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It discusses a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary aspects relevant to Australia and its society, among them:

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These issues are presented in consideration of both current and historical interrelations of European and Australian societies. In this context, studies on Indigenous Australian matters receive special attention.

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Eva Bischoff

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Special Issue

Oceans shape our planet. Their ability to absorb large amounts of CO_2 and store heat makes them a stabilising element in the climate system. However, oceans and their currents are not only crucial for the climate: around half of the world's population lives within 160 kilometres of an ocean. Human life is therefore always shaped by the sea. This proximity to the sea becomes particularly clear when looking at a map of Australia: embedded in the Pacific Ocean, the continent nestles up against the island worlds of present-day Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Malaysia, as the oceanic "Spilhaus projection" (Fig. 1) clearly shows.[1] "The Pacific Ocean has washed, scoured and thumped Australia's east coast for more than five million years".[2]
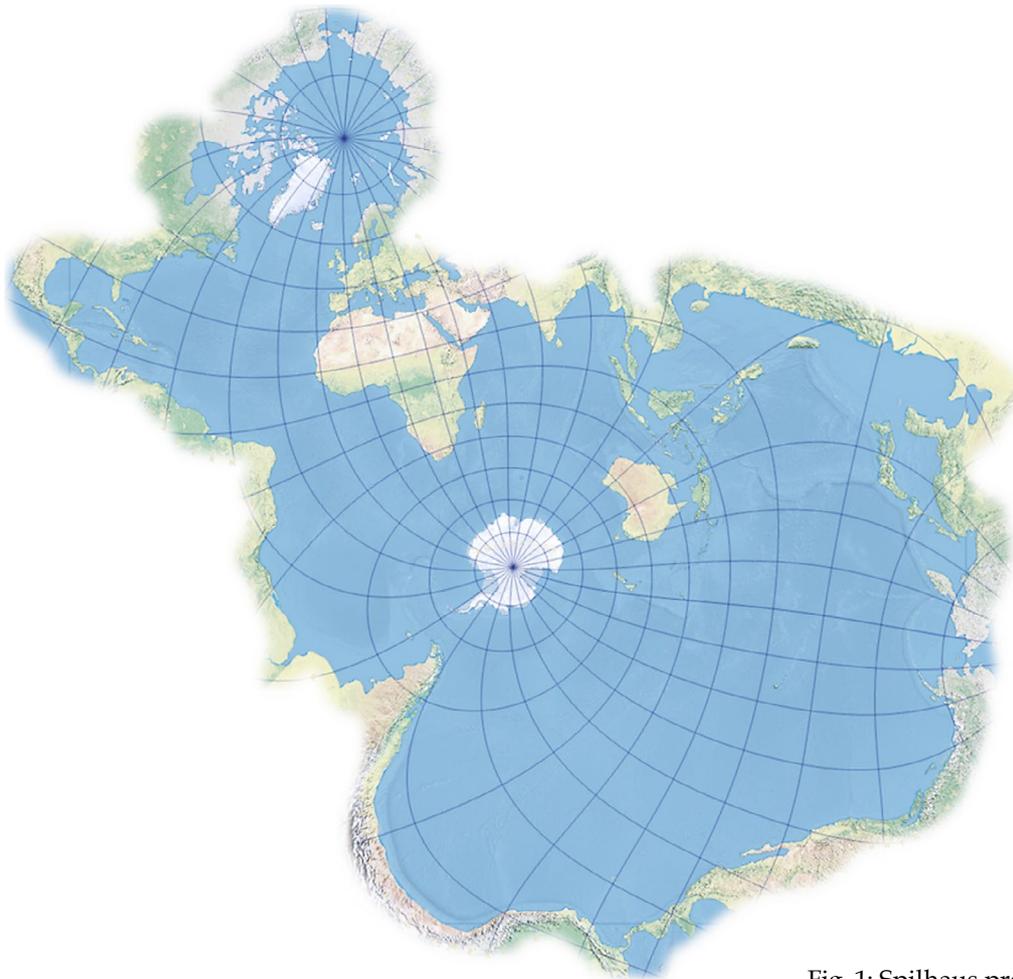

Fig. 1: Spilhaus projection.

1   Bojan Bojan Šavrič, David Burrows, Melita Kennedy: The Spilhaus World Ocean Map in a Square.
2   Ian Hoskins: Australia & the Pacific, p. 1.

The sea also plays a special role for Australia from a historical perspective: maritime resources were already of great importance to indigenous societies and coastal regions were an intensively utilised economic area. The European land grab after 1788 always began from coastal bases. The settlers did not migrate from one coast to another, as in the case of the USA, but from various maritime border areas into the interior. Accordingly, the sea also plays an important role in Australia's cultural memory: as a colonial contact zone, as a bridge between the old and new homelands or as the demarcation line of a 'White Australia' and the associated immigration policies.

To this day, around 85% of Australia's inhabitants live in metropolises such as Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Perth and are therefore never more than 50 km from the coast. The sea is also an economic factor. Maritime industries, from gas and oil extraction to cruise shipping, generated around AUD 68 billion in 2015-2016, or 2% of Australia's GDP.[3] The Australian marine environment, such as the Great Barrier Reef and the beach as a space of freedom and leisure, are not only the destination of national and international tourism (Australia as a 'brand'), but also important reference spaces in discourses on national identity.

These economic, political and cultural relationships give rise to a variety of different, interwoven spaces, which were discussed by more than 46 experts from the field of Cultural Studies (literature, performing arts, film, visual arts), History, Political Science, Anthropology and Geography at the biennial conference of the Gesellschaft für Australienstudien | Association for Australian Studies from 27 September to 2 October 2021.

Following the work of Greg Dening, Epeli Hau'ofa, and Karin Amimoto Ingersoll,[4] the conference charted the multiplicity of Australian seascapes as socially constructed spaces, constituted by connections, exchanges and entanglements rather than by boundaries or by a separating void. In this way, the understanding of 'Australian seascapes', originally used only as a term for the (mostly artistic) representation of a coastal view, was conceptually expanded to describe the different views and perspectives resulting from the investigation of the above-mentioned maritime spaces. Looking at seascapes shows Australia's deep connection to Oceania, the Pacific region and the world. However, in the face of climate change and rising sea levels, many of these connections are becoming tenuous.

Correspondingly, the significance of the sea and Australia's connection to the ocean is widely studied in Australia. In recent years, several key areas of research have emerged in the humanities and social sciences: Firstly, this includes the relationship between humans and the environment, particularly in its literary adaptations.[5] Here, the Great Barrier Reef is often at the centre of attention.[6] Secondly, more recent research reconstructs the relationships between indigenous societies

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3   Australian Institute of Marine Science: The AIMS Index of Marine Industry, p. 6.
4   Cf. Greg Dening: Beach Crossings; Epeli Hau'ofa: We are the Ocean; Karin A. Ingersoll: Waves of Knowing.
5   Cf. Anne Collett, Olivia Murphy (eds.): Romantic Climates; Margaret Cohen, Killian Quigley (eds.): The Aesthetics of the Undersea.
6   Cf. Ian McCalman: The Reef; Ben Daley: The Great Barrier Reef; Ann Elias: Coral Empire.

and the sea, starting with the "maritime colonisation" of the continent by Aborigines more than 50 000 years ago, through the mobility of indigenous actors and exchanges between Aborigines and neighbouring Asian societies in the north of the continent, to indigenous maritime cultural landscapes.[7] Thirdly, early contact and exchange relationships between Europeans and Aborigines as well as early voyages of discovery and trans-imperial actors will be increasingly focused on.[8] A fourth focus is emerging in the field of political science on the topic of border regimes and migration policy as well as the significance of a specifically Australian "insular imagination".[9] This is followed by work on the history and effects of the so-called White Australia Policy.[10] Studies on pearl fishing,[11] particularly in Broome, Western Australia, form a special focus here, as the interweaving of racist immigration and settler-colonial assimilation policies characteristic of the White Australia Policy is particularly evident here.[12] Furthermore, based on Australia's geostrategic and economic interests in the region, a fifth research focus is developing at the interface between political science, economics and geography. Here, the focus is often less on a critical stocktaking in times of climate change and more on the design of future scenarios for policy advice.[13]

The conference papers published in this special issue focus on selected literary, artistic and media representations associated with the Australian Seascapes. Three of them show how deeply interwoven Australian imaginations are with sea images of European (thought) traditions, Christian theology, mythology and art movements on the one hand, while at the same time, characterised by the specific experiences of the settler colony, they create new images and imaginations by appropriating, reinterpreting or delimiting European traditions.

Paul Giles presents in his contribution 'Negative Antipodes: Australian Literature and Planetary Seascapes' some fundamental reflections on the question of how notions of the sea clearly (albeit indirectly) shape our understanding of Australian culture today. The reference to the sea, he demonstrates, for example, using Alexis Wright's novel 'The Swan Book' (2013), serves as a rhetorical device

7   Cf. Sue O'Connor, Foss Leach, Geoffrey Clark (eds.): Islands of Inquiry; Jane Balme: Of Boats and String; Lynette Russell: Roving Mariners; Lynette Russell: Aboriginal Australians as Southern Oceans Mariners; Rachel Standfield (ed.): Indigenous Mobilities; Marshall Alexander Clark, Sally K. May (eds.): Macassan History and Heritage; Jan J. McNiven: Saltwater People; Jan J. McNiven: Inhabited Landscapes; Madeline Fowler: Aboriginal Maritime Landscapes in South Australia.

8   Cf. Gillian Dooley, Danielle Clode (eds.): The First Wave; Peter Veth, Peter Stutton, Margo Neale (eds.): Strangers on the Shore, Early Coastal Contacts in Australia; Sylvie Largeaud-Ortega: The Bounty from the Beach; Kenneth Morgan: Matthew Flinders, Maritime Explorer of Australia; Nigel Rigby, Pieter van der Merwe, Glyndwr Williams: Pacific Exploration; Christopher Maxworthy: British Whalers, Merchants and Smugglers.

9   Cf. Suvendrini Perera: Australia and the Insular Imagination; Peter Chambers: Border Security.

10 Cf. Aileen Moreton-Robinson: The White Possessive.

11 Cf. Julia Martinez, Adrian Vickers: The Pearl Frontier.

12 Cf. Steve Mullins: Octopus Crowd; Ruth Balint: Aboriginal Women and Asian Men; Sarah Yu: Walking Jetty to Jetty.

13 Cf. Jacek Zaucha, Kira Gee (eds.): Maritime Spatial Planning; Erika J. Techera, Gundula Winter (eds.): Marine Extremes; Geoffrey Till: Seapower; John Nash, Ben Herscovitch (eds.): The Blue Economy.

to visualise the indigenous but also planetary dimension of human experiences of displacement and exile in times of climate catastrophe.

Jean Page examines James McAuley's reimagination of the Pacific voyages of Pedro Fernandes de Queirós ("Quiros"), a Portuguese navigator in Spanish service, who led several voyages of 'discovery' in the Pacific around 1600. McAuley's poems, published in the 1960s and early 1970s, Page can convincingly argue, present Australia from its oceanic side, as part of the South Pacific, contrasting today's dominant notions of Australia as a closed, encapsulated continent. In this sense, the depiction of the Australian Seascapes is part of the Australian nation's self-positioning in the (post)colonial Pacific of the post-war period.

Imke Lichterfeld makes a similar argument in her contribution to the 'Heidelberg School', a group of painters centred around Tom Roberts, Charles Conder and Arthur Streeton, who in the late 1880s adopted the style of the French Impressionists and placed themselves in the service of the growing Australian nationalism. In the paintings of these artists, Australian seascapes unite the seemingly contradictory ideals of modernism: industrialisation and mechanisation on the one hand and the idea of nature as an idyllic and relaxing place of bourgeois leisure and recreation on the other.

The fourth contribution in this issue approaches the Australian Seascapes in essayistic-artistic form. In his 'Confessions of a Littoralist', Stephen Alomes addresses the notion of Australia as an island, as a colony, and a nation in a, at times, provocative manner. Australia, he states, is deeply connected to the sea. But behind this lie diverse, sometimes contradictory individual and collective experiences. How do these experiences translate into (changing) Australian politics, social practices or people's dreams?

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Essays

Paul Giles

Negative Antipodes

Australian Literature and Planetary Seascapes

Abstract: This paper will consider the relationship between Australian Literature and World Literature through the figures of the antipodes and the planet. It will suggest that a planetary configuration – two-thirds water, one-third land – changes the relationship between human constructions and natural entities. This introduces into discourse a kind of apophasis, a variant of negative theology, in which social meaning is always liable to be transposed or inverted. The ocean, in other words, enters into the dynamic of Australian literature and culture within form and language as well as through more overt environmental themes. This paper will consider how this complex aesthetic plays out in the representation of seascapes across a range of Australian painters (e.g. Tom Roberts) and writers, from Ada Cambridge in the late-19th century through to Kenneth Slessor in the modernist period along with Alexis Wright and Les Murray in the contemporary era.

The notion of Australia as a country 'girt by sea' has been officially recognized in its national anthem, and in recent scholarship there has been considerable emphasis on both the environmental aspects of oceanography and the political implications of maritime borders. The latter issue has been highlighted by controversies over migration (particularly conflicts over the 'boatpeople'), and also by how the geographical position of Australia as an island nation materially affected its handling of the COVID pandemic. I want to put this question into a larger framework, however, by suggesting how the sea also carried significant purchase in both theology and classical mythology, and how these dynamics have continued to inflect understandings of Australian culture, albeit in a more oblique and indirect though no less significant fashion.

In his book 'The Sea. A Cultural History', John Mack described how many monastic settlements in Britain during the early Middle Ages were established around the coast: the Orkneys, the Shetland Islands, Lindisfarne, and so on. In part, this was because these peregrine monks liked to envisage themselves as on a journey from one world to the next, with the conjunction of land and water in the areas surrounding their monasteries epitomizing this unworldly state. A group of monks who washed up on the coast of Cornwall after drifting aimlessly at sea around the year 880 explained to King Alfred's court that they did not care where they ended up, since the disorientations of the sea and the move away from the illusory securities and worldly comforts of land brought them closer to God.[1] In this sense, my title 'Negative Antipodes' has some correlations with the conception of negative theology that was current throughout medieval times, a state of apophasis, to give it its technical term, which regarded God as unimaginable and incomprehensible, and thus sought to use mystical mediums rather than rational instruments as an approach to knowledge. As Barbara Babcock wrote

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1 See John Mack: The Sea, p. 45.

in 1978,[2] whereas negative theology was once confined almost exclusively to hermetic traditions of mysticism, this idea has circulated much more widely since the dissemination of critical deconstruction, with Derrida's paradoxical notion of absence constituting presence having an important influence on intellectual discourse more widely. Hence Helen Blythe's observation of the mythical idea of accessing the Antipodes through the earth or the sea – the former (earth) synonymous with "darkness, death, and metempsychosis"; the latter (sea) with "mirrors, reflection, and reversal"[3] – comes to have a distinct contemporary relevance.

The sea has always carried this element of the unknown and unknowable, characteristics reinforced rather than refuted by contemporary scientific investigations that have unearthed a complex alternative world beneath the surface of the ocean. This includes not only marine ecosystems but also offshore submerged landscapes, where residues of human culture can be discovered beneath sea level. In a 2021 article published in the journal 'Australian Archaeology', Jerem Leach and a team of researchers described their recent discovery of underwater archaeological material at Murujuga at the Dampier Archipelago, off the coast of Western Australia. This work on a subtidal ancient Aboriginal site has the potential not only to modify contemporary narratives about ways in which seascapes should be considered as part of an integrated national culture, but also to reshape larger conceptions of how human civilization relates to time, along with ways in which sea and land can be seen as intertwined within a larger environmental circumference.

Leach's team argued that studies of submerged terrestrial landscapes have often been neglected because they fall midway between the interests of terrestrial and underwater archaeologists, but it is now important in Australian archaeology "to consider onshore terrestrial and offshore submerged landscapes as an integrated cultural whole".[4] This postulates a hybrid geological world where landscape and seascape intersect, with the likelihood that thousands of Indigenous sites are preserved on the continental shelf of the Australian continent foreshadowing a more expansive planetary condition where land and ocean can be construed as overlapping in significant ways. They concluded that "A similar approach is needed all around Australia's coastal margins and islands, where the transformative cultural processes associated with sea-level change during the Pleistocene-Holocene transition are sorely underrepresented in the terrestrial record".[5] This lends an additional dimension to the mythical idea of the buried civilization of Atlantis, celebrated in Edgar Allan Poe's 1845 poem 'The City in the Sea'[6] and in many other works, since such a legendary conception is given literal incarnation through the unusual landscape of Australia, where time scales are disproportionate in relation to Western norms. It also extends both the spatial and temporal boundaries of the country through its reclamation of Indigenous histories, bringing disparate cultures into juxtaposition.

2   Barbara A. Babcock: 'Introduction,' p. 14.
3   Helen Lucy Blythe: The Victorian Colonial Romance with the Antipodes, p. 9.
4   Jerem Leach et al.: The Integrated Cultural Landscape of North Gidley Island, p. 251.
5   Ibid., p. 265.
6   Edgar Allan Poe: The City in the Sea, pp. 71 f.

Such structural displacements are commensurate with how the alterity of the oceanic world has also been emphasized by cultural theorists from the Pacific region such as Epeli Hau'ofa, whose conception of the planet as a "sea of islands" conjoined primarily by water rather than land masses fits with the geophysical measurement of it as a spherical space that is two-thirds ocean and only one-third land.[7] This in turn is consistent with the recent theoretical work of historians such as Dipesh Chakbrabarty and Sujit Sivasundaram, who have tried to reposition global history as a phenomenon that extends beyond familiar Eurocentric and North American orbits. Sivasundaram's 'Waves Across the South' (2020) advertises itself in a prefatory note, with a nod to Hau'ofa, as "a book which considers world history from a 'sea of islands' in the global South",[8] claiming on its first page:

"There is a quarter of this planet which is often forgotten in the histories that are told in the West. This quarter is an oceanic one, pulsating with winds and waves, tides and coastlines, and islands and beaches; the Indian and Pacific Oceans – taken together as a collection of smaller seas, gulfs and bays – constitute that forgotten quarter".[9]

I am not altogether sure about whether this oceanic environment has until now been 'forgotten', in the implicitly triumphalist way Sivasundaram claims, but it is certainly true that this region, and particularly Australia, has been relatively neglected in relation to World Literature and Culture. A familiar sense of the country being separated from the rest of the world by an extensive sea voyage that took three to four months contributed to what Geoffrey Blainey famously called the "tyranny of distance"[10] that was a constituent feature of Australian history up until the mid-20th century.

Before regular air passenger routes were introduced, Australia was quite literally "girt by sea", with the country surrounded by oceans as if by a moat, designed to keep the rest of the world at bay. This was of course the rationale behind the transportation of convicts, since it was the sea that made Australia almost impossible to escape from in the first half of the 19th century, and it also informed some of the more drastic internal state policies of closed borders in Australia during the COVID pandemic, suggesting this investment in enforced enclosure and separation has never quite gone away. Yet this watery divide also operated for 19th-century emigrants as a liminal space, an opportunity for both economic and psychological transformation.

Such a transitional state is expressed in Tom Roberts's 1886 painting 'Coming South', where the long sea journey between Europe and Australia is represented as a site of limbo, with the passengers waiting to be carried into their next world, a vaguely metaphysical horizon emphasized here by the huddling of human characters in the foreground and the way they are set against the open grey

7   Epeli Hau'ofa: Our Sea of Islands, pp. 148-161.
8   Sujit Sivasundram: Waves across the South, p. vii.
9   Ibid., p. 1.
10   Geoffrey Blainey: The Tyranny of Distance, p. 4.

Fig. 1: Tom Roberts, 'Coming South', 1886

space of sea and sky in the top half of the painting (Fig. 1):[11]

Mack emphasized that it was an experience of the Mediterranean that coloured much writing about the sea in classical Greek and Roman times. But in the Mediterranean most journeys take place within the sight of land, or at least in sufficient proximity to the coast for sightings to be reasonably frequent, whereas the prominence of the Pacific Ocean within planetary geography from the 18th century onwards introduced a new element to cultural representations of the sea. Herman Melville uses this disjunction of scale to good effect in 'Moby-Dick', published in 1851, where the unfathomable nature of Pacific seascapes is linked to both the invisibility of the white whale of the title and to the challenges posed by the sea to regular social customs on land. Australia is depicted in 'Moby-Dick' as "that great America on the other side of the sphere",[12] and this association of Australia with a sense of ontological alterity and difference has played a formative part in the construction of the country's identity.

Such an emphasis on seascapes has been common to both Indigenous and colonial cultures. Thomas Hervey's epic poem "Australia", written at Cambridge University and published in London in 1824, envisages a mercantile empire growing from the islands of Australasia, talking of how his "far-off islets gemmed the sunny seas".[13] As Hervey spells out in his preface, his poem was inspired by "those vast tracts of country lately discovered in the Pacific, Indian and Southern Oceans".[14] It is of course easy enough to see how this involves a typically imperial vision transferred to an oceanic landscape, the idea of Britannia ruling the waves, as Thomas Arne and James Thomson put it in their famous song of 1740,

11 Tom Roberts: Coming South (1886). Oil on Canvas. 63.5 × 52.2 cm. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Accession Number 1738-5.
12 Herman Melville: Moby-Dick, p. 110.
13 Thomas Kibble Hervey: Australia, p. 13.
14 Ibid. p. ix.

subsequently canonized as "Rule Britannia". But in the conclusion to his poem, Hervey also associates the growth of this marine empire with the formation of coral reefs and a gradual emergence of land masses in the southern oceans, arguing that the destiny of Australia will be consolidated by the amalgamation of millions of coral reefs into a new and mighty continent, surpassing Africa and shaping the cradle of a new world:

> "Far to the east – where once Aurora's smiles
> Looked on an archipelago of isles;
> And coral banks upreared their glittering forms,
> Like spots of azure in a sky of storms
> Where many a ship has sailed the foamy brine –
> Sits a vast continent upon the Line,
> Back from her strand assembled oceans rolls,
> And points, with either finger, to the poles!
> But where is Africa? I seek in vain
> Her swarthy form along its native main:
> Methinks I hear a wailing in the wild,
> As of a mother weeping o'er her child!
> Her fate lies buried in mysterious night,
> Where the wide waters of the globe unite;
> And, where the moon walked nightly o'er her hills,
> The billows moan amid a hundred isles!
> – I turn me from their knelling, with a sigh,
> To where a lovelier vision meets the eye;
> Where spreads the British name from sun to sun,
> And all the nations of the earth are One!"[15]

As Robert Dixon has observed, Hervey draws here upon an article written in 1824 by Alexander Dalrymple for the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica', where Dalrymple stated:

> The time will come, – it may be ten thousand or ten millions of years, but come it must, – when New Holland [the old name for Australia] and New Guinea and all the little groups of islets and reefs to the north and north-west of them, will either be united into one great continent, or be separated only with deep channels.[16]

It is a view of the history and geography of Australia being characterized by a differential relation between land and water, one that distinguishes it from the traditional world of the Northern Hemisphere.

This correlation between a changing political map of the Oceanic world and a geophysical process in a constant state of evolution suggests not only how the demarcation of the sea has systematically been politicized, but also how these narratives of the sea have been regulated according to different criteria, involving environmental as well as economic dimensions. The sea can be mapped culturally and politically as well as scientifically, and all of these social cartographies have helped to shape Australia's complex relation to the sea. Brian Russell Roberts's recent work on archipelagic formations has similarly combined environmental with social and political perspectives, to suggest how our understanding of the world would be radically different if civic populations were not so fixated on the idea of continental land masses. As Roberts remarked, the archipelago of

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15   Thomas Kibble Hervey: Australia, pp. 40 f.
16   Robert Dixon: The Course of Empire, p. 143.

Indonesia is actually wider in its extent than the distance from the East to the West Coast of America, that "sea to shining sea" model so often celebrated in American song.[17] This anomaly also raises the question of how political divisions of the seas necessarily divide the world up in ways that do not allow any portion of the ocean to exist in an unmediated natural state. Roberts cited Rafi Segal and Yonatan Cohen's "Territorial Map of the World", where it is clear how from its base in American Samoa the United States borders Tonga and New Zealand across oceanic space, which is not a conjunction that would be obvious from any regular Mercator map. A chart produced by the U.S. government itself in 2020 claimed the Pacific islands situated to the north east of Australia – Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Baker Island and so on – as part of its "exclusive economic zone".[18] Oceans are thus far from being innocent locales, and though they retain elements of enigma and inscrutability, they have also been associated from time immemorial with political power and economic rivalries. Writing in 1848 of the paintings of J. M. W. Turner, John Ruskin described the sea as "an irreconcilable mixture of fury and formalism",[19] and that sense of incongruity between mutually incompatible elements is characteristic both of the sea and of Australia as a country, where its formal borders and boundaries appear to exist in an inherently provisional and conditional state.

In the context of Australian literature and culture, this brings the seascape into an ambiguous realm where it operates discursively as a counterbalance to assumptions of Western hegemony and authority. For example, Kenneth Slessor's famous poem 'Five Bells' (1939), which revolves around a man drowned in Sydney Harbour, is predicated more expansively on a world of inversion, where the "Deep and dissolving verticals of light"[20] serve effectively to dissolve the urban world into its watery correlative, so that the human built environment is always on the verge of being overwhelmed:

> Where have you gone? The tide is over you,
> The turn of midnight water's over you,
> As Time is over you, and mystery,
> And memory, the flood that does not flow.
> You have no suburb, like those easier dead
> In private berths of dissolution laid –
> The tide goes over, the waves ride over you
> And let their shadows down like shining hair[21]

Slessor's poem is different stylistically from, say, Wallace Stevens's "The Idea of Order at Key West", written five years earlier in 1934, where the mythopoeic imagination confronts and attempts to impose order on the "inhuman" ocean:

> Ramon Fernandez, tell me, if you know,
> Why, when the singing ended and we turned
> Toward the town, tell why the glassy lights,
> The lights in the fishing boats at anchor there,
> As the night descended, tilting in the air,

17   Brian Russell Roberts: Borderwaters, p. 130.
18   Ibid., p. 6.
19   John Ruskin: Modern Painters, p. 369.
20   Kenneth Slessor: Collected Poems, p. 120.
21   Ibid., p. 123.

> Mastered the night and portioned out the sea,
> Fixing emblazoned zones and fiery poles,
> Arranging, deepening, enchanting night.[22]

That phrase "portioned out the sea" is particularly interesting, for there is no portioning out of the sea in Slessor, or in most other Australian writers. As a generalization, the narratives of Australian literature tend to be more open to the constantly circulating and disruptive forces of the sea, and this is one reason it embodies a prehuman and perhaps posthuman aspect, one in which social coordinates can never fully fathom the ontological extent of the oceanic environment.

Alexis Wright's novel 'The Swan Book',[23] published in 2013 but set a hundred years in the future, also fits into this category, envisioning as it does a world where global warming has affected the whole planet, leading to multiple sites of flooding, with migrants seeking desperately to reach the safe haven of Australia from across the oceans. Obviously this is a novel addressing both climate change and the boat people, political issues of pressing concern in the second decade of the twenty-first century, but it is not just about a novel about environmental politics in a narrow or instrumental sense. Rather, 'The Swan Book' addresses the tenuous nature of civic organizations of all kinds when set against the power of nature, and in this way Wright is attracted again to an aesthetic of dissolution, a transgression of normative codes of behaviour, an impetus that links her work to a surreal dynamic and indicates how attempts to categorize her fiction merely within easy political categories turn out normally to be reductive. In her essay "Odyssey of the Horizon", written to accompany the exhibition 'My Horizon' by Australian Indigenous visual artist Tracey Moffatt at the 2017 Venice Biennale, Wright responded to Moffatt's visual sequence "The White Ghosts Sailed In" by commemorating, like Moffatt, the day in 1788 when, from the vantage point of Sydney Cove, "[W]hite ghosts arrived to break the boundary of a land that was not theirs to take".[24] At the end of her essay, however, Wright, as in 'The Swan Book', related this vanishing "horizon" to a planetary condition of displacement more generally: "those who are now roaming the planet in search of a haven, a place to be, to try to begin their lives again, or living in dreams of going home".[25] Starting from a position of how the Indigenous world has been disrupted by the sudden appearance of extraneous forces, Wright turns this around to imply ways in which "the planet" itself is coming to approximate an Indigenous condition of dispossession and exile. Indigenous displacement, in other words, becomes a synecdoche of wider planetary displacement, rather than simply an oppositional marker. Instead of merely deploying environmental politics to promulgate a polemical novel, Wright internalizes the dynamics of the planet, just as Toni Morrison a generation ago internalized the politics of race, to represent a world whose experiential coordinates have been entirely changed. In the same way as Morrison's 'Beloved'[26] took the genealogies of race to represent a map of the

22   Wallace Stevens: The Idea of Order at Key West, p. 130.
23   Alexis Wright: The Swan Book.
24   Alexis Wright: Odyssey of the Horizon, p. 114.
25   Ibid., p. 121.
26   Toni Morrison: Beloved.

entire United States, so 'The Swan Book'[27] uses its planetary dynamics to rotate the world on its axis, using its Australian landscape to evoke a necessarily interconnected sphere, one joined together by the circulation of the oceans, where antipodean space and planetary space have become co-terminous.[28]

'The Swan Book' also has interesting links to an aesthetics of shipwreck that have a long provenance in Australian literature. Wright's novel might be construed as a vision of extended shipwreck, where human institutions have become a fragile vessel liable to being overwhelmed by rising seas. Yet the monkey Rigoletto in 'The Swan Book' is not especially disturbed by witnessing "flooding on seaboard city states all over the world", since he regards it as a natural extension of "seeing water flooding in the lanes of Venice, Bangladesh or Pakistan".[29] Similarly, the overturning of flimsy social constructs and their submergence within currents of a vast natural world is a familiar theme of Australian literature, going back to the 19th century. In James Tucker's brilliant and woefully neglected novel 'Ralph Rashleigh; or, The Life of an Exile' (written in 1845),[30] the eponymous transported convict is shipwrecked while trying to escape from a penal settlement in New South Wales, and he finds himself living in an Aboriginal community for four and a half years, before being rediscovered by a Sydney vessel plying the trade route between Australia and the Fiji Islands. The hero's liminal position in between the land and the sea is reflected in the way he becomes assimilated into the Indigenous community, to such an extent that his former friends and colleagues no longer recognize him when they meet again. In Tucker's novel, the sea thus operates again as a site of transformation, a space in which conventional distinctions between social and racial categories become dissolved. 'The Swiss Family Robinson', the novel published in German in 1812 by John David Wyss about a Swiss family of immigrants whose ship goes off course en route to Sydney and is shipwrecked in the vicinity of the East Indies, also fits with this aesthetic of shipwreck that operates both literally and metaphorically and is endemic to the Australian literary environment. The first translation of this novel into English in 1816 was by William Godwin, husband of Mary Wollstonecraft and father of Mary Shelley, who was himself a highly influential figure in London radical circles at the turn of the 19th century.

This idea of shipwreck speaks in a wider sense to the fragility of the human condition that is one of the stylistic characteristics of 19th-century Australian poetry. In Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem 'Ulysses', published in 1842, the epic sea voyager, though as Tennyson says "made weak by time and fate", nevertheless remains "strong in will, | To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield".[31] Australian poets a generation later, however, engage in dialogue with Tennyson, referring sometimes explicitly to his use of classical conventions, but taking both his patriotic and philosophical temper in a different direction. The Australian poet Henry

27   Alexis Wright: The Swan Book.
28   For a more detailed discussion of Wright's relation to racial and environmental issues, see
      Paul Giles: The Planetary Clock, p. 341.
29   Alexis Wright: The Swan Book, p. 284.
30   James Tucker: Ralph Rashleigh, or the Life of an Exile.
31   Alfred Lord Tennyson: Ulysses, p. 620.

Kendall, for example, responded directly to Tennyson's "Ulysses" in "The Voyage of Telegonus" (1866),[32] a poem recounting the unwitting slaying of Ulysses by Telegonus, his son by Circe, thereby foregrounding the theme of parricide that is a lurking presence throughout 19th-century Australian poetry. In 1869, Kendall also published his poem "Ogyges", based on a primeval mythological ruler in ancient Greece, which Kendall observed in a footnote to the poem was written "after the manner of Tennyson's 'Tithonus'",[33] a poem by Tennyson about a prince of Troy. But Kendall's work is not simply a colonial imitation, since it involves rather an intertextual reorientation of this Western tradition, another form of parricide at some level, where the epic hero is dissolved within the sea rather than standing steadfastly against it:

> So with the blustering tempest doth he find
> A stormy fellowship: for when the North
> Comes reeling downwards with a breath like spears,
> Where Dryope the lonely sits all night
> And holds her sorrow crushed betwixt her palms,
> He thinketh mostly of that time of times
> When Zeus the Thunderer – broadly-blazing King –
> Like some wild comet beautiful but fierce,
> Leapt out of cloud and fire and smote the tops
> Of black Ogygia with his red right hand,
> At which great fragments tumbled to the Deeps –
> The mighty fragments of a mountain-land –
> And all the World became an awful Sea![34]

Kendall was not treated particularly sympathetically by Australian critics of his own era or subsequently, who thought his poetry was often eccentric and self-indulgent, if not altogether masochistic and self-destructive. However, his poetic idiom is interesting in part because it evokes a world in which the sea is not something to be imperially resisted and conquered, but rather a natural element that always threatens to overwhelm human civilization, as in the lines from "Ogyges" quoted above, where fragments of mountains tumble down and the land itself dissolves into an "awful Sea". As Harry Heseltine noted, Kendall's poetry is shadowed by a "dream of obliteration",[35] and he often evokes a phantasmagorical notion of the inland sea as a metaphorical conception, a liminal space in between worlds, in a manner reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe. Kendall in other words takes Poe's mythological conceit of a city in the sea and embodies it more naturalistically within an Australian environment that fluctuates between different elements: landscape and seascape.

Kendall also has strong intellectual links with the English poet A. C. Swinburne, who was experimenting with similar aesthetic agendas around the same time, as well as with his fellow Australian poet Adam Lindsay Gordon, whose 1870 poem "The Swimmer" similarly represents the sea as a welcome escape from the burdens of individual resistance:

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32   Henry Kendall: The Poetical Works of Henry Kendall, pp. 93-97.
33   Ibid, p. 103.
34   Ibid, p. 105.
35   Harry Heseltine: The Metamorphoses of Henry Kendall, p. 377.

> I would that with sleepy, soft embraces
> The sea would fold me – would find me rest,
> In luminous shades of her secret places,
> In depths where her marvels are manifest.[36]

But Kendall also produced sea poems in a more realistic vein, including for example 'Coogee', a lively evocation of the beachside suburb near his home in Sydney, where he often swam:

> Sing the song of wave-worn Coogee, Coogee in the distance white,
> With its jags and points disrupted, gaps and fractures fringed with light;
> Haunt of gledes, and restless plovers of the melancholy wail
> Ever lending deeper pathos to the melancholy gale.
> There, my brothers, down the fissures, chasms deep and wan and wild,
> Grows the sea-bloom, one that blushes like a shrinking, fair, blind child;
> And amongst the oozing forelands many a glad, green rock-vine runs,
> Getting ease on earthy ledges, sheltered from December suns.
> Often, when a gusty morning, rising cold and grey and strange,
> Lifts its face from watery spaces, vistas full with cloudy change.[37]

Despite the poem's charm, this is not just an evocation of a local scene, but rather an appropriation of marine landscapes to evoke a carefully calibrated and intellectually consistent projection of the world, one where "watery spaces" introduce a sense of perennial "change" within the everyday world. Tom Roberts, who as we saw produced the 'Coming South' seascape, also did a painting of Coogee Beach in 1888 that was inflected by the new styles of Impressionist painting then becoming popular in Paris (Fig. 2),[38] and both Kendall and Roberts were intent upon using the sea as a starting point for their ambitious artistic designs, using the fluctuating quality of light and water to hold up a quizzical mirror to the more solid Victorian apparatus of a built environment.

In a review of Kendall's book 'Leaves from Australian Forests' in the 'Colonial Monthly' of October 1869, critic George Oakley wrote of the "necessity" of alliteration in Kendall's style: "His prose rings with it as freely as his verse, and in it the remarkable power of his descriptions of Australian scenery chiefly lies".[39] Like Swinburne, whom he praised for his "material sensuality",[40] Kendall uses alliteration to mimic a rhythmic world where the human subject becomes caught up within a self-perpetuating motion, a wave-like movement to and fro that carries the poetic voice and often threatens to drown it. As Oakley astutely noted, "it is not so much he that speaks as Australia in him";[41] and this switch from an active to a passive voice should not be interpreted as a dereliction of poetic prowess, since it creatively repositions Kendall as a mediator of his environment rather than its authoritative begetter. Kendall, like Herman Melville, served in his youth on a whaling ship, where he spent eighteen months, and it is no surprise that among

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36   Adam Lindsay Gordon: Poems of the Late Adam Lindsay Gordon, p. 38.
37   Henry Kendall: The Poetical Works of Henry Kendall, pp. 101 f.
38   Tom Roberts: Holiday Sketch at Coogee (1888). oil on canvas. 40.3 x 55.9 cm stretcher; 56.8 x 72.0 x 5.5 cm frame. Courtesy of Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. Accession Number 9078.
39   Michael Wilding: Wild Bleak Bohemia, p. 255.
40   Henry Kendall: Stray Thoughts about Tennyson, p. 346.
41   Michael Wilding: Wild Bleak Bohemia, p. 78.

Fig. 2: Tom Roberts, 'Holiday Sketch at Coogee', 1888

his final words on his deathbed in 1882 were: "Give me a drink from the sea".[42] In a famous essay of 1875, Marcus Clarke suggested that "the dominant note of Australian scenery" was "Weird Melancholy", with Clarke singling out Kendall as having "caught clearly the wild and grotesque spirit of his native forest".[43] Clarke was not necessarily wrong about the idea of weird melancholy, but it is arguable that the sea rather than the forest was Kendall's dominant intellectual landscape. He was attached not so much to land-based enclosures (even though he did work as an Inspector of State Forests late in his life) but rather to a broader sense of the human world being circumscribed by, and potentially vulnerable to, sea drift. Appropriately enough, Tom Roberts also painted a posthumous portrait of Kendall that now hangs in Parliament House in Canberra, and he could fairly be understood as an icon of this land 'girt by sea'.

In this context, the sea within the discursive framework of Australian literature does not just represent an environmental or scientific phenomenon, but

42   Ibid., p. 540.
43   Marcus Clarke: Country Leisure – II, p. 14.

also a metaphorical and philosophical dimension that challenges conventional Western models of domesticity, insularity and agency. In an essay entitled 'The Lonely Seas' that she wrote in 1911 for the American journal 'Atlantic Monthly', the novelist Ada Cambridge, who left England in 1870 and spent nearly all of her working life in Australia, represented the metaphor of the voyage away from home truths as an act of intellectual conscience, involving an interrogation of inherited nostrums in the light of transition and travel:

> It is the delusion of the unthinking, who have never slipped their moorings, that the deep-sea voyager is but a careless runaway from home and duty, a shirker of sacred obligations[44]
>
> […] my soul is at large on the Lonely Seas, and has been so long that now it could not breathe elsewhere[45]
>
> […] in this immensity you get out of yourself as well as out of other thralls. With such a sweep of vision, you perceive something of the relative proportions of things, and amongst them all your place.[46]

The language in Cambridge's essay revolves around not only oceanic travel, but also a move away from orthodox religion, while also invoking the divided or repressed selves being brought into play by the then new science of psychoanalysis so as to correlate this metaphor of the lonely seas with a voyage into intellectually uncharted territory. In this way, Cambridge presents the sea as a vehicle of transnational displacement, developing a metaphor of travel as conceptual transformation. Subsequently in her autobiography 'The Retrospect', Cambridge critiqued the provincial limitations of vision in Europe as "a medieval sort of business",[47] while commending what she calls "the sea-change my whole being had undergone" by her migration to Australia,[48] with these changes of scenery betokening the larger issues of transition and mutability that were central to Cambridge's fiction in general. Cambridge was an almost exact contemporary of Henry James – James lived from 1843 to 1915, Cambridge from 1844 to 1926 – and she had much in common with the American-born author in the way she combined narratives of genteel manners with darker themes of satiric comedy and the complications of sexual passion, as well as a focus on international themes. Cambridge traversed the Pacific Ocean in the same way James traversed the Atlantic, but of course the reputation of these two novelists today could hardly be more different: James is academically canonized and still widely read, while Cambridge is almost completely forgotten.

Having worked now for thirteen years in Australia after seventeen years in England and seven years in the United States, it remains something of a puzzle to me why Australian Literature is not more widely recognized as a compelling dynamic within World Literature. Cambridge and Kendall are major figures who certainly have not yet had their proper critical due, and there are many others. Lisa Lowe's influential book 'The Intimacy of Four Continents', for example, discussed literary, cultural and economic interactions among Europe, Asia, Africa

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44 Ada Cambridge: The Lonely Seas, p. 96.
45 Ibid., p. 97.
46 Ibid., p. 100.
47 Ada Cambridge: The Retrospect, p. 42.
48 Ibid., p. 51.

and the Americas, but left out Australia and Oceania altogether. A dismissive attitude towards Australia as a colonial backwater among some of the more traditional critics in Europe and North America may be one reason for this neglect, but another I think has been the protectionist instincts of Australian literature specialists themselves, linked to their fear that the viability of their subject would be compromised if it were to become incorporated into a more amorphous larger entity such as World Literature. From this perspective, the global visibility of Australian literature has been chronically hindered by the reluctance of many scholars to regard Australian narratives as being of anything more than local concern. This is particularly unfortunate, I think, since it neglects not only the extraordinary range of Australian texts themselves, but also the broader planetary correlations between environmental perspectives and seascapes that have long been a feature of Australian literary scenarios.

Just to take one example of this, Les Murray's 1992 poem 'Kimberley Brief' uses the coastal landscape of Broome is Western Australia to describe how "the whole world is an archipelago, | each place an island in a void of travel".[49] But this is quite specifically not just a local portrait of Broome; Murray's point is precisely that "the whole *world* is an archipelago",[50] that the combination of islands and inlets on this Western Australian coast becomes a microcosm of the way in which planet Earth is intersected by oceans. And, zooming out still further, the poem's evocation of the "infinite dot-painting" associated with this town not only alludes to the dot-painting style of Indigenous art but also presents human habitation as a series of infinite dots within the much larger natural world:

> With modern transport, everywhere you go
> the whole world is an archipelago,
> each place an island in a void of travel.
> In our case, cloud obscured the continent's whole gravel
> of infinite dot-painting, as we overflew zones and degrees
> toward the great island of the Kimberleys.[51]

In this light, the Australian landscape comes to stand as a smaller synecdoche of the solar system, with Broome a tiny dot on the vast map, just as Earth is a tiny dot within cosmic space.

Another reason Western critics have found it difficult to assimilate Australian literature within the conventional rubrics of World Literature, I would suggest, is precisely because it evokes a disorienting style and scale of what we might call naturalized posthumanism. Such posthumanism displaces more familiar social and political categories into environmental and cosmic perspectives that effectively challenge humanist assumptions and turn Western preconceptions inside out. This is the same principle of reversal that Ruskin remarked on in his comment about the sea's "mixture of fury and formalism",[52] the way the sea remained always resistant to formal cartographies of a more traditional aesthetic kind. Writing of Hawai'i, Isaiah Helekunihi Walker argued that by "observing history

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49   Les A. Murray: Collected Poems, p. 347.
50   Ibid., p. 347, emphasis added.
51   Ibid., p. 347.
52   John Ruskin: Modern Painters.

from the vantage point of the ocean, issues of colonialism, politics and resistance appear strikingly different",[53] and this is even more true of Australian literature in relation to the Western world. Seascapes are not just as an accidental element with Australian literature; they are ontologically embedded within its planetary contours. One of the advantages of the manifold new forms of environmental criticism is that they offer us the opportunity to reassess literary traditions of the past and to trace implicit continuities between the metaphorical representation of shipwreck in contemporary writers such as Alexis Wright and neglected 19th-century novelists such as James Tucker, or the extension of local seascapes into cosmic dioramas that we see in the poetry of Les Murray and Henry Kendall. Just as the Indo-Pacific is becoming more central every year to world politics, so a heightened consciousness of global forces combining land and water, human and non-human, is becoming increasingly visible within a framework of World Literature that has more traditionally been dominated by European and North American interests. Within that expanded orbit, the relation of Australian literature and culture to planetary seascapes will, over time, play an increasingly significant role.

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53   Isaiah Helekunihi Walker: Waves of Resistance, p. 3.

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Jean Page

'Vast Crystal Globe' – Awash in the Sublime

James McAuley's Twentieth Century Sea Voyage ('Captain Quiros,' 1964)

Abstract: In his unusual mid-20th century epic poem 'Captain Quiros,' Australian poet James McAuley reimagines European exploration of the southern hemisphere in retelling the two Pacific voyages of the lay Franciscan Portuguese sea captain (Pedro Fernandes de Queirós). "Quiros" crossed the Pacific in search for the fabled, utopia-laden Terra Australis with the last Spanish voyages of discovery of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The well-researched, deliberately 'out-of-fashion' long poem, drew on the 1904 Hakluyt society English translation from Spanish (1876) of the 17th century chronicle of Quiros and his secretary Belmonte and on McAuley's own post-war experience in the Australian administration of New Guinea. This article focusses on the text's compelling representation of the ocean through which the expeditions travel rather than on the narration of events and encounters. In exploring the archetype of early global travel it examines how, in his depiction of oceanic space, an alternative to an Australian inland 'horizonal sublime', McAuley embellishes the original Spanish text from his reading about ancient maps, the Portuguese Luis de Camões' epic 'Os Lusíadas', and histories of South Pacific exploration and also, the mid-20th century perspective of pioneer environmental writer Rachel Carson. Her landmark 'The Sea Around Us' combined powerful scientific and literary descriptions of oceanic phenomena, some of which are traced in the high mimetic descriptive passages of McAuley's poetic narrative.[1] McAuley's portrait of 'Ocean' and its crossing conjures the sphere of the in-between between continent and islands, known and unknown places and peoples, past and future, faith and the abyss. This ambivalent ocean of indeterminate space, alternatively benign, chaotic and indifferent, is the stage on which the reader sees Quiros' voyages to the land of desire unfold and transform into a dystopian, if more sombre, understanding of the world and more recent Australian history. In the identity-ridden 1950s, the poem helped elaborate Australia's hitherto little acknowledged oceanic identity within a wider region, offering a richer variant on its customary insular interior profile.

The sea and the ocean have long been the scenario for major writing projects – epics, sagas, long novels, poems, including in the Australian spatial imaginary. The ocean voyages of novelist Joseph Conrad made landfall in South-East Asia and Australia. Each day on the way back from school I would walk past the hulk of the only vessel Conrad captained, the 'Otago', laid to rest and rust away on the eastern shore of Hobart's Derwent River. My great-grandmother travelled several times by boat from Tasmania to visit her sister in Christchurch, New Zealand. In the early 19th century Hobart, Tasmania, was the whaling capital of the world. Our school text Swift's satirical 'Gulliver's Travels' reached as far as Australia. However, in Australia, the interior has for a long time held the imaginary to ransom.

Poet Ian Mudie, one of the Australian cultural nativist Jindyworobak group claimed in the 1940s how "it is the outback and not the ocean that grips the minds of Australians",[2] a perception nurtured well into the fifties, as in Russell Ward's 'The Australian Legend' (1958).[3] If the ocean did not grip Australia, which I and others now dispute, it at least caught the imagination of the mid-20th-century

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1   Cf. Rachel Carson: The Sea Around Us.
2   Michael Evans: Island Consciousness and Australian Strategic Culture, p. 1.
3   Cf. Russell Ward: The Australian Legend.

Australian poet James McAuley, who dedicated two years to writing an unlikely 65-page epic-style poem 'Captain Quiros' (1964) about the quest voyage of the 17th-century Portuguese navigator Pedro Fernandes de Queirós (or Quirós, in Spanish). Quiros travelled with two Spanish sea voyages westward across the Pacific from what is Peru searching for the fabled 'Terra Australis'. The first, in 1595, reached the Solomon Islands, the second in 1606 reached Vanuatu, but the third in 1614, with Quiros' death, never left Panama. Nonetheless, I consider McAuley's seascapes, the vital oceanic elements in the poem, to be an important elaboration of the Australian imaginary.

The ocean appears early in Part One, in what Lyn McCredden describes as "exquisite images"[4] setting the scene for the long sea voyage and its encounters with islands and the remote, a world of wonders and terrors:

> Blue hemisphere from Pole to Pole,
> Vast crystal globe where ignorance could scry:
> Projecting fears and longings of the soul
> On the unknown – monsters that swim and fly,
> Whirlpools and primal darkness on the deep;
> Leviathan unchained; dolphins that leap
> Over the mainyard. So in old maps we see
> *Imago Mundi* done in red and gold,
> With fabled lands through which green rivers run
> To a blue scalloped sea.[5]

The archaic, even Biblical, language of "scry" with its "crystal globe" and "primal darkness," and the Gothic motifs – monsters, Leviathan, and gilded maps evoke the allure and fear of those late Renaissance voyagers shifting into a vast unknown. Archetypes of exploration raise themes and motifs central to post-colonial and more recent transnational critical perspectives (Paul Gilroy, Suvendrini Perera);[6] the key tropes – of crossing, identity (the quest for origins), encounter with the Other, history and time. They present binaries for nature and society – centre/periphery, utopia/dystopia, ignorance/knowledge, modernity/the traditional, the ideal and the real. 'Captain Quiros' comes from McAuley's less well-received neo-classical phase of the nineteen-fifties in which he deliberately pursued a 'writing against the grain'. So, while it is essentially a modern epic 'Captain Quiros' is described defensively, as "out of fashion" (Collected Poems [hereafter: CP], p. 142), even by its 17th-century narrator the Spanish chronicler and dramatist Luis de Belmonte Bermúdez.

Context

Other Australian poets of his time took up maritime themes. McAuley (1917-1976) almost certainly drew on the maritime motifs of Australia's first modernist poet Kenneth Slessor (1901-1971) notably his elegy 'Five Bells' (1939) set in Sydney

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4   Lyn McCredden: James McAuley, p. 37.
5   James McAuley: Collected Poems, p. 111.
6   Paul Gilroy: The Black Atlantic; Suvendrini Perera: Australia and the Insular Imagination.

Harbour. McAuley's early poem of the same period 'The Blue Horses' (1940) sets up an inner city industrial ambience reminiscent of the much admired T. S. Eliot.

> The harbour derricks swing their load upon the shore.
> The sacred turbines hum, the factories
> set up their hallowed roar.[7]

Coastal motifs and themes are evident in the work of contemporary poet Francis Webb especially in his depiction of the 19th century whaler and entrepreneur Ben Boyd in the long poem "A Drum for Ben Boyd", with its evocation of the coastal landscape of southern New South Wales. While McAuley's later poem 'Captain Quiros' has shifted beyond Slessor's modernist frame, the influence of maritime motifs in the older poet's long poems arguably endured, notably the maps and sea exotica of 'Five Visions of Captain Cook' (1931) and of 'Captain Dobbin' (1929), published in the 1930s when McAuley published his first poems. Nonetheless, McAuley turned from the more familiar English navigator (James Cook) to the lesser known earlier Portuguese navigators who in the fifteenth century had been sailing to the southern hemisphere, including India (1498), Malacca (1511), Timor (1512), and probably the Australian north and (possibly) eastern coasts (1521).

McAuley's interests in maritime tropes were probably fuelled by his war-time research on maps of New Guinea while stationed between 1943 and 1945 in the Victorian Army Barracks in Melbourne with Alf Conlon's Directorate for Research on Civil Affairs (DORCA). The young poet and his fellow researchers were investigating Portuguese chronicles[8] and old maps, to help find material on New Guinea to assist the military effort against the Japanese who had invaded early in 1942. Mapping material may have included replicas of the fifteenth-century mappa mundi commissioned by the Portuguese from the Venetian map-maker Fra Mauro. Also, McAuley would have come across the speculations on the Portuguese navigations by George Collingridge de Tourcey in 1895[9] held in the Mitchell Library. The researchers would have been assisted in their endeavours with the secondment to the Directorate at this time of the experienced Mitchell Librarian Ida Leeson.[10]

Lay Franciscan Quiros had a utopian vision of the fabled 'Terra Australis' as the location for a future new Christian society but only arrived in 1606 with the second expedition at an island of Vanuatu which he thought might be 'Terra Australis' and which still bears some of the name he gave it – "[Austrialia del] Espiritu Santo".[11] The utopian Portuguese explorer was already the subject of McAuley's early short poem 'Terra Australis':

7   James McAuley: The Blue Horses in id.: Collected Poems, p. 9.
8   McAuley read at this time Bernard Miall's translation of Azurara's chronicles of the early fifteenth century voyages commanded by Henry the Navigator down the west coast of Africa. Conquests and Discoveries of Henry the Navigator.
9   George Collingridge de Tourcey: The First Discovery of Australia and New Guinea.
10 The assembly of a significant collection of historic regional maps was supervised by Mitchell librarian Ida Leeson, as described by Sylvia Martin in Ida Leeson: A Life.
11 The Australian 19th-century Catholic Archbishop Patrick Moran had argued fifty years earlier than McAuley's long poem, and as wishfully as Quiros, that the navigator had arrived in Australia, near Gladstone in Queensland, thus constituting a Catholic founding of Australia.

Voyage within you, on the fabled ocean
And you will find that Southern Continent
Quiros' vision – his hidalgo heart
And mythical Australia, where reside
All things in their imagined counterpart.[12]

Contrary to Ian Mudie's assertions it contributed to a Jindyworobak oceanic rather than purely inland exploration of origins. McAuley's poem was published in the 'Jindyworobak Anthology' (1943).[13] Other Portuguese navigators were addressed in several of McAuley's early poems of this period. McAuley's 1944 narrative poem 'Henry the Navigator' (CP, 1971, p. 21) drew on the fifteenth-century Portuguese Chronicle of Eanes de Azurara. In it the poet speculates on Henry as the "fountainhead" for later European quests to "discover" the southern continent in the following centuries (arguably from Cristóvão de Mendonça in 1521 to Willem Janszoon in 1605-06).[14] In a similar vein, drawing on his library research, in the 1945 narrative poem 'The True Discovery of Australia' (CP, 1971, p. 29) McAuley imagines finding an epistle from Jonathan Swift's fictional navigator Gulliver describing his supposed encounter with the peoples from the southern continent (Part IV, Gulliver's Travels, 1726) from which location Gulliver is eventually rescued by a Portuguese trading vessel.

Conjectures about the discovery of Australia by Quiros, the romantic trope of the oceanic quest, would later be incorporated in Jindyworobak lore as evident in the long poem 'The Great Southern Land' (1951) by Jindyworobak founder Rex Ingamells.[15]

Genesis

The long poem 'Captain Quiros' came nearly 20 years after McAuley's 'Terra Australis'. An apparent after-thought, the poet recorded later how, towards the end of his less well-received neo-classical phase in the late 1950s "in the midst of uncertainty and dryness", he "suddenly took up again an almost forgotten project, of writing a long narrative poem about Quiros".[16]

The project came as a kind of rescue, reflected in his preceding poem on poetic process 'The Inception of the Poem':

[…] suddenly unbidden, the theme returns
That visited my youth; over the vast
Pacific with the white wake at their sterns,
The ships of Quiros on their great concerns
Ride in to the present from the past.[17]

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12 James McAuley: Terra Australis.
13 Probably because the subsequent three stanzas offer a celebration of iconic Australian fauna and flora rather than for its nautical first stanza.
14 See Kenneth Gordon McIntyre: The Secret Discovery of Australia.
15 Not a Jindyworobak Douglas Stewart, editor of the 'Bulletin', wrote the light- hearted long poem 'Terra Australis' in 1949.
16 James McAuley: A Map of Australian Verse, pp. 202 f.
17 James McAuley: The Inception of the Poem in id.: Collected Poems, p. 108.

McAuley's retelling of Quiros' utopian Christian project ("that noble voyage") against the materialist, gold-seeking objectives of the Spanish expeditioners was certainly empathetic: "'Terra Australis' you must celebrate | Land of the inmost heart, searching for which | Men roam the earth" (CP, p. 113). Using the 1904 translation by Clements Markham[18] from the Spanish chronicle for the Hakluyt society, Quiros' historical quest was laden with the poet's own projects and divergences with contemporary secular values and ideology that came from intense reading in philosophy and theology, resulting in his conversion to Catholicism in 1952 after contact with Catholic missionaries in New Guinea. The poet explained how as a "reconvert" he was "seeing the world in the light of a recovered acceptance of Christian tradition and orthodoxy".[19] Looking back to a supposedly quiet 1950s in peace-time Australia, the poet's experience with Catholic Labor politics with the formation of the breakaway anti-communist Democratic Labor Party in 1955 had been neither calm nor detached but gave tension and relevance to the navigator hero in his attempt to found a just, free, spiritually-oriented society. The sea voyage, while an imperial venture for the Spanish to gain new territory and converts, is for the navigator Quiros and, its author McAuley, an archetype of spiritual transformation.

The Crossing

McAuley cited Patrick White's 1957 novel 'Voss' as a source of inspiration. He thought White's account of the fictional inland explorer modelled on Ludwig Leichhardt, as "undertaking things normally the business of poetic narrative and drama".[20] McAuley's unusual poem describes a journey not through sandy deserts but through the treacherous blue deserts of the enveloping "Ocean" (capitalised as is Coleridge's "Moon" in "the Ancient Mariner"). Part One, sets out on the Pacific from Callao in Peru. The poem is dominated by acts of crossing, a vast wasteland the quester must navigate – invariably empty, a grey cold element of infinite latitudes: "Ocean's empty tract" (CP, p. 115), "the Antarctic void", (CP, p. 143) and "blue desert plain" (CP, p. 149) as well as capriciousness in "Ocean's changefulness" (CP, p. 162). The Quiros epoch precedes by two centuries the exploration of Australian oceanic space Paul Carter addresses in 'The Road to Botany Bay' (1987). In 'Quiros' the narrating traveller's description of the barrier Ocean is marked by strong emotions of epic suffering prescribed by Aristotle[21] – "loneliness" (CP, p. 148), "strangeness" (CP, p. 151), "uncertainty" (CP, p. 161) and the journey through it with "hardship" and vicissitude" (CP, p. 162). The endless

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18   Markham's 1904 translation of the earlier Spanish chronicle (The Voyages of Pedro Fernandez de Quiros) was dedicated to the British naval explorer Robert Scott following his first expedition to Antarctic in 1904. Scott had become interested in the Antarctic expedition through contact with Markham. Scott died tragically when leading the second expedition that reached the South Pole after Amundsen in 1912.
19   James McAuley: A Map of Australian Verse, p. 202.
20   James McAuley: The Gothic Splendours, p. 35.
21   Aristotle: Poetics, XII, 145b, p. 9.

horizon suggests "excess of space" or the experience of a "horizonal sublime"[22] Bill Ashcroft detects in 19th-century Australian settlers' responses to the unfamiliar endless inland horizons. Quiros' vast oceanic landscape evokes overpowering disorientation, reflecting that creative aporia from which McAuley, as poet, was fleeing.

This oceanic passage also invites the phrase "oceanic feeling" Sigmund Freud coined to suggest the sensation of unboundedness and limitlessness, akin to an early phase of ego-feeling, a subsequent sense of "oneness with the universe" which Suvendrini Perera[23] associates with the emergence of religious impulses. Perera also argues how such sites of an Australian oceanic sublime are a meeting place for notions of "nation and subjectivity, the psychic and the historical".[24]

Generic Precedents

With its iambic pentameters,[25] archaic diction and heroic couplets the poem approximates the traditional epic form. The 7-line stanzas vary the 8 lines of its possible model 'Os Lusíadas' (1572) by Portuguese epic poet Luis de Camões which recounts Vasco da Gama's fifteenth-century navigations. McAuley read that epic in the 1940s perhaps in Major Thomas Mitchell's 1854 translation.[26] Camões' hero Vasco da Gama journeyed south and east through the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, whereas Quiros travelled westward across the Pacific from the Americas. Part Two on the second expedition describing an island of now Kiribati as "Gente Hermosa" (or beautiful people), refers in epic allusiveness to da Gama's amorous adventures through the tropical islands of the Indian Ocean: "Freely the great Camoens could contrive | A magic isle of Venus in the sea". (CP, p. 149). The epic's putative narrator and author Belmonte also cites as his literary guides the 16th and 17th century Spanish writers, dramatist and poet Félix Lope de Vega and Alonso de Ercilla, author of the epic of Chilean conquest, La Araucana (CP, p. 146).

Projections

The Portuguese epopeia 'The Lusiad' offered an important antecedent in asserting the oceanic identity of Portugal and also, arguably of Australia 400 years later. One of Camoes' successors the modernist Fernando Pessoa re-imagined in 1934 the voyages of "the immense and possible ocean" going even further to "the sidereal south" ("Horizon"). 'Captain Quiros' is driven by the topos of

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22 Bill Ashcroft: The Sacred in Australian Culture, p. 26.
23 Suvendrini Perera: Australia and the Insular Imagination, pp. 40 f.
24 Ibid, p. 41.
25 Iambic pentameter matches the dactyllic hexameter of heroic verse Aristotle thought appropriate for narrating action in the classical epic.
26 Mitchell learned Portuguese while living in Portugal in the early 19th-century in the service of the Duke of Wellington following the Napoleanic invasions (1807-1814).

the "journey south"[27] associated with early voyages from Europe into unknown paradisal regions, the motif of the "happy isles" seen in Nietzsche. Critic Livio Dobrez has described this pattern of writing as "Australia being re-explored, but from the inside".[28] As in McAuley's earlier explorer poems there is abundant imagery and vocabulary of navigators, maps, charts, "cosmography" (CP, p. 113) appropriate for tracing a journey into unknown "Other" places. Jose Rabasa calls this "the centrifugal movement from name-laden Europe to the periphery, where legends and drawings characterise vast territories without history".[29] In this way McAuley's narrator Belmonte elaborates on Quiros' project : "[…] the last continent | Still waiting for the impress of the dreamer"(CP, p. 129). The arguably early Australian Quiros can thus be placed among what David Malouf has envisaged about settler Australians as "late-comers [who] share in a sea-dreaming, to which the image of Australia as an island has been central".[30]

In 1962, at a time of continuing reflection on Australian identity, McAuley wrote of the early European apprehension of the South Pacific as:

> the Antipodean realm, where everything is the reverse of the European order of things; the light of the Golden Age lingers upon it; it is the New World, man's chance for a new start; the Promised Land of a latter-day chosen people.[31]

Against this rosy projection Quiros' ultimate bleak vision of futurity in Part Three points to the harsh consequences of exploration: "The natives shot and poisoned from their land" (CP, p. 173). McAuley's poem predates but anticipates the post-colonial turn of the last quarter of the 20th century. His experience in colonial administration in New Guinea as a lecturer at the Australian School of Pacific Studies (ASOPA from 1946 to 1960) gave him insight into questions facing settler nations like Australia, an awareness also evident in the poetry of some Australian contemporaries, from the Jindyworobak movement of the 1940s (Rex Ingamells and Roland Robinson) to Judith Wright, and emerging indigenous writers Jack Davis and Oodgeroo Noonuccal. 'Captain Quiros', which I consider McAuley's proto-post-colonial long poem, brought to life his own public and private quests, and was enriched by his own experience of and insight into New Guinea, a traditional society such as Quiros might have encountered in 1595.

Islands

The sea voyage involves the making of landfall in the tropical South Pacific, forewarned by the sighting of seabirds, "Tree trunks and coconuts, and turtles floating […]", (CP, p. 153) episodes in which the ocean's coastal zones are now depicted as welcoming, less intimidating. It also involves the encounter with the Other, the islanders. Part One describes Quiros' arrival at the idyllic Santa Cruz of the

27   Mary Louie Pratt: Mapping Ideology, pp. 158.
28   Livio Dobrez: Identifying Australia in Postmodern Times, p. 39.
29   Jose Rabasa: Allegories of Atlas, p. 323. Rabasa's words recall Edward Said's description of the European: "battery of desires, repressions investments and projections", id.: Orientalism, p. 36.
30   David Malouf: The Island.
31   James McAuley: Literature and the Arts, p. 123.

Solomon Islands: McAuley's evocative description of chief "Malope's place" – a ceremonial, utopian traditional society, suggests both past and present:

> This is the island world, Malope's place
> Much like our childhood world of presences
> That looks out from a mythic time and space
> Into the real: a land of similes
> Where man conforming to the cosmos proves
> His oneness with all beings, and life moves
> To the rhythm of profound analogies.[32]

Tragically such timeless societies would be changed irremediably by the passage of the Europeans.

McAuley's descriptions, such as Malope's place, drew on his direct experience, his notebook recordings,[33] of his time visiting the coastal landscapes of Kubuna and Yule Island missions in New Guinea, Australia's immediate northern neighbour then under its administration, whose landscapes resemble those of Australia's own tropical north. The poet admitted that 'Captain Quiros' was "saturated with New Guinea. I couldn't have written it without that experience".[34] Historian Oscar Spate observed that "*Quiros* allowed McAuley to draw on his New Guinea experience, giving him an empathy with Melanesian ways of thought".[35]

Not many of the topoi traditionally associated with Australia are present in this long, less-known narrative. However with the palms, turtles, rainforests, waters and people of the south western Pacific (the "colour and marvellous world of the Pacific explorations")[36] McAuley added to the Australian imaginary the topoi of its tropical North and its oceans to the east, as would contemporaries Judith Wright and John Blight, and successive writers such as Alexis Wright.

The Ocean

McAuley's friend, poet Vincent Buckley, was dismayed to find a final draft even more "persistently prosaic and pedagogical than the first"[37] and out of keeping with contemporary poetic fashion. The poet, however, refused any modification, seemingly mindful of what Aristotle had advised the epic poet on diction: "The poet should elaborate his diction in the quieter passages which involves no characterisation or thought".[38] So the 'Quiros' narrative erupts with patches of extraordinarily lyrical, concrete beauty, especially in the "quieter patches" of the ocean voyage and island visits. In researching the poem McAuley had read, among many navigational texts, the 1952 study by Rachel Carson 'The Sea Around Us',

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32 James McAuley: Collected Poems, p. 121.
33 In the nexus between his life and art, McAuley recorded in his Notebook (24 August 1958) that he would try to write the lyrical passage on Malope's place after he had returned from New Guinea, perhaps the Sacred Heart Mission at Yule Island, with a fresher view of its tropical coastal landscapes.
34 Graeme Kinross Smith: James McAuley p. 317.
35 O. H. K. Spate: Luso-Australia, p. 16.
36 John Thompson's interview: Poetry in Australia: James McAuley, p. 102.
37 Vincent Buckley: Cutting Green Hay, p. 178.
38 Aristotle, Poetics, XXV, 1460b, 1. pp. 37-40.

notable for her scientific observations and poetic citations about the sea.[39] A similar noting of oceanic phenomena is reflected in McAuley's long poem showing the poet's considerable research, thus conforming with W. H. Abrams' view of the epic as "that most ambitious of literary enterprises".[40]

The account of Quiros' journey is studded with passages about the ocean, its moods and exotic creatures – "flying fish and albacore" (CP, p. 115), "pale moon jellies" (CP, p. 146), and the region of its skies – "clouds huge as Asia" (CP, p. 146), and southern hemisphere constellations familiarity with which was essential to early navigators. It offers evocative descriptions of sea phenomena seen in Carson– of phosphorescence – "A luminous glory […] The bows turned up a billowing silver blaze | Over a milky plain of phosphorine" (CP, p. 147); St Elmo's fire, also seen in 'The Ancient Mariner' – "the mast tops seemed alight | Burning like candles […] (CP, p. 148) and the southern hemisphere 'Aurora Australis' – "With tracts that burned with opal-yellow hue | Changing to orange, green and azure blue, | And sheets of cold fire as of a lightning sheen". (CP, p. 147). Arguably the poet was following Aristotle's description of the mimetic role of the poet in depicting that wondrous world of the Ocean, also known as the early Greek god Oceanus: "Since the poet, like a painter or any other image-maker, is a mimetic artist".[41]

Quiros' voyages also encompass the hazardous coastal geographies of the coral reef and beaches "all features of sea country".[42]

The Boat

The symbolism of the boat is central to McAuley's retelling of Quiros' two maritime voyages across the then unknown Pacific Ocean. The very beginning evokes their difficult task: "Four ships upon the calm Pacific fold | Smooth water at the stern, scarce making way". (CP, p. 111) and the question of survival ("How will you fare?" CP, p. 113). The boat introduces the "place of otherness, an unpredictable and alien environment possessing great beauty and destructive power".[43] Boats represent the journeys of personal and spiritual discovery behind Quiros' project but particularly the Christian element of what is one of Australia's most important Christian poems. Since the days of the Apostles, the ship has been a symbol for the Christian church and the seas and elements suggest the world of sin though which Christians must struggle: "In wintry gulfs when storms beat from the Pole […] | In a blind world of rain where men despair". (CP, p. 113).

McAuley's long poem goes further back than the Christian world, adverting to the earlier precedent of Noah's ark. In writing the poem, McAuley had been

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39 In his Notebook for 1959 McAuley records Carson's observations about "moon jellies," and phosphorescence including what Darwin observed in the Beagle off Brazil. Norma McAuley Collection, State Library of New South Wales.
40 W. H. Abrams, Geoffrey Harpham: A Glossary of Literary Terms, p. 97.
41 Aristotle: Poetics, XXV, 1460b, 1, pp. 7 ff.
42 Nonie Sharp: Saltwater People, pp. 31-35.
43 Michael McCaughan: Symbolism of Ships and the Sea, pp. 54-61.

reading[44] the 'Old Testament Book of Wisdom'[45] whose reference to "the frail wood of the boat" is reflected in the representation of the vulnerable wooden vessels available for Quiros' journeys ("unballasted", CP, p. 119, with "rigging and sails rotten", CP, p. 136). Noah's "vessel of derision" (CP, p. 141) thus prefigures Quiros' spiritual cosmography in his own "later Ark | Rid[ing] on baptismal waters to embark | Mystical Adam, the whole company | Of settlers bound for a new heaven and earth" (CP, p. 142). The vessels described in McAuley's 1964 poem uncannily foreshadow contemporary times of dislocation in which similar fragile craft are used to transport travellers seeking survival across waters and seas. Drawing on McAuley's post-World War II anthropological experience in his work on New Guinea at the Australian School for Pacific Administration (ASOPA), the sacred purpose of Quiros' European 'Christian' boats is nonetheless queried in the indigenous perspective offered in Part One:

> Three tall floating structures had appeared
> With white-skinned crews, the colour of the dead.
> Were they non-human spirits, to be feared,
> Or friendly ghosts of ancestors returning?[46]

They foreshadow possible sinister future presences – "the demon company that might bring them harm" (CP, p. 122).

Reflecting McAuley's own recent highly divisive experience in 1950s Labour politics, which brought about a split between the secular and Catholic wings of the Labor Party, the boats in 'Captain Quiros' offer a range of symbolic representations of human nature ranging from noble quest to murderous pillaging to the simple bid for survival.

Time

Being historical, looking from the future of both its narrator Belmonte and its author, to the past of its protagonist hero Quiros and back again to an unwinding and even more remote future, 'Captain Quiros' involves the crossing of seas and time – mythical, historical, colonial, reaching into the poet's own time, the 1960s, and the unknown future of his readers. McAuley's experience of New Guinea gave him a privileged insight into challenges facing a society emerging into modernity. That being said, at a regional and global level, McAuley was personally involved in efforts in Australia to stem communist influences in the unions, the Labor Party and in society, having become in 1956 first editor of the centre right literary and general review Quadrant. McAuley's originality in 'Captain Quiros' was to incorporate the future in Quiros death-bed prophecy in Part Three, drawn from Quiros' Memorials to the King of Spain pleading his project. It reflects the failed hero's acceptance of and author's knowledge of the nature of

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44   McAuley's 1959 Notebook. Norma McAuley Collection, State Library of New South Wales.
45   The Book of Wisdom is one of the Septaguint books of wisdom of the Old Testament, not included in the Protestant Bible but known to the Catholic convert McAuley.
46   James McAuley: Collected Poems, p. 121.

colonial projects. Thus the sea voyage also brings about both vision and disillusion as Quiros admits:

> I saw the primal energies in motion,
> Like blind hooves shattering our secular scheme.
> The long blue rollers of the Southern Ocean
> Had washed away the outlines of my dream.[47]

McAuley's Southern Ocean matches Elizabeth Deloughrey's description of the sea as "a shifting site of history".[48]

Quiros' vision also employs the analogy of maps in which time and space are blended: "And many births of time I saw displayed | Like flat depictions in cartography" thus plunging into "deep perspectives of futurity" (CP, p. 173). Like Wai Chee Dimock's "deep time"[49] successive historical phases are foreseen, recounted and passed over like palimpsests. The recurring motif of ships as human vessels either wrecked on the shores or forever submerged, reinforces the theme of the ephemeral.

Quiros' death-bed prophecy accesses pre-historical time enabling Quiros to gaze on the Continent he only dreamed of:

> "I saw the South Land, vast, worn down, and strange:
> Man in his tribes and insect, beast, and tree,
> Set in a cyclic pattern beyond change.[50]

The lines are deeply ironic. Such fragile changelessness would be swiftly altered by imminent futurity as the monologue shifts to colonial history – the Dutch, English and French arrivals and the British settlement and also more recent global history. This extends from the Enlightenment to World War II and the Holocaust, returning to regional history – the dislocation of Australia's first people: "The natives shot and poisoned for their land".51

The dystopian experience concludes with the uninitiated third journey on Quiros' death with Belmonte gazing out from Panama on the inscrutable Pacific: "Calm to the west the clouded Ocean lay; | But I had reached the end of voyaging". Effectively Belmonte signs out for himself and Quiros' vast project and "self-reflexively"[52] for the author himself who with his long poem would leave his neo-classical grand works for more contemporary genres and stylistics.[53]

Conclusion

Reflecting on Roland Barthes' observations in "Mythologies", Suvendrini Perera has argued more generally how the sea is "fundamentally other, a field outside

47   James McAuley: Collected Poems, p. 172.
48   Elizabeth Deloughrey: Routes and Roots, p. 168.
49   Wai Chee Dimock: Through Other Continents. p. 28.
50   James McAuley: Collected Poems, p. 173.
51   Ibid.
52   Jennifer Strauss: From Heroism to Pietàs, p. 607.
53   As Lyn McCredden has conjectured, one of the "voyagings" of 'Captain Quiros' was "floating one's own commitment before an alien readership", James McAuley: Collected Poems, 1992, pp. 47 f.

human signification".[54] Such a sense of human insignificance and courage is presented thematically and generically in the course of the 305, 7-line stanzas of McAuley's modern epic. That the modern epic was a risky project was already suggested in Belmonte's first Poem when he urges "Go, little stanza, set like a ship to sail, | Inner and outer Ocean" (CP, p. 113). Whether it might be considered an attempt to write a "national biography" will be for contemporary and more recent readers to decide, though its perspicacious 17th-century narrator guessed well that things like that were already "out of fashion" (CP, p. 142) not only in 1964 but also in 1614. As it is, 'Captain Quiros' represents a generic excursion, aided by ocean voyaging, through the utopian quest, the "heroic mystery" proclaimed by Belmonte in his second Poem (CP, p. 141), followed by dystopia to a proto-post-colonial apologetics, anticipating perspectives that would be taken up in the last quarter of the 20th century. Perhaps unsurprisingly such sea voyages foreshadow desperate and courageous collective and enterprises that would be undertaken in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

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54   Suvendrini Perera: Australia and the Insular Imagination, p. 48.

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Imke Lichterfeld

Paradise Post-Colonialised?

A Perpetual Idealist Gaze at the Australian Seaside[1]

Abstract: The beach resort Rickett's Point in Melbourne inspired Impressionist artists like the English immigrant Charles Conder to create scenes of family outings, picnics, and shell collecting. Conder was part of the 'Heidelberg School', consisting of painters in a small village (now a suburb of Melbourne) which is named after the picturesque Baden town. Their aim was to catch a motif plein air; they found beauty outside and claimed to paint its true nature: "we will do our best to put only the truth down, and only as much as we feel sure of seeing" (Roberts, Conder, Streeton). Painting Australian landscapes and creating mesmerising seascapes, they visually framed the nation of Australia creating new 'Australian art'. They display both modernist aspects of progress through industrialisation as well as leisure and nature. Yet, their paintings could be labelled a "tale of a European culture in a non-European land" (Dunlap) because European-trained artists like Tom Roberts and Conder, as well as Arthur Streeton established this type of art in Australia: Painters set up artists' colonies and caught the seaside with both an imperial and a new post-colonial, nationalistic gaze upholding an illusion that includes an erasure of Australian indigenous life. This article analyses how the 'Australian Impressionists' created a (post-)colonial, Australian self-positioned national painting style.

At the end of the 19th century, a group of painters termed 'Australian Impressionists' created artwork that is debatably considered the first national Australian Art. Among them were young artists that – in the years 1888-1890 – lived in the Melbourne suburb of Heidelberg on Mount Eagle and painted scenes of life and nature, such as the bush or seascapes. This article will address their seaside paintings and give a background to their Impressionist connections and elucidate how the 'Heidelberg School' – specifically Tom Roberts, Charles Conder, and Arthur Streeton – could be interpreted as a metonymy of Australian national attitudes created by heirs of colonialism. I will introduce the Heidelberg group and its relation to European Impressionism, highlight the contradictions surrounding their art, and concentrate on the discussion of a few of their seaside paintings as these include ambiguous representations of an ideal image of the colony.[2]

Impressionism had an "impulse to paint contemporary life and experience directly from nature, to study the atmospheric effects of nature's light".[3] Enthusiastic ideas on the immediacy of the brushwork of *plein-air* painting spread throughout Australian culture in the late 1880s, yet, as in the European art scene,

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1 This contribution was inspired by my friend Arno Chun who introduced me to the Heidelberg group, and to him, I express my gratitude. I would also like to recognise that it has become a tradition paying respect to the indigenous people and recognise their heritage when dealing with topics surrounding their sacred lands. Accordingly, I want to express this while the 19th century debate depicted in this article does not recognise their claims but calls colonisers' efforts inherently Australian.

2 Many of the ideas on seasides in Australia can be traced in Fiske, Hodge, and Turner's volume on Myths of Oz. Reading Australian Popular Culture, especially chapter 3 on the meanings of the beach: "This new paradigm is the characteristically Australian beach which is urban and natural, civilised and primitive, spiritual and physical, culture and nature", John Fiske, Bob Hodge, Graeme Turner (eds.): Myths of Oz, pp. 151 f.

3 Norma Broude: World Impressionism, p. 10.

canvases were often completed in the studio. Two ideas compete here: One is to fix momentary and transitory impressions in paintings versus an idea of the universal. This contrast is underlined by questions of plein-air painting as opposed to "the eternities one knew of"[4] and in Australia, this gained national, political momentum as it could also refer to ideas of nation-building.

It might be debatable to argue that Impressionist paintings are popular because of their undeniable, natural beauty; negative sides are often discarded when artists claim to deliver a "pictorial transcription of natural appearances".[5] To the Impressionists, reality often seemed close to pure illusion. Still the Australian Impressionists Roberts, Conder, and Streeton claimed "we will do our best to put only the truth down, and only as much as we feel sure of seeing"[6] which would be comparable to a manifesto of international Impressionism. The truth, however, is that "Australian art" must be labelled an ambiguous creation that brings to the table ideas of colonial grandeur as well as emerging ideas of a new nationhood. Rosenthal argues that "to claim an Australian counterpart [to Paris Impressionist art] demands some explanation".[7] Vaughan claims that the "art of the painters we are including […] under the title of Australian Impressionism – is clearly very different to the style of the mainstream Impressionists" but that their ideas "came to be readily associated with the new international style of plein-airism which developed in the 1870s and 1880s".[8] One relevant aspect is that the artists were often British citizens: Conder in fact only spent a few years in Australia. These 'Australian' painters had knowledge of Paris and London, St. Ives, Glasgow, or Barbizon. They were influenced by European and British approaches to art, especially Romanticism, Naturalism, and – of course – Impressionism. They had been to England and the continent, in fact, they "encapsulate[d] key elements of the new spirit of naturalistic and plein-air painting which was revolutionising European, and particular French" artwork.[9]

In addition, there is a "conspicuous absence of Aboriginal people from Heidelberg landscapes".[10] The dichotomy seems to be one of 'national' Australian and 'colonial' European, rather than indigenous aspects which were still very much neglected not only but also in art at this point in time. Instead, one may distinguish the influence of different art movements in the European countries, such as French art – among them, imitations of Corot, but also Barbizon paintings –, Spanish, Italian, and English styles. American influences are present through Whistler (cf. Watkins); and all these movements were deeply connected. The Australian paintings could then be called a "tale of a European culture in a non-European land".[11]

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4   Ann Galbally: Melbourne, p. 176.
5   Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 441.
6   Tom Roberts, Chas [Charles] Conder, Arthur Streeton: Concerning 'Impressions' in Painting, p. 7.
7   Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 440.
8   Gerard Vaughan: Some Reflections on Defining Australia Impressionism, p. 16.
9   Ibid.
10 Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 241.
11 Thomas R. Dunlap: Australian Nature, European Culture, p. 28.

Thomas Dunlap states that "[t]he settlers though, were less interested in understanding the land than remaking it. [...] they sought to make Australia a 'new England' in the South Seas"[12] and he continues that the Australian achievement – in art – is certainly not deficient because of a lack of effort: "Finding the picturesque or the sublime in the new landscape was more difficult, but the settlers tried".[13] As some of the painters came to Australia only for a short while, they are, as such, part of the "colonial aesthetic history".[14] The 'Australian' painters were migrant Europeans in the bush and yet, Burn grants that "[p]erhaps no other local imagery is so much a part of an Australian consciousness and ideological make-up".[15] Dunlap terms their European experience "cultural baggage"[16] while at the same time this fact is sometimes neglected in favour of a concentration on the prospering Australian nationalism, which highlighted the self-sufficient character and professed success of the new place.

The painters proclaimed to have found a locus amoenus down under – a beautiful and seemingly idyllic place in nature which might be associated with ideas of paradise –, but they also painted urban life: "as French Impressionist painters pictured urban modernity, so did they".[17] This can also be compared to the idea of industrialisation: "The city of the 1880s had also seen the rapid consolidation and expansion of a transport and communication network that fed commercial and suburban growth".[18] Such developments are also reflected in the seaside paintings. In fact, Michael Rosenthal claims that "the Australian experience was urban, suburban and littoral"[19] and he highlights the variety of painters' imaginings that were concerned with representation not only and predominantly of land but also of water. Of course, their seascapes are of greater interest to this article. As with the French seaside towns, like Dieppe or Honfleur, or the Paris region, such as Barbizon or Pontoise, the bush in the Sydney or Melbourne vicinity was reached via train; likewise, steamships can be traced in the background of the seascapes.

The bush itself might look like a desirable spot to dwell and enjoy but this pleasant idyll was created by human labour suffering from the prevalent weather conditions. The Impressionists transformed landscapes into admirable paintings but until the 1890s also seemed to partly ignore the perils of the heat while concentrating on light and harmony of sunshine. The economy was dire in some of these regions and the dichotomy between rural farming and industrial progress sometimes clashed. Similarly living conditions depicted in these paintings encompass opposites, hard work on farms on the one hand and tourist attractions on the other hand. While the artists stylised themselves as Bohemians who spend time away from society, they nevertheless painted societal scenes, involving work and leisure, to finance their expenses.

12   Ibid.
13   Ibid, p. 27.
14   Alan McCulloch: The Golden Age of Australian Painting, p. 1.
15   Ian Burn: Beating about the Bush, p. 83.
16   Thomas R. Dunlap: Australian Nature, European Culture, p. 27.
17   Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 441.
18   Andrew Brown-May: The City's Toil, p. 31.
19   Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 442.

Before now moving on to the Heidelberg group and their 'Australian' seascape creations, it has become clear that definitions of what Australia exactly was, are difficult to pin down: In the late 19th century, Australian ideas about identity and nationhood were very much discussed. The Heidelberg artists contributed to a sense of Australian nationhood and confirmed their status as proud emerging 'Australian' artists who contributed to a national self-consciousness,[20] while still reminding their audiences of European painting traditions. In fact, on the idea of Australian national landscape painting, Riopelle acknowledges their "evolving sense of national identity […] Each nation can recognise itself in landscape and so in the 19th century its representation on canvas became a privileged forum for collective self-reflection. This proved particularly so in places as yet without a string visual tradition based on the European model".[21] Accordingly, this raises questions of contradictory attitudes today: in the light of a postcolonial recognition of indigenous art, the Australian Impressionist paintings could be labelled 'colonial', while they may have been seen as distinctively 'Australian' and, as such, nation-building at the time.

The Heidelberg School and Australian Nationalism

The 'Australian school of landscape painting', usually referred to as 'The Heidelberg School'[22] got its name from the small village Heidelberg, "a pretty rural backwater easily accessible from the city",[23] – named after the picturesque Baden town in Germany – which is now a suburb of Melbourne. It was there that a few painters set up an "artists' colony" to sketch the adjacent scenery,[24] a pastoral, rustic idyll. The young painters Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, and Charles Conder knew each other loosely and had already spent time some together painting in other places. Because of colonial industrialisation, this new locus amoenus was within easy train reach: "In 1888 […] Heidelberg was connected by railway to the city".[25]

It might strike as surprising that Sidney Dickinson in 1891 named the group after Heidelberg[26] as they spent only two years there. Also, as "Burn (1980) has pointed out, the paintings of the Heidelberg School artists are composed from the perspective of the *visitor*, for whom the landscape is a site of imaginative projection and recreation".[27] One could argue that the Heidelberg painters did not feel at home when painting Australia but that they were looking at the situation from an educated outsider's – a tourist's – perspective. Yet "they were recognized as possessing a group identity predicated on place",[28] the reason why the

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20   Christopher Riopelle: Australia's Impressionists in a World Context, p. 11.
21   Ibid, p. 14.
22   Cf. Tim Bonyhady: The Sunny South, p. 25.
23   Jane Clark, Bridget Whitelaw: Golden Summers. Heidelberg and Beyond, p. 89.
24   Cf. Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 441.
25   Leigh Astbury: Memory and Desire: Box Hill 1885-88, p. 56.
26   Cf. Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 238.
27   Ibid., p. 24, emphasis added.
28   Ibid., p. 238.

Heidelberg School could still be defended as 'Australian' as they gave "Australian Impressionism an intensity and radiance".[29] This dichotomy also addresses the issue of the colonial home/exile situation and resurfaces later.

1888 marked the Australian centenary and questions of rising patriotism and national identity surround the paintings of the Heidelberg group. Their art was not necessarily mainstream in Australia and the painters styled themselves as Bohemians. However, at the same time, they were cosmopolitans and sought to finance their endeavours.[30] As such, they formed part of the commercial, colonial and evolving national market, selling their paintings and interacting with critics and society. So the Heidelberg lifestyle "of happy fellowship and brotherhood"[31] was not a closed off space. In 1888, Melbourne hosted the Centennial International Exhibition to praise European settlement in Australia and the formation of a new nation, including not only industrial but also cultural achievements, and this celebration of the new nation also included paintings by the Heidelberg group. Their aim was to create a distinctly or genuinely "Australian art" that would represent life in the new nation.[32] So there are indeed aspects of financial, societal, and political implications in the interaction of these painters; these are sometimes ignored when idealised aspects of a beautiful, impressionist, Elysian refuge surface – also in their seascapes. Riopelle confirms that this national self-consciousness was not necessarily original: "Australia was not alone in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in its growing fascination with its own unique landscape, burgeoning cities, distinctive ways of life",[33] but here, the painters have been hailed for creating the *first* 'Australian art': "Streeton, Roberts, Conder and their contemporaries deployed the radical new tools of Impressionism to produce an art that they understood as characteristically 'Australian'".[34]

If a distinction of Australian art in contrast to the European tradition is sought, then Australian paintings are sometimes labelled more tonal in atmosphere than the colourful displays of e.g. French Impressionism – but of course, there are exceptions to both claims. Georgina Cole, who published a brilliant chapter in the recently released 'Companion to Australian Art' claims that these painters "developed a new way of representing the Australian bush, the city, and rural life that *exploited* its poetic and sentimental potential".[35] This, as might have become clear, not only draws on the painting style but also reverberates with the above-mentioned contradictions. Cole explains that "Heidelberg artists attempted to establish a role and an expressive language for art in Australia in a period of *self-conscious* reflection on national character and identity".[36] As such, this inherently Australian school of painting (though some painters were English at birth) did create an ideal and not any more solely colonial but national locus amoenus and its representation on canvas. Such ideas will now be examined

29   Terence Lane: Introduction, p. 15.
30   Cf. Jonathan Watkins: Australian Painting in the Late Nineteenth Century, p. 178.
31   Ibid., p. 182.
32   Cf. Virginia Spate: The Sunny South. Australian Impressionism, p. 125.
33   Christopher Riopelle: Australia's Impressionists in a World Context, p. 11.
34   Sarah Thomas: Creating a National Identity, p. 49.
35   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 230.
36   Ibid., p. 231.

with regard to the seaside oeuvres of the painters Tom Roberts, Charles Conder, and Arthur Streeton.

Seascapes

It is a mixture of contrasts that can be traced in the Heidelberg painters' seascapes: the subject-matter consists of "nature and modern life",[37] pastoral life, idyllic leisure, the hum of the city, industrialisation, "building national sentiment, and […] represent[ing] characteristic moments of Australian life".[38] The seaside representation needs to be seen as quintessential to a constructed perspective that also reflects on urban society's Australian experience, as Fiske, Hodge, and Turner argue.[39] There are harbour scenes containing ships as well as societal beach outings. The painters showed life at the coast along "the Melbourne shoreline, at Sydney and in New South Wales"[40] in an attractive way: industrial harbours speak of a well-functioning new nation and beach scenes display society at leisure. They visually constructed the coastline as a mesmerising paradise, framing and displaying the imagined, imperialistically embraced Eden at the other end of the world. The ideas connected to their paintings can be compared to Dening's thoughts on the meaning of this liminal zone: "'Islands and beaches' is a metaphor for the different ways in which human beings construct their worlds",[41] drawing on different categories, roles, and institutions.[42] Seascapes construct circumstances and refer to their context – this, too, is evident with the Australian Impressionists.

As Fig. 1 illustration demonstrates,[43] the beach resort Rickett's Point in Melbourne, for example, inspired Impressionist artists like Charles Conder to create scenes of family outings, picnics, and shell-collecting.[44] The representation of outdoor activities would also attract buyers. De Lorenzo and van der Plaat argue how photographic art in the late 19th century tried to please all parties: "nature lovers, tourists, and the petty bourgeoisie, whose transport and accommodation businesses stood to profit from their enterprise",[45] not only but also of representations of the coast. The demands of the market caused the self-proclaimed Bohemian painters to be part of the same commercial end of art. In fact, its exchanges and entanglements drew a mixture of all classes together – of colonial, commercial, and idealist motivation.

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37   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 252.
38   Ibid.
39   Cf. John Fiske, Bob Hodge, Graeme Turner: Myths of Oz, p. 152.
40   Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 440.
41   Greg Dening: Islands and Beaches, p. 3. Thank you to the reviewer for making me aware of this monograph.
42   Cf. ibid.
43   Charles Conder, 'Rickett's Point', 1890. Oil on Canvas. 31.0 x 77.2 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Thanks to the open access policy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, I am allowed to reproduce this painting.
44   Hans Gercke (ed.): Australische Impressionen, p. 36.
45   Catherine De Lorenzo, Deborah van der Plaat: Redefining the Urban Limits, p. 12.

Fig. 1: Charles Conder, 'Rickett's Point', 1890

Tom Roberts (1856-1931) has posthumously been termed the father of Australian landscape painting. He was born in England, his family emigrated to Australia and settled in Melbourne when he was a teenager, but Roberts revisited Europe in the early 1880s to study art, learn about the techniques of transitory impressionism in London and the Paris region.[46] Critics have commented on Roberts' indebtedness to Whistler and his interest in the beauty of landscapes, meteorological phenomena, mist, dusk, and the effect of light:[47] "Roberts returned to Melbourne with an invigorated sense of the expressive possibilities of painting".[48] Indeed, in his own words, he claimed to "have tried to look into the deep quiet face of Nature" and find "beauty in odd corners of some country shanty, or by some lagoon which palely reflects the banks all bathed in a great shimmer of trembling, brilliant sunlight", as he writes in 'The Argus' on 30 September 1893.[49] He greatly influenced the new style of painting in Australia with his ideas of immediacy and direct painting.[50] He also had a passionate belief about catching the Australian experience and creating 'Australian' art covering Australian subject matter. As such, Roberts contributes to the formation of a new national character of Australian painting from formerly colonial ideas.

Terence Lane writes that "Melbourne in the 19th century was a maritime city"[51] which is reflected in Roberts' paintings. One, if not his most famous painting is The 'Sunny South' from 1887. It was painted at Ricketts Point in the Melbourne suburb of Beaumaris. It depicts a summery seaside visit – recreation at the Australian shoreline: naked young men defy prudish Victorian laws and relish the

46   Cf. Alan McCulloch: The Golden Age of Australian Painting, p. 18 ff.
47   Cf. Jonathan Watkins: Australian Painting in the Late Nineteenth Century, p. 181.
48   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 232.
49   Tom Roberts: The Loan Collection of Victorian Artists, p. 14; see also Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 238.
50   Cf. Terence Lane: Introduction, p. 14.
51   Ibid.

Fig. 2: Tom Roberts, 'Holiday Sketch at Coogee', 1888

warm weather. It could be labelled an innocent outing but at the same time, it is a sensuous painting of attractive bathers. Jonathan Watkins analyses that the "group of nude bathers […] particularly the central figure, suggest a liberation. It is as if something burdensome is being shrugged off".[52] The artwork presents leisure. Yet there is a paradox conflict between this apparent freedom from European social morals and a new national responsibility that nevertheless comes with the self-inflicted task of creating great Australian art. This dichotomy continues throughout a lot of the seaside paintings.

The English immigrant Charles Conder (1868-1909), after spending his youth in India, lived in Australia from 1884 to 1890 only and painted pictures of beach outings of exceptional beauty.[53] Ann Galbally states that Conder reached a new maturity from 1888 onwards when he joined Roberts and Streeton. "Tom Roberts […] led Conder to focus anew on his professionalism".[54] The National Gallery of Australia comments on Conder's seaside paintings that he "depicts the activity of *visitors* to the beach. Women in long dresses search for seashells, a small group watches a sailboat travel across the bay and a child paddles in the foreground".[55] The twenty-year old Conder caught a scene of leisure, and fresh energy, but there is also a smoky cloud coming from a steamship in the background, revealing the simultaneous duality of recreation and industry.

52   Jonathan Watkins: Australian Painting in the Late Nineteenth Century, p. 178.
53   Cf. Mary Eagle: The Oil Paintings of Charles Conder, p. 61.
54   Ann Galbally: Portrait of the Surveyor as a Young Artist, p. 78.
55   National Gallery of Australia: Conder, Charles. Rickett's Point, Beaumaris, n.p., emphasis added.

Fig. 3: Charles Conder, 'Coogee Bay', 1888.

Roberts' and Conder's earlier joint outings at Sydney's Coogee Bay yield fascinating paintings of family scenes of beach picnics, sandcastles, and collecting shells: seaside tourism. Roberts' 'Holiday Sketch at Coogee' (Fig. 2)[56] from a visit to Sydney in 1888 shows a "carefully composed picturesque scene".[57]

In fact, Roberts' painting as seen here, from the perspective of a sightseer of the popular bay, displays a touristy atmosphere of beach attractions. Alex Taylor claims the following:

> The naming of this work as a 'holiday' sketch as much describes his own brief visit to Sydney, as it does the swarms of sightseers he depicts buzzing along the shore. A quick trip from the city by tram, the popular leisure spot had become especially busy since the opening of the Coogee Palace Aquarium in December 1887, luring tourists with its swimming baths, skating arena, toboggan rides and ever-changing program of displays and concerts.[58]

It is this contrast of a short artist's visit to capture the beauty of nature of the Sydney Bay (Fig. 3),[59] which at the same time shows how much Coogee Bay is not an untouched paradise anymore but a site of tourism, luring the middle classes to amuse themselves and also to spend money.

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56 Tom Roberts, 'Holiday Sketch at Coogee', 1888. Oil on Canvas. 40.3 x 55.9 cm. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. Thank you to the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), Sydney for allowing me to reproduce this painting.
57 Alex J. Taylor et al.: Picture Notes, p. 115.
58 Ibid.
59 Charles Conder, 'Coogee Bay', 1888. Oil on Cardboard. 26.8 x 40.7 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Thanks to the open access policy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, I am allowed to reproduce this painting.

All three artists painted the same view – here the similarity between Roberts and Conder becomes apparent – their paintings convey the lure that draws humans straight to the beach. Rosenthal recognises many of the paintings as additionally having "a quirky humour […] – ladies in billowing dresses wading over beaches, encounters between urbanities and animals".[60] Roberts' painting, as the others, reflects both the call of the sea and the growing tourism industry. This constitutes an economic aspect included in the paintings.

Arthur Streeton (1867-1943) was born to immigrated English parents and only travelled to the old continent after the Heidelberg period, yet, having a great interest in European art and their way of life, he attached himself to Roberts and the group associated with Australian Impressionism. Roberts appreciated Streeton's eye for the effect of light, the "impression of light and atmosphere in the landscape".[61] Together, they worked at Box Hill and Heidelberg, painting the vicinity[62] – for example the Yarra river – and exhibiting together, in 1889 in the '9x5 Exhibition',[63] termed this way as the paintings were created on 9x5 inch cigar boxes.[64]

According to Watkins, "Streeton […] was determined to maintain a distance between himself and the establishment, and his association with Roberts was a means to an end"[65] because Roberts was considered progressive. Thomas claims that Streeton had a "new vision [of Australia] that continues to captivate the viewer today".[66] It is Streeton who luckily organised the stay at an abandoned house on Mount Eagle in Heidelberg. During his Heidelberg phase, Streeton concentrated mostly on paintings of the bush. Yet, later he would also create paintings of the seaside. After the Heidelberg group fell apart and Conder returned to England, Streeton continued to paint with Roberts for a few years. During this time, he often painted harbour scenes and coastlines that would often be influenced by an industrial buzz: as in Conder's paintings, steamships puff their smoke in the background of most of Streeton's seaside canvases. This awareness of industrial progress defies pure romantic or idyllic images. At the same time, the blurred smoke can evoke fog and an ephemeral consistency in what is being depicted – aesthetically, smoke and fog might reveal formerly unknown images and yet hide clear and specific impressions, and draw on ideas of romantic landscape paintings – this could be read as a clouding of something new forming in the background, based on new ideas, possibly the economic success of this new continent. In later paintings, Conder would also recognise the growing demographic expansion of Sydney and Melbourne. This dichotomy between withdrawal into nature, "much desired images of pastoral wealth and beauty"[67] and at the same time the growth of the new continent dominates his paintings,

60   Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 442.
61   Leigh Astbury: Memory and Desire, p. 55.
62   Cf. Tim Bonyhady: The Colonial Earth, p. 193.
63   Cf. Hans Gercke (ed.): Australische Impressionen, p. 42.
64   Cf. Allison Goudie: The 9 by 5 Impression Exhibition, pp. 36 ff.
65   Jonathan Watkins: Australian Painting in the Late Nineteenth Century, p. 178.
66   Daniel Thomas: The Sunny South, p. 87.
67   Ann Galbally: Melbourne. The Heidelberg School, p. 176.

too. From today's point of view, aspects of nationhood coming into being could be read into these images.

Steamships appear in most of Arthur Streeton's paintings of the Tasman Sea in the South Pacific. Their smoke is visible in the background of Streeton's later representations of the view from his camp near Sydney in the 1890s: Near 'Streeton's camp at Sirius Cove', 1892; 'The Point Wharf, Mosman Bay', 1893; and 'From my camp (Sirius Cove)', 1896. But the existence of the growing industry is just as visible in Conder and Roberts. They do not focus on trains either that were just as valuable for their transport around Sydney and Melbourne, as Monet did in his depiction of the Gare St. Lazare, but they clearly put a focus on the shipping industry – already in 1888.

Conder's 'Departure of the Orient, Circular Quay', the painting of a shipping scene from 1888 shows the life of the centenarian colonial country.[68] The awareness of shifting times is apparent at this stage. And the Heidelberg artists recognised Australians' "healthy productivity"[69] and sacrificial "productive labor".[70] There is an atmosphere of expectation. Large ships, small boats, an expectant crowd. The industrial buzz and commercial aspect of Australian life becomes even clearer in Roberts' 'An Autumn Morning, Milson's Point', 1888 (Sydney). There is an energy and enthusiasm about the "smoke and mist rising from the city", as 'The Argus'[71] published on 30 April 1888 about this painting of departure which also recognises the murky industrial atmosphere of a "polluted waterside"[72] that speaks of the rapid expansion of the city.

Conder's 'Sydney Harbour, Sunset' with thick layers of paint created by a spatula in a golden sky which is reflected on the waters, emblematises the dichotomy of this time: there is a sailing boat and a steamship. It "depicts a yacht and a ferry moving at converging angles across dull green water. […] Fluid and mobile, the paint handling captures the trajectory of the boats in the fleeting and indistinct light of dusk".[73] This is the momentary, ephemeral representation of leisure and past means of traffic while at the same time showing a clash between the nostalgic old and the new quickly industrialised age.[74] The loose brushwork promotes transient effects of time passing. This painting was part of the '9 x 5 Exhibition' in 1889 where the artists insisted on the purity of fleeting art.[75]

However, an exhibition also shows the need for commercial recognition and social connections. It underlines an ambition to be connected with society, and it served, as in the 9 x 5 case, as a display of national importance. As such, it plays a political part, exhibiting – via art – an Australian "cultural identity"[76] or enduring Australian settlement, in fact, a national vision.[77] This ambiguity of transience and value – as it needs to be called from a postcolonial perspective – is

68   Cf. Ann Galbally, Gary Pearce: Charles Conder, p. 84 f.
69   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 249.
70   Ibid.
71   Exhibition of the Victorian Society of Artists.
72   Jane Clark, Bridget Whitelaw: Golden Summers, p. 95.
73   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 242.
74   Cf. Andrew Brown-May: The City's Toil, p. 32.
75   Cf. Alan McCulloch: The Golden Age of Australian Painting, p. 44.
76   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 245.
77   Cf. Ibid, p. 249.

also reflected in the financial dealings with the Heidelberg's middle-class clientele and their smugness towards journalist criticism which reflects the contrast between the self-fashioned Bohemiens and their societal connections.
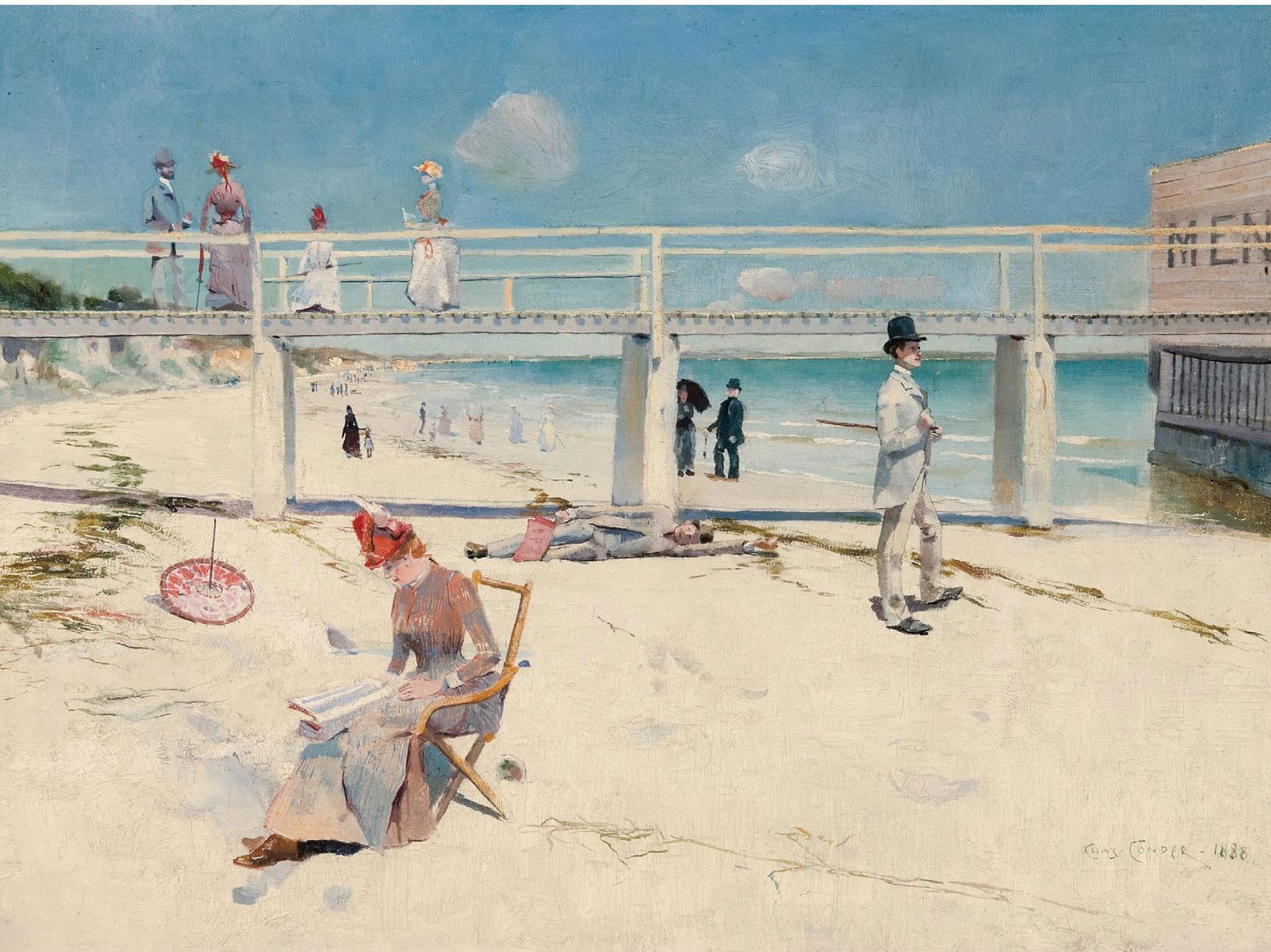
Fig. 4: Charles Conder, 'A Holiday at Mentone', 1888.

Among Conder's paintings and similar to the buzz of the Coogee bay paintings discussed above, the 1888 'A holiday at Mentone' (Fig. 4)[78] stands out as especially decorative, fashionable,[79] and noteworthy: "Conder's A holiday at Mentone […] features the sauntering figures, parasols and beaches that seemed to fascinate painters wherever they might be at the period".[80] One might even confuse Mentone with Dieppe where Conder did in fact paint later in the mid-1890s.

78 Charles Conder, 'A Holiday at Mentone', 1888. Oil on Canvas. 46.2 x 60.8 cm. Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. Thank you to the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide for allowing me to reproduce this painting.
79 Sarah Thomas: Creating a National Identity, p. 46.
80 Michael Rosenthal: Australian Impressionism, p. 441.

There is no better description of the Mentone painting than the following cita-
tion by Georgina Cole:

> Wavering skeins of seaweed draw the eye to the muted dots of promenading fig-
> ures in the background, while in the stage-like foreground three oddly discon-
> nected figures create a sense of accident and ambiguity. The well-dressed woman
> seated in a folding chair has her back to the water and reads a newspaper, ignor-
> ing the flight of her parasol, now upturned on the sand. A dapper gentleman
> behind her gazes solemnly at the bathhouse, his upright stance repeating the
> pylons of the bridge. Between them, a second man lies prostrate on the ground,
> his arm raised in an awkward pose and his body following the line of shadow
> beneath the bridge. His rigidity makes him seem comical, almost unreal, and his
> strange behavior underlines the sense of self-conscious display in the painting.
> The seated woman and the horizontal gentleman have been reading the radical
> Sydney-based journal 'The Bulletin', with its literary "red page" (Smith 2002, 119).
> Both can be identified as fashionable and progressive members of the middle class
> (Spate 1990, 126). As Galbally and Pearce (2003, 34) and Smith (2002, 119) have
> argued, Conder's painting adds a social dimension to the practice of plein-air
> painting. While the beachscape and bathhouse were painted from the spot, the
> figures were added later in the studio, and their staccato arrangement and lack of
> unity suggests Conder's interest in the rhythms of modern art and social life and
> its particular forms of leisure and display.[81]

The painting has a colourful, playful luminosity; it is also a comment on society
in that it depicts a provocative situation[82] as laws condemned a mixed audience at
a swimming resort. People should not be able to watch the other sex bathing. So
images of such "Australian pastoral economy"[83] at the same time reflect the para-
dox of the tourism industry. Indeed, a painting's 'pastoral' quality then becomes
questionable and illustrates instead a self-conscious reflection about its multifac-
eted and original perspectives, including economy, and nationhood.

Opposites seem to attract here, too: The mixture of social classes in the colonial
context, opportunities of leisure, communication via journalism in this paint-
ing, reachability via transport, trains to connect work and nature – the contrast
between rural ideals and industrial progress in the colony – show themselves
in many of the Heidelberg seascapes that are considered national depictions but
do not include indigenous topics. They constitute art that shaped the new nation
down under that seemed ambitious to define itself as self-contained if not auton-
omous. The Heidelberg group – though descendants of British immigrants or
maybe because of this – seem, through their artworks, to have aided in establish-
ing a sense of national identity.

After Heidelberg

The Heidelberg residents disintegrated after 1890. Conder left Australia for
France and England, joined the avantgarde movements, and died before the first
world war. Both Streeton and Roberts relocated to Sydney and travelled the south

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81   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 236.
82   Cf. Ann Galbally: Portrait of the Surveyor as a Young Artist, p. 78.
83   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 246.

of Australia, both also spent time in Europe again in the early 20th century but returned to Australia.

In the 1890s, as the group fell apart, the motifs of the former Heidelberg group members changed. The sun became a principal actor in their paintings and Streeton as well as Roberts put more focus on its effect on the land. Had the energetic effect of light and colour dominated the enthusiastic late 1880s paintings, they now recognised sun-drenched heat-filled landscapes, and the 1890s paintings do speak of hardship, the "drought-affected landscape around Heidelberg",[84] e.g. the dry surroundings of the Yarra River. Their paintings reflect how, like the settler shaping life on his farm, society – alongside money – shapes life on the urban coast.

The Heidelberg painters had shown a rustic colonial paradise down under. Their paintings are celebrated as Australian art and in the 20th century, their values were still perpetuated e.g. in the 1985 exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria 'Golden Summers: Heidelberg and Beyond', as Galbally argues convincingly: "In essence the 'Golden Summers' exhibition offers re-assurance of these myths [of pastoral wealth and beauty], rather than posing any questions or revelations".[85] Outdoor activities like hiking or bushwalking[86] – nature tourism to "a place to revive the senses and spirit"[87] – prospered at this time; however, nature preservation ambitions were rather muted. "Conservation in Australia was little and late", Dunlap argues.[88]

Inspired by the colonial spirit of Australian Impressionist paintings and surfing the wave of vibrant enthusiasm, the tourist industry today – like the Heidelberg visitors – still look for such a paradise, paradoxically and very anthropocentrically often disrespecting ecocritical thoughts surrounding Australian seascapes. In addition, the majority of Australians live by the coast, a fact that could be interpreted on the one hand as a realistic settling strategy of proximity to water and on the other a fulfilled touristic dream of settling by beautiful beaches beside the seaside.

It is noteworthy that some recent exhibitions in this century – e.g. 2007 in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2016 in the National Gallery in London, or in 2021 in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne again –, have professed more awareness and recognition of nature's fragility. However, there is a continuous search for an Edenic myth of Australian beaches that does not recognise the endangering effects of the Anthropocene. Tourists perpetually long for peace and a preserved, untouched land- and seascape. Ambiguities that can already be traced in the Heidelberg paintings might seem repetitive but tourist consumers today still follow this ideal, wanting to catch nature's beauty in the perfect wave or a peaceful beach scene, and thereby follow the laws of the tourism industry.

Ricketts Point now hosts a Marine Sanctuary and an education centre which insists on displaying the beauty of the ocean while teaching an awareness of its

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84   Ibid., p. 237.
85   Ann Galbally: Melbourne, p. 176.
86   Cf. Thomas R. Dunlap: Australian Nature, European Culture, p. 33.
87   Georgina Cole: The Heidelberg School, p. 241.
88   Thomas R. Dunlap: Australian Nature, European Culture, p. 33.

fragility: "Crystal clear shallow waters, sandstone reefs, sea caves, and rockpools make Ricketts Point the perfect place to discover the wonderful sea creatures of Port Phillip Bay. […] beaches and coasts are natural environments".[89] While there is an absence of indigenous motifs in Heidelberg paintings, Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary also recognise indigenous peoples and their lands on their webpage: "Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary sits within an Aboriginal cultural landscape in the traditional Sea Country of the Bunurong People. Parks Victoria respects the deep and continuing connection that Bunurong Traditional Owners have to these lands and waters, and we recognise their ongoing role in caring for Country".[90] This guides today's visitors from touristic and anthropocentric thoughts towards a more postcolonial and ecocritical awareness.

The Heidelberg seascapes, too, demonstrate that the Australian littoral experience is not one of complete idyllic leisure – as Fiske, Hodge and Turner have long demonstrated by underlining these self-same "contradictory paradigms".[91] The sea is an ambiguous space. Leisure and industrialisation might be perceived as ideal, but there are counterpoint arguments in urban life and, as we know today, "beauty might come at an ecological risk".[92]

As this contribution has demonstrated, there are arguable inconsistencies to be detected when approaching Australian seascapes. As beautiful as they may be, these 19th century paintings must also be seen as commodities,[93] and they are witnesses to socially constructed spaces – full of contradictions in their colonial and national context – which can be seen as still reflected in postcolonial idealism today. As has become apparent, the seascapes establish Australia as a new nation – in continuity with European ideals but creating something specifically 'Australian'. From today's point of view, the artists' connection to Europe could be labelled as reflecting a continuously existing colonial spirit in that they not yet acknowledge the rights of Indigenous peoples that would recognise British 'settlers' as invaders. They could also be interpreted as sites of a colonial and national spirit that neglects and yet simultaneously reminds modern viewers of non-acknowledged Indigenous claims by their absence.

However this may be read, the Heidelberg School prospered from the Australian national momentum in the late 19th century and they contributed to its presentation. Their paintings of seascapes were part of an aesthetic movement which remains influential and adored. They, too, are a component of the touristic attraction of the former European colony and now well-established Australian nation.

89   Parks Victoria: Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary.
90   Ibid.
91   John Fiske, Bob Hodge, Graeme Turner (eds.): Myths of Oz, chapter 3, here p. 151.
92   Cf. Catherine De Lorenzo, Deborah van der Plaat: Redefining the Urban Limits, p. 4.
93   Cf. Macarena Gómez-Barris: The Axtractive Zone, p. 5.

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Stephen Alomes

Confessions of a Littoralist

Beyond the Beaches and Waves in Australian Dreamings

Abstract: In my 2020 poem 'Confessions of a Littoralist', I declared: "The coast, not the bush, calls me | despite the smell of gums and the yellow of winter wattle … | We Australians are littoralists, | people of the coast, the shoreline, | the space between hills and water. | [While a few swim, surf or sail and the] | sea is a part of a collective unconscious | [for me] the water is touched lightly, | by slightly sandy, accidentally salty, feet | We need the shores of our dreaming, | but dreaming does not demand diving in | Or even getting wet". Over eight generations, the settler-invaders' world evolved between coast and mountains. In sprawling suburban cities, the water is often far away, and many, including me, feel uncomfortable in water. Our dreaming was shaped by footy ovals and indigenous and exotic suburban gardens. Despite Isolated Country Syndrome, worldly awareness is engendered by port cities, trade and immigration. A different side is parochial ignorance and fear. One cultural result is the other sea theme, the odyssey or journey, the 'Big Trip', once back to London and Europe, then Asia, now New York, which I addressed in the poem 'Innocents Abroad' – "We came by boat | Last of a generation".

I am a Littoralist, someone always living on the shore, which recognises the Latin origins of the term 'littoral', a word rarely used in English, although a normal usage in French. Perhaps my subject is twofold: shorescapes rather than seascapes in my personal experience; and the many connections of a nation of coastal dwellers.

I am, like most Australians, not a person of the 'Bush', certainly not the Inland, even as I am also entranced by the smell of wet eucalyptus, the yellow brightness of wattle and the passion of the reds and pinks of the bottlebrush.

The story I will tell, with feet happily on the terra firma of suburban grass, the sand of a beach or the wooden floor of a cafe, is of course quite different to other engagements with water and the oceans. It contrasts with Indigenous interactions with water, especially in northern Australia, and with the 1988 Indigenous beach protests against the invasion re-enactment in the form of a 'First Fleet' arriving from the sea.[1] It differs greatly from traditional engagements with the sea (fishing, yachting and rowing, swimming, surf lifesaving and swimming) and from new ecofeminist readings of human interactions with other species in the ocean.[2]

Typically, I am an urban coastal dweller with feet firmly planted on solid ground, from bitumen roads and footpaths to veggie patches and gardens and to the green grass of backyards, parks and sporting grounds. I am a product of Hobart, the smallest of the seven port capital cities, even as I lived between city and bush, or as in the Cadbury 1920s advertisement, "between mountain and sea", between Mt Wellington (with its Napoleonic war resonances for a city founded in 1803-1804) and the Derwent River. In fact, my childhood water was the local creek. In Australia, I am drawn to Coogee beach and the rockier charms

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1 Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Fiona Nicoll: We Shall Fight Them on the Beaches, pp. 149-160.
2 Rebecca Olive: Swimming and Surfing in Ocean Ecologies, pp. 39-54.

of Bicheno. As an international traveller, I am drawn to the vistas delivered by rivers and beaches, from the Moselle to the Loire, from Biarritz to Nice, from Sicily to Japan's Kamakura. During pandemic lockdown in Melbourne, I visited the nearby Moonee Valley Creek and Maribyrnong River, for even Port Phillip Bay was beyond my allowed 5-kilometre radius.

Water was even more calming within the experience of the lockdown as I wrote about sitting by the creek in this short poem:

Sitting on my rock by the creek
With apologies to Otis (Redding)

Sitting on my rock by the creek
Grass and shrubs behind me
The afternoon sun sneaking through the gum leaves,
Doing business on the phone
Or just dreaming,
in a moment of escape
from our pandemic lives

Personal history from childhood shapes us. May I note here that this is a personal account of the relationship with water and seascapes and one which also explores art and writing. A more formal academic analysis of specific subjects such as the changing relationships of Australians to the beach or the history and experience of swimming, surf-lifesaving, surfing and surf clubs may tell a different story.

Pursuing the personal and the artistic I won't fully address the 19th century contradictions regarding the sea and leisure: the early popular appeal of rowing, but limited interest in leisure or competition swimming, the costume prohibitions of Victorian puritanism, and the retreat to baths, bathing enclosures on the coast. Nor will I address the political economy story as depicted in Frank Broeze's 'Island Nation', including Western Australia's strong connections with South Asia.[3]

Doug Plaister and Learning Not to Swim

The specific Tasmanian story, particularly Hobart, is of thousands of Tasmanians who learned 'not to swim' and to be afraid of water after 'swimming lessons' at the Education Department's cold Tepid Baths over three decades after World War II. The key person was the Department's swimming instructor Doug Plaister, who later also became Lord Mayor. His pedagogical tricks included putting his foot on your head if you were unwilling to put your head under water when standing at the end of the pool and to use the stick, intended to pull struggling swimmers to the side of the pool, to push them out instead.

When this 'learn-to swim' experience was raised on a memories / Tasmanian History Facebook page it elicited an almost volcanic eruption of thousands of horror stories, with a strong theme of the traumatic legacy which it had left. One

3   Frank Broeze: Island Nation.

comment offered a summary: "a generation of Hobart's schoolchildren have bad memories and still do not swim". Other responses included: "I remember getting thrown in and told swim or drown"; "horrible experience", "at 73 I cannot swim as I am absolutely terrified because I was pushed in the pool"; "he held my head under water and I still have a fear of water, never forgot"; "Big Bully and if still alive would be facing court"; "the prick"; "the boat hook the f@#ker"; "petrified of water on my face"; "I used to dread learn to swim"; "he nearly drowned my brother who to this day still cannot swim"; "I have a phobia of being under water"; "I don't even have baths now".[4]

While a minority who had already learned to swim elsewhere were less critical, more positive towards him (as he was to them) and some went on to obtain lifesaving certificates, the predominant tale was of collective trauma, a horror story. Perhaps Doug Plaister reflected the authoritarian values which R. Freeman Butts saw as characterising 1950s Australian schools, except he maintained them for much longer.[5]

Two Contrasting Familial Interactions with Water – Alomes and Logan

Traditions vary – by state, by region, by generation and even by family tradition.

The Alomes family experience was perhaps aquaphobic. As noted above, like thousands of Tasmanians I am uncomfortable in water, after the scary and bullying experience of Doug Plaister teaching us fear. While I did struggle, successfully, gaining my '25 yards certificate' in the even colder waters of the Derwent River at Taroona High, I enjoyed jumping on and off rocks more. The rocks and tree which I painted in oils on hessian as a high school student.

I was always more relaxed in calm water and became more comfortable when I developed backstroke … lying back and enjoying it. Not that I ever came to like the chlorinated tension of swimming pools and their anonymous change rooms with metallic lockers, keys attached to bathers, and grotty showers full of foot infections as well.

A more specific family experience may have fuelled water angst. Was I somehow influenced by a boating accident when a flat-bottomed dinghy overturned, and my grandfather assisted two cousins and their friend but then had a heart attack and died? I was only seven at the time but perhaps there was family water angst. Even surf could be dangerous. Later, in the mild surf at Park Beach, my sister was pulled out by a rip, and brought in by Jimmy, a contemporary of mine.

Water was generally to be looked at walking or running on sand or later a promenade rather than immersed in (except for a warm bath with a rubber ducky and an Airfix aircraft carrier, when young), although I did enjoy some moments of catching a wave in small surf with those polystyrene small boards held in two hands.

4   Tasmanian History (Facebook page).
5   Robert Freeman Butts: Assumptions Underlying Australian Education, pp. 59 f.

Our Taroona High blazer pockets had a stylised image of a yacht (an early school logo rather than a crest) and the school magazine was called 'Windward', although I think that just loosely suggested forward movement rather than having a nautical meaning. Our sporting world was primarily a plethora of team ball sports along with one day athletics and swimming carnivals.

Although growing up about three kilometres from the Derwent, my first time on a yacht was not until the 1990s in Vanuatu, and then, finally, in the 2000s on the Derwent. That second time was with a friend who had grown up with boats, including wooden dinghies which his father built. In Vanuatu, on one occasion I struggled to swim back to the vessel, more due to anxiety than poor technique. In Hobart, the water meant a day trip on the wooden steamship 'Cartela', on a return trip to South Arm, where my family predecessors had lived for over a century. It was either a family picnic day or a uni booze cruise, or both. I had, however, in the 1970s, been briefly in a kayak out from the beach at Ulverstone – I say briefly as the small waves and my skill deficit tipped me out quickly.

Differently, regarding my partner, Kate Jones, in warmer Sydney, her Jones and wider Logan family loved the water. It was their natural element. Kate's mother Madge had grown up for part of her childhood at Randwick, close to the charms of Coogee. Kate had always been a water baby and the modern Olympic pool was nearby on Victoria Rd. However, even for a Westie, as Gladesville girls then were, it was the surf that mattered most, although middle harbour beaches were at least salt water. Her uncle, Ross, loved swimming and fishing. Kate swam at a Bruny Island beach in Tasmania when we went there. She went in although everyone else found it too cold or they were simply urban, dry and boring … like me. One day we had an adventurous drive to Kuringai National Park, where I saw a goanna, much bigger than the blue tongue lizards of my childhood. We visited ritzy but natural Palm Beach, (celebrated in an iconic Bryan Brown/Sam Neill film) and then, further south, at Whale Beach, where I was astonished. As soon as we had parked the car, her uncle Ross, in his eighties, was heading for the surf, followed by Kate. I was more interested in watching the bride and groom and the unusual beach staging of a wedding ceremony.

I did paddle, however. I do enjoy salty wet feet, and running on firm, wet sand. Beach cricket's good too. Kate and I shared a distaste for sunburn, for sandflies and for our feet bringing sand into the car, however.

Kate preferred surf beaches – in a rare, perhaps unique, moment of Sydney snobbery she looked down on Melbourne's bay beaches. While she preferred salty waters, everyday necessity took her to the local pool and one of her greatest delights became the Prime Movers' aquarobics group of older women.

We had urban reservations about beaches, especially on 38-degree days. With our orange 120Y Datsun, the hail-damaged car from Kate's ANU friend from Narrabri (later stolen from outside our house and never seen again), journeys to Williamstown beach lacked appeal, even as I enjoyed its shallow and calm waters. Simply, it was too hot going both ways in the non-aircon car! The ledger was in the red, hot suburban roads, heated bitumen and air temperatures trumping the

cooling blue of salty water. In similar terms my poem 'All Quiet on the Summer Front' concluded with a preference for cooler times.[6]

I rest my personal dry-land-preferred case.

Frontier versus Water – The Big Picture

Other myths have proven more important in Australian memory and consciousness, despite the Island Continent's 34 000 kilometres of coastline and despite the beach and surf themes in international tourism marketing.

Even with the celebration of the 'jewel-sea' the land is dominant in Dorothea McKellar's iconic poem, 'My Country':

> I love a sunburnt country,
> A land of sweeping plains,
> Of ragged mountain ranges,
> Of droughts and flooding rains.
> I love her far horizons,
> I love her jewel-sea,
> Her beauty and her terror –
> The wide brown land for me![7]

Australia has one of the most urbanised populations in the world (around 70% living in the eight capital cities). However, Australian popular myth has focused more on the Bush, in American terms the 'Frontier', rather than the explorers and travellers by sea, or on the real centrepiece of Australian life since Federation – urban and suburban life.

The Bush Myth is bigger than the beach myth or even the recent fascination with the far Outback. It has taken many forms from the egalitarian and Left 'Australian Legend' to the celebration of the pioneers, the small farmers.[8] Its phases have included the convict era, colonial explorers, the gold diggers, small selectors running mixed farms. In culture, it includes the bush ballads and stories of Lawson and Paterson, idealisation by the Heidelberg painters, who travelled by the new trains to the Bush on the edge of the cities, then in the 20th century outback novels, two discoveries of red ochres, by Nolan and other modernists and later by Indigenous artists. Popular expressions included the many mythic Ned Kelly explorations in films, plays and paintings, and inland images through 1930s colour printing in 'Walkabout' magazine, and 1930s Jindyworobak poets romanticising the land and Indigenous themes.[9] School textbooks took up the theme 'Australia rides on the sheep's back', especially in the 1950s and early 1960s. During the 1950s hydro-powered industrialisation in the then 'Apple Isle', Tasmania, several physiocratic sceptics believed that, unlike agrarian cultivation, manufacturing was not real industry.[10]

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6   Stephen Alomes: Selective Ironies, p. 44.
7   Dorothea Mackellar: 'My Country' in id.: The Closed Door and Other Verses, p. 9 ff..
8   Russel Ward: The Australian Legend; John Carroll: Intruders in the Bush.
9   Geoffrey Serle: From Deserts the Prophets Come.
10   Stephen Alomes: Lands of Ideas.

In many countries, with cities growing as ports or through their location as settlements around rivers, the ship theme is not uncommon, as in the ship in the Paris and Melbourne city crests, the latter also including a whaling image, significant in the early colonial period. In Australia, the crests of states and cities often had a mix – a significant sailing ship, a cow or sheep, and, after the 1850s, gold rushes in a diggers image. Sometimes they added something INDIGENOUS Australian, as in the kangaroo and the emu as 'supporters', and imperial to chivalric images, such as a British lion.

In the Australian colonies after 1788, Adelaide had a 'Buffalo' replica at Glenelg, remembering the 1836 settlers' ship, and in NSW Anniversary Day referred to January 1788 (before its several national political distortions as Australia Day). Tasmania took the sea more seriously – after all it was named after its European 'discoverer', Abel Janszoon Tasman, and its inland exploration story was smaller and complicated – especially the 'often forgotten invaders' wars against the Indigenous people. In other states local land explorers provided the great man in history model, although often few examples from other 'colonies' – Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson finally crossing the Blue Mountains and 'opening up' the interior, in South Australia John McDouall Stuart, in Queensland Leichhardt, in WA Forrest, and first in Victoria both the original Vandemonian boat people, Thomas Henty at Portland and John Batman around Melbourne, and the overland explorer who opened up these southern lands of 'Australia Felix', Thomas Mitchell. Matthew Flinders was the one great coastal explorer with a high profile.

Before Australian schooling forgot generations of settlement and before it discovered Indigenous history, it has had nearly a century of the crazy national obsession – war. War itself has had its associations with the seas, the 'Returned' Services League (RSL) initially unwilling to recognise the home front defenders of Darwin in World War II, then the indigenous wars after the invasion of 1788.

In my historical analysis of the eight generations of settler-invaders, their world is predominantly between the coast and the mountains. Even in the sprawling suburban cities, the water can be a long way away, and many, including me, feel uncomfortable in water, due to bullying swimming teachers, and cold water. Our dreaming was shaped by the cultivated grass of urban footy ovals or suburban gardens, indigenous and exotic, the suburban family car, and by the picture theatre, now complemented by many other screens.

Hands Across the Sea – Friends and Enemies

In a country shaped by Isolated Country Syndrome (ICS, as well as Small Country Syndrome, although only small in population), the other watery aspect involves two seemingly contradictory themes which look across the seas.

One is the worldly awareness engendered by port cities, by trade and immigration in a great trading and immigrant nation, linked even demographically by sea, by sail and then steam, until the global aviation era from the 1970s. The different phases included convicts and masters, immigrants, returning soldiers, young travellers on the 'Big Trip', which Kiwis call 'OE' or Overseas Experience,

rather near to a Bildungsroman tale, and now tourists. Interestingly, led by 'grey nomads', campervan journeys around Australia offer another journeying alternative, especially given the global pandemic.

Parochial ignorance and fear, including fear of other peoples and fear of invasion from the near north continued. The fear of the 'Yellow Peril' was overlaid by angsts about the 'Red Peril', even before the Cold Wars; now, a vague fear persists.

The cultural result is another sea theme, the odyssey, the journey, the 'Big Trip', once to London and Europe, then Asia and now New York, which I addressed in the poem 'Innocents Abroad', about my Wanderjahre – "We came by boat | Last of a generation".[11] Following that journey, I wrote 'When London Calls. The Expatriation of Australian Creative Artists to Britain',[12] studying the great post-war waves, including the Sixties plus Baby Boomer exodus of which I and my sister were a part. Appropriately, the cover image of this Cambridge University Press book shows the ties which bind but are also broken; metaphorically the streamers are 'umbilical' cords, soon cut, between the passengers on a great ocean liner and those farewelling friends and family members on the dock below.

Australians are separated from and connected to the wider world by water, as in the national anthem's most vestigial Victorian poetic line, 'girt by sea', even as it is accurate. Even the eight generations of settlers on the land – for we are today never just 'multicultural immigrants' or transplanted Poms – saw some of their produce shipped to the UK and Europe, as suggested by the apple trucks heading for Hobart's wharves which I saw coming from the Huon Rd every autumn in the 1960s.

The settler-colonial (and settler-invader) experiences had many ramifications. Others will remark on the implications for attitudes to primary Indigenous Australians. Tasmanian invader-settlers shared the European "Lords of Human Kind" (in the historian V. G. Kiernan's phrase)[13] assumptions of the century of European imperialism. Continuing Western and Christian ideas of racial and cultural superiority intensified later in the century, through Spencerian-Darwinian racial ideology (1870s-1940s and beyond), which infected the West, and had its Asian mirrors, which continue today.

Even as they discover their own land and their roots, the sea provides Australians with their most recurrent actual and mythic journey to what have been seen as the 'source countries' of Western culture, from the classical Mediterranean to Western Europe and Britain. Just like the builders of grand buildings on the Parthenon model, in Europe and Australia, we will forget to mention slavery in Greece and Rome.

The sea is central for post-1788 Australian voyagers, the settler-invaders. The sea and Britain are where imported imperial culture came from, as well as capital and labour. In Australian imaginative fantasies, the land is not just girt by sea. The oceans were also where the potential 'enemy' came from, even though Australia is almost impossible to invade – the only ever invaders arrived in 1788 and after. Today, somehow by osmosis, such angsts inform illogical fears of 'boat

11   Stephen Alomes: Selective Ironies, p. 14.
12   Stephen Alomes: When London Calls.
13   Victor G. Kiernan: The Lords of Human Kind.

people', even though most visa-breachers come by plane. Most recently, a desire to obtain a few nuclear submarines to integrate with the American forces in the South China Sea has added a different dimension.

Significantly, it was difficult over the past three centuries for invaders' large military forces to cross the 30 kilometres of La Manche, aka the English Channel. Arguably, Australia, with its southern cities over 5000 kilometres from Jakarta and Singapore, has always been difficult to invade, and almost impossible to occupy. Australia could be blockaded which is why – to return to submarine debates – it actually needs conventional submarines to protect its trade routes instead. Australia's protection by distance, an unrecognised fact, has not stemmed invasion fear, nor its corollary, a related subservience in imperial powers' frontier wars around the globe.

Given our island, colonial and small country syndromes, Australian troops crossed the seas to fight on foreign shores, as they saluted the great imperial power, in eight frontier wars from 1880 to 2021, in addition to the two world wars. Most strangely, but perhaps in a country never again invaded, except by the original invaders from 1788, the resultant Returned Services League's (RSL) definition of military service remained socially and culturally conceived of as going overseas.

Enduring resistance to a recognition of the settler/invader – Indigenous wars by the Australian War Memorial was justified on two grounds: that such conflict was more skirmishes than war; and that it fell outside the official definition of the obligations of the Memorial. Fortunately, with a new Labor government in May 2022, those positions are now being revised.

A personal and family fusion brings together war tales and the colonial odyssey to the world, particularly the UK and Europe. They came together, with modifications, on one of the last travelling, rather than cruising, ocean liners, almost precisely three decades apart. In February 1942 the ocean liner, then named the 'SS West Point', brought Australian troops back from the Middle East to fight the Pacific war as Australia faced a possible direct threat to the continent from Japan, including my father, who served in the army from 1939 to 1945. In January 1972, I crossed the 'sea wall' (in novelist Christopher Koch's term)[14] to the 'mainland', to Melbourne, where I boarded the 'Australis', the large Chandris liner, the same ship, to travel to the UK via a long stopover in the US. A year later I would return initially by plane, via Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, catching one of the last of the travellers' ocean liners to Perth, then hitchhiking overland back home.

While I am not afflicted by seasickness, for most Australians the sea was a means not an end, even as ocean travel became safer. Now in what was, before Covid-19 and climate change, an era of air travel Australians look down on the sea from over 30 000 feet as they similarly look down upon the interior in the many hours it takes to travel from the southeastern cities to depart the northwestern coasts of the island continent.

Australia's east coast is a land of the grey-greens and the blue hills east and south of the great divide where the majority of the Australian population live.

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14   Christopher Koch: Across the Sea Wall.

In recent years, as a Tasmanian expat in Melbourne, I have been imaginatively turned on by the beautiful valley and hills shots, and the gentle rivers of southern Tasmania, perhaps the Huon Valley, in the charmingly ironic comedy television show, 'Rosehaven'. Even more interesting than the personal charms of the female star … and the genial oddities of the male star … who grew up north of the 'Flannelette Curtain', that is in Hobart's working-class suburbs.

The Sydney-based and oriented Australian Tourism Commission markets Australia through Sydney Harbour, the bridge and the opera house, along with the Reef and the Rock, the Red Heart visually apotheosised through Uluru/Ayers Rock. Brand Sydney presents itself as Brand Oz. That image is reinforced by the foreign correspondents who are nearly all based in Sydney. However, most of the 4.9 million people of Australia's second biggest city (Melbourne, for good and bad, is actually bigger) will see the harbour as often as they see Uluru, rarely or almost never. A majority of them rarely see the beaches of the eastern or northern suburbs. Considering Australia's three great sailing capitals, Sydney, Hobart and Perth, again most of the population will never have been out on a yacht or even a motorboat or fishing dinghy, even if a bigger percentage of the population in Hobart will enjoy 'river glimpses'.

In developing a littoralist argument which focuses on the shore rather than the sea and on the voyage or journey connecting a settler-colonial transplant (and, without choice, an Indigenous population) to wider worlds, I don't deny the fundamental relationship with the land.

Lacking the natural wealth across wide areas of the USA, and its ideological energies and imperatives, the settler-colonial and settler-invader population of Australia has sought to sink roots in the thinner soil of the continent. Americans have big ideological dreams rooted in the Puritan legacy and the experience of empire or are focused on achievements measured in dollars. Australians, given their less than ideal convict beginnings, their thinner soil and smaller scale on the world stage, have been more likely to define their belonging and themselves through simple settlement, sinking practical roots, once rural and now for over a century urban.

Australians have long defined themselves above all through owning their own home, a foreign concept in much of Europe and North East Asia, and perhaps soon foreign in 21st century Australia. The quarter acre block which became the space for the domestic suburban temple in the post-war boom years had its origins with Governor Philip who designated that ideal space for planned habitation.

The great PC folly of our times is one which accompanies an otherwise desirable phenomenon, a generally working multiculturalism. It is the chant-like observation with reference to the journey over the sea and now the air: "We are all immigrants". While Australia is an historically immigrant nation after the 1788 invasion, and with very high percentages today, it is absurd to overuse the immigrant moniker to refer to a country after over seven generations of settlement. We might ask, in related terms, when did a Viking become a Norman, when did a Norman invader become English. In Australia the false multicultural theme denies legitimacy to earlier generations of settlers and fertilises milder versions

of populism, as unlikely everyday people, erroneously as well, assume that Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party speak for them.

A related intellectual PC folly parallels the false idea of Australia defined only as an immigrant society. Drawing cues from Left-liberal radical internationalism, the folly treats all nationalism as racist chauvinism, rather than allowing a place for legitimate concern for your own society. That encourages a reaction, engendering populist prejudices, another story.

A Twenty First Century Variation: Demographic, Regional and Cultural Patterns and Water

Relationships with water are influenced by geography, demography, age, gender and culture, as well as region and family. This diversity begins with a greater beach orientation in states with warmer summers and warmer water temperatures, which also produce more competitive swimmers and surfers.

Now that Australia has a massive overseas born population and large numbers of international students, patterns in drowning also reflect the current demography. Overseas born adults and international students, many of whom have limited swimming ability and lack cultural understanding ('Swim between the Flags', especially at surf beaches), are a significant proportion of drowning victims. In the sprawling suburbias of Australia working class migrants are increasingly concentrated in outer suburbs up to, or more than, 50 kilometres from the waterline of the coast.

A 2022 Royal Life Saving Society study reported a rising death toll.[15] Other factors contribute, including correlations with alcohol, a greater proportion of young males, and the deaths of older swimmers and of infants in home swimming pools. A decline in compulsory school swimming lessons in the overcrowded school curriculums, except in Tasmania, despite the Tepid Baths history, may also have a causal role.[16]

A Shoreline View of the World

My discussion has not addressed several themes: the diverse Indigenous experiences of coastal life, the economics associated with the sea, and tourism, water sports (although we might note that Australia wins most of its Olympic gold in or on the water), water species and global warming.

At the same time island stories marked significant moments in my research journey. In nomenclature and conceptual analysis my research has addressed Australia's diverse island, colonial and national experiences. That began with my first academic article on Tasmanian identifications with 'Island, Nation and Empire' during the Boer War of 1899-1902. Other work explored relationships

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15   Julie Power: Australia Records its Worst Year of Deaths by Drowning Since 1996.
16   3AW Melbourne: The Staggering Number of Australian Adults Who Can't Swim.

and questions of dependence and independence – 'The Satellite Society' in 1981 and the changing and contradictory forms of Australian nationalism in 'A Nation at Last?' in 1988.[17]

The prose poem which anticipated this analysis returns to my two themes, particularly the shore dwellers, the denizens of our port city capitals and their sense of water, and less, the second part of the story, the journey, the voyage, the odyssey of a planted but also transplanted people, which I had explored in 'Innocents Abroad'.[18]

Confessions of a Littoralist

We are a littoral people
entranced by rainbows, by light on water
by waves and sand, despite the flies.
The coast, not the bush, calls me
despite the smell of gums and the yellow of winter wattle.
I leave the literalism to the bush dwellers
who know that life is nasty, brutish and short,
with fire and flood, drought and unbearable heat.
We Australians are littoralists,
people of the coast, the shoreline,
the space between hills and water.
Hills, not mountains, please note.
And those wild soldiers, brave or foolhardy,
are not mountain men but just wild colonial boys.
Not that all littoralists are in harmony
A big divide exists – between the majority, people like me,
and the minority.
We drive to the esplanade, walk along the beach and rocks,
in summer our feet briefly touch the froth
as the surf becomes at the beach.
But this swimming, surfing and sailing stuff does not appeal.
A few charge in, embracing the waves,
immersing themselves in nature's elements.
Others, more philosophically bent,
look to Jung or feminist environmentalism,
Is their sea part of a collective unconscious?
I glimpse the waves through a car window
while enjoying an ice cream.
More radically, the water is touched lightly,
by slightly sandy, accidentally salty, feet
We need the shores of our dreaming,
but dreaming does not demand diving in
Or even getting wet.[19]

This article is written from the perspective of a cultural historian. In recent years, after a 40-year gap since school, I have found a second artistic oeuvre after poetry, primarily expressionist painting of populist leaders. However, in a minor

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17   Stephen Alomes: Island, Nation and Empire, pp. 9-18.; Stephen Alomes: The Satellite Society, pp. 2-20.; Stephen Alomes: A Nation at Last.
18   Stephen Alomes: Selective Ironies, p. 14.
19   Ibid., p. 15.

key I have pursued some seascapes, feeling an affinity, which allows me to paint Tasmanian shorelines, particularly Bicheno, while I have neither any interest, nor talent, for painting other landscapes, rural or urban. While my own artistic claims are real, if modest, there is an important general argument for the humanities and social sciences to recognise and appreciate artistic explorations of society and culture, and retreat from current academic fashions that is the often inappropriate formulaic scientisation of research methods and forms of presentation and their digital indices of achievement and impact.

Reflections and a Suggestion of Retraction

Leone Huntsman's 'Sand in our Souls: The Beach in Australian History', a study of Australians' imaginative relationship with the beach and its waters captures its significance. In contrast to Pearson,[20] Booth[21] and Franklin,[22] she focuses more on the idealisation than the reality: "The ways in which artists, writers, film-makers and the advertising industry have depicted the beach are examined for the light they throw on the beach's significance".[23]

Two iconic images are important, both Sydney in origin and in time near to the sesquicentenary of 1938, coming from a photographer and an artist with studios in the same building. Modernist photographer Max Dupain's 'The Sunbaker' (1937) has become one of the most important images in Australian photography. Charles Meere's painting, 'Australian Beach Pattern' (1940), has also become iconic, for example as the cover image of Robert Drewe's short story collection, 'The Bodysurfers' (1984). Meere's work had many European art influences. Significantly, as his close associate and student, Freda Robertshaw (who did her own related painting 'Australian Beach Scene', 1940), remarked, "Charles never went to the beach. We made up most of the figures, occasionally using one of Charles' employees as a model for the hands and feet but never using the complete figure".[24]

In summary, while the beach is culturally significant in Australian dreaming, that idealisation is more important than the immersion experience involving sand, salt water and surf. Like the California music of the Beach Boys, or even the instrumental 'Bombora' by the local Sixties surf rock group, the Atlantics (who took their name from a service station sign), the idea of the beach and of water mattered more than the reality.

Without retracting my argument, is it possible that the new millennium has ushered in a new relationship to water and to nature for a significant number of Australians? I grew up in the era of team ball sports played as an 'Agon' on defined mainly grass surfaces – and they remain dominant, with the Australian game, Australian Football, or AFL, the leader among the four football codes.

20   Kent Pearson: Surfing Subcultures of Australia and New Zealand.
21   Douglas Booth: Australian Beach Cultures.
22   Adrian Franklin: On Why We Dig the Beach, pp. 261-285.
23   Leone Huntsman: Sand in our Souls.
24   P. McCouat: The Origins of an Australian Art Icon.

However, we have also seen the rising popularity of 'Ilinx' or vertigo sports, involving movement, disorientation and often interaction with nature, including surfing, windsurfing, skateboarding, skiing, snowboarding, various forms of bike riding and more. Perhaps, in the sphere of sport, if not in every aspect of life and leisure, Australian interactions with water and nature may be changing.

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Reviews

Claire Wrobel

Tim Causer, Margot Finn, Philip Schofield (eds.): Jeremy Bentham and Australia. Convicts, Utility and Empire

London: UCL Press 2022. 425 pp. ISBN 978-1-78735-818-8. GBP 50 (hardback), GBP 30 (paperback), also free open access

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), philosopher, reformer and founder of Utilitarianism, was one of the first to object to the transportation of convicts from Britain to New South Wales, ever since the first ship of convicts reached the penal colony of Botany Bay in 1788. He developed arguments against the scheme on the basis of the first accounts available on life in the penal colony, and provided a critique of criminal transportation rooted in penal theory. As he never went to New South Wales himself, the use he made of his sources requires careful examination, which is done rigorously in several contributions to the volume under scrutiny. Because he died in 1832, the reformer did not witness the continuation of transportation and its geographical expansion – to New South Wales until 1840, to Van Diemen's land until 1853, and to Western Australia from 1850 until 1868. Although his intuitions that the colony was doomed to fail for economic and demographic reasons and that it would emancipate itself long before the nineteenth century was over proved wrong, the arguments he developed were highly influential in the anti-transportation campaign in Britain in the 1830s and 1840s. 'Jeremy Bentham and Australia' offers a thorough, lucid assessment of both the reformer's critique and its legacy.

This collection of essays is a companion to 'Panopticon versus New South Wales and other writings on Australia' (ed. Tim Causer and Philip Schofield, London, UCL Press, 2022), the latest volume in 'The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham'.[1] Since John Bowring's edition of 'The Works of Jeremy Bentham' (1838-1843) does not meet current scientific standards, the Bentham Project at UCL is putting together a new and authoritative critical edition. The fourth volume of the 'Works' edited by Bowring included, among other texts, two letters to Lord Pelham (the then Home Secretary) as well as 'A Plea for the Constitution', which challenged the legality of the British venture in New South Wales. In addition to presenting these texts with the appropriate critical apparatus, 'Panopticon versus New South Wales' includes hitherto unpublished material which is discussed in 'Jeremy Bentham and Australia'.

The introduction to the volume offers an overview of the contents of 'Panopticon versus New South Wales'. It also underlines the chronological and thematic convergences between Bentham's attack on criminal transportation and his campaign to promote his model prison, the panopticon, at home. While studies of British penal history have long focused on prisons only – and on the rise of the

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1   https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bentham-project/collected-works-jeremy-bentham.

penitentiary throughout the nineteenth century – this collection demonstrates the necessity of thinking in terms of a "carceral archipelago" (70) or "penal nexus" (124). British prisons were only one element in a complex which included the hulks (prison-boats moored on the Thames), American penitentiaries, penal colonies (of which New South Wales is only an example) but also the ships used to transport convicts. As the second chapter points out, "the ship was a floating system of prison management" and, like the plantation, needs to be studied as a "site of surveillance" (70), as has been done by Nicholas Mirzoeff[2] or Georgiana Banita.[3]

The essays are organized in four sections. The first one, on "The historical context of Bentham's writings on Australia" highlights relevant contextual factors such as economic growth in Britain and the empire, the fiscal state, mercantilism, and greater state involvement in criminal justice in the first chapter. The latter explains that the 'Penitentiary Acts' and Bentham's panopticon came a half-century too soon, which is why "transportation persisted and was a necessary step in the process of relinquishing the death penalty" (50). The second chapter questions the "great confinement thesis" put forth by Michel Foucault and shows that transportation was more cost-effective than penitentiaries. It also deconstructs the opposition set by Bentham between his panopticon and transportation to New South Wales, which actually functioned along panoptic lines of surveillance. It reminds readers that "as late as 1867, the year before the final convict vessel arrived in Western Australia, there were still only nine national penitentiaries in England and Wales" (66) and points out that "the British penitentiary evolved in lock-step with the Australian system" (76), concluding that, ironically, "if Bentham's panopticon was ever constructed anywhere, it was in Australia" (77).

The second part ("Bentham and the theory and practice of transportation to Australia") checks his critique against historical realities. The third chapter argues that Bentham's distinction between confinement, banishment and bondage, while of little actual influence during his lifetime, shaped the debate on the functioning of transportation later and reflected the reality of ordinary people's experiences. Chapter four centres on Western Australia, the final Australian penal colony, and not least on the imprisonment of Indigenous Australians, who barely feature in Bentham's writings on Australia. It highlights the limitations of Bentham's remarks about early New South Wales, which cannot be transferred to later spaces and practices and fail to account for "the rise of a separate carceral apparatus for Indigenous Australians" (124), which is here sketched out. The fifth chapter lays bare the flawed, tendentious approach with which Bentham drew on his sources, and suggests that in fact, New South Wales was "an effective reformatory" (138). While Bentham claimed that convicts would not be reformed in Australia because the vast space and scattered settlements made inspection

2   Nicholas Mirzoeff: The Right to Look: A History of Counter-Visuality. Durham: Duke University Press 2011.
3   Georgiana Banita: 'Black Futures Matter. Racial Foresight from the Slave Ship to Predictive Policing'. In: A. Brunon-Ernst, J. Gligorijevic, D. Manderson, C. Wrobel (eds): Law, Surveillance and Humanities. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2023, pp. 193-215.

impossible, the authors contend that it was precisely because they were not under surveillance that they could reintegrate into the new society, benefiting from the incentives to become independent and prosperous.

The third part ("The constitutional implications of Bentham's writings on Australia") centres on his argument that New South Wales had been illegally founded because it had been unauthorized by Parliament. Chapter 6 considers the directions in which Bentham's reflections on New South Wales took his own system. The next one traces his influence, through Romilly, on the platform to establish representative institutions in the colony. Chapter 8 addresses the puzzle created by Bentham's 1831 'Colonization Company Proposal', in which he advocated the establishment of a colony in South Australia, when he had acquired a reputation for holding anti-colonial views with texts such as 'Emancipate Your Colonies!' (written in 1792/93) and 'Rid Yourselves of Ultramaria' (written in 1822). The chapter explains that the proposal was actually consistent with Bentham's early writings on colonies and dependent on the possibility to propose an acceptable form of government for the new colony. It also exposes a central contradiction in the text: "Given that it was a fundamental principle of Bentham's utilitarianism that each person was to count for one and no one for more than one, it was, by his own standard, not only inconsistent but also morally wrong of him not to give due weight to the welfare of indigenous people" (243). The problem caused by this blind spot is tackled head on in chapter 9, which underlines the absence of Indigenous people from Bentham's works on colonization, but also from the scholarship discussing his views, and demonstrates that the erasure of Indigenous peoples is in keeping with the logic of settler colonialism.

The final part ("Bentham, the panopticon penitentiary scheme, and penal institutions and practices in Australia and Britain") puts the panopticon, and penitentiaries more generally, back at the centre of the discussion. Chapter 10 offers a case study of the Port Arthur Separate Prison and compares it to the Pentonville penitentiary built in London in 1842, claiming that the former was a "colonial Pentonville" (296). The next chapter reads the Fremantle Gaol built in the Swan River colony as a "colonial reinterpretation" of the panopticon 306), based on an examination of its formation and the factors that led to it, its location, architecture and maintenance, its role in colonial society, operation and methods of punishment. Once again, it appears that Indigenous populations received unfair treatment, being more frequently subjected to corporal punishments, and, additionally, erased from historical records, as their executions were not included in the colony's criminal statistics. Chapter 12 delves further into Bentham's comparative method, focusing on the tables that compare the penitentiary, hulks and transportation. It uncovers the influence of James Neild, and discusses the place of religion and of solitary confinement. Chapter 13 focuses on the hulks, whose use continued long into the nineteenth century, thereby attesting to the coexistence of different types of spaces of confinement throughout the same period. Bentham, who visited the hulks himself and went back to the topic in his third letter to Lord Pelham, exposed the system of corruption and patronage which presided over their creation and maintenance. Not only did the panopticon not prevail on the hulks, but the ships played a part in the scheme's failure. While

Bentham's considerations on the hulks were fruitless in terms of policy, they contain the seeds of his later denunciation of what he called "sinister interest" (here in the shape of office-holding and patronage) and of his commitment to political reform.

Taken together, the essays in this collection do an excellent job at contextualizing the panopticon and Bentham's writings on Australia, shedding light on their close connections. With the benefit of hindsight, they provide a lucid account of Bentham's argumentation, his selective use of historical sources, and errors of judgment regarding the functioning of the penal colony, as well as its economic and demographic viability. But they also show his influence over the debates regarding transportation, as his arguments were taken up both by critics and advocates. His writings set the terms of the discussion, and it may be argued that Bentham was a foundational thinker for Australia. Beyond the reformer himself, the chapters make a compelling case for expanding the scope of penal history, and considering its various components as interconnected. Penal transportation systems were indeed "bound up in global labour and colonization practices" (89). Common conceptions, such as the Foucauldian hypothesis of the dissimulation of power in the move from sovereignty to discipline, are challenged, and difficult questions, such as Bentham's failure to take into account the Indigenous population and his seemingly contradictory stance on colonialism and imperialism, are not avoided. Factors of social class, gender and indigeneity help build a differential history of Australian colonies.

With this volume, Bentham's texts on New South Wales, which were long regarded as a mere footnote to his panopticon project, get the attention they deserve, and the colonial periphery takes centre stage. One may regret that the book, which includes useful charts and illustrations, does not include a map to help readers visualize the various locations discussed. But this will not prevent this rich, thought-stimulating collection from appealing to readers interested in Bentham's life and thought, in settler colonialism and imperial history, in Australian history and more precisely in the social, legal, penal and constitutional aspects of this foundational period for Australia.

Solvejg Nitzke

Margo Neale (ed.): Songlines. Sieben Schwestern erschaffen Australien. Ausstellungskatalog, Humboldt Forum (Berlin, 17. Juni – 30. Oktober 2022)

Die Ausstellung ‚Songlines. Sieben Schwestern erschaffen Australien' ist eine begehbare Geschichte. Sie handelt davon, wie sieben Schwestern auf der Flucht vor einem Mann das Land durchwandern und dabei formen. Sie bewegen sich von Osten nach Westen und hinterlassen große Felsen, Wasserlöcher und andere Spuren, Abdrücke und Überbleibsel ihrer selbst, so dass die Trennung zwischen Spur und Rest, zwischen Land und geformter Landschaft sowie den Schwestern selbst verschwimmt. Aber dieses Verschwimmen ist keine Unsicherheit. Die Ausstellung zeigt eine bewegte Verknüpfung, die in den ‚Songlines' immer wieder nachvollzogen und neu geformt und damit zur gemeinsamen Basis einer Orientierung im Land, einer Zugehörigkeit zum Land und einer Verbindung zwischen Land und Menschen wird, die ein gemeinsames Sein und gegenseitige Pflege bedeutet. Die Verschiebung in der Übersetzung zwischen dem englischen Untertitel ‚Tracking the Seven Sisters' und der Übersetzung ‚Sieben Schwestern erschaffen Australien' ist in dieser Hinsicht sprechend: Im Original-Titel drückt der bestimmte Artikel, der im Deutschen fehlt, eine größere Vertrautheit aus. Die Suggestion ist, dass im National Museum of Australia bekannt ist (oder vielleicht sein sollte), wer die Schwestern sind oder wenigstens, dass es sie gibt. Der Abstand erscheint auf Deutsch größer und das allein erzeugt wichtige Störungen, die auch der Band immer wieder aufgreift.

Die kosmogonische, weltschaffende Arbeit der Schwestern, die der deutschsprachige Titel hervorhebt, ist ein entscheidender Teil der Geschichte, aber das ‚tracking' im Original findet auf einer anderen Ebene statt. Den verfügbaren Übersetzungen ins Deutsche – verfolgen, spuren suchen/auf den Spuren von, nachlaufen – entgeht die kreative Dimension, die das ‚tracking' der Schwestern im Imaginären der Ausstellung und der Communities hat, deren Geschichte und Gegenwart sie sind. Denn ‚auf den Spuren' der Schwestern zu sein heißt für die Custodians der Songlines – die Ältesten indigener Communities in den Wüstenregionen Australiens – gleichzeitig zu erzählen, in Rollen zu schlüpfen und wieder zu erschaffen. Die kreativen Arbeiten, die in der Ausstellung ausgestellt werden, sind also im Wortsinn schöpferisch. Allerdings nicht, wie die europäischen Genies ihre ‚Schöpfungen' verstanden – autonom, einzigartig, neu – sondern zugleich nachahmend und neu schaffend; gleichzeitig eigene Leistung und Kollaboration. Es sind Kunstwerke, die integraler Bestandteil von Kultur und Land sind. In der Übersetzung geht nichts verloren, weil eine verlustfreie

Übersetzung gar nicht möglich wäre. In ihrem Beitrag „White man got no Dreaming" (206-210) erklärt Kuratorin Margo Neale warum. ‚Songlines' oder ‚Dreamings' sind ein verkörpertes Wissen, das so lange existiert, wie ihre Custodians leben und sie singen. Das Wort stammt von Bruce Chatwin (‚Traumpfade', 1987) und ist, wie Neale betont, zwar in einigen akademischen Kreisen umstritten, allerdings bei Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples weit verbreitet.

> „Allerdings gab es im Laufe der Jahre erhebliche Diskussionen darüber, wie die eigentliche Idee der Songlines über Kulturen hinweg vermittelt werden kann. Sie ist dem westlichen Denken so fremd, dass das englische [und auch das deutsche] Vokabular unzureichend ist. Selbst Indigene Wörter allein genügen nicht. So stellt die *inma* [Zeremonie] die wesentliche Art der Wissensvermittlung dar, sie umfasst Klang, Bewegung, Rhythmus und Gesang." (207, eckige Klammern und Kursivierung i. Orig.)

In diesem Sinne sind sowohl Ausstellung als auch Katalog gespickt von Ausdrücken aus Indigen-Australischen Sprachen und fest im Australischen Englisch verankerten Begriffen, die im Band nicht übersetzt werden, um die Übersetzungsproblematik nicht zu „verschärfen" (Glossar, 262). Gerade bei Ausdrücken, die vertraut und übersetzbar scheinen, wie z. B. ‚Country' oder ‚Walking Country', erweist sich diese Entscheidung als richtig, weil sie ‚Glättungen' verhindert. In der Störung des Leseflusses in einer Sprache (hier eben Deutsch) drücken Texte in Ausstellung und Katalog also Respekt für die Eigenbedeutsamkeit einer anderen Sprache aus. Dadurch entsteht zwar wieder Abstand im Deutschen, aber dieser Abstand ist ein respektvoller, der unbedachte Übernahme und Aneignung verhindert (oder wenigstens stört).

Der Besuch der Ausstellung ist mehr als andere Ausstellungen davon geprägt, was der/die Besucher*in mitbringt. Der andauernde Streit um das Berliner Stadtschloss bzw. Sinn und Unsinn einer Rekonstruktion der Fassaden auf den doppelten Ruinen des Schlosses und des für den Neubau abgerissenen Palasts der Republik sind das eine, die Diskussionen um die Sammlungen, die dort präsentiert werden sollen, ihre koloniale Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, sind das andere. Inmitten dieser wunden Punkte, liefert die ‚Songlines'-Ausstellung mehr als einen Beitrag zur Debatte, sie zeigt die Arbeit, die nötig ist, um Praktiken, Natur- und Kunstverhältnisse buchstäblich zugänglich zu machen.

Eine dieser Praktiken ist die Reflexion und Offenlegung des eigenen Standpunkts. Ich habe die Ausstellung besucht, weil ich einerseits neugierig auf das Humboldt Forum war, das ich bis zum Sommer 2022 noch nicht besucht hatte, und weil ich mich in meiner Forschung für Beziehungen zwischen Menschen und mehr-als-menschlichen Gegenübern interessiere, die durch künstlerische (vor allem literarische) Praktiken geknüpft und gepflegt werden. Da ich weder eine Expertin für indigene Lebensweisen, noch für Australien bin, gilt meine Aufmerksamkeit vor allem jenen Praktiken der Ausstellung, die Menschen und ‚Natur' in Austauschbeziehungen zeigen. Das bedeutet auch, dass ich die Debatten um den Ausstellungsort nicht außen vorlassen kann oder will. Das ginge an dem, was die Ausstellung tut, auch völlig vorbei.

Die Ausstellung besteht aus drei Teilen, die drei Songlines und ihre Traditional Owners: Martu Country und Songlines, Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara

Lands und APY Songline, Ngaanyatjarra Lands und Ngaanyatjarra Songlines. Sie wird von einem Audio-Guide begleitet, über den auf Englisch oder Deutsch Custodians der Songlines die Geschichten der Sieben Schwestern (in wir-Form) erzählen und erklären, welche Bedeutung die ausgestellten Kunstwerke haben. Ausgestellt werden hunderte Objekte – Skulpturen, Gemälde, Keramiken, Fotos und Multimedia-Installationen – die in der Ausstellung in Beziehung gesetzt werden. Das gelingt durch eine multi-modale Ansprache, die den/die Besucher*in so in Bewegung (innerlich und äußerlich) setzt, dass das Gefühl, durch eine Ausstellung zu gehen schnell dem Eindruck weicht, eine Geschichte zu begehen und deren Protagonist*innen zu begegnen.

Der Kontrast zwischen der riesigen, hellen Eingangshalle und der dunklen Umgebung der Ausstellung ist enorm. Von einem ersten Raum aus, in dem ich umgeben von einer Projektion, die Kreise und Linien zeigt, denen ich in der Ausstellung immer wieder begegne, dem Auftakt der Geschichten zuhöre, soll der Übergang in die immersive Ausstellung stattfinden. Er ist also als eine Art Tauchbecken gedacht, das die Außenwelt ganz ausschließt und Aufmerksamkeit und (buchstäbliche) Haltung erzeugt, indem sie Konzentration forciert. Das Gegenstück zu diesem ersten Raum ist die große Kuppel, die Kunstwerke aus der Geschichte der Sieben Schwestern in einer sphärischen Projektion erlebbar macht (vgl. dazu June Ross „Kungkarangkalpa und die Kunst von Walinynga", 82). Beide Räume – die Kuppel noch konzentrierter – umschließen die Besucherin und erzeugen somit eine nicht-abstrakte Atmosphäre, die Kunstwerke aus dem Kontext einer ‚Hängung' herausnimmt und in Bewegung versetzt. Dadurch wird aus dem Gegenüber (oder sogar Gegeneinander) der urteilenden Betrachterin und dem ‚Kunstwerk' als ‚Objekt' ein Umgebungsverhältnis, das dem Dreaming im besten Fall deutlich näher kommt als die Erklärungen, die es mit Worten versuchen.

Das gelang in meinem Fall leider nicht ganz, weil eine Führung stattfand, deren Leiter – vielleicht auch lehrreich – in bester Absicht aus dem Nähkästchen plauderte und davon erzählte, wie die Sicherheitsvorkehrungen des Museums (hier: ein Notausgangsschild) z. T. mit den Konzepten der Ausstellung kollidierten. Was, wie ich annehmen möchte, zeigen sollte, wie stark das Konzept und wie entschlossen die Kurator*innen waren, erweckte leider den Eindruck, ungehöriges oder ‚anstrengendes' Verhalten aufzeigen oder korrigieren zu wollen. Dabei sind es genau die Sorge und Sorgfalt der Inszenierung, die den Effekt der Ausstellung ausmachen. Nicht umsonst wurde die Ausstellung auch im Humboldt Forum von einem umfangreichen Programm begleitet, in dem u. a. ‚community representatives' und beteiligte Künstler*innen selbst zu Wort kommen.

Wie in einem Theater ereignet sich vor dunklem Hintergrund eine Geschichte in Echtzeit. Die Kombination aus Erzählung der ‚virtual elders' und der theatralischen Inszenierung von Bildern, Skulpturen und Installationen markiert deutlich, dass diese Ausstellung weder ‚Kunst' noch ‚Kultur' zeigt, sondern ein Übersetzungsversuch und vor allem eine Einladung ist, Land/Country auf verschiedene Weisen wahrzunehmen, die nicht auf diesen Trennungen beruhen. Damit wird von Anfang an deutlich spürbar, was Anne Weinreich in ihrem Beitrag zum „Erbe der Sieben Schwestern in Berlin" (224) beschreibt, nämlich,

dass es in diesem Projekt darum geht, Songlines und die Künstler*innen, die sie pflegen, in der Vielfalt und Eigenheit ihrer Darstellungsweisen wahrzunehmen (anstatt sie z. B. im „white cube" Prinzip einem Kunstbegriff zuzuordnen, der gar nicht zu den Bildern, Skulpturen und Installationen passt, 228).

‚Songlines. Tracking the Seven Sisters' ist eine der Weisen, in denen sich ein großangelegtes Kooperationsprojekt zwischen „Wissensträger*innen und Spezialist*innen indigener wie westlicher Wissensbereiche" (Margo Neale, 19) materialisiert. Das vom Australian Research Council finanzierte und durch zahlreiche Partner unterstützte Projekt ‚Alive with the Dreaming! Songlines of the Western Desert' ist eine interdisziplinäre Initiative, die zum Ziel hat, zerbrochene bzw. zerrissene Verbindungen zu Songlines wiederzubeleben und das in diesen Beziehungen bewahrte Wissen so zu bewahren, dass eine Chance besteht, es an jüngere Generationen weiterzugeben. Die Kuratorin Margo Neale beschreibt in ihrem Beitrag zum Katalog, wie das Projekt zustande kam, nämlich auf Drängen von Community-Ältesten, die um die Verbindung von Land und Menschen und damit um ein Verhältnis fürchten, das nur unzureichend mit dem eurozentrischen Konzept der ‚Kultur' beschrieben wird. Das wichtigste Ziel des Projekts ist der Aufbau eines digitalen Archivs, das ‚Wissensträger*innen und Spezialist*innen' Zugang zu den Songlines verschafft und so die Möglichkeit bewahrt, dass sie weiter gepflegt werden. Dieses dritte Archiv (neben Custodians und Land) ist kein Aufbewahrungsort, sondern als Katalysator für Austausch gedacht.

Die Ausstellung teilt dieses Ziel, hat allerdings, wenn man so will, eine andere Zielgruppe. Hier geht es weniger um jüngere Generationen, die wieder für Songlines zu begeistern sind, sondern um ein Publikum, das nicht zufällig erst in Australien und dann mitten in Europa angesprochen wird. Die ‚Songlines'-Ausstellung erweckt von Anfang bis Ende einen Eindruck stolzer Präsentation. Anne Weinreich verweist im Katalog mit Bezug auf die aktuelle Forschung darauf, dass nicht-europäische Kunstwerke, Kulturgüter und Naturverhältnisse immer noch sehr häufig als ‚exotisch' oder auf andere Weise paternalistisch ausgestellt werden und die Diskussion um die Dekolonialisierung von Europäischen Sammlungen z. T. sehr langsam und gegen Widerstände stattfindet. Im Austausch zwischen Ausstellung und Katalog werden die Bewegungsenergien spürbar – wenn auch im Vergleich mit dem National Museum of Australia noch vorsichtig –, die nicht nur das Humboldt-Forum, sondern die europäische Museumslandschaft insgesamt betreffen. Genau das scheint mir das besondere an der Verbindung von Ausstellung und ihrem Ort in Berlin zu sein, sie zeigt scheinbar weit entferntes, als unmittelbar Berlin betreffendes. Und zwar nicht nur, weil Berlin mit dem Humboldt Forum ein Projekt realisiert hat, das viele der kolonialen Praktiken, die die Ausstellung mindestens implizit kritisiert, in Architektur gießt, sondern auch, weil ‚Songlines' nicht in den Grenzen des Museums, der Kunst oder der Kultur bleibt.

Besonders die Installation ‚Always Walking Country: Parnngurr Yarrkalpa' (2013, vgl. Katalog, 52-57) hat mich in dieser Hinsicht tief beeindruckt. Es handelt sich um eine immersive 3-Kanal Installation, die die Entstehung des 300x500 cm großen Gemäldes ‚Yarrkalpa (Hunting Ground)' inszeniert. Das Bild ist Teil der Parnngurr Songline und zeigt konkrete Orte, Teile der Geschichte, Pflanzen in

verschiedenen Wachstumsstadien und Landmarken. Im Katalog wird das durch eine Deckzeichnung auf halbtransparentem Papier dargestellt, die die Benennung der einzelnen Teile über das Bild selbst legt, in der Ausstellung hängt diese (beschriftete) Karte der (mit den Mitteln der Songline gemalte) Karte neben der riesigen Leinwand. Die Installation zeigt in einem dreiwandigen Raum parallel drei Filme. In der Mitte sieht man das Bild und die Künstler*innen, Kumpaya Girgirba, Yikartu Bumba, Kanu Nacy Taylor, Ngamaru Bidu, Yuwali Janice Nixon, Reena Rogers, Thelma Judson und Ngalangka Nola Taylor (von denen einige in Ausstellung und Katalog zu Wort kommen) aus der Vogelperspektive und im (langsamen) Zeitraffer; links und rechts wechseln Nahaufnahmen der Künstler*innen bei ihrer Arbeit und der Landschaft, die sie wiedererschaffen. Tiere und Pflanzen sind Teil der Arbeit und des Tagesablaufs, sowie des Bildes selbst. Ich war völlig gefangen genommen von dieser Installation, die den analytischen Blick auf die Entstehung des Bildes von oben zitiert, um ihn zu unterlaufen. Ich war vollkommen fasziniert davon, zu sehen, wie viele Frauen zusammen an dem Bild arbeiteten, ohne dass eine von ihnen dirigiert oder es einen Plan oder eine Skizze außerhalb des Bildes gäbe, auf den sie sich bezögen. Den Künstlerinnen bei der Arbeit zuzusehen erweckt den Eindruck, sie wüssten nicht nur, wo ihre eigenen Linien und Kreise hingehörten, sondern auch die der anderen (ohne, dass sie hinsehen müssten). Dass das nicht nur eine – für meine sich nun endgültig als limitiert europäisch erweisenden Augen erstaunliche – Zusammenarbeit zwischen Menschen ist, sondern das Land selbst und seine Bewohner (Tiere und Pflanzen) sich in die Arbeit einmischen, ist hier sichtbar keine Metapher. Die Installation hat nicht dafür gesorgt, dass ich verstehe, wie das geht. Das kann ich auch gar nicht. Aber zu sehen, wie selbstverständlich Inter-Species-Collaborations, die Anna Tsing und Donna Haraway als Schlagwort etabliert haben, zur künstlerischen Praxis werden, hat mich extrem beeindruckt. Die Installation macht spürbar, dass diese Collaborations nicht nur zum Beschreibungsinstrument von Kunst taugen, sondern eine praktische Poetik von Kunstwerken sind, die mehr sind als das, was an der Wand hängt.

Dass das alles nicht als ‚uralt' und ‚natürlich' dargestellt wird, ist einer der großen Verdienste der Ausstellung. Weder sie noch der Katalog wirken wie ein museales Naturschutzgebiet bzw. Reservat, obwohl die Angst vor dem Verschwinden des Wissens der Anlass war. Vielmehr zeigen sie den Wandel von Praktiken und Techniken als Verlust und Erfahrung kolonialer Gewalt einerseits, andererseits aber auch als lebendige Anpassungsfähigkeit und künstlerischem Willen zur Integration von Leinwand, Acrylfarbe, Keramik, Film und digitalen Archiven. Der kolonialen Ressourcenperspektive setzt ‚Songlines' eine starke Alternative der Beziehung zu Land und Lebewesen entgegen.

Noah Riseman

Geoff Rodoreda, Eva Bischoff (eds.): Mabo's Cultural Legacy: History, Literature, Film and Cultural Practice in Contemporary Australia

It has been thirty years since the High Court of Australia handed down its momentous 'Mabo' ruling, overturning the doctrine of terra nullius and recognising the existence of native title rights in the Meriam Islands and, by extension, Australia. The ruling revolutionised the teaching and understanding of Australian history and generated a wave of scholarship through the end of the 1990s about native title and the effects of the ruling on Australian society. Since the 2000s, it has primarily been historians and legal scholars writing about 'Mabo' and native title, while explicit engagement with the topic has been less common in other disciplines. As Indigenous affairs have turned to other issues ranging from the apology to the Stolen Generations through to the Uluru Statement from the Heart, Mabo and native title have fallen into the background.

Geoff Rodoreda and Eva Bischoff's edited collection 'Mabo's Cultural Legacy' reconceptualises the impact of the 'Mabo' ruling, taking as a starting point that the effects of 'Mabo' have been omnipresent in Australia since 1992. The contributions from anthropology, linguistics, history, literary studies, cultural studies and cinema studies analyse different legacies of 'Mabo' in Australian legal and cultural life. The authors are a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars from Australia and Europe. The book is structured in five sections: Making History; Mabo in Politics and Practice; Mabo and Film; Fiction and Poetry; and Mabo and Memoir. Although all chapters make reference to 'Mabo' and/or native title, the extent to which the authors directly engage with Bonita and Eddie Koiki Mabo, the court ruling or native title vary. Yet, what unites them is how they all discuss sovereignty, co-existence and living Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

In the first chapter, Lynette Russell and Rachel Standfield explore how the 'Mabo' ruling was not a beginning, but the culmination of over a century of Indigenous activism. They show examples from Victoria dating back to the Koorie occupation of Coranderrk in the mid-1800s of how Aboriginal people have consistently asserted sovereignty, framed through the legal and political discourses available to them at the time. Paul Turnbull's chapter focuses on how both Eddie Koiki Mabo and his wife Bonita worked with Black community education programs in 1970s far north Queensland. They also link the Mabos' work with that of other activists like Joe McGinness and the trade union movement to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activism and education initiatives.

The history section thus highlights the 'Mabo' ruling not as a change so much as yet another step on a long journey towards Indigenous rights and shared sovereignty.

The two chapters in the second part of the book are more focused on some of the practical operations and challenges around the 'Native Title Act'. Carsten Wergin discusses the overlapping native title claims from different Kimberley mobs and how they played out in a series of native title proceedings in 2017. His analysis discusses different mobs' meanings of connection to country – be it as occupiers, inheritors or custodians – and how the court arbitrated their native title claims – ultimately rejecting custodianship in favour of occupation. Christina Ringel's chapter shows how linguists have played roles in native title claims. She gives examples of how changing language and references to place have contributed to successful native title recognition in certain remote communities. Wergin and Ringel's chapters both show the limits of native title legislation and the messiness of trying to fit complex Indigenous understandings of country, language and culture into a Western legal framework.

The section on film has three chapters which highlight transformations in Indigenous Australian television and cinema since the 1990s. Romaine Moreton and Therese Davis describe the rise of Indigenous film units within the Australian Film Commission and SBS and how, over the thirty years since the 'Mabo' ruling, film production companies have evolved their policies and practices to encourage Indigenous filmmaking and ownership. They express Indigenous filmmaking as a form of asserting sovereignty which became possible only because 'Mabo' compelled the ABC, SBS, the Australian Film Corporation and other production companies to step up their efforts around Indigenous participation and ownership. Renate Brosch's chapter analyses two filmic representations of Eddie Koiki Mabo's life from 1997 and 2012 respectively and how the latter shows him occupying a role within both Indigenous and Australian cultures. Brosch uses the word hybridity and the argument ties to the broader theme of Indigenous people's belonging in two worlds. Peter Kilroy describes the rise of a Torres Strait Islander screen culture in the 2000s and how production companies and actors have worked to produce homegrown, Torres Strait Islander cinema and television. All of these chapters show significant transformations over thirty years which have empowered Indigenous filmmaking. They all argue that these are legacies of the 'Mabo' ruling because it ushered in a newfound appreciation and *necessity* for Indigenous ownership and development of film.

Section four's focus on literature begins with a chapter by Philip Morrissey about Melissa Lucashenko's novel 'Mullumbimby'. He discusses how the novel explores Aboriginal identity and connection through the three principal characters and how different ways of being Aboriginal can become messily intertwined with native title claims. Dorothee Klein's chapter explores Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of conceiving and belonging to land in Kim Scott's novel 'That Deadman Dance'. It highlights how 'Mabo' forced Australians to recognise and rethink Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connections to country as more than just about ownership, but rather to be a holistic, spiritual belonging. Aboriginal and Australian law are the subject of Katrin Althans' chapter, using

the book 'Lightning Mine' to imagine ways that Aboriginal jurisprudence could (or should) be recognised in native title claims. Finally, Lioba Schreyer explores how Indigenous poetry plays on the themes of terra nullius and history to show that it has always been a lie and Indigenous sovereignty has always been present. A theme permeating all of these chapters is how native title claims often subvert Aboriginal law to Australian/white law, but this does not *need* to be the case; there can and should be room for coexistence. Moreover, they emphasise Aboriginal understandings of connection to country – that which both 'Mabo' and the 'Native Title Act' (supposedly) attempted to recognise yet has proven challenging to implement in practice under the dominant Western legal system.

The final section on memoir begins with a chapter by Lars Jensen which focuses on Aboriginal journalist Stan Grant's second autobiography 'Talking to My Country'. This chapter is more contemporary-focused and uses Grant's book to explore the ongoing unwillingness of non-Indigenous Australians to embrace Indigenous belonging and sovereignty in the thirty years since 'Mabo' – particularly highlighted in the former Coalition government's rejection of the Uluru Statement of the Heart. The final chapter by Kieran Dolin gives examples of Indigenous memoirs written in the 2000s-10s and how they represent trauma and searches for Indigenous healing through justice. Both of these chapters reflect attempts to find a place for Indigenous Australians within contemporary Australia, but how Indigenous people consistently run up against intractable governments and systems which refuse to engage with Indigenous people on their own cultural terms.

The essays in 'Mabo's Cultural Legacy' are disparate, but there are some common themes across the book. One is that sovereignty was never ceded and instead can, should, and does coexist in Australia. Indeed, as the editors point out in the introduction, the 'Mabo' ruling may have seemed revolutionary, but it was actually rather conservative because it did not disrupt the status quo in Australia. The 1996 'Wik' native title ruling further cemented the notion of coexistence, and these chapters all reflect Indigenous assertions of sovereignty and co-existence within Australia. Yet, they highlight that Indigenous desires for co-existence have consistently met opposition in law, history and politics – though Indigenous authors, filmmakers, journalists and activists continue to imagine a different way forward.

The essays also flip the famous adage from Justice Olney in the Yorta Yorta Native Title Ruling about the tide of history washing away Indigenous connections to country. Instead, the authors all show that the tide of history is Indigenous because the novels, poetry, films and histories presented all show ongoing Indigenous connections to country and law. It is this big picture that the edited collection highlights: 'Mabo' made the omnipresence of Indigenous people and culture visible and unignorable – but it was nothing new for Indigenous people. They were always here, as was their law, sovereignty and connection to country.

The extent to which the chapters link to the 'Mabo' ruling vary, with some being obvious and others expressing tenuous links. The book does, however, have a clear focus on assertions of Indigenous sovereignty and culture in the post-Mabo era – how culture is 'used' in native title claims, how culture has been *expressed*

through native title claims, and how cultural artefacts *manifest* Indigenous sovereignty and living cultures. 'Mabo's Cultural Legacy' is a thought-provoking collection worth a read, and I must admit it left me with one lingering question: Have Indigenous framings of law, sovereignty and connections to land changed post-'Mabo', or are we the settlers just now starting to listen? That's a question for another edited collection to answer.

Mark Piccini

Hanna Teichler: Carnivalizing Reconciliation. Contemporary Australian and Canadian Literature and Film beyond the Victim Paradigm

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Hanna Teichler's book 'Carnivalizing Reconciliation: Contemporary Australian Literature and Film Beyond the Victim Paradigm', the eighth volume published in the Worlds of Memory series by Berghahn Books, is an outstanding contribution to understanding how culture compliments, destabilises, and exceeds official attempts by settler-colonial societies like Australia and Canada to reconcile their Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations.

In Chapter 1, Teichler discusses the apologies of former Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper to victims of the Indian Residential School System, and of former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd to members of the Stolen Generations, as well as the legislative and political processes that led to and followed these momentous events. Inspired by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa and similar commissions in South America, these popular reconciliatory approaches can suspend or temporarily reverse power relations, bringing stories of Indigenous suffering from the peripheries of settler-colonial societies like Australia and Canada to the centre.

While Teichler acknowledges the merits of the framework of reconciliation in Australia and Canada, she writes: "It enables the government to reinvent itself as the enabler of reconciliation and new beginnings without the potentially dire consequences of court proceedings and constitution changes" (43). According to Teichler: "Australian and Canadian 'politics of regret', thus conceived, are at risk of becoming self-serving endeavors, because they primarily enable a reconciliation of settler societies with their colonial past" (45). 'Sorry politics' allow two states founded on colonial violence to reinvent themselves as agents of reconciliation while confining their Indigenous peoples to victimhood, ultimately reinforcing an 'us and them' dichotomy. Teichler writes: "Central to both reconciliation endeavors discussed here are the stories of the victims and survivors, but this centrality is also complicit in fostering a specific identity template in relation to the Stolen Generations and Indian residential school survivors: continuous victimhood" (46). In October 2023, Australians were asked in a referendum to recognise Indigenous Australians in the constitution through the establishment of a Voice to Parliament. Teichler's criticism of the victim paradigm as reductive in 'Carnivalizing Reconciliation' is particularly timely given that the debate surrounding the Voice to Parliament saw the 'No campaign' use identity templates such as victim/perpetrator and Indigenous/non-Indigenous to question some

of their opponents' intentions by raising the spectre of reparations and exclude even more of their opponents' opinions on spurious grounds of 'inauthenticity'.

In her second chapter, Teichler examines how others have reframed Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalesque to argue that "the act of storytelling framed by truth and reconciliation processes entails the possibility of a transitory reversal of social hierarchies and leads to empowerment through countering hegemonial understandings of national narratives and identities" (63). While a Bakhtinian carnival of reconciliation can suspend power relations and reverse the positions of powerful and powerless, it remains a play of binary opposites. Teichler writes that "reconciliation processes cater to advocates of cultural essentialism and authenticity, and they rely on the rather simplistic identity schemes that form the structural basis for reconciliation" (68). Teichler proposes that we "reconsider what is at the core of Bakhtin's idea of carnivalesque reversal: the (playful) exploration of others by fools and tricksters who paint outside the lines that reconciliation provides" (80). In the following chapters of her book, Teichler eloquently analyses several cultural productions that render characters who fulfill identity templates without crossing the lines that define them. However, the strength of 'Carnivalizing Reconciliation' is when Teichler discusses several literary texts and a feature film that provide us with "imaginations of perpetrators and perpetration, of victims who turned the tables on those who harmed them, or bring to our attention the plurifold transcultural entanglements that a nuanced engagement with Indigenous cultural reeducation ultimately bears witness to" (80-81).

In Chapter 3, Teichler compares the 2005 novel 'Three Day Road' by Canadian writer Joseph Boyden and the 2007 novel 'Sorry' by Australian writer Gail Jones. Teichler writes: "While Boyden's novel becomes an experimental and experiential site of negotiating historical representations and transcultural identities, Jones's text literally aches under the burden the author's 'good intentions' place on the narrative" (89). In the character Elijah Weesageechak, Boyden creates a transcultural trickster: "The trickster is a hybrid figure, a character who operates at the margins of a given collective, because he likes to appear in contexts where he can put a finger on hypocrisy and deficiency" (105). Boyden, himself accused of falsely claiming Indigeneity, creates a character who "embodies a strand of Indigenous identity that points beyond itself, and may as such be counted as a vision of future indigenalities" (108). For Teichler, this future Indigeneity "will not exist in seclusion anymore, […] but will be prone to influences from other cultures, histories, and mentalities" (108). By contrast, Teichler writes that Jones avoids speaking for Indigenous Australian victims of forcible removal, but "invents a traumatized settler daughter who finds herself voiceless and speechless" (111). In doing so, "Jones avoids speaking for Australia's Aboriginals, considering it 'the right thing to do', but effectively silences them, precisely because her Aboriginal characters have little to no agency" (111). While Jones, through the young but wise settler daughter Perdita, does much to write back to the British ignorance of and cruelty towards Indigenous Australians as a portent of the progressive, white Australian attitudes of today, "Jones reactivates the stereotype of the 'noble savage' in order to contest it" (119). In 'Sorry', Teichler writes: "natives are grouped together in the outback, looking rather ragged and filthy, and appear to be weary

of their own existence" (111). While nether Jones nor Boyden explodes the identity templates confining Indigeneity to stereotypes, Teichler powerfully argues that, despite the controversy surrounding Boyden, 'Three Day Road' imagines a truly transcultural character before killing him for transgressing authenticity.

In Chapter 4, Teichler compares two novels by Indigenous writers: 'Benang' by Australian Kim Scott and 'Kiss of the Fur Queen' by Canadian Tomson Highway. In 'Benang', Scott's protagonist Harley challenges the confinement of Indigenous peoples to victimhood, while in 'Kiss of the Fur Queen', Highway's antagonist, paedophile priest Father Lafleur, becomes a transcultural perpetrator. Harley turns the tables on his Euro-Australian grandfather Ern, who had envisioned in Harley the culmination of a genetic experiment to 'breed out' Indigeneity, by forcing the invalid Ern to accompany him on a mission to reclaim his ancestry. Teichler writes: "Harley's personal quest—the retrieval of family history—blends into and merges with the powerful narratives of colonial dominance and racism on the one hand and resilience and survival on the other" (143). Father Lafleur becomes, in the eyes of his young Cree victims, the 'Weetigo': "The purveyor of utmost evil and moral decay in First Nations mythology" (174). Teichler writes: "To transculturalize the perpetrator, to temporarily reverse and relocate one's sense of whose culture the perpetrator actually belongs to is programmatic for Highway's novel" (176). Indeed, "[h]ighway detaches both victim and perpetrator from their allocated place in the logic of cultural belonging" (176). Teichler's discussion of how 'Benang' and 'Kiss of the Fur Queen' carnivalise the victim/perpetrator paradigm recalls the novel 'Senselessness' by Honduran-Salvadoran writer Horacio Castellanos Moya. The unnamed, non-Indigenous narrator of 'Senselessness' is tasked with line-editing one thousand one hundred pages of the testimony provided by the mostly Indigenous victims of atrocities committed during the Guatemalan Civil War for eventual publication in a report by the Guatemalan truth and reconciliation committee. The narrator of 'Senselessness' is a self-styled poet obsessed with the rich imagery of the testimonies. His mistreatment of the personal stories of suffering leads to an overidentification with both the victims and perpetrators, transforming and eventually destroying him in a way that portends the fate of any society that cannot take the evidence of its injustices on face value or commit to the process of reconciliation in good faith.

The focus of Teichler's final chapter shifts from literary texts to two feature films: 'Atanarjuat' by Inuit filmmaker Zacharius Kunuk and 'Australia' by Australian director and Hollywood royalty Baz Luhrmann. While 'Atanarjuat' is focused solely on representing an Inuit story that precedes European colonisation, Teichler deftly analyses its filmic qualities and play with genres to argue that "it is capable of representing transcultural entanglements" (185). Similarly, Teichler praises 'Australia' for the way that it "carnivalizes the formative bush myth—usually associated with male Euro-Australian agency—and opens it up to those who were structurally and discursively excluded from this national narrative" (186). While 'Atanarjuat' is a culmination of consultations with the Inuit community that has kept the central myth that serves as its plot alive through its oral tradition, Teichler writes: "Kunuk's film undermines the colonial gaze while at the same time subverting its counterpart—the ethnographic gaze that literally

looks for authentic indigeneity" (187). By telling an Inuit story and tackling the reductive representations of Inuit people in earlier Canadian films that served to compliment the colonial project: "The film transforms objects into subjects, both with regard to political ideologies and the pitfalls of the medium of film" (199). Whereas Teichler argues that Luhrmann's blockbuster "is not a voice of, but a voice for the Aboriginals", adding that it "might even fortify a specific stereotypical image of the Aboriginal, namely the noble savage" (208). Like 'Sorry', 'Australia' points towards the more progressive attitudes of present-day Australia because it "breaks open the male, misogynist, racist discourse of the bush myth and transforms it into a testimony to multicultural Australia" (211). However: "It does not foreground and imagine an independent notion of indigeneity", but "is satisfied with assimilating the Aboriginals into the Australian national narrative" (219).

'Carnivalizing Reconciliation' makes clear that ostensibly progressive, 'politically correct' novels and films can repeat reductive stereotypes in their rush to reconcile the violent colonial pasts of countries like Australia and Canada with the multicultural present. More challenging, even problematic texts and particular characterisations can suspend the play of binary opposites, shatter identity templates, and shift the victim/perpetrator paradigm of the 'politics of regret' to point towards a transcultural future. In this way, Teichler's book advocates for the transgressive potential of art and promotes the idea that audiences can imagine more than a temporary reversal of power relations and can instead upend social hierarchies altogether.

Joevan de Mattos Caitano

Kay Dreyfus (ed.): The Fractured Self. Selected German Letters of the Australian-born Violinist Alma Moodie, 1918-1943

Dreyfus' 'The Fractured Self' provides a thorough overview of the various letters that the accomplished violinist Alma Moodie wrote to various contacts in Central Europe over the course of several years. Her book reflects her trilingual skills to communicate in English, French, and German. Born in Australia, in 1898, this virtuoso musician moved to Belgium in 1907 to study at the Royal Conservatoire of Music, but she did not start trying to establish a career there until 1911. Alma Mood was compelled by First World War circumstances to relocate to Brussels, where her mother passed away in May 1918.

Her return to Germany was distinguished by frequent communication with Carl Flesch, a well-known violin instructor in Berlin at the start of the 20th century. Beginning in 1919, Alma Moodie performed the world premières of many pieces by artists like Stravinsky, Pfitzner, Hindemith, and Krenek. Some composers created musical pieces for her performance. Developing interdisciplinary connections with artists from other fields, such as the poet Rainer Maria Rilke in literature was also possible.

Out of the 500 letters that were gathered over decades, the book only includes 270 letters. Soon after leaving Queensland in 1907, Alma Moodie's first English-language messages were sent to friends and family there. Other letters cover subjects such as holidays, travel, concerts, and other personal matters. According to some correspondence, Moodie frequently moved residences in the years prior to getting married while also traveling nonstop. In correspondence with influential figures on the old continent, the First World War's destructive effects, the musical climate under Hitler's rule, etc.

The epistolary collection also contains significant letters that Moodie wrote to her pupils. They shed light on her work as a violin instructor in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The majority of the recipients of the letters were men. This is important for the discussion of the letter-writing exchange because, in the early 20th century, male musicians predominated in the musical world, placing Alma Moodie in an unusual situation. Moodie communicated with some women when she discussed specific issues relating to housework, her responsibilities as a wife and mother, and cordial relationships with friends and colleagues. The Werner Reinhart interactions dominate the collection of letters in this book. They comprise 136 letters traded between 1922 and 1943 and reveal varying degrees of intimacy and formality.

This book has five sections, plus an 'Addendum' and texts that have been added. The numerous endnotes provide extensive information about each individual cited in Alma Moodie's letters. The editor enables the reader to place Alma Moodie's social network in relation to how her career and emotional activities developed in the first half of the 20th century.

The book depicts exchanges between Alma Moodie and some of the protagonists, including Carl Flesch, Arthur Schnabel, Kurt Atterberg, Eduard Erdmann, Hans Pfitzner, Werner Reinhart, and Louis d' Hage, in 'Part One: Starting Over 1918-1923', which contains the first 46 Letters (1-78).

Letters 47-148, are collected in 'Part Two: Complications and Resolutions 1924-1928', where they discuss interactions with Rainer Maria Rilke and activities with conductor Hermann Scherchen. Through interactions with people like the ethnologist Ernst Carl Gustav Grosse, the artist Franz Marc, the expressionist Karl Christian Ludwig Hofer, the poet Hans Reinhart, the composer Ernst Georg Wolff, the conductor Karl Muck, the American mezzo-soprano Sara Cahier, the African lyric tenor Roland Hayes, the Polish conductor Grzegorz Fitelberg, and others, interdisciplinary relationships were forged. Moodie's statements include brief mentions of concert visits to some German cities and to the Netherlands.

Photos of Alma Moodie's Australian family, the pair Eduard and Irene Erdmann, as well as images of five renowned conductors—Arturo Toscanini, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, and Wilhelm Furtwängler—, illustrate important figures in her career in this second section (79-262).

The third section concerning the letters covers the 1929-1932 'Years of Trouble and Fulfillment'. During this time, contacts were made to discuss personal issues regarding the precarious health of Moodie's husband and recital events (263-324).

The fourth section deals with 'Uneasy Accommodations 1933 – 1938'. The content of the correspondence is enriched by a sequence of illustrations, including postcards to Irene and Eduard Erdmann, Werner Reinhard, and Igor Stravinsky in 1930 as well as an image of Alma Moodie in performance with Werner Ferdinand von Siemens conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in the early 1930s. Also photos of Berta Volmer, moments on the beach with Carl Flesch, photo of Alma Moodie's daughter, Eduard Erdmann, and their children Jobst, Jolanthe, Piers, and Judith in the garden of their house in Langballigau in 1937, Lotte Seeger in 1938, the program of the Recital of Alma Moodie and Erdmann in 1942 at the Staatliche-Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt a. M. and a photo of Alma Moodie in Frankfurt in the early 1940s (325 - 409).

The letters reproduced in section five, relate to the war and deaths between 1939 and 1943. During this time, Moodie was a violin teacher at Frankfurt's Hochschule für Musik, and key figures like musicologist Friedrich Schnapp, Maria Louise Schnapp, and others are mentioned. Concerts with important people in Germany and Switzerland are addressed. The bombing attacks on Cologne and other German towns are highlighted in some letters (411-453).

The 'Addendum' letters by Alexander Spengler to his friends Irene and Eduard Erdmann, in which the author's focus was on the memory of Alma Moodie, who had already gone away. On 12 September 1943, Spengler requested written testimonials from some individuals who had a significant impact on Alma Moodie's

career, including Eduard Erdmann, Hermann Reutter, Hermann Abendroth, Peter Knorr, and Hans Erich Riebensahm. In commemoration of Alma Moodie, Spengler intended to release a book of roughly 70 pages that also contained letters the Moodie had with Rainer Maria Rilke. Its main goal was to consolidate an engaging memorial for Moodie's students, colleagues, and family. This memorial book was never published, despite Spengler's brilliant concept and efforts (455-457).

The compilation of letters is followed by highly valuable articles. The author Eduard Erdmann of "Some Memories of Alma Moodie's Artistry" attests to the creative seriousness and cerebral insight of this violinist whose career was distinguished by sensitivity and assurance on stage (461-468).

The goal of Goetz Richter's article, 'On the Higher Values of Artistic Personality: Alma Moodie's Path in Response to Carl Flesch', was to inform readers about the initial encounter between Moodie and Flesch in 1919, which influenced Moodie's artistic growth in terms of both technical and aesthetic qualities (469-475).

Alma Moodie and Eduard Erdmann met in Berlin in the winter of 1920-1921 and struck up a successful partnership, performing with great passion in a variety of recitals (477-480).

Alma Moodie did not speak German as her native language; but the author of the essay 'Moodie's Linguistic Style in the Letters to Eduard and Irene Erdmann' makes it clear that she still managed to express herself with clarity, ease, and humor despite this. According to her, Moodie was proficient in grammar but did not place much importance on punctuation in her correspondence (481 f.).

According to Peter Tregear's essay 'Moodie and Krenek: Challenging Ernst's Earnestness', the Moodies' transition into maturity was profoundly influenced by the military and geopolitical repercussions of the First World War. Other topics covered include Ernst Krenek's aesthetic inspirations and Alma Moodie's participation in performances of some of this composer's works (483-486).

According to Michael Haas' essay 'Alma Moodie and the Third Reich', the Australian violinist's charisma and capacity for inspiration piqued the interest of numerous German and Austrian composers, including Max Reger, Eduard Erdmann, Hans Pfitzner, Egon Wellesz, Hermann Reuter, Karl Höller, and Gerhart München. They wrote concertos and solo pieces for her. Alma Moodie's career was filled with numerous appearances, but there are no recordings of her concerts or recitals because they were either lost or destroyed. Haas emphasizes that during the Nazi regime in the 1930s, the record labels were not ideologically drawn to the contemporary music that Moodie played in the 1920s.

Politically conservative but socially and artistically progressive individuals made up Alma Moodie's musical circle. She had a large Jewish social network that included Schnabel, Braunfels, Flesch, Rostal, and Wellesz. She agreed to take a position as a professor at Frankfurt's Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in 1937 (actually the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Frankfurt Main – HfMDK) despite the deaths of many Jewish musicians, and she remained there until her passing on 7 March 1943, where she taught violin. Alma Moodie was affected in 1939 by the censorship and regulation of different forms of correspondence that the post office moved as a result of the Nazi regime.

Alma Moodie's professional career was cut short, but her impact has created opportunities for numerous scientific studies. The publication of Dreyfus' 'The Fractured Self' advances the field of music and gender study and increases the visibility of Australian women who were instrumental in the first half of the 20th century's male-dominated classical music world.

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