Series editors' foreword

The birth of a series is an editorial, intellectual and human adventure.

We took the initiative of creating the 'Human Remains and Violence' series following our encounters with researchers working in genocide and Holocaust studies, as well as those in the field of forensic science, having in common with them an interest in the twentieth century's legacy of extreme violence. We share their astonishment at the lack of attention paid to the fate of the dead bodies and human remains within these unique contexts, given that this fate reveals political, ethical, religious, social and legal issues, an understanding of which is fundamental to these societies' survival.

Governing the Dead is the second volume in this series, suitably capturing the scope and vigour of these research aims and ambitions. It is the result of a workshop organised in December 2010 by Finn Stepputat at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) in Copenhagen, which brought together political scientists, philosophers, social anthropologists and historians to address the issue of the governance of dead bodies. The event's dynamic success means that it is quite right and proper for *Governing the Dead* to find its place within the 'Human Remains and Violence' collection.

The Copenhagen workshop was indeed one of the first intellectual points of contact for us, followed by several others, first in Paris in 2011 and 2012, and then in Manchester in 2013 and 2014.

Each of these meetings contributed to conceptually strengthening our research and establishing an academic community on an international level that continues to grow.

From an intellectual perspective, there is no doubt that the contribution made by *Governing the Dead* to understanding the salient biopolitics at play in the governance and handling of bodies, both within democratic regimes and in extreme contexts, is an essential one. In studies on extreme violence it will no longer be possible to eschew an examination of the actors, the rationale behind the actions and the ideologies that shaped the practices applied in the handling of dead bodies.

And on a human level, the truly interdisciplinary character and spirit of integrity, openness and intellectual rigour that presided over the workshop in Copenhagen are also qualities that we wish to instil in our collection. We are therefore more than happy to include Finn Stepputat's *Governing the Dead*, convinced that there could be no better ambassador for both our research enquiries and approach.