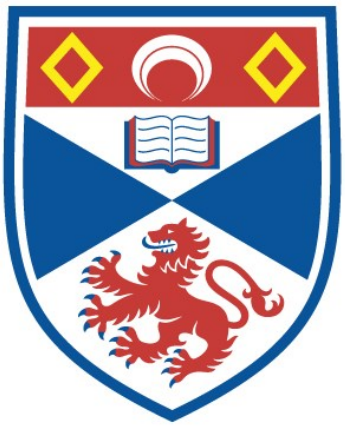
Nyungar wiring boodja:
Aboriginality in urban Australia

Carina Hemmers

A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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I, Carina Hemmers, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 75,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

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Abstract

The present thesis examines the themes of 'shared history,' 'place-making,' and 'reconciliation' to assess how these come together in the establishment of an Aboriginal identity in Perth, Western Australia. Focusing on individuals who do not represent the common stereotypes associated with Aboriginal Australians, it will be demonstrated that these individuals are forced into an in-between place where they have to continually negotiate what Aboriginality means in the twenty-first century. Taking on this responsibility they become mediators, stressing a 'shared history' in order create a place for themselves in the non-Aboriginal landscape and to advance reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia by fighting the dominant discourse from within.

Beginning with the State and Government's Native Title appeal premiss that Nyungar never existed, this thesis will examine this claim by first presenting an account of the history of southwest Western Australia to establish the place Aboriginal people have been forced into by the colonists during early settlement, and the processes of which extend into the present day. From there on in the focus will be on individual Aboriginal people and their careers and businesses, examining how they attempt to redefine what is perceived and accepted as Aboriginality through different interaction and mediation 'tactics' with non-Aboriginal Australians. Finally, this thesis will take a closer look at the reconciliation movement in Australia and the people involved in it. It will determine different approaches to reconciliation and assess their possibility and meaning for the construction of a twenty-first century Aboriginal identity.

The thesis will conclude that although Nyungar are forced into the dominant discourse, their resistance from within credits a new kind of Aboriginality that is just as valid as the 'traditional' and 'authentic' Aboriginality imagined by non-Aboriginal Australia.

Acknowledgements

Over the course of my PhD candidacy there were a number of people who have influenced, impressed, advised, helped and supported me. First and foremost, my supervisor, Stan Frankland, who believed in me even when I myself did not. You have allowed me to do the research I wanted to do, letting me choose my own path but being there when needed. Thank you for supporting me the way you have, putting up with me and inspiring me to do the best I possibly could. All of your advice has proven invaluable and this thesis would certainly not exist without your help.

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I am further indebted to the Anthropology Department at the University of Western Australia for giving me the opportunity to do research in Australia. Michael Pinches for filling out paperwork that allowed me to attain the necessary visa, access to the UWA library, and general affiliation with UWA. Without your help this research would not have been possible and I am grateful you were willing to sponsor my visa despite not knowing me at the time. Katie Glaskin, also at UWA, for being my supervisor while I was in the field. Your support and advice during and after fieldwork has meant a lot to me - thank you for being there when I needed someone to talk to. Martin Forsey, John Stanton, and Nick Smith for letting me sit in their seminars and lectures, as well as the Thesis Writing Group with Katie Glaskin and Richard Davis.

Also in Perth, Western Australia: Tourism WA, and in particular the Aboriginal Tourism Unit, for letting me volunteer and teaching me about the policy-making side of things; Angelique Fransen of WAITOC for her support and information; the South West

Aboriginal Land and Sea Council for the information and fact sheets they provided me with; Rottnest Express Ferries for supporting my research by letting me do a survey, allowing me to join the Swan River Dreaming Tour on several occasions, and giving me free transportation to Rottnest Island; Rottnest Island Authority for waiving my landing fee to help with my survey and attendance of the Wadjemup Bus Tour.

Special thanks also go to my Nyungar and other Aboriginal friends, both those who wished to stay anonymous as well as those who allowed me to use their names - without you my work would have been impossible. Thank you for believing in me, supporting me, and trusting me with your stories. All of you have been invaluable to the present thesis, but an extra thank you goes to Marissa Verma and Greg Nannup: I cannot express how much it means to me that you took the time to read some of my writing, and more importantly, that you approved of it. Thank you for your kind words.

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I am further grateful for my amazing friends and fellow students in the UK, Germany, and Australia who offered a welcome distraction when needed and helped me through the tough times, keeping me (relatively) sane. Luisa, Kristen, Jacqueline, Tess and Michelle: thank you for just being you and always being there. The Saints for letting me be part of something very special that will always be close to my heart. Ashley for the numerous working sessions to keep me motivated. Sandra Reisinger, you are very welcome and thank you for making me see the train. Adam and Alex, for always welcoming me into your homes, providing me with a place to stay and just for being as unbelievably inappropriate as you are. Linda Scott for offering your valuable feedback in return for eternal servitude, and Sara Parkinson for sacrificing your holidays to proof-read my work and (hopefully) eliminating the last of my grammatical errors.

Last, but certainly not least, the biggest thank you of all goes to my parents, Hannelore and Rainer Hemmers. You never told me I could not do something, never doubted me, and always allowed me to chase my dreams. I inherited my desire to see and experience the world from the both of you, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to follow my passion and travel wherever my feet (or bike/car/boat/plane) will take me. Without your love and support I would have never made it this far, and it turns out you were right: Everything will sort itself out in the end. Thank you for constantly reassuring me of this.

Advisory Note:

I respectfully advise all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians that this thesis contains names of deceased Nyungar. I apologise for any distress this may cause.

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Introduction

Into the Field

Nyungar[1] never existed as a united people. This is the bold argument the Western Australian State and Commonwealth Government used in their appeal to the recognition of Native Title over the Perth metropolitan area in 2006 (South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (forthwith SWALSC) accessed 22/04/2008).[2] The appeal questioned the very existence of Nyungar Aboriginal people and the identity of those who call themselves Nyungar by asserting "that Justice Wilcox had wrongly identified a single Noongar society at sovereignty" (SWALSC et al. 2009: xxiii).

> The State argued that for Native Title to exist the 'society' had to show that 'its observance of laws and rules be vital, the members of the society be united in and by their common observance of those laws and customs, continuously through time and only traditional laws and customs are relevant. i.e. the same at sovereignty'. The State argued Justice Wilcox had taken 'a farrago of cultural remnants to be sufficient, apparently satisfied they are traditional looking, regardless whether they produce rights to establish a "community"'. (SWALSC et al. 2009: xxiii)

The problem identified by the State and Commonwealth Government in the appeal is that Nyungar society is spread across the entire southwest of Western Australia and incorporates different dialect groups. The exact number of dialect groups is contested, with Collard and Harben (2010), for example, claiming there are twelve groups, while Berndt (1980) contends there are thirteen, and SWALSC (accessed 22/04/2008) that

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[1] I have chosen the spelling 'Nyungar' as it is the one used by John, the first Nyungar I worked with. It denotes both the singular and the plural. Alternate spellings, that may be used in direct quotations, include but are not limited to 'Noongar' (the spelling preferred by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council) and 'Nyoongar.'

[2] The Native Title claim over the Perth metropolitan area is part of the Single Noongar Claim, which incorporates the entire southwest. See also SWALSC "Media Release: SWALSC Welcomes Appeal Decision" 16/04/2008.

there are fourteen.[3] Nevertheless, Nyungar remains the general name by which the Aboriginal people of the southwest identify themselves today.

In April 2008, the appeal was upheld on grounds that Justice Wilcox had made errors of law. Importantly, however, the Federal Court appeal decision did not say that Nyungar did not exist or did not have Native Title rights over the Perth metropolitan area, instead referring the case back to the High Court for a new hearing (SWALSC et al. 2009: xxiv-xxv). With this verdict, the Federal Court refused to make a decision regarding the existence of Nyungar people, creating uncertainty as to what Aboriginality is and further questioning the identity of those who define themselves as Aboriginal and Nyungar.

The aim of this thesis is, thus, to draw a picture of twenty-first century Aboriginality in Nyungar country, and more specifically the Perth metropolitan area, as it is negotiated through an interaction of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. Aside from focusing on a geographical area that has been largely overlooked by previous research, my main informants also represent a group that is rarely ever depicted in the public as well as academic discourse. They are Aboriginal Australians who do not adhere to the common stereotypes associated with them. These Aboriginal Australians find themselves in an in-between place, in-between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia, in which they continually negotiate what Aboriginality is. In the process of researching this, 'shared history,' 'place-making,' and 'reconciliation' emerged as key themes in the establishment of an Aboriginal identity in Perth, Western Australia. This thesis will use these three key elements as discrete fields of analysis, with each chapter focusing on one of them in turn. Having said that, however, it is important to point out that these key themes are intricately intertwined. Everything within this thesis is interconnected and it is difficult to focus on one thing without the other, which is why 'shared history' and 'place-making' are so important, even though I would argue that my thesis is primarily about the reconciliation process and the negotiation of Aboriginality within this process.

[3] SWALSC (accessed 22/04/2008) identifies the following dialect groups among the Nyungar: Amangu, Yuat, Whadjuk, Pinjareb, Wardandi, Balardong, Nyakinyaki, Wilman, Ganeang, Bibbulmun, Mineng, Goreng, Wudjari and Njunga. Berndt's (1980) list excludes Njunga, and Collard and Harben's (2010) list excludes Amangu and Njunga. See also Fig. 2.

This also means that there are issues, such as Native Title, that need to be discussed to some degree for the overall understanding of ongoing processes and discourses in Perth, although they do not form part of my main focus.

Following on from the introduction, then, Chapter One will give a discussion of the history of southwest Western Australia - divided in pre- and post-Native Title - and its continued influence on and relevance for the present day. It is here that 'shared history' will emerge as a key motif that will also recur throughout my entire thesis. Many of my informants found it imperative to speak of the 'shared history' of over two-hundred years, referring to the time since the first settlers arrived. By stressing that this is history is 'shared' and not just one-sided, my Nyungar friends reassert their place within Australia. It is a place that has been, and, importantly, continues to be negotiated through an interaction of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. While history is marked by ruthless action against Nyungar, the colonial forces had their, often little known, Aboriginal counterparts (Reynolds 1982) and they established a place for their people in the future. Nyungar underline the 'shared history' to make their non-Aboriginal counterparts understand that they, too, had a role to play, that they were not invisible. On another level, by claiming and prioritising 'shared history,' my Nyungar informants also invite outsiders into their world, making "our history [...] your history" (pers. comm. Debra 2008) and creating new ways of seeing relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This active engagement of Nyungar with the non-Aboriginal world is crucial to the ongoing reconciliation process in Australia, and is thus at the heart of my thesis. Nevertheless, it has to be remembered that this engagement is always part of the dominant discourse, and trapped within it Aboriginal people are simultaneously rendered visible as a 'timeless' and unchanging antiquity, and invisible as human beings with their own distinct history, living in the twenty-first century.

Next, Chapter Two will take a closer look at contemporary imaginations of Perth and Aboriginal 'place-making' within those imaginations of the landscape. It will be shown throughout that with regards to urban landscapes, "the trope of a timeless Aboriginal

culture conveniently allowed settlers and their descendants to 'empty' the landscape of Aboriginality" (Byrne and Houston 2005, accessed 03/11/2011). As Taylor's (2000) work, for example, will clarify, dominant discourses and their inherent memory work deny Aboriginal lived experience and instead override Aboriginal memory with more 'pleasant' representations of place. Therefore, the importance of storytelling and code-switching will be used in broad terms to discuss Aboriginal agency and the creation of a mediator role some Nyungar individuals take on. Importantly, here code-switching will not only be discussed in its linguistic form, that is the switching between two languages or dialects, but also in terms of how behaviour is changed in order to communicate with different groups of people. The resulting mediator role is significant, because it exemplifies the way Aboriginal people negotiate with their non-Aboriginal counterparts and thus create new ways of thinking about Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations. This re-imagining of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations is pivotal to the reconciliation movement and as such presents the first step towards reconciliation.

Finally, Chapter Three will take into account the different influences on the reconciliation movement, resulting in a discussion of how different local projects in the Perth area have tried to, more or less successfully, make reconciliation happen. It will be shown throughout that aside from processes of reasserting their place within the landscape, which they have some control over, there is also an ongoing process of stereotyping in which Aboriginal people are categorised and labeled as mainly disadvantaged by their non-Aboriginal counterparts for the purpose of reconciliation. Thus, the reconciliation process is set up accordingly. In effect this means a neglecting of the actual relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, as a result of which reconciliation has become almost an impossibility. However, while Hattam and Atkinson (2006: 688) indeed argue that reconciliation in Australia is impossible, Halloran (2007: 15) acknowledges that it is possible, although "the process of reconciliation is likely to be slow, as its success requires attitudinal and behavioural shifts at a national level." After all, despite the dispossession and assimilation policies "a recurring message that resonates through many of Sydney's Aboriginal communities is that, in spite of such a violent history of dispossession, they have survived" (Hinkson

and Harris 2010: xxvii). In fact, it is pivotal for urban Aboriginal Australians to stress their survival as Aboriginal so as not to be further marginalised and rendered invisible, instead making a conscious statement that they are still here and that they continue to belong.

As will be demonstrated over the course of this thesis, what Hinkson and Harris (2010: xxvii) argued for Sydney's Aboriginal people is also applicable to Nyungar in Perth. First, however, a closer look at my field site and more explanation regarding my fieldwork is required. I will therefore give an overview of the scope and limitations of my fieldwork, before turning to an explanation of how I did fieldwork in an urban context. Furthermore, before moving on to Chapter One, I will offer some brief explanations regarding racism and reconciliation in connection with urban Aboriginality. In addition, I will discuss the importance of the 'traditional' and 'authenticity' with regards to the urban-rural divide, as in dominant discourses the rural is still associated with 'traditional' and 'authentic' Aboriginality, and the urban Aboriginal population is said to be 'inauthentic' and to have lost their 'traditions.' Finally, it is important to note that just as for the key elements of my thesis - 'shared history,' 'place-making,' and 'reconciliation' - the issues of (a) 'urban Aboriginality,' 'racism,' and 'reconciliation,' and (b) 'traditionality,' 'authenticity,' and 'stereotyping' are also closely interconnected and their theoretical implications will thus be discussed accordingly. It is pivotal to include these explanations in the Introduction as these issues emerged as particularly important to the understanding of urban Aboriginal Australian studies, and indeed my own research.

Fieldwork Scope and Limitations

According to SWALSC (accessed 22/04/2008), Nyungar country covers an area from Jurien in the north to Albany in the south, and from the coast in the west to Merredin and Ravensthorpe in the east (see Fig. 3). Some Nyungar I worked with, however, contended that Nyungar country reaches as far north as Geraldton and as far east as Esperance (pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009, Better Business Blitz Participant 2009),[4] thereby underlining the complexity and overlapping of Aboriginal Australian society. That said, "archaeological evidence from Perth and Albany suggests that the Noongar people have lived in the area for at least 45 000 years" (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008). The Nyungar's Aboriginal neighbours are the Yamatji to the north and the Wongi to the east. Still, these discrepancies about the size of Nyungar country further point towards how "Western cartographic conventions reflect the importance of making boundaries to function as markers to exclude others and demonstrate individual ownership and control" (Collard and Harben 2010: 84). Today there are approximately 27,000 Nyungar living across the entire southwest, with some even estimating the number to be as high as 40,000 due to under-identification (SWALSC (nda) as cited in Bradfield 2006: 208). Specifically for the greater metropolitan area, which includes my field site and is 'traditional' Whadjuk-Nyungar country (see Fig. 2), the number of Aboriginal people is quoted to be just under 20,000 by the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (2008 via pers. comm. SWALSC 2012).

[4] The informants' backgrounds will be discussed more fully over the course of this thesis. I use pseudonyms throughout my writing, apart from those cases where I have obtained written permission to print the actual name (indicated by at least one time use of the person's surname). For an overview of my informants, see Appendix (Glossary: Informants' Names, Affiliations, and Relations).

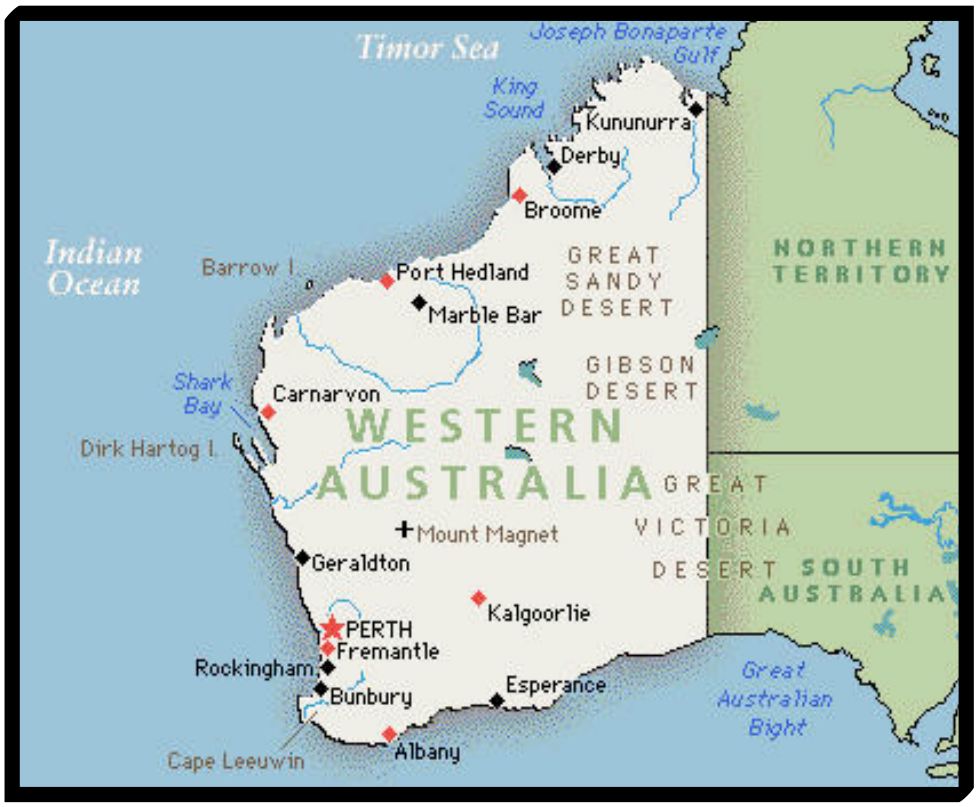

Fig. 1: Province of Western Australia (Source: GMT accessed 08/08/2008)

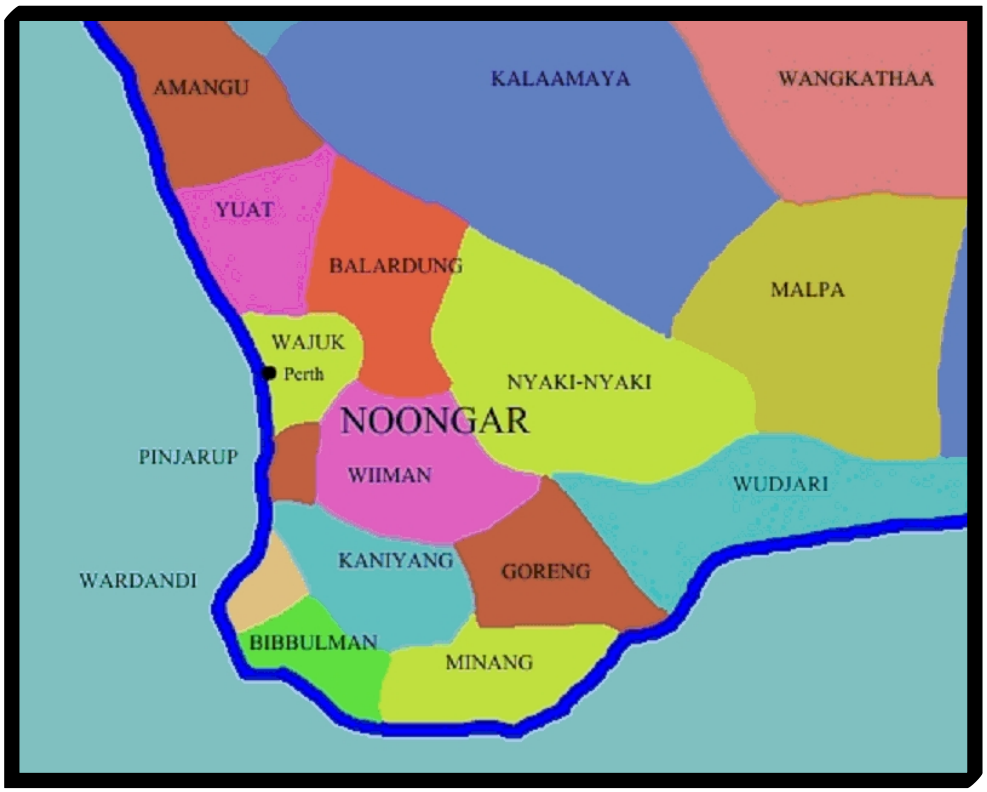

Fig. 2: Aboriginal Southwest Australia (Source: pers. comm. SWALSC 2009)

Fig. 3: Noongar Country and Single Noongar Claim (Source: SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008)

However, while my specific field site, the Perth and Fremantle area, is 'traditionally' Whadjuk-Nyungar country, it is the nature of metropolitan areas to play host to people from different geographical areas. As Toussaint (1987: 11-12) pointed out, "Perth has been the focus of large scale rural to urban migration, on the part of Aboriginal people, which commenced during the 1960s" resulting in "the largest single concentration of Aborigines in Western Australia." Therefore, the people I worked with came from an array of backgrounds. My informants included not only Whadjuk-Nyungar, but Bibbulmun-Nyungar, Balardong-Nyungar, Wardandi-Nyungar, Nyungar-Yamatji, Yamatji, or Aboriginal from another part of Australia altogether. This is consistent with Toussaint's (1992: 19) argument that "Nyungar living in Perth today do not constitute one single homogenous group, although there is a commonality that is engendered by 'being Nyungar'." Indeed, all the individuals I worked with were very particular about which dialect group they belonged to and would claim this particular identity in addition

to being Nyungar and being Aboriginal. They thus create multiple belongings, or identities within identities. As Aboriginal scholars Collard, Harben, and van den Berg (2004: 10) put it:

> The term "Aborigine" does not tell us anything about the regional diversity of Indigenous Australians, it tells us even less about the richness of each of our own cultural, language and geopolitical systems. It simply tells us that we are the original peoples of Australia.

As a result, it can be argued that this 'being Nyungar' is a form of political resistance to not being recognised as Aboriginal by the wider Australians society (Hollinsworth 1992: 144). Therefore, 'being Nyungar,' in addition to their more specific individual Aboriginal identity, is the creation of a universal-Nyungarness or pan-Aboriginality which is supposed to help ascertain the place of those people who identify themselves as Nyungar as distinctly Aboriginal in Australian society (see also Hollinsworth 1992: 144). However, it is also important to note that often the particularity in Nyungar identity claims directly juxtaposes the more universal, and often stereotypical, Aboriginal identity which by and large has to be claimed in order to be recognised as Aboriginal by non-Aboriginal Australia in the first place.

Given this apparent multiplicity of, sometimes contradicting, identities, it is further interesting to note that according to Aboriginal scholar van den Berg (2002: xiv), as well as my Bibbulmun-Nyungar informants Noah and Millie,[5] the name Nyungar derives from a miscommunication between early settlers and those who are now known and identify as Nyungar.[6] Instead of Nyungar, the Aboriginal people of the southwest were known as the Bibbulmun people, which can also be verified through Daisy Bates' (2008, Bridge 1992) controversial accounts. Millie and Noah both maintain that

[5]Millie is a successful business owner in the Swan Valley. She initially started out crafting boomerangs for the Sydney Olympics, but eventually sold that business and now runs an art gallery and gift shop. Her partner Noah runs occasional tours out from the Swan Valley to the country around Williams in the wheat belt where he grew up.

[6] This is in contrast to Berndt (1980: 81) who noted that George Fletcher Moore already documented the name Nyungar, although in a different spelling, in 1842, suggesting that the Aboriginal people in southwest Western Australia used it as an identifying marker long before Daisy Bates came to live with them.

they are Bibbulmun, not Nyungar, and that the only reason they are known as Nyungar today is that when a white settler came up to Daisy Bates and asked her "Who is that?" pointing towards an Aboriginal man, she replied "Oh that's just a Nyungar," meaning "That is just a man." Van den Berg (2002: xiv), on the other hand, argues that there is anecdotal evidence saying that a settler went up to an Aboriginal man and asked what his group name was, to which the Aboriginal man is said to have replied "Nyungar" and pointing at himself, meaning to indicate that he is a man. Thus, while there is disagreement about the participants in this interaction, both sources agree that the name Nyungar derives from miscommunication. Interestingly, the Bibbulmun are also said to be one of the Nyungar dialect groups. When I asked Noel Nannup, a respected Nyungar elder, about this, he replied that while the Bibbulmun are only one dialect group of many within Nyungar country, it is true that Nyungar were also collectively known as Bibbulmun, because the Dreamings they care for make them such an important group. What this brief account of misunderstanding therefore exemplifies and introduces is the idea of the 'contact zone' (Pratt 1992) or 'middle ground' (White 1991), emphasising that Aboriginal people were actively involved in the colonisation process and not just passive bystanders as the 'frontier' (Reynolds 1982) concept would suggest (see Chapter One). No matter by what name they were known before European settlement, though, the fact remains that Aboriginal people inhabited Australia long before the Europeans landed there and that as such Australia was in fact not a *terra nullius*.[7]

It is necessary to mention here that when I first set out for the field, I was determined to research Aboriginal tourism in an urban context. From my literature review at the time it became apparent to me that most research on Aboriginal tourism had been conducted in rural areas, mostly in north and central Australia. I chose the Perth and Fremantle area specifically, because previous research appears to have overlooked this area. This absence was underlined by the extreme difficulty I experienced trying to find any recent literature on the area and its Aboriginal people. In fact, most of the more in-depth ethnography (see for example Baines 1988, Birdsall 1988) I was able to find dated back

[7] The term *terra nullius* itself has been highly contested in recent years. More details on the controversy can be found in Chapter One.

to at least the 1980s. In her early work, Toussaint (1987: 47) pointed out that "material which relates directly to Aboriginal society and culture in the south-west is scarcer and less reliable than from most other parts of Western Australia [...] because the south-west was colonised before other parts of the State and the destructive impact of colonisation was much more pronounced." As such, Nyungar history was rendered largely invisible.

Indeed, the age of the sources, in addition to their reliability, was something I struggled with the most regarding material specifically concerning Nyungar. As a result, from fairly early on I became heavily reliant on SWALSC's resources in piecing together the most important Nyungar experiences in the history of Western Australia. I am well aware that SWALSC is necessarily biased, being the land and sea council responsible for the southwest and the Single Noongar Claim they are actively fighting for the recognition of Nyungar Native Title. In a way, then, SWALSC is creating the historic Aboriginal through their account, recreating what the government denies them to be. However, despite SWALSC's accounts being necessarily politically biased, their website, as well as their 2009 publication *"It's Still In My Heart, This Is My Country" - The Single Noongar Claim History* are the most up-to-date and extensive accounts of Nyungar lived experience in the southwest. In fact, to the extent that I was able to research, there has been barely anything written on Nyungar since the late 1980s that transcends past the issue of Native Title, and where there is other material, it tends to focus on how Nyungar in Perth are disadvantaged concerning socio-economic issues (see for example Toussaint 1992). It is thus my aim to extend the knowledge beyond this, particularly with a focus on reconciliation and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian relations in twenty-first century Australia.

Having said that, going into the field, it was initially my goal to find out and investigate what concerns Nyungar and tourists alike, and how Nyungar represent themselves and are being represented by others in the tourism industry. Actually being in the field, however, changed my research. I still worked within the tourism industry, as I set out to do, but I used it more for context. It was something that linked my informants, making it a working, an active, context, rather than a simple, passive, backdrop. In fact, I would

argue that tourism offers a particular site where Aboriginality is enacted and as such provides a productive and active frame of reference to my research. Importantly, by using tourism in this way I did not have to adhere to the usual limitations of tourism studies - the focus on the tourist - but was able to focus on individuals who are, for one reason or another, involved in the tourism industry at the opposite end of the spectrum. As a result of this, instead of learning about Nyungar as a whole, I ended up working with a limited number of individuals who are seen to represent a group that is, for obvious reasons, not often being written about: Aboriginal people who have careers, maybe even their own businesses, earn good salaries and participate in a modern urban lifestyle.

Methodological Implications: Fieldwork in an Urban Context

Conducting fieldwork in an urban context presented me with problems and methodologies different to those of anthropologists who choose to pursue more 'traditional' anthropological fieldwork in small villages or communities. These problems begin with the intricate position of urban Aboriginal people within the wider Australian society. As Kleinert (2010: 172-173) so fittingly points out, Aboriginal Australians are "ambiguously placed in relation to the nation state [...] constructed through colonial ideologies as part of a distant past or remote present." This view denies "that post-invasion history and experience has created an additional layer of memory" (Behrendt accessed 04/01/2012), not recognising the fluidity of history but imagining it as stages that have to be moved through and concluded (Rose 2005). Therefore, this perception implies the widespread belief, deeply founded in the colonial period, that 'real' Aboriginal people in the twenty-first century only exist in remote areas of Australia. By contrast, Aboriginal people in the city are often thought to be so assimilated that they hardly qualify as Aboriginal anymore (Kleinert 2010: 173).

The main reason behind this is the notion of 'culture loss' which is associated with urban Aboriginal Australians. Indeed, Langton (1981: 16-22 as cited in Toussaint 1987: 24-25) pointed out "a tendency to ignore the Aboriginal response [to colonialism] and

consequently deny their social presence in the city" that resulted from the focus on what she called a "culture of poverty" point of view, criticising that researchers rarely "look further than economic factors in their study of urban Aborigines." One of the most obvious factors for the 'culture loss' perspective is that many Aboriginal Australians do not speak their traditional language anymore. However, as Toussaint (1987: 96-97) wrote, "Nyungar are no less Nyungar because their language has not stayed entirely unchanged in the post-settlement period [...] something which is hardly surprising given the extent of depopulation and disruption in the south-west." That being the case, the notion of 'culture loss' completely disregards "the cultural integrity of Aboriginal people and their ability to maintain certain beliefs and practices congruent with constant change and adaptation" (Toussaint 1992: 16). During our first interview together, my Nyungar-Yamatji friend,[8] Alice (pers. comm. 2009), illustrated this point:

> It's interesting with Nyungar as well being, you know, everybody says they lost their culture, but their culture is slowly, slowly keeping it alive. But I couldn't say what's actually there and what's not. But it would be interesting to know. See that stuff doesn't bother me. Thing is I have my respect and I have my understanding of Aboriginal culture, but it doesn't interfere with my work or what I actually do or how I, you know, live my life. I'm not bound, I suppose, by specifically doing things. You know, what I should do. I work professionally. The minute I have to do work in the community and all that, I know who to see or who to go to first. That way, they will not stop me from doing business. I don't think I've upset anyone there. Anyone so far.

Further underlining Toussaint's (1992: 16) argument is the context of Alice's statement. While the statement is, as mentioned above, from our first formal interview together, I have known Alice for months. During the interview, which took place in a hotel bar around the corner from the office where Alice worked at the time, she is sitting across from me, sipping her iced latte. I met Alice while volunteering with the Aboriginal Tourism Unit at Tourism Western Australia (forthwith Tourism WA).

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[8] Alice identifies herself as a Nyungar-Yamatji woman, arguing that she was born Nyungar but is a Yamatji woman. Specifically, Alice was born on Nyungar country, just like her mother, so she claims that Nyungar identity. However, Alice's grandmother is a Yamatji, and because Yamatji follow the mother's mother's line she is Yamatji as well (pers. comm. Alice 2009).

For approximately nine months of my sixteen months in the field, I worked at Tourism WA two days a week helping out with administrative work through which I gained valuable insights into the governmental side of the Aboriginal tourism industry.[9] However, often it was not so much the actual work I was doing whilst in the office, but the conversations I had with different employees across all divisions, which allowed me to make some valuable contacts throughout the state of Western Australia. This networking was further supported by the open-plan layout of the offices. While Tourism WA stretched out across several floors of a Perth Central Business District high-rise building near the waterfront, the open plan meant that it was easy to meet and talk to employees from most divisions, particularly when having lunch or a coffee break in the kitchenette. Furthermore, being known across different divisions, meant that I was given extra information - for example statistical data from the research unit - and also that I was invited to different events which people thought might be valuable to my research. For instance, I first met Marissa Verma, a Whadjuk Nyungar, at a Better Business Blitz for Aboriginal Tourism which I was only able to attend because I was volunteering with Tourism WA at the time (see Chapter Two). Other events I was allowed to participate in due to my work with Tourism WA include the Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan and Wadjemup Bus Tour launch (see Chapter Three) and the Swan River Dreaming Tour launch.

The Wadjemup Bus Tour (in cooperation with Rottnest Island Authority) and the Swan River Dreaming Tour (in cooperation with Rottnest Express Ferries) are products of Greg Nannup's company, Indigenous Tours WA. Greg is a Whadjuk-Nyungar in his twenties, and I had already been in contact with him before I left for the field. Greg's most successful tour is the Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour, and as part of my research I participated in numerous of these tours to the extent that Greg began to joke about one day bringing a batch of charcoal, painting my skin with it and letting me lead his tour. I also had the opportunity to join him on his occasional Fremantle Heritage Tours which he runs for bus charters, and, after its launch, the Swan River Dreaming

[9] My sixteen months of fieldwork ran from October 2008 to February 2010. For a chronology of my fieldwork, see Appendix.

Tour. During the tours in Kings Park and Fremantle, Greg always introduced me to his guest and said that I was conducting research on Indigenous Tourism in Perth, thereby taking me out of the tourist category for them and placing me somewhere in-between himself and the tourist. This was important, because these tours were walking tours and I often had the opportunity to talk to guests on our way from one stop to the next. As such, having Greg introduce me officially to everyone at once saved me from having to do so individually and allowed me to talk to the participants freely without any further ethical considerations. For the Swan River Dreaming and the Wadjemup Bus Tours this was not as important as, due to the constantly moving nature of those tours I rarely had the chance to talk to participants. What was in the foreground on those tours for me was the reconciliation aspect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia (Chapter Three). It is further necessary to point out that the Wadjemup Bus Tour on Rottnest Island was led by Greg's father, the respected Nyungar elder, Noel Nannup. Noel has an honorary doctorate from Murdoch University in Perth, and often gives talks on Aboriginal culture at different functions and universities. He is a skilled storyteller, mostly speaking with a quiet and humble voice, however big the room, and when he speaks it always grows completely silent in respect.

In addition to my work with Tourism WA and Greg and Noel Nannup, I conducted a number of interviews, both formal and informal. These interviews would take place in different locations, depending on my interviewees' preferences. Some were conducted in offices, others in conference rooms, or even cafés and coffee shops (such as the one alluded to in the above excerpt of my interview with Alice). Thus, doing fieldwork in a city meant for me that the majority of my research was done in public and by appointments. Similarly to Reed's (2002) work on walking tours in London, Aboriginal tours and interviews (formal and informal) with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, made up a large proportion of my fieldwork. In fact, in his work Reed (2002: 128) argues that the problem of urban anthropology is that one is writing about a group of people (the tour guides in his case) who barely know each other, but defining them as one group through their "relationship with the city." In addition, Jacobs and Fincher (1998: 17) noted that urban spaces should be "understood not as a community, but as a

site structured around the actual, not imagined, "being together of strangers"." The emphasis on the actual and not the imagined is important here. It has been pointed out above that although Nyungar are very particular in their identity claims, there is also a wider, more universal Nyungar identity and according to that there is also a wider Nyungar community. This wider Nyungar community, however, I would argue is necessarily imagined as not every Nyungar in the Perth metropolitan area knows each other personally (although they might know or be aware of each other). For my fieldwork this meant that I was within this structure of strangers, working within the framework of us being together in the city, and taking part together in the tourism industry. It also meant that I had to, as Sanjek (2002b: 557) suggested, "follow urban pathways," leading me from intimate situations of one-on-one interviews and conversations to more 'traditional' participant observation in rather institutionalised situations. Focusing my research on tourism helped define those pathways through the abstract field of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.

Most of my interviews were formal interviews, and in accordance with the university's ethics guidelines I had participant information sheets and consent forms, allowing me to record the interviews and explaining that the recording, as well as the interview, can be stopped at any time. These interviews presented ideal occasions to not only find out more about my informants' backgrounds, but also to question them privately about things that I had picked up on during our previous work together and other conversations. Most of my informants I knew fairly well before asking to interview them, which meant that I had the advantage of already having earned their trust. As a result there was a sense of intimacy during the interviews, whether it was in a public or private location. Often both my interviewee and I would forget about the voice recorder on the table, with a simple open-ended question like "Can you tell me about your background? How did you get to where you are today?" leading into a conversation that would sometimes last for two or three hours. This level of understanding was only possible because I knew all of my interviewees before we conducted the 'official' interview.

There were a few people who I only met once or twice before interviewing them, either because I perceived them to be more open towards me and my study or because I knew they only had a limited amount of time to meet with me. Nevertheless, they still helped me gain crucial insights into what it meant for them to be Aboriginal and living and working in the city. I also interviewed a few non-Aboriginal informants who have been involved in the administration of Aboriginal tourism. This provided me with a different perspective on people involved in the Aboriginal tourism industry, resulting in a more critical perspective on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations in that context. Furthermore, my open-ended entry question served different purposes, not least of all to get my interviewees talking and to allow them to find their flow. It further served to let them tell me what they wanted me to know about them, to let them highlight the issues that were important to them rather than leading them in a direction that I preferred.

Finally, there were a number of occasions when conversations turned into ad-hoc, or informal, interviews. On our way back from Rottnest Island, for example, I unexpectedly had the chance to ask Noel Nannup about all kinds of issues that no-one else I had previously interviewed was able to provide an answer to. These kind of ad-hoc, or informal, interviews were not recorded as they were unexpected and resulted out of conversations.

It has to be noted here, though, that it was important to me to also find out more about the wider Australian society. With that in mind, I decided to audit lectures on the topic at the University of Western Australia as part of my fieldwork. It was previously agreed with the lecturers that 'auditing' meant I would be able to participate in the lectures, but was not expected to do the coursework. I was able to strike this agreement with the lecturers due to my affiliation with the University of Western Australia through my visa sponsorship. Specifically, I attended the lectures of Martin Forsey's "Australian Culture: Myths and Realities" and "Australian Society: Facts and Fantasies," John Stanton's "Aboriginal Art: Production of Meaning" and Nick Smith's "Indigenous Australia: Anthropological Perspectives." In addition to providing me with a better understanding of Australian values, the creation of national identity, and how it is portrayed to the

outside (Forsey's lectures), the lectures on Aboriginal Art and Aboriginal Australia also allowed me to gain more academic background information which was not easily accessible to me in the UK. Therefore, the lectures became an active part of my fieldwork, providing me, above all, with valuable references to relevant literature for this thesis. Forsey's lectures in particular, also allowed me greater insight into Australia's image as perceived by Australian and international students. It is important to point out, however, that since these were lectures, I did not have any direct interaction with other students apart from what some of them said directed to the whole class. Nevertheless, the comments provided by the students proved useful and I often used them as an aid to reflexivity, frequently taking them back to my informants in order to ask their opinion on the issues discussed in class.

Some of the most memorable experiences of my fieldwork, though, were, perhaps ironically, those occasional instances where I left the city. They included a trip to Southern Cross for a cross-cultural awareness workshop, an overnight camping trip to Boyagin Rock, and a trip into the wheat belt (see Chapter One).[10] They were individual events and presented the moments when I felt most deeply immersed in Nyungar culture, on my own with a mob who left the city with a purpose.[11] This is not to say that I experienced these situations as more 'authentic' than my fieldwork in the city. Rather, these were opportunities for the mob I was with to teach me about whatever part of their Aboriginality they wanted me to learn about, 'relatively' away from the dominant non-Aboriginal society. Moreover, those trips provided opportunities for encounters with mobs, instead of just individual and very urban (appointment) encounters. They invited me along on those trips, because they knew I had a genuine interest in their activities and was eager to learn. Still, these trips were the kind of 'traditional' participant

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[10] Some of the terms I use for the geographical areas or plants described in the context of those trips may not be verifiable outside my writing. I am persistent in using them, however, because they are the terms used by my informants for the items or geographical areas I am writing about. Examples include bush foods and medicine, such as shillings and betadine, and geographical areas I had thus far been unfamiliar with and that do not show up on popular internet maps. They mix in with bush foods, such as quondongs, and geographical areas, such as Boyagin Rock, that are verifiable outside my writing

[11] 'Mob' is a slang word used to describe a group of Aboriginal people. It is predominantly used by Aboriginal people themselves, although non-Aboriginal people who work with Aboriginal people also tend to use this term.

observation experiences I imagined when I read ethnographies, such as Myers' (1986) *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self* and Jackson's (2000) *At Home in the World*, both of which were of course based on fieldwork in remote locations.

While some might see this as a contradiction to my urban fieldwork, I would argue that these individual events, while taking place outside the city, were still very much connected to it and as such part of the urban discourse. In a sense, these trips were used as ways of place-making by the urban Nyungar I worked with (see Chapter Two). For example, my trip into the wheat belt with Bibbulmun-Nyungar Millie and Noah, who I have already mentioned briefly previously, was to relocate a grave of one of Noah's ancestors (see Chapter One), making it a very obvious attempt at a reversal of the 'emptying' "the landscape of Aboriginality" as described by Byrne and Houston (2005, accessed 03/11/2011).

At this point, before moving on to some theoretical considerations that I deem necessary for the understanding of this entire thesis, it is important to bring up my informants. Some of them I have already mentioned briefly, for example Alice, Marissa, Millie, and Noah. All of them I will discuss in detail at relevant points throughout my thesis. Nevertheless, one individual in particular needs mentioning here: John, a Balardong-Nyungar elder and my very first informant. He was working in an advisory position for the local government at the time and took the weekends for fishing trips or trips into the bush. He took me, along with others, on an overnight camping trio to Boyagin Rock (Chapter One) and it was also his mob that took me along to a cross-cultural awareness workshop in Southern Cross (see Chapters One and Two). John was a constant in the beginning stages of my fieldwork, emailing me information even before I left for the field and helping me settle in after I arrived. Indeed, one of the documents he put together for me with information on Nyungar said that all Nyungar "share the *wiring boodja,*" or the spirit of the land. As a result, the title of my thesis is a testament to him and symbolises the continued connection Nyungar have with their country, urban or not and regardless of any court decisions, in the twenty-first century.

Theoretical Implications: Urban Aborigines, Racism, and Reconciliation as Interconnected Concepts

Studies of urban Aboriginal Australians have gained increasing currency, since cultural geographer Gale's landmark publication *Urban Aborigines* (assisted by Brookman) in 1972. Indeed, the publication "coincided with the first major Aboriginal land rights victories in urban Australia" (Anderson and Jacobs 1997: 16). While Gale's (1972) account was based on her fieldwork in Adelaide, South Australia, Anderson and Jacobs (1997: 16) point out that "within a year of its publication, legal title over a block of Aboriginal housing situated at the heart of metropolitan Sydney, was bestowed upon an Aboriginal Housing Company based in Redfern." Since then Redfern has become known as an 'Aboriginal capital' of sorts with approximately four-hundred to five-hundred Aboriginal people from various regions in Australia living there at the time Anderson (1998: 211-214) wrote about the suburb. Despite its apparent success in urban Aboriginal land rights issues, however, Redfern houses some of the most disadvantaged Aboriginal Australians. Referring to 1991 census data, Anderson (1998: 211-214) explains that although Aboriginal Australians "constitute less than 5% of the total population [...] it is widely held by white and some black Australians that blight, crime, poverty, substance abuse, truancy, vandalism, youth disaffection, and despair have found their natural habitat on that district's streets." This hints at one of the most prominent issues in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian relations: racism.

The way in which Aboriginal Australians are represented in the public eye is one of extreme inequality. In fact, Mellor (2003: 492) argues that the media "is seen both to discriminate against the Aboriginal community by selective reporting and to perpetuate stereotypes about Aborigines through its coverage of news and current affairs." For example, in his article *Two Rescues, One History: Everyday Racism in Australia*, Stratton (2006) refers to two media spectacles involving the rescue of people: two white Australian miners who had been trapped in a collapsed shaft for weeks before finally being freed in a media spectacle, and two Torres Strait Islanders who were lost out at sea for weeks after an unexpected cyclone had hit the area. Importantly, while in the reports on the rescue involving the white Australians the subjects are championed as

heroes, the reports of the Aboriginal Australians' rescue were presented in a largely negative light. Stratton (2006: 657) summarises that the spectacle surrounding the rescue of the miners emphasised Australian values, "two Aussie working men, tested in a battle with nature, coming through it unscathed; and then there was that laconic Aussie humour and the romance." Indeed, former Prime Minister Howard even held a reception in the miners' honour, underlining how their perseverance was seen as an embodiment of the Australian nation (Stratton 2006: 659). At the same time, the rescue of the Torres Strait Islanders went largely unmentioned and ignored by the wider Australian community. On the rare occasions that it did receive media coverage and recognition, Stratton (2006: 661) notes that "while reporting the amazing achievement of the Tabos [the Torres Strait Islanders lost at sea] in surviving for 22 days in extremely adverse conditions, the article simultaneously undermines the Tabos, casting doubt on the veracity of their story and suggesting that they are, in fact, criminals." It therefore becomes apparent that the media highlighting conflict with regards to Aboriginal Australians is a frequent occurrence and thus contributes to the negative picture that non-Aboriginal Australia still holds of their Aboriginal counterparts.

Mellor (2003: 481) takes this argument further by suggesting that "not only was the wider community seen to not care about Aborigines but it also was seen to prefer that the Aboriginal community did not exist." This is particularly evident in the Australian city, where "the legacy of colonialism is often patently clear [...]: creating a known and familiar place out of an unknown land; providing the spatial infrastructure for the distinction between the colonial self and the colonised other" (Anderson and Jacobs 1997: 19). In such a space, the Aboriginal presence is disruptive and endangers the order of things (Anderson and Jacobs 1997: 19). Indeed, Kapferer (1996: 18) points out that there is an infusion of morality into the community that wants to uphold the colonial order, influencing social identity and creating boundaries between different communities. Thereby racism achieves a certain legitimacy, a way for the dominant to justify their actions. According to Sanjek (2002a: 462) this has been happening since the 1400s, when Western Europeans began colonising the world. In its most essentialised form, then, racism can be defined as

> the cultural and ideological formation that shapes perception and evaluation of self and others according to racial identity, which is institutionalized in both interpersonal and larger-scale behavioural social orders. (Sanjek 2002a: 462)

Stratton (2006: 662, citing Essed 1991: 2) further points out that there is more to racism than structure and morals, introducing the idea of 'everyday racism,' or 'new racism,' which "links ideological dimensions of racism with daily attitudes and interprets the reproduction of racism in terms of the experience of it in everyday life."

In Australia, research on the matter "has distinguished between two kinds of prejudice (Duckitt, 1992, Pedersen & Walker, 1997): an 'old fashioned' form characterised by overt hostility and rejection, and a 'modern' form which is more subtle and covert involving individualistic values" (Pedersen et al. 2004: 234). Other terms found to be used for the distinction between different forms of racism included overt and covert, institutionalised and individual, and institutional and everyday (Dunn et al. 2009, Franklin 1979, Halloran 2007). Indeed, Martínez (1999: 9) pointed out that "'racism' is not singular and unchanging; rather 'racisms' are socially and historically constructed, and are manifested in degrees from overt to covert." Especially research from the field of psychology has argued that the more overt forms of racism are declining as people become more educated and the younger generations are perceived as more open to difference than their ancestors (see for example Augoustinos et al. 1999, Green and Sonn 2006, Hill and Augoustinos 2001, Paradies 2005). Nevertheless, "almost a quarter of Australians experienced 'everyday' forms of racism, encountered in shops, restaurants, at sporting events, or in the form of disrespectful treatment on the basis of ethnic identity, or name-calling" (Dunn et al. 2009: 2). The name-calling in particular is something most of my informants experienced at some point in their lives, with my Nyungar friends Marissa and Alice talking about it in more detail during out interviews (see Chapter Two). Interestingly, Dunn et al. (2009: 8) point out that these forms of 'everyday' racism frequently occur in public urban spaces, almost alluding to a kind of ignorance.

> These racisms are ‘everyday’ in the sense of their informality, and the ways in which they can insidiously become seen as expected or normal. (Dunn et al. 2009: 8)

Indeed, especially at the beginning of my fieldwork I was shocked at how carelessly prejudiced comments were being thrown around. It was not just the use of the term ‘Abo’ in a derogative way, but for example one of my non-Aboriginal informants told me about a situation at an office party where they were going to have a barbecue. They had forgotten to bring firelighters, so one of the management staff turned around to one of the Aboriginal employees and told her to get some sticks and start making the fire, as she should know how to do it. The Aboriginal employee retaliated that making a fire was men’s business and as such he should get the fire started himself. While this can be interpreted as a joking situation between two colleagues, it also implies the persisting inequalities and image of what an ‘authentic’ Aboriginal person is, the stereotypes that are continually being applied to Nyungar, and more generally the denial of Aboriginal agency (see also Forrest and Dunn 2007: 705). In this connection, Green and Sonn (2006) found out during a focus group on their project, that remarks like these are often not seen as ‘real’ racism by the wider population. The people involved in the focus group had all gone through intercultural training and did away with such comments by explaining that the people who said them did not have the same level of understanding regarding Aboriginal culture, they were simply ignorant and meant no harm.

This is in line with Forrest and Dunn’s (2007: 712) argument that “there is a low awareness of racist attitudes in society in general” and that linked to that lacking awareness is the privileged position of Anglo-Australians. It can therefore be argued that racism in Australia is at least twofold: “there being racism *for* and racism *against*” (Riggs and Selby accessed 28/11/2011: 192, original emphasis). In other words, racism simultaneously diminishes the victim and privileges the dominant. This is in direct contrast with the strong sense of egalitarianism that Australia prides itself in, and by extension should support the reconciliation process (Halloran 2007: 14). In fact, Halloran (2007: 14) argues that “future efforts to promote reconciliation in Australia

would be prudent to clearly link the strong Australian sense of 'a fair go for all' to the aims and objectives of Indigenous reconciliation." This, however, is rather difficult considering that the Australian sense of egalitarianism is often used as a reason to discriminate (Hattam and Atkinson 2006: 684). In relation to Aboriginal welfare and land claims, for example, non-Aboriginal Australia often resists because they think these claims to be "above and beyond what all Australians equally deserve" (Halloran 2004: 12), no matter if these claims may be an attempt to right a previously and/or continually experienced inequality. As such I would argue that, although by itself it is not enough, for the reconciliation process it is more important to appeal to empathy and higher levels of education to reduce racism levels, rather than relying on utopian ideas of egalitarianism (see also Green and Sonn 2006, Hill and Augoustinos 2001, Pedersen et al. 2004). Overall, I would then suggest, based on my fieldwork and the individuals I worked with, that direct interaction and inter-relation of Aboriginal people with their non-Aboriginal counterparts, and with it the emphasis of a 'shared history' (see Chapter One) is of the utmost relevance with regards to the reconciliation process (see Chapter Three).

> There is an implication for "cultural" recognition that is about acknowledging co-existence. This recognition manifests itself in acknowledgement of country, respecting the knowledge of elders, using Aboriginal place names and erecting monuments that acknowledge the post-invasion history of Aboriginal people. Meaningful progress on reconciliation has taken place most actively at the local level and many local governments have been exploring these kinds of initiatives as part of an attempt to rethink sharing the country. (Behrendt accessed 04/01/2012)

These local level initiatives have also been explored at length by Cowlishaw (2009, 2010, 2011) in her book *The City's Outback* and her two papers *Mythologising Culture*, all of which will be alluded to in more detail in Chapter Three of this thesis. Suffice it to say at this point that a major part of her work is focused on state sponsored culture, which includes a process which has been described as the "Aboriginalisation of urban space" (Anderson and Jacobs 1997: 19). According to Anderson and Jacobs (1997: 19)

this process allows for a more positive representation of Aboriginal culture, and perhaps even goes so far as to "undo some of the more negative stereotypes of Aborigines," by focusing on producing "a productive hybridity by mixing traditional and contemporary Aboriginal imagery as well as combining Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal imagery." If successful, these hybrid images disturb the colonial order and allow Aboriginal Australians to be involved in the creation of urban spaces (Anderson and Jacobs 1997: 19).

An example for this can be found in Hinkson's (2002) account of Aboriginal sites in Sydney. In Parramatta, one of the western suburbs, the Riverside Walk is a 750 metre long artwork that a local Aboriginal man, Jamie Eastwood, created. Running from the main street to the ferry terminal, the Riverside Walk depicts the local Aboriginal history. The Riverside Walk further fits well into the category of state sponsored culture as it is an initiative commissioned by the local council and part of the official reconciliation process in the area (Hinkson 2002: 72). In that connection, Hinkson (2002: 72) notes that the Riverside Walk does not glorify the colonial past, instead explicitly portraying "the themes of invasion, cross-cultural misunderstanding, massacres, Aboriginal resistance, and the stolen generations [...] not [...] as generalised issues but as specific acts that occurred locally in the Parramatta region." Importantly, it needs emphasising that this artwork depicts the past. It shows the things that happened around Parramatta once upon a time; it does not, however, establish a contemporary Aboriginal presence in the city. When it comes to the imagining of Aboriginal people, non-Aboriginal Australians still firmly position them outside the urban, emphasising the importance of the present research.

Theoretical Implications: Traditionality, Authenticity, and the Creation of Stereotypes

Remote Aboriginal communities continue to be described as more 'traditional' than their urban counterparts, placing them in direct opposition to what is perceived as 'contemporary' Aboriginality in the more settled areas. This view ignores the fact that Aboriginal Australians everywhere have been touched by non-Aboriginal Australian lifestyles which makes it impossible to determine one group as more 'traditional' or more 'contemporary' than another. The Belyuen on the Cox Peninsula in the north of Australia (Povinelli 1993), for example, are completely remote compared to Nyungar. Still, the Belyuen are just as "firmly rooted in contemporary Aboriginal life" (Povinelli 1993: 681) as the urban Nyungar who I worked with. The Belyuen, too, lead "a life that includes bush and grocery stores, Dreamtime Beings, the ravages of pollution, approaching cane toads, non-Aboriginal expansion, and land rights" (Povinelli 1993: 681). Indeed, it can be argued that what is perceived as 'traditional' Aboriginal culture is more important to urban Aboriginal people than their counterparts living in remote areas, because they have more direct interaction with non-Aboriginal Australians. Aboriginal people living in urban areas face more pressure to conform to a certain picture of Aboriginality held by non-Aboriginal Australians in order to be recognised as Aboriginal. As such, the 'traditional' is needed as a political tool by urban Aboriginal people. It is important to emphasise that by and large what is spoken of as 'traditional' Aboriginal culture is what is perceived as 'traditional' by non-Aboriginal society and imposed upon Aboriginal society. Often 'traditional' Aboriginal society or history is used to denote something past, something before white invasion of Australia. Social anthropology often used 'tradition' to describe "patterns of beliefs, customs, values and knowledge or expertise which are passed on from generation to generation by the socialization process within a given population" (Seymour-Smith 1986: 279-280). This usage, however, has largely gone out of fashion as it tends to ignore the dynamic aspect of culture, failing "to examine the key problem of the relationship between cultural persistence or continuity and cultural change, a problem which is to be approached not only in terms of cultural elements in themselves but also in terms of the historical

processes of social reproduction and social change in the population concerned" (Seymour-Smith 1986: 280).

In other words, 'tradition' is the romanticised view of a simpler lifestyle before European settlement, the myth of the pre-colonial, that is attractive to non-Aboriginal Australia, contrasting "the constant change and innovation of the modern world and the attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and variant" (Hobsbawm 1983: 2) effectively leading to what Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) termed the "invention of tradition." It is their contention that most of what seems to be 'traditional' leading back years and years, tends to be rather recent and at times even invented.

> 'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. (Hobsbawm 1983: 1)

As a result, I not only use 'tradition' in inverted commas to underline the contested nature of the term, but also to stress that what is entitled 'traditional' is not necessarily so, and often imposed on others from the outside. It is also here that the notion of 'tradition' links in with 'authenticity,' especially with regards to the tourism industry. Specifically for Australia, Hollinshead (1996 as cited in van den Berg et al. 2005: 50) argued "that authenticity can only ever be emergent or negotiated, not fixed, due to hybrid forms of difference in this country," More often than not, Aboriginal Australians have to adhere to what is perceived as 'traditional' Aboriginality to be perceived as 'authentic.' The didjeridu, for example, is marketed as the 'traditional' Aboriginal musical instrument and as such equated with 'authentic' Aboriginality in the tourism industry (see also Chapter Three). However, the didjeridu is only 'traditional' to a small geographical area in north Australia, its invention as a national symbol for Aboriginality, in contrast, is rather recent (Magowan 2005). Furthermore, for the context of the tourism industry it has to be noted that

> there has often been a special weight laid on Aboriginal culture to be simultaneously 'authentic' in both a Western and an Aboriginal sense. Westerners further appear to misrecognise the symbolic power of indigenous performance by harbouring a tacit expectation that it must be true to itself by conforming to localised meanings [...], whilst also appearing how Westerners want it to look. [...] Despite the fact that change in indigenous performance has been ongoing since contact, 'purity' and 'naturalness' are still implicit in the logic that Aboriginal performance should reflect some illusory static and irretrievable past, whilst the West takes pride in its own culture being flexible and malleable enough to be able to cope with being in a continual state of flux. (Magowan 2000: 314)

While this refers specifically to performances, I also found this argument applicable outside the performance and tourism industry. This is significant, because as I pointed out above, actually being in the field shifted my focus away from tourism to the more pressing and relevant topics of reconciliation and Aboriginal place within a perceived white Australia. The issue of 'authenticity' is thus taken out of the tourism context and discussed in its more diverse forms.

For the everyday lived experience of the Nyungar I worked with, the term 'authenticity' itself is by and large only associated with the tourism industry. More common challenges, I found, were as to their 'realness' or 'traditionality' as Aboriginal people, pointing towards the more diverse forms of the 'authenticity' debate. Therefore, the urban Nyungar I worked with instead tend to speak about how non-Aboriginal Australians believe them to have lost their culture and 'traditions.' This distinction further implies that Nyungar, or urban Aboriginal people elsewhere in Australia, can simultaneously be recognised 'authentic' Aboriginal people who have lost their culture. This is also where the frequent classification of Aboriginal people comes in.

For instance, in her work on Nyungar in Perth, Toussaint (1987: 16-17) distinguished between three different types of urban Aboriginal people: 'suburbanites,' 'fringedwellers,' and 'inner-city dwellers.' Focusing her own work on 'inner-city dwellers,' Toussaint (1987: 16-17) established that the individuals defined under this category are by and large unemployed, often have been so for a prolonged time, and

"live in transient forms of shelter, primarily in the centre of Perth and within the wider non-Nyungar milieu." This is in contrast to "the "Fringedwellers" [...] who live outside the ambit of mainstream White society in fringe camps in the northern metropolitan area" (Toussaint 1987: 16-17). According to Toussaint's (1987) categories, then, the urban Nyungar I worked with would be most closely associated with the 'suburbanites.'

> The "Suburbanites" are Nyungar who live in the metropolitan suburbs and who have, to a degree, incorporated some of the more widely held values of the dominant non-Nyungar group. For example, although employment for all Nyungars is generally low [...], I found that those who usually retained relatively stable employment and training opportunities were members of the "Suburbanites" group. (Toussaint 1987: 16-17)

In other words, although I did not set out to do so, I ended up working with the 'Aboriginal elite' (Moore 2003). However, it is also important to mention that Toussaint's (1987) essential classification of Aboriginal people is difficult to support today, and I found there to be much more fluidity within Nyungar society. Interestingly, fifteen years prior to Toussaint's (1987) work, Gale (1972) identified six different types of Aboriginal people: (1) the 'traditional,' (2) the ones in more or less regular contact with Europeans, (3) the mostly assimilated, (4) the fringedwellers, (5) the integrated but Aboriginal (mostly due to 'colour'), and (6) the 'passed over' into non-Aboriginal Australians society (although they may still be recognised as Aboriginal by their relatives). Given this history of classification due to Aboriginal status (see also Chapter One on assimilation policies), it is hardly surprising that questions of 'authenticity' have arisen in recent years. In fact, it can be argued that those discussions about 'authenticity' are a new attempt at classifying Aboriginal people in the twenty-first century.

With regards to 'authenticity,' Reisinger and Steiner (2006, also Steiner and Reisinger 2006) and their differentiation between objective and existential 'authenticity' is significant to mention. They define objective 'authenticity' as "the uncontentious genuineness of an observable thing" and point out that "authenticity is objective so long

as no one disagrees with or challenges it" (Reisinger and Steiner 2006: 69). Existential 'authenticity,' on the other hand, is defined as "being attuned to one's own experiences rather than interpreting the world through institutionalized concepts and abstractions" (Maslow 1968 and Heidegger 1996 as cited in Steiner and Reisinger 2006: 300). The distinction between objective and existential 'authenticity' is an important one to make at this point, as over the course of my thesis it will become apparent that Nyungar in Perth continually have ideas of objective 'authenticity' applied to them by the outside, while the existential 'authenticity' of their lived experience is being ignored. My adaptation of Reisinger and Steiner's (2006, also Steiner and Reisinger 2006) theory is therefore somewhat different from their own intentions. In their two papers, Reisinger and Steiner (2006, Steiner and Reisinger 2006) dismiss the notion of an 'objective authenticity,' because all that is required for it not to exist is that someone contends the 'authenticity' of the observed object. Instead they argue that the 'real' 'authenticity' can only exist in the experience of those observing, in the case of my research the tourist and the non-Aboriginal Australian. However, in contrast to this view, I argue that for my research the importance lies with the lived experience of Aboriginal Australians, their own 'existential authenticity,' and how 'objective authenticity' is attributed to them by the outside. In other words, there is a rift in-between objective and existential 'authenticity' which implies that in order to be recognised as Aboriginal, Nyungar individuals' lived experience is rendered insignificant in favour of some sort of stereotype non-Aboriginal Australians recognise as 'Aboriginal' in the city, for example the "disadvantaged alcoholic" (pers. comm. Alice 2009).

Of course, "individual Australian Aborigines are not affected by alcohol in a different way from non-Aboriginal Australians [...] What we are presented with is social problem drinking" (McKnight 2002: 10). The problem is, once again, one of public representation and goes back to a point made earlier about how Aboriginal Australians are by and large portrayed in a negative light in the media. As a result, images of drunken, violent Aboriginal people will spread much faster across the country and make bigger headlines than those of "the successful- and rather uneventful - day-to-day lives

of Aboriginal people" (Behrendt accessed 04/01/2012) adding to the invisibility of the Aboriginal elite (Moore 2003), or Aboriginal middle class, in metropolitan areas. Writing on the Aboriginal history of Sydney, for example, Hinkson and Harris (2010: xx) argue that

> the impression is that while Aboriginal people were a prominent feature of the city's life in the 1830s, by the 1860s they were no longer a visible presence. From this time on Aboriginal people literally begin to disappear from the historical record. Yet while they may have been increasingly marginalised, Aboriginal people themselves will attest that they were always there.

This goes hand in hand with Byrne's (2003: 76, see also Howard 1980: 92) argument that the invisibility of Aboriginal people in the non-Aboriginal landscape, and more specifically the city, is mainly due to two factors: Aboriginal people were removed to the fringes of white settlements, to "the periphery of white vision," and increasing numbers of Aboriginal people have non-Aboriginal ancestors, eventually lightening their skin. However, this is not to say that Aboriginal Australians in rural areas were not marginalised. Indeed, Goodall (1999: 167-168) argues that the rural landscape became defined by fences and homesteads, confining the Aboriginal to the non-physical, the imagined landscape. Moreover, Goodall (1999: 162) points out that "from the 1860s to the 1930s, this rural zone provided the iconic imagery of 'the bush' for the imagination of many Australians about what they were, what made them 'essentially' Australian." In other words, no matter if rural or urban, Aboriginal Australians were marginalised and associated with the wilderness, not with cities and rural settlements.

> The nonurban landscape in NSW, the bush or the countryside, quickly became a space associated with the ancestors of living Aboriginal people (the "old blacks') [...] But landscape was not associated with living Aboriginal people themselves. Their presence in this landscape was replaced by a population of Aboriginal "sites" (rock paintings, carved trees, coastal shell middens), which, in the minds of whites belonged to a period well removed in time (Allen 1988; Byrne 1997). For white Australians, the "real" Aboriginals were always away on the frontier or away in the past. The challenge for Aboriginal people has

> thus been to re-establish their visibility in the colonized landscape. (Byrne 2003: 76-77)

This association with 'the wild' also led to central and north Australia, where far fewer people live than in the south, to be imagined as more 'traditional' with regards to Aboriginal Australia. It is the "denial of coevalness, or allochronism" as Fabian (2002: 33) calls it: the acknowledgement of people as part of our time during fieldwork, and their consequent removal from it for the purposes of representation. Indeed, Byrne and Houston (2005, accessed 03/11/2011) identify 'deep time' as a key point, meaning "that 'timelessness' as a distinctive Aboriginal quality, consigns Aboriginal people to the 'always-past'." They continue to point out that "largely invisible to white Australians and to many researchers on contemporary urban landscapes, urban Aboriginal people are paradoxically hidden in plain view" (Byrne and Houston 2005, accessed 03/11/2011). There is, thus, a continuing romanticisation of life in the outback, and the 'real' and 'traditional' Aboriginal is part of that romanticism (Goodall 1999). More so, "it was generally believed that by their very presence in an urban context, Aboriginal people would ultimately come to deny, or shed, their Aboriginal heritage" (Toussaint 1992: 16) - taking away exactly what non-Aboriginal Australia desired, what they needed, of their Aboriginal counterparts to assert their own distinct identity in contrast to the 'other.' It is therefore important to note that

> as Attwood has argued, the 'ever present image' of 'the Aborigine' for much of the past 200 years has been one firmly located outside time - historically in Australia Aborigines have been 'consigned to the past, but not to history'. A key signifying label in this process is 'traditional Aboriginal culture', firmly fixing all 'authentic' forms of Aboriginality within an imagined pre-colonial moment and viewing all forms that diverge from it, and the living Aboriginal people associated with those forms, as diminished and impoverished versions. (Hinkson 2002: 63)

Some points of this quote need to be highlighted here, as they will be recurring themes throughout my thesis. First of all, Aboriginal people have been defined as the 'other' by settler Australians and as such they are supposed to symbolise something settler Australians can identify themselves against, something they can differ from, something

to establish their own distinct identity as Australians (see also Jacobs 1996: 107). As such, urban Aboriginal Australians are often not recognised as 'real' Aboriginal people, because they are experienced as too similar to non-Aboriginal Australians to qualify as the 'other.' To be recognised as Aboriginal, they have to adhere to certain stereotypes of the 'timeless' Aboriginal - unless they fall under the stereotypical category of the "disadvantaged alcoholic" (pers. comm. Alice 2009) - again linking back to the correlation of culture loss and the 'authentic' Aboriginal.

Secondly, Hinkson's (2002: 63) mention of 'traditional' Aboriginal culture as a label is interesting, with labelling and categorisation being identified as some of the main issues in the reconciliation movement in Chapter Three. It will be demonstrated throughout this thesis just how trapped Nyungar are within the dominant discourse, trapped as a 'myth' they have to incorporate in order to be recognised as Aboriginal. As Hinkson (2002: 63) points out above, Aboriginal people are continually being attributed antiquity while they are being denied history. As a result, the only way they can challenge the dominant discourse is by, to a certain extent, submitting to it and trying to change it from the inside. In other words, they can only act counter-discursively (Hollinshead 1996) as will be shown in particular in Chapter Two. Consequently, these notions of the 'timeless' Aboriginal and its association with the 'wild' often disregard the lived experience of Aboriginal individuals, and indeed take the focus away from the more 'settled' parts of Australia when Aboriginal Australians are concerned. It is therefore important to now turn the focus on the 'shared history' of Nyungar and non-Aboriginal Australians in the southwest of Western Australia.

Chapter One: Shared History

Introduction

On 10 July 2010 *The West Australian* reported that the head of Yagan had been reburied in the Swan Valley, close to where the rest of his remains are believe to have been laid to rest after his death in 1833. Yagan was the son of Midgegeroo, on of the three Whadjuk 'leaders' - along with Yellagonga and Munday - in the Perth area during the settler days, and Yagan himself was also often, inappropriately, called a chief of the Nyungar (Green 1984: 79). These titles were bestowed upon Yagan, Midgegeroo, Yellagonga, and Munday by the settlers who did not realise that the family groups they referred to as 'tribes' did not incorporate "consistent patterns of leadership nor a discernible system of hereditary leadership" (Green 1984: 79). Midgegeroo and Yagan's specific territory was said to include Fremantle, bordering the Swan and Canning Rivers to the north (SWALSC et al. 2009: 113, pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009). The literature about the history of Western Australia often describes Yagan as a resistance fighter or warrior, or as Green (1981: 82) puts it, "an outlaw or patriot" - depending on how one sees the history of Australia and the place of Aboriginal people within that history. As such, these Nyungar individuals have become 'symbolic figures' in the ongoing historicisation of relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Part of this ongoing process of historicisation is also the fictionalisation of people's lives and historically verified events. For example, the Australian children's book author Mary Durack published an account of Yagan's life in 1964. While it is certainly the most detailed account of Yagan's life, it is also the most controversial. Durack's (1964) work had been written as a children's book and while this depoliticises the act of conquest to some degree, it also means that the lines between fact and fiction become blurred. Nevertheless, it emerges from Bolton's (1994, accessed 24/09/2011) obituary that Durack was highly respectful of Aboriginal culture and through her account of Yagan's life story wished to promote a reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia, specifically in the arts industry, before it became fashionable

within wider Australian society. Moreover, while her account is a fictionalisation of historical facts, it has to be remembered that the most important points in her story can be verified by various other accounts, such as those of Green (1981, 1984) and SWALSC et al. (2009). However, according to Durack's (1964) account, Yagan had formed close friendships with many of the settlers, especially Captain James Stirling and George Fletcher Moore, and was regarded as a good influence on other Aboriginal people. Green and SWALSC et al. do not mention this in their accounts, and in the light of Yagan's description in such historical accounts and settlers' often patronising attitudes towards Aboriginal people, it appears highly unlikely that the close friendship, as described by Durack, between Yagan and the settlers really existed. Instead, I would suggest that it serves as an attempt to neutralise the wider consequences of conquest. Something all sources agree on, however, is that Yagan speared and killed a number of settlers as 'payback' for acts committed against his relatives and friends.

For instance, in 1831 Yagan was a member of a group who speared a settler in revenge for shooting a Nyungar who tried to take potatoes from that settler's garden. A year later, Yagan was identified as one of the 'leaders' in the murder of another settler and consequently named an outlaw by colony officials (Cormick accessed 18/07/2008). It was also for one of these 'payback' actions that Yagan was first arrested and sent to Carnac Island, a small island off the coast of Fremantle, today notorious for its very poisonous tiger snake population. On the way to this small island, Yagan met Robert Lyon who acted as an escort to the prisoners as well as writing about them for the newspapers. After Yagan managed to escape back to the mainland, Lyon published a number of articles about the outlaw, considering him a hero for trying to defend his land and family. Subsequent to his escape from Carnac Island, colony officials offered a reward of £30 for the capture of Yagan, dead or alive. Still, Yagan managed to stay on the run for several months, until he was finally murdered in 1833 by two young settler brothers (Durack 1964, Green 1981: 82, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008). An unnamed settler then decapitated Yagan, smoked his head and shipped it off to England for scientific research and exhibition. The fact that this was at all possible exemplifies the colonial power over Aboriginal people in Australia. The head was finally buried in a

cemetery in Everton, England, in 1964. However, after much campaigning by Aboriginal people in Western Australia, the head was finally exhumed and returned to Perth in 1997, where it was kept safe until the parties involved had a better idea of where the rest of Yagan's body was buried (McGlade 1998, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008). However, the return of Yagan's head was not as easy and clear cut as my brief review may imply. It was Ken Colbung,[12] later in life a respected Nyungar elder, who was the main activist in the campaign, something that put him under scrutiny at the time by then-Nyungar elders who questioned his claim to be a descendant of Yagan (Fforde 2002: 235). This dispute brought to the surface the uncertainty that remains within Nyungar society about ancestors and heritage. "However, despite debate within this community about who should have the authority to claim Yagan's head, all wished for it to be repatriated" (Fforde 2002: 236). Despite this uniting wish for the repatriation of Yagan's head, the media used this opportunity to emphasise the division within Whadjuk-Nyungar society to the wider Australian community, destabilising the Nyungar as a united people (Fforde 2002: 239). The media thus undermined Nyungar community authority in an everyday racist fashion (Mellor 2003: 482, see also Introduction).

Similar accounts to that of the repatriation of Yagan's head can be found all around Australia. Poignant (2004), for example, provides an account of how Cunningham, a showman from England, 'persuaded' a group of Aboriginal people from Queensland to join him on a tour of the world. On his tour he exhibited them like objects, having them perform boomerang throwing and other 'traditional' practices in front of large audiences. Such exhibitions, it can be argued were the foundation stones for the now popular stereotypical images that Tourism Australia uses to promote Aboriginal tourism. For the research of her book *Professional Savages*, Poignant (2004) located the graves of various Aboriginal Australians around the world, most notably finding one in the United States and managing to help return the remains to Australia. Most of those Aboriginal individuals, however, never found their way back to Australia.

[12] Ken Colbung sadly passed away in early 2010.

Byrne (2003) takes these accounts even further by arguing that it was all part of the larger plan to remove Aboriginal people from the Australian landscape and render them completely invisible within it. His starting point is that "this invisibility was achieved in Australia in two ways: physically, by marginalizing Aboriginal people on reserves and in institutions and, discursively, by constructing a heritage landscape in which traces of the post-1788 experience of Aboriginal people were rendered invisible" (Byrne 2003: 74). The heritage landscape Byrne (2003: 73-74) is referring to here is the manifestation of the removal of Aboriginal physical evidence from the geographical landscape into museums all the while working to undermine any potential land claims. The removal of Aboriginal peoples' remains, such as Yagan's head, was part of this process. As a result, Aboriginal people not only became invisible in the landscape, but it also meant that any "traces of past Aboriginal presence in the landscape came to be seen by settler society as a more authentic manifestation of Aboriginality than the acculturated persons of the Aborigines themselves" (Byrne 2003: 77). Therefore, the conflicts surrounding the repatriation of Yagan's head did not matter, the mere return itself was what mattered the most, for "the return which reburial represents is part of the larger return - a return of Aboriginal visibility in the colonized landscape" (Byrne 2003: 77). Consequently, while the media portrayed the repatriation of Yagan's head under an umbrella of dispute, the very fact that they gave Nyungar media coverage and put them in the spotlight, meant they rendered them at least partially visible in the non-Aboriginal landscape.

For all the reasons named above and more, Yagan is one of the most famous Nyungar in history, but his story is by no means unique. It is merely a part of the long history of relations between European and Aboriginal Australians. Generally, in this chapter, I am going to trace this relational, or shared, history of over two-hundred years to give an explanation of who the Nyungar are, putting into context those strong, contemporary, and independent Nyungar individuals that I will focus on in this thesis. More specifically, I will begin by giving an account of the early contact in southwest Western Australia, which will be closely followed by an analysis of ways of thinking about history on the example of the 'battle' or 'massacre' of Pinjarra, and the controversy surrounding the idea of *terra nullius*. Relatedly, I will then look at the issue of

historicisation and the problem of the reliability of sources, before moving on to an explanation of how Aboriginal Australians have been segregated from dominant society and the ongoing slow process of recognition in relation to the past mistreatment, especially the Stolen Generations. From there on, I will focus on Nyungar sociality where both the importance of family and the importance of country in relation to that sociality will be discussed. Finally, I will look at the Nyungar's struggle for recognition, pre- and post-Native Title, with an in-between section which will look at modern Aboriginality and how certain 'traditions' still play a part in this modernity.

What will become apparent throughout this chapter, then, is that while my Nyungar friends often spoke of the history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations as 'shared history,' it is my contention that 'oppositional history' is a far more accurate term to describe the situation. In fact, the conscious emphasis of a 'shared history' can be argued to be a deliberate action within the wider reconciliation process. As Hattam and Atkinson (2006: 687) explain, "history's importance to reconciliation in Australia can also be distilled to the need to seek out and revive moments and stories of conciliation in the past and to build on these aspects of a shared national history and a shared basis for understanding now and in the future." Overall, it thus stands to reason that while 'shared history' is something Nyungar strive for, an ideal to be achieved, what we find in Western Australia is an 'oppositional history,' or in Spivak's (1988) words a "subaltern" history contrasted with the dominant. Bearing in mind that history is invariably subjective, there is always a relationship between the narrator of a historic event and the event itself (Carr 1987: 70). Mellor (2003: 481) takes this point further, arguing that the selective accounts of history are denying the existence of Aboriginal history and therefore giving rise to racism. The subjectiveness and selectiveness of historic accounts therefore means that different authors will necessarily differ in their points of view depending on which historic events or facts they wish to stress, as will be exemplified throughout this chapter of my thesis. As a result, Aboriginal Australians, who had been denied a voice for so long, continually work on transforming the colonial slant on history by highlighting their side of the story in different contexts.

Early Contact in Southwest Western Australia

While the story of Yagan, which took place after the region that is now the metropolitan area of Perth officially became the Swan River Colony in 1829, is one of the first notable encounters between Aboriginal and Settler Australians, it does not mark the beginning of the historical narratives of the meeting between colonisers and colonised. At King George Sound, which is on the south coast of southwest Australia where today the cities of Albany and Denmark are located, Green (1981) suggests the first European visitors had been welcomed in a uniquely confident and friendly fashion. Somewhat reminiscent of Durack's (1964) account, Green claims that the Nyungar of the King George Sound had been willing to receive Europeans as long as they in turn recognised the Nyungar's conditions regarding their women. The Europeans were prohibited from taking up any contact with Nyungar women whatsoever. By observing the rules set by the King George Sound Nyungar, the Europeans were able to build a reciprocal relationship with them, similar to those existing between Nyungar families. If the Europeans, for example, required wood or water, Nyungar were willing to help as long as their help was reciprocated in one form or another, though usually through gifts and biscuits. Indeed, Keen (2004: 369) points out "that we can think of the control of access to land, waters, and other resources as a form of reciprocal exchange: for their mutual benefit, all the country-groups of a region granted access to a limited range of people from other groups." Furthermore, Keen (2004: 368) explains, with special reference to the Yolngu people, that there is a certain "obligation to provide mutual aid" which was part and parcel of many relationships, and even more so gave a positive impression of the individual providing the aid to other members of the community.

More specific in relation to the southwest, but with a focus on archaeology, Dortch (2002: 5) firstly emphasises that the fact that the whole of the southwest shared a language, with only dialectic differences, "suggests fluidity of group and individual contact and movement, and may reflect a high degree of social and economic interactions between different sub-groups." Dortch (2002: 13) then continues to argue along archaeological evidence that reciprocal interactions would have taken place both within smaller families as well as larger groups within and between the sub-groups. It is

important to note here that in Aboriginal societies, the notion of reciprocity was applied equally to the retribution of crimes, as it was applied to the exchange and sharing of resources (Keen 2004: 245). Therefore, it is by entering the reciprocal relationship through abiding by Nyungar rules that the settlers unwittingly made themselves vulnerable to 'payback' action. That being the case, it is certainly remarkable that, according to Green (1981), two groups so different managed to get along so well while remaining autonomous of each other.

Indeed, for the case of the King George Sound encounter, Green (1981: 77-78) presents an example of this by introducing a Nyungar individual who he evidently thought to be of noteworthy importance. His name was Mokare and, according to Green (1981), he became friends with settlers, sharing his camp and food with them. Subsequently, Mokare became known as a guide and advisor to the pioneers during their stay at King George Sound. I have chosen to call the Europeans that Mokare interacted with pioneers here, because the first people to come to King George Sound from Europe did not come as settlers. Instead, King George Sound was a supply point of sorts along a 'naval' route to Sydney and New Zealand. There was no or little penetration of the interior, and hence those visitors were not 'settlers' in the sense as seen in other places around Australia, including Perth. As a result, the Nyungar of King George Sound and their European visitors formed a relationship quite different from Yagan's experiences in the Perth metropolitan area. In his role as a guide and advisor, it has been documented that Mokare became particularly close to two pioneers; the first one being Captain Barker, and the second one, after Barker's departure, being Alexander Collie. Referring to Barker's diary, SWALSC et al. (2009: 59, original emphasis) wrote that

> he and Mokare grew to expect a great deal of each other and their expectations were not always satisfied. They seem, however, to have formed a friendship of sufficient substance to accommodate disappointment *and* cultural differences.

While this in some ways, again, echoes Durack's (1964) account of friendship between Aboriginal people and settlers, the present case is based on evidence left behind by the

early pioneers. According to Barker's diary entries, as referenced by SWALSC et al. (2009: 59-65), Mokare told him stories of the Dreaming, about his initiations, and the land that lay beyond the camp. Although Barker, in his diaries, admitted to not fully comprehend what Mokare was telling him, it can still be argued that Mokare set himself up as a kind of mediator between the pioneers and the landscape. The account of the relationship between Mokare and Collie is not as detailed as the relationship between Mokare and Barker, mostly due to the fact that Collie was not as vocal about it. Indeed, SWALSC et al. (2009: 60) argues, if Collie had not insisted on being buried next to Mokare we would probably know nothing about it today. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that the situation at King George Sound, considering the colonial history of Western Australia in general, was very idiosyncratic. Until Barker left the area "there was no settlement beyond the garrison, no colonial expansion, no dispossession" (SWALSC et al. 2009: 61). Consequently, it can be argued that this distinctive situation is the exact reason why the initial encounter in the Albany/Denmark area was so much more peaceful than Yagan's experiences in the Perth area, as outlined earlier. They, therefore, serve as examples of the complex variations that mark different types of colonial encounter, both spatially and temporally in the complex history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.

As has just been demonstrated, it is this spatial and temporal complexity that meant that not all Nyungar came into contact with Europeans at the same time or in the same way, hence allowing for them to respond to diverse situations of settlement in diverse ways as these arose (SWALSC et al. 2009: 99). In fact, Reynolds (1982: 198) argues that non-Aboriginal Australians have been brought up to think that Aboriginal people were much more simple and negative in response to settlement, when in fact they were actually "much more positive, creative and complex." While in Australian history white people have become the heroes of the nation's myths, there have been Aboriginal equivalents to these nationalist heroes - Aboriginal meeting white, traveling together, watching them, assessing them, and finding out their intentions (Reynolds 1982: 198). In other words, non-Aboriginal Australians have been taught a unified history of conquest that does not account for the localised variations of response.

What Reynolds (1982) describes is, by and large, the interaction at the 'frontier,' though he makes a point of illustrating this from the point of view of Aboriginal Australians, thereby contrasting the usual 'frontier' accounts written from white perspectives, giving voice to the silent, the "subaltern" (Spivak 1988) history. In general, the term 'frontier' is used "to conceptualize the penetration and interpenetration of different ethnic groups or culture-bearers in process of migration and development" (Seymour-Smith 1986: 125). The key here is that the frontier is seen as a process, implying that it consists of different stages that have to be moved through in order to get to the end. "To put it another way, the sequential theory of the frontier treats a tension-laden and interactive relationship as if it were a linear progression in which violence is always about to be overcome" (Rose 2005: 49). Instead, as Rose (2005) continues to argue, the frontier should be seen more as a matrix that continues to shape the present and that can be used to reflect on Australia's current situation.

Continuing on from this, Pratt (1992: 7) argues that the concept of 'frontier' "is grounded within a European expansionist perspective (the frontier is a frontier only with respect to Europe)." Therefore, Pratt (1992) introduces the concept of the 'contact zone' instead.

> A "contact" perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and "travelees," not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, *often within radically asymmetrical relations of power*. (Pratt 1992: 7, my emphasis)

In her definition, the idea of the 'contact zone' "is an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal correspondence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect" (Pratt 1992: 7). In short, the 'contact zone' describes the space where people who have previously been separated come into contact with each other. Thereby they create a relationship with each other that, by and large, incorporated constraints, extensive inequality, and uncontrollable disputes between the groups (Pratt 1992: 6). By focusing on the actual contact instead of the

frontier, Pratt's concept underlines the interactive element of colonialism in a way that the frontier - with its emphasis on migration and development from a European perspective - is unable to do. In the 'contact zone,' both sides had influence on the other. It highlights the resulting misunderstandings between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and emphasises, more than anything, that Aboriginal people were as much participants of the colonial encounter as their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

An alternative, but similar, concept was proposed by White (1991), who, in the context of European and American Indian relations, writes about the 'middle ground' as an in-between place where people of different backgrounds meet and create new meanings to appropriate each other within this in-between place. It is important to note here that both sides created the 'middle ground' together, with colonial power relations taking over in due course, and consequently marginalising the Indigenous peoples as 'the other.' While this might at first seem to somewhat contradict Pratt's 'contact zone,' I would argue that White's (1991) 'middle ground' as a concept is actually situated somewhere between the frontier and the 'contact zone.' Just like in the 'contact zone,' the 'middle ground' denotes that both sides had influence on the other, and that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people were part of the colonial encounter. However, at the same time, White's (1991) interpretation sees it as a process by pointing out that 'the other' was only created in due course, hence incorporating the frontier's characteristic process, or stages that have to be accomplished to get to what we have today.

What these examples of early contact in Nyungar country and the relating concepts of analysis emphasise, then, is the complexity not only of the contact itself, but also of the representation of said contact in historical writing. Thus, it is important to consider not just the history of Western Australia, but the ways in which it has been written about, in order to clarify the significance of 'shared history.'

Ways of Thinking about History: Pinjarra and the Problem of *Terra Nullius*

On 28 October 1834, arguably one of the most important events in the history of colonial conquest in Western Australia took place at Pinjarra (approximately 80km south of Perth). White Australian history refers to this event as the Battle of Pinjarra, while for many Nyungar this is remembered as the Massacre of Pinjarra. These two different perspectives on one conflict in the past are significant, because not only do they exemplify the subjective qualities of historical interpretations, but they also indicate the unequal power relations in the telling of those histories. Depending on the point of view, the conflict at Pinjarra can either be interpreted as a 'simple' misunderstanding that got out of control, or as the bloody climax of a series of events that led to loss of Aboriginal lands and the break-down of Aboriginal social structure. Either way, to this day, the event is still being referred to as one of the darkest days in the history of Western Australia, presenting it as a point of convergence between the dominant narrative of the coloniser and the muted, subaltern history of the colonised (Bates 1929: 187-192, Green 1981: 84, 1984: 99-106, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, SWALSC et al. 2009: 105-107, West Australian Vista accessed 02/07/2008). It is through this convergence of histories that the different ways of thinking about history and the possibility of a 'shared history' can be examined.

In order to explain the Pinjarra conflict as misunderstandings that got out of control, the difficult relationship between settlers and Nyungar has to be examined and understood in context. Settlers had been hunting Nyungar game for a very long time when Nyungar started to disregard fences and hunt the settlers' cattle as if it were game. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this was interpreted as stealing by the settlers. Former Indigenous Rights lawyer Ritter (1996) in his work on the "rejection of *terra nullius*" argues that this is due to different understandings of the concept of ownership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, specifically referring to "private property." According to Ritter (1996: 11-12), "the "private property" that is protected by the common law is a socially determined construct," which was first "introduced with the colonists, [and] bore no resemblance to Aboriginal notions of "land tenure"." Theoretically, Aboriginal people were still able to own land in the colonial system, but only in the British sense, which

completely disregarded 'traditional' Aboriginal ownership or tenure over land (Ritter 1996: 12). It therefore works as an illustration of the confusion of different ways of thinking, or modes of thought, about the world coming together. For Aboriginal people, everything is part of the land, and as such the settlers' cattle were game to be hunted when they were hungry. They did not recognise fences, as they were both physically and ideologically a construction imported and defined by the colonising society. The settlers had claimed 'their' piece of land, owning it in the British sense and not recognising any Aboriginal rights to it as Australia was a *terra nullius*, as the argument goes today.

The concept of *terra nullius* itself, however, opens up a host of questions. First of all, it stands to reason that the very deaths of Europeans "on the frontier are powerful evidence that many parts of Australia were forcibly invaded and that Aboriginal people resisted the invasion of their lands" (Harris 2003a: 84) - thereby rendering void the notion that Aboriginal people have no interest in the land. Second, it is interesting to note that the term *terra nullius* was not used in Australia until 1978 (Ritter 1996: 18), around a decade after Aboriginal people were recognised as Australian citizens.

> When Australia was originally colonised by the Crown, neither *terra nullius* or any other legal doctrine was used to deny the recognition of traditional Aboriginal rights to land under the common law. Such a doctrinal denial would not have appeared necessary to the colonists, because the indigenous inhabitants of the colony were seen and defined by the colonists as intrinsically barbarous and without any interest in land. Thus the colonists required no legal doctrine to explain why Aboriginal people's land rights were not to be recognised under law because no doctrine was required for what was axiomatic. (Ritter 1996: 6)

Therefore, Ritter (1996: 6-7) continues to argue that, contrary to popular opinion, *terra nullius* as a concept applied in Australian law is completely irrelevant to Native Title disputes. In fact, Nicoll (2002) points out, citing Reynolds (1996: 3&15), that the Mabo Decision only rejected *terra nullius* with regards to land, but not sovereignty.[13] As such, the overturning of *terra nullius* in the Mabo Decision did nothing but use the concept as

[13] More detail on the Mabo Decision will follow over the course of Chapter One.

a scapegoat for the past rejection of Native Title and redeeming the public view of Australian law as equal (Ritter 1996: 6-7, Watson 2002). In the same vain the Australian law managed to further push Aboriginal Australians into the dominant discourse, a "discourse of power" (Ritter 1996: 9), that only allows them to act counter-discursively (Hollinshead 1996) in their attempts to resist the dominance.[14] It is questionable, then, what exactly *terra nullius* means with regards to the situation in Australia. Ritter (1996: 8) argues that in the specific case of Australia, the concept of *terra nullius* is not based on the notion that the land is unoccupied, but rather that it has ethnocentricity at its heart - Australia was occupied by the colonists on grounds of Aboriginal people and their way of life not being consistent with what European culture denotes as right. This, in turn, meant that

> even when Aboriginal people were both formally and actually included within the colonial legal system, the internal ideological mechanisms of the law meant that Aboriginal people were labelled as non-conformists, and denied the law's benefits. The reason for the despotic impact of English law on the Aboriginal population was because the two cultures did not share remotely similar visions of "truth". [...] The inevitable result was that Aboriginal people, when forced to subscribe to a legal system that was based on "truths" that were totally alien to them were disadvantaged by the operation of that legal system. (Ritter 1996: 11)

This leads us back to the differing interpretations of ownership and the rising conflicts between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people during the early days of settlement in Western Australia. Bolton (2008: 11) also noted that George Fletcher Moore, one of the first and most prominent settlers in Western Australia as the Advocate-General, entertained the idea "that 'perhaps these uninformed creatures think they have as good a right to our swine as we have to their kangaroos', but that did not stop him [George Fletcher Moore] and his fellow colonists from taking strong measures in defence of their property."

[14] More on the counter-discourse can be found in Chapter Two.

After the settlers started to defend 'their land' at gunpoint, James Stirling decided it was time to act in order to secure the safety of the settlement. Due to a shortage, Stirling cut off the regular flour rations which were given to Nyungar and which they understood as a form of payment for the land (West Australian Vista accessed 02/07/2008), which led to a group of Nyungar raiding a flour mill. This is said to have been followed by Stirling assembling a militia and raiding the Nyungar group at Pinjarra.

Although other sources, for example SWALSC and Daisy Bates, cannot seem to agree completely on what happened at Pinjarra either, it seems unlikely that it was 'just' a few misunderstandings that got out of control. According to SWALSC et al. (2009: 105), who are critically reiterating Green's (1984) account, an expedition was delayed when a Murray River Aboriginal man was sighted in Perth and thought to be a spy for his particular group. Therefore, instead of going on the planned expedition, Stirling and his men made their way on mount to Pinjarra on 25 October 1834. It is reported that Stirling's contingent noticed an Aboriginal group of approximately eighty in the early hours of 28 October 1834 on the other side of the Murray River. Never making their presence known, Stirling's men split into two groups in order to ambush the Aboriginal camp, killing several in the process. However, Aboriginal numbers that were killed cannot be known for certain. Reports range from eleven (Green 1984) and thirteen (Bates 1929), to thirty (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, West Australian Vista accessed 02/07/2008), demonstrating the confusion and problem of sources to which I will return in a moment.

Some points made by SWALSC and Green (also as reiterated in SWALSC et al. 2009) are consistent with Bates' (1929) account, but by no means all of them. Bates (1929: 188) also points out that the incident at Pinjarra took place on 28 October 1834, by pointing out that Stirling and his men were camping overnight on 27 October 1834 on their way to Pinjarra, where they wanted to build a town. According to Bates (1929: 188), however, the group seems to have happened upon the Nyungar more by accident than on purpose. They heard voices, and because two members of their group, Private Nesbitt and Mr Barron, had "been speared but a short time previously, the moment was

considered favourable for punishing the perpetrators if these proved to be the offenders" (Bates 1929: 188). Moreover, according to this report, Stirling's men tried to announce their presence and asked the Aboriginal group to come forward to be interviewed, but could not be heard over the noise the Nyungar made. Therefore, they split up into two groups and when one of them advanced, the Aboriginal group began to back up - ending up surrounded as the other group started to advance as well. In addition, Bates (1929: 188-189) claims that Stirling's party explained what they wanted from the Aboriginal group and first assessed their identity, making sure they were the ones they wanted, before acting. Most importantly, maybe, Daisy Bates - who considered 'full blood' Aboriginal people the only ones worth her time and study, not considering so-called 'half-castes' to be proper Aboriginal people - thought the Battle of Pinjarra "to have been the beginning of the end for the Bibbulmun people" (Bates 1929: 189). More than that even, Harris (accessed 09/11/2011: 1-2) argues that "for the British, it was the place at which south-western Indigenous resistance to colonisation was overcome." In some ways, then, the colonial accounts critically presented by, for example, SWALSC et al. and written by Bates' are excusing colonial behaviour while attempting to eradicate the colonised.

What these differing accounts of the Pinjarra conflict clearly show is how subjective history is. Both sides of this 'oppositional history' will continue to claim their view to be the more accurate one. While it is my contention that in this case it is more important that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are beginning to acknowledge each other's role within history, which is part of the constant renegotiation of Aboriginality today, the inherent problem of theses accounts is the availability of reliable documentation. Harris (accessed 09/11/2011: 9), for example, states that even "the exact location of the events at Pinjarra is not fixed" and that the only thing sources agree on in terms of locality is that the massacre happened somewhere along the shores of the Murray River. Another example comes from Knightley's (2001) *Australia: A Biography of a Nation*. This work's extremely brief account of Pinjarra is worthwhile citing in its entirety as it illustrates how easily confusion can be created.

> Western Australia was probably the worst state for the murder of Aboriginals. In 1834 British soldiers under the command of Captain James Stirling, the state's first governor, butchered a sleeping camp of eighty Aboriginal men, women and children from the Nyungar tribe near Pinjarra. Their leader, Yagan, had learned English and had tried in vain to explain Aboriginal law and culture to the settlers. Reverend R.M. Lyon, a missionary who befriended Yagan, described him as 'a noble, princely character'. Yagan was eventually shot by an 18-year-old white boy, William Keats, and his head was cut off - a form of mutilation of Aboriginal bodies often practised by whites at that time - smoked to preserve it, and then sent to London as a trophy. (Knightley 2001: 110)

There are several obvious issues with this account, three of which are particularly noteworthy. The biggest issue is that it seems to suggest that Yagan was the leader of the group at Pinjarra when in fact he had already been dead for several months when the conflict took place. The issues continue with the Nyungar group at Pinjarra being the Pinjarup (Harris accessed 09/11/2011), not the Whadjuk, which is further evidence that Yagan would not have been involved in the conflict there. Lastly, there is the recurring issue of the number of deaths at Pinjarra. It has already been mentioned that there is quite some variation in numbers, but Knightley's reported number of eighty is by far the highest I have come across and a far cry from the eleven reported by Green (1984), the thirteen reported by Bates (1929), or even the reported thirty (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008). Even if taking into account that some sources only quote the number of those who were killed in the first attack, but not during the following pursuit, which is said to be between fifteen and twenty Aboriginal people, it still does not add up (Harris 2003a: 86). At this point I would, therefore, like to take the opportunity to look in more detail at some of my literary sources to illustrate their problematic nature and influence during the development of this thesis.

Historicisation and the Reliability of Sources

Daisy Bates, while not very well known in the UK, is frequently discussed in Australian anthropology. Through her writings, she gained a reputation as a racist in modern-day discourse, although an argument can be made that she was merely very much a woman of her time. Influenced by the Victorian era, she believed Aboriginal Australians to be a dying race and thought it her job to smooth their passing (SWALSC et al. 2009: xvii). Despite her racist remarks, even my Bibbulmun-Nyungar friends, Millie and Noah, encouraged me to read her works. According to them, "once you get past the racism, there is actually quite a lot of stuff in there" (pers. comm. 2008), referring to the cultural knowledge Bates acquired while living with the Nyungar. However, Bates' Victorian era inspired racism is not the only reason she is controversial. When Radcliffe-Brown first arrived in Perth, Western Australia, in September 1910, Bates joined his expedition and introduced him into the field (Scheffler and Needham 1975, White 1981).

> Mrs Bates and Mr Brown (as he then was) were in the field together for six months, first on the mainland and then on Bernier and Dorré Islands, until their mounting incompatibility made co-operation no longer possible. Radcliffe-Brown returned to the mainland and worked for a further six months on the cattle and sheep stations of the area around Carnarvon and Port Hedland, and returned to England in early 1912. Mrs Bates did some months fieldwork around Peak Hill and then returned to Perth; the government took this opportunity to terminate her employment, and later handed back to her her manuscript to publish herself. (White 1981: 193)

It is around this manuscript, and the academic rejection implied by the handing back of it, that the main controversy revolves. The manuscript had been in Radcliffe-Brown's possession for a while and when it was returned to Bates by the government, it is asserted to have been in a "mutilated" state (Scheffler and Needham 1975: 310). After the publication of Radcliffe-Brown's articles based on his fieldwork in Western Australia, Bates then accused him of plagiarism, something supported by Needham, but refuted by others (Scheffler and Needham 1975, White 1981). Furthermore, Bates is said to have "felt ill-treated by the Australian anthropological community and she often complained of not receiving credit for 'discoveries' which were in fact common-place

ethnographic findings more or less readily ascertainable by anyone who would take the trouble" (Scheffler and Needham 1975: 310). In fact, I have heard many anthropologists in Australia (pers. comm. 2008) say that it was not so much due to her material that she was not taken seriously in the anthropological community, but that it was more because she never went beyond the descriptive. She never analysed her material, and it was thus never accepted as ethnographic evidence by the anthropological community. Furthermore, Blackburn (1994: 231) points out that "Daisy Bates gave contradictory accounts of her life and work," which again made her less credible in anthropological discourses at the time. Nevertheless, for all the controversy surrounding Bates, being aware of her racism and going past it, I found her accounts helpful and insightful, especially knowing that some of the Nyungar alive today accepted her writings and found some merit in it.

In the introduction to this thesis, I have mentioned my reasons for being so overly reliant on the necessarily biased SWALSC resources in this part of my work. SWALSC is the Land and Sea Council responsible for the ongoing Native Title negotiations of the Single Noongar Claim. However, while they are clearly using existing ethnography to validate their argument that Nyungar society, including 'traditional' beliefs and customs, has persisted since sovereignty, they are also offering a wide range of materials that are not otherwise easily accessible - especially from the UK. As such, using the SWALSC materials is a little bit like using Bates' (2008, Bridge 1992) accounts, being aware of the slant, getting past it, and drawing from it the data needed to draw a comprehensive picture of Western Australia's, and more specifically the Nyungar's past.

Furthermore, the different perspectives on history also indicate the source of the movement in thought from early conquest to the desire for reconciliation today. This is where the notion of historicisation comes in. Ohnuki-Tierney (2001: 213-214) criticises that "somehow, "historical process" tends to be squeezed out between the "prehistory" and the contemporary societies of socio-cultural anthropology, which seems periodically to flirt with "historicisation,"" going on to argue that researchers sometimes seem to forget that the non-Western people they are studying are just as able to 'make

history' as their Western counterparts, even if it is founded in an oral tradition. Thus emphasising the subjectivity of history, Ohnuki-Tierney (2001: 218, original emphasis) defines historicisation as "the effort to understand culture and society *through time*." At the same time, Ikui (2001: 42) asserts historicisation as memory work, emphasising again that history cannot be neutral, arguing that "memory is important to historical studies today not because it provides an alternative to the conventional concept of history, but because it provides a window onto the way the past is viewed today." As such, when people give accounts of the past they can choose not to provide certain details, or emphasise others. In that connection it is worthwhile considering how Aboriginal people have been portrayed as a homogenous group, resulting in "an assumption of uniformity of response to the European presence" (Anderson 1983: 474). Yet, it has already been shown in this chapter that Aboriginal responses to European settlement were anything but uniform.

Nevertheless, the homogenising of Aboriginal Australians is important in the historicisation of the colonial contact. Wolfe (2006: 402) has argued that it is a "style of romantic stereotyping that I have termed "repressive authenticity," which is a feature of settler-colonial discourse in many countries." In fact, Wolfe (2006: 402) asserts that colonialism, or "invasion" of a country as he calls it, should be seen "as a structure rather than an event, [...] narrating that history involves charting the communities, discontinuities, adjustments and departures." In other words, "history does not stop" (Wolfe 2006: 402). For Wolfe (2006), colonialism is about place and territory, the primary desire being to eradicate Aboriginal people with settlers looking to replace Aboriginal people within the physical landscape of the colonised geographical area. As a result,

> In Australia [...] the erasure of indigeneity conflicts with the assertion of settler nationalism. On the one hand, settler society required the practical elimination of the natives in order to establish itself on their territory. On the symbolic level, however, settler society subsequently sought to recuperate indigeneity in order to express its difference - and, accordingly, its independence - from the mother country. [...] For nationalist purposes it is hard to see an alternative to this contradictory

> reappropriation of a foundationally disavowed Aboriginality. The ideological justification for the dispossession of Aborigines was that "we" could use the land better than they could, not that we had been on the land primordially and were merely returning home. (Wolfe 2006: 389)

In other words, the colonists did not claim Australia under the assumption that was applied to them by Aboriginal people - that they were relatives returning from the land of the dead - but acted on grounds of ethnocentricity, seeing themselves to be in need of the land and Aboriginal people as having no interest in it - a concept that was later labelled *terra nullius* and symbolically abolished in the Mabo Decision (Ritter 1996). As can thus be seen, in whatever form it may be, it has taken Australia a long time to reach this point and accept Aboriginal people as part of their (white) country and society. As such, even before Australia was established as an independent nation in 1901, and subsequent to the afore mentioned early encounters and confrontations, the settlers in Western Australia inaugurated the Western Australian Government as a move to control and 'protect' the Aboriginal population from extinction. However, what was first meant as a declaration to protect Aboriginal people soon turned into protection against them (Appleyard and Manford 1980: 185).

The Segregation of Aboriginal People

In 1838, only four years after the Battle of Pinjarra, the Western Australian Government decided that Rottnest Island, today a mere thirty minutes ferry ride from Fremantle, should become a prison for Aboriginal lawbreakers. Although the British Government was resistant to the idea at first, they eventually allowed the act to pass, thus authorising a deliberate act of separation. By legalising the removal of men from the land where they had spent all their lives, the British considerably weakened Aboriginal society and their capacity to resist colonisation. What was particularly severe about this decision was that families were separated, unable to visit, unable to take care of 'traditional' business and unable to attend family affairs. While those incarcerated in Fremantle still had a chance of contacting their families, being sent to Rottnest Island meant a complete

removal from the land as well as their social structure (Green 1981: 93, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008). Indeed, Green (1981: 93) argues that Rottnest Island as a prison was a catalyst for the decline of "Nyungar society for it removed the best of its men, left women vulnerable, wrongs unavenged, sacred areas unattended and the traditional life disoriented." Rottnest Island was 'closed' as a prison in 1931, having been home to more than 3670 Aboriginal males aged eight to seventy, and a deathbed to about 370 of them. Today the former prisoner accommodations and army barracks have been renovated and provide a temporary home to thousands of tourists every year. The island itself, however, receives only little recognition as a site of importance in Nyungar history (pers. comm. 2009, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008), with tourists mainly pursuing leisure activities like snorkelling, cycling, and sun bathing.

A survey I carried out during the Australian summer of 2009/2010 in agreement with Rottnest Island Authority and Rottnest Express Ferries supports this argument.[15] During the course of this survey I talked to a total of 173 people (104 domestic, 69 international) either onboard Rottnest Express Ferries or at C-Shed in Fremantle, where the ferries to the island departed. As per the agreement with Rottnest Island Authority, no one was interviewed on Rottnest Island itself.[16] When I asked participants what they were going to do on Rottnest Island during their visit - giving them the chance to give multiple answers - a striking 54.34% said that they were going swimming/snorkelling, followed by 46.24% who wanted to cycle around the island (9.25% said they were going to walk around the island), and 9.83% saying they were going to the beach to sunbathe. Only two of the 173 participants said that they were going on the Wadjemup Bus Tour - an Aboriginal heritage tour that was running at the time, but has since stopped operating (see Chapter Three). When I asked participants what they knew about the history of Rottnest Island - again giving them the opportunity to give multiple answers, and accepting all answers no matter if true or false - 38.15% said they did not

[15] I produced a report of this survey for Rottnest Island Authority and Rottnest Express Ferries. It can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

[16] When I introduced myself to possible survey participants I told them that I was undertaking a research project on tourism in Perth and on Rottnest Island. I did not, however, mention that my project focused on Aboriginal tourism, as I wanted to avoid leading them on in their answers.

know anything, 24.28% mentioned that is used to be an Aboriginal prison/penal colony for Aboriginal people (4.62% said that Rottnest Island used to be a convict island without specifying the ethnicity of the convicts), 22.54% knew the origin of the name Rottnest, stating that it derived from the Dutch word for rat's nest, with 6.94% mentioning that Rottnest was discovered by the Dutch.

Combined, these results convey that while a significant number of visitors displayed a general awareness about the history of Rottnest Island, this awareness did not factor into their planning of activities during their stay. One reason for this might be that most visitors only go over for a day, or have already been to Rottnest Island several times and participated in some of the history and heritage tours offered by volunteers on previous visits. Most importantly, however, these results showcase the ignorance that still exists regarding the Aboriginal side of history and thus continues to problematise the possibility of a 'shared history.' Therefore, my findings provide evidence for the argument that "the authority of institutional memory [...] in presenting the 'real' present as a representation of past realities arises from a narrative of power that is embedded in the discourses of the production of history" (Banerjee and Osuri 2000: 274). Or, to put it differently, the ongoing process of retelling the past enables the whiting out of history.

When Rottnest Island 'closed' as a prison for Aboriginal Australians in 1931, Australia had already been independent for thirty years. Before moving on to discuss the government act that would influence all Aboriginal ways of living, it is important to understand what the newly federated Australia was trying to achieve and make of itself. It is therefore necessary to mention one of the first legislative acts that Australia put into place after its federation: the Immigration Restriction Act 1901 - also known as the White Australia Policy. The act is important with regards to Aboriginal people as it shows the lengths Australia went to in order to create itself as a white nation, which was safe from non-white outsiders and continually working on whitening Indigenous insiders.

The Immigration Restriction Act was meant to keep out anyone that was not deemed white enough by the government. This was done through the application of a dictation test in which the applicant had to write a passage in any European language, as chosen by the immigration official, and translate it into English. If they were unable to do so, they were refused immigration (Chesterman and Galligan 1999: 9, Cook et al. 2009: 295, Greig et al. 2003: 175). It was after World War II before Australia was forced to loosen up this policy, because they were unable to attract more British people. Therefore, more than half of the immigrants arriving between 1945 and 1960 were from other backgrounds (Cook et al. 2009: 291-295, Greig et al. 2003: 175-178). In addition, states also had the right to make their own citizenship laws, which meant that states could easily decrease the prerogatives of racial minorities - specifying only that it was illegal to discriminate people based on the state they are from. This meant that states were able to discriminate against a certain race, no matter what their state of origin, as long as all people of that race were treated the same way (Chesterman and Galligan 1999: 6). In short, racism was legalised.

> Section 117, as it finally became in the Constitution, specifies: 'A subject of the Queen, resident in any State, shall not be subject in any other State to any disability or discrimination which would not be equally applicable to him if he were subject of the Queen resident in such other state.' (Chesterman and Galligan 1999: 6)

Bearing in mind that "while most migrants chose to come to Australia, Indigenous Australians have had a foreign culture imposed upon them in their own lands" (Greig et al. 2003: 183), the White Australia Policy is important as a background to understand what happened to Aboriginal Australians in the following years, particularly after the Aborigines Act in 1905 had been passed. The White Australia Policy was thus the foundation for legalised racism, both towards immigrants and Aboriginal Australians. With discrimination legalised, the Aborigines Act 1905 not only made segregation legal, but also gave the government of the day the legal rights to control Aboriginal everyday lives. An early form of segregation could already be witnessed in the Rottnest Island prison case, where men were separated from their families and their country. However,

the 1905 Act now also allowed the separation of Aboriginal people who had not broken any laws as defined by the Australian Government. Furthermore, the 1905 Act was an advancement of an act that had been inaugurated even before Australia became independent as a nation. In 1886, the West Australian Government (under British rule) passed the Aborigines Protection Act, which allowed for the foundation of an Aboriginal Protection Board in 1887. The members of the board were appointed by the governor to whom they were answerable rather than the government. The people affected by the 1886 Act were defined as

> Every Aboriginal Native of Australia, and every Aboriginal half-caste or child of a half-caste or child habitually associating and living with Aboriginals. (50 Vict. No. 25, 1886 as cited in Green 1981: 108)

This definition was carried forward into the 1905 Act. Most importantly, the members of the board had the power to appoint protectors of Aboriginal people which came into play more dominantly after the establishment of the 1905 Act. As such, after the passing of the Aborigines Act, the Chief Protector of Aborigines became the legal guardian of every Aboriginal person under the age of sixteen, as defined in the 1886 Act. Subsequently, in 1915, A.O. Neville was appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines and it was under him that the so-called 'native settlements' were founded, as suggested by his predecessor Charles Gale - the most famous being Moore River Native Settlement - to become home to hundreds of Aboriginal people from all over Western Australia (Haebich 1992: 165-169, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, SWALSC et al. 2009). Gale proposed the 'native settlements' as "a home for Aborigines where their children could be educated and trained in farming and cottage industries while the adults and young people worked to make the settlement self-sufficient," believing that "Aborigines would move willingly to the settlements" (Haebich 1992: 147-148). This, however, was not the case as Aboriginal people preferred to stay near their homes and families.

Nevertheless, there were those who were unable to resist government pressure due to their reliance on rations or because of their general vulnerability due to old age, for instance (Haebich 1992: 171). The elderly and children were therefore common targets

to be moved into the 'native settlements.' The children especially became known later on as the Stolen Generations, which showcases the continuation of policies of separation and "refers to the 10 to 30 percent of the total population of Aboriginal children between 1910 and 1970, who were forcibly removed from their parents" (Povinelli 2002: 37). In a way then, the Stolen Generations exemplifies an advancement in the systematic destruction of Aboriginal society: first the men were taken away and imprisoned, then the children were taken away and put into camps. In addition, children were not only taken away from families against their will, they also had to live in conditions often inferior to their own camps while the government - in pursuit of a white Australia - continued trying to 'breed out' Aboriginality (Haebich 1992: 171, accessed 08/03/2008, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008). The government even kept records of Aboriginal caste statuses, from half-caste, over 1/4th and 1/8th to as much as 1/128th caste (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008).

The Stolen Generations and the Slow Process of Recognition

In this context it is worth mentioning that while the government had the power to remove all Aboriginal children from their homes, they focused on taking away those of mixed descent. Due to their lighter skin colour they were mistakenly believed to be more intelligent than children of 'pure' Aboriginal descent and were thus to be educated at 'native settlements' like Moore River, in an attempt to integrate them into the workforce as maids and farm hands for white Australians. The records of Aboriginal caste statuses further reveal how another aim of these settlements was to breed out Aboriginality, going as far as prescribing who could marry whom and disallowing marriages between people of lighter skin colour with people of a darker pigmentation. What was particularly severe about this decision was that it disregarded Aboriginal kinship rules, frequently marrying the 'wrong' people and creating great shame within the Aboriginal communities (pers. comm. Alice 2009).[17] Indeed, speaking to the visibility of Aboriginal people within the non-Aboriginal landscape, Byrne (2003: 76, original emphasis) notes "that the specific visibility of these people as *Aboriginal* was

[17] See also SBS's *First Australians*, which is available as a podcast from iTunes.

low because many of them had a white parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent." As a result, it is unsurprising that one can wander through the streets of Perth today without knowing whether or not one has met an Aboriginal person - it is just not necessarily possible to tell by the looks of people - implying that there is more to being Aboriginal than just skin. This is further underlined by the fact that during my fieldwork I did not meet one person who had an Aboriginal ancestor and would not claim that Aboriginality. Additionally, by giving the government absolute power over Aboriginal children, the legislation "laid the basis for the treatment of Aboriginal children by the government in ways that would have never been tolerated for white children" (Haebich accessed 08/03/2008). A short account from my own research can clarify what it meant for Aboriginal children to be separated from their families, showing that the Stolen Generations still very much influences Aboriginal family life today.

Jared was part of the Nyungar mob that I accompanied to a cross-cultural awareness workshop in Southern Cross, where he was to tell his story of being stolen. He was one of the junior members of the mob, although being in his forties, and acting as an all-purpose runner in support of the women who ran the workshop. Jared did not talk much during the course of the workshop, but when the topic turned to the Stolen Generations, two elders asked Jared to tell his story, because he was stolen as a child.

> Hi guys, my name is Jared. I come from Quairading. Born there. Wasn't a nice site actually when I got taken away. I was about eight years of age, sitting in my class room doing school work, sitting with me friends and I [knocks on the table] heard a knock on the door. And when I hear loud knocks on the doors that means authority and as a little Aboriginal bloke I started sinking back in my seat thinking, you know, thinking, I was thinking alright somebody's gotten into trouble. And I knew straight away when I heard that noise there's gonna be a little black fellow gonna to be taken out of that class room. So I started ducking out of my seat and without anybody asking me nothing, police officer, welfare officer, and the headmaster came in the class room, said to the teacher: "We have to take Jared out." Here I am looking at the police officer, welfare officer, and the headmaster: "What are you taking me for?" I didn't know. Got taken away from school, soon as I left school didn't see my mother or father ever again for about two or three years. I got taken away, put in a foster home,

> now I'm just starting to get back to connection with my family. (pers. comm. Jared 2008)

Jared's account exemplifies that the taking away of children was not just an act of separating Aboriginal people from their families and land, but placing them in foster homes or in foster families, it was also a more general separation from Aboriginality. Unfortunately, a lot of children that were abducted by the government never found their way back home, growing up in settlements or with foster families who would repeatedly tell them that being Aboriginal was something undesirable, thus teaching them to be ashamed of their heritage (see for example Haebich 1992, 2000, Morgan 1987). Jared's story demonstrates that these past legislations are still relevant today as they continue to affect Aboriginal people and their search for identity. Many still do not know anything, or only very little, about their collective and individual heritage, customs and beliefs. Instead of learning about these things from their parents, these individuals have to learn about these at a much later stage than they usually would or should have. Subsequently, "members of the Stolen Generation filed a federal class action lawsuit against the state, arguing that it had violated their human and constitutional rights" (Povinelli 2002: 37). The Royal Commission that inquired into the matter decided that what happened by forcibly removing Aboriginal children from their families was, in accordance with the 1951 definition by the Genocide Convention, social genocide or cultural holocaust. This was further underlined by the age of the majority of the Aboriginal people who filed the lawsuit, as most of them were taken away from their families in the 1940s. In 1997, however, the High Court ruled that no constitutional rights were violated and that the decision to remove Aboriginal children from their families was valid even though morally questionable (Povinelli 2002: 37-38). Therefore, the account of the Stolen Generations once again exemplifies the conflicted and contested nature of Australian history, further illustrating that it is more an 'oppositional history' that leaves a 'shared history' to be desired.

However, while Aboriginal people were being fully integrated into the workforce, for example as house maids and farm hands, by different legislative acts, they were still not

recognised as citizens in their own country. It was not until 1944 that the Native Citizen Rights Act was passed, enabling some Aboriginal people to obtain citizenship rights if they were able to prove that they were living a 'civilised' life. In order to do so, they had to demonstrate that they did not engage in 'tribal and native associations' for at least two years and embrace what was considered the manners and habits associated with 'civilised' society. At least on paper then, Aboriginal people received the same rights as their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Nevertheless, in the 1950s Aboriginal people were still not recognised as human beings. Instead, legislatively they fell under the Flora and Fauna Act - something that appears somewhat ironic, as on the one hand non-Aboriginal Australians were trying to remove Aboriginal people from the land and not accepting them as part of it, while on the other hand recognising Aboriginal Australians as an integral part of the land by putting them under the Flora and Fauna Act. Still, it needs to be pointed out that by moving Aboriginal people under the Flora and Fauna Act they were rendered inhuman, 'something' more closely related to plants and animals, revealing evolutionary ideas of 'the savage' and reinforcing the British colonial power and perceived superiority. Only in 1967 were all Aboriginal people finally recognised as lawful Australians (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, SWALSC Fact Sheet "Noongar History and Culture").[18]

Another milestone in the continuing struggle to have Aboriginal rights recognised was the famous Mabo Decision in 1992. Through this decision, in which a judge ruled that the Meriam people of the Torres Strait Islands (far North Queensland) did have land rights because of their deep connection with the country, it was acknowledged that Australia was not a *terra nullius*, that is "a land belonging to no one" (Povinelli 2002: 39, see also Broome 2001: 235-237), at the time of colonisation. Although it has already

[18]Attwood and Markus (1998) actually argue that the 1967 referendum has been heavily mythologised, to the extent that even well established historians and anthropologists are unclear about what the referendum was supposed to be about specifically. The authors conclude "that the government's decision finally to conduct the referendum was a rather cynical one, which had little if anything to do with any programme of changing relations between Aborigines and the Australian state, and much more to do with maintaining the status quo, shoring up the government's position at home, and bolstering Australia's image abroad" (Attwood and Markus 1998: 273). In a way then, Attwood and Markus' work on the 1967 referendum echoes Ritter's (1996) work on the rejection of *terra nullius*, as discussed earlier in this chapter, speaking to the overall mythologising of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.

been established earlier in this chapter that *terra nullius* did not have any real affect on Native Title, it is still important to point out that through this decision, it was for the first time widely acknowledged "that the concept of native title was not inconsistent with the principles of the Australian common law" (Povinelli 2002: 37). Following on from the Mabo Decision, the Australian government passed the Native Title Act in 1993, giving the entire Aboriginal population of Australia the chance to prove that they are still, in some way or another, connected to their country and thus own land rights (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008).[19] Consequently, Aboriginal Australians attempt to demonstrate that even though there has been a lot of change since the Europeans arrived, they still have continued to remain strong, adapting to new circumstances in order to survive what was imposed on them by the outside. This, however, is easier said than done as "the requirements they must satisfy to have Native Title recognised are more about satisfying the conditions imposed by legislation and as interpreted by the courts, than about the dynamic and continuous associations they have had with their 'country'" (Ellemore 2003: 236). As such, Aboriginal people are still very much caught in the subaltern, seen as an antiquity while being denied history.

A modern day example of this is the Yorta Yorta case. The Yorta Yorta people are an Aboriginal group in Victoria, and as such, like Nyungar, residents in a more settled area of Australia. In essence, the decision to deny Yorta Yorta Native Title "renders Aboriginal communities invisible in the more densely populated and settled parts of Australia" and acknowledges "that only those relationships that have remained static and 'traditional' are authentically Aboriginal" (Ellemore 2003: 248). However, Barcham (2007: 209) pointed out that while the Yorta Yorta may not have continued all the diverse practices of their ancestors, it does not necessarily mean that their identification as Yorta Yorta is any less meaningful or valid than that of their ancestors'. Yorta Yorta customs were never static and could have changed radically in any which way, regardless of colonisation. Continuing on with this argument, Barcham (2007: 209, see

[19] Major amendments to the act are expected as in July 2010 a determination has given Torres Strait Islanders Native Title over approximately 40,000 sqkm of sea, whereas before it had been said that there cannot be Native Title over water. These amendments have so far been put forward in form of the Native Title Amendment (Reform) Bill 2011.

also Ellemore 2003: 242) writes that what is most important to remember is that the framework of Native Title cannot deal with cultural change over time sufficiently, therefore creating new injustices through its mere existence.

> That is, recognition within these frameworks appear to be dependent upon the maintenance of a fixed identity. In the Australian case this injustice means that some Aboriginal groups (such as the Yorta Yorta) are, through their denial of recognition of *their* native title rights, in a sense being denied their existence as authentic Aboriginal groups. (Barcham 2007: 209, original emphasis)

However, Barcham (2007: 211) also explains that the problem of cultural change and how to deal with it is not coming from the Native Title law itself, but from how it is construed in individual cases. In order to claim Native Title, Aboriginal people have to prove to the court that they continued the 'traditional' beliefs and customs of their ancestors since sovereignty and produce "a detailed account of the content of their traditions and the force with which they identify with them" (Povinelli 2002: 39). The law therefore only emphasises continuity, but leaves the amount of change allowed within that continuity up for interpretation.

It is therefore important to consider how Nyungar, living and working in the city, are creating a space for themselves and try to raise the awareness of an Aboriginal presence in urban Australia. While they are involved in Native Title proceedings, they are also counteracting "the current Native Title process in Australia [which] requires indigenous Australians to promote a static and 'traditional' place-based identity" (Ellemore 2003: 248). To demonstrate this point, a look at the Nyungar struggle for recognition pre- and post-Native Title Act 1993 is required.

Nyungar Sociality: The Importance of Family

In 1988, Birdsall wrote about the 'all one family' as a 'modern day' version of what used to be extended family groups in and before colonial times. These 'all one families' were said to contain approximately two-hundred to three-hundred members, meaning that not everyone necessarily knew each other very well or lived close to each other. In fact, some might not even have seen each other very often, because they lived in completely different regions of the southwest, but everyone knew exactly how they were related to each other and ensured that everyone else knew that and how they were related (Birdsall 1988: 141). Frequently, I have witnessed Nyungar meeting others and one of the first questions that came up after they introduced each other with their full names, was what country they belonged to. By knowing each other's first and last name, as well as their geographical connection, Nyungar are able to place each other on an imaginary map of their 'relationship landscape' that they carry with them in their heads wherever they go.

While Nyungar today do not necessarily live in extended family groups on a day-to-day basis anymore, the concept of the extended family group is still of importance. Its meaning for Nyungar society can be clarified by referring to Myers' (1986) concept of the 'one-countryman' in the context of the Pintupi of the Western Desert. I would suggest that the 'all one family' and the 'one-countrymen' are related concepts. According to Myers (1986) the 'one-countryman' is a member of the community, similar to how every Nyungar, according to Birdsall (1988), is a member of an 'all one family.' The significant difference between the two concepts is that the 'all one family' is focused on the group and the 'one-countryman' is focused on the individual; "each person has his or her own set of "one-countrymen"" (Myers 1986: 90). In contrast, each Nyungar is a member of an 'all one family,' a larger collective that is the same for all its members (although members can individually also have ties to another 'all one family'). At the same time, however, both the 'one-countrymen' and the 'all one family' focus "on the set of social relations [...] with numerous others that an individual can expect to exercise over a long period" (Myers 1986: 73). Importantly, both concepts do not necessarily refer to the people one is living with at a particular moment in time, but to

the people one has social relations with, the people whose houses one is always welcome at and who always offer their help (Myers 1986: 91).

Continuing her explanation of the 'all one family,' Birdsall (1988) wrote about how travel is an integral part of the system, especially for senior women who travel along something they call the 'run.' According to Birdsall (1988: 141), a 'run' consists of a number of towns, providing a geographical connection and network between members of the same 'all one family,' with Haebich (1992: 171) also noting that in the early twentieth century Aboriginal people were inclined to find jobs along their 'runs' rather than moving into 'native settlements.' Interestingly, Beckett (1988a: 119, also cited in Byrne 2003: 75) further describes a similar concept in use in New South Wales, which he termed 'beat.' It can therefore be argued that the 'run,' and the movements along it mirror the social relations innate to an 'all one family.'

In contrast to this stands Myers (1986: 54-57) explanation of *ngurra*, which translates to both 'country' and 'camp,' in context of the Western Desert's Pintupi. *Ngurra*, like 'run' or 'beat,' also refers to movements on the land, but while the 'run' and the 'beat' refer to fixed locations, *ngurra* can move. "*Ngurra* is not only the human creation of "camp" but also the Dreaming creation of "country"" (Myers 1986: 55). Thus, on the level of "country" *ngurra* remains fixed, while on the level of "camp" it moves with the Pintupi. Importantly, then, in Nyungar country, people are identified with country through their belonging to a specific area and 'run,' whereas for the Pintupi country is identified with the people who have lived there (Myers 1986: 56-57). Of course, one can argue that this is due to the extent of settlement. The Pintupi live in a remote location and, at least at the time of Myers' fieldwork, maintained a semi-nomadic lifestyle, which means that *ngurra* as "camp" has the potential to shift its geographical location. The Nyungar, on the other hand, have been much more affected by settlement and their families are scattered across Western Australia, making travel necessary to maintain relationships.

Indeed, according to Birdsall (1988) it was particularly important for older women to travel along their 'runs' to visit their female relatives and to ascertain that these raised their children the 'Nyungar way.' It is significant here that the relationship between a mother and her child was characterised by authority and obedience while the relationship between an aunt and her niece was one of friendship and assistance. Moreover, it is important to add that while a mother held the utmost authority, the oldest child was responsible for his or her siblings. If anything happened to the younger siblings, the oldest would be held accountable, even if it had not been his or her fault. However, after the punishment was over, the oldest child was free to deal out punishment to the younger siblings. Therefore, children learnt very early on that they were responsible for their actions and that the repercussions of those actions affected everyone (Birdsall 1988).

This, then, also emphasises that "locality is never a given but, rather, is a product of regular "work"" (Appadurai 1996: 180-181 as cited in Byrne 2003: 75-76). As a concept, then, 'runs' or 'beats' "are real in space, and they are alive with movement" (Byrne 2003: 75). However, Birdsall (1988: 141) also points out that the 'run' is only significant if Nyungar speak about it in a possessive form, "for example, our run, their run, or his run." This is interesting, because during my fieldwork, around two decades after Birdsall's (1988) paper was published in an edited volume, I have not at any point heard either of the expressions 'all one family' or 'run' as Birdsall cited them from her informants. This apparent vanishing of terms may suggest that the 'all one family' and the 'run' do not exist anymore. However, I found these concepts still applicable to some of my own research, specifically when Aboriginal festivals and trips into the bush with my Nyungar informants were concerned. I would therefore argue that while these terms are no longer used by my informants, the importance of maintaining family relations is still very visible in Nyungar everyday life.

For example, while visiting and participating in different Nyungar festivals, such as Survival Day in Fremantle on 26 January 2009, I was able to observe how older children look after the younger ones while their parents and grandparents, aunts and

uncles, go about their business. It is important to remember, of course, that festivals and other gatherings engender these family situations and as such do not necessarily reflect everyday situations. Nevertheless, it still emerged from interviews with my informants that family, no matter where in Nyungar country they are located, is of the utmost importance in contemporary Nyungar life. In fact, I would suggest that family remains a pivotal aspect of Aboriginal Australian society and as such it is at the heart of urban Aboriginality. Indeed, Toussaint (1987: 84) explained that "kinship provides the mechanisms for coping with the instability and hostility of the outer non-Nyungar environment," giving Nyungar something to hold on to that is distinct from the dominant non-Aboriginal society and as such positions them and allows them to recognise themselves as Aboriginal within that society. Importantly, Nyungar thus not only recognise who they are, but also who they are not in relation to non-Aboriginal society. In that connection, Behrendt (accessed 04/01/2012) argues in the case of Aboriginal people in Sydney that there are "tightly knitted kinship and family networks" in the metropolitan area. The key, Behrendt (accessed 04/01/2012) notes, is that while these urban kin relations are equally strong to those in rural locations, they by and large "interweave more widely than they once did," therefore reinforcing the connection between contemporary city life and more 'traditional' views of the world.

> My ex-husband, right, he has no family. He has a father and a mother and a sister that he hardly ever sees. And my family was his family, and he couldn't understand why I kept doing, doing, doing, giving, giving, giving to my family and when he was shut off from his family. It was easy enough for him to do. I was saying that is not the way you work. *We work family, sort of close.* When asked to do things, we do things or whatever. *It's your support network.* And that's why my family was his family, too, and he became one of them. Part of the family. They open the door up to him and accept him as one. (pers. comm. Alice 2009, my emphasis)

What Alice, a Nyungar-Yamatji woman, alludes to here is that the interpretation of what a family constitutes differs between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. Here, she argues that her ex-husband, who is a white Australian, has no family although saying that he has a father and a mother, which would constitute a family in the non-

Aboriginal Australian sense. In the Aboriginal Australian, in the Nyungar sense, however, it is about the relationships these terms imply. Alice points out that her ex-husband hardly ever sees his parents, which is why she is able to argue that he has no family of his own.

Another example of the importance of maintaining family relationships comes from my trip to Southern Cross in late October 2008 to hold a cross-cultural awareness workshop for employees of a mining company with a mob of Nyungar.[20] By the most direct way, Southern Cross is approximately 370km and 4 1/2 hours drive east of Perth. However, the day we left I learned quickly that if you travel with a group of Nyungar not much goes the most direct way (see Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 for a broad reference of the route and detour we took to get to Southern Cross). Getting out of the city, for starters, was a mission in its own right as we had to get everyone into the same mini-bus, picking up the mob all over town as well as getting supplies for the workshop. Through all this I quickly learned and experienced that "Nyungar time is any time" (pers. comm. Debra 2008), meaning that it did not matter how long it would take us, as long as we got there in the end. To some degree, however, we were bound by western concepts of time as the reception of the hotel we were staying at closed overnights, in addition to us having to be there to begin the workshop on time the next morning. On our trip to Southern Cross we took several detours, which I did not quite realise during our drive due to my unfamiliarity with the territory at the time, but retracing our journey on a map after we returned to Perth, I was able to form a sense of the lengths we had gone to in order to fulfil visitation duties.

[20] More on the workshop can be found in Chapter Two. It is important to mention here, however, that I did not personally hold the workshop. The mob that took me along did. It is the same workshop that Jared's story stems from.

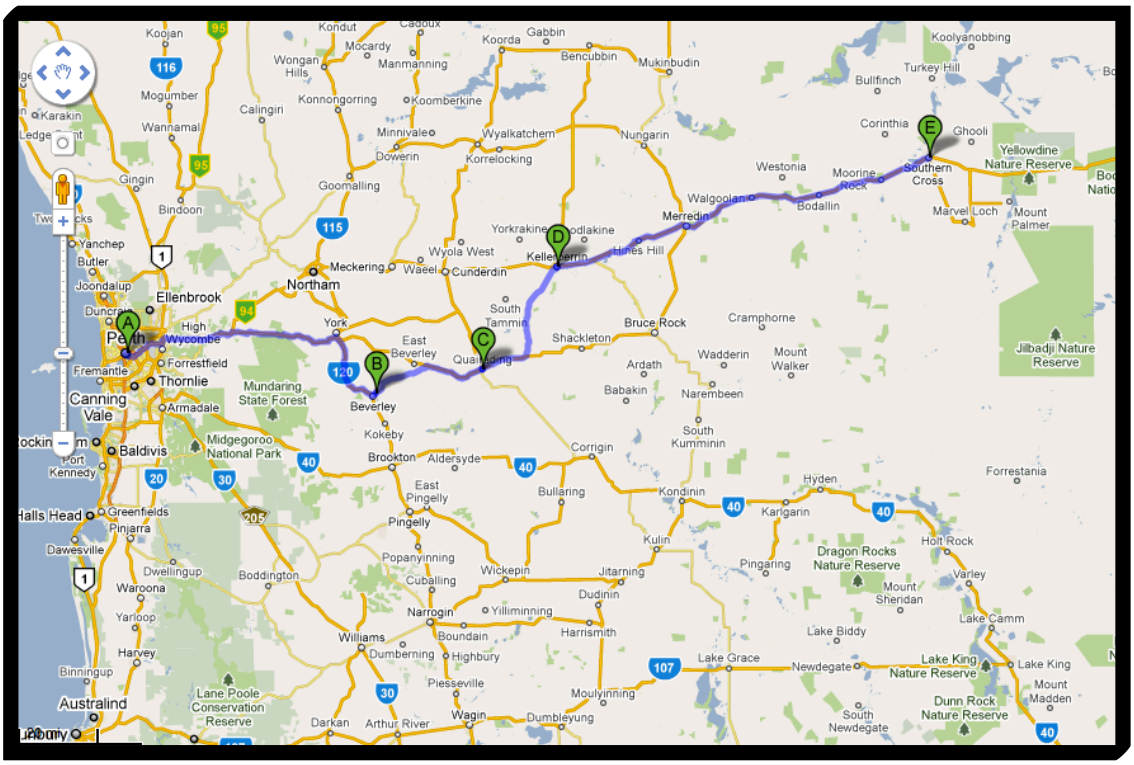

Fig. 4: The approximate route from (A) Perth to (E) Southern Cross, including our stops (B) Beverly, (C) Quairading, and (D) Kellerberrin (Source: Google Maps).

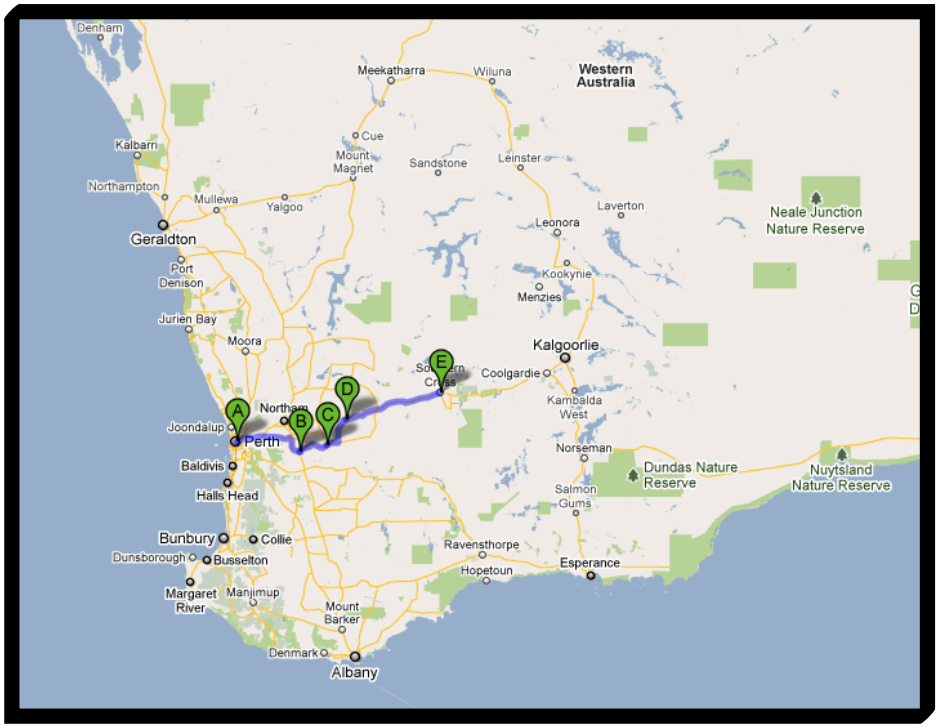

Fig. 5: The approximate route from (A) Perth to (E) Southern Cross, including our stops (B) Beverly, (C) Quairading, and (D) Kellerberrin - Area View (Source: Google Maps).

As this speaks to the significance of travel to Nyungar social life, it is also important to note that Birdsall (1988: 145) argued that Nyungar who did not visit their relatives on a more or less regular basis would sooner or later be deprived of their spot among the 'all one family,' and subsequently lose part of their identity.[21]

> Nyungar people make three sets of claims in identifying themselves. They claim membership in an all one family, they claim special knowledge of a set of towns recognised by other Nyungar as belonging to one of the family communities comprising that all one family, and one particular town in this claimed set is specially claimed as identifying the individual. (Birdsall 1988: 143)

While the only experience I have with this argument is that Sabrina and John, from the mob I went to Southern Cross with, are particularly associated with the Brookton area of Western Australia, I cannot say anymore about it. However, what this quote clearly indicates is the importance of the relationship between Nyungar and country.

Nyungar Sociality: The Importance of Country

Nyungar, like many other Aboriginal groups, have an intimate relationship with the country, so much so that they often refer to it as their *boodja* (mother). Every living thing is part of the same life cycle and "to look at the land through Nyungar eyes is to perceive personhood in all life-forms" (Baines 1988: 228). According to Baines (1988), recognising that all living things, plants and animals alike, are 'subjectified' is crucial to understanding Nyungar behaviour. To Nyungar every life form is a being that is aware of its surroundings, and therefore to harm the country is to harm a Nyungar relative. As a result, Nyungar are not only fighting for the recognition of the land as 'traditionally' theirs, but for the recognition that the land is part of them, part of their family and that they belong to the land just as much as it belongs to them (see also Keen 2004).

[21] I cannot comment on the possibility of loss of identity as argued by Birdsall, other than that all of my informants stressed the importance of family and subsequently their cultural connection.

This intricate relationship to land is rooted in the Dreaming, a cosmological concept that explains how the world became what it is today and most importantly, continues to do so. On their tours around the Perth metropolitan area and Rottnest Island, Noel and Greg Nannup always stressed that the land is looking after itself. According to Noel and Greg (pers. comm. 2009), for Nyungar every place has a certain meaning in the story of Aboriginal life and the Australians landscape is physically inscribed with their history and their Dreaming (see also Chapter Two).[22]

It is important to mention here that I have not encountered any discourses on the Dreaming outside the tourism industry during my time in Perth. In the reconciliation settings I experienced, the Dreaming was only ever mentioned in cross-cultural awareness workshops as part of a more general overview of Nyungar culture - never as part of the active discussions and interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants. Rather, it was presented as a genesis story - a story of origin, place and ownership - something the non-Aboriginal participants were able to relate to with their diverse religious backgrounds. It is clear from literature on contemporary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal disputes, however, that the Dreaming still plays a part in urban Aboriginal life (see for example Collard and Harben 2010, Lewi 2005, McDonald et al. 2008).

Jacobs (1996: 113-114), for example, has argued that some Aboriginal communities actively and strategically avoid disclosing 'traditional' knowledge about the landscape until Dreaming places are threatened by destruction. Therefore, she continues to point out, important Aboriginal places can just 'materialise' unannounced and as such simultaneously make the Aboriginal community more vulnerable to claims of 'inauthenticity' and trouble non-Aboriginal Australia with the knowledge that there is always a possibility of new sacred sites being discovered. An example of this from Nyungar country would be the Swan Brewery development controversy where Nyungar claimed the existence of a site of significance in relation to the *Waugal*.[23] In Nyungar

[22] See in particular "The Story for the Countryside."

[23] The Swan Brewery controversy will be alluded to later in the following section.

cosmology, the *Waugal* plays the most important part as will become apparent in Greg Nannup's story for the countryside in Chapter Two. For now, suffice it to say that the *Waugal* is the giant Dreaming Rainbow Serpent that created the southwest Western Australian landscape, and with it sites of significance, or 'sacred sites,' for Nyungar people. As such, the *Waugal* is often at the heart of controversies when it comes to urban development plans (Baines 1988, Lewi 2005, see also next section).

Importantly, I do not wish to diminish the importance of the Dreaming to any Nyungar or other Aboriginal Australians. In fact, I would argue that by using Dreaming accounts in controversies such as the Swan Brewery Development, Nyungar are continually engaged in the revision of the understanding of Dreaming in the wider Australian society. Byrne (1996: 86) suggests that the Dreaming used to be understood "as a fixed 'charter' handed down to the living by ancestral beings and anchored to 'sacred sites'" and that the revision of that view now emphasises "the agency of the living Aboriginal actor not only as receiver and transmitter but as interpreter and modifier of the Dreaming." Given the unpredictability that exists today with regards to the materialising of sacred sites, there is a desire on part of the non-Aboriginal community to precisely map these sites in order to avoid future planning and development conflicts (Jacobs 1998: 266). That this is, however, impossible is demonstrated by Munn's (1996) account of 'excluded spaces.'

> Aboriginal "excluded spaces" can be understood as particular spatiotemporal formations produced out of the interaction of actors' moving spatial fields and the terrestrial spaces or bases of bodily action. From this perspective, the analytic problem of spatial boundaries cannot automatically refer to limits marked out on pieces of land (or in architectural forms); nor can bodily boundaries be dealt with as body surfaces apart from the body's spatiality, actions, and locatedness. (Munn 1996: 462)

In other words, the Dreaming is ongoing and as such important places will shift as the Dreaming continues (see also Povinelli 1993: 684). Primarily, the Dreaming is an identifying marker for Nyungar themselves as distinctly Aboriginal, as well as for non-

Aboriginal Australians who exploit the Dreaming as a symbol for 'real' Aboriginal culture. As a result, I would suggest that to urban Nyungar today the Dreaming is something intricate and private, and as such it is only brought to the forefront when the discourse demands it.

Nyungar Struggle for Recognition Pre-Native Title Defining Aboriginality Today

Nyungar began fighting for the protection of their land even before the Native Title Act and the foundation of SWALSC. Baines (1988) describes how Nyungar struggled to preserve a sacred site in the metropolitan area of Perth, which was under threat by a planned pipeline. They were able to do so because of the Western Australian Heritage Act 1972, which was in some ways a first step towards the 1993 Native Title Act (Bell 1983: 279). The pipeline was supposed to run right by (in what way - over, under, next to it etc. - was still to be determined) the Bennett Brook, which according to Nyungar mythology is home to a *Waugal*, the rainbow serpent from the Dreaming that made all the land become real. During the negotiations between Nyungar and non-Aboriginal Australians, old issues, similar to those known from colonial times, came to the foreground again. The negotiations were not just following the rules of the non-Aboriginal Australians, but the non-Aboriginal Australians also had trouble accepting the Nyungar's personal relations to and their 'subjectification' of the land, as well as the fact that no single Nyungar can speak for all Nyungar.[24] In a way, it can therefore be argued that non-Aboriginal Australians were repeating their actions from the time of settlement, forcing Nyungar into their behavioural context without stepping over the lines themselves, effectively creating a neocolonial discourse. As a result, when the negotiations did not seem to get them anywhere, the Nyungar organised a protest on Heirisson Island in an attempt to draw attention to their situation. Heirisson Island lies

[24] The statement that no single Nyungar can speak for all Nyungar brings up an interesting dynamic with regards to the different Nyungar groups and a larger pan-Nyungar identity. It has been pointed out earlier in this chapter that there are divisions in Nyungar society, and more particularly also in Whadjuk-Nyungar society, and that those divisions have been highlighted by the media to undermine pan-Nyungar identity. During my fieldwork, these divisions became most visible with regards to Welcomes to Country. For smaller ones, such as an event by a student Amnesty International group, Greg was able to do the Welcome in his father's stead without anyone particularly caring. For bigger events, however, it is of the utmost importance that the correct elders are being invited to to the Welcome to Country, as asking the wrong people offers great offense.

in the middle of the Swan River, slightly east of the Central Business District, with a causeway running across that links the city with the southern suburbs. By organising the protest in this location, Nyungar wanted to make a point of showing that they are not a danger to society and that, as a matter of fact, they were fighting for their cultural survival and recognition, not for conquest. Underlining this point further, the only Nyungar joining the protest both day and night were women and children, with then men joining them during the day for a few hours at a time (Baines 1988).[25]

Similarly to the pipeline issue discussed by Baines (1988), there was a controversy over the Swan Brewery site that took place in the early 1990s. The Swan Brewery is located at the river, at the bottom of Mount Eliza on which Kings Park is located. Lewi (2005) writes how the site was first taken up for the brewery in 1879, and also notes that from the 1920s onwards there was very little development on the site with the brewery being abandoned in the early 1980s. Towards the end of said decade, a newspaper made an open call for options on what should happen to the site, escalating into a full-on community debate - and it was not just Aboriginal people who were against redevelopment. However, Nyungar probably took the most serious stance against redevelopment plans, asking for the brewery's demolition instead. To Nyungar the site was said to be a resting place for the *Waugal* and there used to be "a key landmark of round rocks symbolic of Waugal eggs" (Lewi 2005: 49). Early European settlers had removed the rocks, however, and it was therefore claimed that Nyungar connection to the site could not be proven (Lewi 2005: 49). In the end, the existing Swan Brewery ended up being renovated and reopened in 2001.

Although both Birdsall and Baines' arguments date back over two decades ago, I still found them useful to my experiences with Nyungar. The trip to Southern Cross is

[25] Since the initial submission of this thesis in January 2012, there have been protests by Nyungar against the Single Noongar Claim. The South West Land and Sea Council continues to be in negotiations with the government to find an agreement outside court. As portrayed by the Australian media, there are some Nyungar who are not involved in the Native Title claim through SWALSC who are not happy with the potential of an agreement being made that decides over the whole of Nyungar country. Unfortunately, I cannot say whether or not some of the 2012 protestors had been involved in the protests described by Baines (1988), but the existence of protests alone illustrates the intricate political situation, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians as well as between different Nyungar groups, that exists in Perth today.

exemplary of how a route is altered to accommodate family commitments, and it is relatively unimportant that they did not call it a 'run' as proposed by Birdsall (1988) and Haebich (1992), because the fact of the matter remains we made detours to see family members while we were headed in roughly that direction anyway. There is further an overlap regarding the three sets of identity claims mentioned by Birdsall (1988: 143): on the trip to Southern Cross the Nyungar mob I traveled with demonstrated their knowledge of certain towns as part of their family connections; on an overnight camping trip to Boyagin Rock, we were in the country that John grew up in and close to the town of Brookton with which he associates in particular; and on a day trip into the Wheat Belt with Noah and Millie, we came by many landmarks that Noah recognised from his childhood - not even to mention his connection through the location of his great-grandmother's grave. It is therefore apparent that through the mere act of going bush, Nyungar not only attempt to reconnect with their country, but also recreate a space for themselves in the landscape.

In early December 2008 I went on a day trip into the Wheat Belt with Millie and Noah. Millie is a Bibbulmun-Nyungar who runs a business in the Perth metropolitan area, selling everything from Aboriginal paintings and small souvenirs to bush food. Her partner Noah, who is also a Bibbulmun-Nyungar, additionally runs tours out of Millie's business. During this trip into the Wheat Belt we met with an anthropologist from the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) to begin relocating Noah's great-grandmother's grave, which had been ploughed over by a local farmer near the town of Williams in the 1950s. It is important to note here that this is by no means an isolated case. As Byrne (2003: 74) notes, citing one of his earlier papers, "many of the [Aboriginal] cemeteries ended up in the middle of farmers' paddocks with the graves trampled by grazing stock." No one knows exactly when Noah's great-grandmother was buried, but Noah and the anthropologist estimated it to have been in the 1930s. If they managed to clearly identify the burial site, through soil samples for instance, it would be fenced in and some sort of sign of acknowledgement would be put up. If they cannot clearly determine the site, on the other hand, they still have the option of installing a

sign at the end of the road, acknowledging that there used to be a Nyungar campsite, and that Nyungar are buried in the area.

What was particularly striking about the visit was how easily recognisable and distinguishable the campsite remains. Nyungar and non-Aboriginal Australians used to camp there together while building a water pipeline in the 1950s. However, while Nyungar slept directly on the ground surrounded by trees, non-Aboriginal Australians brought concrete to the campsite and paved little patches in-between the trees to make a marked out and level camping space. In a way, then, this illustrates the different relationships to landscape as portrayed by Nyungar and non-Aboriginal Australians. Nyungar saw themselves as part of the land, while non-Aboriginal Australians tried to dominate it.

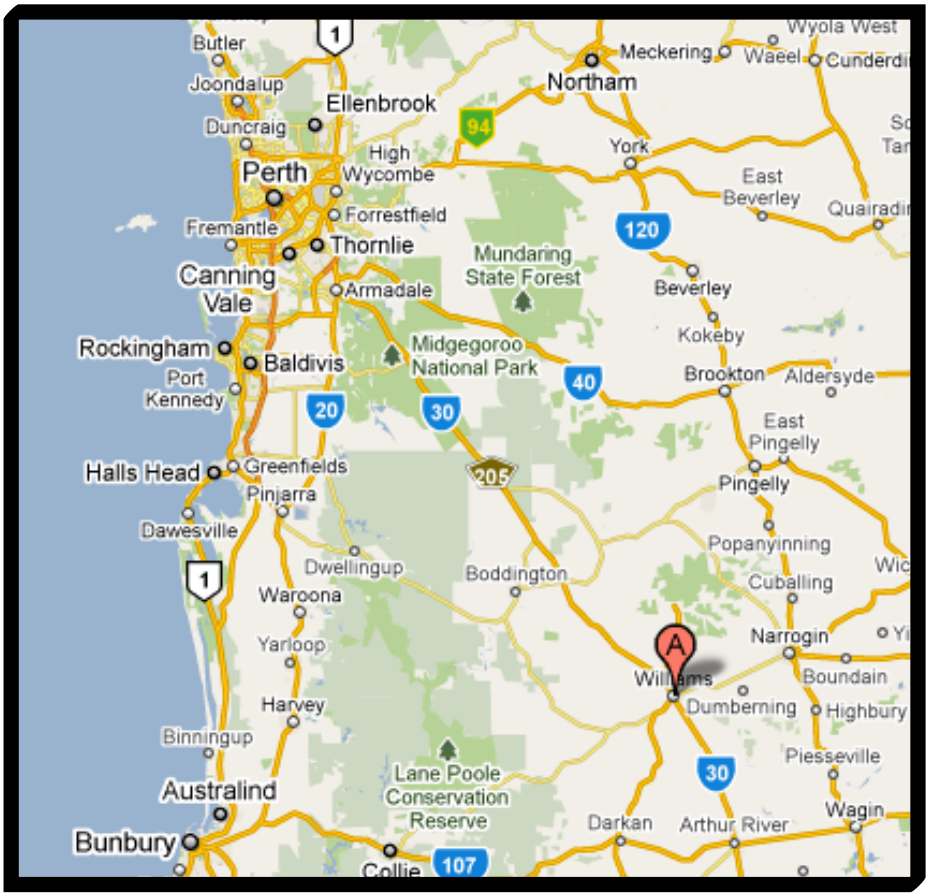

Fig. 6: Williams (A) - Wider Area (Source: Google Maps).

Furthermore, this is the country where Noah grew up. He was born in the Williams area as a bush child and grew up with his family working for local farmers. While driving through the town, Noah pointed out a local pub, relaying how when he was a child there was only a very small space within this pub reserved for Aboriginal people. According to Noah, there were only twelve chairs in that small space and if all of these were taken, no more Aboriginal people were allowed in until others left and some of those twelve chairs became available. Additionally, Noah told me about a local shop which had a line drawn on the ground in front of the register. Aboriginal people were not allowed to cross that line, meaning if an Aboriginal person wanted to buy something but was too small to reach over the line to the register, they had to wait for someone tall enough and willing to do the transaction for them. While these brief examples speak to Noah's memory of certain places within the non-Aboriginal landscape in Australia, they most importantly demonstrate how separation and segregation entered Aboriginal life in varied ways, and not only in the form of men and children being taken away, further implicating the need for a rebuilding of the Aboriginal relationship within the landscape.

Earlier the same year as the Wheat Belt trip, at the end of November 2008, John invited me on an overnight camping trip to Boyagin Rock. I had been in touch with John even before I left for the field, during which time the Balardong-Nyungar elder sent me emails with information sheets about Nyungar that he himself collected for projects with school groups and cross-cultural awareness workshops like the one in Southern Cross that his mob took me along to. At the time John was working for the Western Australian government in Perth's Central Business District, but living, with his wife and foster daughter, in a suburb south of the river near Fremantle. I visited his home a few times during my time in the field, and just like on this occasion on our way to Boyagin Rock, it was never empty. Someone, be it his siblings, his children, or grandchildren would always be there - illustrating once again the importance of family relations and cohesion.

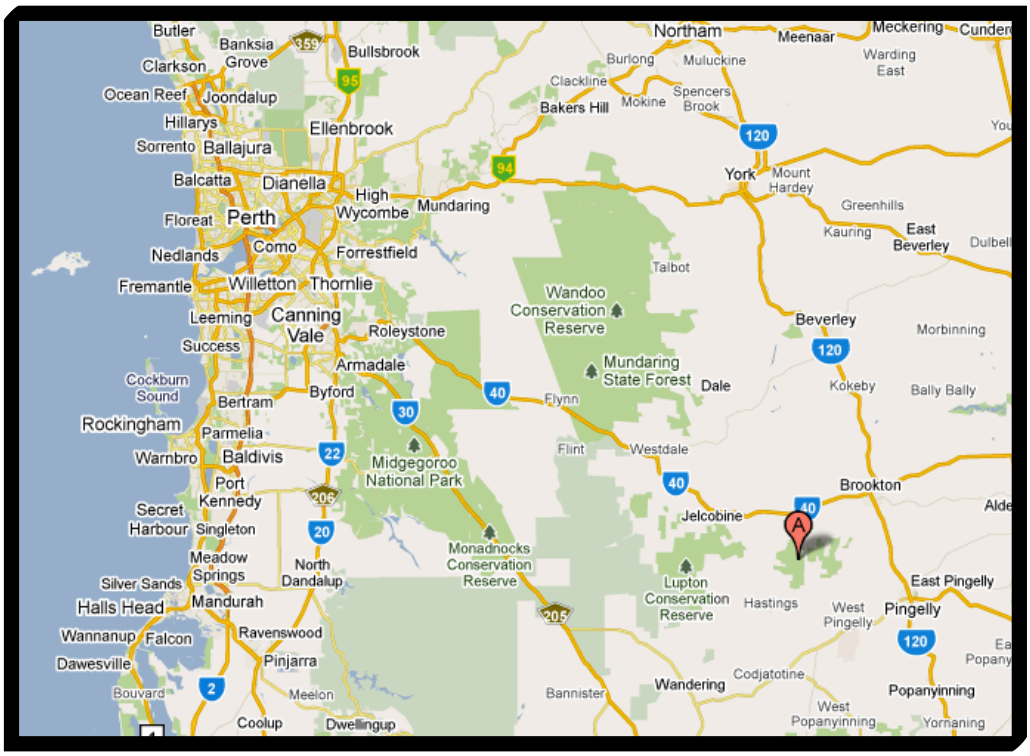

Fig. 7: Boyagin Rock Nature Reserve (A) - Wider Area (Source: Google Maps).

By the time we got to the campsite at Boyagin Rock, everyone else, including four more Nyungar - Bridget, Mary, Laura, and Kenny were already there and set up. It was here that I found out that this trip was predominantly for a teacher, Paul, and three of his students, Maria, Fiona, and Marcus, who were engaged in a school project on Nyungar, but that John also used this opportunity to reconnect with the country where he grew up. As we settled around the campfire, John asked the guests from the school projects about their backgrounds, the way it is common in Nyungar society. Looking at the two girls, Maria and Fiona, he asked "So what mob are you from?" Maria, looking shy and taken aback, answered in a quiet voice "I'm a half-caste." Before John could say anything, Mary, his sister-in-law, interjected by saying "We all are, honey. Show me one full blood that's still alive," and John clarified that he wanted to know their names and where they are from.

What this brief introduction demonstrates is the disconnectedness from their roots some Aboriginal Australians still experience today, as well as a sad realisation of what has

been lost. At the same time it illustrates that those who have already gone through the search for identity, those who are sure of their Nyungar ancestors, fully embrace it. However, simultaneously they are thankful for modern technology and modern life in general. For example, while sitting around the campfire, Mary told me that John actually used to live in a *Mia Mia*, a 'traditional' Nyungar hut, here in this area around Brookton during his childhood. Nevertheless, she also pointed out that while they loved going bush for limited amounts of time, for example on camping trips like this one, she would not want to live that way. "I wouldn't want to move back into the bush and I'm sure John would not want to either," adding laughingly "I love my TV shows too much" (pers. comm. Mary 2008).

Modern 'Traditionality': Urban Nyungar as Hunter-Gatherers

While all the Nyungar I worked with lead a city lifestyle, they still enjoy activities which may be described as stereotypical Aboriginal behaviour: going bush, camping, hunting, or fishing. Interestingly, urban Nyungar are very adamant about being hunter-gatherers. Through personal communication with several Nyungar resident in the Perth metropolitan area, I found that they maintain their contemporary self-defined hunter-gatherer status through trips into the bush and otherwise jokingly say that these days they hunt and gather in supermarkets. I argue that today the urban Nyungar's hunter-gatherer status is self-defined, because 'traditional' hunting and gathering is not their main form of subsistence anymore. Therefore, by going bush and 'hunting and gathering' in supermarkets, Nyungar redefine for themselves what it means to be a hunter-gatherer and use this self-definition to position themselves as distinctly Aboriginal, away from the dominant non-Aboriginal society. Before the establishment of modern amenities, Nyungar in Perth lived mainly off seafood from the ocean, as well as from the Swan River and freshwater lakes. Elsewhere, their supplies ranged from fish and turtles in the coastal area around Albany, and resources from local forests in the southeast of Western Australia, to what the semi-arid regions further north had to offer (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, pers. comm. Noel and Greg Nannup 2009).

Despite this self-defined hunter-gatherer status of urban Nyungar, whenever the act of hunting and gathering is considered in literature focusing on Aboriginal people living today, the attention tends to lie with people living in rural areas who are interested in hunting in National Parks and Wildlife Reserves (Ross 1994, accessed 08/04/2011). Aboriginal Australians from the city going on a weekend trip into the bush which includes hunting are by and large being ignored when it comes to writings surrounding hunting and gathering. Some literature even goes so far as to suggest that with all that modern technology has to offer - and by this they mean mainly four-wheel-drive cars and shotguns - Aboriginal hunting practices have become unsustainable (Swallow 2010, accessed 08/04/2011). Nevertheless, Cowlishaw (2004: 216), writing about Aboriginal people in urban New South Wales, argues that "hunting and gathering of emu, fish, kangaroo, and wild fruits are of crucial significance in the lives of some families, although for some these are secreted practices, tinged with stigma." The stigma Cowlishaw refers to here can be attributed to a number of reasons, for example the feeling to have lost something of the past, some sort of "tradition" they should know about but do not.

> Murris are Aboriginal people; they are known and know themselves as such, and have been judged so for generations. But when they seek definitive cultural markers they look to the past, seek physical evidence such as cave paintings and middens, perhaps remnants of language, or ceremony and art taken from books. *While kinship is still a foundation of social organization, it has neither the specific explicit rules nor the authority that shaped social relations in the past*. Current everyday practices are seldom claimed explicitly as sources of cultural pride. Local ways of remembering and telling are assumed to be inferior to the characteristic scholarly and public ways of marking authoritative history with dates as anchors in time, and town or station names fixing the narratives' spaces. (Cowlishaw 2004: 219, my emphasis)

This quote, although about Murries in New South Wales, perfectly describes the Nyungar situation in Western Australia. Nyungar still value kinship, with their families

playing a big part in their everyday lives,[26] but holding on to other practices which have a 'tradition' attached to them, such as hunting and gathering, gives them something more, something that is not 'everyday,' something they have learned is 'traditionally Aboriginal.' Therefore, being a Nyungar in urban Western Australia is not only about negotiating Aboriginality and what it means to be Aboriginal in the twenty-first century, it is also about balancing their lives between perceived 'tradition' and modernity.

During my time in the field, I heard many Nyungar talk about hunting and gathering in one sense or another. I personally experienced modern 'traditional' hunting and gathering with Nyungar on two distinct occasions.

The first occasion was on our way to the cross-cultural awareness workshop in Southern Cross. Barely out of Quairading, Jared suddenly hit the brakes of the mini-bus we were traveling in and had us all disembark. While driving he had seen some useful plants on the side of the road, so we got out to collect them and the Nyungar explained to me what we had come across: Shillings and Betadine (see Figs. 8 and 9).[27] Shillings are a little smaller than tennis balls and have to be cracked open. Inside there is a small plate the size of a Shilling-coin (hence the name) which has the same colour as the inside of an almond and tastes a little like one as well. Debra, one of the Nyungar I was traveling with, explained to me that Shillings are supposed to be good for your liver and kidneys. Betadine was introduced to me as a Nyungar ointment, "but you get it in pharmacies as well - it's that yellowish stuff that doctors put on you before they cut you open for an operation" (pers. comm. Sabrina 2008). Betadine has an orange colour when directly applied from the plant to the skin. The fruit itself is small, about the size of a hazelnut, and it needs to be crushed in the middle to retrieve the ointment.

[26] More on this can be found in Chapter Two.

[27] I do not know the original names for these plants; these are the names by which they were introduced to me.

Fig. 8: Shillings (Photo by Carina Hemmers)

Fig. 9: Betadine (Photo by Carina Hemmers)

Fig. 10: Collected Quondongs (Photo by Carina Hemmers)

After we had returned to the car with our assortment of Shillings and Betadine, we continued on our way to Southern Cross, stopping twice more for gathering purposes. Both times because we saw quondongs (see Fig. 10) growing on the side of the road, but eventually decided that we would take more time to collect them on the way back to Perth the next day.

On the second occasion, I experienced Nyungar hunting and gathering first hand was during our overnight camping trip to Boyagin Rock, when we went kangaroo hunting. Using the same mini-bus we traveled to Southern Cross in, John got into the driver's seat with a shotgun, while Laura took the passenger seat with a spotlight, and Kenny took the rear seat with the second shotgun - they were going to roll down the windows and shoot from inside the mini-bus. The spotlight was not for the actual spotting of the kangaroos, but to attract their attention and make them stand upright, providing an easier target. While this is exactly the kind of hunting technique Swallow (2010,

accessed 08/04/2011) says makes Indigenous hunting practices unsustainable, Nyungar say there is an overpopulation of kangaroos, and it is not like they are hunting every single day.

Driving around for a while and coming across rabbits, wallabies, and possums fairly early on, we finally spotted some kangaroos in a wheat field. The first few shooting attempts were unsuccessful, but moving on to different locations the men finally managed to shoot three kangaroos between them. On all occasions, as soon as they saw the target going down, one or two of the men would get out of the mini-bus to grab it and put it into the boot of the mini-bus which we had previously lined out with cardboard. After deciding that the three kangaroos in the back of the mini-bus were more than enough, we started driving back to camp. However, when we came across a stretch with clean sand, John decided to stop in order to skin and gut the kangaroos right there. The first thing was to break the kangaroos' legs and cut a hole through the muscle to hang them upside down at the fence that was running along the sand road. We then continued to cut off their tails, keeping them as they were, before skinning and gutting the animals, throwing everything but the meat and the tails into the nearest bush - including the hide. After all I had read about 'traditional' Aboriginal hunting practices and how the game was used before I came to the field, I was quite surprised at how casually the hunters disposed of much of the animal that was not wanted. John (pers. comm. 2008) explained this had to happen "because we didn't skin them properly." So with the edible remains we made our way back to camp where we hung the remains on a fence for the night to dry out.

What these two brief accounts of my Nyungar hunting and gathering experiences demonstrate is that 'going bush' is still very much part of modern Aboriginal lifestyles. It can be anything from a simple day or half day fishing trip to a trip that lasts for several days and includes hunting. Although an argument can be made for urban Nyungar to be tourists into their own cultural heritage, I would suggest that it is a case of Nyungar holding on to what they remember of the old days and what is at the same time recognised as 'traditionally Aboriginal' by non-Aboriginal Australians.

Furthermore, what this shows is how Nyungar identify as distinct Aboriginal Australians but at the same time embrace modern day amenities. It therefore becomes apparent that bush trips take on extra meaning for Nyungar. It is how they reconnect with the country that they or their ancestors are originally from. In other words, they reestablish their relationship with the landscape, both the physical as well as the ideological landscape. In the case of the Boyagin Rock trip, John and his mob do so primarily for themselves, but with the help of the non-Aboriginal participants whom they show and explain their country to. In the Wheat Belt example, on the other hand, the Millie and Noah reestablish their connection and relationship with the country just as much for themselves as they are demonstrating it to non-Aboriginal Australia.

On a whole different level from the one of recreating a space for themselves in the landscape, then, Nyungar's trips into the bush are not only a positive example of Aboriginal Australians working with non-Aboriginal Australians,[28] but they are also upholding a 'tradition' of sorts that was instated in the colonial period. It is on this level that it is important for me to consider my own place on those trips and on my fieldwork in general. As was demonstrated earlier in this chapter, ever since the first pioneers arrived in Western Australia, Nyungar have been known to take on a kind of tour guide role. To briefly reiterate, Green (1981), for example, wrote about how Nyungar people at King George Sound took white visitors inland, and Greg Nannup always mentions on his Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tours how one of his ancestors worked as a guide for John Forrest, the first Premier of Western Australia. By taking me, and in the case of the Boyagin Rock trip, the small school group into the bush with them, the Nyungar I worked with are upholding not a 'tradition' formed in the 'pre-historic' Dreaming, but in

[28] More on this can be found in Chapter Three.

the tangible past.[29] Additionally, such practices also emphasise a contrast to those occasions in Western Australian history when non-Aboriginal people made their way into the bush to forcibly remove Aboriginal Australians from their home lands. As a result, it can be argued that by teaching early pioneers and settlers their way around and how to survive in the bush, Aboriginal people actually proved that they inhabited the landscape and further manifested themselves in it - despite the legal myth of *terra nullius* and not having their rights recognised for such a long time. *Terra Nullius*, of course, was officially demolished with the Mabo Decision and the recognition of Indigenous rights arguably reached new heights with the passing of the Native Title Act 1993.

Nyungar Struggle for Recognition Post-Native Title

What the two brief examples of the proposed pipeline and Swan Brewery land disputes of the pre-Native Title period show is that even before the passing of the Native Title Act in 1993, Nyungar were actively trying to preserve their land and struggling for recognition as a distinct Aboriginal people. More importantly, perhaps, they continue to do so also outside the direct Native Title discourse. These examples, therefore, illustrate how despite oppression, Nyungar have tried and continue to try to resist. Today, then, with the ongoing Native Title claim, the southwest region of Western Australia, including Perth, is necessarily in a politically difficult and contested situation. While I am looking to transcend the issue of Native Title and focus on reconciliation instead, the Native Title history in Perth and the southwest is still important for understanding the current situation of Nyungar in the city. It is also one of the most written about issues in

[29] That is not to say, of course, that guided tours and family trips into the bush are the same. Guided tours, whether in the city or in the bush, are done for other people, whereas trips into the bush may be used by Nyungar as an opportunity to reconnect with the country themselves. To demonstrate this point more clearly, Greg's tours in the city are clearly done for other people, while the trip to Boyagin Rock, for example, was primarily also organised for others, John and some members of his mob came together to share some 'family' time and using the opportunity to visit their country. On the other hand, there are the trips to Southern Cross and Williams. The former, while organised to hold a workshop for others, the journey itself was very much about the mob, their family, and their country. The latter was specifically organised by Millie and Noah for themselves, with the aim of relocating dead ancestors and thereby reestablishing and reaffirming their connection to the Williams area.

the research relating to Nyungar, displaying the problem of identity construction and recognition.

After its foundation in 2001, SWALSC lodged the so-called Single Noongar Claim in September 2003. The claim was split into two parts for court proceedings, with ‘Part A’ referring to the Perth metropolitan area and ‘Part B’ referring to the wider southwest region. The trial concerning ‘Part A’ began in October 2005 and all parties agreed that it would not influence the proceedings for ‘Part B’ (SWALSC et al. 2009: xii). The Single Noongar Claim covers the whole of Nyungar country (see Fig. 3), representing around two-hundred Nyungar family names. By lodging one single claim, Nyungar asserted that they are a united people (which was later contested by the State and Commonwealth governments). Also, it would avoid overlapping Native Title claims, something that was earlier used to deny land title to Indigenous people in Queensland, where three sub-groups held ‘traditional’ rights over the same area and there was a worry that these overlapping claims undermine the shared identity of the groups (Smith 2003, SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, SWALSC Fact Sheet "Nyungar History and Culture", SWALSC et al. 2009).

Three years after the original lodging of the Single Noongar Claim, in September 2006, Justice Wilcox decided that Native Title did indeed exist in Perth. Justice Wilcox thus became the first judge to recognise Native Title in a capital city in Australia. This ruling, however, did not mean that the whole of Perth would automatically fall into the hands of those Nyungar who were represented in the claim. Native Title only exists in such places where it has not been ‘extinguished,’ for instance “vacant Crown Land, some National Parks, Forests and Public Reserves, some types of pastoral areas and some Aboriginal communities” (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, SWALSC Fact Sheet "South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council"). Therefore, the recognition of existing Native Title over Perth would have been more of a symbolic act than anything else. Indeed, this symbolic act would have provided a helpful tool to further the reconciliation process, not only locally, but Australia wide.

While reconciliation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, it is worthwhile noting here that it is based on the need to create more equality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, as the former continues to be heavily disadvantaged. It is thus interesting to note that many non-Aboriginal communities perceive Native Title as a threat to their homes and livelihoods, often using their belief in egalitarianism and a 'fair go' for everyone as the reason for why Aboriginal people should not be able to claim land under Native Title. "In other words, resistance to Aboriginal claims is due to them being perceived as above and beyond what *all Australians equally* deserve" (Halloran 2004: 12, my emphasis). As such, in an attempt to stop this threat, non-Aboriginal Australians draw "on the myth of 'Aboriginal privilege' - the idea that indigenous people are unfairly advantaged in land and welfare, which has gained popular currency in Australia since the early 1980s" (Mickler 1999 as cited in Ellemore 2003: 238), while at the same time 'Aboriginalising' their own connection to the land (Ellemore 2003: 246).

While Ellemore (2003: 246) emphasises that this 'Aboriginalising' of non-Aboriginal relationships to land does not necessarily mean that their connection is 'inauthentic,' it is clearly an attempt to undermine the Aboriginal Australian's claim, as "in order to claim Native Title successfully, indigenous groups must demonstrate a continuous association with the claim area and assert an identity that is traditional and distinctive from white communities and other Aboriginal communities" (Ellemore 2003: 236). As a result, what becomes apparent through the legal proceedings is that what Nyungar need to do in order to gain Native Title is proving that they conform to western ideas of Aboriginality and 'tradition,' distinct from any possible non-Aboriginal claim to the land, which at the same time continues to separate them from a modern lifestyle in the western imagination.

Justice Wilcox's decision, to reiterate the Introduction, that Native Title did indeed exist over the Perth metropolitan area was appealed by the State and Commonwealth governments who claimed "that a Nyungar people had never existed" (SWALSC accessed 22/04/2008, SWALSC "Media Release: SWALSC Welcome Appeal Decision"

16/04/2008). More specifically, Brunton (2007: 3), the anthropologist representing the state in the Perth Native Title proceedings, argued that for there to be successful Native Title determination the Nyungar involved should have proven the entire southwest was populated "by a single community, rather than a number of smaller bodies such as 'tribes' or dialect groups" in addition to the required "necessary degree of continuity in the acknowledgment and observance of traditional laws and customs from 1829 until the present." By quoting Justice Wilcox referral to the Yorta Yorta case, Brunton (2007: 4-5) does concede that 'traditional' societies did not exist in a vacuum, as modern mythology will have us believe, but that they indeed underwent changes even before European arrival. Still, he questions the existence of a single Nyungar society as opposed to the existence of several smaller sub-groups who speak with related dialects. In his opinion there is proof in the writings of, for example, Norman Tindale and Daisy Bates, that sub-groups of what is known as the Nyungar people changed parts of their laws and customs without taking into consideration other sub-groups' opinions - thereby eliminating their status as a single society (Brunton 2007: 6-7). Justice Wilcox' referral to the Yorta Yorta case is further interesting, as

> the local white communities used a number of strategies which challenged the authenticity of Yorta Yorta identity and knowledge. [...] This began by contesting the very *name* of the local Aboriginal group. It was argued in the proceedings of the Native Title Claim and asserted in discussions surrounding the claim, that Yorta Yorta is not the name of the traditional group(s) associated with the forest. (Ellemore 2003: 241-242, original emphasis)

The same argument that was used to appeal the Nyungar Native Title, can therefore also be found on the other side of the country, speaking to the changes that needed to take place for Aboriginal people to survive colonisation by creating a stronger connection with each other. Furthermore, Brunton's (2007) referral to Norman Tindale, who famously created the 'Aboriginal map' of Australia, needs to be considered in relation to the Yorta Yorta case, where Ellemore (2003: 238-239) points out a double standard that exists for the regulations to prove connection to land, with Aboriginal Australians being

"required to use a map to define their traditional country, [while] settler Australians are claiming 'black hearts' as a way of demonstrating their own attachments to place."

Besides criticising Justice Wilcox heavily for several aspects of his judgement, but most specifically for its inconsistency with the Yorta Yorta High Court decision and its implications for the recognition of the continuity of 'traditional' customs in the southwest, Brunton (2007: 1) is indeed very vocal about his doubts that Nyungar could have the above mentioned continuity in acknowledgement of 'traditional' laws and customs in the Perth metropolitan area when said area "has been settled by non-Aborigines for over 175 years." The ongoing Single Noongar Claim therefore illustrates how Nyungar still struggle to be recognised not only as Aboriginal people of Australia, but as distinctly Nyungar. It exemplifies the continuing definition of Aboriginality by non-Aboriginal Australians as well as contrasting the formality of Australian common law with the informality and variety of Nyungar society and lived Nyungar experience.

On 23 April 2008, Nyungar then faced a major setback in their continued fight for Native Title determination. While the High Court did not say that Native Title did not exist, they still maintained that Justice Wilcox's ruling was faulty and therefore referred the matter back to a Federal Court for a new hearing. While the Nyungar involved were determined to keep fighting for their 'traditional' land, the decision was undeniably disappointing, particularly in light of the public apology that was issued by the Australian government to all Aboriginal people in February 2008 (Perpitch accessed 04/07/2008). Subsequently, SWALSC Chief Executive Officer Glen Kelly issued a statement that mediation outside court would be the way forward (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Pascoe 2008: 118, former forthwith AIATSIS). Indeed, the SWALSC February 2010 newsletter reported that in December 2009 a 'Heads of Agreement' had been signed by both SWALSC and the Western Australian government which "establishes a two-year timeframe for the negotiation of a settlement package that will resolve all current and future native title claims across the area" (SWALSC 2010a). A few months later, in their July 2010 newsletter, SWALSC reported that negotiation had started and that, if successful, they could be finalised "by

February 2012, and ready for implementation by December 2012." They continue to point out, emphasising the importance of negotiations, that if the process should be unsuccessful, the matter would go back to the Federal Court where it could take up to fifteen years to resolve. Consequently, Nyungar continue to be involved in a legal battle for recognition and identity.[30]

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to clarify the involvement of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Western Australian history, showing that both sides were equally involved in the process, albeit in unequal power relations. By not just presenting historical 'facts,' but putting them into context through, for example, the discussion of the reliability of sources and the process of historicisation, I have further demonstrated how Nyungar are frequently seen as remnants of the past rather than modern human beings who embrace their history, because they have to, need to, and want to, in order to be recognised as Aboriginal.

All of the Nyungar I worked with live a city life. Some of them work in offices, and others give tours in the metropolitan area. They live in houses in and around Perth and Fremantle, take the car or the train to work, eat in restaurants, and go out clubbing with friends. In all regards they are individuals that lead a modern lifestyle, far removed from what is promoted as 'Aboriginal' by the government and tourism industry. It is therefore not surprising that Aboriginal Australians living in urban areas are considered less 'traditional' or even 'inauthentic' by the majority of non-Aboriginal people, Australian and other. As has been pointed out before, it is a common assumption that to find a 'proper' Aboriginal Australian, one has to travel to the bush as such individuals do not

[30] Not all Nyungar are involved in the Native Title, as became clear during the recent protests (which happened after the initial submission of this thesis) regarding Single Noongar Claim negotiations. Unfortunately, I do not have any information on which family names are represented by the Single Noongar Claim. All of my informants, however, denied any involvement in the claim. Moreover, since the submission for examination of this thesis in January 2012, SWALSC has made it known on their website that a final offer for an out of court agreement is not expected until late 2012. They further say that the final offer will be followed by a number of authorisation meetings in 2013 where Nyungar will decide whether to accept the agreement. If it is not accepted, the claim will go back to litigation.

exist in the city (Cowlishaw 2010: 220). The Nyungar I worked with are very aware of the fact that their daily lives are not seen as particularly 'Aboriginal' by their non-Aboriginal counterparts and it appears that by 'going bush' they are attempting to reclaim some of that Aboriginality as it is defined by non-Aboriginal Australia, while also reestablishing their own relationship with the landscape.

The widespread denial, or non-understanding, of Aboriginality in the city emphasises the continued struggle Nyungar are facing to resist ongoing colonial power relations in the politically charged environment of southwest Western Australia that requires them to demand the existence of a 'shared history,' rather than accepting the existence of an 'oppositional history.' It takes some strong individuals not only to fight for official recognition in the public sphere, but also to negotiate what Aboriginality means in the twenty-first century. At the same time, when the first pioneers and settlers arrived in Western Australia, Nyungar accepted them on their lands as part of their history: the Europeans were their dead ancestors returning to them (see for example Dixon et al. 2006). The Europeans, on the other hand, decided that Australia's nomadic people had no interest in the land and that it was thus up for the taking. All the while, Nyungar continued to take Europeans in, teaching them about the landscape and ways to survive in it. Their survival skills and their adaptation allowed them to live through the deliberate separation and attempted eradication the Europeans imposed in order to gain full control over the land and its inhabitants. Despite the creation of an imagined white Australia, or perhaps because of it, Aboriginal people continued to carve out a space for themselves within that society.

It is thus that Nyungar are attempting to turn the mirror back onto the wider Australian community, and the myth of white Australia itself, thereby creating a 'double landscape' (Mattingly et al. 2002: 745-746). In broad terms, "a *double landscape* [is] an external plane of observable deeds, what we might think of as public events, and an internal plane of thoughts and emotions [...] providing narratives the capacity to simultaneously reveal and interpret public and collective events and investigate a highly subjective world of individual experience" (Mattingly et al. 2002: 745, original

emphasis). An example of the double landscape from my larger fieldwork area can be taken from the historical events at Pinjarra as described earlier in this chapter. Harris (accessed 09/11/2011: 10) recognised the existence of a "double trauma," as she termed it.

> First it is obvious trauma for the Indigenous people who have insisted on the correctness of their oral history against almost two centuries of insistence on a European version. Secondly, it is a site of trauma for parts of the European population which are caught in the awful situation of having to contemplate the revision of their history and all of the values associated with it, especially fairness and justice. (Harris accessed 09/11/2011: 10)

It can therefore be said that the physical landscape holds different meanings for the people who live within it, depending on their memories and historic associations with that place. This necessarily results in people of the same physical landscape inhabiting different ideological landscapes - the 'double landscape' is created and holds value for any events happening in the present and/or the future. Then, by going bush and taking non-Aboriginal Australians along to teach them bits and pieces of Indigenous knowledge, Nyungar reinforce their position within the natural and political terrains of the landscape, a position that they held since sovereignty. They are manifesting themselves as modern human beings, who enjoy a time out in the bush as well as all the amenities a city lifestyle has to offer. They do not conform to stereotypes per se, but are willing and able to use them to their advantage if need be. For better or worse, in a quest for survival they adapted to changing circumstances and continue to do so in the present day.

Chapter Two: Place-Making

Introduction

Perth has a reputation of being the heatwave capital of Australia, indicating that it is a sunny, hot, and happy or positive place. When in late 2009 Adelaide was experiencing an unusual heatwave for that time of the year and the geographical area, many television news reports said that Adelaide did not want the title of "heatwave capital" and that while the sun and a certain amount of heat was more than welcomed, forty degrees centigrade was decidedly too much and should be sent back Perth way. Indeed, Taylor (2000) argues that the popular expression "the sun always shines in Perth" is so much part of Australian society that it is shaping the way Western Australia's, and more specifically Perth's, past is remembered. Quoting Healy (1997: 5), Taylor (2000: 29) points out that "social memory in Australia, as in other settler societies, is a product of colonialism... we are all memory workers, recalling and forgetting, selecting, ordering and erasing memories." The implications of such memory work and its ramifications for the social creation of place are manyfold. For example,

> From a native-born perspective, landscape is inseparable from the idea of *place* in Australia; while from an immigrant perspective, a consciousness of the landscape must be developed from an initial encounter with space. [...] Place is a custodial phenomenon involving practices in time as well as topography, while space is a neutral entity awaiting significance. Space can become territory or property if appropriated in particular ways. Or it can become place if incorporated more assiduously and ritually into systems that give rise to personal or communal awareness. (Gibson 2008: 59, original emphasis)

Perth as it is now, at least on the surface, is a vibrant European-Australian city which, though often declared as "Dullsville" by its eastern counterparts (Stannard 2007: 35), is mainly represented through images of its modern skyline under bright blue sky or its many sunny Indian Ocean beaches. What these representations push aside is that somewhere 'below' this European-Australian surface there is another layer, a layer that

is not as ‘sunny’ as popular and selective accounts will have us believe. In other words, it is a layer that resulted from past events as described in Chapter One, but was buried under a layer of popular imaginations inspired by still existing colonial power relations. The short film *Cant Chant (Wegrewhere)* by Vernon Ah Kee (2007), which was part of the Figuring Landscape exhibition (Elwes et al. 2008), plays on these multiple layers. Essentially it is about Australian beaches as ‘white’ places and Aboriginal Australians claiming them back. In *Cant Chant (Wegrewhere)* Vernon Ah Kee and his friends re-appropriate the beach by surfing on surfboards that feature what would be recognised as ‘traditional’ Aboriginal art on the top, but on the bottom side these surfboards show colonial photographs of Vernon Ah Kee’s ancestors that had been taken by Norman Tindale (Elwes et al. 2008). It can be argued that while on the surface these Aboriginal surfers conform to non-Aboriginal perceptions of themselves, beneath the surface they are riding on the colonialist wave, determined to master it. Therefore, Ah Kee’s (2007) film becomes part of the varied responses to colonialism, as described in Chapter One, showing that these continue to be of importance in the present day.

The different layers of the landscape, especially the suppression of the Aboriginal landscape under the ‘sunny’ landscape of non-Aboriginal Australia, are further important, because “it is within such imaginings of Perth as an exclusively white middle class society, that European-Aboriginal relations have been framed” (Taylor 2000: 30). Regardless of the ongoing Native Title negotiations, as described in Chapter One, it has been widely documented that in general Aboriginal people feel a strong connection to the land they call home (see for example Myers 1986). The case is not any different for Nyungar, despite living in a more settled area of Australia. Even more so, and rather ironically perhaps, Haebich (1992) argues that the failed policies of the early twentieth century have led to a reaffirmation and intensification of Nyungar identity. According to this view, the segregation of Nyungar into settlements and reserves resulted in making their cultural connection, in some way or another, stronger and more distinct. By actively differentiating Nyungar identity from themselves, the colonial forces gave Nyungar “a way of resisting the relentless march of the assimilating forces of modernity and the nation-state” (Bucholtz and Hall 2004: 384). Consequently, it can be argued that

in spite of there having been serious disruptions to Aboriginal life and 'traditions' caused by colonisation, Nyungar have still created a distinctive place for themselves in the contemporary urban landscape. As the upcoming examples of Greg Nannup's Kings Park Indigenous Heritage and Swan River Dreaming Tours clearly shows, "traditions such as story-telling continue to weave together cultural memory, place and identity, thus relocating and repositioning highly adaptive local Aboriginal cultures within urban landscapes" (Taylor 2000: 33).

What becomes apparent, then, is that while Aboriginal Australians continually struggle for recognition and a place in the Australian landscape, the image that Australia is presenting to the outside world is that of a sunny place where the world is better and the people happier - rather than acknowledging the very real continuing inequality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia. Therefore, "it seems likely that many, if not all forms of contemporary Indigenous identity are at least inflected by forms of identity making - and the 'politics of recognition' - that are deeply tied to the 'encapsulating' mainstream both nationally and internationally" (Smith and Morphy 2007: 6). For example, while on fieldwork I audited lectures on Australian society at the University of Western Australia. In one of the very first sessions, students were asked to describe what they thought the 'typical' Australian looked like. The overwhelming consensus was that the 'typical' Australian is an athletic and tanned male. It took a little bit of pressing from the lecturer for the students to realise that by imagining a tanned man, they were in fact imagining a white person as the 'typical' Australian, not someone with an Aboriginal background. This brief anecdote typifies the widespread and prevailing attitude towards Aboriginal people in Australia, and it exemplifies the political reality in which they have been rendered almost completely invisible within dominant discourses (Harris 2003b).

As a result, I am now focusing on how Nyungar, living and working in the city are creating a place for themselves and raising the awareness of an Aboriginal presence in urban Australia. This can be done in a variety of ways, however, due to my research being in the context of tourism, I became most interested in the 'tradition' of storytelling

in a cross-cultural context. In this chapter I will therefore specifically look at place-making through storytelling and code-switching, with elements of performance flowing into it as well. Following theoretical considerations of storytelling and code-switching, their application will be discussed with particular reference to the role of the mediator and the performance, or enacting, of Aboriginality. From there on the discussion will move to the issue of reconciliation, and how both storytelling and code-switching are used in cross-cultural awareness workshops, before considering the importance of education for the reconciliation process. It will become evident that all the elements - storytelling (and with it 'shared' and 'oppositional' history), code-switching, the performance of Aboriginality, reconciliation, and education - are intricately intertwined with regards to place-making.

Theoretical Implications: Storytelling

> Our lives are storied. Were it not for stories, our lives would be unimaginable. Stories make it possible for us to overcome our separateness, to find common ground and common cause. To relate a story is to retrace one's steps, going over the ground of one's life again, reworking reality to render it more bearable. A story enables us to fuse the world within and the world without. In this way we gain some purchase over events that confounded us, humbled us, and left us helpless. In telling a story we renew our faith that the world is within our grasp. (Jackson 2002: 245)

During my time in the field, I encountered storytelling in many different forms and situations, most prominently, however, during cross-cultural awareness workshops and Greg and Noel Nannup's tours. By telling Dreaming stories on organised tours, or talking about their personal life experiences in different contexts, Aboriginal people create a sense of belonging, not only for themselves, but also for the non-Aboriginal people who get to share in the stories (Mulcock 2007), allowing them to see that there is an Aboriginal Australia in the city, as well as allowing them to embrace that urban Aboriginal 'Australianness' into their own lives.

Although not in the same context as Mulcock (2007) describes, Bell (2009: 84), for example, explains how she began learning about the Ngarinyin way, whose 'traditional' country is in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, and often found herself misunderstanding what she was being taught. According to her, this was because she made the common mistake of trying to understand Ngarinyin culture in terms of her own. More importantly in this context, though, she gives a vivd account of how she was taught through storytelling:

> When Mowaljarlai and I discussed an issue he would first raise a question, which I would attempt to answer in simple English and lingo. [...] Mowaljarlai would then apply my example to his own context, to see how it would work in practice. [...] Then he would tell me the story, and the story's context - physical and metaphysical - and leave me to make the unarticulated connection between the concept and the story. If I then asked him to explain the evidence he would tell me another story, and another if necessary, until I finally got it. Getting it was demonstrated with a prolonged *Aaah!* which he would acknowledge with a nod. (Bell 2009: 84, original emphasis)

While I never had a learning-through-storytelling experience like the one described by Bell, I still maintain that most of what I learned, I learned through stories. I also found myself having these *Aaah!* moments that Bell (2009) describes, often wanting to kick myself for not seeing the obvious earlier. The most poignant of these was when, near the end of my fieldwork, I found myself on a Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour with Greg and two journalists. I remember sitting on the little wall near the big Boab tree on a particularly hot day, having a quick drink of water while, for the umpteenth time, listening to Greg relaying the story of how it was removed from its original home in the Kimberley and brought down to Perth on a truck in late 2008 to be replanted in Kings Park.

> That Boab tree, which isn't local to the southwest of course, caused a lot of commotion coming into the city. It came on a large truck, and they actually had to cut down some other trees to get it through because the tree was too big. It was quite crazy. There were even stories of cars being forklifted onto the footpath and they were being

> put back down after the truck had gone through. A lot of commotion. It is going to take another three to five years to tell if that tree is going to survive. They were putting a road down in the north and did all their planning and when they actually got to the site, they realised there was a tree there. Instead of building the road around the tree, they dug it up and it was given to the park as a gift from the Aboriginal people of that group up there. (pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009, Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour)

It was then that it hit me for the very first time. What Greg was telling here was not just the story of a tree. It was a story of all Aboriginal people in Australia who were forcibly removed from their lands, relocated to a part of the country they did not belong to. Greg (pers. comm. 2010) confirmed my new-found knowledge in a later meeting, emphasising again that "the tree is very much out of place and it was removed from its country." Greg further always made a point of saying that they would not know for a few years yet if the tree was going to survive in this climate and after the long journey from the Kimberley. Nevertheless, Greg also pointed out that occasional leaves and fruit to be found on the tree were a good indication that the tree might survive. When I spoke to Greg (pers. comm. 2011) more recently, however, he said that there is a lot of damage to the tree that is now becoming visible. Thus, the survival of the Boab continues to be questionable. Still, by talking about the tree in this way, Greg again draws a striking unmentioned comparison with Aboriginal Australians. Removed from their lands, often unsure of what was going to happen to them, they survived albeit the wide Victorian belief that they were close to extinction. With this newfound knowledge the Boab tree has become a powerful image to me, in the sense in which Greg was using it, but also as a representation for the realisation that no matter how often you hear a story, there is always something new to learn. With this realisation came the understanding that Greg was not only telling the story of a tree removed from its original place, and by extension the story of Aboriginal Australians removed from their original place, he was also telling part of the tree's own intrinsic story.

Fig. 11: ~750-Year-Old Boab Tree in Kings Park (Photo by Carina Hemmers)

In Aboriginal Australia, stories are inscribed in the land in the form of what is known as Dreaming tracks. The landscape is more than an array of natural and man-made physical features. To Aboriginal Australians, each place is inscribed with a story - for example, "the ancestral beings, fixed in the land, become a timeless reference point outside the politics of daily life to which the emotions of the living can be attached" (Morphy 1995: 188) - similar to a house that is filled with all of a family's memories (Bell 2009). An object, such as a tree, can thus have its own story all of which it only knows itself, with only parts of that story being known to others who can then

pass it on and take meaning from it. As a result, the tree becomes a living entity rather than a mere object to the person who recognises its intrinsic story (Bell 2009: 222-223).

This is only one of the many examples illustrating how I learned through storytelling. During my time in Perth, I often found myself sitting and listening. Sitting in offices, conference rooms, cafés, boats, and parks; listening to life stories, Dreaming stories, or historical accounts. All of these accounts together provided me with an image of what it means to be an Aboriginal person in twenty-first century Australia living in the city, emphasising the continuing struggle for recognition born out of past events as discussed in Chapter One. This continued struggle for recognition, of course, is closely linked with reconciliation (see also Chapter Three).

In line with the historical legacies of colonialism in Australia, previous governments and generations refused to recognised what happened to Aboriginal people for years, passing on the task of breaking barriers and working towards reconciliation to today's generation. Such reconciliation today requires the government and the wider non-Aboriginal community to learn to recognise Aboriginal people and their cultural heritage as part of an Australian past, present, and future - a modern Aboriginal life that includes both the bush and the supermarket (Povinelli 1993: 681). For non-Aboriginal Australians this recognition means coming to terms with their role in Australia's controversial past, the colonial time and its policies, and to start moving in a new direction. For the Aboriginal population, however, recognition often means being identified with 'tradition,' a 'tradition' that situates them in a pre-colonial past (Povinelli 2002: 56) in the eyes of the non-Aboriginal community, instead of creating a place in the present. It is what Wolfe (2006: 402) describes as "repressive authenticity" or a form of "romantic stereotyping."

> Wolfe's term 'repressive authenticity' captures well this process, in which living Aboriginal people and the challenges they pose to settler colonial society have been cut loose from the dominant representations of Aboriginality that are prevalent, and indeed traded, within those same societies. (Hinkson 2002: 63)

Indeed, Hattam and Atkinson (2006: 691) argue that "non-indigenous hopes for reconciliation are largely marked by forgetfulness and the desirability of 'moving on', [while] those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are just as frequently tied to remembering and having their histories recorded and respected." This implies that Aboriginal Australians continue to be identified with the past rather than the future, or, in fact, the present, unless they focus on what their 'traditions' can do in the present and become in the future. Thus, they have to find a way to merge past and present in a way that preserves 'tradition' but leaves room for development in the future, hence demanding flexibility of Aboriginal Australia while non-Aboriginal Australia is by and large allowed to continue moving forward in their set mind frame.

In turn then, one of the ways in which Aboriginal Australians attempt to achieve this is the telling of stories, whereby Aboriginal people not only rediscover and recognise their own culture and beliefs, but also share them with others which results in the generating and transmitting of knowledge and awareness, taking an active step towards reconciliation. In fact, certain situations of storytelling - such as cross-cultural awareness workshops or Aboriginal tourism products - are often a major part of so-called Reconciliation Action Plans.[31] They recognise that Aboriginal people are major stakeholders in certain organisations and that an understanding of Aboriginal culture is essential to those organisations' success. As such, these discourses are part of the wider debate on reconciliation as framed by non-Aboriginal Australia. Consequently, the participation in these forms of discourses by Aboriginal people can be understood as an engagement with, and submission to, an externally generated system of knowledge transfer. Furthermore, this linking of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australias, and the movement or fluctuation between the two is also where the notion of code-switching comes in.

[31] For more details see Chapter Three.

Theoretical Implications: Code-Switching

Code-switching is a concept which has its roots in the study of linguistics, and has most notably been explored by Blom and Gumpertz (see for example Heller 1988b, Woolard 2004). However, even when there is a study that is said to incorporate anthropological perspectives, like Heller's (1988a) edited volume, the focus is still very much on (socio)-linguistics. More recently, code-switching has also been employed in the cross-cultural business sphere (Molinsky 2007). In its most basic sense, code-switching means that people are switching between two or more codes, or languages, while they are talking. This implies that there are people who speak differently according to which sphere they are in, even though they might not necessarily be aware that they are doing so, and might even deny that they are doing it at all when confronted with the fact (Heller 1988b, Woolard 2004).

Importantly, there is great variety in the ways in which people can code-switch. In the linguistic sphere of code-switching, Blom and Gumpertz (1972 as cited in Heller 1988b: 4-5, Woolard 2004: 75) famously introduced a distinction between *situational* and *metaphorical* (later renamed to *conversational*) code-switching. Situational code-switching, according to this distinction, "is rooted in a social separation of activities (and associated relationships), each of which is conventionally linked to the use of one of the languages or varieties in the community linguistic repertoire" (Heller 1988b: 4-5). Consequently, there is a higher likelihood of code-switching occurring from one sentence to the next, rather than within the same sentence (Woolard 2004: 76). In contrast, according to the proposed distinction, metaphorical (or conversational) code-switching describes "a change in language that does not signal a change in the definition of the fundamental speech event" (Woolard 2004: 76). This means that the core of the speech event's definition remains untouched while implying a different relationship between the people involved coming into play. In other words, while situational code-switching can signal, for example, a change in power relations when the code excludes others from the speech event, in metaphorical (or conversational) code-switching the initial relationship between participants remain the same, but they are able to hint at other underlying relationships through the switching of codes.

For example, in the Introduction I gave a brief anecdote of a staff barbecue where they had forgotten to bring firelighters. During the interaction, a non-Aboriginal staff member jokingly told an Aboriginal staff member to get some sticks and light a fire. While this is part of the overall 'staff interaction' in a relaxed atmosphere, the switch to the referral to ethnicity without actually mentioning it further establishes the staff members' relationship to each other as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian - including all the unmentioned, but still existing, stereotypes. Importantly, I do not wish to imply that deep down the comment was a hateful or a racist one. However, it does illustrate how the staff members do not only see each other as colleagues, but also in terms of their ethnicity; an underlying relationship which is hinted at through the switching of codes.

Heller (1988b: 1) adds another layer to the study of code-switching by attempting to showcase code-switching "as boundary-leveling or boundary-maintaining strategy, which contributes, as a result, to the definition of roles and role relationships at a number of levels, to the extent that interlocutors bear multiple role relationships to each other." Unfortunately, Heller (1988a, 1988b) very much remains in the area of linguistics rather than focusing more on anthropological perspectives, as the title of her volume promises. Nevertheless, the study of code-switching continues to be a useful tool when looking at urban Aboriginal people and how they negotiate their relationships in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes simultaneously as my examples below will show.

In more recent cross-cultural code-switching studies, the analytic focus has been on switching behaviour instead of language in order to act appropriately in an intercultural business situation (Molinsky 2007). Molinsky's (2007: 623) behavioural code-switching model completely disregards language while still being based upon Heller's (1988a) ideas of linguistic code-switching. This supposedly clear separation of linguistic and behavioural code-switching is underlined by the author's paraphrasing of Myer-Scotton's (1993 as cited in Molinsky 2007: 623) argument, saying that "both linguistic and cross-cultural code-switching share the notion of changing from one form of

behaviour (or word choice) to another for the purpose of creating a desired social impression." I do not think these two can, or should be, treated as separate entities. Language influences behaviour, and behaviour influences language. I would therefore like to refer to communication scholars Samovar and Porter's (1994: 19) definition of intercultural communication, who simply explain intercultural communication (and with it code-switching) as something that happens when a message is produced in one culture and intended for consumption by another culture.

> The link between culture and communication is crucial to understanding intercultural communication because it is through the influence of culture that people learn to communicate. [...] The ways in which we communicate, the circumstances of our communication, the language and language style we use, and our nonverbal behaviours are primarily all a response to a function of our culture. (Samovar and Porter 1994: 19)

According to this view, both language and behaviour are ways in which messages are produced and do not need to be treated separately in communication studies, or anthropology for that matter. By extension, then, it is possible to argue that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians have different ways of communicating, hence necessitating the ability to code-switch. However, as in so many other instances in Australian society as well, due to the underlying power relations that continue on from the colonial period, the ability to code-switch is by and large only expected of Aboriginal Australians.

In contrast to what has been discussed here, I am going to try and move away from the very analytical and theoretical sphere in which code-switching has been explored so far. Instead, I am going to explore what it means for people to code-switch, and why they feel the need to do so, bearing in mind that it is "not merely [about the] kinds of speakers, who produce and reproduce particular identities through their language use" (Bucholtz and Hall 2004: 369). Aboriginal people in certain positions have no choice but to code-switch on a daily basis. They are taking on roles of mediators, not

only between their private and professional landscapes,[32] but also between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian communities, resulting in a constant renegotiation of their position within both of those landscapes while simultaneously mediating their own practice of code-switching by their understanding of their position within the interaction (Gal 1987 as cited in Woolard 2004: 82). More specifically, I will draw on what my Whadjuk-Nyungar friend Marissa told me about her code-switching experiences during our meetings, as well as my experiences with Greg on his tours of Kings Park, and the cross-cultural awareness workshop I attended with a mob of Nyungar in Southern Cross.

Before moving on to those example, however, it is important to note that there has been some discussion on whether or not code-switching is a 'strategy,' which according to Woolard (2004) comes down to whether or not there is intentionality and/or conscious planning involved. For all of my examples, I would argue that they are intentional code-switches and that some degree of conscious planning goes into them. However, that is not to say that all code-switches are consciously planned, though they might well be intended. Similarly, it is worthwhile pointing out that de Certeau (1984) draws a distinction between 'strategy' and 'tactic,' with strategy being something involved in the dominant discourse, whereas a tactic is employed by the subjected. It would thus appear more appropriate to call code-switching, as it is employed by Nyungar, a tactic - a tactic to reconstruct, reconstitute, and re-appropriate their place within a landscape that they have not only been removed from, but which was also forcibly taken from them.

I will therefore now focus in turn first on the more particular code-switching experiences of Marissa and Greg and their implied movement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes (in an ideological sense), before moving on to the more applied nature of such tactics - focusing on reconciliation. It is possible to trace the development of reconciliation tactics through this chapter, from the theory behind code-

[32] Here, I speak of 'landscapes' as an ideological concept, rather than a geographical one. Thinking about landscapes in Australia in both and ideological and a geographical sense creates an interesting dualism with regards to the layers (the colonial layer with the Aboriginal 'buried' beneath it) as discussed earlier in this chapter.

switching and storytelling, to how code-switching and storytelling are used to mediate between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia, finally arriving at their more subtle application in the reconciliation process.

Applied Code-Switching: The Role of the Mediator

I first met Marissa Verma at an Indigenous Tourism Better Business Blitz organised by the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operator Committee (forthwith WAITOC). Marissa was attending as a WAITOC board member, but was actually a full-time employee of SWALSC during my time in the field. The Better Business Blitz had Aboriginal tour operators from all over Western Australia attending.[33] Afterwards, I had a number of private meetings with Marissa during which she told me her life story. At one of these meetings, she explicitly brought up the issue of code-switching, which she referred to in this way, too, outlining the complexities of the concept:

> It's what they call code-switching, you know, and some people can do it and some people can't. It's just a matter of, you know, people getting education but also holding on to their cultural links as well. And you probably hear that term quite a lot out there. People code-switch. The way that I go home from my work place is totally different from what I come into my work place. And sometimes you forget to code-switch. You get into work acting like you do things at home and then sometimes you go home like you do things at work and you go like "Gosh what's going on?" (pers. comm. Marissa Verma 2009)

While this quote already implies and underlines the variability in the concept of code-switching and that in practice it is anything but smooth and unproblematic, for the purpose of context, I would like to first briefly consider Marissa's personal and

[33] The Tourism Better Business Blitz (or BBB for short) was a one-day workshop organised by WAITOC and Tourism WA for indigenous tour operators from all over Western Australia.There were approximately thirty Aboriginal people participating, who are all somehow involved in the tourism industry (plus the workshop leaders who would come and go throughout the day). The workshop was aimed at giving participants new ideas for their businesses, as well as advice on various issues of concern, such as how to get accreditation from Tourism WA and Intellectual Property Rights.

professional background. This will also exemplify how she always, all her life, had to code-switch, even though she might not necessarily have been aware of it.

Marissa is, as was mentioned briefly previously, a Whadjuk-Nyungar who was born in Subiaco, a central suburb of Perth, and has lived around the Perth metropolitan area all her life. She now lives in the city of Fremantle, just south of Perth. She has a younger brother who now lives in Monkey Mia (approximately 870km north of Perth) and who makes his living by giving guided tours of the area. Marissa was educated to Year Twelve (approximately eighteen years of age) and subsequently enrolled in a bridging course at Curtin University. The bridging course was designed to get her writing and communication skills up to speed in order to allow her to proceed to another degree. Marissa ended up going for an associate degree in science and technology where she discovered that she was able to study a lot of topics that were in line with her passion for the environment. This eventually enabled her to go for a job with the Department of Conservation and Land Management (forthwith CALM) which is now known as the Department of Environment and Conservation (forthwith DEC). At CALM, Marissa was employed through an Aboriginal Heritage Unit, giving her the opportunity to give guided tours of the bush and teach Aboriginal culture and language to school children, as well as visitors from overseas. It is here where she sees her start in the tourism world, gathering experience as a tour guide and teaching people about culture while maintaining her Nyungar perspective.

Although it would appear though this example that the only occupation available for Aboriginal Australians is to 'be' Aboriginal, without the possibility of simply being office workers, I would suggest that this is mainly due to the context of my research. As mentioned in the Introduction, my fieldwork was focused on the tourism industry, an industry in which being Aboriginal can be used as a distinct advantage to fill a supposed gap in the market. I say 'supposed' gap in the market, because while at Tourism WA it has always been highlighted how tourists coming to Australia want to have an 'Aboriginal experience,' I have never come across any detailed research that supports this much quoted claim. However, Tourism WA went to great lengths to support

Aboriginal tourism across the state. This is not only emphasised by the existence of an Aboriginal Tourism unit within the organisation, but also by the existence of the *Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Product Manual* (Tourism WA 2008).

The manual identified fifty-four Aboriginal tourism products across the whole of Western Australia as either market or export ready. Greg's Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour, for example was included in the manual as market ready (Tourism WA 2008: 28). Being recognised as market ready meant that Greg had to display a number of characteristics in relation to his Kings Park tour, including a "reasonable understanding of the tourism industry, [...] strong understanding of customer service environment, [...] exposure/experience in the international market, [and] relevant licences and insurances" (Tourism WA 2008: 9). More importantly, however, products included in this manual were privy to special assistance by Tourism WA. In return for participating in an analysis survey, for example, those businesses received extra assistance with business development; promotional collateral such as business cards, posters, and leaflets; and they were eligible for a rebate to assist with the purchase of urgently needed equipment. Making the tourism industry as a whole even more appealing to Aboriginal Australians, Tourism WA offers traineeships to Aboriginal people through which they receive a permanent position with the agency. It is therefore hardly surprising that so many Aboriginal Australians choose to work in the tourism industry, and by extension thus make it their job to be Aboriginal.

Marissa was already working with SWALSC when I met her, and continued to work with them for a while longer until her contract ran out after I had left the field. In her work there, she was trying to find opportunities for Aboriginal people to get involved in Caring for Country, or Natural Resource Management as it is called in the 'official' office code, through creating tourism ventures like heritage trails and guided tours. To Marissa, this part of her job is extremely important. She sees tourism as a great venture for Nyungar, because, in Marissa's view, Aboriginal people can turn their cultural knowledge into something that can be a business venture. It is something Marissa thinks worthwhile educating Aboriginal people about, because non-Aboriginal people have a

demand for it. Another part of the reason why she thinks it is so important is her recognition of the fact that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ways of thinking differ profoundly. She sees non-Aboriginal Australians as thinking more in substantialist terms, and Aboriginal Australians in relational ones. As Eyben (2007 as cited in Eyben 2008: 19) explained,

> A substantialist perspective primarily sees the world in terms of discrete entities. These are pre-formed, in the sense that the relations between them are of only secondary importance. It is a way of looking at the world which allows us to observe, classify and ascribe essential properties to the concepts we employ to organise our understanding.

More to the point, the following quote from Marissa further exemplifies the difference between substantial and relational ways of thinking, as well as that there is more to code-switching than language. It is about different ways of thinking and being in the world.

> We know through heart and spirit that we are connected to land. According to the law, the law that the state has, that European way, does not fit into Nyungar law and that's the conflict we're in, because we know by heart and spirit and soul, but they know by a structure or road or... And that's the harder fight, saying that there is a spiritual connection. (pers. comm. Marissa Verma 2009)

The brief description of Marissa's life, in addition to this quote, shows how growing up in two worlds, the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal landscapes of Australia, has forced her to adapt accordingly on what can be called a daily basis. It is an example of how Aboriginal people continue to be forced into the dominant discourse, while at the same time creating 'tactics' (De Certeau 1984) within that discourse as a means of resistance to it. This has also been discussed at some length by Hollinshead (1996), to whose work I will return later. Suffice it to say for the current context that the adaptation as enacted by Marissa, and various other Nyungar, happens as a fusion of all the different kinds of code-switching discussed here. It is a fusion that my Nyungar-

Yamatji friend Alice (pers. comm. 2009) explicitly expressed when using the phrase "talk the talk, walk the walk."

> We've been taught to live in an Aboriginal society as well as a Western society. A lot of the times when I'm doing my work is both in traditional and contemporary, because, you know, I have to go back to the community and talk the community sort of level. But then I have to come back to Western society and interpret back on what the community says. I think it's getting easier. Like with the more you're exposed to both Aboriginal culture and European culture we can, you know, *walk in both worlds* and carry forth on what people are trying to. Because at the end of the day, *you both have the same idea*, but they come together at different angles. *You're still talking the same language, but it is the way you do the language.* They're two different things. I'll just give you an example on Natural Resource Management. That is the Westerner's view of how things are protected. But if you look at the Aboriginal way, it's Caring for Country. But they're two, they mean the same thing. But the way to get there is the same as well, but it's just a bit longer. That's where I had to play that role with the organisation: mix both Natural Resource Management and Caring for Country and educate both. (pers. comm. Marissa Verma 2009, my emphasis)

In a way, then, code-switching is not only about switching between the ideological Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes, it is also part and parcel of the substantial and relational discourses happening in Australian society. While more detail on the issue will be presented in Chapter Three, it should be mentioned here that in the reconciliation discourse there is a strong emphasis on plans and actions to be taken, whereas the improvement of inter-human relationships tends to be a secondary goal.

Moreover, what Marissa is expressing here is important for mainly two reasons. Firstly, she reiterates why code-switching is necessary and happens on a fairly regular basis. Secondly, she emphasises that the ideas proposed on both sides of the code-switch are the same, they are only expressed differently. This is in contrast with the famous Sapir-Whorf hypothesis which in simple terms states "that the structure of a given language will affect the way in which speakers of that language think" (Barnard and Spencer 2002: 499). In other words, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, or Whorfian hypothesis as it is

also known, argues that languages are not easily replaceable with each other. Grammar rules and semantics differ from language to language, implying that because we use these to structure our thoughts, the way we structure our views also differs. Hence we perceive the world in different ways, meaning people cannot talk about the same thing in different codes and still mean the same thing. As such, it is questionable that they actually are the same ideas if they cannot even be thought about in the same way (Barnard and Spencer 2002: 499-501). However, according to Barnard and Spencer (2002: 501) most anthropologists see "the significance of Whorf's hypothesis [as lying] less in its possible truth, and more in its continuing ability to generate thought and discussion on a problem which is central to the whole anthropological project." Finally, Marissa highlights that code-switching happens on at least two levels: the behavioural ("walk in both worlds") and the linguistic.

This last point may seem contradictory, as Marissa explicitly states "you're still talking the same language," however, it is the second part of her sentence - "but it is the way you do the language" - that points toward a linguistic code-switch. What she means is "talk the talk" (pers. comm. Alice 2009) depending on her audience. For instance, while visiting an Aboriginal community, Marissa will talk more slang and laugh and joke as a way of communication (see also McConvell 1988). The community level of understanding means that they talk with Aboriginal slang, such as inserting Nyungar words into sentences (for example *unna* meaning "yes"), so Marissa needs to adapt and use more slang when visiting communities. Conversely, when meeting with non-Aboriginal people, Marissa will not talk slang, but instead emphasise her words the way it is understood to be proper in non-Aboriginal society to show that she is able to talk at this level, too. Marissa recognises that she would not be able to do this had she not been brought up in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes of Australia.

> I have an advantage because I am Aboriginal and I know the way I need to act when I go out and work with our mob, and when I need to get business done with non-Aboriginal people I can also talk to their level, too. I play a bit like a *mediator* role. I owe Western society for allowing me to get educated and learn how to speak properly to do

> business with non-Aboriginal people. (pers. comm. Marissa Verma 2010, my emphasis)

In other words, Marissa knows that "when negotiating or remonstrating with a white developer, land owner, or town councilor over the protection of a shell midden, rock-art site, or burial ground, Aborigines must have one eye on the likelihood that this white person believes that they are not "real" Aborigines because they drive a car, use a cellular phone, and do not have dark-enough skin" (Byrne 2003: 77). Consequently, Marissa not only realises the advantage of her participation and engagement with the externally generated system of knowledge transfer, that is her submission to dominant forms of education, but also recognises that she is a member of different social spaces, taking on different roles according to her movements within those social spaces. This is related to de Certeau's (1984) work as he uses the metaphor of the nomad to discuss strategies and tactics. The nomad is seen as place-less, something that is inscribed in Australian history through the myth of *terra nullius*. According to de Certeau (1984), without a place nomads cannot employ strategies, however, they can temporarily challenge the dominant discourse by using tactics which he describes as "a clever *utilization of time*, the opportunities it presents and also of the play that it introduces into the foundations of power" (De Certeau 1984: 39, original emphasis). These nomadic individuals, these code-switchers, actively use their 'nomadic-ness,' their ability to move between social spaces to create a place for themselves, even if only temporarily, and to challenge the non-Aboriginal dominance within it.

Heller (1988b: 7-8) further underlines this by pointing out that in order to understand code-switching it is important to realise that those individuals who can code-switch are taking on different roles in each of the spheres they move in and therefore possess several different roles and role relationships. This statement also implies that the code-switcher's identity is an attribute of the situation they are in, rather than of the individuals themselves or the groups they belong to (Bucholtz and Hall 2004: 376). Therefore, identity is not "a fixed set of categories but an identification [of] an ongoing social and political process" (Bucholtz and Hall 2004: 376). Finally, Marissa recognises

that it is due to her upbringing that she can take on, and indeed has a certain responsibility to take on, a mediator role between the different social spaces she moves in, realising that this is not accessible to everyone. Marissa thus inadvertently exemplifies that identity does not originate in culture; rather identity is a result of culture (Bucholtz and Hall 2004: 382). Consequently, Bucholtz and Hall (2004: 382) define identity as "an outcome of cultural semiotics that is accomplished through the production of contextually relevant sociopolitical relations of similarity and difference, authenticity and inauthenticity, legitimacy and illegitimacy." Marissa is not who she is today, because she was born a Whadjuk-Nyungar in metropolitan Perth. She is who she is today, because she was brought up in-between both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal social and political landscapes. She is who she is as a result of having to negotiate between those ideological landscapes, realising that this negotiation is hard work and that code-switching is anything but defined by an easy intentionality.

At the same time, I would argue that Aboriginal people like Marissa have the power to challenge what is perceived as (stereo-)'typically' Aboriginal, not only by enacting and reinforcing their Aboriginality, but by doing so in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes. While these individuals undoubtedly take on a mediator role for relations in-between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia, they can do the same for their Aboriginal families, as arguably there are just as many prejudices and stereotypes in Aboriginal society about non-Aboriginal society as there are the other way around. As my Nyungar-Yamatji friend Alice (pers. comm. 2009) explained:

> The thing is, I suppose, there is prejudice in white society and there is prejudice in black society. And to me, a lot of people that I grew up with over there had prejudices and they are black society. And to me, knowing that other history side of things, you know, is saying well we weren't all alcoholics, we weren't all women bashers, we weren't all this. Violence wasn't a thing for us. And for me, I suppose, educating my family as well as seeing that they are caught in that circle, that cycle of life of all the nastiness that twenty-first century brought on the world and can't get out of it, so I escaped that circle and trying to find a way to get the young ones more educated and get them out of that circle as well.

Following on from this, it is worthwhile pointing out that during the cross-cultural awareness workshop in Southern Cross, to which I refer in more detail below, Jared (pers. comm. 2008) openly admitted to having had racist feelings in the past:

> I used to be pretty racist, because of what happened to me - that I got taken away - but ever since that happened and since I found my brother, I've changed my life right around. Now I'm racist towards nobody, cause I look at everybody as my brother and sister no matter what country they come from.

The brother Jared is referring to here is in fact a non-Aboriginal Australian that he grew up with and was friends with during their childhood. According to Jared, they had not seen each other for fifteen or twenty years when they ran into each other at university. More importantly, however, by relaying this story in the context of the cross-cultural awareness workshop, Jared implies that there is no shame in having had racist feelings in the past due to circumstances endured, but that everyone can change their lives and begin to accept others. Furthermore, by claiming that he sees everyone as brothers and sisters now, he appropriates non-Aboriginal people's place in the Australian landscape and allows them not only to belong, but to claim Aboriginality as well.[34]

Therefore, by being able to code-switch, Alice (and Jared as well) is not only mediating and challenging what is perceived as the norm in-between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal spheres, but also within the different spheres themselves. There are certain preconceptions and prejudices that exist within the Aboriginal Australian landscape, which mean it is up to people like Alice, who embrace their mediator role, to teach others within the Aboriginal Australian landscape about their non-Aboriginal counterparts to move forward in the reconciliation discourse.[35] It is once again striking, however, how dependent on the involvement of Aboriginal Australians the

[34] The argument that every Australian can claim Aboriginality is rather problematic, of course, especially with regards to Native Title. However, I would argue that Jared's statement is more targeted at an ideological level and is supposed to offer non-Aboriginal Australians a kind of acceptance by Aboriginal Australia. More detail on how non-Aboriginal Australians are being allowed to claim some form of Aboriginality will be presented in Chapter Three.

[35] By 'reconciliation discourse' I mean to stress the ideological implications of the more practical term 'reconciliation movement.'

predominantly non-Aboriginally desired reconciliation movement is. The responsibility to mediate always lies with Aboriginal Australians, never with their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Arguably, people who share the responsibility of a mediation role between different social spaces are Aboriginal tour guides. While they constantly interact with non-Aboriginal people from all over the world, they also have to work with non-Aboriginal Australians in their daily business lives. For example, I have first hand experience of Greg Nannup, who runs the Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour and also kick-started the Wadjemup Bus Tour and the Swan River Dreaming Tour,[36] switching back and forth, and it is here that the implications of switching codes are the most obvious. Notably though, Greg does not switch codes in terms of switching from one distinct language to another. Rather, he sticks with English, but as Marissa Verma (pers. comm. 2009) pointed out, "it is the way you do the language." For example, Greg and I would often meet up before the guests of his tour arrived. Talking about nothing in particular, Greg's mannerisms and way of speaking would instantly change when the first guests arrived. He still remained relaxed and 'open' (for lack of a better word), but was not as free in what he was saying as he was when it was just the two of us. Greg would then switch codes a second time, when he began his tour, to take on his storytelling persona (see also later on in this chapter, introducing his Welcome to Country). In addition to Marissa's point about the variability of language use, Woolard (2004: 74) also argues that code-switching is so much more than just switching between distinct languages or dialects. It can also be the switching between "registers, "levels' [...], or styles of a single language" (Woolard 2004: 74). It is here, with the idea of 'doing language,' that the notion of performance as a "highly deliberate and self-aware social display" (Bucholtz and Hall 2004: 380) connects with code-switching. It is therefore important to consider performance with relation to Aboriginal Australia.

[36] More information on these tours can be found in Chapter Three.

Applied Code-Switching and Storytelling: The Performance of Aboriginality

It has already been mentioned that the active removal of Aboriginal people from the physical Australian landscape resulted in artefacts of the past being seen as more 'authentic' than living Aboriginal people themselves (Byrne 2003: 77). The performance of Aboriginality, therefore, takes on new meanings and becomes a political platform, especially with regards to the arts and in particular theatre. Aboriginality can be performed in a variety of ways, and to different ends. Therefore, before discussing the performance of Aboriginality in the arts, which arguably is closest related to the performance of Aboriginality in the tourism industry, it is worthwhile taking a look at how Aboriginality is performed in everyday situations.

An example of this can be found in Cowlishaw's (2001) work,[37] which explores how Aboriginality is performed in rural communities and what this means for local politics. It is important to make a distinction here between Bourke, the place where Cowlishaw conducted her research, and Perth. The way places like Bourke are seen in Australia predefines the sort of performed Aboriginality that can be found. Indeed, in the abstract for her paper, Cowlishaw (2001) writes that "the nation's images of Aborigines in places like Bourke as depressed, distressed or depraved are echoed in local white narratives." This is in contrast to the Perth metropolitan area, where narratives of Aboriginal people are by and large absent. However, when they do appear they also tend to be negative (see also Introduction). In Bourke, then, Aboriginal people largely represent the the bottom of the social classes in the public imagery.

> Indigenous people here are definitive 'have nots' in two senses; statistical evidence of Aborigines' lack of jobs, education and good health is a regular part of a concerned public discourse; further, these are Aborigines with no (traditional) language, no (traditional) ceremony, and not even black enough skins to be credited with

[37] Cowlishaw's (2001) paper was published in *UTS Review: Subaltern/Indigenous/Multicultural* and is cited accordingly in the bibliography. However, due to it not being available online, Cowlishaw graciously emailed me a copy in PDF format. Unfortunately, this means that I am unable to cite corresponding page numbers, as the PDF file is a copy of her original paper format, not the format in which it has been published.

> authenticity, though such a view is not articulated in the public domain. (Cowlishaw 2001)

Thus, while the Bourke example presents a completely different social context to my own research, there are still certain parallels to be found, such as the contention over what constitutes an 'authentic' Aboriginal Australian. It further exemplifies that there are no more clear-cut distinctions between urban ('modern') and rural ('traditional') Aboriginal Australians, the idea of which still continues to interfere "with the exploration of conditions under which a distinct culture or identity is reproduced and transformed" (Cowlishaw 2001).

For the specific case of Bourke, then, Cowlishaw (2001) draws a vivid picture of how 'life' is happening on the street, outside the local pub. In this scene, Aboriginal people are performing the sort of behaviour they know is expected of them by their non-Aboriginal counterparts, that is shouting abuse at each other, cursing and swearing at high volumes in the middle of a public area, making their white audience feel more than uncomfortable. According to Cowlishaw (2001), the Aboriginal Australians in this scenario are thrilled to have the "ability to shock white observers with an exaggerated version of their known fears," stressing that the non-Aboriginal observers see this behaviour as proof for the existence of social problems. Cowlishaw (2001) also stresses, however, that this sort of behaviour in the street is not 'typical' Aboriginal or particularly truthful. "Rather, those expressing violent sentiments in the main street are particular performers who are, in part, responding to their social typification, crying out: 'You thing we're disgusting? I'll show you disgusting!'" (Cowlishaw 2001). In a way, Aboriginal Australians are thus rebelling against non-Aboriginal judgments in a performative and very political way, as "they define the contours of race relations by emphasising the separation between the cultural arenas of disreputable Aborigines and respectable white citizens" (Cowlishaw 2001). Importantly, this suggests that the struggle behind these rebellious performances is about the uncertainty of what modern Aboriginality is and how it should be expressed (Cowlishaw 2001).

At my own field site, I have not encountered Aboriginality to be performed in such a direct or 'shocking' way as described by Cowlishaw (2001). Memories of the most direct and conscious performances of Aboriginality during my fieldwork all stem from situations were it was expected of individuals to be Aboriginal and to perform as such to a certain extent. The most prominent of those were Welcomes to Country and Aboriginal tours. In these situations, the performance of Aboriginality becomes almost theatrical and as such it should be explored in that way as well.

The first time I came in contact with the performance of Aboriginality in a theatrical context outside the tourism industry was when I went to see the film adaptation of Jimmy Chi's musical *Bran Nue Dae* (Perkins 2009). While to the non-Aboriginal viewer, like myself, it was by and large mainly a feel-good movie, I also found it to be over-the-top and yet incredibly accurate in its portrayal of contemporary Aboriginality. While it is set in the late 1960s, it plays on many stereotypes and discusses issues that prevail in the present day. For example, the theme song's lyrics are quite telling:

> There is nothing I would rather be
> than to be an Aborigine
> and watch you take my precious land away.
> For nothing gives me greater joy than to
> watch you fill each girl and boy
> with superficial existential shit.
> (*Bran Nue Dae* 2009)

Underlined with up-beat music, these lyrics play, perhaps rather cynically, on the past policies that have removed Aboriginal people from their lands, whilst also making a point of illustrating that all they want is their place within Australia.

Famous Nyungar playwright Jack Davis takes this portrayal of double meaning even further. In his 1983 play *The Dreamers*, Davis has most of his characters speak in Nyungar on and off, with one of them - the Aboriginal Dancer - only speaking Nyungar (Carlson 2008: 139-140). By using this method, Davis creates an invisible divide between his Nyungar-speaking and non-Nyungar-speaking audience that highlights

cultural difference to both. Interestingly, the divide does not necessarily exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, but specifically between Nyungar-speaking and non-Nyungar-speaking Australians, regardless of their ethnicity. This is seemingly unintended by Davis, as becomes clear when the invisible divide and the intrinsic double meaning of the play takes its high point with the Aboriginal Dancer performing a Nyungar chant.

> For a non-Nyungar speaking audience member 'this figure is reassuringly recognizable,' even if its language cannot be understood. It signifies both Aboriginality 'and the "universal" grief appropriate to a moment of death.' For Nyungar-speaking audiences, however, the message communicated is much different: 'The white man is evil, evil! My people are dead. Dead, dead, dead. The White man kill my people. Kill, kill, kill, kill'. (Hodge and Mishra 1991: 206 as cited in Carlson 2008: 140)

It is because of the unintentional element in the invisible divide, I would argue, that this quote emphasises the importance of mediators and the power they hold within interactions. Without a mediator, non-Nyungar speaking audience members will necessarily not fully understand the chant. Be it that they completely misinterpret its meaning or simply understand it as 'cultural difference.' With a mediator, then, the outcome of any interaction, not just this particular example, thus becomes a direct result of the mediator's (mis-)interpretation, with both sides having to trust its accuracy. Taking the importance of a mediator in relation to performing Aboriginality, the situation becomes particularly interesting when the mediator is also the one doing the performing.

This is, I would argue, the case for Greg Nannup, who not only enacts his Aboriginality on his tours, but simultaneously interprets Aboriginality for tourists. His tours require him to be Aboriginal, and to stand out as such, but they also require him to make Aboriginality understandable to his customers. It is, therefore, important at this point to briefly mention code-switching again, as "Goffman characterizes much codeswitching as involving "changing hats," i.e., rapidly altering the social role in which a speaker is

active" (Woolard 2004: 86). Greg managed to switch in an instant from Greg-the-businessman to Greg-the-tour-guide or, more fittingly, Greg-the-storyteller. I remember the numerous times I met Greg on the lawn outside the gift shop in Kings Park, waiting for the tourists who were booked to come on his tour, chatting about everything and anything. Even after the first tourists arrived, while making polite small-talk, Greg would remain 'himself' (although not as freely as with only me present, as pointed out above), the Greg I had come to know privately. Only when all the people who were booked on his tour were there and ready to go would he switch into Greg-the-storyteller. His whole demeanour would change, the way he stands, walks, talks - his words would become quieter and softer in a way as he became the storyteller with the first word of his official "Welcome." The performance of such a Welcome to Country can be seen as a continued ratification of Nyungar authority over the country they 'traditionally' belong to (Smith and Morphy 2007: 9). With the Welcome to Country, Greg not only placed himself within the landscape, but actively claimed his place by explaining his connection to the country.

Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour - Welcome by Greg Nannup on 02/01/2009

First of all I'd like to welcome everyone to Kings Park. My name is Greg Nannup and I run the Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour, which is an hour and half long walk looking at Indigenous history and culture here in the southwest. My surname Nannup, there is a small town down in the southwest called Nannup, which was named after my ancestors who traveled through with some early European explorers. So we ended up with the town name and the family name the same. But my grandfather, Charles William Nannup, he was born just up in the hills of Perth which we can quite conveniently see from here. So he was a local Indigenous man in this area, and that is our family link to this countryside and the south.

And also looking at that, there were over two-hundred and fifty different language groups across Australia. Within that, over seven-hundred different dialects. So there were a lot of words out there. Here in the southwest one language was shared between the fourteen different tribes. However, the dialects were slightly different. Those in the coastal areas would have different words to those inland of course. But they were very similar.

When we look at the people who lived in the southwest of Western Australia, you would have heard the name Nyungar before. The Nyungar people lived no further north than Geraldton, no further east than a small town called Merredin, and no further south than the south coast town of Esperance. So it was large pocket of land. Within this area there were fourteen different tribal groups, and our local tribe here were known as the Whadjuk. And the word Whadjuk simply meant "the carers of the link between the land and the ocean," and that link, of course, can quite conveniently be seen from here again: the beautiful Swan River, which we call *Derbal Yaragan*. The word *derbal* means "fresh water mixing with salt water," the word *yaragan* is the tortoise, which we find further upstream.

So once a year the Whadjuk would gather up in the hills. They would travel this beautiful waterway down to Fremantle, where they would have an annual festival. Fremantle we call *Maanjar,* which simply means "fair ground" or "festival place." And while there, they needed a couple of food sources which were found in abundance and which I will point out today on the tour. When these people traveled, the women would travel on the south, and the men would travel on the north side of the river. The men would take those boys that were to become men this year with them on the north side of the river, while the women took those younger children along the waterway to a place called Point Walter, which is a great environmentally friendly area where the women could teach the children what food you could eat and, more importantly, what you couldn't eat. And also how to make tools and all the basic necessities to survive in the bush. And I will mention that place, Point Walter, a little bit later during our story for the countryside.

So, we are going to take a little bit of a walk through the park looking at some of the plants that were useful for food and medicine. In the bag here I've got some artefacts. Once we go over the Tree Top Walk, there is a little amphitheatre on the right, called *Beedawong*, which simply means meeting place. We'll be stopping in there and I'll tell you the story for the countryside and we'll look at those artefacts. If you have any questions as we go feel free to ask. Fortunately, it is a nice warm day, so we'll try to stick to the shade as much as possible to keep you comfortable.

In text form, it is difficult to describe the changes in Greg's demeanour that can be seen and experienced. I heard a few people criticise his tour appeared as too scripted, which I would argue is due to the fact that Greg takes on the storyteller persona. Greg-the-storyteller is like a double edged sword. While his voice becomes quiet and soft and it does often sound as if he is reading from a script, it works for the most part because he fully embraces this storyteller identity. This has its high point when the group enters Beedawong, an amphitheatre near the Tree Top Walk, and Greg begins to tell the story for the countryside.[38] In this connection, Greg also explains how the land is seen by Nyungar as looking after itself, emphasising that to Aboriginal people the land is a living being, "a dynamic world defined by continuity, growth, and change, where human life is interactive with a natural and spiritual world integral to the land" (Andrews and Buggey 2008: 68). For the story of the countryside Greg relies largely on local knowledge that has been passed on to him by his father and his uncle; the most important greographic features and the stories related to them. Indeed, Andrews and Buggey (2008: 66) argue that "the physical structure of the place is used as mnemonic to recall the narratives, which provide information about history, identity, and lifeways." Therefore, by keeping up the 'tradition' of storytelling Greg is reinforcing the Nyungar people's roots in the land (Andrews and Buggey 2008: 67), even within the context of 'sunny' Perth. By continually telling and retelling the story for the countryside, Greg re-appropriates and repositions Nyungar in a landscape that is imagined as almost entirely white middle class, attempting to frame Nyungar and settler-Australian relations outside that framework (Taylor 2000).

[38] 'Countryside' is the term Greg uses. It has been pointed out to me during the viva that this is interesting, as 'country' is the general term used by Aboriginal people to talk about the land. 'Countryside,' on the other hand, is a British concept. Given the context of the tour, it can be argued that Greg uses the British concept to create a sense of familiarity with the tourists - something that will be useful to look at for future research on the matter.

Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tour - The Story for the Countryside as told by Greg Nannup on 02/01/2009

I would like to tell you the story for this countryside. This story is a story that has been passed down for thousands of generations of people. My father heard it from his great-uncle. His uncle came and visited when they were small children and he told the story around the fire, traditionally, just like they used to, which is more than likely one of the last times it had been done that way. These days we still do it with groups of people. This story is situated in a time we know as the Dreaming or the Dreamtime. You would have heard of this time before. It was the creation time for Indigenous people here. During this time, it is said, that the land was flat. It was featureless. The sky sat heavily on the land. Nothing was as yet real and everything roamed in spirit form.

To make this story shorter than an hour, I'll say that there were three main spirits. Number one was the *Waugal*, which you saw on that signpost. *Waugal* was the rainbow serpent, this giant snake. And *Waugal* was sick of all the other spirits arguing over what they would look like and what they would do when they became real. *Waugal* used all of his might and he pushed up the sky and turned into a real snake. The only thing that was real was this being. And as *Waugal* traveled across the landscape he pushed up the dirt around him, creating hills, valleys, and future rivers. There were two human spirits in this story as well. They were called *Djanak*, which simply meant very tall being. They towered across the landscape as they roamed in spirit form.

One of the first things that they did was watch *Waugal* very closely, because we say curiosity is one of the greatest flaws in the human race. The two human spirits wanted to know how they could become real. And as this *Djanak* woman followed *Waugal* as he created the Swan River, she saw this opportunity to place her foot under the snake's tail. And as she did, she trod on the ground, her foot became real, because it was under the snake, and she left a giant footprint. That footprint is in this giant valley we know as the Swan River today. Just up around the corner, a couple of bends away, there is a sandbar crossing the river. Next to that sandbar, there is a depth that we know as Black Wall Reach. It is the deepest part of the Swan River, measuring over fourteen metres. Quite a long way down. And at the bottom of those depths you'll find an unusual little creature, and that is the seahorse. For an unhealthy river to have seahorses living there, there must be something special going on. And that is the women's area. Next to that where the sandbar is, we call that place *Joondalup*, because *joondal* means "long white hair" and this spirit woman had long white hair down to her back. As she traveled one of those strands fell across that valley and it represents the sandbar today.

When I said the women and children traveled on the south side of the river, that is the place they went to. There is different levels of understanding within this culture. That place, you can really go there with anyone. You can learn anything about it, because it's everybody's area. Everybody has been there when they were younger. And only when the old women set off to different areas could they share the true knowledge that went beyond what the men could know and the knowledge beyond what the younger people could know. So there is a men's side and a women's side to this culture. Meanwhile the men travel on the north side of the river. But *Waugal* was still creating this landscape.

The spirit woman, she became very eager to find out how to become real. She followed *Waugal* even closer. But the spirit man, he got a bit distracted and he started to wander off to the south. The last glimpse the spirit woman saw of him, he was collecting things and he was eating them. But she took no notice. She traveled northeast instead. And as she traveled north, she began to realise that she was not alone. Staring back at her from the darkness and the distance, were a small pair of eyes. These eyes looking back at her, she wanted to know what it was - curiosity got the better of her again. She bent over and picked up this small being, and when she brought it close to her face she could see that what she had collected was a small child. A spirit child. Due to emotion, another one of our great human flaws, she did not want to put the child back. She liked it so much, she wanted to keep it. So she put the child in her long white hair, and the child held on. As she traveled on, she saw another one of these children. Again, she picked it up, she liked it, she put it in her hair. She became obsessed collecting these children. She collected hundreds and thousands of them as she wandered northeast.

She reached a point where she stopped and she realised all the other spirits were following *Waugal* and taking up their place as they went. But these little spirits had been placed throughout the landscape before *Waugal* even started traveling. She realised she had to put them back, because one day, once everything became real and the Dreaming was over, these spirit children would be born into people and where they were collected from is where those people would be born. So she knew she made a mistake. And as she stood there, northeast of Perth, she realised this. But she also realised that the spirit man, he was collecting things and eating them. When she realised the only thing he could have been collecting and eating were those children that she loved so much, she began to get quite upset.

She began to tremble and shake. And it is said she transferred that tremble into the ground where she stood and that will remain there forever. That place today is known as Meckering, a town a couple of hours drive northeast of Perth. At Meckering, in 1968, there was a large earthquake. Every year on the seismic graph, scientists will tell us that there are over three-hundred tremors each year recorded out at Meckering, which makes it the most unstable piece of land in Western Australia. To the old people, they say that shaking under the ground is from that spirit woman as a reminder of this story. Occasionally my father takes special groups out there, and he follows all the important places, and he takes the people to the land that moves. It is one thing to hear about it, but to be there and hear the story while you are there is something completely different.

But from this point that the spirit woman realised she had to put them back, she also knew the first thing she had to do was stop the spirit man. So she began to run in a line south. And as she ran, the children in her hair began to panic. The children on the ground she passed as she headed south began to get upset, because they knew those children in her hair belonged on the land. Our word for child or children is *kurlanga*. And the *kurlanga* on the ground knew they had to help those *kurlanga* in her hair, so they turned themselves into the spirit bird which represents children. It's a very similar word to *kurlanga*. It is *kulbardi*. And *kulbardi* is the name for our magpie.

These giant spirit magpies flew up, picking the children from her hair and dropping them back to the ground where they belonged. But as the child hit the ground it turned to stone, because it was not where it was from. It didn't turn to a small stone. It turned to a very large stone. Those stones could be up to four or five building stories high. They could be two kilometres in radius. They are huge granite stones, and there is a large trail of them running south where the spirit woman ran. We've got Boyagin Rock, Jarragin Rock, Cocobin Rock, Yorkrakine Rock - they keep going on and on and on to the largest of all, or most important to us, which we call *Kaarta Kitj*. Remember, here is called *Kaarta Garup*, so an important place, high place, overlooking everything. *Kaarta Kitj* is that central stone. It is the very important place. And it just happens to be right in the middle of Nyungar land. This is the point where she looked around for the spirit man. She couldn't see him. The children were still falling because of the *kulbardi* dropping them. So that stone grew very high. That place is known today as Wave Rock. You might have heard of Wave Rock.

From here she ran one last loop to the south, leaving the Perangarups and other associated stones behind as the children fell. But she ran back towards Wave Rock, or *Kaarta Kitj*, and she jumped onto the stone. And as she jumped off of the stone, she lifted her feet above the sky's level and she knew that she could never return back to the land again. She was trapped above the sky. She is still there today. And at night when we look at the stars here in the southwest, we have that beautiful long white mass we know as the Milky Way. We call that *Joondal*. It is her long white hair. It is all you can see of her. The children she collected are all those little stars, but every now and then, as promised, she has to return the children to where they belong. She'll gather them in groups and she'll send them back in a shooting star or a meteor. When the old people see a shooting star they say the words *wayarn kurlanga nyinna*, which means "spirit child returning back to the land."

It is a beautiful little story, and this is only a short version of it. It is one of those stories you could almost say is the never-ending story, because as you get older you learn more about the story and more gets added to it and it all just fits into place like a jigsaw. This story in its entirety can take two or three hours to tell. And there are different people in different parts of the society that can hear parts of the story others couldn't. It just keeps going and the story still continues today.

It is further important to point out that storytelling in Australian Aboriginal societies has mainly been explored in instances of Dreaming stories - specifically in Nyungar country by, for example, Patricia Baines (1988) who wrote about occasions when Dreaming stories were recounted to give meaning to events happening in the present. It should be briefly mentioned, however, that there is a growing academic discourse on Aboriginal life stories and how they are being collected and archived as references for future generations as to 'not forget' (see for example Cowlishaw 2009, van den Berg 2002). My experiences with the telling of life stories, though, were always in the context of reconciliation events as will be shown below. Hence, for the context of this chapter of my thesis, the differences in usage of Dreaming stories is more at the forefront. As such, Rumsey (1994) explained how Dreaming stories also incorporate more recent events, explaining that it is essentially a "mode of orientation" that lets Aboriginal people make sense of the world and the events within it. This is also in line with Cruikshank (1998: 46) who wrote that "stories connect people [...], and they unify interrupted memories that are part of any complex life." While Baines' (1988) example stemmed from a one-

off storytelling event during a protest, however, the example of Greg is different, because it is recurring on a more or less regular basis. Greg does exactly what Rumsey (1994) explained and sets his story up as an explanation of how the southwest came to be the place it is today, showing that Aboriginal communities have their own explanations, belief systems, and place in the landscape.

By stating that it is "the never-ending story" Greg implies to the guests on his tour that the Dreaming is ongoing, although he never said so explicitly. Greg's father, Noel Nannup, on the other hand was always adamant of this fact during his Wadjemup Bus Tours. In this connection, Bell (2009: 65) observed in the context of the Ngarinyin that all stories were told in present tense. While she first suspected this to be due to a possible inexperience with the English language, she soon found that it was consistently done no matter who the storyteller was. Thus, she concluded the use of present tense to be a representation of the fact that the Dreaming is ongoing (Bell 2009: 70) and saw it as evidence of the Ngarinyin "belief that the past and future exist literally in a continuous present" (Bell 2009: 65). Consistent with this is Rolf de Heer's observation (as referred to in Bell 2009: 70) that in Aboriginal culture fiction as a concept does not exist. As a result, what non-Aboriginal people call Dreamtime stories are deemed verifiable and truthful by their Aboriginal counterparts, which then gives a whole new meaning to the importance of storytelling. This is consistent with Arendt's (1965: 52 as cited in Jackson 2002: 253) view that the storyteller's viewpoint stays fixed, withstanding any idea of ultimate truth and instead serving as a reminder that truth is relative depending on our situation. In fact, in the absence of fiction this form of storytelling can thus be said to establish the Dreaming as history. As Muecke (1983, accessed 06/10/2011) argued, "'history' [...] achieves a truth effect because it seems embedded in time and removed from the variable perceptions of the subject of 'talk'." In other words, because the Dreaming is ongoing, much like non-Aboriginal 'reality' - for want of a better word - it is embedded in the space and time continuum, establishing it as 'true history' through the perceived independence of narrators from the narrated.

> The absence of fiction in the Aboriginal lexicon further compels us to consider storymaking as a very practical, even essential, human capability because it seems to have as legitimate and credible a function in recording the sciences and humanities as does the Western tradition. To Mowaljarlai, and apparently other Indigenous peoples, traditional story is knowledge and knowledge is only revealed in story. Story is stored in the mind for recall at any time. It is written in the land in both natural and painted forms, and is shared in storytelling, song and dance. (Bell 2009: 71)

The story of the spirit man and spirit woman who followed *Waugal* as he made everything real is a story that the more I heard it, the more I got to know Perth and its surroundings, I began to see in the physical landscape. I began to see the hills - the earth that was moved up as *Waugal* made his way through the country - and when I saw the sandbank near Point Walter, I was immediately reminded of the spirit woman's long white hair. For me these realisations came slowly, over time, and as I began to know the city, I began to see Perth in this way no matter who I was with and whether or not I had recently heard the story. In other words, "the present-day landscape is presented in the myths and simultaneously represents the myth" (Morphy 1995: 194). However, the key to this realisation was time. Tourists who heard the story would find it entertaining, and maybe even remember it as they returned to the shop which marks the starting point of the tour. However, as they found themselves looking over Perth from Kings Park after the tour they arguably would rarely make a connection beyond this memory. The story for the countryside would thus remain little more than an entertaining story, or an abstract concept, and a confirmation of 'authenticity' to Aboriginal people.

However, this changed as Greg started up the Swan River Dreaming Tour and took the story with him from Beedawong to Black Wall Reach. Black Wall Reach is one of the sites featured in the story; it is where the spirit woman left her footprint behind - the deepest part of the river. In addition, the sandbank at Point Walter - the strand of her long white hair that fell as she was following *Waugal* - is visible from Black Wall Reach. The story therefore became tangible. The places in Greg's story were not far away places anymore; they did no longer just exist in Greg's memory and the listener's

imagination. Both the narrator and the listeners were in the location of a past event, which embedded them in the Aboriginal landscape. The story became more than a story, it became a tangible, verifiable piece of knowledge. Through the narration of the story for the countryside, at a location featured within it, the landscape became associated with an event and was thus being marked with meaning (Magowan 2001a: 43).

> Stories identify the rights of storytellers or singers to relate particular names of the ancestral landscape and, by doing so, they emplace their own identities into the landscape. The listener also becomes part of that landscape as they are enfolded into its memories, implicating those who have rights to tell and those who may know. (Magowan 2007: 58)

As a result, Greg was not only emplacing himself and the listeners in the landscape, he was also restricting the knowledge he shared. He made a point of telling his listeners that the story he shared with them was only a short version and that Nyungar learn more of the story as they get older, implying that there is a public and a restricted part to the story (see for example Magowan 2007: 58). This distinction between public and restricted knowledge, and women's and men's business, is common and well documented in Aboriginal Australia (most famously perhaps by the Berndts, see for example Berndt and Berndt 1980, 1994).

Having thus established the theory behind code-switching and storytelling, as well as the more practically applied role of the mediator and how Aboriginality is performed in public, it is now time to consider its more particular usage with regards to reconciliation.

Moving Toward Reconciliation: Cross-Cultural Awareness Workshops

> Maori and Aborigines have long been telling histories in which, for example, they have created a sense of landscape, community and place. This has continued in the wake of colonisation: the colonial state has demanded that they do so, and indigenous peoples have often sought to show and explain their cultures and historical experiences to settlers in the hope that they and their worlds will be understood and recognised. (Attwood and Magowan 2001: xii)

In October 2008, a mob of Nyungar invited me along to a cross-cultural awareness workshop they were holding for employees of a mining company in a small town called Southern Cross, approximately four hours drive east of Perth.[39] The main part of the training was led by Sabrina, an Aboriginal elder, and her sister Debra. They were supported by elders Maxine and Bridget (who were there to tell their life stories), as well as Jared, who took on the role of what can best be described as an all-purpose-runner, but also got a chance to share his story of how he was stolen as a child.[40] Often these workshops include a part on the history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal contact in Australia, including an overview of the most important policies that have affected Aboriginal people, before moving on to talk about Aboriginality in the twenty-first century - often in the form of life stories. Of course, the kind of stories that are shared are largely chosen according to the present circumstances, however, in this way terms like the Stolen Generations lose their abstraction for non-Aboriginal participants and actually become something they can better relate to. In short, one way that stereotypes and racism are attempted to be overcome in an effort for reconciliation is by personalising otherwise abstract concepts and thereby inducing a sense of empathy and reducing prejudice (Hill and Augoustinos 2001, Pedersen et al. 2004).

In the introduction to the workshop, Debra encouraged the twenty-odd participants to ask questions, ensuring them that she did not want them to have any negative experiences - thereby emphasising that the workshop provided a safe environment in

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[39] For more details on the journey itself, see Chapter One.

[40] For more details on Jared's story, see Chapter One.

which anything can be shared without judgement. To demonstrate this point, she asked the group to talk to a partner for two minutes about their experiences with Aboriginal Australia. It should be mentioned here, though, that while my experiences with cross-cultural awareness workshops were only positive, Marcia Langton's (pers. comm. 2010) kind comments on a paper I gave at the ESfO Conference in St Andrews in 2010, reminded me that this might not always be the case depending on where they are and who is participating. Langton (pers. comm. 2010) pointed out that in some cases cross-cultural awareness workshops can have extremely negative consequences, meaning that due to extreme racism by non-Aboriginal people, Aboriginal workshop leaders have ended up traumatised and in need of counselling.

It is fair to say, therefore, that at both ends of the spectrum, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, responses to cross-cultural awareness workshops and the stories shared within this context, are as varied as the participants themselves, due to their intrinsically individual backgrounds and life experiences (Halloran 2007: 3). Jackson (2002: 108), for example, argued that "although concepts of culture, race, and nation denote abstract, imagined, and collective subjectivities, their meaning is inextricably connected to the experiences of individual subjects." Accordingly, at the Aboriginal end of the spectrum, "some admit to finding 'the act' of telling their stories personally therapeutic (Bird 1988: 9), while others feel as though salt has been rubbed into their wounds" (Jackson 2002: 57). Reactions of non-Aboriginal Australians towards their Aboriginal counterparts, on the other hand, are just as varied, but while it has been shown that overt racism is decreasing, there is still a lot of subtle racism in Australia (Pedersen and Walker 1997 as cited in Halloran 2007: 3).

Furthermore, while the statement that the responses to cross-cultural training are as varied as their participants as such does not seem to give any concrete information, I propose that the varied responses are due to who holds most of the control during the workshop. While I have no information on the situation referred to by Bird (1998: 9 as cited in Jackson 2002: 57) or Pedersen and Walker (1997 as cited in Halloran 2007: 3), in my workshop experiences the control over what was shared within this formulaic

structure lay very much with the Aboriginal workshop leaders. They were able to steer the conversations towards whichever direction they wanted. This provides a stark contrast to the early to mid twentieth century, when Aboriginal people were still struggling to have their voices heard, sending a strong political message about their own place in society today. Consequently, my experiences provided me with public life storytelling events that, counter-discursively (Hollinshead 1996), challenged pre-existing power relations within Australian society.

Bringing the groups back together after two minutes by using clapping sticks - the 'traditional' Nyungar music instrument - Debra asked the group if there were any interesting stories that had come up. She also reminded them that they are in a safe environment - thereby reassuring them that whatever they said would not be judged. One participant (pers. comm. 2008) mustered up the courage and told his story:

> When I was growing up, my family was pretty racist, but I didn't realise it until I was fairly grown up, playing footy and working alongside Aboriginal people. As a young fellow your whole demeanour, the way you talk and so on just gets influenced.

Debra emphasised that these are life experiences that influence all that we do, and that of course as children the influence of others is profound until they grow up and have their own experiences. Encouraged by this statement, another participant came forward. She was originally from the UK, but had been living in Australia for over ten years. She remembered living in Adelaide when she was about fifteen years old and being scared of Aboriginal people in the city, because they would come up to her asking for a Dollar - something that she found extremely frightening at only fifteen years of age. She was embarrassed to share her story, but did so voluntarily nonetheless. Debra was understanding and explained that this is "fear of the group," and shared her own experiences of how she went down to a shopping centre in suburban Perth where a group of teenagers were hanging out. She did not specify the teenagers' ethnic backgrounds, but said that she felt frightened and that this was due the fact that they were in a group. Hearing this story, the participant confirmed that she would have been

just as scared if it had been non-Aboriginal people coming up to her asking for a Dollar, but it just happened to be Aboriginal people.

Demonstrating her empathy with the white participants, Debra decided to share another memory triggered by this conversation. When she worked in the Northern Territory, a white person came up to her asking for a Dollar. She explained how surprised she was and it was obvious that she saw humour in this complete turnaround. However, she also emphasised that it does not matter who they are or what colour they are, they are living on that same poverty line. Debra explained how this is down to the 'shared history' of over two-hundred years in Australia, "so our history is also your history" (pers. comm. Debra 2008). As has been illustrated in Chapter One, Nyungar have been subjected to colonialism and forced to merge into the modern organisations of society. Therefore, by saying that they share over two-hundred years of history, Debra created a therapeutic discourse that works within the modern organisations of society and creates new ways of seeing relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (Illouz 2008). Importantly, the listeners do not necessarily understand Debra's stories themselves as therapy. Rather, by Debra sharing her stories the participants begin to trust her and that the workshop really is a 'safe environment' as claimed. This understanding then in turn creates a discourse that is experienced as therapeutic, because participants can share their stories without fear of being judged. As such, the workshop could be called a therapeutic space in which populist discourses of psychology and sociology are mixed with Indigenous knowledge in order to facilitate forgiveness and recognition.

What made this situation particularly interesting, though, were the underlying power relations of this workshop. By holding the workshop, the Nyungar mob is assumed to 'know' and the workshop participants to 'not-know,' thereby giving the Nyungar mob the 'upper hand' and turning around the still existent power relations that were established during the colonial times. By placing the 'knowing' with the Nyungar, the participants in Southern Cross gave them the power to turn the workshop into this therapeutic space, to offer the forgiveness and absolution they seem to seek by mustering up the courage to talk about their experiences with Aboriginal people. In

addition, Jackson (2002: 39-54) writes that storytelling is a useful tool for re-empowerment and that every story has to be seen as a product of the wish to give a considered account and a deliberate attention to those details that will provide an advantage to the storyteller in one way or another. So, by telling the participants about his experiences as a stolen child, Jared, for example, personalises the Stolen Generations and induces a sense of empathy among the participants (Hill and Augoustinos 2001, Pedersen et al. 2004). Evoking a particular emotional response, therefore, can empower the workshop leaders and at the same time make all participants feel better about themselves by eliciting a sense of absolution. As such, the workshop setting becomes, as mentioned above, a therapeutic space that generates a new perspective of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations. Hill and Augoustinos (2001: 245) also point out that whilst these power relations are important to overcome prejudices and racism, it is just as important that both groups - Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal - interact and cooperate in the tasks set throughout the training. Part of this interaction and cooperation is formed by the Nyungar mob sharing their stories.

An interesting perspective on how Aboriginal life stories are perceived by non-Aboriginal workshop participants is provided by Green and Sonn (2006: 387), who conducted a study on whiteness and reconciliation. During their study it became apparent that their (white) participants did not necessarily recognise racism as such in others, instead viewing racist remarks as careless and unthinking, because those individuals lacked the awareness the participants possessed. They subsequently "positioned themselves in the role of the teacher to other non-Indigenous Australians, based on what they believed to be their more knowledgeable and empathetic understanding of Indigenous communities and cultures" (Green and Sonn 2006: 287). The authors go on to describe how their participants admired but also felt sorry for the Nyungar that conducted their reconciliation workshop. The participants admired how the Nyungar talked about their lives, but felt sorry that they had to expose themselves in such a way to be recognised by non-Aboriginal Australian society.

Furthermore, during the workshop in Southern Cross the mob admitted that, as a result of past legislation, there are likely to be more 'white ways' than 'Nyungar ways' in Nyungar country. This statement is barely surprising when considering that Nyungar country belongs to the more settled south of Australia. Stereotypically, more 'traditional' Aboriginal Australians are considered to be found in the more remote and less settled north (see also Byrne 2003: 77). What is barely ever recognised, however, is the fact that even in those regions that are assumed to be more 'traditional,' "people have to fight hard to retain it [their 'traditional' beliefs]" (Colbung 1980: 103). In fact, van Krieken et al. (2000: 156) argue that Aboriginal Australians from an urban environment are less bonded with 'traditional' Aboriginality, therefore having to construct a new form of Aboriginality from what they understand 'traditional' Aboriginality to be and what they know of the white ways.[41] As such, it can be argued that the context of the cross-cultural awareness workshop forces Aboriginal Australians to be positive about their dispossession. They therefore concede that having been brought up in these ways means they are now able to have the best of both worlds, though they emphasise that there is a broad spectrum of Aboriginal life in Australia today - ranging from poverty to wealth. In this mob's specific case, however, it means that they can now continue to have their form of spirituality, their connection to land, but live in a nice house with an AUS$500,000 mortgage.

When it comes down to it, despite the mob saying that there might be more 'white ways' than 'Nyungar ways' in the southwest, some form of contemporary urban Aboriginality is still aligned to every aspect of Nyungar life - for example the high importance of family relations that has has been previously explained. Nyungar, like other Aboriginal people across Australia, have been forced into the non-Aboriginal landscape and have hence adopted their lifestyles to it. Some non-Aboriginal Australians, on the other hand, are now choosing to embrace Aboriginality in their lives to create a new distinct sense of 'Australianness' (Scates 1997, Mulcock 2007). This cross-cultural awareness training was about opening participants' eyes to a culture that

[41] More on the construction of a new form of Aboriginality can also be found in Chapter Three.

is also part of their own. Sabrina (pers. comm. 2008) concluded the workshop, once again emphasising that they share over two-hundred years of history: "Your culture is the Aboriginal culture of Australia and it's up to you to find that culture."

Notwithstanding that these examples clearly show how storytelling is used to elicit certain emotional responses in an attempt to overcome racism, it remains important to identify what stories are being shared. For while there is a strong case for the re-empowerment of Aboriginal people through such workshops, it is also apparent that the stories shared are related to topics of great interest to non-Aboriginal Australians. An example is Jared's story of how he was stolen as a child - the Stolen Generations remain at the forefront of issues in Aboriginal affairs, and in fact was brought to the limelight by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd when he famously apologised to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in February 2008. Another example is provided by Maxine, one of the elders from the Southern Cross workshop, who related how she lives out in the bush and walks ten kilometres into town every day, or Debra, who told of the ceremonial proceedings when one of her daughters passed away.

What is particularly interesting is that these examples are a part of their lives today, emphasising how some of them may still choose the bush over the city and how 'traditional' ceremonies are still important and used today. However, they also provided examples of their past and as such Maxine (pers. comm. 2008) explains that she was born as a bush baby because "we wasn't allowed in hospitals, but we shared and cared for each other - that was just the way we lived, we shared and cared." By relating these experiences the Nyungar create a sense of 'otherness' that exists within the world of workshop participants, an 'otherness' that often appears to be required of Nyungar to be recognised as truly Aboriginal. As a result, it can be argued that as Aboriginal people share their life stories in public events, such as cross-cultural awareness workshops, they do so in an effort to foster a genuine understanding between all involved, but at the same time select the stories they wish to tell very carefully depending on current political discourse and the responses - emotional or otherwise - that they wish to evoke in their listeners. I would thus argue that while there is an ongoing process of re-

empowerment in these situations, this re-empowerment is sharply defined by the ongoing dominant political Australian discourse.

In a way then, the Nyungar mob used the 'oppositional history,' the account of historic events from a non-Aboriginal perspective vis-a-vis the Nyungar perspective, to merge Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes into a 'shared history' in an attempt to promote reconciliation and demolish stereotypes. In his work on the possible resistance of stereotypes by Aboriginal Australians within the context of tourism, Hollinshead (1996) identifies three possible modalities through which Aboriginal people can challenge the dominant discourse of non-Aboriginal Australia. The first is "identification" - meaning that events happen solely and unquestioned within the dominant, non-Aboriginal, discourse. The second is "counter-identification," effectively a means of turning the discourse on its head. It is also within this second modality that de Certeau's (1984) suggestion of tactics used by the nomadic subject against the strategies of the dominant becomes relevant. The third modality as suggested by Hollinshead (1996), and the hardest to achieve, is that of "disidentification," because it involves employing new ideologies in order to escape the discourse entirely - if that is at all possible. Within the context of cross-cultural awareness training, I therefore suggest that a process of "counter-identification" is underway and that the status quo is challenged from within the discourse through a variety of tactics such as code-switching and storytelling. In this process of "counter-identification" in the Southern Cross context, Nyungar told stories that, while of some importance to themselves, were first and foremost of interest to the non-Aboriginal participants. However, during one-on-one interviews my Nyungar informants highlighted an entirely different issue as important to them.

Moving Towards Reconciliation: The Importance of Education

In the previous section it has become apparent that the Stolen Generations continue to be a prominent topic in Australia, and in particular in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations - emphasising the continued influence of past assimilation policies on modern everyday life. I found it therefore striking during my interviews with Marissa and Alice, of whom I collected the most extensive life stories, that they did not place any emphasis on the Stolen Generations at all. Instead, both Marissa and Alice very much focused on the importance of their education. Of course, on could argue that the Stolen Generations is something far removed from Marissa and Alice's personal circumstances, and as such would not have been highlighted as a topic important to them. This, however, I do not believe to be the case. Alice in particular told me how she has relations all throughout the state, because her ancestors met in missions after they had been removed from their families and her parents are still trying to piece together the puzzle that is their family. It therefore becomes evident that the Stolen Generation is something that is still very much present in Nyungar families, but when left to their own devices other issues, such as education, emerge as more important to Nyungar individuals. Thus, while the Stolen Generations is not necessarily central to the individual's own story, it is central to the story of the wider Aboriginal community. This speaks to their engagement with the current political landscape, their acknowledgement that education in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscape provides a form of empowerment, and their determination to build a good life for themselves instead of succumbing to popular stereotypical views.

> I think education is very important, because a lot of our, you know, kids that can't have education. None of my brothers and sisters ever had education and so to me education was actually what saved me. Otherwise I'd be sitting in Wongan with hundreds of kinds and drugs and alcohol like all the other families. (pers. comm. Alice 2009)

Both Alice and Marissa pointed out the importance of growing up in two ideological landscapes while recalling their life stories for me. As mentioned above, during the cross-cultural training in Southern Cross, it had indeed been mentioned that Nyungar people were now able to have the best of both worlds, specifically naming their spirituality and an AUS$500,000 mortgage. Marissa and Alice went beyond this in their accounts though. They stressed that growing up in-between their Aboriginal home lives and their non-Aboriginal public lives was a constant struggle against racism and stereotypes.

Marissa remembered being teased in school by other children about who she was, which she associated with the poor Aboriginal Australian schooling system while she was in school. At the same time she recognised that the system has changed considerably and that now Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children are learning together, not just about massacres like during Marissa's time in school, but everything, all the positives and negatives. She further considered it important to keep up a link to the 'traditional' Nyungar background, to know who you are and not lose yourself in a vast changing world. In terms of her own education, Marissa is proud that she did all of her schooling and went on to university, despite not having had an easy start. To reiterate in Marissa Verma's (pers. comm. 2009) own words:

> I actually went all the way to Year Twelve doing my studies and then went off to uni, which I didn't think I'd be able to do, but there was an opportunity. I studied a bridging course, so that sort of got my skills up to speed with the uni world - so you know, writing skills, communication skills and all that, because I didn't do too well in High School. But when I got to uni they sort of bumped that up a bit more. And then I went on to an associate degree in science and technology, so I really got into the science. That really allowed me to pick the topics I really wanted to do... I tended to pick a lot of environment ones.

It is through her love for the environment that she ended up in tourism related work and with SWALSC, where she was working during my time in the field. Moreover, she also used this as a way to stay in touch with her Nyungar roots and continued to learn from the elders she met through her work.

Another related example can be taken from one of my interviews with Alice, which also emphasises how her education helped her getting over her childhood struggles and to fully accept who she is and to be proud of it. Alice grew up in a small country town, where she was schooled until Year Ten, before she had to move on to two different boarding schools for Years Eleven and Twelve.

> Me, *I've actually used to as a kid shamed to be black.* You know, we just got called all the names under the sun and so you never used to be wanting to be that. And I suppose, after the years, I used to get into a lot of fights. Got expelled from one school, wasn't my fault. It wasn't my fault. You know, and caused a lot of pain, I suppose for a lot of people and not necessarily it was their fault, but I suppose it was my anger and through my work I think that actually saved me. And through my mum, everything I do I do for my mum. I'm the only one out of my family, out of six of us, was sent to boarding school, the youngest, and she was happy about that I think. I, all my life, I planned out sort of for her. To make her proud. And from work, I had a lot of them. From all the in-house stuff that you get - personal development, confidence building and all those workshops you do - sort of I started getting confidence up. I started, you know, I used to be the quietest, nobody knew I was around, but now they can't shut me up. I think that interaction with other people, interaction with my own as well, learning about myself, learning about culture later on in life, *because in school I was taught that white history* and not. Then went to uni, I done two years a degree in Aboriginal Community Management and Development and left for Adelaide, so I didn't do the third year to get the diploma, but that sort of done all the history side and just learned myself. *I always listen to the old folk. And I think that sort of built that pride up in me again.* Sort of getting away from that anger mode and the hate and blame game and sort of, well it's your life, you know, you have a problem with me that's your business, sort of thing. *And that's the way it goes. How to be a black woman now.* (pers. comm. Alice 2009, my emphasis)

This brief excerpt of my interview with Alice is particularly significant as it draws a powerful image of how Alice's education helped her get over her childhood struggles and come to fully accept who she is and to be proud of it. It could therefore be argued that from the Aboriginal side of the reconciliation process, the goal is to find pride in the Self, which is not an easy feat considering that one of "the most frequent experience of [everyday] racism was in the form of disrespectful treatment and name-calling" (Dunn et al. 2009: 2). The telling of life stories, therefore, not only enables one to pin-point racist abuse, however subtle it may be, but also allows for recognising the effect other people's words have on us and to grow from it.

> To say storytelling may have the power to heal is not, therefore, to say that stories repress memory or deny history, but to point out that in bridging the gap between private and public realms, storytelling enables the regeneration and celebration of social existence, without which we are nothing. (Jackson 2002: 58-59)

Both Marissa and Alice have come to fully embrace their Aboriginality and are proud to be Whadjuk-Nyungar and Nyungar-Yamatji, respectively. They are individuals who walk in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world, sometimes acting as translators of sorts for others from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes. They are representatives of a new generation of Nyungar, a generation that has learned to adapt to survive and who pass on their stories to help others do the same; to educate the young ones, to help them to become ever more involved in a complicated political landscape, and to carve out a place for themselves within it.

Conclusion

This chapter set out with the premiss that in contrast to what Western Australia's history would suggest, Perth is seen as a sunny and positive place by the dominant white middle class society that resides there. This view, a result of ongoing memory work, undermines the Nyungar perspective on land both in the present and in a historical context. The Nyungar perspective is in a way buried under a layer of colonial history and triumph, a layer from which they have been partially removed and partially rendered invisible. Nyungar thus feel a need to reestablish their presence in the landscape, both geographical and ideological, in order to create a social space for themselves. They have been shown to do so through a variety of 'tactics,' most notably code-switching and storytelling.

What became evident throughout this chapter is that in order to reinforce their place within Australia, Nyungar have to constantly emphasise their distinct Aboriginality and set it apart from the wider Australian society to have it recognised. Again, this is done through the application of code-switching and storytelling, as has been illustrated by my example of Marissa who often acts as a mediator between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ideological landscapes. A further point has been made that code-switching and storytelling as ways of place-making are used in the performance of Aboriginality. Here, a first focus was on performing Aboriginality in everyday situations (Cowlishaw 2001), before moving on to more 'theatrical' ways of code-switching and performing Aboriginality in the tourism industry. Many Aboriginal people involved in the tourism industry, but by no means all of them, make it their job to be Aboriginal and as such it is here that their presence in Australia is most felt.

It has further been established, that code-switching and storytelling are applied in reconciliation settings, such as cross-cultural awareness workshops. Here, Nyungar create a sense of belonging that applies both to themselves and to their non-Aboriginal workshop participants. They share stories and mediate between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal modes of thought in order to create a greater understanding between the two. Of vital importance here is also the issue of education, to which many Aboriginal

people, but in this case particularly Alice and Marissa, attribute their success in the largely non-Aboriginal society.

Most importantly, however, this chapter has shown the interconnectedness of all the issues discussed - storytelling, code-switching, performance, reconciliation, and education - when it comes to ways of place-making. In the bigger picture, it therefore also becomes apparent that the three main themes of this thesis - 'shared history,' place-making, and reconciliation - are inseparable. It is important to understand the 'oppositional' history and why it is presented as 'shared' history in intercultural discourses in order to understand the need and importance of place-making for Nyungar in Perth. In turn it is then important to understand the need and importance of place-making 'tactics,' in order to understand the process of and the need for reconciliation, which again emphasises the importance of a 'shared history.' As a result, in order to complete the circle, it is now time to take a closer look at reconciliation in Australia.

Chapter Three: Reconciliation

Introduction

Right in the heart of Perth there are approximately 400 ha of parkland, including botanical and water gardens. High up on Mount Eliza, or *Kaarta Garup* as the local Nyungar call it, Kings Park offers a welcome retreat from city life as well as a stunning view over the neighbouring Perth Central Business District. I am sitting in Beedawong, the amphitheatre in Kings Park, gazing at the Tree Top Walk and at the - through the trees barely visible - South Perth skyscrapers and Swan River, while Greg finishes the "Story for the Countryside" (see Chapter Two). Turning to the bag he carries with him on every tour, he begins to take out several artefacts to show to the tourists. Among them are a *kodj* (a 'traditional' stone axe), fire making sticks, and a *booka* (kangaroo skin cloak). Going through them one by one, Greg explains how two stones are attached to the wooden stick to form the *kodj* using a mixture of 50% resin, 25% fibre, and 25% charcoal to create a glue.

> You heat the wooden stick over the fire and then roll it through the mixture of resin, fibre, and charcoal until it sticks to the wood. You then heat up the stones as well and glue them to the wood. Heat on heat sticks better. If you use cold stones, they may come off. (pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009)

Passing around the *kodj* so everyone can take a closer look, he asks for one or two volunteers to help him demonstrate the fire making sticks, explaining that the wood comes from the *balga* (grass tree) and that the piece that is drilled into the other stick is called a *mirra lynnie*. "The trick is," Greg (pers. comm. 2009) says, "that the *mirra lynnie* has to have some left-over charcoal on it as it helps create the heat needed to start the fire." With a wink he explains that we are going to cheat in this regard, taking out a fire lighter to slightly burn the bottom of the stick.

> If you ever watch TV shows like *Survivor* or *Shipwrecked* you will notice that they often have trouble lighting a fire with these kind of sticks. That's because they forget about the charcoal. (pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009)

Further explaining that it is not about the speed with which the stick is twisted between hands, but about the pressure between the two sticks, he hands them over to the volunteers to try and create some smoke, which they successfully do after a couple of minutes.

> It will only take three or four good drills on a hot day like this. You need the friction. Friction creates heat. Never take the two pieces of wood apart, or the cold air gets in. To start the fire, you would usually have a birds nest underneath the sticks and the hot embers falling off would slowly ignite a fire. It's almost impossible to do on a rainy or even a cloudy day, because of the moisture in the air. The record for lighting a full fire this way is three minutes flat, and it was set by a group of university students near Boyagin Rock. (pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009)

While the volunteers are at it, Greg introduces the *booka*, explaining that it can be worn in two ways: with the fur on the inside to keep warm during the winter, or with the fur water soaked on the outside during the hot summer months. "The combination of the wet fur and the see breeze we get here in Perth every afternoon will keep you wonderfully cool" (pers. comm. Greg Nannup 2009). Indicating that he is finished with his demonstration of the artefacts, Greg invites the tourists to come up and take photos, some eagerly putting on the *booka* and grabbing the *kodj* for a pose in front of the Kings Park scenery - a piece of bush in the middle of the city.

One tourist, however, chooses to challenge Greg at this point of his tour. Asking "So what's your background? You don't look very Aboriginal," this tourist not only questioned Greg's identity as Nyungar, but as Aboriginal in general. Greg's expression slightly staggered for a moment, he manages to pull himself together quickly simply saying "Dad is Nyungar, Mum is European." Greg's initial astonishment at the question is not surprising. After all, Greg explains his connection to the country we are standing

on in every single one of his tours during his Welcome to Country (see Chapter Two). If anything, this tourist's behaviour exemplifies how appearance and essence are linked in the tourists' mind, displaying ignorance towards cultural dynamics and change. To illustrate my point, Nic Craith (2007: 11) writes in connection with cultural heritage that

> In the past dominant groups of society claimed ownership. They determined which elements of heritage were worthy of affirmation or preservation in the public space at national level. Frequently, the more powerful groups ignored diversity in favour of a one-dimensional, homogenous narrative.

In a way, then, the Aboriginal Australian image Australia presents to the outside world is a stark contrast to the assimilation policies of the early twentieth century, when they were actively trying to breed out colour - ultimately resulting in the Stolen Generations. Today, they are almost actively trying to 'infuse' colour back into Aboriginal Australia. Indeed, my Nyungar friends (pers. comm. 2009) often remarked how "back in the day you could not be white enough, today you cannot be black enough" (see also Moore 2003: 184-185), venting their frustration at how they had to conform to and enact what the wider Australian society perceived as proper for Aboriginal people. It thus becomes evident that the question of what Aboriginality is today is something that is necessarily defined through an interaction of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As an intersubjective issue it becomes a two-way street, not only determining the Aboriginality of some Australians, but also allowing for the indigenisation of others.

In this regard, Greg's demonstration of the 'traditional' tools represents, to a certain extent, a submission to what is perceived as Aboriginal in the popular imagination. At the same time, the tourist's challenge shows that simply adhering to some materialistic form of supposed 'traditionality' is not enough to be recognised as Aboriginal. The Kings Park landscape, the Dreaming stories, the tools, they all are recognised as 'traditional' and Aboriginal easy enough. The actual person, however, is not. This gap between the recognition of materialistic and human representations of Aboriginality is part of the negotiation of what Aboriginality is today, and as such notions of

Aboriginality, indigenisation, and postcolonial theory (Aboriginality is a colonial label) are key to the discussion of reconciliation. In fact, I would argue that this gap is precisely why reconciliation is predominantly a 'theory' problem. Rather than focusing on relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals on the micro-level, creating a dialogue, the reconciliation process mainly revolves around policy-making and creating actions and plans that lead to measurable outcomes.

Bearing this in mind, in what follows I will firstly determine the roots of the need for reconciliation and focus on the theory behind reconciliation, especially looking at how the term has been interpreted by different governments. I will then present the Swan River Dreaming Tour as an ethnographic examples of how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians can work together outside the reconciliation movement and still come up with a potentially effective approach to reconciliation if their venture succeeds as a business. Following on from there, I will discuss the issues of indigenisation, state sponsored culture, and the negotiation of Aboriginality with regards to the reconciliation process, before moving on to a more detailed account of so-called Reconciliation Action Plans and the need for measures of success and failure. Finally, I will closely examine the Wadjemup Bus Tour, part of the Rottnest Island Authority Reconciliation Action Plan, and ethnographic example of a failed reconciliation attempt. It will become evident over the course of this chapter that the way in which the reconciliation process has been set up in Australia, with a focus on simple, measurable outcomes, it is doomed to fail. As long as the complexities of inter-human relationships keep being ignored, and there is no actual dialogue taking place, the possibility of reconciliation hangs by a thread.

The Root of the Problem: Labelling, Othering, and the Need for Reconciliation

The quest for reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia has resulted from a conflict between the popular Australian myths of egalitarianism and the historical policies of segregation, racism, and assimilation.[42] The slowly changing perspectives on history within non-Aboriginal Australia have further underlined this process. For example, Aboriginal accounts of history since colonisation are now being taught in schools, something that was unimaginable only a few short decades ago. Despite this, I would argue that there still remains a clear imagined distinction within the non-Aboriginal Australian thought with Aboriginal history, including the Dreaming, as something that took place up to the moment of colonisation and 'white' Australian history taking over from there. Therefore, in reconciliation settings, such as cross-cultural awareness workshops and some Indigenous heritage tours, many Nyungar feel the need to stress that there is a 'shared history' of over two-hundred years in Australia when referring to the time since the first settlers arrived. As has been documented in the previous two chapters of this thesis, by stressing that there are two sides to history - two sides that can be or possibly even are shared and combined - Nyungar reassert their place within Australia, a place that has been, and continues to be, negotiated through an interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia.

However, while Nyungar are attempting to claim their place within history and contemporary society, the previous chapters have also shown how hard it is for them to be heard within that society. Furthermore, in this place-making process, they have to continuously let outsiders invade their Aboriginal landscape, and are forced to share their personal life stories in order to create new ways for non-Aboriginal people to see relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

As such, having its roots in historical injustice means that reconciliation can also be used as a tool for the extension of colonial power (Muldoon 2003: 187) into the postcolonial, with non-Aboriginal Australians further trying to control their Aboriginal

[42] For more detail see Introduction and Chapter One.

counterparts in one way or another - thus creating a neocolonial discourse.[43] More often than not it is non-Aboriginal Australia that desires a symbolic form of reconciliation, but it is up to Aboriginal Australia to provide it for them. Indeed, "reconciliation was seen as 'an Aboriginal issue, not as an issue for all Australians'" (Hattam and Atkinson 2006: 691). It can therefore be argued, according to Hattam and Atkinson (2006: 691), that "it remains largely true that non-Aboriginal engagement with issues surrounding reconciliation has been marked by ignorance, incomprehension and suspicion, some of which appears to have been quite deliberately 'manufactured' and the result of implicit racism." The real disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal people are thus often labelled as their own fault because of the way they handle things. Rarely is it understood that by labelling disadvantages in this way the dominant society is applying its own standards and values to a different lifestyle (Green and Sonn 2006: 385).

While labelling is something all of us do without thinking about it, it is also an important means to "impose boundaries and define categories [...] to construct our social world" (Moncrieffe 2007: 1), implying that the process is laden with power relationships (Moncrieffe 2007: 2). These power relationships, or "discourses of power" as Ritter (1996: 9) calls them, indicate "the idea that apparently natural or objective social structures act to privilege the ruling interests in a society, while, at the same time, they will punish non-conformity to the existing social structure" (Ritter 1996: 9). In other words, power relationships in this regard are built on discrimination. This process, of course, can be laden with racism, if the categories defined are thought to be inferior to the dominant mode of thought (see for example Fields 2001). In fact, Fields (2001: 48) points out that categories are, more often than not, imposed on others without their input or consensus. In Australia, the process of categorisation and its inherent discriminatory power relationships have been taken to a whole different level, stressing the need for reconciliation. In Australia, racism is constitutionalised (Davis 2007, accessed 26/10/2011, Hunter and Schwab 2003), emphasising the categorisation and

[43] Muldoon (2003: 187) only writes about reconciliation as a tool for the extension of colonial power. He makes no assertions to postcolonialism or neocolonialism. It is, however, my contention that Nyungar find themselves so caught within the dominant discourse, only able to work against it counter-discursively, that as Muldoon sees reconciliation it actually creates a neocolonial discourse.

labelling of the 'other' by the dominant society. Indeed, in 2000 the final report of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation suggested, among other things, to "create a preamble to the Constitution that recognises the Indigenous population as the first peoples of Australia; [and] a new section of the Constitution making it unlawful to discriminate against people on grounds of their race" (Hunter and Schwab 2003: 94). However, the Constitution remained unchanged and former Prime Minister Howard's revision of the preamble did not have any legal consequences either, as it was "technically not the preamble to Australia's constitution but the preamble to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900" (Davis 2007, accessed 26/10/2011). Hattam and Atkinson (2006: 688) make the connection between racism and reconciliation most clearly, pointing at the complexity of the term reconciliation and the ideas behind it:

> Reconciliation as a social imaginary informs cultural politics and hence also the struggles over material conditions. But then reconciliation is a problematic concept for a variety of reasons. The term itself has become code for a complex set of ethico-political processes for negotiating an 'honourable' relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Projects such as 'truth telling', [...] are inflected by notions of restorative justice, reparations, repair and apology rather than persecution, incrimination and confrontation. It is a term that still interpellates a whole range of political actors and as such is a site of contestation itself. Like all 'keywords', the meanings of 'Reconciliation' have been worked over by various political actors, including governments through their legislative powers, by the media, a range of think tanks, lobbyists, academics and other activists, and in the hands of other groups who claim the term. Reconciliation is variously always good, stalled, off-track, amorphous, vague, an abdication, a sham, and impossible.

What Hattam and Atkinson (2006: 688) suggest here, then, is that the way reconciliation has been set up and introduced in Australia means that it can be used in any which way; out of the genuine desire to change something, as well as to create a neocolonial discourse. It is further interesting that they describe reconciliation as a 'keyword,' implying that it is no more than a label attached to certain discourses (see also Cornwall

and Brock 2005). While this does not necessarily mean that reconciliation is, or has become, meaningless, it is important to note that labels are exclusive.

For example, in the context of international development work, Eyben (2007) describes how when she was working for an aid company she constantly labelled people, wanting to help them progress. In the process she was excluding others who could have profited from the aid work, thereby actually regressing the possible outcomes of the aid work. To explain her point, she described that whilst working to recruit people to participate in a literacy program, she categorised 'the poor' who would most profit from the program as skinny and wearing rags for clothes. It was not until one of her colleagues pointed out to her people that did not fall into her pre-defined categories of being skinny and wearing rags, but were still poor and illiterate, that she began to see her mistake.

Eyben (2007: 40) terms this approach to her work 'othering' and clarifies that it is a "process whereby a dominant group defines into existence a subordinate group, for example, when an aid agency classifies its target population according to criteria that the people themselves would not employ." This reminds one of White's (1991) 'middle ground' and the invention of the 'other' as part of colonial discourses as outlined in Chapter One of this thesis. Indeed, even Eyben (2007: 40) draws a comparison between aid work and colonialism, stating that "the process of 'othering' in the relationship between colonizer and colonized thus produced an extreme, unmoderated form of bureaucracy." In other words, the act of labelling necessarily created some form of bureaucracy, including policies of assimilation and reconciliation, and this act of labelling or 'othering' can be traced from colonialism to the present day. Aboriginal Australians, for example, were not Aboriginal Australians until the first outsiders arrived (see for example White 1991: xv). Becoming Aboriginal Australians with the arrival of Europeans, this process of 'othering' meant a series of violence and military conquests that resulted in dispossession, displacement, segregation, racism, and the implementation of assimilation policies, eventually leading to the need for reconciliation as it is experienced today. As a result, Aboriginal Australians are looking for recognition of their place within Australian society, to be seen as legitimate

Australians and not just the marketable 'other' that is still seen as a 'problem' outside the tourism industry. Non-Aboriginal Australians, on the other hand, are being seen as looking for forgiveness, especially since former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's public apology in February 2008 (see also Hattam and Atkinson 2006: 691).

Reconciliation in Theory

> Numerous studies have shown that reconciliation - the rebuilding of deeply damaged relations between nations, peoples or faiths - can begin only when peace and stability have been achieved. Once the right conditions are in place, a nation can begin to debate its past. (Cole 2003 as cited in Levy and Sznaider 2006: 94)

Given reconciliation's foundation in Australia's conflicted history, it is important that a 'truthful' account of the past is the primary concern of the reconciliation discourse (Muldoon 2003). Of course, Muldoon (2003: 188) makes a valid point by suggesting that "unless we confront the past and recognise the injustices that have been committed there can be no way forward, for there will be no recognition of the need for reconciliation at all." Even so, it has already been demonstrated in the preceding chapters that history is invariably subjective and oppressive. In fact, I would argue that the problem is not the lack of objectivity in historical accounts, but rather that Nyungar continue to be trapped within the dominant discourse and that their accounts of the past can only be heard within that discourse. Muldoon (2003) is not ignorant of this and does allow for the subjectivity of history by arguing that the past is experienced differently, and that those involved in reconciliation must have a genuine desire to remain open and interact with each other in order to together negotiate a way forward for everyone involved. In other words, it is necessary to create an open and equal dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

This is a crucial point to remember for both sides of the reconciliation movement, and as can be imagined, it is not the easiest of tasks due to Australia's complex history drawing a multifaceted response from non-Aboriginal members of society - not least of

all shame and embarrassment (Green and Sonn 2006: 380). These responses were visible during the cross-cultural awareness workshops I experienced, with non-Aboriginal participants being hesitant to speak out about their experiences with Aboriginal Australia in the presence of Aboriginal people. They needed constant encouragement and acknowledgement from Aboriginal Australians that their feelings about those encounters were perfectly normal, understandable, and nothing to be ashamed of (see Chapter Two). It is important to note here that this process is very one-sided due to the underlying power relations. During those workshops, non-Aboriginal Australians are indirectly asking their Aboriginal counterparts for their forgiveness, although most of the attendees will not have had anything to do with the past mistreatment of Aboriginal people. Rather, the forgiveness they seek is for racist feelings they may have experienced at one point or another in their lives and that are articulated during the workshop (see Chapter Two). At first glance, it might appear unproblematic that only non-Aboriginal Australians seem to need the Aboriginal Australian's acknowledgement and forgiveness, and that this does not appear to be applicable vice-versa. Yet, it has already been pointed out that reconciliation is often seen as an Aboriginal problem (Hattam and Atkinson 2006: 691) and it is also Aboriginal Australians who are expected more than anyone else to participate actively in the reconciliation process, for example by telling their life stories, no matter the pain they might be inflicting upon themselves by reliving their memories.

Despite these difficulties reconciliation remains something that is desirable to non-Aboriginal Australia and at the forefront of many business and government organisations. Whether it is out of a genuine desire to change something within Australia, or simply in order to please various stakeholders, many companies are implementing so-called Reconciliation Action Plans in an effort to become, or at least appear, more friendly towards a multicultural Australia. While there is no legal requirement for agencies to implement Reconciliation Action Plans, doing so increases their goodwill with the Aboriginal communities involved as well as with the wider public, as they can use this as part of their outreach program and marketing. Being primarily about improving relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal

Australia and increasing awareness of the disadvantages still faced by Aboriginal people, these Reconciliation Action Plans usually involve at least one component to promote intercultural awareness. These components can take on different forms, like the aforementioned cross-cultural awareness workshops or sending employees on Aboriginal tours in and around the city. During my time in the field I witnessed employees of different agencies, governmental and non-governmental, going on Indigenous heritage tours as part of their divisions' Reconciliation Action Plan, as well as taking part in said workshops.

Reconciliation Action Plans were first introduced in 2006 by Reconciliation Australia, a non-profit independent organisation which was set up in 2001 (Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011). They are supposed to be "specific, measurable, action oriented plans" with a desire to "close the 17-year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and other Australians" (Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011), including practical aims of resolving issues like inequality in the workplace and creating more and better opportunities for Aboriginal people. Leading up to the establishment of Reconciliation Australia in 2001, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation inaugurated a National Reconciliation Week in 1996, which saw "over 300,000 people walk across Sydney Harbour Bridge" (Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011, see also Cowlishaw 2009, Hinkson 2002) in its year 2000 celebrations, showcasing their desire for reconciliation. Cowlishaw (2009: 101-102, original emphasis), who participated in the march across Sydney Harbour Bridge describes the experience in *The City's Outback* most extensively:

> It's 28 May 2000 and the Sydney Harbour Bridge is to be given over to a 'Walk for reconciliation' for a couple of hours. [...] Finding dense crowds forming long queues at the ticket office at Central station we assume that some major sporting event is clashing with the Bridge march. But once in the packed carriage on the train for North Sydney, it becomes clear that this whole huge mass of people is heading for the march! My heart soars; this is not the Australia I am familiar with, one that is ignorant, suspicious and indifferent to Indigenous people. [...] Smiling faces do not convey solemn obligation, but rather festive excitement and triumphant assertion. [...] At North Sydney station

> wave upon wave of people are pouring from buses and trains [...] Walking across the Bridge among the throng in the sunshine, we watch as planes write a fluffy white SORRY repeatedly across the deep blue sky.
>
> The organising authorities have been taken by surprise. Many thousands more people than expected have turned out, and more trains and buses are hastily brought into service. The planned 2 hour Bridge closure is extended to the whole morning and then until 2pm. I wonder if the two decades of academic research into Australia's painful black history have contributed something to this outpouring of a unified sentiment of concern.

In the context of Australia's contested past, then, the reconciliation movement "represents a clear effort to acknowledge this past, as well as address the current relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people" (Halloran 2007: 2). A major turning point in the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people was the 1967 referendum, which had over 90% of the Australian population vote in favour of officially recognising Aboriginal Australians as Australian citizens. This meant that from that moment onward they were "counted in the national census of the population and that the Commonwealth Government should have the power to legislate for Aboriginal people" (Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011). This was followed up by the introduction of the self-determination policy in 1972, and the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in May 1991,[44] which finally lead to the passing of the Aboriginal Reconciliation Act in June (by the House of Representatives) and August (by the Senate) 1991 (Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011).

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[44] The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody was announced by former Prime Minister Hawke in 1987, "in response to a growing public concern that deaths in custody of Aboriginal people were too common and too poorly explained" (Nagle and Summerrell 2002: 8). The Royal Commission produced a number of reports on the matter, including one on the underlying issues specific to Western Australia. Moreover, the report specific to Western Australia identified a correlation between Deaths in Custody and the Stolen Generations. As Haebich (2000: 51) writes, "of the ninety-nine cases of Aboriginal deaths in custody between 1980 and 1989 investigated by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), thirty-two occurred in Western Australia." They further found that specifically in Western Australia police harassment of Aboriginal people was a significant issue, and "that nineteen of its thirty-two case studies had been removed from their families" (Haebich 2000: 415).

Before moving on to my ethnographic experiences of the Australian reconciliation movement, it is important to briefly consider reconciliation as it has been employed by the governments over the years. Essentially, there are two sides to reconciliation that have been stressed by different governments: 'symbolic' and 'practical' reconciliation. Firstly, former Prime Minister Keating opened the "reconciliation decade" (Altman and Hunter 2003) in 1991 by emphasising "'symbolic' reconciliation that focussed on issues such as apologising to the stolen generations and marching for reconciliation" (Gunstone 2005: 4). Keating's successor Howard, on the other hand, chose to focus on 'practical' reconciliation during his time in office from 1996 to 2007. The Howard government's interpretation of 'practical' reconciliation, however, was "a neo-assimilationist view that argued the need to concentrate on improving socio-economic outcomes such as health and education" (Gunstone 2005: 4, see also Hunter and Schwab 2003), using it as a way to avoid 'symbolic' reconciliation and an apology to all Indigenous people of Australia. Indeed, representatives of the Howard government even suggested that an apology would hinder the reconciliation process (Cook and Powell 2003: 285).

> He [an Aboriginal man] specifically confronted Minister Ruddock about why the government steadfastly refused to apologize officially. Ruddock replied: "We want to assist in the process; commitments have been made on this in terms of money. Apologies have been made by individuals, but a formal apology has been considered by the present government, and the decision not to offer a formal apology reflects our desire to move forward together. (Cook and Powell 2003: 285)

In other words, Ruddock's statement exemplifies the Howard government's desire to 'forget' and 'move on,' something that is still regarded as the main objective for many non-Aboriginal Australians involved in reconciliation (Hattam and Atkinson 2006: 691). It can hence be argued that "the semantic ambiguity of 'reconciliation' has proven to be extremely convenient for politicians of all colors anxious to indefinitely defer the constitutional recognition of Indigenous rights" (Nicoll 2002). Therefore, in the same vain it can then be said that Keating's 'symbolic' reconciliation sought to focus on

moving on by acknowledging the past, but not taking any 'practical' actions to change Aboriginal Australia's socio-economic situation.

It is thus important to consider the difference between 'practical' and symbolic' reconciliation a little more specifically. Hunter and Schwab (2003: 84) explain the concepts most clearly by pointing out that 'symbolic' reconciliation refers to "Indigenous rights, stolen generations, deaths in custody, and the invalid alienation of land and resources," while 'practical' reconciliation refers to "improving the health, housing, education and employment of Indigenous Australians." In other words, a focus on 'practical' reconciliation for the Howard government meant trying to 'fix' Aboriginal problems as defined and identified by non-Aboriginal Australia while ignoring the "subtle interactions between the dimensions of Indigenous disadvantage" (Hunter and Schwab 2003: 95). On the other hand, the 'symbolic' reconciliation movement under Keating prioritised acknowledging and recognising Aboriginal Australians while ignoring the very real disadvantages as experienced by Aboriginal Australians. Consequently, Davis (2007, accessed 26/10/2011) argues that

> practical and symbolic reconciliation are essentially two sides of the same coin, and most Australians understand the importance of symbolism in nurturing a sense of nationhood and the feeling of inclusion [...] Indigenous peoples have not played any formal role in state building, and symbolic gestures such as recognition in a constitutional preamble will deliver some heightened sense of belonging and perhaps engender some uncontested truths about the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australian history.

As such, I would argue that for the reconciliation process to take effect the first step must be to foster an understanding and awareness of Aboriginal cultural issues, and a decreasing of racist attitudes, instead of focusing on 'fixing Aboriginal problems' as the Howard government proposed, which clearly echoed colonial attitudes toward Aboriginal Australians. Altman and Hunter (2003: 13-14) agree that while movements towards equality of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians in all aspects of life are desperately needed, it is not what reconciliation as such depends on the most. What

proper reconciliation demands at the end of the day is “a dialogue between equals whereby each party comes to accept the diverse aspirations and beliefs of the other” (Altman and Hunter 2003: 14). In short, what is needed first of all for successful reconciliation is mutual understanding and equality of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Finally, I would argue that the ethnographic examples in this chapter showcase a hands-on approach to reconciliation and can thus be categorised as a form o ‘practical’ reconciliation. I am well aware that the term ‘practical’ reconciliation has, or at least had at some point, a negative connotation to it, due to its use by the Howard government to oppose an official apology to all Indigenous people of Australia (Higgins-Desbiolles 2003: 38). In fact, Short (2003: 503) goes so far as to argue that “the practical reconciliation “initiative” ignores key indigenous aspirations such as land rights and self-determination and fails to offer any form of cultural protection.” While he may well be right in that assessment, I would suggest that there is more to it than that. Based on my example of the Swan River Dreaming Tour, I would suggest that there are more important aspects to such a ‘practical’ reconciliation approach. What stands out here is Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians working together to create a unique experience, not only for tourists (although they are obviously the target audience) but for everyone who wishes to participate. It is not just an Aboriginal person, who could be said to be giving a biased account of settlement, and it is not just a non-Aboriginal person, who could be accused of “stealing” cultural knowledge and providing an ‘inauthentic’ experience. It is exactly this which makes the Swan River Dreaming Tour, and potential similar products, so inherently powerful in a quest for reconciliation.

Consequently, my interpretation of ‘practical’ reconciliation is fundamentally different from the Howard government’s approach. For the sake of making a necessary distinction, I would term my interpretation ‘dialogic reconciliation,’ as it is built on communication, equality, and the working together of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. My interpretation, therefore, presents a more ‘hands-on’ and active approach which is in line with Geoff Clark’s (as cited in Higgins-Desbiolles 2003: 38)

argument that “reconciliation is, people being different but finding solutions together” - something that my upcoming account of the Swan River Dreaming Tour provides an example of. In other words, the Howard government’s interpretation of reconciliation was non-Aboriginal people finding solutions for Aboriginal problems, not recognising - as Clarke does - that reconciliation is something that has to happen between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

Swan River Dreaming: Practical Reconciliation without a Plan

Usually, Aboriginal heritage tours only feature one perspective: the Aboriginal one. The Swan River Dreaming Tour is an exception to this and as such provides an example for hands-on, or ‘dialogic reconciliation.’ By working together, Rottnest Express Ferries (forthwith REX) and Greg Nannup enable the sharing of historical perspectives. While Greg would tell the Indigenous side of history, the REX host would give dates and other facts of settlement, that is the colonial side of history, as well as pointing out some wildlife long the tour. To be able to split the story between the two narrators provided a welcome contrast between the tour components. The tour lasted one and a half hours, leaving from Barrack Street Jetty, to which it would return after making its way downriver as far as Claremont Bay and Black Wall Reach (see Fig. 12).

Before I go into more detail, however, it is important to note that the tour was never meant to be a tool for reconciliation. REX do not have a Reconciliation Action Plan and the tour was never supposed to be more than a tourism product. The reason I am including it is that if it had been successful as a tour,[45] it could have also been successful in the reconciliation movement as it provides an exceptional example of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians working together - which is exactly what made the Swan River Dreaming Tour so different from other Aboriginal tours.

[45] Due to low numbers, the tour now only runs as a charter.

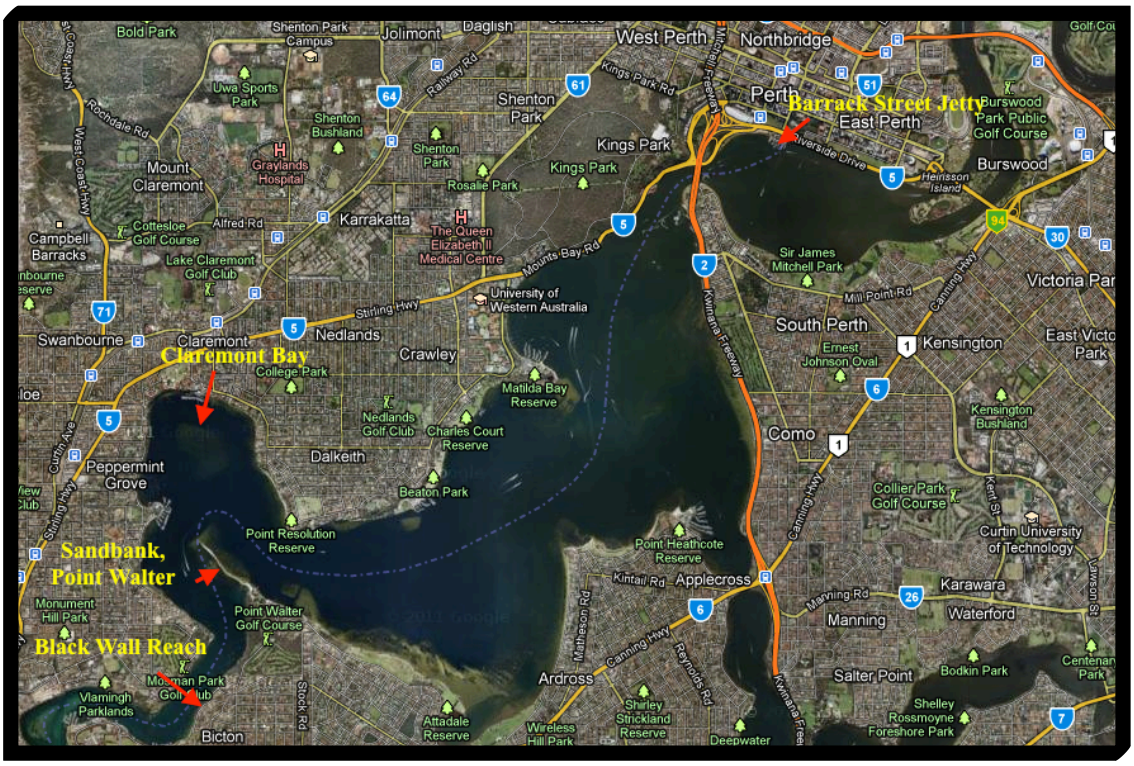

Fig. 12: Swan River Section - Highlighted: Barrack Street Jetty, Claremont Bay, Sandbank near Point Walter, and Black Wall Reach (Source: Google Maps).

In addition, it is necessary to point out a methodological problem. Due to the constantly moving nature of the tour, I usually had no opportunity to talk to other tourists on board. During the stops the guides would be talking and on our way from one stop to the next passengers would be confined to their seats as it was a high speed journey. While it could be argued that this methodological problem also points to a larger flaw within the argument of the Swan River Dreaming Tour as an example for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal reconciliation, indicating that tourism is an inadequate vehicle for reconciliation, I would suggest that the reconciliation attempt is not primarily between tour operator and tourist, but between the tour operators themselves. The interaction between the tour operators, who do encourage questions and interaction with them, and the tourists is only secondary for my argument here. Mainly, I wish to present a clear contrast to the failed Wadjemup Bus Tour, which was set up as a reconciliation venture, and which will be discussed later in this chapter. As a contrast to the Wadjemup Bus Tour, then, the Swan River Dreaming Tour exemplifies that if reconciliation is taken

outside the political discourse and applied to the micro-level, there is still hope for it to succeed.

The most prominent theme of the Swan River Dreaming Tour was the divergent views of landscape. Set up as a deliberate juxtaposition, the REX host would draw guests' attention to wildlife, such as the dolphins that inhabit the river, or an osprey nest at Claremont Bay, as well as pointing out other landmarks, such as the clearly visible limestone that runs all the way from Shark Bay (approximately 800km north of Perth) to Albany on the south coast of Western Australia, making it "the world's most extensive deposit of carbonite eolianite" (pers. comm. REX host 2010). Especially the mentioning of limestone is interesting as it appropriates the non-Aboriginal place within the landscape, leading to the "inevitable process of indigenisation" (Mulcock 2006: 90).[46] When looking at Fremantle, for example, some of the oldest buildings, such as the Round House and the Fremantle Prison, were built out of limestone - limestone that was excavated by the first settlers right there in Fremantle.

> Built in 1830-1831 as the colony's first gaol, the low, rubble limestone, twelve-sided structure situated on high ground on Arthur's Head at the entrance to Fremantle Harbour remains a visible sign of Fremantle's colonial past. (Sassoon 2006: 260)

Indeed, particularly in Western Australia with its still growing mining industry, the excavation of natural resources can be said to be one of the most popular ways in which non-Aboriginal Australia inscribed itself into the landscape.[47] In fact, I would argue that the popularity of such an artificial inscription into the landscape can be interpreted as a 'strategy' employed by non-Aboriginal Australia, as "land rights success in Australia was, and still is, linked to specific construction of Aboriginality in which 'traditional' Aborigines are privileged over those Aborigines who have had their way of life most seriously disrupted by contact" (Jacobs 1988 as cited in Jacobs 1996: 111). Meanwhile,

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[46] Indigenisation will be discussed at more length later in this chapter.

[47] See also Chapter One for a discussion on Native Title, and Chapter Two for the dispute over the Swan Brewery as an example of non-Aboriginal inscription in the landscape.

Greg counteracts this appropriation of the landscape by non-Aboriginal Australians by relaying the Aboriginal importance of places, relating them to Dreaming stories and stressing the belief that the land looks after itself.

For example, at Claremont Bay Greg explains that it is the place where Nyungar boys were initiated to become men. It was up to here that some of the women would travel with them for ceremonial reasons before turning around, with Birri Point being the last place where the boys could swim across the river before they became men. As part of the initiation process, Nyungar boys would receive a scar on their upper arm.[48] After the initiation they would stay in the vicinity for about two weeks, using a hakea plant and ash to help the healing process and to make the scar more prominent. Greg (pers. comm. 2010) then continues to point out Christchurch College, "one of the fines finishing schools for boys in Perth," noting that it is built exactly where Nyungar boys used to get initiated. He then moves on to point out Claremont Hospital, not far from the school as seen from the river, and explains that this is where the boys went to heal. This he uses to emphasise how the land looks after itself, pointing out that things that were 'traditionally' done on a particular stretch of land continue to be done there: where Nyungar boys were initiated, there is a school now; where they went to heal, there is a hospital; the place where the old men used to go sit down to make decisions, that is where the Western Australian Parliament is today.

Whether these examples are factual, or if they are a way in which some Nyungar rationalise colonisation and settler inscription in the landscape, further appropriating non-Aboriginal belonging, is in this instance relatively unimportant. It is a 'tactic' to move Aboriginal Australia into the present, to show that it is visible within the non-Aboriginal landscape to those who 'know' (see also Jacobs 1996: 121). What is far more interesting is that these claims appear to be generally accepted and remain unchallenged, not only by tourists, but also by Australian guests and Greg's non-Aboriginal colleagues on this tour. As a result, the tour guides not only demonstrate the

[48] It has been documented (for example in Berndt and Berndt's edited volume *Aborigines of the West: Their Past and Their Present*) that part of the Nyungar male initiation was a nasal septum piercing. This, however, was never mentioned by Greg on his tours.

divergent views of landscapes, but also how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians use those divergent views to converge and share the landscape.

Playing into these views of the landscape, and the ability to share the landscape due to those views, is the fundamentally different understanding of the Dreaming in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world views. At the beginning of the tour, the REX host (pers. comm. 2010) would point out that

> Perth City was established as part of the Swan River Colony in 1829, when London sent orders to name the West Coast a British Territory, due to rumours of the French looking to colonise the area. Now as we sail downriver, away from Perth, we begin our journey through time from 1829 back thousands of years into the Dreamtime.

By saying that "we begin our journey through time from 1829 back thousands of years to the Dreamtime," the REX host not only exemplifies the tourist myth of the timeless Aborigine, but also a different perspective on an 'Aboriginal' time and the continued perception that Aboriginal history is something pre-colonial. It showcases two different imaginations, and is therefore a clear juxtaposition of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian modes of thought. Importantly, through this juxtaposition, the Dreaming is made eternal and unchanging, while the meaning of Aboriginal Australian involvement in contact history is continued to be denied. As such, the REX host displays one of the most common misunderstandings of the Dreaming. While to non-Aboriginal Australia the Dreamtime is something located in the usually distant past, to Aboriginal Australians it is in fact something that is ongoing, preferring the term Dreaming over the term Dreamtime (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2009). In relation to the landscape this means that the Dreaming continues to be involved in the shaping of the land (see also Magowan 2001b), having the land look after itself, and appropriate the Nyungar's place within a world that has been altered through the actions of non-Aboriginal Australia. Indeed, Myers (1986: 48, original emphasis) says for the Pintupi that "both the country (the landscape and its form) and the people are thought to be "from The

Dreaming" (*tjukurrtjanu*), the ground of being." This further indicates the continuing effects the Dreaming has on the present.

As a result, I would argue that the way in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians are working together here to appropriate each others' presence could have been an interesting approach to reconciliation if that had been its purpose. Instead, it was a mere business venture which, unfortunately, failed. However, the failure of the tour as a business venture does not necessarily mean a failure of the reconciliation process in general, or 'dialogic reconciliation' specifically. As has been said, reconciliation was never the purpose of the Swan River Dreaming Tour, and perhaps it does indicate that the two perspectives are irreconcilable. Nevertheless, I would argue that the possibility of reconciliation has been demonstrated to a certain extent by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working together on creating mutual understanding, even if they had to adhere to stereotypes to do so. The tour did fulfil the tourists' desire for something more than their normal lives,[49] by contrasting Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal views without becoming controversial or embittered. Significantly, though, the tour was very much about the past, about what it *used* to be like to be Aboriginal in contact with settlers. The present was most represented within the landscape, which is supposed to be independent of both Aboriginal and settler Australians - *looking after itself*. In this way the tour provided an insight into the 'oppositional' history, with both sides sharing their views, while the landscape remains an independent onlooker and only becomes contested and divergent due to the actions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, providing the "middle ground" (White 1991) needed for reconciliation.

[49] See also "Wadjemup Bus Tour: A Tourism Perspective" later on in this chapter.

Reconciliation and the Importance of Indigenisation

The most popular and prominent way in which non-Aboriginal Australia enters the 'middle ground' (White 1991) and becomes involved in the reconciliation process are the so-called Reconciliation Action Plans, which have been briefly introduced earlier. During my time in the field, I witnessed the launching of two Reconciliation Action Plans: one by Lotterywest in November 2008,[50] and one by Rottnest Island Authority in February 2009. The latter used the opportunity of the Reconciliation Action Plan launch to also launch the Wadjemup Bus Tour,[51] set up in cooperation with Greg Nannup's Indigenous Tours WA, which would run daily with Greg's father Noel Nannup as a guide. Both the Lotterywest and the Rottnest Island Authority plans are divided into four sections: relationships, respect, opportunities, and tracking of progress and reporting. All four sections define the actions/tasks that are going to be taken, who is responsible for those actions/tasks, a timeline for the actions/tasks, and the measurable target/desired outcome of each action/task. In both Reconciliation Action Plans the section on respect is the most extensive.

What Lotterywest and Rottnest Island Authority, along with many other agencies, do here is exactly what Eyben (2007: 33) describes as her 'mistake' while working in the transnational development business, namely focusing "on categories instead of relations" with the result of building models of reconciliation and "unintentionally strengthening the objectification process." Translated to the issue of reconciliation in Australia this means that agencies are focusing on distinct categories and using them to make plans to improve the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, while avoiding the local context and moving the actual relationships into the background - thus creating a double landscape (Mattingly et al. 2002: 745-746, see also Chapter One). In other words, these Reconciliation Action Plans inadvertently reinforce

[50] "Lotterywest (the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia) operates according to the provisions of the Lotteries Commission Act 1990 (as amended), as a statutory authority responsible for selling lottery games and distributing the proceeds for the benefit of the Western Australian community" (Lotterywest 2008: 7).

[51] Wadjemup is the Aboriginal name for Rottnest Island. It translates as "place across the water where the spirits are" (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2010).

the existence of both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes simultaneously, instead of merging them.

For their launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan, Lotterywest invited Sabrina to do a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony. She was joined by her son, Max, his wife, Haley, and some other members of their extended family. Lotterywest began the launch by having their CEO give a short welcome before introducing Sabrina, who was wearing a wool hat in the Aboriginal colours as she always does on occasions like these. Sabrina gave the Welcome to Country, while at the same time Max took care of the Smoking Ceremony. During her Welcome to Country, Sabrina explained that a Smoking Ceremony is used to ask the bad spirits to go away and to invite the good spirits to join the occasion. She also went on to explain that she always tell people not to say "I am Aboriginal," but to say more specifically, for example, "I am Balardong" or "I am Balardong-Nyungar" to claim their heritage, make it specific and unquestionable and to emphasise their pride in it. Moreover, she argues that non-Indigenous people also have a right to claim that heritage, because they are all Australians, thereby mixing the variety of Aboriginal identity with the uniform Australian. Addressing the largely non-Aboriginal audience, Sabrina (pers. comm. 2009) once again claims, as she did in the cross-cultural awareness workshop in Southern Cross:

> Your culture is the Aboriginal culture of Australia, and it's up to you to find that culture. Because you are, I am, we are, Australian.

This is in line with Noel Nannup (pers. comm. 2010), who argues that everyone who has lived in Australia for more than seven years can claim a connection to the land and that everyone who was born in Australia can claim to be an Aboriginal Australian - although arguably in a different sense.[52]

> You can be Aboriginal through skin or through birth. Being Aboriginal through skin, you belong to a group. You're not just Aboriginal,

[52] See also Chapter Two where Jared claims that he calls everyone his brothers and sisters, thereby allowing non-Aboriginal Australians to claim a form of Aboriginality.

> you're Nyungar, you're Whadjuk. If you're born in Australia, you are Aboriginal. (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2010)

By saying this, Noel, similarly to Sabrina, incorporates the 'other' from his perspective, that is 'white' Australia, into the Aboriginal self, in a way utilising reverse assimilation. Importantly, however, by stressing that Aboriginality can be claimed through skin and/ or birth, Noel is still making a conscious distinction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, while at the same time allowing non-Aboriginal Australians to claim Aboriginality based on their birth. Furthermore, with this Nyungar are incorporating what Mulcock (2006: 90) calls the "inevitable process of indigenisation" into the Aboriginal Australian discourse. By asserting that non-Aboriginal Australians have the right to claim some form of Aboriginality, Nyungar invite their non-Aboriginal counterparts to step out of their known ideological landscape and to step into the Aboriginal one. In her work, Mulcock (2006) explores non-Aboriginal expressions in relation to land, without having been invited into the Aboriginal landscape, and how they often use recognised Aboriginal ways of talking about the landscape to appropriate their own place within Australia.

> Indigeneity, if not Aboriginality, has become a rather sought after and celebrated quality - partly *because* of its moral implications for rights and attachment to place - which are inextricably entwined with notions of belonging. It is important to note, however, that when indigeneity is claimed by those who have been born on Australian soil but are not of Aboriginal descent, it is not always done with the intention of displacement, but often with the desire for 'emplacement'. (Mulcock 2006: 100, original emphasis)

When Sabrina and Noel say that non-Aboriginal Australians can claim an Aboriginal heritage, they are actively giving them a place to, and allowing them to, belong. In other words, Sabrina and Noel are both enabling that 'emplacement' and simultaneously are emplacing non-Aboriginal Australians within the Aboriginal landscape.

Nevertheless, while Nyungar like Sabrina and Noel support the idea of indigenisation, it should also be mentioned that this theory has its critics. Bell (1997: 53), for example,

criticises authors Lynn Andrews and Marlo Morgan, who claim their works to be true accounts but are actually classified as fictional by the book industry, for their new age approach to Indigenous knowledge, stating that their representations of Aboriginal life are "romantic and ahistoric." According to Bell (1997: 53), Andrews and Morgan thus create a mysterious account of their interaction with Indigenous people, claiming that their informants "hold the keys to true and authentic ways of knowing." The irony of the matter is, Bell (1997: 53) continues to point out, that by employing new age views the dominant society basically requests Aboriginal people to solve their problems for them, while continuing to ignore the persistent inequalities and need for reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

Rose (2005: 58) takes this a step further, arguing that "this invasion via mysticism replicated the process of colonisation of land; it discovers, claims, and opens up indigenous culture as another unowned region, a cultural terra nullius." By this line of thought, indigenisation becomes a dangerous concept as it can serve "as a superficial philosophy which can actually be destructive in its ignorance and lack of awareness of Aboriginal ways of being" (pers. comm. Higgins-Desbiolles 2011). In fact, "these philosophies de-contextualise Indigenous beliefs and erase their cultural histories of dispossession, racism and oppression in the process" (Magowan 2005: 97).

Finally, it has to be noted that the idea of indigenisation is by and large deployed only in connection with claims to land, a sense of belonging to land. However, "becoming Aboriginal would take not only a connection to country, but a change in spirit and the development of interdependence and interconnectedness in relationships akin to those of Indigenous Australians" (pers. comm. Higgins-Desbiolles 2011), implying that while today Native Title claims are the main way to assert an Aboriginal identity, there is much more to being Aboriginal than the inherent connection to country. It is here that the limits of indigenisation become particularly clear; if everyone can claim Aboriginality, Native Title not only becomes unattainable but also meaningless. Arguably, however, Aboriginal people like Noel and Sabrina allow for indigenisation in a purely ideological way and as an attempt to appease non-Aboriginal people. As a

result, it can be said that while indigenisation in relation to land is helpful in creating a sense of belonging, in all other aspects it is a rather problematic concept that needs to be treated with care.

Returning to Sabrina's Welcome to Country, she eventually introduced another member of Lotterywest who gave a short speech after acknowledging the Nyungar as the traditional owners of the land we were standing on. This was followed by a didjeridu playing and dance performance, with the launch being brought to a finish by the raising of three flags: the Australian, Aboriginal, and Western Australian. According to Lotterywest, the raising of they flags is indeed something they do every morning (although as less of a spectacle and without witnesses). In some ways, this active performance of what is perceived as 'traditional' Aboriginal culture "is indicative of the enduring colonial attitudes that [...] Indigenous people are participating [in] to add colour and value, not as Indigenous people with rights that must be respected" (Higgins-Desbiolles 2005: 235).

Furthermore, it is worthwhile mentioning here that this performance also appears somewhat displaced, considering the didjeridu is not 'traditional' to the southwest at all (pers. comm. Debra and Sabrina 2008, Magowan 2005). Rather, it is only recently that the didjeridu has become a symbol for Aboriginality which is deeply lodged in the Australian imagination (Magowan 2005: 80). Indeed, didjeridus and didjeridu music have become popular tourism products, because they "represent 'Aboriginality' (images and sounds that signify indigenous identity) in particular ways, which are themselves linked more to tropes of exotic 'world' music than to the expressions of local Aboriginal musicians" (Gibson and Connell 2003: 175). As such, didjeridus also fit into the 'new age' movement as a symbol of 'traditional' Aboriginality.

> The didjeridu operates as a cultural symbol in a variety of ways within tourist cultures: as an object/souvenir; as an artefact linked to myths of 'static' and 'primitive' Australian indigenous cultures (and consumed as part of a neo-tribal' aesthetic); as a backpacker activity (didjeridu lessons); and as another instrument/sound incorporated into the

> cultural policies of ‘world’ and ‘new age’ music. (Gibson and Connell 2003: 182)

It therefore becomes apparent that some Nyungar utilise the ‘new age’ discourse in order to offer something to the tourism market, as well as appropriating and reconfirming their own status as Aboriginal. This showcases more than anything how “Nyungar are reforming corporeal dispositions for their own embodied expressions of indigeneity and cultural difference” (Magowan 2000: 314) by using the didjeridu with “its status as an icon of Aboriginality” (Magowan 2005: 80). In other words, while Aboriginal people have lost “control of their own representations of Indigeneity” (Magowan 2005: 86), they are using the items that have been rendered museum objects by the colonial power to reinforce their own Aboriginality in ways accepted by the dominant society.

While the way in which Nyungar utilise the didjeridu during such performances goes directly against Sabrina’s emphasis on particularity in identity claims, it at the same time underlines the symbolism of Sabrina’s red-yellow-black wool hat and implies the existence of a larger, universal, Aboriginal Australian identity, which can be interpreted as a confusion over identity. It is important to mention, however, that Nyungar did not initiate the Welcome to Country ceremonies. Rather, it is non-Aboriginal Australia that by and large wishes to acknowledge them in this way (Magowan 2000: 314), pointing towards the State’s influence on the ‘survival’ of culture.

Reconciliation and the Idea of State Sponsored Culture

> As institutions increasingly recognise the place of indigenous people in the political structures of white society, and request them to endorse their use of indigenous land through performance, we might ask ourselves to what extent is the nation responsible for the cultural borrowing that is arising from groups whose traditions have died out? (Magowan 2000: 314)

With institutions taking on an ever larger role in the recognition of Aboriginal Australia, what exactly is Aboriginal in an urban context becomes questionable. The launch of Lotterywest's Reconciliation Action Plan in the previous section, for instance, provides an example of what Cowlishaw (2010: 221) has termed "state sponsored culture." Cowlishaw (2010) argues that most, if not all, displays of Aboriginal culture in suburbia are not in fact necessarily Aboriginal, but symbols recognised as Aboriginal by the state. As a result, a rather shallow and stereotypical view of Aboriginality is created, homogenising the Aboriginal to conveniently position it as the 'other' to the dominant society. Aboriginal Australia is thus labelled and put into pre-defined categories, reinforcing their position as an antiquity rather than as independent people with their own history living in the twenty-first century.

The most common portrayals of Aboriginal culture in urban environments include, but are not limited to, paintings recognised as Aboriginal in public areas,[53] flying the Aboriginal flag, and official ceremonies such as Welcomes to Country. The latter are a frequently occurring example of state sponsored culture at my field site. In fact, as I learned while volunteering with the Aboriginal Tourism Unit at Tourism Western Australia from February to September 2009, every government-funded event in Western Australia has to incorporate a Welcome to Country given by an appropriate Aboriginal

[53] For example, there are 'art galleries' around Perth which are targeted at tourists. They claim all their products to be 'authentically' Aboriginal, however, upon closer inspection one will quickly find that all their items are mass produced and in fact 'made in China' or 'made in Taiwan.' Interestingly, when I went into an official tourist information centre in Perth's city centre, asking about Aboriginal tours in Perth, they also recommended that I go to one of those tourist-target 'art galleries' that are not recognised as Aboriginal tourism products by Tourism Western Australia. One notable difference was a gallery called True Blue in Fremantle. While they also sold mass produced goods, all their 'authentic' Aboriginal art had tags on them with more information about the artist and their background. True Blue also has artists in residence and is recognised as an Aboriginal tourism business by Tourism Western Australia.

elder, that is someone who was 'traditionally' responsible for the stretch of land where the ceremony is being held, thereby making it quite literally a state sponsored display of Aboriginal culture, substantialising a generic Aboriginality and banalising the process of actual recognition. During those state sponsored events, the Welcome to Country can often appear forced instead of heartfelt, especially when listening to non-Aboriginal responses and acknowledgements, thus further underlining their state sponsored nature. In short, it stands to reason that many events in Western Australia incorporate Welcome to Country ceremonies in order to qualify for government subsidy rather than actually wanting to acknowledge Aboriginal people in that way, emphasising the businesslike aspect of reconciliation. This is further underlined by the fact that Aboriginal elders can request substantial amounts of money in payment for the performance of a Welcome to Country. In a way then, the discourse about the distinction between 'practical' and 'symbolic' reconciliation is turned on its head, as the 'practical' becomes 'symbolic' - the introduction of a government subsidy to acknowledge Aboriginal culture exemplifies not only the commoditisation of culture, but also the neocolonial discourse in which Aboriginal culture is still being oppressed.[54] Nevertheless, it is not my intention to diminish the importance of Welcome to Country Ceremonies to the reconciliation movement, as the recognition of Aboriginal culture in the public sphere alone is a step forward.

It is thus necessary to draw a distinction here between two kinds of Welcomes to Country as I experienced them during my time in field. The Welcomes to Country as described in this chapter for Lotterywest and Rottnest Island Authority, I would term 'state instituted' Welcomes to Country. These Welcomes to Country are requested by the state and involve some kind of interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal

[54] It should be mentioned here that the Western Australian Liberal Party recently put forward a motion to abolish Welcomes to Country as part of all official events, because they were seen as unnecessary. In addition, the Western Australian Liberal Party state president, Barry Court's, suggestion that the Aboriginal flag itself was unnecessary provoked great controversy within Western Australia (The West Australian 07/08/2011). Opposition to Court's comments instead emphasised that "the Aboriginal community has a distinct identity and that has been accepted in Australia and they should have their own flag" (Ripper as cited in The West Australian 07/08/2011). The motivation behind those comments made by the opposition is questionable, but it goes to show the continued need for the reconciliation movement to find a middle ground between those state sponsored displays and genuine acknowledgements of Aboriginal culture.

people during the ceremony. I hesitate to call it a solid interaction between the two sides, however, because apart from thanking and referring back to each other, there is fairly little actual interaction taking place; it is quite scripted and cut off, making it a very limited intersubjectivity circumscribed by a repeatable structure. This limited interaction during the ceremony and the scripted acknowledgement of Nyungar country by the non-Aboriginal organisers underline the impression that Welcomes to Country are something that have to be done rather than something that is desired to be done by Aboriginal people.

On the other hand, there is what I would term 'public instituted' Welcomes to Country, because they tend to be organised either by individuals who have a genuine desire to acknowledge Aboriginal Australia or by Aboriginal Australians themselves. In 'public instituted' Welcomes to Country, there is usually no response by non-Aboriginal people involved, and as such they are often more genuine in the sense that they are not funded by the government. For example, Greg and Noel Nannup make a Welcome to Country part of each and every one of their tours, and Aboriginal guest lecturers - no matter what Aboriginal background they come from - at the University of Western Australia always acknowledge Nyungar country before commencing their lecture. Of course, it could be argued that these 'public instituted' Welcomes to Country represent an individual submission to recognised patterns of Aboriginality. However, at the same time, it can also be argued that this 'submission' is in fact a counter-discursive strategy, in de Certeau's (1984) sense, to move Aboriginality into the public sphere, into the visible, without applying the commodification of culture symbolism.

In turn it can then be argued that the state utilises event sponsorship to juxtapose Aboriginal Australia - the 'other' - with the dominant non-Aboriginal Australia. By doing so, they demonstrate a stereotypical Aboriginal mode of thought through the symbols recognised as Aboriginal, while situating them as timeless and unchanging, fulfilling a pre-colonial fantasy. Thereby the state is actively disregarding the variety of Aboriginality as stressed by Sabrina in her Welcome to Country to Lotterywest's Reconciliation Action Plan launch. Importantly, however, with this deliberate

juxtaposition the state simultaneously recognises that there is an Aboriginality in the city. Outside the Welcome to Country context, this is also underlined by Ken Colbung's (1980: 102, original emphasis) words as he wrote:

> People say some of us in the southern states have lost our culture. But we still have remnants of it: we are still aware of *what we are*, and *who we are*.

These remnants Colbung mentions can be said to apply to the particularity within identity claims as Sabrina stresses them, with the awareness of being applicable to a more universal Aboriginality.

It thus becomes apparent that even though it is surrounded and influenced by non-Aboriginal mythologising, urban Australia is not without Aboriginal culture. In fact, Cowlishaw (2011: 12) locates "cultural revival as part of suburban mythologising rather than ethnogenesis," arguing that it is instigated and supported more by non-Aboriginal aspirations than Aboriginal expressions of shared identity. Accordingly, what is being portrayed in state sponsored culture is not "'Aboriginal culture' [...] in changed conditions" (Cowlishaw 2010: 222), but rather an Aboriginal culture which has been cultivated, tamed even, to enliven, complement, and embellish non-Aboriginal Australian society. Indeed, to present Nyungar culture in other conditions would be to question and confront 'traditional' models of Aboriginality, something that has been avoided by anthropologists through preferring to work in the rural north rather than the urban south. Following on from this, it becomes apparent that non-Aboriginal Australia does not see Aboriginality as something that is actually done, a lived experience or a legitimate way of life. Instead, non-Aboriginal Australia experiences Aboriginality, by and large, as a set of symbols that create the stereotypes - throwing boomerangs and spears, collecting bush tucker, and cooking damper in the camp fire (Cowlishaw 2011: 14).

Nevertheless, just because they may be 'invented traditions' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), stereotypes, and myths, does not necessarily preclude that they are false in a

sociological sense (Greig et al. 2003). From a sociological view, "*myth* represents a cultural reference-point that people use to make sense of their surrounding social and physical world, and helps orient their action" (Williams 1980: 177 as cited in Greig et al. 2003: 160, original emphasis). It can thus be argued that myth as a cultural reference-point represents another form of, or extension of, categorisation and labelling. I would hence suggest it is more important to question the absence of Aboriginal Australia from the non-Aboriginal Australian mythopoeia rather than questioning the reliability of Australian myths. In addition, it goes to show that what Australia has seen is a separation of two mythologies, one for non-Aboriginal and one for Aboriginal Australia, both created by the dominant non-Aboriginal society.[55] In other words, it is important to remember that while non-Aboriginal Australia created their own myths about themselves and their nation, Aboriginal Australia did not. What is generally perceived as Aboriginal has not been defined as such by Aboriginal people themselves, but by non-Aboriginal Australian society.

In that connection, Langton (1993: 27) wrote that there is a widespread, unfounded, belief that Aboriginal people are best at depicting what it is to be Aboriginal, because being so is thought to give them greater insight into Aboriginal culture. In fact, during her Ronald M. and Catherine H. Berndt Memorial Lecture at the University of Western Australia in 2009, Langton (pers. comm. 2009) explicitly stated that she believed this thought to be untrue. Using herself as an example, Langton explained that people often assumed she knew more about Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal scholars - just because she is Aboriginal herself. She stressed the vast research that the Berndts carried

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[55] Popular non-Aboriginal Australian 'myths' are wide ranging, but most of them intertwine: mateship and egalitarianism, a 'fair go' for everyone, the workingman's paradise, the love of the underdog and the Anzac legend are all central to Australian society (Chesterman and Galligan 1999, Graetz 2002, Greig et al. 2003, Horne 2005[1964], Van Krieken et al. 2000). Indeed, while some 'myths' like that of the workingman's paradise stem from actual advancements in the Australian State - Australia was the first country to introduce a forty-hour work week, and offered comparatively high salaries to white workers (Greig et al. 2003: 169) - the idea of a 'fair go' can be said to be the outstanding Australian characteristic which is grounded more in the desires than actual achievements of Australia (Horne 2005[1964]: 20). The phrase 'fair go' penetrates all areas of social life, including marketing and advertising. While people will often be heard talking about wanting a 'fair go,' they also require them for other, specifically the underdog (Horne 2005[1964]: 21). It is important to note here, though, that Aboriginal Australians have never been seen as underdogs (Horne 2005[1964]: 22), which points to their exclusion from popular Australian myths. Indeed, Jacobs (1996: 107) even argues that "Aborigines were positioned outside the civilisation' of the emergent city: a pure negativity against which settlers constituted their sense of Self."

out throughout all of Australia with a wide array of Aboriginal groups, and that through this research they gained insights that she herself would have never had the opportunity, or would have thought, of uncovering. In line with Langton's argument (1993, pers. comm. 2009), it can then be said that to assume that Aboriginal people have greater insight into Aboriginal culture just because they are Aboriginal is essentially false and can even be called racist, because it implies a belief that all Aboriginal Australians are the same. As a result, Aboriginal people often have to adhere to these stereotypes as there is a belief that there is a 'right' way to be Aboriginal, a 'true' Aboriginality (Langton 1993: 27). Aboriginality, however, is a colonial label.

The Negotiation of Aboriginality

In order to understand how Aboriginality functions as a colonial label, it is necessary at this point to take a step back and consider what has been discussed so far. The indigenisation of non-Aboriginal Australia and the idea of state sponsored culture which have been described in the previous sections underline the Nyungar's position as the "subaltern" or "historically muted subject" (Spivak 1988: 295) as described in Chapter One. Processes of place-making, as described in Chapter Two, therefore become doubly important: they not only fortify the Nyungar's presence in the landscape, but also function in terms of identity formation. Indeed, I would argue place-making and identity formation are inextricably linked, because "it is within the landscape that we find and produce our full sense of human being" (Frankland 2008: 98, see also Feld and Basso 1996: 11, Morphy 1995: 205). In other words, it is with regards to our environment, the physical landscape around us as well as the people around us, that we identify ourselves and realise what we stand for. What we are we are in relation to others, in the context of history.

> I am sure that people who are not of Aboriginal descent are unaware of the strong emotional feeling we have for a particular place. We see it as part of our spiritual background; and that is what is being constantly undermined. (Colbung 1980: 101)

As has been widely documented, not least of all in colonial documents, in Nyungar country there are no so-called 'full-blood' Aboriginal people left. In fact, it is often difficult to tell if someone is Aboriginal or not - the gene pool is so diverse that Nyungar appearance ranges all the way from dark skin and dark hair to fair skin, blonde hair, and blue eyes. Importantly, however, whoever has the least amount of Aboriginal 'blood' in them will claim that Aboriginality. This is exemplified by Waters (as cited in Cerulo 1997: 389) who argues that "ethnic identity [is] the product of personal choice - a social category individuals actively decide to adopt or stress." Instead of only *being* Nyungar, they are actively *becoming* Nyungar by claiming that identity and reinforcing it by acting it out (see also Butler 1988: 522). It becomes a 'project,' a "strategy of survival," as Butler (1988: 522) argued in the case of gender performance. According to this theory, the goal of Aboriginality as a project is cultural survival, with its main strategy being the continued performance of Aboriginality (see also Chapter Two). At the same time this means, however, that if those involved do not succeed in performing their Aboriginality as is expected of them (state sponsored culture), they are likely to be punished for it - for example by being labelled as not being a 'real' Aboriginal, or presenting an 'inauthentic' experience.

There is thus a question of definition, a question of what it means and what it is to be Aboriginal and to whom. In Chapter One, I have already briefly mentioned that when two Aboriginal people meet for the first time they will state their full names and say which country they belong to, through which they can place each other in relation to themselves and their families. They will know how they are connected and possibly even related to each other. If their Aboriginal connection is through the mother, they will also state their mother's birth name as it may tell the other person more about them than their actual surname. Indeed, "the ability of suburban Aboriginal people to discover common relatives and common stories of the past when meeting for the first time is striking" (Cowlishaw 2011: 10). Nevertheless, it remains an often difficult task for Aboriginal people to figure out who has a right to claim Aboriginality and who has not, as it is something that is placed in-between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes. What non-Aboriginal Australia considers to be Aboriginal is frequently

disconcerting for Aboriginal Australia due to the 'oppositional' history (see also Langton 1993: 28-29). The difficulty to determine who is and who is not Aboriginal therefore further arises from the dominantly used definition, as laid down by the Commonwealth and the Australian High Court which render an Aboriginal person as someone "who is a descendant of an indigenous habitant of Australia, identifies as Aboriginal, and is recognised as Aboriginal by members of the community in which he or she lives as Aboriginal" (Langton 1993: 29). Consequently, in theory those who are already recognised as Aboriginal by their community have the power to deny others Aboriginality as part of that community. What is Aboriginality is therefore always dependent on others, that is, it is always negotiated through the interaction between people.

The intersubjective property of Aboriginality further implies that Aboriginality is defined by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people interdependently. Their individual ideas of Aboriginality will be constantly revised through contact, in whatever form, with the other. In this regard Langton (1993: 34-35) distinguishes between three categories of contact that build the foundation of Aboriginality both culturally and textually. In broad terms it is a distinction of different levels of intersubjectivity, with category one being Aboriginal people interacting with each other in the Aboriginal landscape. Category two, on the other hand, denotes the non-Aboriginal landscape, inhabited by non-Aboriginal Australians who lack solid first-hand experience with Aboriginal people, and instead stereotyping, iconising, and mythologising them as the 'other.' Finally, the third level is in-between the landscapes with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people interacting with each other.

According to Langton's (1993) categories, then, those Aboriginal people living in remote parts of the country in some ways represent the complete opposite to those non-Aboriginal people in category two. While these Aboriginal people "know of, have seen, and have some explanation of fences, windmills, four wheel drive vehicle tracks and other evidence which whites leave behind [...] usually there is no one to explain" (Langton 1993: 34). On the other hand, stereotypes and myths produced by

non-Aboriginal Australians about their Aboriginal counterparts today are not representations that derived from a lack of explanation. Instead, "they are inherited, imagined representations" (Langton 1993: 34-35) that date back to the time of first settlement and the broader myths of the savage (see Jahoda 1999). Consequently, the only working category of Aboriginality is produced in the interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, where pre-conceived ideals are constantly challenged and revised.

Nevertheless, in how far non-Aboriginal people actually engage in discourses represented by Langton's third category, rather than giving into the far easier option of reproducing myths and stereotypes as described in category two, remains questionable.[56] Especially in urban contexts, and when considering popular mainstream displays of Aboriginal culture, such as a Welcome to Country, on has to wonder what exactly is being represented - an attempt to showcase Aboriginal culture as experienced by the Aboriginal community in order to revise existing views held by non-Aboriginal Australians, or Aboriginal culture as imagined by the wider Australian community that reinforces their pre-existing views.

> Thus, when the nation offers to recognise Aborigines, it is not the actual alterity of present Aboriginal citizens they are interested in, but rather a cultural fantasy of people who are symbolically different but practically the same. It is thus not possible for Aboriginal social identity to be simply their own business. (Cowlishaw 2011: 10)

This statement clearly exemplifies the constraints that non-Aboriginal Australia put on their Aboriginal counterparts by dictating what is and what is not 'authentically' Aboriginal. Magowan (2007: 65) argues in this connection that "there is a danger that what the public read as 'authentic' images of indigenous life may disempower and constrain their social, political and economic potentialities by promoting a stereotype of cultural heritage."

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[56] See for example my account of the Swan River Dreaming Tour earlier in this chapter.

As a result, I would suggest that the Aboriginality that is defined in urban contexts lies somewhere between Langton's (1993) categories two and three. There is an interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, but it is so heavily influenced by non-Aboriginal mythopoeia that it disregards the actuality of a contemporary Aboriginal way of life. Thus, although Langton attempts to describe different levels of intersubjectivity, different levels of relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, we have come full circle to Eyben's (2007) criticism of labelling and categorisation. As much as we try to categorise our lives and relationships to make sense of our world, categories disregard the complexities of individual situations. The same problem can be found with Reconciliation Action Plans, where categories exist to measure the success and failure of such plans.

Reconciliation Action Plans and the Idea of Measuring Success and Failure

The majority of Lotterywest's Reconciliation Action Plan is built around their grant scheme and raising cultural awareness. All of Lotterywest's proceeds go back into Western Australian communities, and by including their grant schemes in their Reconciliation Action Plan they are attempting to make those grants more accessible, not only to urban Aboriginal people, but in remote areas as well. It is therefore one of their targets to have "at least 4 visits to remote Aboriginal communities, [and a] success rate of 80% or more for grant applications from Indigenous organisations" (Lotterywest 2008: 11). They further aim to have all their staff undergo cultural education over the course of three years, with a continuation of attendance and support of "cultural learning events and celebrations organized by Aboriginal people and providing these opportunities to all staff, retailers (when appropriate) and Board members (when appropriate)" (Lotterywest 2008: 15). In addition they wish to not only fly the flags daily and include Welcomes to Country at significant events, but to have Indigenous employees have "access to cultural leave to celebrate cultural days" (Lotterywest 2008: 15). By keeping such a range in the achievability of their aims and actions, Lotterywest attempts to ensure having challenging goals as well as easily achievable ones to ensure

at least some success, or give an appearance of success, of their Reconciliation Action Plan.

What becomes apparent through this brief description of what is incorporated in Lotterywest's Reconciliation Action Plan goes back to Eyben's (2007) criticism of categorisation. Instead of focusing on direct relationships, Lotterywest, as well as many other agencies with Reconciliation Action Plans, develop categories to which they can attribute distinct aims and goals, thereby substantialising the process and making it measurable. This, Eyben (2007) argues, is particularly visible in bureaucracy where it is often demanded that important facts are condensed into bullet points no more than a page long. Bureaucracy leaves no space for the complexity of real life and relationships. Instead, it has to be possible to measure everything in terms of success and failure, completely disregarding that "policy discourses of 'success' and 'failure' conceal the local social effects of development interventions" (Mosse 2006: 940). Mosse (2006: 940) therefore argues that failure in policy discourses "is a failure to interpret," because it "is not the failure to turn design into reality, but a certain disarticulation between practices and their rationalising models." Thus while the relationship building components of Lotterywest's Reconciliation Action Plan might be more difficult to achieve due to the necessary level of interpretation, more trivial actions such as the daily raising of the flags increases Lotterywest's reconciliation success rate.[57]

Arguably, the place most in need of a Reconciliation Action Plan is Rottnest Island, not least of all because of its cruel history for Aboriginal people.[58] The long refusal to recognise Rottnest Island's importance in Aboriginal history and its continuous promotion as a leisure resort, is most likely also the reason for the high amount of (media) interest generated by the launch of the Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan. When I was on board the ferry to Rottnest Island for the launch, I was surprised to see most of Perth and Fremantle's Aboriginal communities

[57] To date Lotterywest has not released any information regarding the success of their Reconciliation Action Plan.

[58] For more details, see Chapter One.

there to celebrate the launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan. I found this surprising, because many Aboriginal people do not like going to Rottnest Island, not only due to its brutal prison history, but also because there are still so many Aboriginal people buried on the island. While it could be argued that by attending they were making a conscious political statement rendering themselves visible in a place so many of them have been exiled to, removed and invisible from the mainland, I would suggest that it was also a matter of supporting an important member of the community and his attempt to make a difference, therefore falling more into the category of displaying kin relations and importance of family rather than politics. As such, it is an act that demonstrates the relational aspects of Nyungar life just as much as it does the political. In fact, one of Nyungar women (pers. comm. 2009) I spoke to said:

> I used to work on Rottnest Island for four years after I finished school, in a bout of teenage rebellion I guess. That was twenty-two years ago and I haven't been back since. I swore I'd never go back. I'm only going back today for Noel.

She brings up and interesting point. Her testimony conveys that she is not going to Rottnest Island on that day in support of the Reconciliation Action Plan, but in support of Noel Nannup. It shows her respect for the Nyungar elder who would travel to Rottnest Island every single day to conduct the Wadjemup Bus Tour.

The actual launch took place outside, in pouring rain, and began with a ceremonial dance by an Aboriginal dance group called "Common Ground," which in many ways presented a stark reminder of the colonial period's "professional savages" as described by Poignant (2004), also providing further evidence for Muldoon's (2003: 187) argument of reconciliation as the extension of colonial power. The Aboriginal people Poignant (2004) describes in her account were persuaded - or even kidnapped - by an English showman, who would take them around the world, exhibit them, and have them perform in front of a curious 'civilised' audience. While in Chapter One I already described Poignant's (2004) journey around the world, tracing the steps of those Aboriginal people, trying to relocate their corpses to return them to the country they

came from, it is important to mention her work again at this point in relation to the performance of perceived Aboriginality, which effectively is turned into a spectacle (see also Mills 1999).

From my volunteer work with Tourism WA at the time I knew that Rottnest Island Authority had particularly invited members of Perth and Fremantle's Aboriginal community to attend the launch. The image the spectacle of the Reconciliation Action Plan launch was supposed to convey was one of forgiveness: Aboriginal people have returned to Rottnest Island, forgiving the non-Aboriginal community for previously exiling them there as prisoners. It is a dark image and it is juxtaposed by comments from the Aboriginal community such as the one above, going for the sole reason of supporting one of their own.

The celebrations were brought to an end by the launch of the Wadjemup Bus Tour, part of the Reconciliation Action Plan under the opportunities section, and which runs under the slogan "No Guilt, No Blame" and also reflects the point of other reconciliation movement components, such as cross-cultural awareness workshops. The slogan is to ensure today's non-Aboriginal Australia that they do not have to feel guilty for something that their ancestors did, and that Aboriginal Australia is not blaming them for their past mistreatment - something that is often assumed as pointed out by Green and Sonn (2006). Moreover, the slogan exemplifies the expected recognition and acknowledgement of non-Aboriginal Australia by Aboriginal Australia as mentioned earlier. To this end, Noel and Greg conducted three short bus tours (thirty minutes instead of an hour and forty-five minutes) to give an impression of what the real tour was going to be like.

Wadjemup Bus Tour: A Tourism Perspective

Wadjemup Bus Tour: A Fieldwork Diary Excerpt

As we travel along the only road around Rottnest Island, Noel begins by telling the guests about Rottnest Island's history as an Aboriginal prison. The prisoners were Aboriginal boys and men from all over Western Australia, and the majority of them were jailed for spearing sheep which had a minimum sentence of seven years. However, according to Noel, most of them did not even realise what they did wrong, due to differing perceptions of ownership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. In connection with this, Noel also explains that he believes Aboriginal women to be emotionally "the toughest women on earth," as they not only endured their men being taken away and imprisoned, but also had to deal with their children being taken away from them, referring to the Stolen Generations.

> No guilt, no blame. We can never change what happened in the past, but we can make sure it's not forgotten and make right for the future. (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2010)

With this Noel repeats the theme of the tour "no guilt, no blame" and begins to speak of the Dreaming, explaining to the guests on his tour that the Dreaming is not somewhere in the past, but that it is right here, in the present. It is continuous. With this we reach a bay that Noel calls *Walga Wa*, the place where all colours are. Noel says that to understand Aboriginal people, to understand the Dreaming, you need to trust your imagination. "The more vivid your imagination, the better you are going to understand me and my people" (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2010).

This is the theme running through the tour from that point forward. Noel gives accounts of Dreamings he researched, Dreamings that are still going on today, and how they are connected to specific events in time. An example of this is his research of the Butterfly Dreaming, which he traced all the way from the coast, meeting Aboriginal people hundreds of kilometres inland, somewhere near Alice Springs, who also follow the Butterfly Dreaming, only knowing that it originated somewhere "over there" in the west. Another example is connected to the birth of an albino humpback whale, through which he traced the birth of a girl in the desert who will become the custodian of a related Dreaming. Noel links this account of his researched Dreamings with more practical explanations of how to hunt specific food, and explanations of Aboriginal words, taking a joking stab at the tourism industry by saying that he likes to hunt crayfish - "now in the tourism industry known as bush tucker" (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2010).

More seriously, Noel explains that the best way to catch a duck, for instance, is by building a narrow trench and putting bait in it. The duck will follow the bait into the trench, but is then trapped, because it cannot open its wings and ducks cannot walk backwards. As for the Aboriginal vocabulary, Noel mentions several Nyungar words including their translations, for example *booka* which is a kangaroo-skin cloak, but can also loosely be translated as 'clothing,' because *kaarta booka* translates as 'hat,' with *kaarta* being the Nyungar word for head. More specifically to Rottnest Island, Noel refers to the quokka, a small macropod which is native to Rottnest Island. According to Noel, the name quokka comes from the desert Aboriginal word *kooka* which translates as 'meat.'

The tour finishes as we drive back into Thompson Bay Settlement, past the Aboriginal burial ground, which Noel says is the largest death in custody burial ground in Australia.

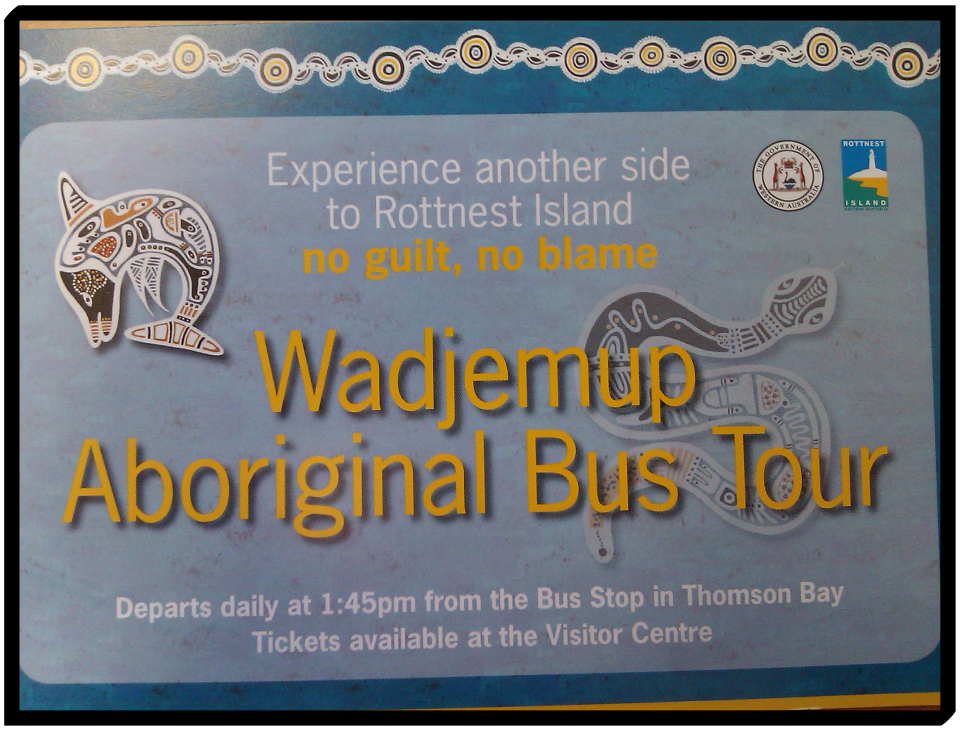

Fig. 13: No Guilt, No Blame (Photo by Carina Hemmers, original marketing collateral by Rottnest Island Authority)

Fig. 14: Quokka (Photo by Carina Hemmers)

There are several issues that need to be noted here with regards to the fieldwork excerpt. Noel mentions that the main offence Aboriginal Australians were arrested and sent to Rottnest Island for was spearing sheep. With this he presents an example of how everyday actions (in this case hunting and gathering specific animals) were rendered illegal by the colonial forces, thereby also pointing to the forced dispossession and removal from land that Aboriginal people experienced. This is important for the place-making process as Noel's emphasis on the importance of imagination to the understanding of Aboriginal culture underlines. Indeed, Gibson (2008: 60) argues that imagination is required not only from non-Aboriginal people to understand the Dreaming and the Aboriginal landscape, but that it is also required from Aboriginal Australians in an effort to re-appropriate the Australian landscape for themselves.

> When applied to landscape, imagination encourages the ability to propose astute what-if scenarios that might help us stimulate some disrupted spaces so that they can become places again. This imagining must be partly speculation and partly remembrance. (Gibson 2008: 61)

Therefore, by stating that "the more vivid your imagination, the better you are going to understand me and my people" (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2010), Noel reasserts "his people" in the Australian landscape and juxtaposes an Aboriginal mode of thought to non-Aboriginal perceptions of the world, implying that if you can imagine things like Aboriginal people do (and due to their dispossession they necessarily have to imagine them, too, according to Gibson), it will take you beyond what is visible to the non-Aboriginal world. Additionally, by appealing to the tourists' own imagination, Noel creates a discourse where there is no 'right' or 'wrong.' All Noel does is provide the tourists with information in form of a story which they then apply to their own imagination, going away with their own individual interpretation of Aboriginality. He therefore adheres to new age beliefs, giving the tourists what they are craving: something more than their normal lives. In other words, they are requiring the 'authenticity' they believe they lack in their everyday lives and which they believe Aboriginal people to hold. This 'authenticity' is achieved by Noel telling the tourists about his background, sharing Dreaming stories, and speaking in language. Furthermore, another element is added to this 'authenticity' with his joking stab at the tourism industry by stating that what he calls crayfish is now more commonly known as bush tucker. This joking statement creates a more intimate rapport with the tourists, implying that in this moment he is sharing something with them that the general tourism industry does not understand. Again, it reinforces the 'authenticity' of the tour.

In this regard, MacCannell (1976) argued that tourists' desire for something 'authentic' could be found in modernity's perception that 'authenticity' lies in the simplicity of others, while modernity itself seems alien and inauthentic. However, Urry (1995: 140), for example, has argued that this search for the 'authentic' cannot be successful as "those being gazed upon come to construct artificial sites which keep the inquisitive tourists away." This is necessary as tourists pose a major disturbance to the 'real life,' a disturbance that would be considered intolerable in all societies (Urry 1990: 9). Therefore, MacCannell (1976) argues, Indigenous tour operators are creating what he termed 'staged authenticity.' Events need to be staged to supply tourists with what they expect to encounter. Jedrej and Nuttall (1996 as cited in Nuttall 1997: 232) even go a

step further by suggesting that tourists inspire Indigenous communities to search for their own 'traditions' as well as elements that tourists would see as traditional. As a result, tourists inspire a "cultural production of authenticity" (Nuttall 1997: 232), which again goes back to the cultural regeneration as pointed out earlier in this chapter - for example through the re-appropriation of cultural artefacts for the reinforcing of cultural identity.

> Non-Aboriginal Australians [and international visitors] enjoy ancient traditions while suspecting the authenticity of the Aboriginal subject; Aboriginal Australians enjoy their traditions while suspecting the authenticity of themselves. (Povinelli 2002: 57)

Nevertheless, the notion of 'authenticity' with regards to Aboriginal tourism remains rather problematic. There are shops, or 'art galleries,' in the Perth area, for example, that claim to be selling 'authentic' Aboriginal art, when in fact it has been manufactured in China or Taiwan. In this case the issue of 'authenticity' becomes less problematic and more straightforward. However, when it comes to tours and direct interaction with Aboriginal people the concept becomes more complex. It is here where Taylor's (2001) concept of 'sincerity' and Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (1994) idea of 'tourism realism' come in as a welcome contrast, providing some distance from the notions implied by 'authenticity.' It should be mentioned, however, that it is not my intention to negate or circumvent the issue of 'authenticity.' Rather, they are supposed to provide alternative perspectives that are not as preoccupied with what is 'real' and what is 'not real' as 'authenticity' is.

Firstly, Taylor (2000: 23) argues that "the notion of sincerity is significantly different from that of authenticity in that it occurs in the zone of contact among participating groups or individuals, rather than appearing as an internal quality of a thing, self, or Other." What is especially important here is that while 'sincerity' implies the actual contact with the 'other,' 'authenticity' does not necessarily do so. As an example, Taylor (2000) describes how in New Zealand tours and Maori performances are sold to tourists as being 'authentic,' but in fact get taken completely out of context. An example for this

is the *haka*, which is performed for tourists. However, usually the *haka* is only performed on special occasions and/or for people of high respect, which is said to also include well-publicised international rugby matches (pers. comm. 2009). Another aspect is that these performances are set in the past - in what is perceived as a 'traditional' Maori village - and tourists are not allowed to interact with the Maori who act as mere performers on stage. Interestingly, according to Filipucci (2002: 85) labelling something as 'traditional' makes it appear 'authentic,' even if in reality it is a recent invention. What is significant about 'sincerity,' then, is that it occurs in the 'contact zone' (Pratt 1992), in-between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes. Finally, the notion of 'sincerity' takes the focus away from the "successful re-production of "objective truths" - authenticities - and towards a view of tourism as embodying communicative events involving values important both to the social actors involved and in themselves" (Taylor 2001: 8-9). In other words, 'sincerity' is not so much about adhering to one image or a correct way to be Aboriginal (Langton 1993), but about both sides of the encounter negotiating what Aboriginality means.

In addition to Taylor's (2001) idea of 'sincerity,' Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1994: 459) make a case point for 'tourism realism,' arguing that "the preoccupation with authenticity is a symptom of doubt, a preoccupation with the relationship of what is given to something that is posited as prior." Put differently, for Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1994), 'authenticity' is too focused on the relationship of something from the past, or 'tradition,' with the present - casting doubts over the legitimacy of our being. They thus contrast their understanding of 'authenticity' with the concept of 'tourism realism' "in relation to virtuality and its effects" (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994: 459). Therefore, they argue, the preoccupation should not be about whether or not a tourist product (as in tours) is 'authentic,' but if it is successful in portraying a realism desired by tourists. It is about the tourist experience.

To argue their point Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1994) use the example of Maasai who perform 'traditional' activities for tourists on a lawn of a colonial estate near Nairobi on a daily basis. Effectively, the Maasai are "performing the "noble

savage" in a carefully and collaboratively constructed ethnographic present" (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994: 235). They are giving the tourist what they desire: a look into a different, simpler lifestyle. At the same time, the tourists do not have to leave the 'safety' of civilisation to get into contact with the 'wild' or 'noble savage.' While Noel does not offer his guests a 'noble savage' persona, he does offer them a different view of the landscape by appealing to their own imagination and thus presenting them with what they believe to be a 'right' way of being Aboriginal (see Langton 1993: 27). Noel thus presents the tourists with a combination of the spiritual and the practical worlds of the Aboriginal Australians, and the non-Aboriginal imagination of it. This is further underlined by Noel's linking of Dreaming stories with more practical explanations of hunting and Aboriginal vocabulary throughout the tour.

Moreover, what the above fieldwork excerpt of the Wadjemup Bus Tour and its subsequent analysis exemplifies is how refocusing the "tourist gaze" (Urry 1990) can ultimately help non-Aboriginal people, tourists and Australians alike, see a new perspective and learn to understand Aboriginal people. As such, when Noel begins the Wadjemup Bus Tour, he symbolically moves the tourist beyond the "tourist gaze" (Urry 1990) by explaining that there are different layers of history and that his tour is about looking at the land, looking at Rottnest Island, through the eyes of those people who know it best: Aboriginal people. In his work, Urry (1990) describes the "tourist gaze" as something integral to every tourist experience, giving insights into everyday lived experience by providing a contrast to our daily lives.

> The tourist gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday experience. Such aspects are viewed because they are taken to be in some sense out of the ordinary. The viewing of such tourist sights often involves different forms of social patterning, with a much greater sensitivity to visual elements of landscape of townscape than normally found in everyday life. People linger over such a gaze which is then normally visually objectified or captured through photographs, postcards, films, models and so on. These enable the gaze to be endlessly reproduced and recaptured. (Urry 1990: 3)

Applied to the Wadjemup Bus Tour, we can then see how Noel, by saying that they are going to look at Rottnest Island through the eyes of Aboriginal people, circumvents a level of the 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990) and invites the tourist to step beyond it. He is offering them a vantage point they are not able to reproduce through modern media and technology, a vantage point that appears to the tourists to be more than the 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990) but is in fact still a level of it. In other words, Noel encourages tourists to utilise a different form of gazing.

In addition it is worthwhile to consider Noel's position in all of this. in his work following on from *The Tourist Gaze*, Urry (1995: 178) describes, citing Morris, how the Sydney Tower became a symbol of modern tourism in Australia in the early 1980s. What is peculiar about this, though, is that "it interpellated Sydney residents as 'citizen/ tourists', becoming at one with 'real' tourists in their gaze on Sydney, and becoming simultaneously the living objects of that gaze" (Urry 1995: 178). To clarify my point, by creating a tourist attraction like the Sydney Tower from scratch, Sydney residents were moved into an in-between landscape that situated them still as residents of Sydney and as tourists of sorts as they were gazing at the tower. This situation meant that they were simultaneously gazing as well as being gazed upon by tourists from outside Sydney. I would argue that what is said here about Sydney residents is also happening to Noel on the Wadjemup Bus Tour, although it can be argued that Noel positions himself in that way. By inviting the tourists to step - symbolically - beyond the 'tourist gaze,' he is situating himself in an in-between place, in-between not only the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes, but also the tourist landscape. In this in-between place he is gazing at the landscape together with the tourists, while also standing out from them and being "the living object of that gaze" (Urry 1995: 178).

Wadjemup Bus Tour: Failed Reconciliation

The Wadjemup Bus Tour was running on a daily basis until it was discontinued in 2010, due to low numbers. The failure of the tour, and in effect Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan, can be put down to a number of interrelating factors such as poor promotion and timing of the tour. In fact, by beginning just after lunchtime and lasting for about two hours, returning to Thomson Bay just in time for the last ferry back to the mainland, was a considerable drawback for potential customers. The majority of visitors to Rottnest Island are day-trippers and as such the Wadjemup Bus Tour would have cut considerably into the day-visitors' other plans. However, there has also been some controversy surrounding the tour, because of the way Noel Nannup was reportedly treated by the Rottnest Island Authority. On 2 July 2011, Peter Hancock wrote for *Perth Now* that elders had placed a curse on Rottnest Island "in response to what they see as a failure to recognise the deep importance Rottnest has to Aboriginal people" and that "Indigenous Tours WA is suing the RIA for breach of contract, claiming the failure of its Wadjemup Bus Tour resulted directly from the authority's failure to protect the tour from racial discrimination." Whether there actually was a curse or not is relatively irrelevant in this regard. What is far more intriguing is the way that Noel's mistreatment has been reported, but that at the same time the media is employing a stereotype that undermines the article itself by referring to a supernatural element and thus, to a certain extent, making it appear ludicrous.[59] Furthermore, according to Hancock's (2011, accessed 27/07/2011) article, many Rottnest Island Authority staff did not believe there was any Aboriginal significance to the island beyond the Thompson Bay settlement and that therefore a specific Aboriginal tour was unnecessary.

In addition, Hancock (2011, accessed 27/07/2011) claims that potential customers were told by Rottnest Island Authority that the tour was unreliable, even though Noel Nannup would travel from Fremantle on the mainland to Rottnest Island daily, without even knowing if there was a tour to conduct or not, that is without knowing if anyone had

[59] See also Stratton (2006) on everyday racism and media reporting. His work has also been mentioned in the Introduction.

signed up to go on the tour. There were no reasons given for the claim in the article, however, as I learned during my time with Tourism Western Australia, reliability of tours is one of the key issues in Aboriginal tourism. Knowing that many Aboriginal people do not like going to Rottnest Island due to its prison history and the Aboriginal cemetery, I asked Noel how he felt about it during one of our ferry trips back to the mainland.

> Someone has to do it. Someone has to make this sacrifice. It is important to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together, to raise awareness and understanding. But it doesn't do to blame anyone. "No Guilt, No Blame" as we say on the tour. (pers. comm. Noel Nannup 2009).

Noel is continually working on improving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations, and is often invited to conferences or workshops as an ambassador of sorts. He is an incredible storyteller, with a calm and quiet voice; it would be possible to hear a pin drop when he speaks. He believes in his work and as such was willing to make the 'sacrifice' of going to Rottnest Island daily. On days that people were booked on the tour, Noel would begin by giving a Welcome to Country in Nyungar, translating that he asked the bad spirits to go away and the good spirits to come and sit with us - with which the bus would leave Thompson Bay Settlement to make its way around the island.

Given Noel's reported mistreatment (Hancock 2011, accessed 27/07/2011) and the breakdown of the tour, it is interesting to note here that all of the Reconciliation Action Plan sections mentioned earlier, the Wadjemup Bus Tour falls under the opportunities section of Rottnest Island's Reconciliation Action Plan, whereas the main part of the Reconciliation plan is focused on the relationships and respect section. It therefore appears highly ironic that, according to their own Reconciliation Action Plan, it is important to Rottnest Island Authority that not only does the organisation encourage and participate in cross-cultural education and cultural ceremonies, but that they get more Aboriginal people involved in the activities on the island. The Reconciliation Action

Plan's aims also included to have as many Aboriginal people involved in as many various aspects as possible, such as environment and cultural heritage, and education programs for schools and holiday makers.

The results of the Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan thus exemplify the inherent problem of such categorised models: the failure to recognise the local socio-economics of tourism and in general, as well as the failure to appropriately incorporate human relationships and lived experience. Furthermore, given the reported treatment of Noel Nannup, and his respected status within the Nyungar community, the visions of Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan are not likely to take fruit anytime soon. One would think that by implementing a Reconciliation Action Plan, the Rottnest Island Authority finally recognised Rottnest's place in history, but instead, given everything that has happened since the launch, Paolo Amaranti's Reconciliation Action Plan statement (Rottnest Island Authority 2009: 3) as the CEO of Rottnest Island Authority now, in retrospect, appears rather hollow, and presents an example of the rhetoric superseding the practice:

> The Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) is committed to working with Aboriginal people in a spirit of reconciliation so that all can move forward together in an environment of cooperation and understanding that is built upon acknowledgement of the past but is focussed on the future.

Part of this commitment was supposed to be the failed Wadjemup Bus Tour. As a result, the failure of the tour extends to the failure of the Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan, and serves as a reminder of the difficulties experienced within the reconciliation movement. It demonstrates the discrepancies between pre-defined categories and lived experience, such as the continuing injustice and racism portrayed by members of the dominant society. Therefore, the Wadjemup Bus Tour, and its surrounding issues illustrate the persisting unequal power relations within the reconciliation movement as well as the continued need for a genuine dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Conclusion

Over the course of this chapter, I have attempted to give an insight into the reconciliation movement in Australia and the problems related to it. While Higgins-Desbiolles (2005: 223) believed it to be a marginalised undertaking, my first hand research has shown the problem of reconciliation to be something very much at the centre of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations. Based on what I have presented in the previous sections, I would suggest that the main difficulty encountered in the reconciliation movement is the discrepancy between policy making and relationship building. In the first instance, I would argue, reconciliation should be a dialogic endeavour about improving relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia. However, the set-up of Reconciliation Action Plans as key models prohibits this to a certain extent, instead focusing on measurable categories and thinking about reconciliation in a business sense rather than a relationship one.

In fact, the whole set-up of the reconciliation movement with its measurable starting point and goal to close the continuing life expectancy imbalance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians prevents a focus on the relationship side of things and favours a substantialist approach. This is underlined by Eyben's (2007) argument that many agencies' desire to sort people into simple categories for their purposes rather than considering the complexities of individual situations. Reconciliation Action Plans, such as the ones described in this chapter of my thesis, are thus necessarily labelling and categorising people, thereby removing them as individuals from the actual process of reconciliation and replacing them with goals and actions that can be measured by their success or failure.

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the reconciliation process, founded as it is in the complex and contested history of Australia, can be used to reinforce colonial power relations as Muldoon (2003: 187) suggested, creating, as I would argue, a neocolonial discourse. Urban Nyungar who I worked with continuously claim that history should be a shared discourse between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, underlining the contested nature of history and rendering themselves visible in a landscape from which

non-Aboriginal Australia previously tried to eradicate them, in many ways creating a "double landscape" (Mattingly et al. 2002). While reconciliation often appears as something largely desired by non-Aboriginal Australia with Aboriginal Australia being forced into the process, the emphasis on shared history exemplifies that reconciliation remains something both sides have to actively work on together to make a difference in Australia.

However, it has reportedly (see Hancock 2011, accessed 27/07/2011) come to light that there is still a significant amount of discrimination and racism involved in a number of areas of daily life within Australia. In fact, Forrest and Dunn (2007: 712) argued that "there is a low awareness of racist attitudes in society generally or of Anglo privilege" indicating how deeply imbedded racism is in Australia, with racism being "'everyday' in the sense of their informality, and the ways in which they can insidiously become seen as expected and normal" (Dunn et al. 2009: 8). This is further important for the negotiation of Aboriginality as laid out by Langton (1993), because this negotiation is just as much influenced by existing myths and stereotypes as it is by a meaningful direct interaction of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. The need for reconciliation is therefore founded in both the assimilation policies and the myth of white Australia.

For the case of the Wadjemup Bus Tour, which was set out as a reconciliation venture, it is no use to try and analyse what went wrong from a business point of view. What matters is that the Wadjemup Bus Tour was part - if not the centre - of Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan. Rottnest Island Authority's Reconciliation Action Plan is, therefore, clearly a failed undertaking with the discontinuation of the Wadjemup Bus Tour. In fact, its failure quite simply points to a continued inequality in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations, be they symbolical or practical, as Aboriginal Australians reportedly continue to be mistreated and discriminated against (Hancock 2011, accessed 27/07/2011).

The failure or the Swan River Dreaming Tour, on the other hand, is due to different reasons. While I cannot comment on the marketing of the tour or the market research

that went into it, it is a very different case to Rottnest Island based on the absence of a Reconciliation Action Plan alone. It is not possible to say that the Swan River Dreaming Tour failed in terms of reconciliation, because reconciliation is not something it was ever supposed to deliver. Instead, the aim was to present it as an example, and as a direct contrast to Rottnest Island, of the ways in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians can work together to advance the reconciliation process in Australia beyond the political discourse. The Swan River Dreaming Tour reveals that there is hope for reconciliation in Australia to succeed, not through categories and labels as the state would have it, but by fostering a meaningful interaction, a dialogue, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Conclusion

This thesis began with the State and Commonwealth Government's Native Title appeal premiss that Nyungar never existed as a united people, directly questioning the identity of those Aboriginal Australians who call themselves Nyungar. Focusing on Nyungar who are part of what Moore (2003) calls an 'Aboriginal elite,' I have attempted to draw a picture of contemporary Aboriginality as it is negotiated through an interaction of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within urban Australia. It is a picture that is severely underrepresented in the public image, as well as academic writing. By claiming a particular Nyungar identity - such as Whadjuk, Balardong, or Bibbulmun - in addition to a more universal or pan-Aboriginality that is expressed in 'being Nyungar,' these Australians maintain their distinct Aboriginal identities while not adhering to the stereotypical categories Aboriginal people in Australia are usually associated with. These Nyungar thus find themselves in-between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes, both physically and ideologically, and it is in this in-between space that they have to negotiate what Aboriginality is in the twenty-first century.

Over the course of this thesis, the themes of 'shared history,' 'place-making,' and 'reconciliation' have been identified as key elements, and discussed with regards to their significance in the foundation of an Aboriginal identity at my field site, the Perth metropolitan area. Not only did 'shared history,' 'place-making,' and 'reconciliation' emerge as key themes, however, they were also used as distinct fields of analysis, with each chapter dedicated to one of them. It has become evident throughout that despite my thesis being primarily about reconciliation and how Aboriginality is negotiated within this field of analysis, all three key themes are intricately linked with each other and none can be discussed without the other two being considered also.

The main problem of the reconciliation movement, as it is set up in Australia, I suggest lies in the emphasis on substantialist methods, rather than relational ones - regardless of whether the focus is on 'symbolic' or 'practical' reconciliation. An example are the

Reconciliation Action Plans discussed in Chapter Three and their focus on being "specific, measurable and action oriented" (Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011). By being focused in this way, Reconciliation Action Plans - as good as their intentions may be - can actually be rather counter-productive to the reconciliation process. Instead of working on relationships at the micro-level and creating a dialogue, for example between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees in the same office, these plans are focused on the macro-level: formulating ideas of how to improve Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations and avoiding micro-level context - thus marginalising the importance of lived experience and relationships.

As a result, I have argued, code-switching as a part of Nyungar's nomadic urban identities (De Certeau 1984) plays an important part not only in the reconciliation context, but also in Australian everyday lived experience. While the focus in previous studies has been more on the linguistic aspect of code-switching, it has been my contention to move the focus more towards how code-switching is applied, how people move between different ideological landscapes, and take on mediator roles (see Chapter Two). In other words, I have used code-switching in broad terms to discuss Aboriginal agency. What was significant about my use of code-switching, and with it the performance of Aboriginality, was that it did not necessarily involve a change from one language to another, but rather focused on how one language was used to communicate in different ways.

The examples I presented came from two different areas: Marissa, a Whadjuk-Nyungar who works in an office, and Greg, a Whadjuk-Nyungar tour guide. Both of them code-switch on a daily basis, having to mediate between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal landscapes for their work. Marissa in particular pointed out that she feels a sense of responsibility to act as a mediator due to her upbringing in-between both the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal spheres (see Chapter Two). Consequently, by continually liaising between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia, these Nyungar individuals actively work on improving relationships and thus reconciling Australia, as well as renegotiating what is perceived as Aboriginal in the wider Australian community.

> They and many others identify in ways that 'bond' them with those Aboriginal and settler Australians close to them, and 'bridge' the differences they have with others (Pearson, 2007b), and are fully capable of managing the ambiguities of simultaneous sameness and difference (see Nussbaum, 2000, pp. 11-15, 78-80). [...] they neither adopt entirely the position of Aboriginal clone to which they are assigned nor abandon it in favour of rootless individualism. They negotiate the cultural barriers, juggle the competing demands, and use, refuse and manipulate available stereotypes in order to harmonise the constructed contradictions and move between their multiple intersecting cultures [...]. Thus, they manage the governing pressures to have them succumb to the restricted version of Aboriginality and commit to agendas beyond it [...]. And they do so by changing, not abandoning or losing, their Aboriginality. (Moore 2011: 429)

Nyungar are thus never fully part of the dominant discourse, while at the same time they are perpetually trapped within it and as such can only act against it counter-discursively (Hollinshead 1996). It continues to be difficult for Aboriginal people to make their voices heard when they wish to act outside stereotypical representations. Specifically in Perth, for example, the Nyungar I worked with are often struggling to be recognised as Aboriginal because they do not fit the stereotypes of the urban Aboriginal drunk (pers. comm. Alice 2009, McKnight 2002) with socio-economic issues such as healthcare and housing disadvantages, and they do not live a 'traditional' life in the outback. In a way these ideas of Aboriginality imply the impossibility of being Aboriginal and a 'normal' Australian simultaneously - although this is of course exactly what Nyungar are (Moore 2003: 186). Therefore, Nyungar have to apply what de Certeau (1984) described as 'tactics,' such as code-switching and storytelling (see Chapter Two), to challenge the dominant discourse from within. This relates back to Nyungar as 'nomadic' urban subjects that move between different social spaces. According to de Certeau's (1984) theory this 'nomadic-ness' identifies Nyungar as place-less but able to utilise 'tactics' in certain situations to challenge the dominant discourse, members of which are, in contrast, identified as using 'strategies.' It is here that the Nyungar's need for place-making through code-switching and storytelling originates.

Furthermore, part of this counter-discursive action against the dominant discourse is the continuous claiming of a 'shared history' on behalf of the Aboriginal community (see Chapter One). Although it has been shown throughout my thesis that a more accurate description would be 'oppositional' or 'subaltern' history, the 'shared history' claim is a necessary tactic. If Aboriginal Australians were to claim a 'subaltern history,' it would be seen only as a contrast to settler-Australian history, an alternative perspective that can be accepted but does not have to be. It is likely that the dominant society would continue to view Aboriginal history as something that occurred before colonisation, maybe even more than they are doing already. Consequently, it is necessary for Aboriginal Australians to claim a 'shared history' to force themselves into the dominant history and to demonstrate that Australia was not just built by the settler society. At the other end of the spectrum, however, being part of the dominant discourse also means that within the counter-discourse Nyungar are forced to adhere to the issues that non-Aboriginal Australians are concerned with. For that reason, the Stolen Generations, for example, is something that is always part of discourses between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

This predisposition, I would suggest, is due to the Stolen Generations still being part of living memory as well as still affecting Aboriginal individuals and families (see for example Haebich 2000). In addition, when I left for the field, the Stolen Generations had just gained new currency through former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's official apology to all Indigenous Australians. This, and the continued focus on 'traditional' and 'authentic' Aboriginality are reasons why I decided to move beyond the scope of Native Title, and as such the arguably most current issue in southwest Western Australia with the ongoing Single Noongar Claim. Instead, I chose to focus on the reconciliation process, for it emerged as a pressing issue very much on the forefront of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations in Perth. Moreover, I found Native Title too concerned with 'traditional' custom, stressing the continuity of it from sovereignty, but more often than not completely disregarding the 'change' part of the legislation. In that connection, Merlan (2007: 142-143) argued that

> Land rights (including, for these purposes, also native title) have made possible great practical gains in some ways, brought about real changes in national awareness and recognition of indigenous people, and played a role, with both positive and negative consequences, in the reinforcement and contestation of identity politics among indigenous people themselves. But land rights have also reinforced already strong, limiting ideas within Australian society concerning authentic Aboriginal identity and being as necessarily linked to land, or else of lesser value; and have delayed recognition of the ways in which, now that indigenous people are no longer chiefly dependent on land for their daily subsistence, their relations to it are recontextualized and relativized to other aspects of their lives.

Reconciliation may not be perfect, or much better than Native Title, but it gives Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians who genuinely want to make a change something to work with. If the focus can be taken away from the substantialist views and moved towards the relational side of the process, there might actually be a chance for it to move something. Nyungar, as well as other Aboriginal Australians, will have to continue claiming a 'shared history,' and push themselves back into the picture that they have been forcibly removed from in the past: the Australian national image. Thus reasserting their place within the landscape, Nyungar have to reemerge from their 'hiding places,' and claim their land more in an ideological than a legal way. They will have to challenge their own 'objective authenticity' (Reisinger and Steiner 2006) which was bestowed upon them by their non-Aboriginal counterparts, in order to gain recognition of their 'existential authenticity' (Steiner and Reisinger 2006), their lived experience.

For all the reasons named above and more, Hattam and Atkinson (2006) argued that reconciliation is impossible. However, events like the reconciliation walk across Sydney's Harbour Bridge (Cowlishaw 2009, Hinkson 2002, Reconciliation Australia accessed 12/03/2011) prove that there are many Australians interested in reconciliation, no matter in how shallow a form. This suggests that there might actually be a basis to work with, especially on a local level (Behrendt accessed 04/01/2012). It will take a lot of time, as Halloran (2007: 15) pointed out, as the change that needs to happen for at

least marginally successful and meaningful reconciliation is nothing short of reconstructing and re-imagining the Australian national image. For now, therefore, Australians genuinely interested in reconciliation can only cling to the urban Aboriginal community's message that they have survived as distinct Aboriginal Australians in spite of the violence and dispossession (Hinkson and Harris 2010: xxvii). All of the urban Nyungar I worked with "are comfortably Aboriginal, and not traditionally so [...] celebrat[ing] their origins as an identity resource along with modern freedoms" (Moore 2003: 188). These Nyungar have created, and continue to create a new form of Aboriginality through the interaction with non-Aboriginal Australia. It is an Aboriginality that is contemporary, but at the same time just as valid as the 'traditional' and 'authentic' Aboriginality imagined by non-Aboriginal Australia. To say it in my Whadjuk-Nyungar friend, Marissa's (pers. comm. 2009) words:

> Nyungar people are here. Nyungar people are living. They are still alive. Their culture is still alive.

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Appendix

Glossary: Informants' Names, Affiliations, and Relations.

Alice	Nyungar-Yamatji, met through my work with Tourism WA, no known family relations with any of my other informants, born in Wongan, resides in the Perth metropolitan area.
Bridget	Nyungar (exact groups unknown), Elder, Southern Cross Cross-Cultural Awareness Workshop.
Debra	Balardong-Nyungar, John's sister, Aboriginal Teaching Assistant, resides in the Perth metropolitan area.
Greg Nannup	Whadjuk-Nyungar, Noel Nannup's son, tour operator (Kings Park Indigenous Heritage Tours, Fremantle Heritage Tours, Wadjemup Bus Tour, Swan River Dreaming Tour), resides in the Fremantle area.
Haley	Max's wife.
Jared	Nyungar (exact group unknown), part of John's mob, Southern Cross Cross-Cultural Awareness Workshop.
John	Balardong-Nyungar, Elder, my first informant, associated with the Brookton area of Western Australia, resides in a suburb near Fremantle.
Kenny	Nyungar (exact group unknown), met on the Boyagin Rock camping trip.
Laura	Nyungar (exact group unknown), met on the Boyagin Rock camping trip.
Marissa Verma (nee Maher)	Whadjuk-Nyungar, met through my work with Tourism WA, no known family relations with any of my other informants, born in Subiaco (inner suburb of Perth), resides in Fremantle.
Mary	Nyungar (exact group unknown), John's sister-in-law, met on the Boyagin Rock camping trip.

Max	Balardong-Nyungar, Sabrina's son.
Maxine	Nyungar (exact group unknown), Elder, Southern Cross Cross-Cultural Awareness Workshop.
Millie	Bibbulmun-Nyungar, Noah's parter (no known family relations with any of my other informants), has her own business in the Swan Valley.
Noah	Bibbulmun-Nyungar, Elder, Millie's parter, originally from the Williams area of Western Australia.
Noel Nannup	Whadjuk-Nyungar, Elder, Greg Nannup's Father, tour operator (Wadjemup Bus Tour), has an honorary doctorate, resides in the Perth metropolitan area.
Sabrina	Balardong-Nyungar, Elder, John's sister, associated with the Brookton area of Western Australia, resides in the Perth metropolitan area.

Fieldwork Chronology[60]

October 2008	- beginning of fieldwork - first trip to Rottnest Island - Cross-Cultural Awareness Workshop in Southern Cross with John's mob
November 2008	- first contact with Tourism WA and WAITOC - Aboriginal Festival (Wardarnji Aboriginal Cultural Celebration) - first meeting with Greg Nannup - Kings Park Indigenous Heritage tours - Lotterywest Reconciliation Action Plan Launch - first meeting with Millie and Noah - trip to Boyagin Rock with John and his mob
December 2008	- Kings Park Indigenous Heritage tours - Fremantle Heritage Tours - Amnesty International student group event with Welcome to Country by Greg Nannup - trip into the wheat belt with Noah and Millie
January 2009	- Kings Park Indigenous Heritage tours - first interview with Tourism WA employee - first meeting with a Nyungar dancer and subsequent interview - volunteering with Tourism WA - Aboriginal festival in Fremantle (Survival Day)
February 2009	- Fremantle Heritage tours - first interview with Greg Nannup - volunteering with Tourism WA - first meeting with Alice - interview with WAITOC member - Indigenous Tourism Better Business Blitz - attending classes at UWA - Rottnest Island Reconciliation Action Plan Launch

[60] I am only including those events in this chronology that are of relevance to what has been discussed in this thesis. The interviews mentioned in this chronology are only the 'formal' ones.

March 2009	- attending classes at UWA - volunteering with Tourism WA - archival research - first meeting with a Nyungar teacher - first meeting with Marissa Verma after the Better Business Blitz and subsequent interview
April 2009	- attending classes at UWA - volunteering with Tourism WA - archival research - first interview with Alice - trips south exploring different Aboriginal tourism products - first follow-up interviews - Ronald M. and Catherine H. Berndt Memorial Lecture by Marcia Langton
May 2009	- attending classes at UWA - volunteering at Tourism WA - follow-up interview with Marissa Verma - archival research - trip north exploring different Aboriginal tourism products
June 2009	- trip north exploring different Aboriginal tourism products (continued) - volunteering with Tourism WA - archival research - attending classes at UWA
July 2009	- volunteering with Tourism WA - interview with Tourism WA employee - follow-up interview with Alice - archival research - NAIDOC week - attending classes at UWA
August 2009	- volunteering with Tourism WA - attending classes at UWA - archival research - follow-up interviews
September 2009	- volunteering with Tourism WA - attending classes at UWA - archival research - follow-up interviews

October 2009	FIELD BREAK in New Zealand
November 2009	- follow-up interviews - Swan River Dreaming Tour Launch - Aboriginal Festival (Wardarnji Aboriginal Cultural Celebration) - Kings Park Indigenous Heritage tours - Swan River Dreaming tours - attending classes at UWA
December 2009	- Fremantle Heritage tours - Swan River Dreaming tours - Wadjemup Bus tours - Rottnest Island survey - SWALSC workshop
January 2010	- Rottnest Island survey - Kings Park Indigenous Heritage tours - Swan River Dreaming tours - Wadjemup Bus tours - follow-up interviews - attending classes at UWA
February 2010	- Kings Park Indigenous Heritage tours - Swan River Dreaming tours - Wadjemup Bus tours - follow-up interviews - attending classes at UWA

Rottnest Island Survey – Report[61]

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This report is a summary of the results of a survey carried out to test the awareness of Aboriginal culture, history and tourism in the southwest of Western Australia. Presented in this report are merely the results of the survey, no interpretation of the results is being offered. The survey has been carried out on Rottnest Express Ferries and at C-Shed in Fremantle. No one has been surveyed on Rottnest Island. The survey took place with the agreement of both Rottnest Island Authorities and Rottnest Express.

When I introduced myself to possible survey participants I told them that I was doing a research project on tourism in Perth and on Rottnest Island. I did not, however, mention that my project focuses on Aboriginal tourism, as I wanted to avoid leading on their answers. Please note that while I did not keep records of demographics, I did do my best to approach people from as many different age groups as possible.

If you wish to publish any part of this report, please consult me beforehand and cite me appropriately.

[61] This Report was produced for Rottnest Island Authority and Rottnest Express Ferry as part of the agreement that allowed me to do the survey.

Q1: Where are you from?

Perth	55
Intra-State WA	4
New South Wales	11
Queensland	12
South Australia	7
Tasmania	2
Victoria	13
Austria	1
Canada	2
China	7
Cyprus	2
England	15
France	3
Germany	6
Malaysia	2
Netherlands	1
Norway	3
Reunion Island	4
Scotland	9
South Africa	2
Sweden	1
Taiwan	3
UK*	3
USA	4
Wales	1
Total	173
Total Domestic	104
Total International	69

*Did not specify where in the UK.

Q2: Have you been to Rottnest Island before?

	Yes	No
Perth	53	2
Intra-State	4	0
Inter-State	8	37
International	6	63

Q3: What are you going to do on Rottnest Island?
(N.B. Multiple answers were possible.)

Swim/ Snorkel	94	54.34 %
Cycle	80	46.24 %
Sunbathe/ Go to the Beach	17	9.83 %
Walk Around	16	9.25 %
Relax	12	6.94 %
Get Drunk/ Go to the Pub	12	6.94 %
Have Lunch/ Eat	7	4.05 %
Sightseeing	5	2.89 %
Plane Flight over Rottnest	4	2.31 %
Work	4	2.31 %
Canoeing	3	1.73 %
Going to See Friends	3	1.73 %
Bus Tour (Unspecified)	2	1.16 %
Bus Tour (Wadjemup)	2	1.16 %
Play Tennis	2	1.16 %
See Quokkas	2	1.16 %
Glass-Bottom Boat Tour	2	1.16 %
Take Photos	2	1.16 %
Gun Tour	1	0.58 %
Check out Shops and Cafes	1	0.58 %
Nothing Planned	17	9.83 %

Q4: What do you know about Rottnest Island and its history?

(N.B. Multiple answers were possible. I accepted all answers no matter if true or false. The information below reflects the exact information/key words I received from participants.)

It used to be an Aboriginal prison/ penal colony for Aboriginal people.	42	24.28 %
Origin of the name 'Rottnest.'	39	22.54 %
Quokkas.	26	15.03 %
Rottnest was a military base during World War II/ the war.	13	7.51 %
Discovered by the Dutch.	12	6.94 %
Rottnest used to be a convict island.	8	4.62 %
Guns.	8	4.62 %
Rottnest was once connected to the mainland.	7	4.05 %
Army Barracks.	5	2.89 %
Shipwrecks.	5	2.89 %
Used to be a cheap and affordable holiday destination for people from Perth.	5	2.89 %
Penal Colony/ Prison (don't mention Aboriginal people).	4	2.31 %
Rottnest is a major holiday destination.	4	2.31 %
Slavery.	4	2.31 %
Aboriginal History.	3	1.73 %

Backpackers' Story/ History.	2	1.16 %
Oliver's Hill.	2	1.16 %
Aboriginal People were on Rottnest up to World War I.	2	1.16 %
Schoolies.	2	1.16 %
There is approx. 6500 years of history.	2	1.16 %
There used to be prisoners on the island (no mention of Aboriginal).	2	1.16 %
World Wars.	2	1.16 %
Island Trust.	2	1.16 %
Surf Spots.	2	1.16 %
Aboriginal Colony (no mention of penal/prison).	2	1.16 %
Lighthouse.	2	1.16 %
Rottnest used to be a general prison during war.	2	1.16 %
Rottnest was an atonement camp during the war.	2	1.16 %
A Class Nature Reserve.	1	0.58 %
There is one of the oldest life forms on the island.	1	0.58 %
There has been a school there since 1875.	1	0.58 %
Great for snorkeling.	1	0.58 %
Rottnest has become over-developed and pricy.	1	0.58 %
Aboriginal Burial Ground.	1	0.58 %
Old Railway.	1	0.58 %
Cemetery.	1	0.58 %
Don't know anything.	66	38.15 %