halealoha Ayau Director	Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Hawai'i Nei	15.05.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-018	Lee Burgess Repatriation Officer	National Museum Australia	20.05.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-019	Te Herekiele Haerehuka Herewini Kaiwhakahaere Kaupapa Pūtere Kōiwi (Manager Repatriation)	Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa	05.06.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-020	Amber Kiri Aranui Pou Rangahau Tautaki Kōiwi (Repatriation Researcher)	Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa	05.06.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-021	Dame Nganeko Minhinnick Ngāti Te Ata and Waiohua Elder	Ngāti Te Ata	18.06.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-022	David Kaus Repatriation Programme Director	National Museum Australia	24.06.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-023	Rob McWilliams Senior Collection Manager, Indigenous and Restricted Collections	Museums Victoria	26.06.2015	Interview Notes
	Jamie Thomas Former Community Liaison Officer			
LOR-024	Lindy Allen Senior Curator and Repatriation Programme Manager	Museums Victoria	27.05.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-025	Ray Ahmat Cultural Heritage Officer	Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Corporation	29.07.015	Recorded Interview
LOR-026	Wade Morgan Cultural Heritage Coordinator	Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Corporation	29.07.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-027	Rodney Dillion Palawa Elder and Former ATSIC Commissioner	Palawa Community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission	05.08.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-028	Tony Brown Former Senior Curator, Indigenous Cultures	Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery	06.08.2015	Recorded Interview

LOR-029	Dr Julie Gough Artist and Curator	Palawa Community	06.08.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-030	Caroline Spotswood	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	07.08.2015	Interview Notes
LOR-031	Matt Poll Curator Indigenous Heritage and Repatriation Project	Sydney University Museums	23.07.2015	Interview Notes
LOR-032	Repatriation Team	Ministry of the Arts	21.05.2015	Meeting Notes
LOR-033	Natasha Zanrosso Project Officer	Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council	26.06.2015	Meeting Notes
	Maria Pizzi VAHC Secretariat			
LOR-034	Major Sumner Ngarrindjeri Elder and Repatriation Coordinator	Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority	23.08.2015	Recorded Interview
LOR-035	Dr Daniel Antoine Assistant Keeper for Bioarchaeology & Curator of Physical Anthropology	British Museum	12.01.2016	Recorded Interview
LOR-036	Edward Halealoha Ayau Director	Hui Malama I Na Kupun O Hawai'i Nei	03.04.2015	Written Response
LOR-037	Stephen Welsh Curator of Living Cultures	Manchester Museum	01.09.2015	Written Response

The participants listed here took part on an arranged meeting or interview and gave written consent for the use of their data, name and association to be used in relation to the Legacies of Repatriation research project. Other interactions and meetings documented in my research diary have been anonymised so are not listed here. The role and association listed are that which links the participant to this research project and therefore former roles rather than current position/association has been given for some participants. Unless the participants position is listed as 'former' the position listed is the one the participant held at the time of data collection.

Appendix 2

Repatriations of Human Remains from The Royal College of Surgeons of England 2001-2016

Accession Number	Exit No.	Exit Date	Destination (RCS Records)	Location in September 2015
RCSMS/6	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSHM/Osteo. BD 1489	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSHM/Osteo. BD 1490	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSHM/Osteo. BD 1491	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSHM/Osteo. BD 1492	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSHM/Osteo. BD 1493	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSOM/A 54.2	82	27.05.2002	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSHM/Osteo BD 1488	208	16.09.2009	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	Returned to Tasmania by TAC
RCSOM/A 53.13	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.1	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.14	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.295	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.291	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.296	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/S 50a.4	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSHM/D 703.5	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.143	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.144	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra

RCSOM/A 53.22	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.23	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.231	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.24	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.241	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.261	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.27	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.28	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.121	92	07.04.2003	for Northern Territory	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.142	92	07.04.2003	for Northern Territory	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.141	92	07.04.2003	for Northern Territory	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.121	92	07.04.2003	for Northern Territory	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.29	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.18	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSHM/Osteo 1188 (object)	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSHM/Osteo 1028 (object)	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSHM/Osteo 1043 (object)	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 49.9 (dental casts)	92	07.04.2003	National Museum Australia, Canberra	National Museum Australia, Canberra
RCSOM/A 53.293	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.133	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.19	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.191	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.192	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.193	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.194	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.195	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.15	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.196	92	07.04.2003	Yorta Yorta People, Victoria	Returned to Yorta Yorta Nation
RCSOM/A 53.152	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	Returned to Community
RCSOM/A 53.153	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	Returned to Community

RCSOM/A 53.154	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	Returned to Community
RCSOM/A 53.155	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	Returned to Community
RCSOM/A 53.156	92	07.04.2003	for Victoria	Returned to Community
RCSOM/A 53.17	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	Returned to Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
RCSOM/A 53.171	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	Returned to Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
RCSOM/A 53.172	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	Returned to Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
RCSOM/A 53.25	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	Returned to Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
RCSOM/A 53.251	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	Returned to Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
RCSHM/Osteo.1066	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	South Australian Museum, Adelaide
RCSOM/A 53.2A	92	07.04.2003	for South Australia	South Australian Museum, Adelaide
RCSOM/A 53.292	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Returned to Ngati Te Ata for burial
RCSHM/D 699	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.2	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.3	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.4	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.5	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.61	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.62	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.621	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.622	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.623	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.624	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/A 49.625	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/D 49.3	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSOM/E 14.711	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSHC/Osteo. 772	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSHC/Osteo. 773	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
RCSHC/Osteo.774	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa Tongarewa
2001:492	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te papa: To be returned to Chatham Islands late 2015
RCSOM/D 110.3	173	15.11.2007	Te Papa Tongarewa	Te Papa: To be returned to Chatham Islands late 2015

RCSOM/E 24.44	259	07.09.2011	Hui Malama I Na Kupuna O Hawai'i Nei	Returned to community for burial
RCSPC/C 20b.4	78	06.09.2001	United Synagogue Burial Society	Burial Bushey Cemetery
RCSPC/C 20b.1	78	06.09.2001	United Synagogue Burial Society	Burial Bushey Cemetery
RCSPC/C 20b.2	78	06.09.2001	United Synagogue Burial Society	Burial Bushey Cemetery
RCSPC/C 20b.3	78	06.09.2001	United Synagogue Burial Society	Burial Bushey Cemetery
RCSPC/C 20b.5	78	06.09.2001	United Synagogue Burial Society	Burial Bushey Cemetery
RCSPC/C 20b.6	78	06.09.2001	United Synagogue Burial Society	Burial Bushey Cemetery