The Journey Home – Guiding Intangible Knowledge Production in the Analysis of Ancestral Remains

Who was involved?

Our project is a collaboration between the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) and the Laboratory of Archeology (LOA) at the University of British Columbia, working with the Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee, as part of an ongoing relationship stretching back to the 1990s through collaborative work.

What is this project about?

- **Providing information and developing research guidelines** useful to inform community-institutional relations, the application of research, the identification of intellectual properties issues, and the sharing of knowledge.
- **Providing practical guidelines and protocols** to identify and navigate points of common interest and contention between scientific and cultural communities in both bioanthropological analysis and the production of intangible knowledge resulting from the analysis of ancestral remains.
- **The repatriation of ancestors from LOA to the SRRMC is the case study** for developing these research guidelines and protocols while working between scientific and cultural communities.

How was the project implemented?

**Four Interrelated Processes**

1. Broad-based discussion and dialogue.
2. Exploration and documentation of research questions and methods.
3. Development of a joint research plan.
4. On-going broad-based discussion and dialogue.

What did we get out of it?

The project is ongoing as relationships continue with further research planned in the future.

**Current project outcomes are as follows:**

- The treatment of 27 ancestors returned from LOA, the Museum of Vancouver and the BC Coroner's Office, or otherwise recovered through the direction and archaeological work of the First Nations themselves.
- A Stó:lō driven analysis of ancestral remains for community members undertaken by UBC bioanthropologists.
- Various publications and conference papers.

**Planned project outcomes include:**

- Protocols for analysis, interpretation and use of the research results available through IPinCH.
- Providing information and developing research guidelines useful to inform community-institutional relations, the application of research, the identification of intellectual properties issues, and the sharing of knowledge.
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What about ethics?

All research was undertaken in compliance with the protocols of the Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee and the SRRMC. In addition, research also followed the requirements of the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

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**Who is allowed to share in and benefit from this knowledge?**

- How can scientific research address Stó:lō questions about their ancestors? Including their identity and where they are from? Who has caretaking responsibility? What kind of protocols should be applied? How should they be cared for?
- What types of anthropological research and scientific analyses can be applied to answer community-based questions?
- What are the details and cultural implications of analyses—both destructive and non-destructive?
- Who decides which questions to ask and which analyses to undertake? Who interprets the results? Who owns the data? How do ‘scientific’ and ‘cultural’ ways of knowing relate?
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