

AL6

Week 2, Friday

Mummies: ethics and the dead

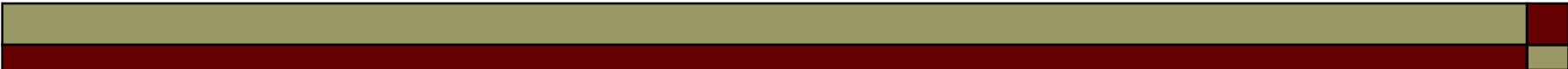
HPAH5080/6080 Ancient Lives in Death

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Ethics regarding the dead

- ❑ (SHOULD BE) focuses on balancing respect for human remains with the interests of the living, including scientific, cultural, and familial concerns
- ❑ Existing need to be
 - treating the deceased with dignity
 - honouring their last wishes
 - navigating display / analysis of remains in archaeology, medicine, and data usage



Core Ethical Principles

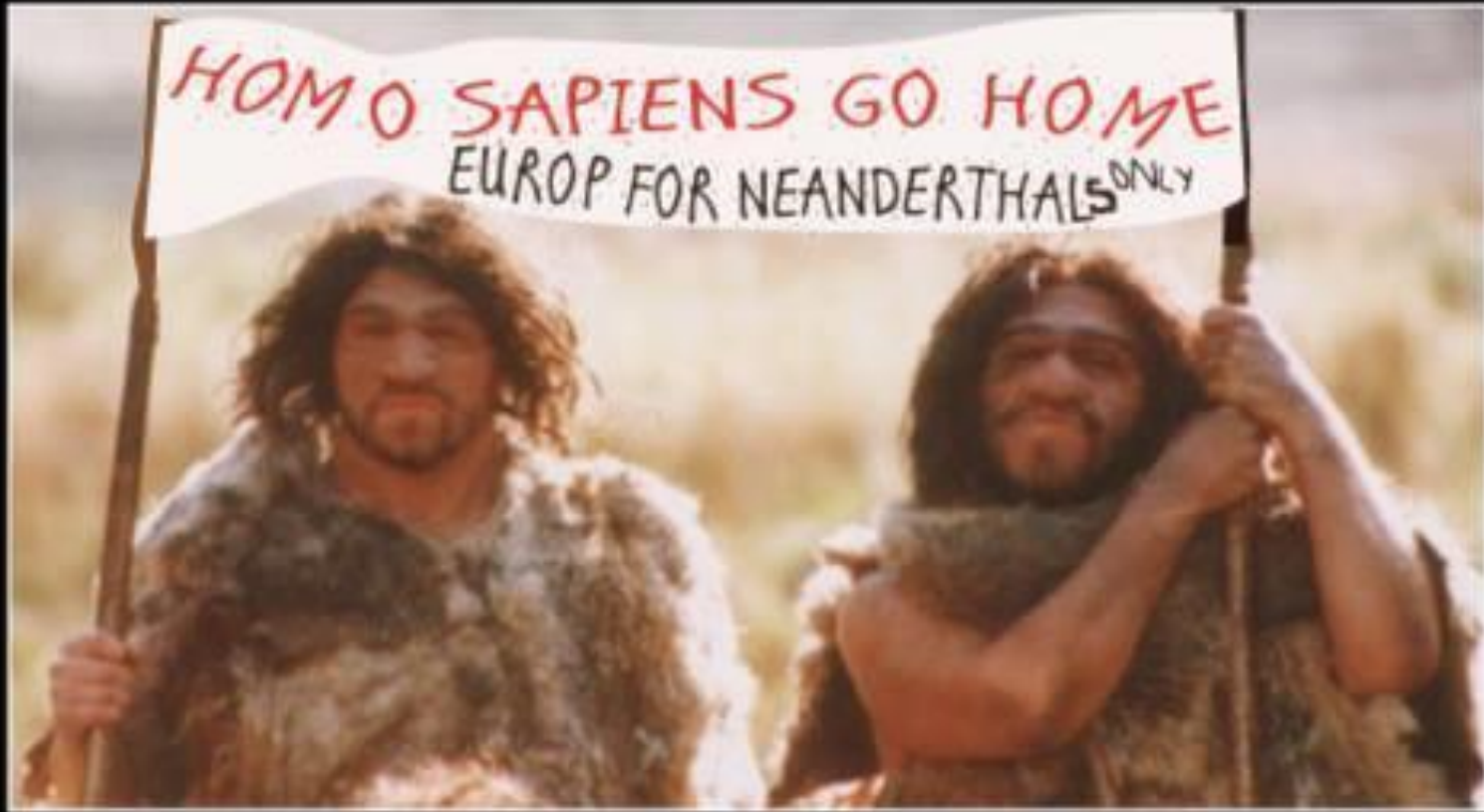
- ❑ Respect and Dignity
 - dead have no legal rights, but society holds a duty to treat remains with respect and avoid disrespectful, overly violent treatment
- ❑ Posthumous Autonomy
 - honouring wishes of the deceased regarding their remains
- ❑ Cultural and Religious Sensitivity
 - must consider cultural, religious, traditional practices, burials, rituals



Debates and Challenges

- ❑ Harm to the Dead
 - philosophical debate: can the dead be harmed or are ethical duties entirely for the sake of the living
- ❑ Burial vs. Display
 - exhibition of human remains in museums: historical education vs. respectful treatment of deceased.
- ❑ Grave Reuse
 - Chimes with contemporary experience: space becomes scarce → is reusing graves ethical permissible?
(keeping memory ← → practical necessities)

Ownership: Deeply held belief systems emerge



Preserving the dead for posterity



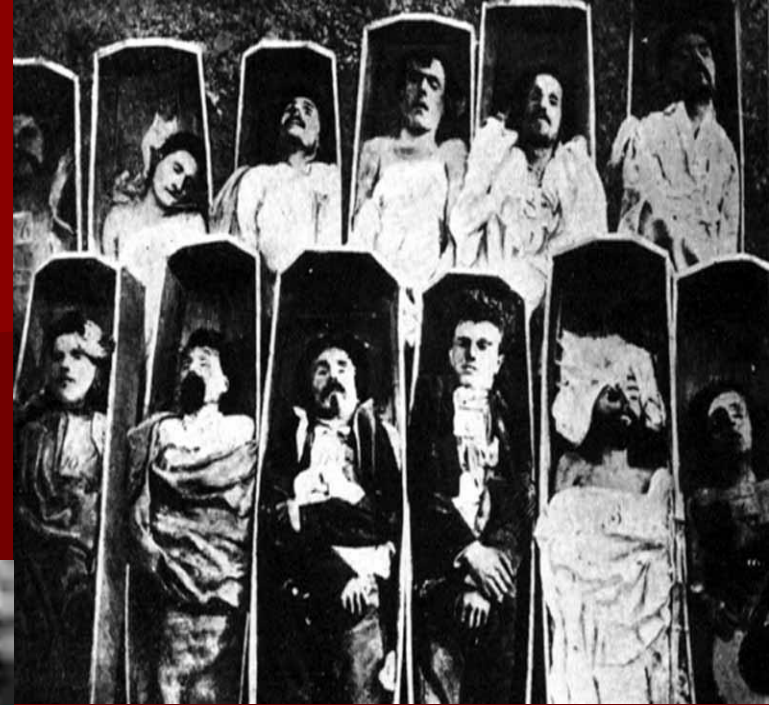
Eva Peron 1952

Stalin

Lenin: the look



Bodies for display

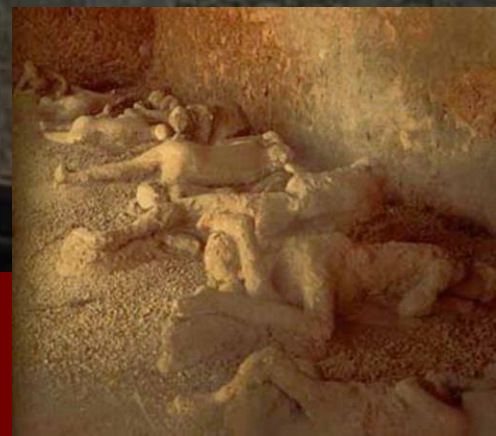


Bodies as curios
Bodies of conquest

Communards, 1871
Post-Mortem
photographs



Pompeii





Peru



Inca
Chile-Argentina border

Qilakitsoq Mummies

The Greenland Mummies



By W. P. Pyper, F.R.S., Author of "The History of Animals," "The Country of Animals," etc., etc.

Whereas came the Tennesseans we do not definitely know. But even prior ages I was able to show that they passed through New Guinea, and around Kamohia on their way to their final home in Tennessee. The evidence was furnished by the skull, which presents human form in no other human skulls. The features were of the same order as those of the skull of the human jaw and teeth, as the most noticeable of these features, and they are well shown in the accompanying photographs (figs. 1 and 2).

The politics of death and burial: reburial and repatriation



Freedom fighter very tall, athletic, a killer shot with a spear

Both admired and feared

The death mask here, his head was decorated after his death for affect!

Yagan's execution, which resulted in the removal of his head in 1833, became folklore and a symbol of the unjust and/or brutal treatment of the indigenous peoples of Australia. Yagan is seen as a hero by the Noongar people.

Пиво «ОРА Yagan
(Двойной Индейский
Пилл Эль Яган)»
темное,
нефилтрованное,
непастеризованное.

Состав: солод, овесный
кварцевый, ячмень, вода
пильжак, пшеница, дрожжи.
Окислительный слой – 10%,
алк. 8,2 %об.

Содержание алкоголя в пиве
в 100 мл пива – 8,2 мл.
Содержание алкоголя в пиве
в бутылке – 87 мл.

Энергетическая ценность:
«Факт» в 100 мл пива – 273 кДж
Плотность спирта в пиве
в 100 мл – 8,8.

ГОСТ 31711-2012

Срок годности: 60 суток
с даты разлива.

Дата разлива:

Хранить при T°
от +7°C до +13°C.
Защищать от прямых
солнечных лучей.
После открытия
бутылки пиво не
должно храниться
более 3 суток.
Пиво не должно
храниться в
холодильнике более
3 суток.
Пиво не должно
храниться в
холодильнике более
3 суток.
Пиво не должно
храниться в
холодильнике более
3 суток.



0,5L

YAGAN'S HEAD DOUBLE IPA ALC. 8,2%

Производитель:
ООО «Коникс Брэу» (442000)
Павловский район, с/поселок
«Павловское сельское
поселение»,
с/поселок «Павловское»,
с/поселок «Павловское»
ИНН 44-02-0000000

KONIX BREWERY

GREEN STREET
BREWERY

АЛКОГОЛЬ ВРЕДИТ
ВАШЕМУ ЗДОРОВЬЮ!

Алкоголь вредит здоровью детей
и подростков до 18 лет.
Вредит здоровью и развитию
мозга, печени и
сердечно-сосудистой системы.
Вредит здоровью и развитию
мозга, печени и
сердечно-сосудистой системы.

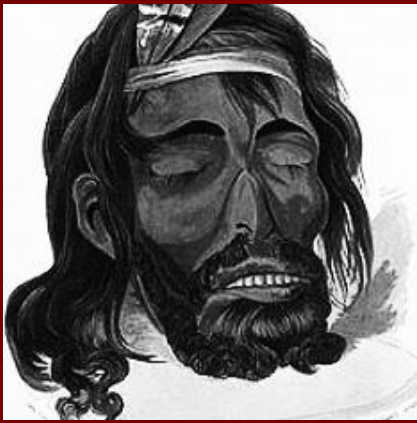
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ИНН 44-02-0000000



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EAC

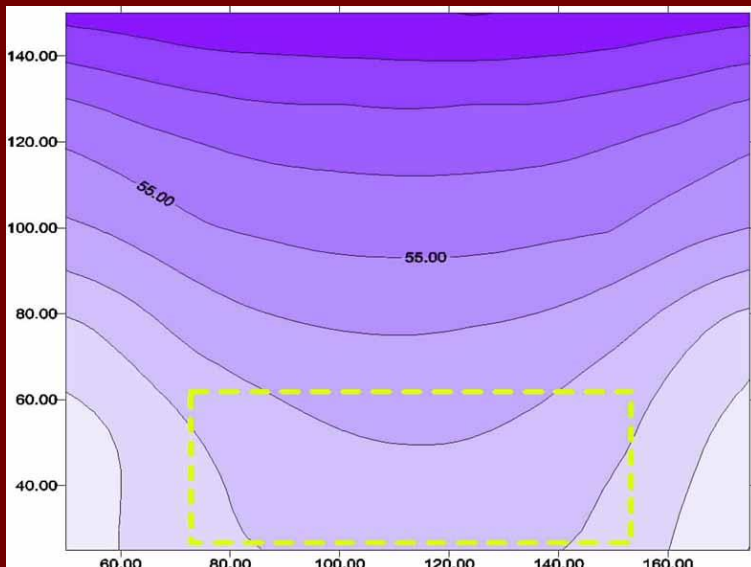
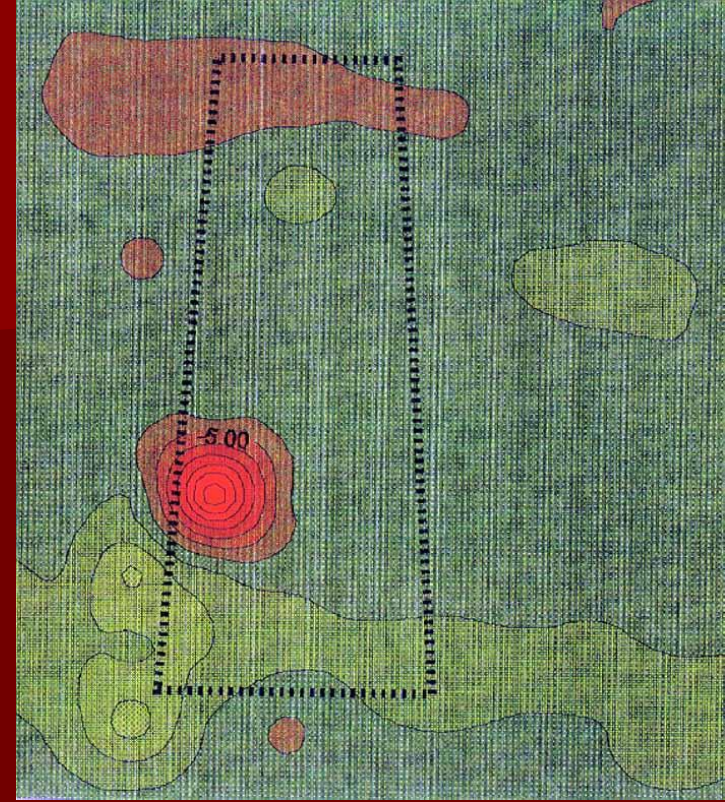


The story of Yagan and his head

- 1833 Yagan was shot, after escaping from exile by a British settler
- Either a freedom fighter or dangerous outlaw
- Decapitated (to claim bounty) after being preserved
- Sent to England, eventually to Liverpool Museum
- 1964 removed to Everton Cemetery (with a Maori head and a Peruvian mummy)



Yagan on Heirisson Island.



Recovery of Yagan's head from its unmarked grave in Liverpool, Everton Cemetery around 1993. It was located, removed and returned but not for years.....

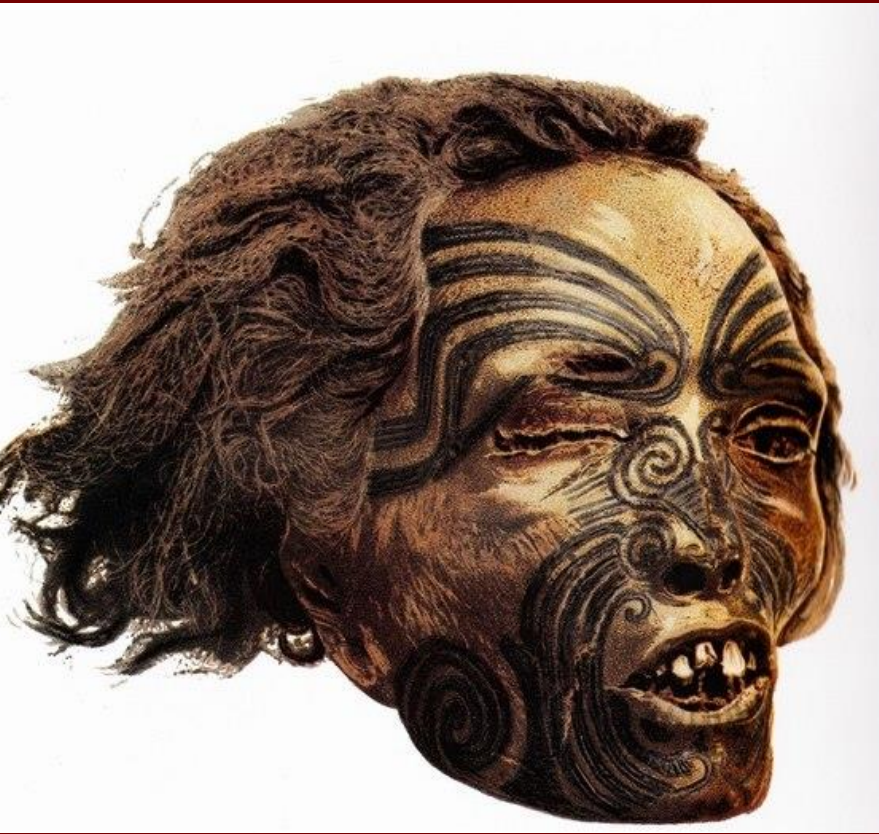


And what about now? Where is he??

- The Noongar have been asking since 1980 for him to be returned
- Reactions to the repatriation were varied, racist commentary from the media, plus vandalism of the statue of Yagan on Heirisson Island
- It took 13 years of wrangling (between elders as to where and how he should be reburied) before reburial of Yagan's head was celebrated on the 10th July 2010 with full Noongar honours



Mokomokai: tattooed heads of Maori and others



- Tā Moko face marking was a sacred practice
- More the marked, the more prized it became
- Highly valued under the Musket Wars, essential heads for guns
- You need more guns, you get more heads to trade.

Major-General Horatio Gordon Robley with his mokomokai collection



Which brings us to skulls



- Defleshed or fleshed – all the same to collectors
- Belong to a group of skull from the Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford
- Typology is the basis for the collection display
- Why the interest = phrenology

Note: painted and mouth sealed



'Treatment of the Dead' display,
here they are the enemies



Shrunken heads: mummification

Amazonian shrunk head Peru



- The Shuar tsantsas or shrunk heads are from mostly South America Ecuador, Peru,
- They were much-sought after 19th and 20th Century collecting
- They are not "war trophies", but capture 'power'
- collections of shrunk heads between 1884 and 1936 (banned but traded until 1950s)
- Indigenous people have long argued against the public display of their ancestors' remains

Shrunken Heads: Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford

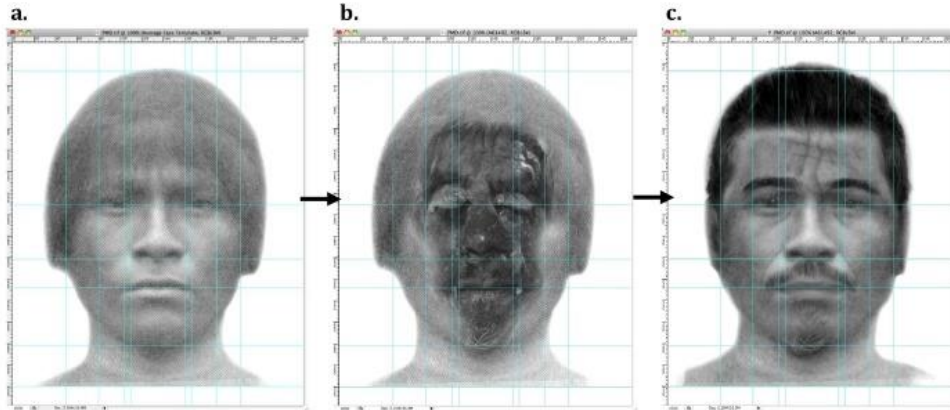


The Shuar (SAACW) tsantsa or shrunk heads - decolonisation



Facial reconstruction

Generation of post-mortem depiction



Original shrunken head



Post-mortem depiction



Ceremonial *tsantsa*



Commercial shrunken head

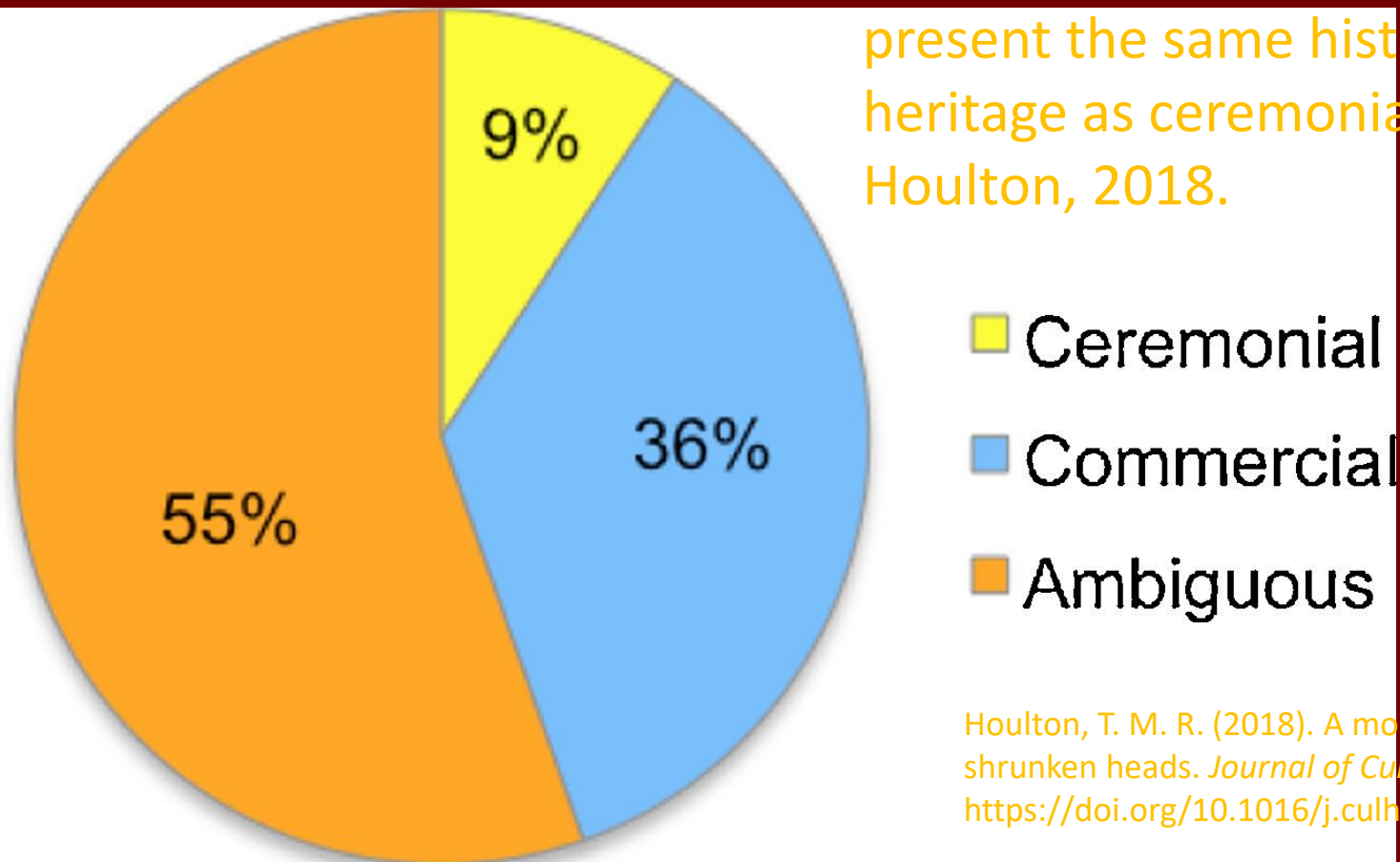


Houlton, T. M. , & Wilkinson, C. (2018). Facial preservation following extreme mummification: Shrunken heads. *Forensic Science International*, 286, 31–41.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2018.02.028>

Authentic: ceremonial or commercial

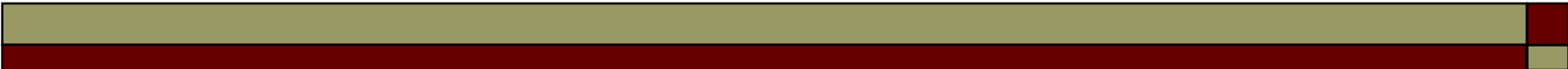
Re: commercial heads: 'These heads were made in abundance and do not present the same historical value or heritage as ceremonial *tsantsa*'.
Houlton, 2018.



Houlton, T. M. R. (2018). A morphometric investigation into shrunk heads. *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 32, 238–247.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.culher.2018.01.004>

Cultural closeness

- Culturally affiliated
 - Australian aborigine, Māori, American Indians
 - Several different cultures (Viking)
 - So old – who knows who is related to whom
 - Culturally extinct (Iron Age Silurian's, South Wales)
- Culturally isolated
 - Egyptian mummies, Otzi the Iceman, Bog-bodies



Views from the Museum of London - Views of Indigenous peoples

- “a complex and multi-layered debate, influenced by concerns of Indigenous-peoples in other countries; the multicultural nature of modern society; as well as modern religious and humanist philosophies, medical ethics and museological concerns”
- of Australian aborigines for whom their..... ancestors must be released from the continuing barbaric torment inflicted on them by incarceration in the store of a museum

Rameses I, successfully repatriated 2004 from Niagara falls Museum, but not to tomb, but Luxor Museum

- Return of cultural remains is high on Egypt's agenda, but to where?
- Where's the difference between a Canadian museum or an Egyptian one?



“returning antiquities to their original sites in Egypt helps restore their archaeological context and spiritual power....” Hawass, 2004

And with Egyptian mummies?

- Socio-cultural awareness: The call by *indigenous* populations is not strong
- Ethical guidelines for ancient mummies is lacking
- Examinations done without informed consent
- Anonymity cannot be claimed



Anwar el-Sadat, 3rd President of Egypt, closes the Royal Mummy museum, 1980

Re-rehoused in 2021



Who speaks for the ancient dead



Otzi the Iceman: how did he die?

- His intestine contained einkorn-wheat, goat-meat and pollen from over 30 plant-types including the Hip Hornbeam which definitively dates death to late-spring when it flowers (Bahn, 2003:87,90)
- He suffered from Osteoarthritis, Arteriosclerosis, whipworm parasites, fingernail Beau-Reil lines indicate periods of poor-nutrition, rib/nasal fractures had healed and had repeated frostbite

Who has cultural affinity here?



“This sequence shows that the mitochondrial type of the Ice Man fits into the genetic variation of contemporary Europeans and that it was most closely related to mitochondrial types determined from central and northern European populations.”

Privacy and the Pharaohs

- ability to use stored samples
 - Don't have to take new samples
- development of technique to use smaller or more degraded samples
- ability to use older samples

See Holm, S, 2001 The privacy of Tutankhamen – utilising the genetic information in stored tissue samples. *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*,



Scientific examination

Social World Economy Politics Culture Crimes Justice

frica, Archaeology, Biology, History » [King Tut's DNA is Western European](#)

King Tut's DNA is Western European

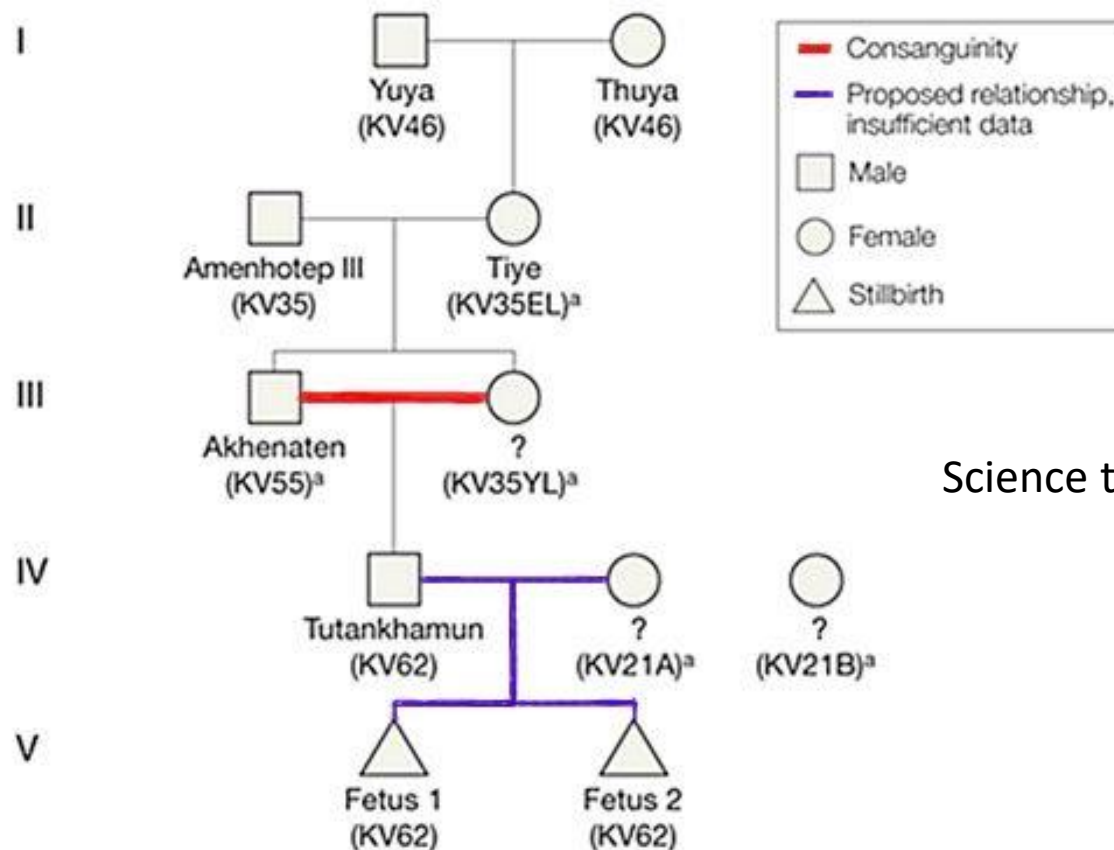
U Times on Jun 7th, 2010 // 460 Comments

refusal of the Secretary General
an Supreme Council of
ahi Hawass, to release any
which might indicate the racial
haraoh Tutankhamen, the
ts reveal that King Tut's DNA is
nt match with Western
chromosomes.

t results were inadvertently
a Discovery Channel TV
e filmed with Hawass's
— but it seems as if the Egyptian

Two golden masks of King Tutankhamun are shown side-by-side. The mask on the left is a full-face mask with a white headdress and a small figure on top. The mask on the right is a smaller, more ornate mask with a headdress and a small figure on top.

Tutankhamun DNA family tree



Science to resolve, to right wrongs?



Gosden: Post-Colonial archaeologies

- ❑ Using science is what the settler nations revert to, to maintain control
- ❑ Using the legal system (the courts as arbiters) is the settler nations way of maintaining power

Ginger - A reconstructed Egyptian grave-pit

- Ethical and conservation issues with display of mummies in museums



Mummified bodies in Museums:

Conserving the body of a Predynastic Egyptian

- Human remains need → conserved with particular care



Ethical issues



Cyfarthfa Castle Merthyr Tydfil



Ethical issues with mummified humans – “without informed consent?”

- ❑ Dehumanising by treating as an object (mummy instead of mummified person)
- ❑ Removal of mummified bodies from Egypt
- ❑ Display of mummies in museums
- ❑ Conservation of mummies
- ❑ Research on / with mummies
- ❑ Mummy autopsy (latest case of voice reconstruction – report [here](#)) – what is necessary?
- ❑ Will need discussion and engagement