

Institution: University College London		
Unit of Assessment: 15 – Archaeology		
Title of case study: Reshaping professional heritage practice and changing understanding of heritage in the UK and internationally		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2012-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Rodney Harrison	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2012-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Rodney Harrison has directed a series of connected research projects about heritage futures while based at the UCL Institute of Archaeology. Working closely with international partner organisations, he has brought together professionals from a range of sectors who are engaged with heritage preservation, influencing professional heritage practitioners to adopt more sustainable and resilient conservation practices. The projects have also inspired, co-created and supported new forms of artistic expression and have changed how general publics think about heritage and its role in building futures through a long-term exhibition and collaboration with Manchester Museum. Harrison's research has shaped the AHRC's Future Heritage Research Strategy and associated research funding priorities.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Futures studies – defined as systematic investigations of historical and contemporary social, ecological and political phenomena to postulate possible or probable future scenarios – is a rapidly expanding interdisciplinary field of research, united by the general aim to empower researchers and publics with foresight to help them to more actively and accurately shape desired futures. Since joining UCL in 2012, Harrison has directed a series of research projects that have: introduced comparative perspectives to the study of natural and cultural heritage practices; reframed and redefined the concept of heritage as more dynamic and future-oriented; and broadened the definition of heritage to include waste and other anthropogenic legacies (such as climate). The framework for this work was established in <i>Heritage: Critical Approaches</i> [R1] which argues for a more joined up approach to natural and cultural heritage conservation and management. It shows how this might be realised by way of hybrid forums composed of experts from a range of disciplines and local community representatives (see also [R2]). The ways different kinds of heritage practices contribute to the building of different social worlds is conceptualised and demonstrated in the co-authored monograph <i>Collecting, Ordering, Governing</i> [R3].</p> <p>From 2015-2019 Harrison was the PI on the AHRC-funded Heritage Futures (HF) research programme [i] and from 2017-2020 on the AHRC-funded Heritage Priority Area Leadership Fellowship (PALF) project [ii/iii]. HF is the largest critical, comparative study of heritage and heritage-like practices across traditional sectoral boundaries. HF found that despite future rhetoric in heritage practice – typically said to be undertaken for the benefit of 'future generations' – few natural or cultural heritage practitioners, organisations or policy makers think in concrete terms about when the futures they are working for will take place, who will be in them, or how their work in the present actively contributes to realising the futures for which they claim to be working [R4]. Structured around the themes of uncertainty, transformation, diversity and profusion, HF research identified a range of key issues that are common across natural and cultural heritage which could form the basis for more integrated and coordinated collaboration across the sector [R4/R5] and which might also influence both policy-making [R4] and research in these areas [R4/R5/R6]. HF research elaborated on previous research [R3] to identify how modes of <i>collecting</i> in the field influence modes of <i>ordering</i> in ex-situ collections, which in turn realise particular kinds of <i>management</i> of the endangered objects, places, species or practices these collections act as proxies for, and thus both <i>what</i> is preserved and <i>how</i> [R4]. Working collaboratively across natural and cultural collections has allowed Harrison and his team to identify shared problems and how these might be addressed collectively [R4/R5]. A focus on</p>		

topics such as nuclear waste and climate change has shown how natural and cultural heritage conservation practices must accept, and can work creatively with, inevitable and rapidly accelerating forms of environmental, climatological and social change, rather than against it [R4/R5/R6]. HF research highlights the value and importance of comparative approaches to natural and cultural heritage practices and the need to see heritage as only one (valorised) form of human inheritance, which also includes waste and climate change in the Anthropocene [R6]. Research also showed, for example, how ideas from the realm of household decluttering might be applied in innovative ways to address some of the apparent problems of 'profusion' in contemporary collections [R4/R5]. Harrison is Co-I for a follow-on funding project that, in collaboration with the National Trust and Historic England, considers how natural and cultural heritage managers can work with inevitable processes of environmental and climatological change [iv].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1. Harrison, R. (2013) *Heritage: Critical Approaches*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge. Translated into Chinese and Italian language versions, submitted to REF 2014. Review in *Memory Studies* (2014): 'a must-have...for any scholar interested in heritage and memory, material and visual culture, tourism, the politics of representation, and emergent ways of thinking about heritage preservation and memory practices.' [Available on request].

R2. Harrison, R. (2015) 'Beyond "Natural" and "Cultural" Heritage: Toward an Ontological Politics of Heritage in the Age of Anthropocene', *Heritage & Society* 8(1): 4-42. Peer reviewed. Journal's most cited and second most downloaded article (September 2020).

<https://doi.org/10.1179/2159032X15Z.00000000036>

R3. Bennett, T., F. Cameron, N. Dias, B. Dibley, R. Harrison, I. Jacknis, & C. McCarthy (2017) *Collecting, Ordering, Governing: Anthropology, Museums and Liberal Government*. Duke University Press. Peer reviewed, submitted to REF 2021 [Available on request].

R4. Harrison, R., C. DeSilvey, C. Holtorf, S. Macdonald, A. Lyons, N. Bartolini, E. Breithoff, S. May, J. Morgan & S. Penrose (2020) *Heritage Futures: Comparative Approaches to Natural and Cultural Heritage Practices*. UCL Press. Peer reviewed, open access; submitted to REF 2021.

<https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10104405/1/Heritage-Futures.pdf>

R5. DeSilvey, C. and R. Harrison (2020) (eds) 'Anticipating Loss: Rethinking Endangerment in Heritage Futures'. Special issue of *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 26(1): 1-103. Peer reviewed. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2019.1644530>

R6. Harrison, R. and C. Sterling (eds) (2020) *Deterritorializing the Future: Heritage in, of and after the Anthropocene*. Open Humanities Press. Peer reviewed, open access.

Funded research projects

(i) **Heritage Futures**. AHRC. AH/M004376/1. GBP1,600,000+3 PhD studentships (GBP60,000 each) provided as in-kind support from UCL, York and Exeter respectively. 1 Apr 2015-31 Mar 2019; ext to 31 Sept 2019. **PI: Harrison** (UCL).

(ii) **AHRC Heritage Priority Area Leadership Fellowship**. AHRC. AH/P009719/1. GBP1,056,000. 1 Jan 2017-31 Dec 2019 (ext to 31 Dec 2021). **PI Harrison** (UCL).

(iii) **AHRC Heritage Priority Area Leadership Fellowship Follow-on-Funding: Opening New Pathways to Impact across Heritage Research, Policy and Practice**. AHRC. GBP100,000. 1 Jan 2020 to 30 Sept 2020 (ext to 31 Dec 2021). **PI Harrison** (UCL).

(iv) **Landscape Futures and the Challenge of Change: Towards Integrated Cultural/Natural Heritage Decision Making**. AHRC. AH/T012196/1. GBP81,000. 1 Feb 2020-31 Jan 2021 (ext to Jan 2022). **PI DeSilvey** (Exeter), **Co-Is Harrison** (UCL), **Samuel** (National Trust), **Fluck** (Historic England), **Hails** (National Trust).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Current global crises and transformations (from climate change to mass migration to new social movements) highlight the need to develop more sustainable and resilient conservation practices which are sensitive to inevitable processes of future social, environmental and political change and to encourage practitioners from different areas of interest to identify and pursue common

goals and learn from one another. However, there has been a trend towards increasing specialisation within the heritage sector (e.g. see IUCN/ICOMOS 2015). These global issues also highlight the need for better understanding amongst general publics of the role of natural and cultural heritage in resourcing the future, and the specific ways in which they do so. The activities of Harrison and his Heritage Futures (HF) and Priority Area Leadership Fellowship (PALF) teams have had an impact on natural and cultural heritage policy making and conservation and management practice, changing the ways in which heritage is understood by its users and publics, by bringing these fields into closer dialogue with the field of futures studies.

Deepening understanding and changing practice in international heritage organisations

Harrison and his HF team worked closely with an international advisory board and 25 international partner organisations, bringing together professionals from a wide range of sectors who are engaged with heritage preservation to think collectively about shared issues. The HF team facilitated a series of inter- and intra-thematic knowledge exchange events involving and co-designed by these partner organisations and other invited participants. These included: a 2016 workshop exploring issues of long term futures in heritage management at the site of the long term nuclear waste repository being constructed by partner organisation SKB (Swedish Nuclear Waste Management company); a 2017 workshop at Kew Gardens looking at different forms of collecting and categorization practices and their influence on the definition and management of different forms of heritage; and a 2018 workshop at Orford Ness, co-organised with the National Trust (NT) and Historic England (HE), exploring issues relating to natural and cultural heritage management in changing coastal environments [R4/R5], [i]. Each was attended by representatives of the partner organisations and other relevant practitioners (c.30-35 people for each workshop). Harrison and his team have also organised workshops on data and heritage in conjunction with the Alan Turing Institute and British Library (2017), and with UK-based museums and archives on contemporary collecting practices (2018). These workshops constituted important professional development opportunities for participants, which deepened understanding and changed organisational practice.

The Director of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Nature Culture Initiative described the Kew workshop as a “valuable opportunity” that “created the foundation for deeper understanding of perspectives, and mutual learning” with conservation professionals [A1]. The Curator of Kew’s Economic Botany collection, attested to the change of perspectives inaugurated by their involvement: “hosting the workshop was important in changing internal perceptions of Kew (previously described by senior staff as ‘not a museum’) and positioning it firmly in the museum sector”, developing “a greater awareness of the big questions and wider context of the future of our collections, looking well beyond our usual 5-year horizon”, and “building expertise and confidence in humanities engagement [at Kew], through new contacts, through giving time for thinking and discussing, and in enabling Kew staff to adapt to boundary-stretching work” [A2]. The NT’s Historic Environment Director, noted that the project was the “longest and best [...] period of CPD for me” and has led to further engagement by NT regarding “the need to adapt to and mitigate accelerated environmental change” through [A1] the ‘Landscape Futures’ follow-on project [iv] on which she is a Co-I. The involvement of advisory board members at Director and Assistant Director level at the NT, UNESCO, IUCN and ICOMOS has ensured HF’s significant impacts within international heritage practice. The Director of IUCN observes that HF has provided international heritage organisations, such as IUCN, with “validation of the need to rethink fundamentals and not just re-present existing approaches” and demonstrated the value of “reframing nature-culture considerations in conservation practice” through engaging with “a project that thinks on timescales beyond the normal short-termism of conservation decision taking” [A1].

Changing the ways in which heritage is understood by its users and publics

An exhibition on Heritage Futures was developed around the four main themes of the project in collaboration with the Manchester Museum (MM) to communicate the more expansive view of heritage and its role in resourcing futures developed by Harrison and the HF team [R1/R4/R5],[i]. The museum decided to extend its originally planned 3-month run to at least 2 years (December 2018-end 2020) and to make the exhibition central to their major planned redevelopment (called “Manchester: Hello Future”) in recognition of its significance, not only to the

museum's visitors, but to the museum's expanded understanding of its own role [B2]. This run was cut short by COVID when the museum closed in March 2020; however, at the time of writing a virtual version of the exhibition is in development. HF's research programme themes formed the basis for a number of additional activities developed by the museum to engage with their own partner organisations and community. For example, 'Heritage Futures Studio' provided grants of up to GBP1,000 to support the development and delivery of creative projects and events by local groups [B2]. Under this initiative 6 projects were funded, creating 10 events and exhibitions which reached audiences of over 100,000 people [B2]. Importantly, many of these audiences were external to the museum. In its first year the exhibition itself was visited by over 360,000 people; based on the first year's figures the total number of visitors over its 15-month run is estimated to have been c.420,000 people [B2/3]. A survey conducted at the beginning of 2020 showed that the exhibition had an impact on visitors' intended personal recycling behaviours and their understanding of the importance of collective action in conserving the natural and cultural environment and preventing further climate change. In addition, the exhibition changed visitors' understanding of heritage as a concept. Prior to visiting the exhibition, 85.7% of those surveyed said that heritage was more associated with the past; having visited the exhibition 90% agreed that heritage was more associated with shaping the future. It also generated an enhanced and expanded understanding of what heritage encompasses, with several of the visitors noting their surprise at the inclusion of language and contemporary objects/buildings in the context of heritage [B4].

The Director of MM noted that HF "themes encouraged the museum and its audiences to look at its collection differently (across subject specialist boundaries) and critically (in the context of wider questions around heritage). In particular, the theme of profusion has fed into our thinking for the development of the Museum's Zero Waste Hub, an experimental space for ecological thinking and action" [B2]. The exhibition also influenced the choice of title by Director of the Museum for her linked 'Professorship of Heritage Futures' at University of Manchester. A curator on the exhibition, noted that "the four themes – profusion, diversity, transformation and uncertainty – were a powerful model for considering the work of the museum and the difference it was trying to make". In this way, "Heritage Futures enabled the Museum to make more of its various exhibits, and to more clearly communicate its ambitions around a more future-focussed role and purpose." The curator has subsequently left the museum to start a new consultancy connecting museums with the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change issues. He notes the significance of the project in this decision, indicating how "Heritage Futures made me reflect on my own future and what I am aiming to achieve through my own work, working with others" [B1]. Drawing on [R6], these themes are carried through in a subsequent collaboration between the curator, Harrison's PALF team and the Glasgow Science Centre (GSC) on a high-profile international design competition, *Reimagining Museums for Climate Action*, which supports the development of an exhibition on museums, heritage and climate change that is being co-developed for the Glasgow Science Centre for COP26 in November 2021 [ii/iii]. The competition received 543 registrations and 264 final entries from architects, artists, designers, museum professionals, indigenous representatives, poets, and activists across 48 countries (185 from Global North, 75 from Global South or mixed (4 not stated territory)).

Inspiring, co-creating and supporting new forms of artistic expression

Through HF, Harrison and his team also worked closely with artists to commission artistic products related to each of its four themes (uncertainty [Martin Kunze, Karen Guthrie], transformation [Antony Lyons], diversity [Nancy Campbell] and profusion [Shelley Castle]; [R4] [i]). Testimonials from the artists show how their involvement in the project has had a significant impact on their practice and future projects. Lyons described working with HF as a valuable learning experience and his contribution to the project's book provided "the opportunity to reflect on, and consolidate, some core strands of my artist practice and critically deepen some particular elements" [C1]. Lyons' involvement led to two year-long artist residencies hosted by project partners (Wheal Martyn Museum and Orford Ness, NT) and his subsequent appointment as 2020 artist-in-residence at the Elan Valley in Wales. Through the HF residencies he has produced site-specific artworks that have reached a total audience of 12,000 people (with a further 25,000 having engaged with his work online) and led engagement workshops for 190 participants [C1]. Castle, Creative Associate at Encounters Art, worked with HF to co-create a project focusing on the values

people invest in objects in their home environment. In May 2018 this culminated in creative community installation 'Human Bower'. Castle reflects that "the most striking aspect of the impact [...] is how it has stimulated a conscious awakening in myself as an artist and deep reflection on my own practice" [C2]. The inclusion of these artworks in the exhibition at the MM has ensured their exposure to significant audiences which these artists would not have otherwise been able to reach (360,000 in first year, estimated 420,000 until COVID closure on 18th March 2020) [B2/3]. For Kunze, founder of Memory of Mankind (MOM), a global time capsule project which aims to store data on stable ceramic disks for a million years into the future, HF activities provided unique space for collaboration. Kunze remarks that he "had not previously found the time nor the right people with whom to discuss [his project]" and that participation in "the HF network has increased the profile of MOM [...] with diverse experts, the media, and other engaged individuals" [C3].

Shaping heritage research policy in the UK and internationally to further influence heritage management policy and practice

Harrison's work on HF and PALF has shaped how heritage is defined and researched through the take up of his findings by the AHRC. Harrison redrafted the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council's Future Heritage Research Strategy with AHRC staff, defining 8 key priority research areas to guide decision making on strategic research funding [D1]. Drawing directly on his research, these included topics such as: 'values and cultural heritage' [R1]; 'inclusion and diverse heritages' [R1/R3]; sustainable management of heritage' [R4/R5]; and 'future heritages' [R4/R5/R6], which asked 'How can we identify, and conserve, the emergent heritages that will be of value to future generations?'. The strategy also places a strong emphasis on the relations between natural and cultural heritage [R2].

PALF has been cited as an example of 'Innovation in Cultural Heritage Research' in a report prepared for BEIS by the UK National Commission for UNESCO on the innovative capacity of the cultural heritage sector within the UK and how it can aid international development [D2]. HF has been used as a case study of research impact contributing to sustainable development in a joint report produced by the AHRC and Swedish National Research Council for the Joint Programming Initiative in Cultural Heritage and Global Change [D3]. AHRC's Associate Director of Programmes notes Harrison's PALF activities have "strengthen[ed] the narrative and evidence base for the economic, social and cultural value and impact of heritage research, as well as enhance[d] the research capability for heritage research as a cross-disciplinary and collaborative field of enquiry" [D4]. By informing heritage research priorities for the main UK funder of heritage and museums related research (AHRC fund over 75% of all academic research on heritage undertaken in the UK), Harrison's work has led to significant changes in the kinds of research being funded and undertaken in the UK. His research has shaped particular thematic research funding calls, including the JPICH 'Changing Environments' and 'Conservation, Protection and Use' calls, and the AHRC GCRF Urgency Grants Highlight for 'Proposals Addressing Threats to Cultural Heritage resulting from Natural Disasters and Climate Change' [D4]. In turn, research projects funded under those calls have increased understanding, and changed ways of managing natural and cultural heritage, in the UK and internationally [D4].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

A. Shaping international heritage policy and practice: [A1] Testimonial: Head of Nature/Culture initiative IUCN; [A2] Testimonial: Curator, Ethnobotany Collection, Kew; [A3] Testimonial: Historic Environment Director, National Trust and blog post <https://bit.ly/3bVzR1K>

B. Changing the ways in which heritage is understood by its users and publics: [B1] Testimonial: Curating Tomorrow; [B2] Testimonial: Director of Manchester Museum (MM) and HF Studio Grant Data; [B3] MM Visitor Data (to end November 2019); [B4] MM Visitor Survey Data and report (January 2020).

C. Inspiring, co-creating and supporting new forms of artistic expression: [C1] Testimonial: Antony Lyons, Independent Artist; [C2] Testimonial: Shelley Castle, Encounters Arts; [C3] Testimonial: Martin Kunze, Founder and Director, Memory of Mankind.

D. Shaping heritage research policy in the UK and internationally: [D1] AHRC Heritage Research Strategy; [D2] Cultural Heritage Innovation Opportunities for International Development (UKNC UNESCO 2019); [D3] Heritage Research Matters (Riksantikvarieämbetet 2019); [D4] Testimonial: AHRC Associate Director Programmes.