

The
Politics
of

Privilege and Prejudice in
Aotearoa New Zealand,
Australia and South Africa.

Design

Edited by
Federico Freschi
Jane Venis
Farieda Nazier

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FOREWORD

**Emeritus Professor
Khyla Russell**

**Kaitohutohu of
Otago Polytechnic
2004-2015**

Ko wai tēnei e mihi mai ki a koutou te rōpu kaituhi kua mahi ate tini ki roto ki te pukapuka tuatahi pēnei ai? Ko Aoraki mauka , Pūkaki roto, Waitakiraki awa, Araiteuru tai . I whānau au ki Ōtākou I raro I te parerau o Pakihau noho ai , engari i te wā mutuka a mahi e noho ai ināianei I raro I te mauka Hikororoa, ki te taha I te awa Waikouaiti i te whenua o Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki kei Karitāne noho ai. Ko Te Ruahikihiki tetahi hapū ki Ōtakou me Puketeraki ; ko tēnā tetahu hapū tēnei he uri.

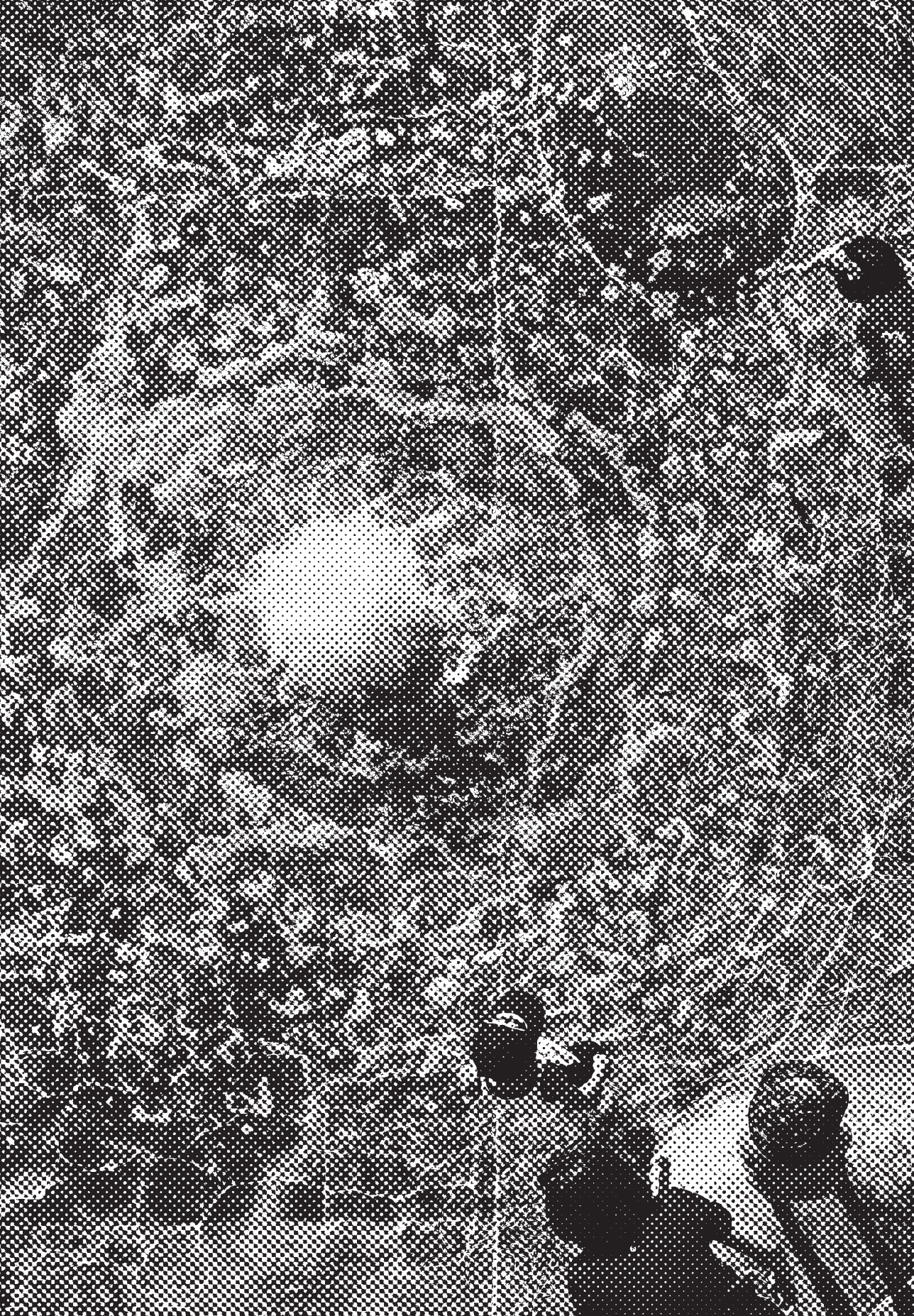
It is an honour to be invited to introduce, and be introduced to, this splendid book, *The Politics of Design*, the writing and publication of which has been truly collaborative across Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. The content is such that it draws any potential reader in. The many new ideas presented in this volume challenged my pre-existing ideas about design. No doubt some readers may be likewise challenged as they work their way through this book.

The authors in this volume provoke us with new ideas and give new contexts to old ones. Coming from different geographical contexts, they challenge us with new and fresh understandings of design and the way that it has been implicated in perpetuating constructs of race and identity.

This is the first international peer-reviewed book to be published by the Otago Polytechnic Press, which has a strong reputation for producing scholarly journals. It has been a pleasure to engage with the range of contributions by authors who are academics, artists, teachers and designers in the sustained format of a scholarly book of this nature. I offer you the opportunity to open the book and enjoy every page from its beginning to its end.

Nō reira, kāti I kōnei ngā whakaaro me ngā kupu ohoku, kei roto I te pukapuka ki wiwi ki wawa tuatahi. Kei a koutou te wā ināianei.

Nahaku noa nei nō Khyla Russell ēnei mihi.



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An illustrated book of this scope is expensive to produce, and we are immensely grateful to Professor Leoni Schmidt, Director of Research and Postgraduate Studies and Oonagh McGirr, Deputy Chief Executive Learning and Teaching Services at Te Kura Matatini ki Otago | Otago Polytechnic, for funding support and championing the project. Please note, however, that any findings, conclusions or opinions expressed in this volume are those of the various authors, and Te Kura Matatini ki Otago | Otago Polytechnic accepts no liability in this regard.



Figure 1

Apartheid signage, Cape Town Station, 1966. One of the most ubiquitous manifestations of apartheid design was in public architecture and urban design, with separate spaces and amenities demarcated for use by 'whites' and 'non-whites.' Signage was therefore an obvious expression of a raft of legislation designed to keep the races apart and to preserve white privilege. Photo: *The Cape Argus* photographer. © African News Agency, used with permission.

INTRODUCTION

Privilege and Prejudice

Federico Freschi,
Jane Venis and
Farieda Nazier

Although design totally infuses the material fabric of the world around us, it is almost always rendered invisible by the very thing(s) it brings into being.

Tony Fry, 2011

In *Design as Politics*, Tony Fry argues that in “giv[ing] material form and directionality to the ideological embodiment of a particular politics,” design must be understood as “profoundly political.”¹ He argues further that all aspects of design that shape social and cultural experience – built environment, transport systems, information systems, infrastructure and so on – are by their nature ideologically loaded and “predicated on how human beings should be viewed and treated.”² The longer arc of Fry’s argument is concerned with the urgent need to harness the political power of design to effect positive environmental change, a political transformation that he terms “Sustainment.” Nonetheless, his notion that “design expresses power materially and in ways that shape how people interact and ontologically prefigure their material culture”³ raises provocative questions about how design has historically served to distribute and exercise power.

In seeking to understand the causes and ongoing effects of global inequality, the relationship between design and politics deserves particular scrutiny in the postcolonial context. Despite being the product of deliberate political and social intentions, successful design appears ‘natural,’ its ideological biases effectively hidden in plain sight. In former settler-colonial societies, this ‘invisibility’ begs the questions of the historical complicity of design in imposing and maintaining racialised hierarchies of privilege, access, identity and notions of ‘belonging.’ While the former dominions of the British Empire in the southern hemisphere – Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and South Africa – followed different paths to sovereignty, they are united by several common factors. Not least, as Annie E Coombes argues, the ways in which white settlers dealt with Indigenous⁴ peoples “is the historical factor which has ultimately shaped the cultural and political



Figure 2

Margaret Preston, *Aboriginal design, with Sturt's Pea*, 1943, colour masonite cut, hand coloured in gouache on buff wove paper, 32.0 x 41.0 cm. Art Gallery New South Wales. The appropriation of the visual culture of Indigenous people as a means of finding an 'authentic' expression of modernism was common to all settler-colonial societies in the mid-twentieth century. In this example Preston refers in a general way to Aboriginal design overlaid with a representation of the native flower *Swainsona formosa*, which she has identified by its colonial common name. © Margaret Rose Preston Estate. Licensed by Copyright Agency.

character of the new nations, mediating in highly significant ways their shared roots/routes.”⁵

In South Africa, the route was highly visible. Apartheid, as a deliberate system of institutionalised racism and segregation, permeated every aspect of South African political and cultural life, and its pernicious effects continue to inform the present – politically, socio-economically and culturally. The environments and daily experiences of South Africans continue to be mediated by the long-reaching and persistent consequences of design policies implemented by apartheid urban planners, industrial designers, technocrats, architects and ideologues (Figure 1). While apartheid did not exist as a political

system in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, all aspects of society (and by extension design) were geared to privileging European settler societies over the rights and needs of Indigenous populations. Indeed, all three countries had similar colonial dispensations before the introduction of apartheid by South Africa's National Party government in 1948, particularly so far as race relations were concerned. In effect, apartheid legislated and institutionalised the kind of racial discrimination that was a common denominator of the British Empire. In all three geographic contexts, the privileging of the values of the settler-colonialist over those of Indigenous populations is evident across the spectrum of social activity, from architecture and urban planning to transport networks, land policies, education, health, justice, and arts and culture. Over this construct was laid a thin veneer of 'assimilation;' at best, a well-meaning nod to the notion of a new nationhood, but in effect a negation of the importance of Indigenous cultural identity. The net result of this process was a loss of land and resources that eroded the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people.

In South Africa, the effects of apartheid were highly calculated, all-encompassing and systematically designed. Examples abound: from the large-scale transformation of the demographic and geopolitical landscape through the creation of Bantustans, the Population Registration Act, the Pass Laws and the Group Areas Act, to the valorisation of Western culture at the expense of African cultural forms, to the divisive use of print media and later television to disseminate propaganda through channels segregated according to racially specific content. As a design ideology, apartheid governed and disciplined everyday life. It was evident through mechanisms such as the euphemistically named Reference Book (Passbook); in the ubiquitous 'matchbox' houses of the Black townships; the all-male and all-female hostels of the migrant labour system; and the production of the infamous Casspir and Ratel police and military vehicles, which were designed both for use in the country's ongoing border war and to intimidate, surveil and frighten the civilian opposition.

Although in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia design engineered for cultural separation was not part of a visible agenda, as it was in South Africa, social inequalities were and are facilitated by the Western design aesthetic of the European colonial communities. In these settler-colonial contexts, design became the business of the 'civilised' settler who poured money into 'creating a home away from home.' This was supported by the annexation of Māori



Figure 3

(Clockwise) Air New Zealand plastic Hei Tiki, toothpick and swizzle stick. During the 1960s and 70s Air New Zealand appropriated and debased Māori cultural artefacts to claim an 'authentic' national identity for the airline. The plastic Hei Tiki was routinely distributed to passengers and was accompanied by a leaflet describing it as "a talisman of New Zealand and her Māori people. Though its origin lies deep in the past, it has become New Zealand's symbol of good luck. The most treasured tikis were made of rare jade-like greenstone carved with care by skilled Māori craftsmen. The tiki was usually worn as a neck pendant and acquired a ritual veneration. Its history was handed down in chanted song from generation to generation and its 'power' increased with age. Air New Zealand hopes this tiki will bring you good fortune and be a memento of New Zealand, the Wonderland of the South Pacific." Images courtesy of The Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT), Auckland.

land In Aotearoa New Zealand through legislation passed after the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, and in Australia by successive Indigenous and First Peoples' policies. Consequently, architecture, product and graphic design, as well as arts and culture more generally, had an overwhelmingly Eurocentric bias and were privileged over 'native crafts' (Figure 2). The 'native' sensibility was, in turn, exploited to betoken 'authentic' national identity when it was expedient to do so, or degraded as cheap tourist souvenirs (Figure 3). It is also important to note that power was not only exercised in all these contexts by privileging the colonial aesthetic, but also by defacing or removing works made by Indigenous peoples.

In varying degrees, the inescapable and systemic inheritance of what was essentially racialised design continues to inform the present across these geographical locations, evading critique and hampering efforts at decolonisation. While there is a growing body of literature on the shared histories and legacies of settler colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, there is no comparative study that focuses specifically on the role of design in creating and perpetuating racial hierarchies. This book aims to redress this both by taking an expanded view of what constitutes design, and by raising long-overdue questions about the history and implications of design in these contexts, its problematic legacy and effects. How were buildings, objects, visual culture and material culture implicated in the embedding of white privilege, and how do they continue to be implicated in the embedding of unconscious racist bias and the normalising racial logics of former colonial-settler societies? How were designed forms, structures, spaces and artefacts that sustained the development of these societies entangled within – but also foundational to – the politics of obtaining and deploying power? How do these structural inequalities continue to inform design in the present and how are people experiencing the historical remnants of design?

In different ways, the essays in this volume grapple with these questions. While the chapters dealing with Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia are largely concerned with Indigenous redress, those from South Africa analyse racialised aspects of settler culture. This may be a function of the fact that, unlike Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, Indigenous people have always been the majority group in South Africa and since 1994 South Africa has had a Black majority government. These differences in approach challenge us to think comparatively across disparate but conceptually similar geographical and cultural contexts.



THE ART OF MATA-ORA—TATTOOING THE FACE OF A MAORI CHIEF (MOKO).

Tattooing was a favourite adornment of old-time warriors. In olden times a small sharp bone chisel was used to make the incisions, and a vegetable pigment was rubbed into the miniature trench in order to give the necessary blue colouring. With the men moko has long fallen into desuetude, but the native women of many of the tribes still have their lips and chins adorned with the modern tattooer's steel chisel.

Figure 4

Ferguson and Hicks after James Ingram McDonald (1865-1935), *The Art of Mata Ora – Tattooing the Face of a Maori Chief (Moko)*, c.1905, photomechanical print on postcard pasted to cardboard, 70 x 126mm. Common throughout early settler-colonial societies, this kind of imagery of Indigenous people presents them as ‘noble savages’, extensions of the ostensibly vacant landscape. Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, artist’s file. Given by Dr H.D. Skinner, 1969.

As such, they enable a better understanding of the politics of design and its role in sustaining the prejudices and privileges of whiteness, while also highlighting the progress of transitional justice in the contexts under discussion. In rendering visible complexities and contradictions that have long been hidden in plain sight they lay the foundation for a new kind of restorative knowledge.

While design and its histories and research methodologies are central to this volume, its interdisciplinary scope and broad definition of design provides opportunities for diverse and challenging new insights to emerge. As editors we took an open approach to the submissions, encouraging authors to engage the thematic of the book in ways that resonated with their research, rather than responding to identified topics. Although the thematics of the resulting chapters overlap, four dominant sub-themes nonetheless emerged: land; the built environment; self-imaging; the production of artefacts and technologies; and methodologies of teaching and learning. The book is correspondingly structured into four parts – “land and landscape”; “space, place and planning”; “imaging and identity”; “artefact, technology and learning.”

Part One | Land & Landscape

In different ways, the chapters in Part One deal with notions of land and landscape as being intrinsic to how we understand our positionality with respect to nature and to each other. The problematic and discredited notion that land is inert was imported to the colonies by self-interested European settlers. It was based on ideologies that distinguish between humans and nature and favoured the idea that the former has dominion over the latter. The landscape is construed as a 'geographic object' begging to be tamed, groomed, disciplined, cultivated and commodified to serve the needs of mankind. The natural landscape was considered unaltered, untouched and therefore unclaimed. By extension, land ownership was seen as the privilege of the white man, as in many colonial contexts Indigenous people were considered fauna and part of the unclaimed and 'vacant' landscape, which was in turn infamously enshrined in British colonial law as *terra nullius* (Figure 4).

In many ways, the success of the colonial project relied on the occupation of land and displacement of its peoples, whether by conquest or other dubious measures. This sets up a hierarchical relationality of the superiority and power of white settlers over the new land and its flora and fauna. In contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, the ways in which we relate to our external environment and surroundings continue to be tainted by our colonial and neo-colonial politicisation. It is impossible to relate to land and land politics without referring to the violent displacement endured. The stark continuities are striking. In South Africa, many Indigenous Africans are still landless and living in squalor, despite more than 25 years of Black majority government. In Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, Indigenous title to land continues to be contested in favour of exploitative neoliberal economic imperatives, while Māori and Indigenous Australians continue to be disproportionately socially and economically disadvantaged. Historical design remains implicated in these persistent inequalities for as long as the geographic, urban and architectural vestiges of colonialism remain in place.

In Chapter One, "Beyond Landscape," Rod Barnett and Hannah Hopewell speak to appropriation and displacement in Aotearoa New Zealand through analogies of gardening and urban design. Through a discursive, autoethnographic dialogue they explore the creation of the oppressive spatial

categories of the colonial episteme, which systematically sought to convert the land into landscape and territory. They show how harbours, bridges, railways and roads are implicit in the production of relationships between land, body and notions of performativity, entanglements and intra-actions. The authors' poetic language gives a poignant view on the invasion and invasiveness of the continuing dominant colonial trope that is emblematic in the landscape. This process is kept alive, they suggest, by the colonial episteme complicit in the education of designers. The designed and constructed are considered as measures both to provide and cut off access and to control movement. Through Barnett and Hopewell's dialogue we see how the garden becomes a microcosmic landscape at the hands of the individual. In taking this approach, they show how present-day notions of landscaping, gardening and economic agriculture are implicated by their roots in the colonial project, a relationship that remains evident linguistically in the relationship between the noun 'landscape' and its verb inflection 'landscaping.'

The broader question of land and how it is mapped is the subject of Chapter Two, Lynette Carter's "Singing the Land." Carter shows how the oral tradition of waiata (song) is fundamental to understanding Māori associations with Iwi (tribal) territories. She argues that the formal features of the waiata can be understood as "geospatial tools" that evokes both history and ancestry while continuing to affirm a sense of shared community identities. This is in marked contrast to colonial conventions of mapping as one of the primary technologies for the imposition of ownership and control. As such, mapping remains deeply implicated in the project of colonialism and its long shadows continue to complicate debates about transitional justice. Carter shows that while colonial conventions of mapping imposed artificial boundaries that served to satisfy economic and political objectives, the land as sung into being by waiata connected Māori through kinship and place in ways that continue to resonate. In an ironic reversal of mapping technologies, when combined with contemporary GPS data the information held within waiata provides irrefutable evidence of unbroken Māori Iwi mana whenua (recognised power and authority) status. As such, the geospatial information implicit in waiata have in recent years enabled Māori to establish claims to land and its resources in the context of Treaty of Waitangi settlements.

The authors of Chapter Three, "Australian Indigenous Knowledge and Voices

in Country,” Lynette Riley, Sebastian Tarunna and Ben Bowen show how the design of landscapes in Australian urban and rural environments has been at the crux of Indigenous Australian and settler relations for the last 250 years. They proceed from an understanding of how the sacredness of land in Indigenous Australian ontology makes relations with the land pivotal to law, language and culture as major sources of life and meaning. Land, they argue, is central to Aboriginal political, cultural, spiritual, economic and social life. However, the settler-colonial design of urban and rural landscapes and land tenure arrangements, informed by notions of *terra nullius*, have continued to deny Indigenous ontology and (re)created ongoing inequalities. Taking the University of Sydney and its surrounding suburbs as a case study, the authors show how settler-colonial design deliberately attempted to efface and obliterate the designs of Aboriginal landscapes and ceremonial grounds, and with it their connection to ancestral beings among other sources of meaning. They argue that, in effect, government policies on urban design and land tenure continue to perpetuate colonial-era epistemic violence, alienation and inequalities, while continuing to undermine the sustainability of the land. This chapter adds to its voice to Indigenous Australian activism that has continued to challenge the ongoing violence of the material conceptualisation and design of land and land tenure in urban and rural spaces based on exclusive ownership divisions and boundaries.

Sue Taylor’s chapter, “Marikana: A Town in Decline and the ‘Ordinariness’ of Apartheid, Atrocity and Ruin,” reminds us of the persistence of violence as the corollary of land exploitation. The otherwise unremarkable and dilapidated mining town of Marikana in the northwest of South Africa achieved infamy in 2012 when 34 unarmed striking Lonmin miners were shot and killed by South African police. Recalling the appalling violence inflicted on unarmed protesters by the police during apartheid, the massacre has become a shockingly powerful symbol of the unresolved divisions and inequities of post-apartheid South Africa. Taylor shows how the landscape of Marikana is indelibly haunted not only by the recent massacre, but also by the long shadows cast by apartheid agricultural and mineral exploitation, the “ordinariness” of its omnipresent mining infrastructure and modest buildings belied by the appalling living conditions of mine workers on its periphery. While the town itself has ostensibly shifted from being a ‘white’ to a ‘black’ town, the very landscape itself seems reluctant to yield the deeply entrenched legacy of apartheid design.

Using a selection of illustrations from children’s books published during the apartheid era, in “White Childhoods During Apartheid: The Ideology of Landscape in Children’s Book Illustrations” Leana van der Merwe shows in Chapter Five how depictions of landscape served the affective purpose of naturalising and normalising the white child’s place in Africa as innocent and natural, and therefore as its rightful heir. Van der Merwe uses the lenses of pastoral, economic and mythological nation-making to discuss ways in which children are primed to continue unsolicited white superiority over land and peoples alike. She argues that the ostensible charm and playfulness of the illustrations she discusses belie their real ideological purpose, which is the maintaining of race-based divisions and the privileging of whiteness.

Part Two | Space, Place & Planning

The first task of the settler-colonialists was to create a viable sense of ‘place’ out of the ostensibly empty ‘space’ of the landscape. Only through use, habit and history could the wildness and savagery of the colonised land assume the referents of temporality and location by which to measure its value and allow its benefits to accrue to the settlers. Claiming ownership, often through what Anne McClintock describes as “untidy, opportunistic interference with other regimes of power,”⁶ enabled the settler-colonialist to construct a compelling fantasy of an inalienable sense of place, linked culturally to the colonial metropole and yet exotic, the wildness of its flora, fauna and people subject to the totalising organisational logic of imperialist capitalism.

In different ways the chapters in Part Two speak to the enduring problematics of settler-colonial place-making, and how the implicit whiteness of the worldview that informed the design of various places and spaces – whether black African townships, public squares, apartment blocks or birthing spaces – has been challenged and subverted by subaltern agency. In “Un-designing the ‘Black City’: The ‘Radical Imagination’ in Twentieth-Century South African Urban Black Art and the 1940s Squatter Movement,” Pfunzo Sidogi shows how black people were systematically excluded by the colonial and later apartheid governments from active participation in designing the spaces they were to inhabit. Resistance to this exclusion included James Sofasonke Mpanza’s Squatter Movement of the 1940s which, the author argues, enabled black people to “un-design” the township spaces that were allocated to them by forcibly



Figure 5

A colourised photograph entitled *Buying native curios from a train, Botswana, c. 1930*, illustrates the conflation of one of the key technologies of imperial conquest – the railways – with the consumption of Indigenous people’s artefacts as tokens both of exoticism and ‘authenticity’. Courtesy of the Transnet Heritage Library Photo Collection.

occupying land that had been designated for other uses by the municipality. Sidogi extends this notion of the “un-designing” of the township by engaging the radical imagining of black artists who artistically reconfigured the black city in their work. These artists, he argues, were de facto “unwitting and largely unacknowledged urban designers” who conceived urban spaces that were meaningful to their users and that overturned the racist logic of colonialist and apartheid urban planning.

Fiona Johnson and Jillian Walliss’ “Reconciling the Australian Square” engages the urban square as one of the most enduring legacies of colonial urban planning in Australian cities. They argue that initiatives to enact a process of Reconciliation has often devolved on designers, planners and politicians focusing on reconceptualising urban squares. Focusing on Adelaide and Perth, two capital cities with strong Indigenous populations, they examine how the reconceptualising of the civic square as a decolonised, twenty-first-century

space has become an important element in “the twin agendas of civic space and Reconciliation.” In this context, Johnson and Walliss argue that the rethinking of the urban square is a critical step in a decolonised design process that privileges dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians over the tokenistic ‘recognition’ of Indigenous perspectives.

In Chapter Eight, “The Aesthetic and Spatial Politics of Ponte City, Johannesburg,” Denise Lim takes Ponte City (an infamous cylinder-shaped apartment block in the high-density suburb of Hillbrow, Johannesburg) as a case study for exploring the tensions and contradictions of gentrification, displacement and race in contemporary Johannesburg. Conceived initially as a self-contained, high-end residential complex, Ponte was designed to represent a certain imaginary of white privilege and aspirational social mobility in 1970s Johannesburg. By the late 1980s, as the foundations of apartheid began to crumble, Hillbrow had become a racially mixed area, and in the wake of white flight to the suburbs the once-glamorous Ponte became a vertical slum. Despite several subsequent attempts at redevelopment and gentrification, Ponte “retains the dystopic reputation of harbouring socially deviant populations submerged in lives of crime, illicit activity, and urban decay.” As a result, Lim argues, Ponte is a compelling reminder of the extent to which the social and racial stratifications of apartheid ideology remain embedded in the visual and material life of the South African built environment.

The final chapter in this section brings into the debate a space that is rarely considered outside of its specialist literature, namely the birthspace. As Suzanne Miller and Teresa Krishnan remind us, even though “our first exposure [as nascent human beings] to a design aesthetic is the room we emerge into when we are born,” this remains a space whose embedded design prejudices largely remain hidden in plain sight. Miller and Krishnan show how birthspace design is generally shaped by the ideologies of hospital managers, architects and economists and rarely take into account the affective needs of their most important users, birthing women. Furthermore, they argue, in Aotearoa New Zealand conventional notions of what constitutes effective birthspace design are fundamentally informed by a rational–functionalist colonial worldview that at best marginalises and at worst entirely excludes Māori cultural perspectives on birthing. Miller and Krishnan make a case for the role of midwives in radically decolonising the birthspace such that it can better serve its primary function of

supporting the physiological, emotional and cultural needs of women giving birth.

Part Three | Imaging, Identity & Place

It is common cause that visual signifiers of identity are understood as expressions of social values and hierarchies, as well carriers of political meaning. As such, they are an important component of the “imagined communities”⁷ that underpin constructs of national identity. Indeed, symbolic tropes of belonging are as old as the history of nationalism, and often function to indicate hierarchies of belonging. The design of such tropes inform the chapters in Part Three, Imaging, Identity & Place. As settler-colonialism expanded in the southern hemisphere, signifiers of identity began to evolve to normalise colonial settlement. Such signifiers (evident in all aspects of colonial place-making, from spatial planning to architecture to the design of various forms of visual communication, fashion and everyday products) served to impose hierarchies of taste and form that signified both the triumph of imperial civilisation over native savagery and the creation of a sense of ‘home.’ This process resulted in persistent tropes of exoticism that privileged a white worldview, paradoxically casting Indigenous people as exotic and perpetually other.

Two of the chapters in Part Three explore the role of branding to depict a nostalgia for the aesthetics of the coloniser, a ‘home away from home’ superimposed on the landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. In Chapter Eleven, “Do something New, New Zealand,” Caroline McCaw and Megan Brasell-Jones consider how recent graphic design branding campaigns in Aotearoa New Zealand that reflect a nostalgia for ‘earlier and simpler times’ can be seen through a problematic settler-colonialist lens. They show how the branding aesthetic of the pristine, untouched landscape draws from images “brought from Britain in the nineteenth century and reproduced in the processes of settler colonisation in early New Zealand.” In challenging the role contemporary designers play in reinforcing these colonial images within design education in Aotearoa New Zealand, McCaw and Brasell-Jones propose new models of signifying national identity through landscapes within a bicultural framework. They acknowledge that “this will always require working with Māori: listening as well as asking; participation and engagement; and learning to know differently as part of a practice of care.”

In contrast to the branding of landscape, in “Art over Nature over Art” (Chapter Twelve) Matthew Galloway discusses the branding of Christchurch City. Galloway uses this example to outline how ‘place branding’ is both an aesthetic practice and a demonstration of power. In the case of Christchurch, the branding is of a quintessentially English city, and in the process any visual connection with *mana whenua* Ngāi Tahu has been erased. Following the devastating earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, the city’s logo, the centrepiece of which is the now-destroyed cathedral, represents a Christchurch that no longer exists except in the persistent imaginary of the colonial-settler. The gap between how the city is represented through its logo and the reality of its post-earthquake state is described by Galloway as “something of a slow-logo moving identity crisis.” He discusses how an inclusive approach to the rebuilding of the city has been adopted, with a strong voice being given to local *iwi* (tribes). However, given the persistence of embedded prejudices, Galloway remains sceptical as to whether there will be any meaningful change in perception.

In both these chapters we see evidence that whiteness, in this case a very English whiteness, is normalised through design, occluding all other approaches. In Chapter Ten, “It’s fun in South Africa: Interior Design for the Union-Castle Shipping Line, 1948-1977,” Harriet McKay considers how the interior design of cruise ships of the Union Castle Line at the height of the apartheid era served a meticulously crafted message for its predominantly English passengers. McKay argues that the overriding message of a happy, fun-filled South Africa was designed to shield the British tourists’ gaze from the reality of the social and political conditions in the country to which they were blithely sailing. The chapter opens with an analysis of one of the shipping line’s posters which bears the message “It’s fun in South Africa,” featuring the image of a happy, dancing black child. There is no hint of irony in this representation. Rather, it is the beginning of a careful curation of the upcoming experience that privileges the white appetite for exoticism while occluding the reality of black lives in apartheid South Africa.

Another familiar trope of the colonial imaginary of Aotearoa New Zealand, that of the fearsome tattooed Māori, is explored by Jani Wilson in Chapter Thirteen, “He moko kanoahi, he maimai aroha: Māori Facial Tattoos in Aotearoa New Zealand Feature Film History.” Wilson explores how and when the depictions of moko kanoahi in Aotearoa New Zealand film history may have

added to negative and hostile perceptions of Māori. She acknowledges that although moko kanohi can appear intimidating in person and in film, the industry has played a significant role in perpetuating negative societal perceptions of Māori. Wilson proposes that by acknowledging the impact of such negative representations and normalising moko kanohi in film, contemporary film producers may aid the acceptance of these significant cultural emblems both on- and offscreen.

Part Four | Artefact, Technology & Learning

The praxes of design and the resulting social artefacts are two distinct elements considered in Part Four. Both the processual and the artefactual are imbued with the attributes that inhabit and express our inner and outer worlds. They speak to the aesthetic and technological ‘prowess’ of time-space and peoples, while simultaneously revealing designers’ cultural, political and ideological affiliations. By extension, those who commission designed objects are implicated. Often hidden behind their utilitarian functions, the designing of objects at the very least moves, directs, commands and provides. The designed artefact itself is therefore complicit in how it shapes and images the message-laden objects we encounter and use on a day-to-day basis. Furthermore, designed objects often mediate and maintain relations between the powerful and the powerless, while also serving as a constant reminder of the embeddedness of cultural ‘craft’ practices and the important role they play as markers of identity (figure 6). The importance of placing this problematic front-and-centre of the curricula in our institutions of higher learning is a thread that implicitly runs through all the chapters in this volume, but is given particular attention in the final chapter.

In Chapter Fourteen, “The Boeing’s Great, the Going’s Great: South African Airways, Apartheid and the Technopolitics of Design,” one of the editors, Federico Freschi gives an insight into the ways in which apartheid was complicit in technological advances in long-distance aviation from the 1960s. Freschi argues that the South African national carrier’s role as a key enabler of apartheid goes beyond its alleged complicity with the illegal transporting of arms, exploiting the global reach of its sanctions-defying route network. Given the geopolitical forces that banned South African Airways from important air corridors and necessitated lengthy detours, the airline had a particular need



Figure 6
 A souvenir matchbox given to Air New Zealand passengers in the 1960s appropriates Māori taonga as markers of an 'authentic' national identity, at once exotic and familiar. Courtesy of The Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT), Auckland.

for aircraft that could fly ultra-long-haul routes. In collaboration with the international suppliers Boeing, Airbus, Pratt & Whitney and General Electric, the apartheid government found solutions to its particular operational requirements. The contemporaneous innovations to wide-bodied jets, first implemented for the South African carrier, came ultimately to enable the benefits of ultra-long-haul aviation that we take for granted today. Freschi argues that the complicity of these international suppliers and the benefits that accrued to them thus raise important questions about the 'morality' of technological artefacts, and the ways in which we continue to benefit from design that was originally sponsored in the name of oppressive political forces. He describes this process as "the trade-off between misery and progress that we have come to accept as one of the inevitable, if unintended, consequences of our mastery of the world around us," and asks what other 'benefits' of apartheid design may still be hidden in plain sight.

In Chapter Fifteen, "Whiria te Whiri – Bringing the Strands Together: The Māori Fibre Arts as Spaces of Reclamation and Decolonisation," Donna Campbell shows how the colonial project in Aotearoa New Zealand endeavoured to effect (and mostly succeeded in) cultural genocide. Colonialism's totalising

ideologies and practices required the crippling of Indigenous peoples' self-determination by eliminating cultural practices, beliefs, epistemes and philosophies. In the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, as elsewhere, colonialism disrupted the legacy of intergenerational Indigenous knowledge passed to future generations of Māori. She argues that, for Māori, representation is not only about claiming a right to self-determination, it “also supports a form of voice through creative expression.” She focuses on the Māori weaving practices of raranga and whatu as a form of embodied expression that provides a unique point of access to the Māori worldview. As a cultural practice at the intersection of theory and practice, raranga and whatu come to embody ancestral memories, “embedded within the cultural body of the weaver and the native weaving materials of the land.” For Campbell, the reconnection of contemporary practitioners with the embodied memories of the act of weaving provides alternative ways of enacting resistance and decolonisation.

The design education process in institutions of higher learning (in this case the University of Technology Sydney) is interrogated in Chapter Sixteen, “Towards Design Sovereignty.” Drawing on their experience of bringing Indigenous voices into the design curriculum, Jason de Santolo and Nadeena Dixon provide a set of insights into how both a design curriculum and practices of learning and teaching can move away from the hegemonic discourses of settler colonialism and become indigenised. The ongoing climate crisis (brought starkly into consciousness by the devastating Australian bush fires of 2019), the Black Lives Matter Movement and the exigencies of the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020 all lent a particular urgency to their work. These combined forces, they argue, revealed “a raft of unsettling foundations to the design discipline and to the higher education model itself,” with the Covid-19 lockdowns in particular placing a new emphasis on the imperatives of trust and wellbeing in the education system. De Santolo and Dixon note the impossibility of separating the transformation of design education both from these urgent global issues and from the politics of their own cultural resurgences. The chapter focuses on their work in an Indigenous-centred research hub entitled Design Sovereignty. They show how the example of Design Sovereignty they provide aspires towards greater wellbeing, renewal and growth in their communities, while at the same time dismantling outdated Western thinking and practices of extraction.

In this volume we have sought to engage with diverse responses to the question

of what a ‘politics of design’ in former settler-colonial contexts might be. The responses offered by the authors are as disparate in time and geographical context as they are in their approach to the question of what constitutes ‘design.’ Nonetheless, even as they merge, converge and diverge, they are united by a common interest in the intended and unintended consequences of historical design choices. Furthermore, they show how the often invisible biases implicit in these choices continue to guide, shape and inform the present. This volume is not an exhaustive, coherent study, but rather a consciously divergent set of historical insights, provocations and alternatives. *The Politics of Design* raises timely and important issues in a global context of rising inequality, instability and uncertainty, in which the imperative to design more equitable and sustainable solutions has become paramount.

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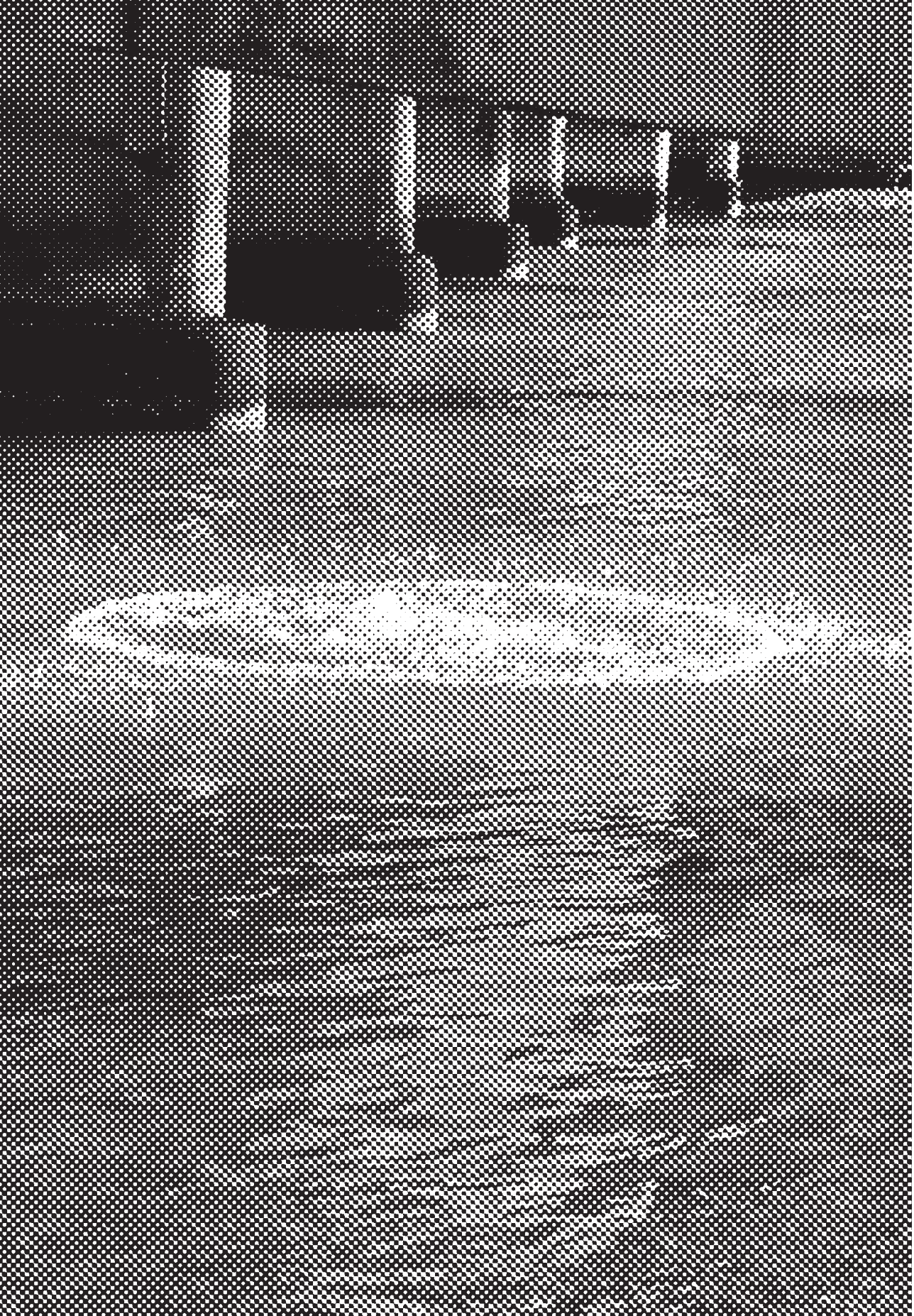
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Notes

1. Tony Fry, *Design as Politics* (Oxford & New York: Berg, 2011) (e-book).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Throughout this volume we capitalise the term Indigenous to refer broadly to “peoples of long settlement and connection to specific lands who have been adversely affected by incursions by industrial economies, displacement, and settlement of their traditional territories by others” (indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca). The term is not capitalised when used as an adjective that does refer directly to a specific population.
5. Annie E Coombes, ed., *Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), 2.
6. Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York & London: Routledge, 1995), 6.
7. In his influential book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 1983, rev. ed. 1991, repr. 1996), Benedict Anderson posited that the concept of the nation must be understood as a highly subjective cultural representation through which people come to “imagine” a shared experience of identification with a culturally defined community. He focuses on the development of vernacular and national print languages in the Americas and Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the extent to which the bourgeoisie could achieve solidarities on an “imaginary” basis through “visualising” others like themselves through print.

Part 1

LAND & LANDSCAPE



Beyond Landscape

Rod Barnett and
Hannah Hopewell

HH: Rod, we spoke briefly the other day on landscape and politics, or was it the politics of landscape? Either way, “*and*” the little conjunction between landscape and politics holds my attention. Perhaps the *and* here yields less the act of addition, that is, the question of what might be meant by landscape *plus* politics, and more the potential of a contrapuntal relation, something of a co-responding, a correspondence. How then do landscape and politics speak to one another, or show themselves in relation? Seems with landscape *and* politics, a leaning into the middle¹ is required.

It’s late afternoon and I’m in my sitting room, the tide is at a low ebb. I’m watching three kōtuku ngutupapa² systematically wade their way across the flattened seagrass of the intertidal. They have their heads low, and whilst their lanky legs slowly step forward, their heads sweep side to side allowing their spoon-like bill to feed on the tiny critters exposed by the silty low tide. Nearby, and moving in a comparatively hectic fashion, a pair of tōrea pango³ on little orange legs zigzag through the shallows. If the early summer northerly wasn’t blowing so intensely, kāruhiruhi⁴ would be fishing in the channel – but not this afternoon. They are likely to be perching tight in the almost lifeless macrocarpa just around the point. Since I have lived here, which is only two and a half years, the kāruhiruhi are onto their second macrocarpa tree perch. The first lost its needles and became brittle, yet before it toppled, taking a good chunk of the crumply cliff with it, the birds decamped to a flourishing neighbouring tree. It now lies with the noke⁵ and hekaheka⁶ as they return it to the soil. The kāruhiruhi must have known their resting spot was about to be no longer, and I’m sure they well know the days are numbered on their current home. Perhaps we humans are not the only ones to “shit in our own nests?”

RB: I sense the non-additive *and* of which you speak. There is a spatial tone to your depiction of it. Let me add a time tone. Landscape and politics face the *and* of *and after that*. It's the *and* of historical displacement, generation upon generation, where adding elements erases others. The problem of the *and* can be clearly seen.

For instance: last year when I first arrived in Kāwhia I drew up the following list:

Order of Projects in the Garden

- pull down all extraneous fences and store materials
- cut and store firewood (bring in a load)
- remove all unwanted materials from garden (incl. lights, ornaments, seats)
- remove tree stumps
- remove extraneous trees
- build compost bins
- extend and rationalise vege garden
- build chicken run
- build boundary fences where req'd and mend existing fences
- line and wire the shed.

As I read this line-up now, I recognise (with a mix of disappointment and battered hubris) a tone, a *mentalité*, and a vocabulary that I might find in the to-do list of missionary John Cowell, who settled his family here in about 1831.⁷ His wife, Mary Ann, is believed to have been the first white woman to have lived here. She may have viewed the list as a set of instructions. But the fact is that displacement continues. Gardening is very good at that. Me too.

HH: I have a to-do list a bit like that. Upon review, I am somehow bothered by the number of tasks dedicated to the holding back or hindering of persistent displacement (maintaining boundaries, controlling erosion, retaining crumple banks, removing invasive species). As you suggest, a garden only manifests through forms of displacement, *an after that*, yet at a concurrent scale, at least in this occasioning, these forms of holding back are part of a collective

preservation, a conservation of colonial possessory logics founded on indigenous displacement. This problem of the *and* then addresses me also, and with this complicity arrives a re-spatialised world: a land-form. That is, the generic forms of topographic manipulation, land parcelling and patterning associated with, and expected of, suburban settled environments. I'd agree with whoever said "the political is personal." Yet at the same time, can such attentiveness also have an impersonal character, one that refuses the making of frontiers, horizons and spatialised *otherings*? Is it possible to take part in simultaneous landscape cadences and temporalities beyond the project of occupation?

Next door, I see my neighbour Paul is moving his boat across his smooth flat lawn again. He grows a vibrant green fine fescue and mows it with symmetrical precision. Paul doesn't like it when the grass under his boat yellows, so performs this move as routine, although it feels to me more ritualistic. Beyond Paul and his boat's movements, the surface complexity of the inlet stretches. I've headed outside too. The boat cover flaps in the strong wind, flinging its ties angrily against its steel hull. The northerly air is heavy with moisture, and smells particularly earthy today. I want to inspect the hollow left on the soft-grounded foreshore where I recently removed a very large pampas grass. It was quite a dramatic task. In fact it took about six months and a series of strategies to finally see it gone. Approaches ranged from hacking messily at its cutty long leaves, to chain-sawing its compacted roots, to setting it ablaze. Why such a fight? Pampas grass *Cortaderia selloana* is an exemplary coloniser and fiercely opportunistic in its settling of the soil around the inlet. I have no real problem with the grass, in of itself, only the force of its promiscuity. Multiplying so rapidly, it smothers the less assertive, like its more restrained rival, the endemic *Austroderia toetoe*. Both grasses look kind of alike and occupy a similar habitat, in fact I understand most people don't notice any difference. Perhaps it is this visual similarity that has cloaked pampas' unsanctioned ascendancy in the region?

Yet this once golden-sanded foreshore is no stranger to rivalry and multiplication of the alien. For a period in the 1840s, a gun-boat appointed under dubious authority as the "Porirua Navy" would cruise the harbour wantonly firing cannon balls into the dense coastal vegetation.⁸ Whilst historical records name boats and officers, there is no reference stating exactly why these acts of fire were undertaken. No orders, no reports. Perhaps we can assume these patrols were solely for the display of power, simply one occurrence among many

others of plain, unsolicited means to injure the people of Ngāti Toa Rangatira: to weaken their relationship with land. How does any idea of landscape move past, *an after that*, when the very foundations of Aotearoa's societal relations rest upon the violent and racialised construction of property encased within modernity's notion of progress?

A Vicious Example

I step over too much in exotic suburbia
An excess of surface, as if
The truth of space is time
Seedlings of karaka
Root reaching for total darkness
Supposing that things could be worse⁹

As for the newly formed pampas-void, I don't think I will fill it with toetoe.¹⁰ The hollow is at the high tide line and with the growing frequency of king tides, I'll just watch the respective limits of soil and sea renegotiate their own endless correspondences.

RB: You ask how should the *and* be thought, and suggest a correspondence where landscape and politics reveal themselves in relation. Now as I look out over the harbour I see two double-hulled waka¹¹ riding at anchor in front of Maketu marae.¹² The waka came in here for the Covid-19 lockdown, and have stayed on. Behind them, on the other side of the water, is Totara Pā¹³ occupying a small headland. I go there in our boat sometimes. Kūmara¹⁴ pits among the mānuka¹⁵. It was one of the last pā that Ngāti Toa Rangatira occupied before they left this moana¹⁶ for yours. Our two harbour landscapes are connected in many ways. The maki (orca) that swim past my place may be the same ones that swim past yours.

Ngāti Toa brought seeds and slips to Whitireia from Kāwhia: hue,¹⁷ potatoes, kūmara. The garden Jacqueline and I are making is on the hilltop site of Motu Ngaio Pā which presided over the bay that the town of Kāwhia now occupies. Karere Aua Pā sculpted the headland on the northern side of the bay. The kāinga¹⁸ was tucked between the two, in consonance with the ecology of which it was a significant part. Behind it were the gardens. Naturally, we have a fine view

of the Kāwhia moana from our hilltop pā site. We have a great view of the four fishing charter boats that leave the wharf each morning with their eager townies on board, and return bins laden with tāmure,¹⁹ makumaku,²⁰ tuna,²¹ and kahawai. They are caught across the bar in the open sea but, as we know, the ocean is not an endlessly productive multiplicity. We have a great view of the SUVs, quads and motorbikes that drive up and down Maketu beach all day during the summer. They do donuts on the pipi beds and ride over the restoration areas in the sand dunes. They even use posts from the dotterel protection fences as fuel for camp fires on Ocean Beach. Daisy saw them. She's the chair of the Maketu marae rūnanga.²² She runs the Beach Patrol (volunteers from the community), working to help change people's behaviour (both local and visitors) on the beach. Is this the *and* of correspondence? Shellfish, internal combustion engines, tangata whenua²³ all meeting up on that beach at low tide on summer evenings.

HH: That is true our harbours are connected in multiple ways. Ngāti Toa Rangatira having dwelt in Kāwhia since the thirteenth century undertook Te Heke Mai-i-raro, the arduous journey south in the 1820s. They settled in Te Awarua-o-Porirua only a few decades before the influx of colonialists. I'll keep a look out for shoots of hue that may still be remaining. And I think so, the happenings, both rhythmic and spontaneous on Maketu beach are instances of the untimely *and*. Entanglements beyond measure. Entanglements of difference. Entanglements as togetherness?²⁴ Does the value of such attentiveness bring the 'political' to bear on incalculable aspects of everyday life in the place of a too-readily naturalised pragmatism? Maybe in this way, qualities of the political are always undergoing displacement too.

Three shallow water bodies make up Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour where I live. The narrows, where the three meet, is a wondrous place. But sometimes when it rains a lot I get a whiff of sewage.

“Porirua is also the point by which all the persons coming from the northern settlements to Port Nicholson must pass, in order to cross the ferry over that river. The natives have recently, in the most vexatious manner, refused to permit either Europeans or natives to pass cattle of any kind over the ferry.”²⁵

The narrows was bridged by rail in 1885 so as to speed up north-south access,

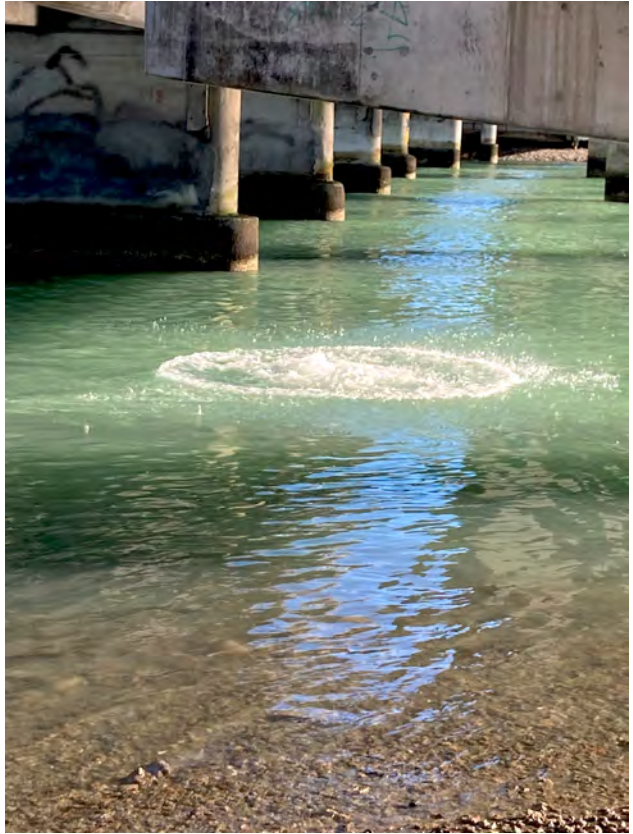
and as a result, the progress of land appropriation and conversion to territory. Not until 1936, was a road bridge built. Now, most week days between the hours of 6:00 and 9:30 a.m., and again 4:15 to 6:30 p.m., the cars crawl bumper to bumper governing the spatiality and life on the isthmus. Saturdays are relentless. Yet for decades, resisting this domination, packs of local children have found the bridges a means to get amongst the enchantment of the narrows. The bridges themselves afford an opportunity, nonetheless a hazardous one, to liberate an alternative dynamic and unintended correspondence. In the warmer months when the tide is nearing high, shirtless children young and less so, gather on the sands at the bridge piles. Between the urgency of the cars and the rush of anticipation, they take turns climbing over the bridge-rail, teetering momentarily upon a tiny foothold before leaping the five or so metres down into the channel. The rhythm of shrieks and cheers float across the water into my earshot finding a way to involve me, and I'm sure a great many others. Drivers often toot, sometimes in annoyance, sometimes in celebration. The council put up a sign "No jumping off the bridge" and I believe an officer is occasionally dispatched to give out warnings. Frequently, when the weather aligns, families and friends meet to recline and picnic on the smooth west facing sands to take in the performance. I am certain the narrows, despite horrific expropriation and ongoing pollution will remain joyous. There is no show at this time, given the lowness of tide, but I am confident the liveliness will start up tomorrow.

RB: The garden taking shape here is pretty big and, yes, we're growing hue. I've been thinking about mahi kāinga. Surely if there is a basic condition of landedness this is it. Mahi kāinga refers to food production areas, but also encompasses the processing of plant and animal materials for clothing, vessels, ropes, boats, medicines, tools and other objects: rain capes made from raupō²⁶ reeds, water bottles from hue fruits, oil from kererū and kiore. Chicken crates made from pallets. A fruit salad of tamarillos, kiwifruit and feijoa?

The root of mahinga kai is mahi. I believe mahi means to make, to do, to perform the practice of production, but most of all it means to work. It seems to fold into its meanings the basic role of human labour in the production of 'goods and services' for nonhumans and humans. It was the root system of the social ecology of Māori, the far-spreading web of tasks (gathering, planting, cooking, threshing, sewing, stretching, drying, carving, weaving, and so on),

Figure 7

Hannah Hopewell, *At the Narrows*, February 2021.



of knowledge and customs that comprise the whole idea of mutual aid. The tasks have changed but we can do this, right? Interactions between plants, soil microbes, invertebrates, molluscs, ika²⁷ and pipi²⁸ once determined the diversity and productivity of plant and animal communities round here. Kāwhia hapū (subtribe) trenched, ditched, levelled, terraced, inundated, channelled and otherwise rearranged soils and systems for agricultural production. They hunted and fished in the harbour and the five rivers that run into it.

A dozen waka full of calabashes containing thousands of potted duck, pigeon, weka, pukeko and kaka, each lavishly decorated with feathers of the birds within, were drawn up on the beach ready to be launched.²⁹

Think of the mahi that produced that feast on the shore of the harbour. How deeply embedded it is in the harbour system. But a re-spatialisation process

got going, fundamentally changing how such work is done. It continues today. I am continuing it. We all are. Professional designers continue it professionally, and with great impact. Landscape architects, urban designers and architects contribute willingly and unwittingly to the doctrine and practice of re-spatialisation. We're building roads, bridges, culverts; constructing dams, airports, towns; 'developing' land for horticulture, farming, tourism, and subdivisions. These structures and categories are everywhere, at widely different scales, divergent degrees of materiality, and extraordinary variability of specificity. In our garden, for instance. Is it possible to work beyond landscape here? Jacqueline's and my garden aspires to mahi kāinga status and effect. Our whānau³⁰ is extending. Who knows we may all end up here. May our waka be full of calabashes. It will certainly be full of plants – ours is a biota-led recovery. The plan is to make the garden into a laboratory, where we can conduct extensive and intensive investigations into *Who knows what?* Into carbon sequestration and soil development, best kūmara for Kāwhia (as if that is not known), but mainly into the possibility of strange encounters, heart-stopping entwinements. Who knows what ghost you might encounter on the battlements of this pā at night?

HH: Don't we frequently encounter ghosts in the landscape, or get a sense of atemporal haunting hovering within the very idea of landscape? I think my garden is haunted by the force of those cannon balls and the memory of its once thick forest. This is manifested in many ways, but viscerally by the rusting cans, broken glass and various plastics that keep being thrown up by the slope behind my house. Endemic plants have trouble rooting here as when cadastral lines cut the road and plotted ownership, the soil was traumatised. Its complex body was left exposed and raw. The fact the site was 'empty' and used as an informal tip before the Victorian house was transported from Wellington in the 1980s hasn't helped. Ngaio,³¹ kawakawa³² and karaka³³ are sure trying to make a spontaneous comeback, hence my mahi is dedicated to giving them space by annulling Cape ivy and wandering willy's persistence. Again a battle. It seems to me you and Jacqueline are learning to live this atemporal haunting and the enchantment that can accompany it. Working with the land *beyond* landscape – against the anaesthesia ushered by modernity? I don't think I've found my way with that as yet, but I am contemplating re-enchantment with landed-ness being a minor

way to counter, what colonisation has inflicted on this whenua.³⁴ Perhaps there is potential for transforming landed-ness beyond endorsements of proprietary? Sounds like a relational doing.

Now the day I set the pampas alight, neighbours on the hill complained smoke was blowing through their washing. With sirens blaring the fire service arrived and made me put it out. It felt theatrical. Sometimes living on the seashore of a smallish and almost landlocked harbour surrounded by mainly house-covered hills feels a bit like a stadium. All eyes face in. Rod, it seems such sensation rests on the topographic particularities of *this* place, and reminds me how the qualities of the social are spatially contingent. Yet beyond the coherency of landform, there is a gravity in excess to interpretation around the body of water itself. It is as if the life of water intensifies how (life's) multiplicities can be known. Is this enchantment?

Young Ned must have just woken up as I notice him on the mudflat. He's staring at the kōtuku in such a way I expect he'll start barking and startle them into flight. I think he's puzzled as is too young to recognise the kōtuku from last year. They are only here for a short time before they migrate south via Kāpiti Island. I wander from the deck to bring him in, and without shoes dodge the ridges of rock protruding from the silty wet ground. With the sun lowish, I face westward as my feet sink a little. Beyond the thin flat of the Mana sandspit where the shallow waters of Pāuatahanui and Onepoto meet to pick up speed, the headland Whitireia comes into view. I frequently spot shark fins in this area, but a few months back a pod of maki came into the harbour no doubt chasing whai³⁵ into the shallows. Whitireia is blanketed in yellow-flowering gorse *Ulex europaeus*, yet in this soft early evening light the vividly outlined peninsula is a texture of blurs and shadows. Gorse is a pioneer plant extraordinaire and has a checkered reputation in Aotearoa. Introduced in the 1800s as hedging to demarcate land parcels in line with settlers' landscape imagination, it's a most potent signifier of colonisation. Yet it is also effective at minimising erosion on cleared slopes as well as fixing nitrogen in the soil. That's in fact why Whitireia is gorse-covered. Beginning in the 1840s, all of the land in my current eyeline (and a whole lot more) was systematically stripped of its thick broadleaf-podocarp forest: kahikatea, kāmahī, karo, kawakawa, kiekie, kohekohe, kōwhai, māhoe, mānuka, mātai, ngaio, nīkau, pukeata, rātā, rewarewa, rimu, taupata, tawa, tītoki, tōtara.³⁶

Ned and I, at entirely independent cadences make our way back to the deck. As we pass through the intertidal threshold and into my property proper, I notice the tide has turned. Irrespective of waterbodies, terrain, and of course existing land rights, an 1841 subdivision plan initiated by Governor Grey reimagined this landscape as productive farmland. Over the following decades, as Ngāti Toa Rangatira sovereignty over its ancestral lands shrank and shrank, the deforested land was turned over to grazing. Without appropriate land cover these slopes continually erode the harbour floor, smothering the lives to whom it is home. In fact, all the sparsely vegetated hillsides surrounding the inlet have suffered this plight contributing to extreme sediment build up and biodiversity loss in harbour ecologies. Yet it's been quite some time since these hills were extensively grazed. Accelerating property prices saw the end of viable farming and, from the 1960s, further parcelling of land into suburban size lots prevailed. Economic conditions, and perhaps conditioning, incentivised land for single lot housing over low yielding farm blocks. Presently the last rural area interfacing the inlet is subject to a local government endorsed land-use change to residential tenure.

For Aotea

It was the eye that was open in passing
the mediocrity of capital, plundered as sensation
where strip searched, piled and flattened
feet walked your bare-arsed pukepuke.

You could say that form is a learning.
But what you thought were dark tails of illumination
were the hackles of unconsented shaving.
Consent is meaningless when refusal is not an option. ³⁷

Since 1976, Whitireia is protected from such a future as it has Regional Park status. It remains one of the most significant sites in the area for Ngāti Toa Rangatira. Polynesian navigator Kupe first landed at Komangarautawhiri (a beach on the peninsula) about 1000 years ago and left a punga, a stone anchor, which originated from the island of Rarotonga. The punga, named as Maungaroa, remained on the beachfront for many centuries, until it was chipped at by colonial soldiers stationed nearby in the mid 1800s. Maungaroa is now kept

at Te Papa Tongarewa, the national museum, and a sign-posted copy stands in its place. Given Ngāti Toa Rangatira officially settled their grievances over land seizures with the Crown in 2014, it is unlikely Whitiareia will ever be returned to the iwi.³⁸ Yet why would there not be another displacement?

RB: Hannah, the body of water does intensify how life's multiplicities can be known. How did multiplicities become such mysteries? Kupe came to Kāwhia too. Nineteenth century photographs of Maketu marae show whare³⁹ and other buildings located on the foreshore of the harbour. The transition from whenua to moana is seamless, and it is clear that the relationship between the people and the harbour is intimate and careful. A seawall was built in 1971 (and reinforced in 2004) to “protect the dignity” of Auakiterangi, the meeting house, by preventing erosion. The effect of creating a hard, clear, division between land and sea was to render the foreshore available to all-comers as a public space rather than privately-owned land.⁴⁰ Now Daisy has to run a Beach Patrol.

Yes the harbour is effortlessly multiple (as opposed to productive). You can't harvest its multiplicities. You can harvest its organisms, but it needs to be tended like a garden. Production is a relationship beyond the promise of design. When, as a direct result of land confiscations that were taking place in the Waikato, Tāwhiao drew the aukati⁴¹ and divided the King Country from the rest of the motu,⁴² he designed a zone of safety and sovereignty for Māori.

Who could know that this would begin the erasure of a distinctly Māori geography based on those highly calibrated production regimes known by Māori as *mahi kainga* and considered by settlers simply as nature?

Sure, the role of settler labour in the re-scripting of indigenous spatialities is pretty conspicuous. But let's momentarily consider the nineteenth century idea of nature as unimproved, uncultivated and unproductive land. Maybe the colonists arriving in Kāwhia in the 1830s did really think that the land would remain in a state of nature unless they applied their labour to it. Isn't that why they improved it, in order to lay claim to it? These were people. “The system made them do it.” It made them value the labour/production dynamic which is now so problematic.

Jumping forward to 2020 we find, in February of that year, the Labour Prime Minister of Aotearoa New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, still doing just that – promoting the labour/production dynamic. At a national iwi forum, she

announces that the government has put aside \$30 million to make investment in under-used Māori-owned land easier, and is going to change the law to reduce the barriers to developing that land. The Prime Minister said, “We want to see underutilised land, as has been the case with Māori land, utilized so, there’s work that we can do together.” According to Jacinda Ardern, about 80 per cent of Māori freehold land was underutilised or under-productive.⁴³

HH: I wonder about settler labour and current efforts sustaining the colonial project from *beyond* the individual and that ‘system made them do it’. It makes me think of Lazzarato’s ‘mega-machines’ and processes of subjectification beyond the domain of individual conscious agency – the pre-personal and the extra-personal – whereby the human is never externalised from the systems at play. Yet one of the ways western modernity maintains a distinction between the individual and things, such as from the multiplicity that is land, is through the operations and discourse of property rights. Property rights nullify the capacity of the multiple to act (politically) assigning such agency only to the ‘owner.’⁴⁴ This doesn’t mean of course the multiple cease to act, but is rendered unseen, de-realised, within the naturalised bounds of common-sense relationality. Again, the possessory regime occupies centre-stage in the prevailing settler-colonial imagination and consequent re-spatialisations of land. *What is to be done?* How does landscape design resist the exhaustive urges of modernity? Bruno Latour makes a compelling case for banishing the wholesale mindset of ‘production.’ He advocates “practices of engendering.”⁴⁵ That is, he suggests, “to establish a distinction between the act of producing – which attributes the undertaking and the central role to the human agent – and the act of contributing to the generation.”⁴⁶ Here we see a gravity shift onto other ‘modes of action’ and the potential disruption or even revaluation of land, in spite of the labour-production circuit. Perhaps engendering practices will open pluralistic approaches to land and its care.

As dusk sets in, I notice the wind has dropped significantly so I take up a soft chair on the deck. It’s quiet, other than a hum coming off State Highway 1 whose line of lights have just come on. The rhythmic paddle of several waka ama⁴⁷ crews pushing against the flow of the incoming tide comes into earshot. Following the channel, they make their way through the small moored yachts in a beeline to their club. The paddlers will be tired after working against this wind.

Directly north, lining the opposite side of the inlet, is a row of about 35 brightly coloured boatsheds. They appear quite lifeless from where I sit – close enough to make out the distinctness of form and colour, but too far away to detect any goings on. Whilst the local government has decided these boatsheds are iconic structures that contribute to the urban landscape character and local identity, they have tried to ban people living in them and put restrictions on alterations. It wasn't that long ago these sheds housed a vibrant community of well celebrated artists and poets:

Two years ago we used to row
to an island here called Cockleshell:
Gather cockles in a sack
warm them up and gorge ourselves.

A friend we used to do this with
near died from typhoid fever:
They had the cockles analysed
shit from down the coastline further

Barefeet on the beach is madness,
this beach that was once made of sand:
the sun shines bright on broken glass
Cockles from Cockleshell Island are banned ⁴⁸

But now, their quaintness has them wedged in time. As the darkness sets in, Ned sits at my feet. The black-backed gulls begin to gather for their regular evening social. They assemble on one of the boats moored in the channel, and with nightly gatherings, have successfully transformed its black canopy into a speckled white. I watch and listen as the noisy dance emerges, and under the hullabaloo note a pattern of gestures at play, one indecipherable to me. The core of the group huddle closely, whilst others are tentative, undertaking their variation of the squawk from the surrounding waters. Occasionally and without guaranteed success, the outliers gather courage and take to the air to join the group. Often they are knocked back. Who could know what they are relaying to, with, each other, but it seems important. It feels as though Ned and I, only 30

metres or so away, inhabit an entirely different striation of time.

Closing the distance

I was born in the windless
yet the wind here and now
Like the touch of the gull's wing
Tells me again, I am mythical

With tidal hosting
the multiple and the mutual
Times arrow folds into circles shorn of end
Separation presents in the spacing of a question

Despite the protean, there is modification to be made
she says, don't pin it on emotional experience
While our worlds and imaginations regenerate
Granules sort inside soft stone.⁴⁹

RB: Who knows what they are relaying to Hannah, the black-backed gulls, the artists and poets, the boatsheds, the waka ama crews... . And what is to be done, you ask. How can landscape design resist the exhaustive urges of modernity? 'Our' Prime Minister refers to land that is not productive economically. But this whenua is fabulously productive in other ways. This land (this last land, this land that is called a 'resource') is not available to the kind of evaluation that occurs within the rule of property development. In this regime, even land that has no value is valued for precisely that reason. Up until recently I thought the answer to *What is to be done?* was submission. That landscape architects, planners and urban designers should willingly submit their power and authority to the local group or groups. The locus of political agency would shift to tangata whenua, to whenua itself. What would that require me to do in my own garden? Can I claim to be minding it for Tainui (52,000 iwi members last count) from whom we lease it?

Now I do not think this way. This thing-thing way. Could the deployment of spatial imagination to see beyond landscape, beyond the 'qualities' associated with it, could this not be a collective rather than an individual endeavour? A beyond landscape movement? If this ongoing physical reordering of space-

time, in which I am complicit, is not to become the dreaded “indigenous public space,” or some such category, it definitely needs to be executed through spatial practices that move us all *beyond landscape*. We need to divest landscape of its categories, such as (among others), site, space, design, representation, place, even performance. This is our mahi. It’s not possible for public space that is beyond “space” and beyond “public” to conform to contemporary planning and design protocols. A different ontology is required for the beyond to emerge. Thanks to Anne Salmond I found out about holobionts:

Imagine a condition in which kaitiakitanga⁵⁰ – the practice of taking care of the land – is not practised because it is good, but because it emerges within a metaphysic in which there is no distinction between humans and nonhumans, between abiotic and biotic, where animals are composites, the subject is a multiplicity, life forms make their own environments. A holobiont, like a rotting log in a rainforest, is an assemblage of organisms that enter into relationships with each other in a way that creates the milieu in which they thrive.⁵¹

My garden project list includes:

remove extraneous trees

extend and rationalise vege garden

build boundary fences.

So, like the nineteenth century settler who arrived in Kāwhia with guidebooks for colonising (in the form of Bible and almanac), I have my ordering system. It’s very familiar. Basically the same. I’m still hacking a garden out of the wilderness. Unfortunately, holobionism is not yet at work in our place. Design professionals like me need to decide where we stand as we watch (impede) Indigenes remodelling their environments according to design protocols Euro-Americans were not taught in school. While many environmental designers are working with Indigenous communities, nevertheless the only people who can re-script Indigenous spatialities/environments/social ecologies are the Indigenes themselves.

Land is not property. Labour is not the production of commodities. Capital is not the medium of exchange or the generator of value. The value of land is not based on whether or not it is “productive.” Land is spontaneously generative, and humans are part of this generation. We work in order to give. We give in

order to stake our claim as something significant and receive the gifts of others. Land is critical to this mutualism, for it provides our sense of ourselves and the gifts we distribute. How we live in this land is critical too. Therefore, we must design our relationship with our environment ourselves, with great care. Because Indigenous public space-time is neither Euclidian, Newtonian, or Einsteinian⁵², an indigenous intervention in contemporary public space – an urban landscape that, let's say, 'celebrates' or 'expresses' indigenous structures of feeling, would be something like a tear or a rent in the fabric of western space-time. Perhaps such an intervention would reveal or open up to a transformative *beyond*. It may not be recognizable to the settler community into whose lifeways it has irrupted. On the other hand, neither could it ever be the real deal, since its open and endless connectivity would be curtailed. Nevertheless, it could be a holobiont!

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Notes

1. See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) p.25.
2. Royal spoonbill.
3. Oystercatcher.
4. Pied shag.
5. Earthworm.
6. Fungi.
7. Another reference says 1823.
8. Elsdon Best, "The Shadow of War," extract from *Porirua and they who settled it* (Canterbury Times, 1914) http://www.tawahistory.org.nz/projects/best_article_porirua_war.html.
9. Hannah Hopewell: From a collection of unpublished poems 2019/20.
10. Wetland grass, *Austroderia toetoe*.
11. Canoes.
12. The open area in front of the *whareniui*, where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the *marae*.
13. Fortified village.
14. Sweet potato.
15. Tea-tree, *Leptospermum scoparium*.
16. Ocean, water.
17. Gourds, calabash.
18. Residence, home, village, settlement.
19. Snapper.
20. Kingfish.
21. Eel.
22. Iwi authority, tribal council.
23. Local people, hosts, indigenous people.
24. See Karan Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
25. R. P. Boast, "Ngāti Toa and the colonial state: A report to the Waitangi Tribunal," (June 1998) p. 82.
26. Bullrush.
27. Fish.
28. Pipi – the bivalve *Paphies australis*, a common edible bivalve.
29. Tom O'Connor, *Tides of Kawhia*. (Auckland: Reed Publishing, 2004) p. 35.
30. Family.
31. *Myoporum laetum*.
32. Pepper tree, *Macropiper excelsum*.
33. *Corynocarpus laevigatus*.
34. See Carl Mika in J. Reader, P. Jandric, M. A. Peters, *et al.*, "Enchantment - Disenchantment-Re-Enchantment: Postdigital Relationships between Science, Philosophy, and Religion," *Postdigital Science and Education* (2020): n.p.
35. Stingray.
36. Native trees/plants of Aotearoa New Zealand in order from left.
37. Hannah Hopewell: From a collection of unpublished poems 2019/20.
38. Tribe.
39. Houses, buildings.
40. University of Auckland, School of Architecture Professor Richard Toy famously described the bay as New Zealanders' public space. Sinister connotations.
41. Border, boundary.
42. Country, island.
43. Radio New Zealand, [Checkpoint] February 5, 2020, [01:16 - 01:20.]
44. Roberto Esposito, "Persons and Things," *Paragraph* 39, no. 1 (2016) [p.34]; Maurizio Lazzarato, *Signs and Machines: Capitalism and the Production of Subjectivity*, trans. J D Jordan (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2014), [p.35].
45. Bruno Latour "Production or Engineering?" in E-Flux Architecture, September 16, 2020 at <https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/accumulation/345107/production-or-engineering/>
46. Bruno Latour "Production or Engineering?" in E-Flux Architecture, September 16, 2020 at <https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/accumulation/345107/production-or-engineering/>
47. Outrigger canoe.
48. An excerpt from Sam Hunt, *Bottle Creek Blues*, Bottle Creek Press, Wellington, 1971. <https://timehasflewn.tumblr.com/post/21643210789/bottle-creek-blues>
49. Hannah Hopewell: From a collection of unpublished poems 2019/2020
50. The practice of caring for land.
51. In her book *Tears of Rangī* Anne Salmond comes back again and again to the relational systems of whakapapa, to the open-endedness of Māori social networks and the flat ontology of Māori metaphysics. She captures the interactivity of these conditions in her use of the ecological term holobiont. See her section on Māori concepts of whenua (land), p. 319. Anne Salmond, *Tears of Rangī: Experiments across Worlds* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017).
52. See Patu Hohepa's space-time spiral in Salmond, *Tears of Rangī*, 406.



Figure 8

New Zealand Company settlements in 1851. Map drawn and engraved by J. Rapkin; vignette illustrations drawn by H Warren and engraved by JB Allen. Published by John Tallis & Co. Provenance: *Tallis's Illustrated Atlas and Modern History of the World, Geographical, Political, Commercial and Statistical*, edited by R Montgomery Martin Esq., published by John Tallis and Company, London & New York. This map shows the early settlements of the New Zealand Company that existed at the date of publication of the map (1851). It is typical of early colonial maps both in its imposition of European place names and the drawing of arbitrary boundaries (in this case, a number of towns and the region of Canterbury being indicated in pink, the colour used to mark British colonies). The cameo of a Māori man and the decorative border of the map with its free appropriation of Māori motifs evokes the 'exoticism' of the remote colonial territory. Image used under license from Alamy.

CHAPTER TWO

Singing the Land

Lynette Carter

Waiata as Spatial and Temporal
Markers of Place in the Landscape

KARANGA

Tēnā ra koutou e
e kā mana, e kā reo, e kā wehi, e kā tapu e
ānei he taoka tuku iho ōu tātou tīpuna e
nau mai i raro i te maru o te mauka tapu Takitimu e Ko tēnei te reo
poroporoaki
ki te huka wairua ka wheturakitia
piki atu rā koutou ki te pūtahitaka o Rehua, ki te kahu o te Kahuariki ka
awatea e
hoki wairua mai hoki wairua mai
Kei mai ki tēnei i te hau o Tahu Potiki e Whakatau mai rā
Whakatau mai rā

KARAKIA

Ka haea te ata
Ka hāpara te ata
Ka Korokī te manu
Ka Wairori te Kutu
Ko te ata nui
Ka horaina
Ka taki te umere
He pō, he pō
He ao
Ka awatea

Karanga such as the one above are used on marae to open the way into a specifically Māori place, relationships, and practices. The karanga speaks to the land, the ancestors and the living – and also acknowledges those still to come. The karanga situates people into the landscape and is a way of opening the relationships and increasing the layers of association with places. The karakia that follows provides the spiritual elements to engage with the place and with each other. Karanga and karakia then are part of a set of tools that locate people within a landscape. This chapter has been opened by a karanga because it is about how waiata open the way to understanding about the relationships and practices underpinning Māori and the landscape.

In Aotearoa New Zealand there is ongoing tension between how indigenous Māori people and Pākehā speak about the ways in which they occupy the landscape. This creates politically charged language as each group claims space in a bi-culturally divided landscape. Language is part of a culture and every aspect of that culture – whether it is song, law, instruction, history or social organisation – is expressed through language. The distinguishing features of each language are what make the narration meaningful to the people to which it belongs. This is done through dialect, vocabulary, familiar imagery, deeds of past generations, and the stories explaining the symbolic nature of landscape features within the people’s territory or environment. Māori oral traditions provide a rich mosaic of understanding land and land use, and the traditions are part of how Māori claim association with their particular tribal territories. This chapter discusses how one genre of oral tradition, waiata (song), explains the notion of spaces as places for action. The features within the waiata (words, knowledge, names, rhythm and sounds) are geospatial tools that build multi-dimensional layers across the landscape. This helps build the histories, associates these with the living, and assists with planning for the future in increasingly shared community spaces.

European settlers claiming territories in Aotearoa New Zealand and elsewhere used the device of mapping lines on a page to denote boundaries. Sometimes these followed natural features of the landscape such as rivers and mountains. However, as geospatial tools they were often arbitrary and took no cognisance of indigenous patterns of land use. For the colonisers, mapping was one of the primary technologies for imposing ownership and control. In contrast, this chapter reclaims indigenous knowledge systems by hypothesising

that oral traditions form part of a set of geospatial tools that provide historical, social and economic knowledge about landscapes that help to define it and the people associated with it. Hauiti Hakopa refers to this as the “geography of narratives”¹ that includes oral traditions such as waiata (songs), whakatauki (sayings), and stories. Hakopa asserts that these traditions work together like sets of tools and data that map the landscape. When discussing the power of mapping, John B. Harley explains that a number of maps can be centred on a single map, thus building up a corpus of information “from the same period,” and “equally, the depiction of an area or feature can be traced on a series of maps through time.”²

The interlinking nature of songs and stories work in a similar way. Thus, song maps do not in themselves print out the image of the landscape, but contain symbols, sounds, and descriptions of the landscape that alert listeners to the memories of place. Hence the song maps linked with stories of the places embedded within them are just as liable to contain details and information through which it is possible to navigate one’s way through places. Māori are not alone in using waiata and other oral tradition genre in this way. Marina Roseman discusses the Malaysian Temiar peoples’ practice of using song maps that “map and mediate their relationships with the land and each other...songs are termed paths.”³ Roseman notes that Temiar “sing their maps: theoretically, in their epistemology of song composition and performance; melodically, in contours of pitch and phrasing; textually, in place names weighted with memory.”⁴ She suggests that this practice of song mapping can be used as an “ethnohistorical document comprising a new way of making claims to land,”⁵ thus establishing contemporary Temiar property rights in the Malaysian rainforest.⁶ Māori too are using the information contained in old waiata and stories to establish claims of longevity with landscape and the resources within it – most notably in the context of Treaty of Waitangi settlements. Therefore, I will investigate the role of waiata in mapping the landscape, and in particular the way waiata collaborate with stories to develop multi-dimensional layers of data across landscape to define and claim it.

Waiata

The waiata connect people and events through references to kinship and relationships and provide details about events such as (but not exclusively)

occupation, resource gathering, and war. They are in effect ways to map a landscape and people's space within it, as well as to provide necessary records and information about tribal life and events. Place names in particular are included to remind of connections, and the imagery evoked allows the listeners to travel across the landscape. In his work on Kaluli songs and their place in connecting people with places, Steven Feld describes it as, "...[the] citation of place names in texts of song and lament construct improvised or composed maps that evoke memories of events, times, and social relations. The idea of a...path, emerged as one of the key devices of song composition and performance...".⁷ Feld also stresses that the "emotional and memorial power of songs depended on their place name sequences."⁸ The singing of the pathways identifies and connects people to landscape. This allows a picture of the named places to develop, and the listeners' memories allow them to travel through the landscapes across space and time. The names endure upon the landscape so in a sense the temporal nature of the songs can always provide a source of connectedness. The past informs the present connections and will ensure the future generations will also have evidence of longevity with the landscape.

The song is a mechanism for recalling the events that lead to the naming and the resultant claims. The naming is claiming, and "place names act as indicators of human interaction with the environment."⁹ Place names acquire a "functional value that easily matches their utility as instruments of reference"¹⁰ and through them, people can map the environment with "their values, knowledge and beliefs."¹¹ The songs then become the mechanism for transferring this knowledge and can act as a historical source verifying land-usage rights.¹² One way Māori are using song this way in Aotearoa New Zealand is through the Waitangi Treaty settlement process. Iwi, such as Ngāti Rangiwewehi in Rotorua, are utilising old tribal and hapū waiata as evidence of continued occupation in their settlement negotiations. The verification of an unbroken connection to specific lands and/or resources is a requirement for the Treaty settlement process, and the songs contain reference to the cultural landscape that locates people indelibly within it through space and time. Combined with new global positioning system (GPS) mapping technologies, the information held within waiata can provide data both for verifying this information and the unbroken iwi mana whenua status (recognised power and authority). The waiata verify the tribal place upon the landscape and as such become a Māori knowledge framework that provides the

evidence of recognised occupation, claims, and uses. The songs carry the place names that locate the wāhi tapu (sacred places), urupa (burial sites), villages, and the locations of whai take (geographical markers such as named ridges, mountains, and rivers) for the wider resource catchment areas. In effect the tribal waiata sing the landscape and recall the place, the stories and image of the lands, mountains, rivers and so on. Although this chapter concentrates on waiata, it is important to explain the role of stories in unlocking the information held within waiata. Together these waiata and stories become a complex mosaic of data that allows access to understanding the singer's place within the sung spaces.

Stories

The waiata and the place names sequenced within them provide data for measuring landscape changes over time. They provide historical data and information about the environment and occupation, and any intergenerational changes that occur become part of the memories evoked through listening to the songs. The songs contain the place names; the stories expand on the naming, and the information about the lands surrounding the places will develop over time. As Keith Basso remarks, "...the country of the past...is never more than a narrated place-world away,"¹³ and the "speech of the ancestors"¹⁴ underpins a mosaic of intergenerational connectedness and adjustment to each new challenge and transformation. When each new generation of people adds its memories and presence to the landscape so the stories may change and develop to include the changing landscape, occupations and use. As Jane McRae notes, the oral tradition links the collective memory of tribal groups genealogically and geographically.¹⁵

Oral traditions are spatial and temporal tools that build multi-dimensional layers of data across the landscape so we can build knowledge frameworks that intersect and provide structure as to how we understand our place. They build the histories, associate these with the living, and assist with planning for the future to ensure that the landscape can always link us and in all contexts. The landscape then can help with planning for the future through the utilising of the layers of information and data contained within the tools.

The physical presence recalls the name

The name recalls the event

The event recalls the whakapapa

The whakapapa recalls the connections between things past and things present

The connections between things past and things present is the element which gives ... pride and identity.¹⁶

Just as the words of the waiata open the memory and place people within the landscape so the sounds of the waiata are important in connecting place with the singers. The rhythm and sounds within the waiata often followed the contours and textures of the lands and water ways, and stressed the sounds of the landscape. The rippling of the water; the bird sounds of the forest; the rise and fall of the mountains and hills were all sung into the waiata so that the landscape is created through the voice. The flow of the music and rhythm recalls the landscapes and the associations:

...[and] takes listeners on a journey that flows along song paths ... the flow of the songs being emotionally and physically linked to the sensual flow of the singing voice ... connecting these flowing paths reveals an acoustemology of place relations, a fusion of space and time that joins lives and events as embodied memories.¹⁷

Similarly, Māori waiata also sing knowledge, are melodic within the pitch and phrasing, and contain place names weighted with memory, and thus create mapped paths across the landscape. In keeping then with the idea of song maps as pathways across landscape, it is the sequencing of place names within waiata that are the key to this. Place names and the order in which they are sung provide structured layering of information that advances a story (or purpose) through the songs.

Waiata then act as records of histories, events, whakapapa, and changes that tell the story of the people who belong to that landscape. At the same time, when sung, they invoke the memories and sensations of standing upon the land thus fusing the experiences and memories into the song itself. Some waiata move across landscapes – naming the places as they go and providing reasons for the names and the connections, which act as an indicator of belonging – thus creating a cultural landscape that is imbued with identity.

The following waiata sings of the aroha (love and respect), for Aoraki, the

maunga ariki (supreme ancestral mountain) that embodies Ngāi Tahu mana with the tribal landscapes.

Kātahi au ka kite ai
I a Aoraki e tū mai ra e
E ngaro ana koe i roto i
Te kohu me te hukarere
Aue ra e Aoraki
Te maunga ariki
Maringi ai ōu roimata
Ki roto o Pūkaki
Kātahi ra ka haruru mai
Ki te awa of Waitaki
Ka ata titiro
Ngā mania tekateka o Waitaha
Mehemea au ka tuohu ai
Me maunga teitei
Noho mai ra kei te hoki ahau
Ki te ohonga o te ra e i!¹⁸

Only once have I sighted you standing in your awesome splendour, Aoraki,
You have often hidden by the mist and snow; Aoraki you are my maunga
ariki
Your tears flow into Lake Pūkaki and rumble down into the river Waitaki
I gaze across the plains of Canterbury, the seed bed of Waitaha
I salute you Aoraki with the proverb that reminds us to aspire to great
achievement
If I bow my head let it be to a lofty mountain.¹⁹

The waiata begins at Aoraki, the sacred mountain for Ngāi Tahu, whose tears flow into Lake Pūkaki; move into the Waitaki river; and then journey down the river and out across the Canterbury Plains. The river mingles with the sea thus linking the mountain to the landscape between mountain and sea, and importantly to the resources and places within the space. The mountain is the recognised tipuna (ancestor) for Ngāi Tahu and the mountain itself is used as a marker for

identity – thus anyone reciting the name Aoraki within their whakapapa is connected automatically to the Ngāi Tahu territories in the South Island. These place names then recall the whakapapa and the events that establish the claims from descendants for these landscapes. The events that explain the names and the whakapapa are recalled in the following story as told to Herries Beattie by Wi Pokuku.²⁰

Ko Uruao na i tae te whenua i tuku ki a Matiti. Na Matiti i tuku mai ki a Rakaihautu. Ka manu mai a Uruao. Ka riro mai i kona ra takata a Waitaha... Ka riro mai ia Rakaihautu te ko a Tu Whakaroria, ko Matuarua te Atua... Ko Rakaihautu te takata nana i timata te ahi te ruka ki tenei motu. Ka noho tenei motu i Waitaha. Katahi a Rakaihautu ka haere ra waekanui o te motu nei haere ai me ka takata. Ka riro tonu ko te roto a uta, te roto a tai; Takapo, Pukaki, Ohau, Hawea, Wanaka, Wakatipu-wai-maori, Wakatipu-wai-tai. Haere tonu Te Anau wai tai tae noa atu ki te matuka mai o te mouere. Ka waiho ka kaitiaki i reira, ko Noti raua ko Nota. Ka hoki mai Rakaihautu te roto nui a whatu: Kai- Maranuku, Waihora, Wairewa, Kai Taieri, Kai-Karae, Wainono-a-Kahu, Te Aetarakihi, Waihora, Wairewa i konei. Kahuaina te ikoa o taua ko, ko Tuhiraki. No reira, ka whakatauki: “ka puna-karikari-a-Rakaihautu”, “Ka pou pou-a-Te Rakaihouia”, mo ka pahao tuna kanakana, ka whakapikapika [pekapeka?] a waitakataka ki te hao te kai a te-aitaka-a-Tapuiti. I reira, ka taua ki koura, te anuhi me ka manu, me ka mea katoa. Ka tuturu tenei motu ko Rakaihautu te takata, Ko Rakaihouia, Ko Waitaha te hapu. I ai tona whakatauki o mua tae noa mai ki tenei raki: “ka puna-karikari-a-Rakaihautu. Ka pou pou-a-Te Rakahouia, Ka pakihi-whakatekateka-a-Waitaha”.

Uruao came to this land and was given to Matiti. Matiti gave it to Rakaihautu. The Uruao sailed here. That is how the people of Waitaha were brought here ... Rakaihautu brought the digging stick of Tuwhakaroria, called Matuarua-te-atua ... Rakaihautu was the first person to light fires on this land. Then Rakaihautu went out through the middle of the land journeying with the people, continued to the inland lakes and fiords; Tekapo, Pukaki, Ohau, Hawea, Wanaka, Whakatipu-wai-Maori and Whakatipu-wai Tai. They went on to Te Anau and arrived at the end of the island. Guardians were left there,

Noti and Nota. Rakaihautu returned inland to establish here extensive food gardens; Kai Marunuku, Waihora, Kai Taieri, Kai Karae, Wainono o Kahu, Te Aetarakihi, Waihora, Wairewa. He renamed the digging stick, Tuhiraki [Mt Bassu on Banks Peninsula]. So therefore the whakatauki: “The springs dug by Rakaihautu”; “The posts of Te Rakaihouia” for the lamprey eel weirs, lines of lures, and driving the progeny of Tapuiti into the dangling nets. There in reality was established crayfish, mullet and sea birds, and all other things” this land was established and Rakaihautu is the man; Rakaihouia followed and Waitaha his kin group.²¹

The descendants claim mana whenua (power and authority) as the tribal entities for this landscape through these place names and stories (among others). The three place names that appear in the waiata unlock the memories of the stories and the other names that helped to establish the relationship between the descendants of the early ancestors with the present and future occupation and associations. These stories, such as that told by Wi Pokuku, link people and events to specific areas of the landscape, thus creating the mosaic of identity and belonging with landscape. The claims are informed from past, relevant in the present and allow for future recognition as the kaitiaki (recognised guardianship) of the particular areas. This becomes an important distinction when lands and landscapes are the subject of multiple claims and uses. Oral traditions, such as waiata, are key to understanding how ancestors thought about their association with place and as Te Marie Tau points out, oratory provides the means by which “Māori learn of their history” and that “within oral compositions, we discern a landscape utterly different for that seen through a ‘western lens’.”²² Tau reminds us that we need to pay attention to “how our people told their past and what really underpins their stories”²³ in order to fully understand how and what the ancestors thought and believed happened in terms of history and settlement. The oral traditions, such as waiata, help with this as they contain some of the key information and data for unlocking tribal knowledge of the landscape and how they connect to it.

Thus, the association with the named places in the waiata, Katahi Au – Aoraki, Lake Pukaki, the Waitaki river, and Te Mania Whakatekata o Waitaha – are irretrievably linked to that of the people. The place names in the waiata act as one layer upon a multi-dimensional map to access the landscape in order

to secure claims and use rights. These in turn link to other data sets (stories and whakatauki for example) about the environment, resources, occupations and so forth. It is experiential data from an intergenerational temporal and spatial data system that provides continuous information of occupation and use. The waiata are also a soundscape when the rhythm and form mimic the rippling waters, rolling hills, and sound of fauna. The waiata associate the singers with the landscape in a multi-dimensional layering of history and connections that Feld refers to as “The acoustemology of place relations, a fusion of space and time that joins events and lives as embodied memories.”²⁴ Waiata map the landscape and are, in a sense, a spatial tool that in conjunction with other oral tradition data sets (stories and whakatauki), provide a visual representation of landscapes. In a contemporary sense they provide a set of information and data that can be used to verify association and interpret change over time. Along with the other spatial tools and data sets (such as GPS), they can provide layered historical data for ecology, occupation and connections in spatial and temporal ways. In contemporary times it is important for indigenous peoples to be able to utilise all data and information available to enable them to make deliberate and informed decisions in environmental management and governance. The oral traditions, starting with waiata, deserve much more recognition as to how they articulate the knowledge, values and beliefs of peoples in explaining and thinking about their identity and rights to specific places and the resources within them. Waiata as song maps are part of that pathway to self-determination.

Editor’s note: An earlier version of this article was published in *Scope: Kaupapa Kai Tahu*, 3 (2015) 5-10 and has been amended by the author to fit within the Kaupapa of this book. It has been reproduced with the permission of the editor of *Scope: Kaupapa Kai Tahu*, 3 (2015).

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Figure 9

Ben Bowen, *Flooding on Riverbed (now Oval) near to the Original Water Spring, The University of Sydney*, undated. Photo: Ben Bowen.

CHAPTER THREE

Australian Indigenous Knowledges and Voices in Country

Lynette Riley,
Tarunna Sebastian
and Ben Bowen

The University of Sydney's Camperdown Campus and surrounding areas are examined in this chapter as a case study to explore the site's hidden Aboriginal history. More specifically, it draws on Aboriginal Songlines and the colonial systems of cultural mapping of urban Country through the use of archives, analysis of geographic sites and an exploration of local narratives.

The University of Sydney was established in October 1850 in the City of Sydney, but by 1857 it had shifted two miles out of the city due to increasing student enrolments. The new location in 1857 was a dairy farm, known as Grose Farm, which later became the suburb of Camperdown. Over a century and a half later, the University of Sydney has expanded to include six different campuses within the wider Sydney region after reaching its full capacity at Camperdown. At this point it is important to note that all Land in Australia was and will always be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land as sovereignty was never ceded. The University of Sydney's Camperdown Campus site belongs to the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation; the Aboriginal history of the Camperdown Campus has remained locked away in archives and within Aboriginal families, its existence repressed by the dominant culture until the last few decades.¹

This chapter will explore the effects of colonisation on urban land design, management and tenure through the voices of Aboriginal people. It will also address Aboriginal people's relationship with, to and through Country,² showing the hidden history of Aboriginal custodianship and care for, by and with Country and the underpinning of Indigenous knowledges beneath the turf, mortar and concrete of settler colonial occupation of the University of Sydney's Camperdown Campus. The authors are writing from the unceded Lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, who have practised their sovereignty over

countless generations and many more to come. We acknowledge their time-honoured and continuing care for the Country which the authors now call home and in doing so pay our respects to the Eora People, Elders past, present and future.

Contextual Framework for Aboriginal Exclusion

In Australia, the complexities and contradictions of urban design, land management and land tenure arrangements and their related political, economic and cultural benefits have long been hidden from Aboriginal Australians. Debates over the conceptualisation of land rights, design and management have previously centred on remote areas of the Country. Aboriginal Land tenure rights and claims in contemporary urban spaces have attracted less attention, concealing the lived realities of the ongoing political, economic and cultural inequities experienced by contemporary urban Aboriginal Australians.³ Local, state and Commonwealth governments and other institutions have until recently shown a lack of engagement with Aboriginal Australian people regarding tenure rights, design and management of Land. In Australia, the Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Rights Northern Territory Act 1976 granted land titles to certain groups of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory who could demonstrate continuing traditional occupation.⁴

Most other Australian states also have some form of land rights legislation. The Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 came into existence after the High Court Mabo decision in 1992, which recognised the continuing title of Aboriginal people and did not support the *terra nullius* doctrine or the view that Australia was “unoccupied” or “uninhabited” prior to European settlement.⁵

The image presented (Figure 10) on the opposite page is a Tribute Kangaroo Cloak in recognition of ‘Bungaree’ (Riley, 2016) who circumnavigated Australia with Matthew Flinders during 1801-1803 (Smith, 1992). Bungaree acted as a diplomat and interpreter around Australia. Without his use of protocols across Country, Flinders would not have been able to make contact with other First Nation people, nor would he have been able to make landfall, as Bungaree’s initiation markings showed that he was a significant Elder. As such, this is clear evidence of the early interactions of First Nations peoples with the colonisers, which were not always recognised, and that the same protocols were not utilised or adhered to by the colonisers.

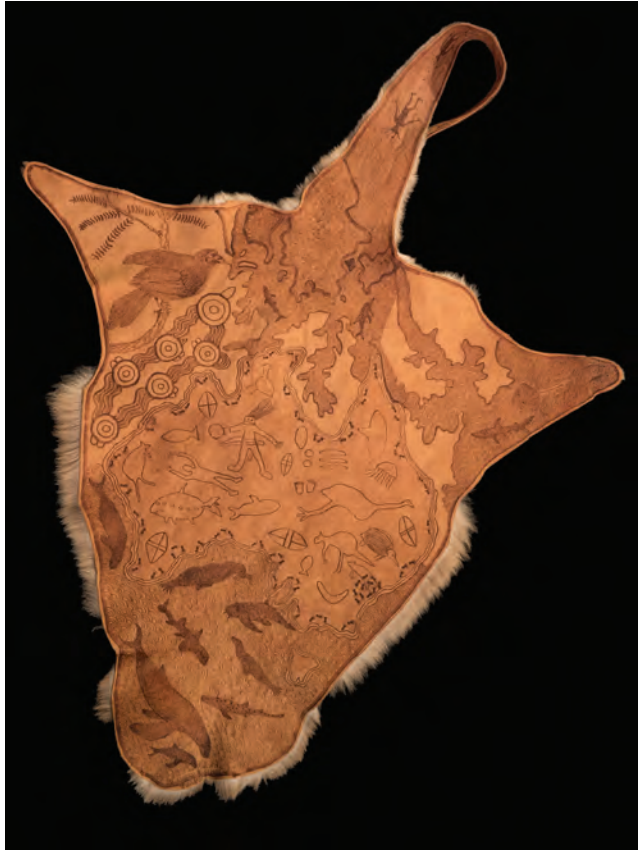


Figure 10

Lynette Riley, *Bungaree*, Tribute Kangaroo Cloak, 2016. Bungaree circumnavigated Australia, with Matthew Flinders in 1801-1803, making contact with people from Aboriginal Nations around the coast of Australia. The symbols on Bungaree's Cloak represent cultural connections and lived experiences. The Bell Minor bird represents Bungaree's Totem. The Bell Bird is a unique animal, living along the coast south and north of the current Sydney site, in the forests of this region. Three concentric circles represent family connections between Bungaree (pointed half circle), his five wives (double half circles) and their various children. The Map of Australia has three lines running parallel to each other to represent Bungaree's circumnavigation of Australia. Footprints, around the coast, represent Bungaree walking across Country to meet Nation and Clan Groups. The cluster of footprints around Sydney represents Bungaree's Nation, Clan and Family Groups. With the 'Map of Australia' are various rock engravings in the Sydney region covering the lands of the Eora, Ku-ring-gai, and Dharawal, the key areas where Bungaree lived. The outline of the coastline around Sydney with Broken Bay is where Bungaree was born and grew up with his family. The cross hatching on the lands surrounding 'Patonga' was Bungaree's traditional lands. In the water surrounding Port Jackson one can see a tiger shark, a dolphin head and a stingray. Port Jackson, North Head, Middle Head and South Head represents where Bungaree lived and engaged with the colonists during his life. The small cross hatching on Middle Head is land granted to Bungaree by Governor Macquarie. Outside the map of Australia are sea creatures found around the coastal areas of Australia. Along the tail is the symbol for water and within the water are spirit figures that look after and protect people. Artist/Creator: Lynette Riley.

In 2021, there are two legally recognised and distinct systems of land ownership, use and tenure operating in Australia: one is Aboriginal Land tenure, which is older (over 60,000 years), the other is through colonial legal systems, which are much younger (only 230 years). However, developers and state governments have negotiated to limit land rights and/or restrict Aboriginal people's access to their traditional Country. This limits opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to exercise continuing occupation, self-determination, leadership and governance; capacity building; maintenance of cultural strengths, ceremonies, law and pride; and confidence and self-esteem.⁶

Securing Aboriginal Land tenure is complex. The recognition of land and water ownership, rights and interests involves the negotiation of law, policies and ideologies, often within complex matrices which have arisen over the 250 years of colonial history, government policies and legislation.⁷ Aboriginal Land tenure rights are potentially at odds with other economic development priorities. For example, large-scale mineral extraction and pastoral and other mining activities contribute significantly to the wealth of Australian states. Mapping Aboriginal ownership of land is part and parcel of a more general attempt by Australian states to define and serve their own internal economic interests, rather than recognising enduring Aboriginal relations to land.

Aboriginal people are fighting for their land rights and Country, for the recognition of their pre-existing and pre-contact ownership of their land, and for the right and responsibility to control what happens on their Country and to their Country. Aboriginal Australian relationships to land and sacred sites have been oversimplified by the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth).⁸ Aboriginal people do not see their sacred sites and Land in isolation or in bounded parcels of land subdivided and commodified. Sacred sites are linked together along the journey of the Creator, who also set down customary laws throughout the whole Country. Hence Aboriginal peoples' connection to the Land and sacred sites is of spiritual and religious significance. Within customary law, Aboriginal peoples have spiritual, social and cultural obligations to each other, to Land, Waterways, Sky Country and to ancestral spiritual and sacred sites. However, for the past 250 years developers and town planners have ignored the significance and connectedness of sacred sites or mapped sites as discrete landmarks. Negotiation of the rights to the design and development of Aboriginal Land continues to be viewed in isolation from the pressing realities and concerns of Aboriginal people.⁹

Indeed, Eurocentric, colonialist and imperialist views of the world have led to the development of a system of mapping the Earth that was hierarchical in nature and continues to be so. This can be linked back to the emergence of the understanding that the Earth was not flat, but a sphere.¹⁰ The spherical land mass was then divided into the Global North at the top and Global South at the bottom, divided by the equator and creating a geographical hierarchy. This perspective contributed to the commodification and colonisation of the Global South.¹¹ Unlike the Eurocentric perspective of the world, Aboriginal Australians lack a hierarchical view of the Earth and have always seen the Earth as a cyclic and living body since the beginning of time.¹²

Aboriginal Australians have other ways of knowing and organising Aboriginal Land tenure, which comes with relationships to Country (which includes Land, Water and Sky), entailing obligations and rights, roles, responsibilities, ownership and custodianship.¹³ The holistic and integrated relationships Aboriginal peoples have with the Land are difficult to explain briefly. However, what is particularly relevant to this chapter, and the understanding of land tenure and design, is the concept of Traditional Owner or Custodian. This concept has different meanings across the diverse cultures of the 250 Aboriginal Nations and their Clan groups. Within this context, ownership may not be exclusive to an individual, but may be collectively held by Clan and Nation groups. The primary significance of ownership is not measured in material wealth, but directly relates to the values, ethics and morality embedded in Aboriginal Law. The Law addresses knowledge, relationships, responsibilities, problems, disputes, mediation, ceremony, Kinship, Totems and taboos.

Aboriginal Land Tenure

The term ‘ownership of Land’ is not defined as a valuable, marketable commodity. Instead, it defines the ontological and epistemological concerns of an intimate group of people, regardless of gender, who stand in a particular relationship to the Traditional Owners or Custodians and whose various obligations, roles and responsibilities depend on their relationship to Land, whereby each has different responsibilities, obligations and roles to Country. Consequently, this is a bilateral relationship: people both own land and belong to it. They have a dual relationship to the Land involving rights, roles and responsibility.¹⁴ Realising the material value of ‘ownership of Land’ is

not the purpose or primary meaning of ownership.¹⁵ Aboriginal Law is the ancestral, celestial Traditional Law and Customs, which Stanner has labelled as “Dreaming.”¹⁶ Dreaming is the place of lawfulness and it is inscribed and enacted in and through the Land. It is the source of creation – of Aboriginal Songlines, songs, stories, morality, Lore, ethics and languages, from the beginning of time. Similarly, Aboriginal ontology is a product of a long reciprocal and continuing relationship with everything living on the Land.

Songlines and stories are interconnected with the Land and express the relationality between Aboriginal Law, knowledge, spirituality, health and wellbeing, Country, community and family. Songlines are the spiritual and navigable pathways, or tracks or footprints of the ancestors, or the “way of the Lore.”¹⁷ Songlines tell of the long journey of ancestral spirits as they created the Land, living and non-living Lore, integral to Aboriginal religion and spirituality. Songlines are deeply tied to and defined by following an ordered sequence within the Australian landscape, representing a map, compass and the seasonal calendar of the whole Country. They provide important intergenerational knowledge, cultural values and wisdom to Aboriginal peoples through dance, art, trade and ceremonies, moving from site to site across Clans and Nations, crossing and connecting the whole of the Australian continent and their neighbouring Countries.

Songlines are complex pathways that explain the history and meaning of spiritual, ecological, economic, environmental, cultural and ontological knowledge that is written in the Land. Each verse records significant events, understandings and meanings at a particular site and is repeated several times. Aboriginal Elders and traditional owners travel along Songlines with their young people, telling the stories and singing the songs of the sites, so that children acquire a mental map of their Country, the boundaries of Clan and Nation groups and trade routes throughout the Country.¹⁸ It is on the basis of this ontology that land tenure is arranged. In addition, Songlines have also been of critical significance in Aboriginal Land title claims, made under both the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 and the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) (Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993).¹⁹

In Australia, Aboriginal legal, political, cultural, economic and social systems of Land title are characterised as “true communal allodial title.”²⁰ Allodial title exists where the real property is owned free and clear of any superior landlord.²¹

That is, Aboriginal Australians trace their relationship to Land through their person–ancestral interrelationship, roles and responsibilities, which have been passed down through parents, gender, Kinship, Songlines, place of birth, conception and residence.²² Aboriginal Australians have a Kinship system which is based on relationship to Land, then Moieties, Nations and smaller Clan groups.²³ Even today, urban Aboriginal people retain and are integral to this Kinship system, encompassing Nation and Clan groups that never change. Every Nation and Clan group have their own Dreaming or Songlines woven and interconnected into the Land and governed by the Law.²⁴

Aboriginal Land management, tenure and design principles, expressions of Country and culture are grounded in the Land and guarded by the Elders and protocols through which knowledge itself is communicated. There is no word for ‘design’ in Aboriginal languages. However, Land is the Law, and sustainability of Land and all living things on Land hold the highest significance. For Aboriginal people the Law is transparent, naked and is written on the Land, Sky and Water Countries. Caring for Country is the same as caring for one’s self.²⁵ The Land belongs to Aboriginal Australians through communal title deeds. Despite the duress of colonialism, women and men have carried out their own rights, roles and responsibilities relating to their Law and have continued to observe their Songlines and Law, ceremonies, knowledge, cultures, histories and languages, actively managing and designing Country consistent with ancient Law, understanding and identities.²⁶

Dreaming and Songlines continue to be expressed in dances, narratives and artistic expressions. David Peat writes:

Songs come to us from another world, they have their own existence and power ... Sound, vibration and song are believed by many to be creative generative forces [aligned] with the cosmos. The song law is of place, creating and making the holder of the song indigenous [Aboriginal] to place. The song is alive in the land, the law lives in the singer and the singing continues in many forms.²⁷

The Songlines inform and guide caring for, by and with the Country – for example, the systematic practices used to promote the sustainability of the landscape and plant and animal life.

Continued Aboriginal Connections

The colonial worldview has negated the Dreaming, which is the ontology and epistemology of Aboriginal people. Our Dreaming was incompatible with the legal doctrine of *terra nullius*, which conveniently reduced the Land to a resource commodity or capital asset, enabling the systematic colonising and dehumanising of Aboriginal people.²⁸ Land was bought, ‘cleared,’ mapped, divided and sold in a scarcely acknowledged systematic frontiers war from 1788. In effect, it continues with the 2020 blowing-up of the 46,000-year-old sacred Juukan Gorge site by Rio Tinto, the closure and bulldozing of remote Aboriginal homeland communities and the forced relocation of Aboriginal inhabitants. Land is the prime concern of settler colonialism. Patrick Wolfe argues that this model of domination operates from “the logic of elimination of the native”²⁹ because the acquisition of land is its central feature. Based on enduring settlement, settler colonialism is – as Wolfe put it – “a structure, not an event.”³⁰ Thus, settler colonialism is an ongoing structure of domination, power and control of Aboriginal Land and peoples.

Aboriginal people shaped the land by fire to aid the production of grasslands for animal grazing, maintaining and promoting the production of bush foods, propagation of seeds and plant growth around swamplands and forests, as well as to make it easier to map and navigate through their Country.³¹ This was carried out using various technologies, including ‘firestick farming’ and was adapted to cultural economies and technology on a daily basis. Aboriginal peoples have expanded and adapted existing technologies, processes and practices, through systematic and sophisticated use of fire and gendered mosaic burning throughout the Country. Aboriginal land management and cultivation techniques have sustained croplands, waterways and abundant animal life.

Eurocentric political, historical and sociological scholarly writings suggest that the colonisation of Aboriginal Australia was a passive event far in the past.³² However, this estimate is in stark contrast to the ongoing lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, individuals and communities who insist on the prevalence of the constant, unrelenting pressure of colonisation. This is a growing pressure maintained through the fabrication and romancing of the Western past; barriers faced by Aboriginal peoples and communities in the public space of ‘truth telling;’ and the continued desecration of land and culture



Figure 11

Ben Bowen, *Aboriginal Rock Engraving*, Sydney Region, 2016. Photo: Ben Bowen.

through the development of land through a linear boundary system that does not validate, support or even acknowledge cultural practices and Lore. This latter practice is prevalent in urban centres where cultural sites are eradicated with bulldozers and built on to deny the very existence of Indigenous ‘connection to place.’

Contemporary urban Aboriginal experiences and identities are continually being challenged politically, within the media and national and state institutions, especially in relation to the continuing validity of the concept of ‘connection to Country’. Through colonial development and the continuation of urban development, the destruction of culturally critical sites has taken the form of continuous waves of colonising attacks on Aboriginal identities. As part of the resistance, there has been a consolidated and collaborative effort to build and enrich the tapestry of Country and culture. This tapestry is bringing together the oral histories and stories of rebuilding what were traditional pathways, to what is now and where we are going. This development directly challenges the freezing of culture pre-1788.³³ It enables our continued resilience, sustenance and growth,



Figure 12

Francois Peron, A map of Sydney's Parramatta Road showing the streets and houses of British colonists, 1802. National Library of Australia.

undermining the 'loss' concept when connecting to Country. It allows us to see through colonial architecture and destruction of Country, to still sing her and continue our role as custodians.

Sydney as a Prime Example of Exclusion

Sydney was the first point of colonisation by the British in 1788. These are the traditional Lands of the Eora Nation, made up of 29 clan groups.³⁴ Within the boundaries of the St George's River, the Hawkesbury River and the Parramatta River, the territory of the Eora Nation is estimated to cover around 700 square miles (1,800 km²); the reality that these people have lived in this area for well over 55,000 years is evidenced in dated middens and artworks carved (Figure 11) and drawn on sandstone caves and escarpments.³⁵

Much of Sydney's now built-up environment has either buried or destroyed many Aboriginal sites, or has used traditional practices to build the city's infrastructure. For instance, the arterial and main roads to and from Sydney and over the Blue Mountains heading west into regional New South Wales



Figure 13

Joseph Lycett, *Sydney from Surry Hills*, 1819. Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

(Figure 12) are built on Aboriginal people's travelling tracks established tens of thousands of years before the British arrived.

Aboriginal communities, especially around developed urban centres like the Wangal/Gadigal Lands of Sydney, find themselves continually torn between historical protection and progress. A core principle here is the requirement to define what is traditional culture and practice and to establish a hierarchy of value for practices around that time stamp.³⁶ This approach encourages an assumed dollar value to assign to a site, practice or access and compares this to the contemporary value of infrastructure. Ultimately, this equation is loaded in favour of 'progress', the destruction of cultural sites for mining, roads, footpaths or public access. The lost value of such sites goes beyond conventional economic understanding to encompass concepts of social capital, emotional and physical wellbeing, connection, identity and the health of Country and environment. Joseph Lycett's 1819 painting, *Sydney from Surry Hills* (Figure 13), is a representation of the Sydney region near the University of Sydney grounds, showing open healthy Country, then barely touched by colonisation and urbanisation.



Figure 14

Ben Bowen, *USYD Quad, The Burial Ground*, undated. Photo: Ben Bowen.

It took a mere 18 months after the arrival of the colonial forces in 1788 to identify the value of the ‘Kangaroo Ground’, now known as The University of Sydney, which stands at the junction of two major Songlines that track towards the west and the southwest through open Country and fresh waterways.

Gadigal Land was allocated to the Crown and church authorities to establish Grose Farm (1793) and the Female Orphan Institute (1801) and to appropriate the traditional Songline into what is now known as Parramatta Road (1793). The establishment of Grose Farm saw the destruction of the pre-contact cultivated land, trees, crops and waterways through attempts to create water reservoirs. Despite these disruptions to Gadigal Land management practices, in 1821 Commissioner Bigge’s report highlighted favourable yields from Grose Farm in terms of food production for the colony. However, by 1823 Bigge altered his findings to state that Grose Farm’s production had failed due to poor land management by settler colonials.³⁷

Consequently, within 30 years of colonisation, the landscape that had previously sustained Aboriginal peoples, cultures, agriculture and aquaculture had been eradicated under the ill-informed hands of colonial occupation that dominated Gadigal and Wangal cultures.

Furthermore, the colonial disruptions to Aboriginal cultural practices and connection to Country continued with the construction of the University of Sydney’s Great Hall and Quadrangle on Gadigal People’s traditional burial

grounds. The Great Hall and Quadrangle are the university's most significant buildings, where graduations and other major ceremonies are held (Figure 14). The grand sandstone buildings, manicured lawns and prized jacaranda trees have their foundations buried deep into the bedrock of the burial grounds of the Gadigal People.

The burial grounds were located above the bedrock. This bedrock protected the underground and surface waterways from getting contaminated. It also created a 'secure' isolated place for traditional Gadigal burial ceremonies. The Lore, according to which the site was cared for with fire, limited the growth of flora for the protection of graves. Today, when Aboriginal people walk past these burial grounds with visitors, they create a connection to Country by teaching them to see beyond the concrete and sandstone structures. Pre-contact life is described by focusing on the sources of the local sandstone, cultural fire, land care, grasslands and protections of Country relating to the burial grounds, rather than colonial histories. The ability to challenge people to use their senses to bypass their vision connects them to Country and Culture, just as it always has been. Songlines have been buried under layers of road base and surface materials, but the Country we have always learned about keeps pushing back through, with the emergence of native species in the landscapes and with waterways continually flooding buildings and underground car parks. Today, greater attention is being focussed on the opportunities to connect and reconnect to Country, even when Country has been buried under layers of concrete and mortar, overshadowed by tall buildings. It is this connection that Elders have been able to use to frame and draw out the traditional Culture, Law and Lore of the Country within the colonial infrastructure.

Aboriginal Reclamation

The constant destruction, removal and repurposing of land through colonisation creates an almost impossible task of the reclamation of space by Aboriginal people. The removal of scarred trees (trees from which bark was removed for shields and bowls or trees with significant markings to commemorate a place or Elders who had died), cultural artefacts and places and the loss of native flora and fauna creates a major challenge – to be able to reimagine and recreate this space when surrounded by colonial buildings, concrete and the overwhelming narratives and records of colonial endeavour. In the University of Sydney's

own conservation management plan, the colonisation process has been viewed successfully:

The freshwater sources and swamps within or in close proximity to the University grounds, east and west of the Petersham Ridge, may have attracted occasional Aboriginal occupation. However, there are no sandstone outcrops (commonly utilised by Aboriginals in the region) on the campus, no source[s] of stone for tool manufacture have been found, and no Aboriginal sites have yet been located within the area of the grounds.³⁸

The destruction and removal of the physical, cultural features of the site has led to a belief in the erasure and elimination of Aboriginal cultural mapping connections and history.

Although modified, altered or damaged by colonisation, Country is not defined as lost by Aboriginal communities. The precedent for our community lies in the lands, waterways and sky affected by climate changes witnessed by our ancestors. As our stories have told over thousands of years, many of our places remain on the harbour and ocean floor due to the changing sea levels witnessed by our ancestors. We have not lost these places to ocean waters, as we still retain the place, its name and its connection to our systems; it is a physical and spiritual embodiment throughout time, mapped through our Songlines. Alteration through colonisation and the urbanisation of our landscapes does not reduce our connection to their physical presence on a site. We may no longer be able to put our feet in the river, but we may still know its name, travel its path and understand its connection and place. The past is always reflected in the present and through the Elders.

The reclamation of Aboriginal Land is witnessed through annual events such as the Yabun Festival, held on 26 January on the grounds between two major Songlines and on the waterway that brings together and celebrates Aboriginal survival and resilience. Yabun brings together the old and new cultures, breathing new songs into Country, building connections for the next generations – the same generations of Aboriginal community that walk the Country daily, telling the truth of what lies beneath. Aboriginal communities have been left fighting for protection of still unaltered cultural places, while simultaneously reconnecting to the sites lost to our eyes through colonised urban

development. What economic value can be placed on a cultural site by virtue of its environmental and biodiversity impact, contribution to social wellbeing, and economic, cultural and spiritual values? Such questions have been asked around the world. One example is legally recognising river systems as entities; the Whanganui River in New Zealand has been recognised as having human rights,³⁹ thereby establishing a value for the waterway beyond the resources it contains.

The work of reconnecting to traditional sites and removing the burdens of colonising landscape development opens the door to ‘truth telling’ about place and history. The work underway in Lake Condah in Gunditjmarra Country demonstrates the value of infrastructure in managing environment. Close to Lake Condah is Budj Bim, with high-value cultural sites which were subject to further discoveries following the devastating bushfires in the area in 2019/20. Part of the site was lost to environmental damage due to colonising developments of the area. The Gunditjmarra Country revitalisation work serves as an example of the power of restoration of Country, which also opens restorative possibilities for other Aboriginal Nations, including Cadigal Country and the University of Sydney. As work in Lake Condah provided stability in environmental water flow, so too knowledge, culture and Lore can protect Country and unwind the damage wrought by colonisation.

The University of Sydney demonstrates what happens when inclusivity is not attempted – the grounds are divided around old waterways, which have been damaged by attempts to alter their path. After heavy rain, large areas of the university flood, including sports ovals, buildings, underground car parks and gyms (Figure 9). Work has been undertaken to futureproof the site against water damage, but in the absence of cultural knowledge and Lore little improvement has been made.

Colonisation has created a physical environment that attempts to render Country and culture into a dream or figment of the past, no longer required in the present. Revitalisation and reclaiming of Country through developing new pathways to connect our people to Country, regardless of the damage done by colonisation, remains a core focus in taking the world’s oldest surviving culture and society into the future.

Connection to Country, Land and its environment is strengthened by people, their stories and connection to place through pedagogies of story-telling.⁴⁰ This process helps ensure that Aboriginal world views and cultural knowledge are

embodied across Country. Aboriginal ontologies are essential to theorising the world precisely because people are forced to apprehend, appraise and then rethink “universals”⁴¹ while undergoing place-based learning, which includes secular/sacred practices communicated through experiential learning. Such learning is concerned with maintaining the world’s peoples and environments, guaranteeing all living creatures and plants a right to their own existence and contribution to Mother Earth – rather than isolating them as ‘natural’ resources, which assumes they are only present in the environment to be used for and by people.

Re-Mapping Aboriginal Presence for Inclusive Connections

Aboriginal people’s concerns are ignored when colonising agencies serve to extinguish Aboriginal sovereignty, which diminishes Aboriginal connections to specific Country as place-based communities. Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty comment that this also encourages the view of Aboriginal people as “artefacts,” not as dynamic cultures.⁴² As a result, it is vital to engage with Aboriginal peoples in the dialogic process to ensure there is ongoing inclusion of, and initiation and interest in, local cultural knowledge, often cited as “bush knowledge” in Australia, with its own pedagogies, with a clear understanding that this is local knowledge appropriate to specific Country – not just any place in Australia.⁴³

Aboriginal identities have been challenged, broken, displaced, disembodied and influenced by the forces of settler colonialism, globalisation, neoliberal power and siloed sovereignty, and also through the exclusion of Aboriginal epistemology, ontology and cosmology.⁴⁴ At the same time, people are seeking to reproduce Aboriginal knowledge through Western lenses and classification systems (for example, Linnaean taxonomy), and place Western research approaches, education and pedagogies of social practice as the primary ways of knowing, being and doing.⁴⁵ This serves to create a pan-universalism of “planetary consciousness”, embedding the deep structures of “colonialist consciousness”⁴⁶ which ignore and displace local Aboriginal knowledges and exploitation of resources through the rhetoric of ‘progress’. Western science is validated over traditional Aboriginal knowledges, leading the march toward urban contemporaneity⁴⁷ which seeks to exclude the natural world.

One must ask, then: What is the place of Aboriginal people, their traditions

and knowledge of the environment, animals, waterways and skies, derived from their continuing links with Country vs commercialisation and the over-use of land and its resources? In this scenario, it is more than ever imperative to ensure that Aboriginal people's knowledges and inclusivity are mapped and utilised, rather than being built over and denied.

The responsibility for this mapping of prior occupation, culture, language, Lore, Law and connection to Country is often laid on Aboriginal peoples, who must 'prove' living and continuing connections. While Byrne and Nugent have shown how such 'proof' may be attained,⁴⁹ we must still come to appreciate some of the issues and challenges which exist for Aboriginal peoples in bearing this 'burden of proof'. In what follows is set out the ways in which this cultural mapping might be done, as established by Byrne and Nugent, whereby cultural mapping of Country is achieved through language – stories, personal narratives and songs. Unfortunately, in the translation to Western modes of historical heritage (as opposed to cultural heritage) there is an implication that Aboriginal heritage has no place in the post-contact period, implying it is not authentic or 'real.'⁵⁰ Byrne and Nugent have demonstrated how mapping of cultural and historical heritage may be undertaken through the use of archives, landscapes and narratives – using Western modes of record keeping. Riley has further expanded this approach, outlining the challenges for Aboriginal Australians.

1. Archives

Archives constitute one way in which historical heritage is recorded and stored. They include legislation – the Acts and laws passed by each state in Australia; historical documents placed in formal institutions, which require particular qualifications to access; institutional records, usually maintained and accessed by means of strict guidelines within the institution, with their own filing and writing styles; and aerial maps of sites, often interpreted by anthropologists. These Western systems often create controversy and conflict for Aboriginal people as they exclude their traditional practices as irrelevant. Archival records are often in a formal style or relate to a particular discipline, such as anthropology, which many Aboriginal people are unable to access or understand, and are held within institutions which Aboriginal people are unable to access, review or challenge. Additionally, much of this material is recorded through Western lenses. It is also often viewed through a patriarchal cultural lens and often excludes Aboriginal

women. This becomes a major issue when anthropologists state, for example, that “Aboriginal women had no role in traditional ceremonies.” Such statements become part of the fabric of misinformation and lies relating to cultural practice, which must now be refuted through formal research and publications. We also need to recognise that often in these documents Aboriginal people were seen as enemies and cross-cultural exchanges did not occur. Aboriginal people’s cultural knowledges and connections to particular Country were often used by colonisers to divide and segregate them. Additionally, the impact of changes to the environment – the clearing of land, the establishment of villages and townships – have changed the landscape, and we must delve beneath this surface to find what has always been there for Aboriginal people.

Institutional archives need to build in Aboriginal histories through incorporating oral heritage, including storytelling, yarnning and songs to inform the interpretation of existing records and acknowledge the different filters appropriate to different cultures and eras. We urgently need to encourage more oral recordings and explore how to turn these into archives which are not only place-based, but Clan- and Nation-based. We need to determine the gaps in the records caused by Aboriginal oral traditions being excluded, thereby ensuring that Aboriginal histories and connection to Country were invalidated. Another archival source that is under-utilised are family archives, with their photos and stories which provide evidence of the waves of change experienced by Aboriginal peoples over time; this material has traditionally not been kept or viewed as relevant for archival storage.

2. Landscapes

Landscapes offer a spatial focus for the formation of cultural memory and mapping; they are utilised to create an understanding of community development which is especially important in urban development. Sources used in this process are the mapping of spatial areas where communities are building; determining what has influenced changes in the landscape; the maintenance of accurate records, to archive what lies beneath urban developments; identifying those who identify with a specific community and/or urban development, people and families who may have a personal investment in these areas; identifying the borders created across Country to separate villages and townships and how these borders were created, including what and who influenced this process.

The key issues for Aboriginal people in this area are the non-inclusion or appreciation of the history of contact, the policies and wider community practices which influenced the post-contact landscape. These factors included where Aboriginal people could live; policies of segregation and assimilation; and the racial violence that accompanied both rural and urban development which separated the places where Aboriginal people could live from non-Aboriginal settlements and towns. These policies, which supported racist views that Aboriginal people were not welcome in many towns, ensured that they were made visible but treated as invisible peoples, dependent on local non-Aboriginal community attitudes. This raises questions of whether Aboriginal people were classified as refugees or people seeking refuge; or the expectation that Aboriginal people were built out of rural and urban development as they were viewed as only needing a place to stay as a base for a stop-over, not permanent residences in the townships. Additionally, both rural and urban development often sought to exclude and hide Aboriginal prior occupancy by building over and/or destroying their sites of significance.

Key post-contact sites for Aboriginal people are the established Reserves, Missions and Stations on which they were forced to reside. In assessing Aboriginal Reserve and Mission sites, there is a need to understand why Aboriginal people were placed in certain locations. Were these sites places of control or havens for Aboriginal people? Were they intended to allow them to cultivate food crops on their own land or to avoid hostile ‘white’ farmers? The history of the establishment of Reserves and Missions and the ‘real’ reason for their closure is contentious, since land was often taken back by government agencies and redistributed to ‘white’ farmers. Additionally, there are the legal ramifications involved in how this land was provided – as leased sites or camps or gazetted government Reserves. Each provides a different version of how Aboriginal people have been viewed and treated in rural and urban development.

The mapping of landscapes on Reserves and Missions needs to take into consideration that they were often spatially organised following traditional campsite practices – for example, with separate men’s, women’s and family areas. Spatial mapping must incorporate Aboriginal people’s traditional connections across Country, such as ‘spirits’ and their hiding places. Often Aboriginal Missions and Reserves were turned into living museum exhibits and tourist attractions – for example, La Perouse, now a suburb in Sydney.

Understanding the impacts on Aboriginal people forced to live in these conditions is imperative in mapping these sites. What has been the impact on patterns of movement and restriction of movement? What has been the impact on health of the destruction of traditional travelling tracks, food sources, ceremonial sites, family and Kinship networks, and work roles changed to meet Western employment requirements? And how do changes to the landscape create borders across Country? We need to have a greater appreciation of the reality that Aboriginal Nations and Clans cut across Western boundaries at local, regional and state levels, and of the ongoing impact of this on people's livelihoods and cultural practices.

3. Narratives

Narratives here refer to the heritage and autobiographical memory which is publicly recorded and produced to document rural and urban community development. Narratives are important where concrete evidence is either missing or difficult to prove – where there are “no observable physical traces on or in the ground ... unlikely to have left any detectable physical remains or any long-term imprint on the terrain.”⁵⁰ Oral archives can be built up through collecting written autobiographical stories, oral stories which were filmed or oral recordings. Such stories consolidate geo-biological connections of individuals, families and communities to particular locations, and offer corroborating evidence based on other people's stories, family records and artefacts. These stories can be supported by historical evidence – for example, locating oral interviews on landscape maps, where they help make visible personal histories, landscapes and places with special significance. This work includes filling out the histories of public places not normally noticed, such as: swimming pools, picture theatres and schools, to create cultural landscapes.

Key issues with the narrative approach include Western patriarchal attitudes which have ignored Aboriginal women's stories and cultural practices; Aboriginal stories being interpreted by non-Aboriginal investigators in terms of autobiographical memory, which is problematic at best; and the effect of a particular era and place on a given narrative, particularly the policies which sought to govern and control Aboriginal peoples. Technical issues include the quality of the narrative and recording; the identity of the interview team, their technical expertise and their understanding of Aboriginal protocols and

suitability to collect narratives from the Aboriginal community as part of the evidence process.

These factors determine what and how evidence was recorded and what knowledges are or aren't passed on. Other questions include what corroborating materials were gathered, before, during and after interviews, and is there a need for follow-up interviews to clarify particular points? What and whose language is used in the narratives, who is doing the interviews and who is transcribing them – that is, is the language being accurately recorded, or is it being translated for Western understanding, which may dilute the meaning of what was recorded? What codes of ethics was applied in oral history collections and maintained in the ongoing use of material? What role is given to Aboriginal people to veto what is collected, how it is distributed and in owning their own information? Who holds copyright and intellectual and cultural rights to the information gathered? It may create ongoing distress for communities when they are told, for example, that particular universities and researchers now own their language or stories of connection and use of land across Country. Finally, whose voice and interpretations are recorded as being valid? – often Aboriginal occupation over many thousands of years is seen as irrelevant to the colonisers' story and their version of rural and urban development. At this point, it is worth noting the dearth of tangible traces relating to where and how Aboriginal peoples were engaged in establishing townships and public facilities.

Mapping Aboriginal presence and continuity is often subject to Westernised proofs of existence and Western legal systems. While fighting for this recognition, using these Western systems to 'prove' their ongoing continuity and even existence, the burdens and challenges this poses for Aboriginal peoples need to be understood.

Conclusion

Colonisation has forced Western frameworks, landscapes and urbanisation onto Aboriginal peoples worldwide. As a result, Aboriginal ontologies are theorising the world precisely because Aboriginal peoples are being forced to apprehend, appraise and then rethink 'universals.'⁴⁸ Aboriginal peoples in Australia continue to challenge Western understandings of the world, as the latter maintain their over-arching 'right' to impose their values and use of land, waterways, animals and environment as commodities for commercialisation – as opposed to

Aboriginal rights to existence and relationship outside of the commercialisation framework.

This chapter has provided an overview of the social and cultural context of Aboriginal Australians living in built-up environments; what has been attempted through Western-style urbanisation to make Aboriginal occupation invisible, to build over and destroy Aboriginal connections to Country and Land; and the ways in which Aboriginal people maintain their unbroken connections to Country, seeing beneath the concrete and tar of colonisation.

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Notes

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Figure 15

The town of Marikana showing the railway line and chromite loading siding to the north of the town and the central high street with its retail development and many open urban allotments. Surrounding the town are formal and informal settlements and commercial farmlands. The Lonmin Marikana Platinum mine and site of the police killings are to the east of the town and not in this image (Google Earth image March 2021, AfriGIS (Pty) Ltd 2021 and Image@2021 Maxar Technologies).

CHAPTER FOUR

Marikana

Sue Jean Taylor

A Town in Decline and the 'Ordinariness' of Apartheid, Atrocity and Ruin

South African towns and cities are infamous for their racially segregated town planning and spatial structures,¹ with 'black' areas (townships) usually located in less desirable neighbourhoods than the 'white' residential and business areas. Townships were established on the outskirts of urban and industrial areas in order to form a reservoir of low-paid black migrant labour to sustain the towns and cities economically. Any large-scale urban migration of black work-seekers was prohibited through racially based legislation. Following the first South African democratic election in 1994, work-seeking movements were no longer restricted and, as a result, formal low-cost housing lags far behind the needs of work-seeking migrants. Informal settlements have sprung up around all major towns and cities to house hundreds of thousands of migrant workers, including mineworkers in South Africa's mining areas.

In many small towns in South Africa, the apartheid-built infrastructure is physically still in place, but the original ideological and restrictive spatial design has been overridden by the desperate need for housing for low-income earners. Although the core structure of the original settlements may remain in many of South Africa's former 'white towns,' many small towns and their very large peripheral townships are now de facto 'black towns' with a black African majority.²

One particular small South African town, Marikana, in the North West Province, witnessed a fatal police ambush when, in 2012, a now infamous miners' strike occurred. A large group of platinum miners, employed by the mining company Lonmin, demanded more money for their dangerous toil. In particular, the rock drillers, who felt they took the most risk, wanted to be paid R12,500 per month, rather than the R4000 they received. For the strike to hold, non-striking miners had to be intimidated, and some were brutally murdered.³

The Lonmin management declared the strikers to be “criminals” and events began moving towards a brutal conclusion. In the absence of a plan to manage the striking miners and bring the confrontation to a safe conclusion, armed police and sharpshooters were brought in and given high-powered rifles. Many of the police took the provision of such weapons as permission to use extreme force. The unarmed strikers, including Mgcineni Noki, who achieved international fame as the “man in the green blanket,” expected negotiations, but were instead shot dead while the world watched via numerous television channels. Around 17 miners were shot as they moved in formation towards a line of police officers, and another 17 unarmed miners, some injured, were later murdered as they hid amongst the boulders of the nearby hill known as Small Koppie.

The nation was deeply shocked by these events, which marked a sober end to the vision of post-apartheid South Africa as a society where violence against black people was a thing of the past.⁴ The Farlam Commission of Inquiry that followed placed the blame on an over-zealous police response and subsequent cover-up by the police and industry actors, as well as pointing to a corrupt and incompetent municipal administration that had become a symbol of post-apartheid governance and had created a landscape of despair.

Before the 2012 Marikana atrocity and the local and international notoriety it generated, few outsiders had heard of this small town. And while, before the atrocity, little research had been done on the platinum sector and the severe social and economic stresses it was creating, the police shooting of striking mineworkers drew instant academic attention to the political and labour issues within this mining landscape.⁵

The History of Marikana

The Rustenburg area was divided into white farms from the 1850s onwards, largely ignoring the existence of black landowners and traditional forms of land ownership. The town of Marikana was established in 1870 and was set within a landscape of white-owned farms in the then Transvaal Boer republic. Today, the tiny farming town is located in the post-apartheid Rustenburg Local Municipality, within the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality of North West Province. In the 1970s, the mining of platinum group metals began to replace agriculture as the dominant industry in the region, with ongoing and complex social impacts.⁶

Today Marikana is set, not within a fertile farming region, but within a damaged mining landscape dominated by the infrastructure, tailings dams and rock dumps left by the platinum mining industry.⁷ The town is further surrounded by a sprawl of new, low-cost, residential settlements of RDP housing (Reconstruction and Development Programme, a low-cost government housing programme) and massive areas of informal settlements marked by various levels of treeless destitution. Unlike the nearby small city of Rustenburg, which has had townships for black workers since the 1920s, Marikana had no such places. Presumably, in the past, the few black town workers lived in back rooms behind shops or on white-owned farm plots near the town. In the past, no black person would have been allowed to own land within the town.

Since platinum mining began in the Rustenburg area, a population boom has erupted as desperate people are drawn to the area in search of work – although they do not always end up employed.⁸ The desperate need for low-cost housing in this region has overridden the restrictive, ‘old-style’ apartheid town planning framework, and the invisible apartheid boundary around Marikana has effectively been demolished by the new municipal authorities and private property developers to create a massive sprawl of low-cost housing beyond the urban edge.

Coincidentally (or unluckily), the town is very near to the Lonmin plc Marikana Platinum Mining Concession, and while the 2012 atrocity has been extensively researched, Marikana itself has been ignored by photographers, journalists and academics despite being a ‘witness’ to the events that led up to the massacre. The killings have left no trace on the physical structure of the town, and the uninformed will find no evidence of these shocking events in the town. Nowhere in Marikana is there a formal memorial to the 34 miners who died there. There are no monuments, posters, graffiti or opportunistic tourist signage reading “To the Massacre Site – R20 fee for guide” in or around the town. After 2012, 34 white crosses (now vandalised) were placed at the massacre site, which is difficult to reach in an ordinary vehicle, discouraging gawping visitors. Floral wreaths are occasionally laid there on the anniversary of the shootings.⁹ A luxurious memorial garden was mooted by Lonmin in 2016, but has failed to appear. Instead, in 2019 Lonmin’s mining and refinery complex was sold to Sibanye-Stillwater at a fire-sale price, leaving the new owners to deal with a hostile union and fractious wage talks.¹⁰

The establishment of Marikana in 1870 indicates that the original town had a purpose within the white farming community, and considerable built evidence of this purpose remain – for example, the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) building on the main street, a row of shops, planted pavement trees, smallholder plots once used for market gardening, and the railway station with waiting rooms and stationmaster’s accommodation. In 1948, the Afrikaner National Party came to power, and draconian race laws were introduced. Plans for the renovation of the railway station in the 1950s show that there were to be separate waiting rooms, ticket offices and parcel counters for “Whites” and “Non-Whites.”¹¹

While Marikana has never been a residential town – equipped with a town hall, school and leafy side streets with rows of houses – there are about 12 smallholder properties at the southern end of the town, with spacious if unremarkable dwellings as well as farm workshops and sheds. In 2021, these smallholder properties appear run down, with little farming activity evident,¹² although they have not been redeveloped for low-cost housing. This makes one suspect that there are hidden issues relating to residual white land ownership in and around the town, prohibiting municipal buy-outs for low-cost housing schemes. Public plans for the Rustenburg Local Municipality suggest the development of a regional Central Business District (CBD) at Marikana to serve a “vast urban agglomeration” of the future greater Rustenburg;¹³ landowners within the town may have positioned themselves to benefit from this development. The town’s infrastructure progressively deteriorates down the main road towards the railway line in the north; and across the rail tracks, to the north and east, the informal settlements for black mineworkers begin.

Using Google Earth Street View (images from 2010), and Google Earth (images from 2019), the urban fabric of Marikana (25° 41’ 29.08” S, 27° 29’ 23.78” E, elevation 1164 metres) and surrounds can readily be seen, including the main road, the retail facilities and railway siding, as well as the surrounding informal settlements (Figure 15).

Research Interest in “Unremarkable” Places

There is intense research interest in the ordinary towns and cities of the world and how they are responding to global change.¹⁴ The global urbanising process currently underway is unprecedented in human history and the world is unsure

of the consequences of rapid urbanisation. In both the developing and developed world, small towns are becoming ghost towns as young people leave for the bigger urban centres. At the same time, the infrastructure of the cities of the Global North is aging, creating many “unremarkable” and derelict urban sites, often described as “non-places,” in European towns and cities. Investigations of these areas are revealing that many neglected and abandoned places are worthy of study for a variety of reasons.¹⁵ These include their current use by non-mainstream occupants such as drug addicts, homeless people and teenagers with skateboards, as well as many of them being sites of new, ‘wild,’ urban biodiversity.¹⁶

Although “unremarkable places” or “non-places” in the urban landscape¹⁷ have not been well studied in South Africa, academic interest in the dynamics of unoccupied urban land and urban “spaces” in South African cities is slowly growing.¹⁸ In South Africa, abandoned, ordinary and unspectacular urban places will in all likelihood carry racial meanings linked to the apartheid past of racial exclusion and will not in fact be vacant, but occupied by destitute black persons. Investigating the “unremarkableness” of the tiny South African farming town of Marikana seemed a worthy project, particularly considering the proximity of this ‘ordinary’ town to an ‘extraordinary’ event, the 2012 police shooting of striking mineworkers. The town is also interesting because of its bystander status in the face of the poverty and exploitation in the platinum mining sector. While the small white farming town of Marikana was “unremarkable” for a very long time, the 2012 atrocity should have made it visibly exceptional in some way – but it has failed to do so.

As an outsider visiting the town, one has the sense of stepping into a rather ominous ‘movie set’ where subtle cues have been provided to indicate that bad things have happened in the past, that nothing here is pleasant, and that there are hidden elements of violence creating tension. The settlement seems desperate and brash, a dangerous frontier or mining town with dusty, pot-holed streets, formidable mining infrastructure all around and hardscrabble poverty the lot of local people. Heavy mining vehicles carrying loads of ore roll continuously through the town. Walk-on ‘actors’ appear, carrying crates of beer. Smoke billows from an informal street barbeque where ‘hoodlums’ stand around and converse, setting the scene for a drama yet to happen. The town has a raw, masculine aura, attesting to the prominence of male labour in the local mines.

There are no luxuries in Marikana, which caters heavily for the mineworker clientele, providing liquor outlets, money lenders, *chisa nyamas* (local barbeque eateries) and shops that sell essential goods, clothing and basic groceries.

Nonetheless, there are many women living in the area, some in transient relationships with the migrant mineworkers, and others from the surrounding rural areas seeking a settled life and schools for their children. The various mining companies in the platinum mining areas have failed to assist with housing their workers, and this neglect has led to many social and health problems. The link between a poorly housed mining labour force and higher HIV/AIDS infection rates is well known.¹⁹ Poor working and living conditions, chronic fatigue and indebtedness all contribute to stress and worker safety issues.²⁰ Also of concern is the failure of the police to address issues of sex work, rape and sexual violence²¹ and the trafficking of women in the area.

Alcohol plays a major part in the lives of the mineworkers, both as a coping mechanism and as a social outlet. It is hard to miss the very large liquor store at the northern edge of town, close to the informal settlements across the railway line. Although there is a sports stadium near the Wonderkop informal settlement some kilometres away, there are no recreational facilities in and around Marikana, no cinemas, sports fields and sports clubs or other gathering places, although *shebeens* (indoor drinking venues) may exist in the informal settlements. Alcoholism is rife²² and it is disturbing to see so many crates of beer being unloaded outside the town liquor store. There are also many ‘drinking trees’ at the side of the road just outside the town. These large, shady thorn trees are littered underneath with hundreds of bottle caps, broken glass and empty beer bottles, where men sit in the shade and drink as their recreation.

Other pointers to economic distress are the number of roughly constructed roadside stalls, where women traders sit under threadbare umbrellas selling fresh produce, enduring very unpleasant conditions including vehicle noise and dust and 40° Celsius heat in summer. People walk long distances in and around the town to save on taxi fares.²³ Morgan Ndlovu has noted the “unbearable” living conditions at Marikana.²⁴

All these features indicate that both the town of Marikana and the Marikana region around Lonmin’s platinum operation are not pleasant rural places, but are stressed localities with adverse health and other consequences for residents.²⁵ Suicide rates are high among platinum miners.²⁶ However, there are a number of



Figure 16
Retail outlets on the Marikana high street, 2018 (photograph by author).

formal and informal churches in and around the town, attesting to the importance of faith in this area.

The 'Ordinariness' of Apartheid

The history of South Africa was shaped by colonial rule (by both the Netherlands and Great Britain), by the discovery of gold, diamonds and platinum, as well as by the system of racial segregation known as apartheid.²⁷ During early Dutch, British and then National Party Afrikaner rule (1948-94), racial segregation would have been considered as both ordinary and normal and not widely questioned. After 1948, when it came to power, the South African National Party promulgated the Group Areas Act No. 41 (1950) and other apartheid legislation, making racial segregation a 'justifiable' and 'normal' state for society. South Africa's different racial groups were assigned to different residential and business sections of urban areas in order to ensure white dominance of the country and subjugate non-white people. Black people were relegated to distant and unpleasant localities, further entrenching their disadvantage. Again, this was

considered a normal aspect of South African life, and went largely unchallenged by white National Party voters. It was seen as normal by white persons for different race groups to live in (or be forced to live in) different areas.

Pressure against the apartheid system intensified from the late 1980s onwards as both political pressure and the need for black Africans to urbanise and access economic opportunities became an unstoppable challenge to the 'normal and ordinary' in South Africa. The Group Areas Act was repealed in 1991. In 1994 the first South African democratic election allowed all citizens of the country to live and work wherever they chose. Suddenly, the 'ordinary' was overturned.

Residual Apartheid in Urban Design

While the 1994 post-apartheid Constitution aimed to create a future free from discrimination and inequality, traces of the country's segregated past remain in the urban infrastructure. Even after the repeal of racial legislation, South African towns and cities exhibit the historic, racially defined zones within urban structures,²⁸ with the most desirable land already taken up by whites and their interests. This legacy of racially based town planning is an ongoing constraint in the post-1994 era. Jeannie Van Wyk explains that the multiple laws regulating spatial planning in South Africa continue to impede the proper allocation of land use and perpetuate the deep inequalities of the past.²⁹

As the new post-apartheid democracy matures, social and spatial change is accelerating in many places, although not always in the ways anticipated or desired. According to Dinah Rajak, the post-1994 period is characterised by the persistence of economic apartheid which produces spatial configurations that are reminiscent of the old order of racial segregation.³⁰ Poverty and the inability to afford decent accommodation now define residential settlements. Racial integration in urban areas is slowly becoming evident with the growth of the black middle class and movement of wealthier blacks into formerly whites-only residential and business areas.³¹ In addition, the emerging and complex patterning of socio-spatial changes occurring in South African cities is being influenced by events at the local, national and international levels, including the instability of neighbouring African countries and persistent cross-border migration and settlement,³² as well as high unemployment rates and labour migration by black South Africans. Although segregation still exists in most urban areas, it conforms to new lines of ethnicity (local blacks and foreign

blacks), income and faith,³³ and is no longer enforced by law.

Post-apartheid transitions in the country's small towns have not been adequately studied,³⁴ other than the recognition that the dynamics linking housing and job availability are driving social transitions and urban development in these areas. Lemon and Clifford found that there is no single post-apartheid experience and that different towns and cities, and even different neighbourhoods within the urban areas, are undergoing different spatial transitions. This is happening at the same time that rapid urban development is seemingly overriding rational town planning regimes. In terms of South Africa's urban planning regulations, there has been a post-1994 "loosening of political and related controls" in the way the land is used and by whom,³⁵ changes which reflect the need to rapidly build new mass housing in places like the Rustenburg Local Municipality. New urban housing developments are now driven by mandates for sustainable urban settlements and low-cost rental accommodation and housing, rather than racially based ideological imperatives.

Because the existing urban structure cannot be altered significantly, the current situation of unplanned settlement characterised by large-scale urban sprawl continues to be a reality throughout South Africa.³⁶ This situation is very evident in and around Rustenburg and at Marikana. Poor black people still have to live in bleak peripheral localities. The population of the Marikana sub-place (town and surrounds) is 19,522 – 98.3 percent black African, 0.1 percent Coloured, 0.5 percent Asian, 0.9 percent white and 0.2 percent considered as "other."³⁷ Poverty and competition between the various ethnic groups and between locals and migrants creates conflict in the Marikana area. Xhosa is the predominant language spoken (reflecting a majority of Xhosa workers from the Ciskei), but the local Tswana, Tsonga and Sotho languages are also significant.

The post-apartheid period has its own share of political and economic challenges, including the proliferation of stagnating small towns linked to dysfunctional municipalities and a lack of investment in local economic development.³⁸ At the same time, major economic changes are causing many small towns and rural areas in South Africa to stagnate as agricultural and mining economies experience decline.³⁹ In the Rustenburg Local Municipality, platinum mining is still a strong industry and Rustenburg remains one of South Africa's fastest growing secondary cities, with the population growing by 410 percent between 1995 and 2015. Rustenburg is evolving into a complex

metropolitan area, hopefully with a diverse economic future and a diminished reliance on mining.⁴⁰

Platinum Mining and Spatial Inequality in Housing and Living

Since the 1970s, the Rustenburg platinum mines have attracted thousands of desperate and hopeful work-seekers. The unmet need for affordable housing and rental options in the mining areas has resulted in a vast peri-urban sprawl of formal and informal settlements across the landscape – a situation which perpetuates spatial inequality and hampers urban integration. This reality manifests itself in the growing number of informal settlements in the mining areas, creating a blighted landscape. To the north and east of Marikana are massive informal settlements, of various levels of treeless destitution. Land invasions have taken place in and around Marikana – for example, the informal settlement next to the railway line (Figure 15) and the many informal settlements on farmland and hidden away from main roads (but visible in Google Earth images taken in 2019).

Marikana's black migrant mine workers and other black residents find themselves segregated along economic lines, with slightly better-off black families living in small government-funded RDP houses, while the unemployed and those drawing on the "living-out allowance" live in appalling conditions in informal settlements like Nkaneng on the outskirts of Marikana. The so-called living-out allowance is optional, and is paid to mineworkers by Lonmin as an alternative to the company providing them with hostel accommodation. This allowance is seen as highly problematic and has led to an increase in informal dwellings around the mine workings. Mineworkers remit the allowance to their families, or spend it on local entertainment and women, or to pay to live in a one-room rented shack.⁴¹

Some distance to the north-west of the town, numerous new housing developments for low-income and low-to-middle-income black residents are springing up. These estates form a huge treeless sprawl of modern, yet semi-unliveable, low-cost houses that lack amenities (parks, recreational centres, old age homes, sports facilities, churches, transport hubs, shops), although they contain a large number of clinics and a high school. Ntemba notes that the rapid growth of uncontrolled informal settlements on Rustenburg's outskirts has flouted one of the Rustenburg Local Municipality's Spatial Development

Framework's priorities – to ensure that new residential developments are located within the urban edge and are determined by the availability of bulk services, social amenities, economic opportunities and public transport systems, and provide for sustainable urban and rural development.⁴² In this instance, sound town planning and aspirational goals making for 'a better life for all' – rather than repressive ideological ambitions – have been over-ridden by the desperate need for low-cost housing. Here, the positive environmental practise of demarcating an urban edge has been erased by the sheer pressure for cheap housing.

Bad Housing Ignites Conflict and Ends with a Police Massacre

The platinum industry in South Africa has experienced serious labour unrest since 2007 as it has become increasingly clear that the wealth from the platinum mines has failed to create any wealth for the mineworkers.⁴³ In 2011, a year before the massacre, Lonmin was already experiencing violent community protests at its Marikana operations, indicating workers' anger and frustration over the low wages paid in return for dangerous work and numerous fatal mining accidents. David Van Wyk notes that while Lonmin took "extensive steps to reduce fatalities and injuries at its operations," the company failed to mitigate the appalling living conditions endured by workers and their impact on workers' health and their ability to work safely.⁴⁴ Unsafe and unhealthy working and living conditions are part of an ongoing landscape of trauma which exists around the town.

The informal settlements of Nkaneng and Wonderkop, located near the Lonmin Marikana Platinum Mining Concession areas, were major flashpoints that sparked the 2012 miners' strike,⁴⁵ places where discontent had built up to intolerable levels. Nkaneng contains thousands of corrugated iron and cardboard shacks, housing an estimated 15,000 people living in absolute deprivation.⁴⁶ Amnesty International deemed housing for mineworkers at Marikana "squalid and inadequate," and after the 2012 massacre Lonmin increased its efforts to provide formal apartments for workers and their families, but only because of pressure from the organisation. According to Ndlovu, black workers in South African industry remain hidden, and he asserts that the "hellish and unbearable" conditions of the Marikana platinum mining landscape made the 2012 massacre "inevitable." For him, the majority of the black labouring population in South

Africa inhabit a zone of “non-being” characterised by “hellish living conditions including low wages, hard labour, squalid accommodation and premature death” – this describes conditions at Marikana.⁴⁷ Despite the mining strike and the 2012 atrocity, these conditions continue to mark the industrial landscape outside the town of Marikana.

The Marikana Platinum Landscape Remains a Racially Segregated Landscape

Despite political changes in South Africa, the apartheid spatial design processes that began in the 1970s are still evident in the platinum mining towns of North West Province – new settlements for low-income black workers continue to be established not only on the undesirable periphery of towns, but also on tribal land near mining operations.⁴⁸ In the past, many of these peripheral locations were typically located in environmentally degraded areas, lacking basic services and the amenities supporting a quality urban lifestyle. At Marikana, both formal and informal housing for black African workers are still located in degraded areas, now with the added footprint of large-scale mining infrastructure; dangerous road traffic including massive ore trucks; unvegetated tailings dams; a busy railway loading siding for coal, chromite and granite; and dust, railway traffic and noise. All these hazards are located near the new black African residential areas north of the town, rather than inconveniencing the ‘white’ part of town to the south.

An ‘Ordinary’ Town that Witnessed a Massacre

The town of Marikana is a very ‘ordinary’ place. It has no architectural wonders, no scenic views, no heritage museum or ‘atrocities’ walking tours, no gift shops for tourists (there are no tourists) and nowhere for visitors to have coffee (journalists and mining professionals are the only visitors to the town, albeit sporadically). This lack of modern attractions or amenities is surprising given the wealth that the platinum mines have generated for shareholders. Since the massacre, the ordinary has reasserted itself in this small town, despite Philip Frankel’s assertion that the “industrial and political landscape in South Africa was altered forever” by this event.⁴⁹ The town continues to appear drab and shabby (Figure 17), despite the massive publicity that surrounded the 2012 police killings. However, the presence of private vehicles attests to the mobile wealth that exists in the area, if not invested in the town.



Figure 17

A view of the northern end of the Marikana high street showing the older and more informal shopping area near the railway line and chromite loading siding, 2018 (photograph by author).

New Clothes for Old Apartheid-style Towns

As I have hinted, Marikana is not as economically lifeless as one would think at first glance. It is a busy shopping destination for local mineworkers and their families, with cheap goods, imported Chinese blankets and shoes, cell phones and air-time, micro-credit, fresh produce, liquor and traditional medicines and traditional healer consultations all on offer. The nature of trade in this town has shifted to service black Africans on small incomes, and not the needs of the white farmers of the past. While there has been little residential infilling of the town itself, new retail and business outlets have appeared since 2004 including Spar, PEP Stores and a Capitec Bank. There are many other more informal, foreign-owned shops and retail kiosks selling blankets and cell phones, and numerous hawkers of goods and vegetables along the main street, outside the abandoned Dutch Reformed Church and next to the railway line. The town's economy is thus a hybrid of formal retail enterprises and an informal survivalist

economy. One suspects that a key factor hampering the development of Marikana as a regional shopping destination is the sheer lack of spending power in the area. No one has money to buy expensive things.

While Marikana and its surrounds continue to experience the lingering legacy of apartheid spatial inequality, no-one seems to have the resources or sense of urgency to change or challenge this situation. Many small towns and rural areas in South Africa have stagnated or declined as agriculture and mining economies have begun to struggle.⁵⁰ A host of confounding post-apartheid political and economic factors, linked to dysfunctional municipalities and a lack of local economic development, has exacerbated this situation.⁵¹ At Marikana, while platinum mining is still strong, the town itself has clearly not prospered from the industry, although the development of new retail outlets may signal that investment is finally becoming worthwhile. It is often the case that a neighbouring large town or city drains economic activity away from smaller towns, and this may be what has happened to Marikana. Greater Rustenburg is evolving into a complex metropolitan area, drawing in resources from outlying areas, which may be stunting the economic growth of Marikana.

Faith as a Symbol of Apartheid Design

A symbol of past white Afrikaner culture and domination at Marikana is the semi-derelict Dutch Reformed Church, with its imposing spire. The huge church is now surrounded by a broken fencing bolstered with razor wire, and with an overgrown thicket of drought-stressed trees and prickly pears in a large, heat-shrivelled garden. The church attests to the efforts of white farmers in the area to maintain their distinctive faith and culture. This Afrikaner church, established in 1945, no longer has a congregation and has closed. Groups of black informal traders sit outside the church gate with its very faded “Gemeente Marikana” (“Marikana Congregation”) sign, and worship elsewhere. Reflecting the demographic changes in the town, there has been a proliferation of informal churches providing for the needs of the black community living in the vast reaches beyond Marikana. On a Sunday, black folk dressed in their Sunday best can be seen returning from worship and strolling the many footpaths in the area.⁵²

White Abandonment of Marikana

Today white people form only 0.9 percent of the residential population of Marikana (197 individuals), whereas in the past the white presence would have been much greater. The flight of white people from the town may indicate a final, absolute resolution of racial segregation in that the whites have fled to secure, gated developments within Rustenburg or elsewhere, leaving the crowded, underserved and environmentally degraded mining landscape and shabby town entirely to black Africans. Interestingly, at Marikana, while white people are visibly absent, 'hidden' land ownership by whites may be preserving the apartheid structure of the town and forcing new 'black' residential development out into the surrounding landscape, rather than encouraging urban infilling.

While considerable open land remains within the original town, this land has not been used for low-cost infill residential development, despite the huge need for housing in the area. This land (estimated at around 80 percent of the old town's area) was formerly ploughed for farming or market gardens.⁵³ In 1910, Marikana farmers requested a railway siding at Marikana to enable them to supply markets in Pretoria,⁵⁴ and it is likely that fresh produce was grown on these urban plots. These strips of land are currently unoccupied, covered with weeds and traversed by footpaths,⁵⁵ although new retail development has taken up some of these degraded plots to establish a supermarket and shops catering for low-income earners buying basic goods on credit.

Discussion and Conclusions

A relic of a former Boer Republic (ending in 1910 when South African became a British Union) and the apartheid era (1948-94), the town of Marikana no longer fulfils its previous function as an agricultural service town and religious centre for white farmers. Rather, it has become a black town providing goods and services for black mineworkers in the area. The Dutch Reformed Church, long a defiant symbol of White Afrikaner culture, is abandoned and at risk of becoming vandalised as there is no longer an Afrikaans-speaking congregation in the area. The black faithful attend their own churches in the townships and informal areas.

The search for 'ordinariness' in and around Marikana has revealed that the old white town has atrophied over past decades and, rather than being the custodian of apartheid spatial design, is now stranded within a degraded mining

landscape. Today, the town is neighbour to a massive sprawl of formal, low-cost, mass housing projects and dismal shack settlements in a ruined industrial landscape. Marikana was also witness to the Lonmin workers' strike and the 2012 massacre of 34 mineworkers. It hosted the droves of media personnel who came to report on this event and then left, never to return. Of all of this, there is no trace in the town. There is not even a tattered "Remember Marikana" poster or faded graffiti.

However, Marikana was never a town in the strictest sense, with streets, suburbs and buildings where people lived and worked. It was always just a shabby main street, a railway station, goods siding and a few shops, and has been like this for longer than a hundred years. The lack of amenities or notable architecture mark it as unremarkable, and nothing much is known about its early days. Perversely, since 2012, new retail (not housing) development has taken place within Marikana, converting some of the derelict urban farm allotments into modest new shopping centres, and signalling a new hopefulness by investors. The level of white land ownership within the town would be worthy of study for its latent influence on town planning, even though the white residential presence has dwindled to almost nothing.

While Marikana may appear 'ordinary' in terms of small-town architecture in South Africa, the town and its surrounds are host to many unpleasant undercurrents, chiefly labour exploitation, hints of human trafficking of both men⁵⁶ and women, alcoholism and a neglect of the basic human right to decent living arrangements and a safe environment. The Bojanala District Municipality and Rustenburg Local Municipality have both failed in their constitutional duty to improve the housing situation for thousands of incoming labour migrants, and have also failed to anticipate the scale of population growth and accommodation needs that are typically associated with mining industry booms.

While the new era of democracy post-1994 should have presented the opportunity to correct racially based planning in such an 'ordinary' town, in reality the same old type of segregated planning, mostly for reasons of contingency (the availability of cheaper land on the margins of towns and cities), has continued. There is little evidence of urban infilling of unoccupied land within the 'old white town' to provide low-cost housing close to amenities. The apartheid system located black African housing settlements long distances from jobs, and in poor quality landscapes (next to mine dumps or polluting industry),

and the example of Marikana shows that this trend is continuing. Black people are still disadvantaged in the post-apartheid era in Marikana, as they were in any South African town or city in the past, because the areas allocated to them are degraded, unserviced and unpleasant.

The fate of Marikana makes elegant town planning discussions about the legacy of urban apartheid design irrelevant, rather exemplifying a contemporary crisis caused by the inability of the regional municipalities to cope with the massive influx of homeless, semi-destitute work-seekers. The resulting conflicts and stresses experienced by this migrant population are manifesting in embedded violence, alcoholism, crime and violence, mental and physical ill health and exposure to infectious diseases like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, as well as the ongoing lack of safety for women. All this may be creating a situation from which it is difficult for the platinum municipalities to retreat, creating political turbulence and leading to further strike action and police violence, again with loss of life.

Robust new economic enterprises will be needed to sustain a future Rustenburg metropolis and avoid an economic collapse following the eventual exhaustion of the platinum resource. The prospect of greater Rustenburg becoming another mining ghost town is not unimaginable and is an outcome canvassed by Ntemba.⁵⁷ Perhaps the migrant workers will flow elsewhere to take up other opportunities, and the unremarkable town of Marikana will fall back into its tried and tested slumber.

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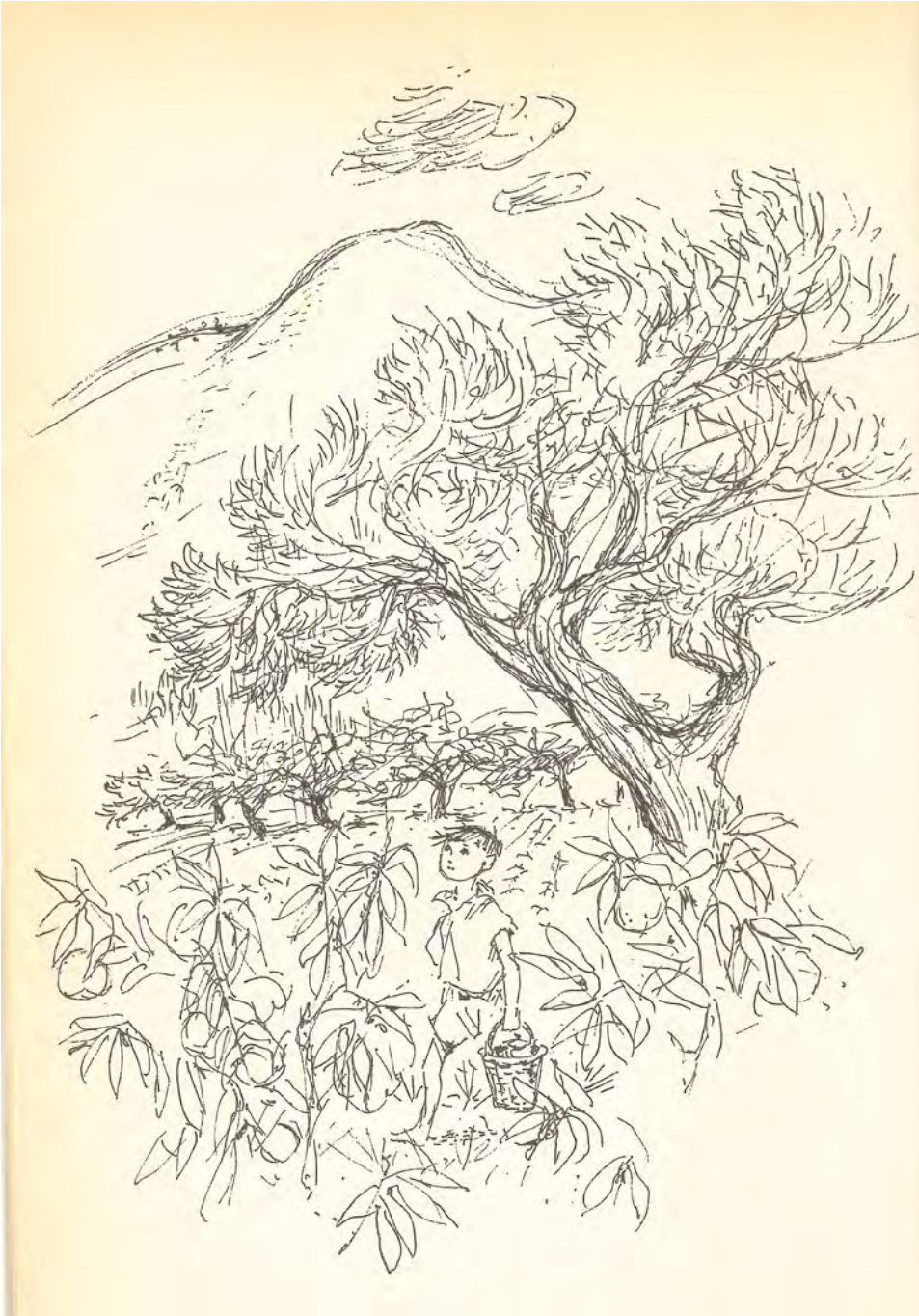


Figure 18

Katrine Harries, image of the character Bramie in *Stories van Bergplaas*, 1963 (Bouwer 1984: 1). Image reproduced courtesy of NB Publishers.

CHAPTER FIVE

White Childhoods During Apartheid

Leana van der
Merwe

The Ideology of Landscape in Children's Book Illustrations

Introduction: The (White) Child in the Landscape

On the first page of *Stories van Bergplaas* (Stories of Mountain Farm), well-known South African children's author Alba Bouwer (1920-2010) paints an idyllic pastoral scene: Bramie, a ten-year-old boy, is the son of a farmer. He is sent on an errand to take coffee and rusks¹ to his father who is working in the vineyard together with labourers. He pauses briefly beneath a big plum tree, from where he sees "the house and the cellar and the orange grove that begins right on the other side of the green steel gate stand beckoning and warm in the sun; the mountain stream that jumps out from high up the hill, and runs past the house to the vineyards, can only be seen shimmering through the oak trees here and there."²

The illustration, by Katrine Harries,³ that accompanies the text, partially illustrates the scene described by Bouwer (Figure 18). Bramie, pictured in the foreground, is framed by the majestic plum tree, and in the background the vineyard and the mountain can be seen. Walking briskly, basket in hand, he looks up towards the sky; his gaze is open and relaxed. He is alone, yet safely enclosed by a familiar scene, which can also be described as picturesque. Indeed, in this book, and other similar titles by Bouwer,⁴ the ease and safety of rural life for white farmers in apartheid South Africa is rendered nostalgically, and the presence of black labour in the landscape is naturalised through its invisibility.

South African children's literature and the illustrations contained therein cannot be described as innocent, or devoid of any hidden meaning, as some authors suggest.⁵ Indeed, they form part of the white supremacist project of Afrikaner nationalism during apartheid, and assist in advocating a way of life

which preserves so-called “civilised power structures”⁶ and naturalises the connection between race, separateness and the ownership (or indeed the lack thereof) of land. The illustrations in the publications discussed in this chapter highlight a Eurocentric and nostalgic view of the South African landscape, influenced by colonial and neocolonial desire, history and culture.

In this chapter, I discuss illustrations from a selection of children’s books from the apartheid era (1948-94) to show how depictions of the South African landscape serve cultural, political and affective purposes by naturalising the white child’s life in Africa as innocent and natural. Furthermore, these illustrations of landscapes serve an ideological purpose through their embodiment of affect, in that they create a sense of uncomplicated belonging while establishing and maintaining divisions based on race. The illustrations discussed in this chapter were created within the specific social context of apartheid. As such, they exist in conversation with other literary and cultural artefacts from the same period, but also with those of colonial Southern Africa, which continue to influence the manner in which the South African landscape is viewed, understood and made to function today.

WJT Mitchell challenges the notion that landscape should be approached as a mere genre in art, or even as an object or text that can be viewed and given meaning.⁷ Landscape, he believes, is “a process by which social and subjective identities are formed.” Jill Casid takes Mitchell’s assertion further by proposing that the landscape is a place of performance, a fluid construction, where actions and processes take place and where bodies are implicated in complex relationships with each other, but also with plants and animals.⁸ In other words, while Mitchell suggests that specific power relationships and ideologies are implicated in landscape, Casid adds that the organisation or “landscaping”⁹ of nature has implications for race, class and gender. She reasons that the purpose of landscaping is to create a semblance of stability and to facilitate belonging in a world marked by difference. In Casid’s view, the colonial landscape is a deliberate construction and is organised, cultivated and understood as a representation, fashioned on ideas and ideals imported from Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁰ These ideas still persists in contemporary imaginings of the landscape. The landscape is thus not only represented in art, literature and visual culture, but is also actively transformed to look and function in ways that conform to representations we have become accustomed to.

Similarly, Mitchell argues that landscape as a genre of painting developed in Europe in the wake of societal changes that demanded that specific material aspects of the economy, politics and emerging nationalities be communicated and naturalised.¹¹ Moreover, he questions commonly held Romantic notions that landscape painting was connected to a spiritual awakening during the late eighteenth century and sides with a more skeptical view that landscape does not illustrate history, but makes it, through spatial, ideological and affective devices. Thus landscape cannot be approached as a silent witness or an innocent backdrop to that which is pictured or illustrated, but is an active agent in constructing meaning and forming subjectivities.

Melissa Steyn questions the notion that one can emerge from an apartheid childhood unaffected by the complex materialities and meanings embodied in visual and literary objects, as well as everyday interactions between people, mediated through intertwined systems of power and privilege.¹² In harking back to an uncomplicated, idealised childhood, white South Africans cannot discount the influence of visual culture and the materials with which they were raised. For many white South Africans, ignorance or claims of innocence characterises their daily experience of themselves, and specifically those (white) selves in relationships with others. Steyn refers to this as the “ignorance contract.” She shows how ignorance operates not only as a result of white childhoods, but also as an instrument of social control, since it ensures that generations of white South Africans, even after apartheid ended, would grow up adhering to this silent pact. Ignorance, Steyn writes, should not be equated with “absence” of knowledge. Rather, it presents the “presence” of a different sort of knowledge; one which has a very specific function in a race-conscious society.

The “contract” that Steyn refers to operates as a sort of blindness to other positionalities and has the effect of regulating an insular, inward-looking world view that necessarily excludes others. This contract is unspoken; in fact, it relies precisely on the type of silence that normalises its workings in everyday interactions, but also in making sense of history and memory. Steyn argues that white children are not only initiated into epistemologies of ignorance by their parents, but moreover are discouraged to question what is deemed appropriate performances of whiteness, especially in their interactions with others. Furthermore, Steyn demonstrates how white psychological well-being is supported by the “ignorance contract,” as it protects against negative affects

such as guilt and shame regarding one's privilege in opposition to the destitution of others.¹³ Simultaneously, it resists the questioning of the context of myth, memories and histories which might disorientate the subject's conception of self.

In the illustrations under consideration in this chapter, the South African landscape functions in the ways described by Mitchell – that is, as a cultural effect producing meaning and subjectivities. As argued by Casid, they also function as a performance of certain material values and affective conditions embedded in culture.¹⁴ In other words, the illustrations assist in maintaining the realities of white culture within a specific historical and social context. The mythological connection to the land and the sense of belonging cultivated through that mythology is naturalised through these depictions of the natural world. Following Benedict Anderson's idea of "imagined communities," Jeremy Foster reasons that for white South Africans, the emergence of a national identity during apartheid is fundamentally related to an affective relationship to a specific territory.¹⁵ This territory had been contested and inhabited by others, and perceived as problematic, since the arrival of the Dutch in the seventeenth century. He argues that in order to understand the preoccupation and anxiety of white South Africa regarding the land, one must investigate how meaning had been created – by looking at representations, but also by probing the actual interactions with and cycles of transformations of the landscape that characterised colonial times and continues even today.¹⁶

Children are not surrounded by the natural world unproblematically or indeed innocently. However, the self-evident nature of depictions of the pastoral and the picturesque landscapes in South African children's literature during the apartheid era renders white childhoods in the South African landscape as complete and uncomplicated. This in turn maintains the "innocence" and ignorance of white childhoods that Steyn writes about, and is thus a design of apartheid subjectivity. The literary and visual language of the examples I discuss in this chapter help to socialise children into ways of seeing and thinking. These modes of seeing produce specific visibilities and invisibilities, which are found in illustrations of the landscape. This language also models acceptable forms of 'white' behaviour and establishes boundaries by performing 'the way things are' as natural.

This article explores three commonly observable tropes in children's literature illustration, published during apartheid, that can be interpreted as contributing to 'ways of seeing' and 'ways of knowing' that bolster white

supremacist power through nationalist, racist and colonialist mindsets. These mindsets contribute to the ignorance or innocence that Steyn writes about, that justifies the status quo of apartheid society.

The three tropes examined in this article roughly correspond with the stages of colonialism as theorised by Frantz Fanon (1925-61). The first trope is the elevated view of the 'available' landscape or the 'surveying gaze,' which is connected with exploring, conquering and taking ownership of land. The second, which corresponds to the appropriation and economic exploitation of colonial territories, is the cultivation of the land, which is also a form of control or ordering, and facilitates affective belonging. The last section deals with fables and the mystical, and explores mythmaking in colonial (and indeed postcolonial) states. Here, justification for colonial control is revealed and subjectivities which were formed during the initial phases of colonisation are confirmed and strengthened. These myths relate specifically to the status and identities of persons who are not considered 'white.' The imagery in these publications is thus shown to embody a full circle of activities necessary for establishing ideological domination.

The 'Surveying Gaze'

In *White Writing*, JM Coetzee notes that colonial descriptions of the Southern African landscape by writers and travel artists reveal not only a tendency to romanticise the landscape, but also the expectation that the landscape should look like a painting.¹⁷ Equally, if the landscape encountered does not conform to the ideals of European landscape painting, it could be transformed to function as such. Picturesque landscapes are ordered according to specific aesthetic principles. William Gilpin (1724-1804) describes them as containing "distant mountains, a lake in the middle distance, and a foreground with rocks, woods, broken grounds, cascades or ruins, this foreground to be characterized by ... texture ... in contrast to the 'tenderness' of the middle and far ground."¹⁸ The landscapes encountered by travellers and settlers in Africa, however, often had to be reinterpreted pictorially to submit to these norms, as they were vastly different from the European countryside. This confrontation with an alien landscape or wilderness is at odds with the picturesque or pastoral configurations to which the European eye responds by wanting to conquer, control and cultivate. Picturesque and pastoral scenes, therefore, serve a European cultural

ideal by submitting to picturesque aesthetics. The European viewer sees a new territory as a potential subject of a landscape painting¹⁹ and thus also surveys it in order to possess or control.

Illustrations by F Lategan in *Die Groot Afrikaanse Heldeboek* (The Big Afrikaans Book of Heroes), first published in 1976, submit to certain notions of the picturesque. Moreover, the artistic style references well-known colonial travel artists such as William Burchell (1782-1863) and Thomas Baines (1820-75) in its aesthetics and treatment of the landscape itself, as well as the people in the landscape.

The story of a white teenager, John Ross, is told in a chapter titled “*Die lang tog*” (The long journey). It is accompanied by an image that shows Ross, 15 years old, arriving from British-controlled Natal at another European settlement – albeit a Portuguese one – which is today Maputo in Mozambique (Figure 19). He is accompanied by three men, identified as Zulu warriors. In typical picturesque fashion, the longer grass in the foreground is rendered with texture and detail, while the settlement in the background is illustrated in a less discriminate fashion. The wide, open ocean suggests the vastness of a lake, while palm trees gently frame the stage where the surveying of the landscape takes place. The detailed foreground is set off against the distant skies. Even though Ross is only a child, indicated by his smaller size in relation to the men, he is in command of the Zulu warriors, who carry the wares that they are to trade with the Portuguese settlers at Delagoa Bay. Ross points towards the small settlement in the distance, a lone flag flapping in the wind. Ross’s body language conveys authority over both the unknown landscape and the black warriors as he leads the party into Portuguese territory.

In gazing at the imperial landscape, the one who looks is established in a specific relationship of power to that which is being observed. This act of looking includes a series of “selective blindnesses”²⁰ in that it omits that which will dispute its claims to ownership or potentially resist its restrictive control of the space pictured. Simultaneously, in surveying the scene, the landscape is arranged according to specific cultural and representational codes, which hark back to European depictions of colonial Southern Africa. The making of images is therefore an act of appropriation, in which the landscape and the people contained therein are fixed according to the design and desires of the coloniser, which resist any defiant voices.



Figure 19

F Lategan, 'John Ross arrives at Delagoa Bay', in *Die Groot Afrikaanse Heldeboek* (The Big Afrikaans Book of Heroes) (Grobelaar 1976: 70-71). Image reproduced courtesy of Protea Publishers.

Even though Ross is a child, he is the protagonist in this story. The Zulu warriors, sent to accompany Ross by King Shaka himself, submit to his orders and follow him on his heroic quest. The black men are pictured wearing loincloths only and carrying traditional weapons, while Ross, in European dress, carries a gun, signifying his modernity. The minimal and simplified rendering of Zulu traditional attire positions the men as 'savage;' they are rendered as ethnographic 'types' and not as individuals. Furthermore, their near nakedness renders them childlike, another well-established trope of the depiction and description of black men during apartheid.²¹ Ross is entering the new, unknown territory upon which his gaze is fixed, with the black men following him. In crossing the threshold to the Portuguese settlement, Ross is symbolically taking charge of territory, familiarising it through his instructive gaze. The white boy's mobility within the landscape is thus implied, while the colonised remains a fixed object, stripped of all individuality and agency, and transformed by the white boy into a powerful working machine to carry wares.

Exploration of unknown territory is a common theme of colonial travel writing and painting. The frontier of civilisation is continually pushed forward through exploring and settling in new territories, but also symbolically through images such as maps, paintings and drawings in travel journals. In order to legitimate the settlement of Europeans on the African continent, the white male is positioned as a heroic figure who, against all odds, continually crosses borders and boundaries and brings civilisation and order to new landscapes. In addition to this topos, MacCann and Maddy note how in children's historical fiction, blacks who help whites to achieve this goal is a common trope.²² However, collaboration between the races is not presented as equal; the hierarchy of white

(hero) in mastery over black (noble savage) is always maintained. In “*Die lang tog*,” the young Ross trades much-needed medicines from the Portuguese, assisted by the Zulu warriors who follow him unquestioningly and trust him fully. The white boy is also the one who takes the initiative for going on this voyage and who, later in the narrative, is able to read the evil intentions of a Frenchman (always a dubious nationality), who is suspected of being a spy.

Images that show (white) European conquest of unknown and (seemingly available) territory naturalise the control and ownership of land through depicting those that conquer it as brave and heroic – but also as humanitarian saviours who not only advance their own cause, but uplift others through their efforts. In the text accompanying the image, Ross is described as a brave young man with friendly eyes, and he is shown to treat the Zulu men with respect and kindness. The white child who engages with the images and texts in books such as *Die Groot Afrikaanse Heldeboek* may thus find an ethical and moral base for the real-life political and economic power structures that they encounter in apartheid South Africa. Steyn notes how this “moral certainty” also operates as arrogance in the form of ignorance of systemic injustice related to the land.²³

Cultivating the Land

Casid argues that “to plant [a garden] was to both produce colonies and to generate imperial subjects to sustain them.”²⁴ Although the processes and operations by which the African landscape is transformed into a colony, through planting, cultivating, ordering and controlling, include a variety of violent practices, through the application of picturesque aesthetics they can be transformed into a pleasant and calming scene. Such a picturesque approach is taken by Joy Collier in her nonfiction book about Cape Town aimed at a young readership. Collier chronicles what she perceives as the most important people, places and historical events that made Cape Town what it was in the 1960s.

In *Ou Kaapstad* (Old Cape Town), formal gardens play an important role. Collier engages in abundance not only with significant gardens such as Kirstenbosch, but also with many less well-known ones such as the garden of the old synagogue – of which she makes meticulous sketches and describes in detail individual plants including strelitzias, ancient fruit trees and the African coral tree or *Kaffir boom*,²⁵ as it was then known. She chronicles the founding of Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and specifically mentions and includes a

small drawing of van Riebeeck's hedge, that was declared a national monument by the government of the Union of South Africa (1910-1961) on 6 April 1936. This recognition of the historical importance of van Riebeeck's hedge preceded the promulgation of the Representation of Natives Act No 16 of 1936, that would severely restrict the voting rights of non-white citizens living in the Cape Province, by only one day. Today, the traces of this hedge serve as a reminder of the failed attempt by European settlers at keeping entanglement with new contexts and peoples at bay. The hedge represents not only a reaction to the realisation of vulnerability in the new world, but also the neurotic 'whitely' desire to demarcate and control a space set apart for 'civilisation,' in which others would be relegated to the periphery.

The first image in Collier's book is a telling example of her vision (Figure 20). Simply identified as "die tuine" (the gardens), the scene paints a picture of tranquility and leisure, a paradise where white citizens are strolling or resting. Collier specifically identifies this as a scene where *Strelitzia alba* is pictured in the background, although these plants are not the obvious focal point of the drawing. In addition to this, an inscription above the image, by Peter Kolbe (1675-1725), a German ethnologist and traveler to the Cape, describes in Dutch the abundance of crops and ornamental plants that are grown in the Cape Colony, including indigenous as well as exotic plants and useful varieties imported from Europe. Collier thus positions Cape Town as a garden from the outset.

Casid argues that in such contexts "garden" is a substitute for "colony," in that the cultivation of land is metonymic for taking ownership of a place.²⁶ When a garden has been made and plants have been settled there, especially those transplanted from Europe, the land is no longer 'empty' and has thus been re-appropriated. The colonial landscape, therefore, is always a hybrid one, in which the native and the foreign are mixed together. The gardens pictured in all of the images in Collier's book contain a mixture of indigenous and grafted plants. This 'colonial intermixing,' together with picturesque aesthetics, legitimates ownership of the land through positioning unbalanced power relationships as natural.

Strelitzia alba, also known as the white bird of paradise, is such a colonial graft. Although the plant is indigenous to Southern Africa, it is only found naturally in the Garden Route, specifically in the area between the *Robberg* and what is today known as Knysna.²⁷ The caption to Collier's image notes that "the

Aan die Kaap „vind men zeer grote en wyduitgestrekte dalen, die overvloedig koren, wyn en allerhande boom- en tuin-vruchten voortbrengen; daar benevens groejen daar ook allerhande kruiden, welruikende bloemen, en kostbare Aloën, treffelyke medecinale gewassen, en wat het oog en het gemoed verder vervrolyken kan. Daar benevens zijn die bergen ook bezaait en bedekt met de edelste kruiden en bloemen, die een zeer aangenamen reuk van zich geven.”

Pieter Kolbe 1704



Die Tuine, Strelitzia Alba, waarskynlik deur Auge geplant, op agtergrond.

Figure 20

Joy Collier, 'Die Tuine (The Gardens)', in *Ou Kaapstad (Old Cape Town)*, 1961.

strelitzia was probably planted by [Johann] Auge,²⁸ a well-known botanist and also the superintendent of the Dutch East India Company Gardens. The inference is that the image title, *die Tuine* [The Gardens], refers to these gardens, the first garden to be planted at the fledgling trading post under Jan van Riebeeck (1617-79) in 1652. Although it is not possible to ascertain Collier's intention with certainty – by placing this specific image in such a central position – coupled with the text as shown in Figure 20, she inadvertently places her publication within a particular cultural context and makes specific historical connections between colonial and apartheid notions of space and their embedded meanings. Plant collection and transplanting is an important cultural and economic activity of the “colonial landscape machine,”²⁹ which has the function of transforming the landscape into a productive, contained and controlled space where specific performances of identity (read race, class and gender) are set to take place.

In the foreground of Collier's image, a small, bare-foot black boy carries a baby on his back. In contrast with the seated couple behind them, they seem to be merely passing through a space set apart for the white leisured class. In the background, a white girl is strolling with her father. Casid suggests that “picturesque intermixing” in colonial landscapes does not only include plants, but people as well.³⁰ The black figure, she argues, like the natural elements in the composition, serve as decorative props. Simultaneously, the inclusion of black children, as opposed to adults, shows how the colonial machine reproduces naturally that which has been produced artificially in terms of crops and subjectivities. The image of the small boy carrying his baby sibling has a naïve charm that gives it a certain provincial appeal, but also suggests the absence of a parent figure. This absence is highlighted by the inclusion of the white girl, with a man, assumed to be her father, who is smartly dressed.

Nevertheless, the reader of the image might or might not consider this absence in the light of a general invisibility of black labour in children's book illustrations. This absence has likewise been identified in colonial images and literature by a number of critics including Mitchell, Coetzee (1988) and Jennifer Beningfield, and can thus be accepted as a common aesthetic device of the colonial picturesque.

Collier's book engages with space, and specifically with landscape, in a romantic and nostalgic manner. The text laments the disappearance – “like sandcastles before the relentless tides of demand”³¹ – of some of old Cape

Town's historical buildings, to be replaced by offices and flats. In *Ou Kaapstad* (Old Cape Town), Collier's text and illustrations engage with a romantic notion of nature, specifically gardens and those that sustain them as custodians of 'the natural.' She nostalgically renders the landscape of Cape Town in a manner which shows its progress and the beauty of its 'civilisation.'

She also demonstrates how indigenous people have benefitted from this progress – albeit in a paternalistic manner – and selectively includes them in her illustrations. In the caption to her illustration of a house in *Waal Street*, she specifically identifies the “coloured women” in the foreground, and in the text below she explains that while a separate Hottentot race no longer exists, the “characteristics of their race – the flat face and copper-coloured skin – can sometimes still be detected in the Cape Coloureds.”³² Black children are always presented with bare feet, while white children are smartly dressed. In an illustration of the gardens in the *Governor's House*, a white man wearing a suit is strolling in the garden, while a single black worker is using a spade; another is sitting idly beside him (Figure 21).

The manner in which plants and people are arranged in these images creates a specific understanding of spatiality based on difference, one which would have been affirmed by the actual lived experiences of white children during apartheid, where public amenities were separated according to race. In Figure 20, the grouping of the two passing black children with the scattered pigeons in the foreground creates the impression that this division is natural and operates peacefully within the bounds of everyday urban life in Cape Town. Furthermore, the gardens and important places of the city are shown not only as segregated, but – crucially – also cultivated and controlled by white hands, while the menial labour is done by black hands, thereby establishing a hierarchy of power. Simultaneously, the image creates the impression that black people are either not able (or, indeed, do not desire) to have equal opportunities. Collier's nostalgic renderings of 'mixed' landscapes paints a harmonious picture of different races living together peacefully within a specific hierarchy and framework of power, each performing their assigned subjectivity correctly. Indeed, Steyn argues that the correct performance of subjectivity is an important element introduced to children through specific epistemologies of ignorance.³³ 'Not knowing,' and learning not to see that others are oppressed, enables the white self to live comfortably and without guilt or shame, even if others are excluded.



Figure 21

Joy Collier, 'Tuin, Goewerneurswoning (Garden, Governors' House)', in *Ou Kaapstad*, 1961 (Collier 1961: 26& 27). Reproduced with courtesy of NB Publishers.

Fables and Folk Tales

Fables and indigenous folk tales were popular literary genres for children in apartheid South Africa, and many such books were published. Elwyn Jenkins argues that the “collecting, translating and retelling [of] indigenous folk tales” are ethnographic activities whereby indigenous peoples are shown to be closer to nature and possessing mystic powers.³⁴ They are thus different, tribal and primitive. In these representations, black people and their culture are presented as static and as something that should be preserved for future generations, a concept which Jenkins argues is paternalistic. She notes that many such publications in apartheid South Africa position the indigene as “childlike,” especially through the illustrations in these books. They are understood as childlike because they represent an earlier stage in the development of humans, making it easier for the white child to imagine them living far away and separate in so-called homelands and reservations. In their primitive and superstitious state, they are not seen as being part of the modern world and nor does it seem that they can contribute to progress and development. In addition to being

nostalgic, the paternalistic manner in which indigenous cultures are portrayed in children's literature is sometimes in an instructive context – as a way of teaching (white) children about (other) cultures, and often also about nature and environmental conservation.³⁵

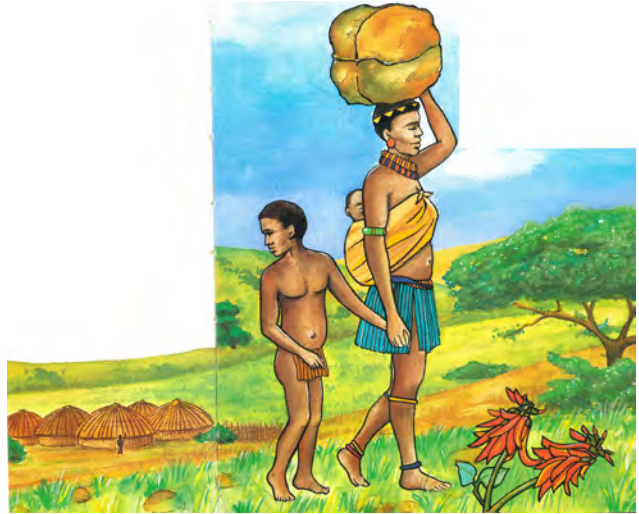
Lynn Bedford Hall's *Shaka* (1987), illustrated by René Hermans, falls within this category of ethnographic literature for children. Although the book presents itself as truthful historical narrative in a similar way to *The Book of Heroes*, discussed above, it has been written to show Zulu culture as not only vastly different from Western culture, but also extremely violent and somewhat irrational. The short stories collected in the book are presented as individual, almost disjointed, fables, although they form a more-or-less historical trajectory. Many of the stories also have an underlying moralistic message. The pictorial devices used by Hermans are similar to those discussed before in their treatment of the Zulu people as well as the landscape. The Zulu warriors portrayed are rendered so as to be indistinguishable from each other; they are fixed types, not individuals. The book presents a romantic pre-colonial world inhabited by black tribes, in which conflict with white explorers and settlers does not feature in any form whatsoever.

There is only a single page that deals with a meeting between Zulu and British figures at Port Natal. In this story, John Ross is also mentioned. The image accompanying this section tells a story of an uncomplicated meeting of the two cultures. King Shaka is shown in traditional clothing, meeting two smartly dressed white men, one in full military uniform while the other is wearing glasses and a cravat. Shaka sits with a spear in his lap, while the two white men are carrying no weapons. It is thus implied that they come in peace and that although they have military power (signified by the uniform), what they actually bring is knowledge and civilisation (signified by the clothes worn by the second white man). The contact between black and white in this book is thus presented as straightforward, while potential violence is obscured.

The landscapes in *Shaka* are consistently rendered within the bounds of the picturesque. In an image accompanying the story "Ongelukkige Kinderdae" (An Unhappy Childhood), a woman identified as Nandi, the mother of Shaka, leaves her village with six-year-old Shaka and a baby tied to her back. In the text, it is explained that Nandi, the third wife of the chief Senzangakhona, has been evicted from the village by her husband. A tree in the middle ground and

Figure 22

René Hermans, 'Ongelukkige kinderdag', from *Shaka* (1987:2 & 3). Image reproduced courtesy of Penguin Random House SA.



indigenous grass aloes³⁶ in the foreground frame the scene of the three figures walking away from the settlement in the valley below. Rolling green hills can be seen in the background. The small village huts are placed close together, and are all rendered similarly with decorative textures; they are devoid of human life, except for a lone shadowy figure carrying a spear. An open path in the middle ground meanders through the landscape, in the absence of a river or stream. The elevated or surveying gaze is used in several of the images in the book.

A similar treatment of indigenous settlements in the landscape can be observed in Gina Daniel's illustrations for *Afrika Stories* (1988), by Phyllis Savoy. Daniel consistently renders the settlements of indigenous people according to pastoral/ picturesque conventions. Although there are many images in this book portraying human figures in typical tribal dress, the landscape images are mostly devoid of human life. However, huts are included as decorative elements, mostly in the background, and are transformed into quaint country cottages, often paired with wild animals in the foreground. Distant hills and trees framing the view are also a regular feature. The illustration accompanying a Basotho story about a lazy, drunkard son, who embarrasses and brings ruin on his family, curiously does not portray any important aspects of the story. Instead, it shows a typical Basotho thatched home, depicted in picturesque fashion (Figure 23). The scene is strongly reminiscent of the image of the elderly white couple's cottage in *Die Krismiskinders* (*The Christmas Children*, 1926,

1978), by CJ Langenhoven (Figure 24), discussed below. Both these images render houses in the Southern African wilderness based on the archetype of the old English country cottage.

According to Casid, the transformation of the homes of the colonised into rustic cottages creates the impression of a contented state for the indigene and is an important feature of the colonial picturesque. It is unthinkable that the family in the Basotho fable would live a contented life after suffering such ruination from their only son; nevertheless through the pairing of this story with the ‘contented cottage’ image, the reader is presented with the idea that ‘all is well’ and that ‘the way things are’ is acceptable for some. Furthermore, in fashioning both the dwellings of the indigene and the white rural classes as similarly pastoral, some anxieties regarding difference are resolved in that both can be incorporated into the picturesque landscape. Additionally, by setting them up on equal terms, the assumption is made that both black and white ‘belong’ in the landscape on equal terms, thus legitimating the presence of the white man in rural South Africa.

CJ Langenhoven’s *Die Krismiskinders* is a popular Afrikaans children’s novel that can also be described as a fable due to its engagement with the mystical and the unexplained, as well as its moralistic character, a feature typical of this author. In the story, three babies, a girl and later twin boys, are left as gifts in baskets at the front door of an elderly childless couple who lives alone in the wilderness. A prophecy made by a ragged Santa Claus figure, who appears to the couple at the beginning of the book, foretells the appearance of angelic children. The three small children are the embodiment of childhood innocence: they are respectful towards their adopted parents and show empathy towards as well as mastery over animals; they never fight among themselves, they are intelligent, creative and have musical talents. They are protected by doting parents who raise them well. There are also spirits who protect the children and teach them skills – although these spirits are sometimes ominously presented as mean and mischievous.

Langenhoven’s book, originally published in 1926, was republished in 1978, this time with illustrations by Cora Coetzee (1940-), a well-known artist who has illustrated various South African children’s books. While Coetzee’s illustrations of Langenhoven’s fable capture something of his vision,³⁷ they also present her personal interpretation, situated within the temporal and social context of



Figure 23 (top)

Gina Daniel, Illustration from '*Afrika Stories (African stories)*', 1988 (Savoy 1988: 72). Image reproduced courtesy of Penguin Random House.



Figure 24 (bottom)

Cora Coetzee, '*Voor die eerste Krismis (Before the first Christmas)*', from *Die Krismiskinders (The Christmas Children)*, (Langenhoven 1978: 1). Image courtesy of NB Publishers.

apartheid South Africa. The children in the book grow up in a quaint cottage (Figure 24), surrounded by an expanse of wild nature. Both image and text present the setting as an arcadian wilderness in which children who live close to nature can talk to animals and grow up in peace and comfort. The children are regularly pictured together with plants and animals of all kinds, emphasising their pure and almost mystical nature. However, the peaceful landscape rendered in this book is repeatedly disrupted by an ever-present and sinister force, at first unseen, in the form of “Bushmen,” who are always portrayed as an unspoken danger.

Langenhoven’s story suggests some interesting comparisons with JM Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* (2004), although in *Krismiskinders* the author does not, like Coetzee, show the reader how power structures deliberately utilise fear of difference to create systems of domination. Instead, the presence of Langenhoven’s barbarians in the landscape is constructed in a way that emphasises keeping children safe from real – and not only perceived or constructed – dangers.³⁸

Eventually, the children are indeed taken away by the ‘barbarians’ and presented as a sacrifice, as liminal beings caught between civilisation and savagery. Their elderly parents are urged by Santa Claus, who suddenly appears to them, to believe that by giving up their children, they and their home will be spared. The bushmen are tricked by the children’s musical talents and fall asleep, but the children cannot escape; they are taken into a dark cave by a large bat with baboon-like claws to serve “the King of Darkness.” Being noble, ethical and pure, the children refuse, and are sent to the deepest and darkest corner of the bat-cave, where they will sleep for all eternity. Thus, while the young protagonists are immortalised to an extent, in sleeping forever they will never grow up, thus never losing their innocence.

From the very beginning of the story the impending bushmen attack is always just below the surface. This dread establishes the world of the book as a ruptured surface, where danger lies just beyond what one can see. This world is inhabited by peculiar, unknown creatures and cruel strangers with dark motives. The children are removed from their fairytale existence by the bushmen, and it is this act of violence which delivers them into the hands of the forces of darkness, which eventually leads to their demise. Although the ultimate evil in this story is not the bushmen, it is they who open the door to this final malevolence. The

implication is that it is better to be kept separate from those who are different, as the outcome of contact is unpredictable and threatening. The idea that black persons are treacherous and evil is a persistent trope in literature for children available in apartheid South Africa. In *Krismiskinders*, the innocence of the white children is juxtaposed with the barbaric nature and frightful embodiment of the bushmen in several illustrations that set the children in opposition to the bushmen within the landscape.

Read together with Coetzee's illustrations, Langenhoven's fable is interesting for another reason – that the landscape, although it might appear peaceful, hides something sinister, an uncommon feature of the illustrations discussed earlier in this chapter. The Southern African landscape is therefore revealed as treacherous, perhaps even a place of conflict. The possibility is raised that for the reader, everything that can be seen is not simple or self-evident. However, any potential for redemption is thwarted through the revelation that the only thing hidden in Langenhoven's landscape is the *Swart Gevaar* (black danger), along with a terrifying force of otherness embodied by the hybrid baboon–bat creature. Otherness, miscegenation and hybridity are thus revealed as powerful destructive forces that should be controlled and avoided.

The fables and indigenous folk tales discussed in this section show how ideology and myth operate in fixing subjectivities and explaining 'the way things are' as natural. Ironically, by re-presenting folk tales originally told by indigenous people, knowledge of these 'others' is controlled by situating them as different. This does not facilitate any real understanding, but rather creates a fearful fascination. Difference is therefore presented as a justification for apartheid realities that the child observes in daily life. Langenhoven's story takes this concept a step further by showing how black people are not only different and strange, but also dangerous, and should therefore be controlled to ensure the survival of (white) civilisation in Africa.

In Closing

Steyn argues that ignorance is a form of knowing that was actively managed in apartheid South Africa.³⁹ In addition, she argues that the tenacity of these "innocent" and ignorant forms of racial knowledge is yet to be tested in post-apartheid South Africa. This is especially relevant to the experiences of white children in contemporary South Africa, as many of the books discussed here

are still in circulation and are being reprinted. White South Africans still have significant economic and cultural power at their disposal and thus the “resources to impose their desires, drives and will,”⁴⁰ albeit to a lesser extent than before. White subjectivities that still claim to know the other intimately, without questioning the source of this knowledge, are problematic in post-apartheid South Africa. Steyn thus suggests that the “signatories to the ignorance contract” need to be “reschooled” for contemporary interracial society in a way that challenges fixed subjectivities and positionalities not to replicate the epistemologies of ignorance in future generations.⁴¹

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Notes

1. A typical South African snack, which consists of a dried sweet bread, baked twice, and then dunked in coffee or tea to be eaten.
2. Own translation. The original Afrikaans reads: "Die huis en die kelder en die lemoenboord wat net anderkant die groen ysterhek in die muur begin, staan oop en warm in die son, en die bergstroom wat hoog op teen die kop uitspring en by die huis verby na die wingerde loop, blink net hier en daar deur die akkerbome."
3. Katrine Harries (1914-78) is a German illustrator who emigrated to South Africa and illustrated over 60 Afrikaans children's books. Her style can be described as realistic or naturalistic and embodies sensitively rendered emotional content, revealing a keen interest in the life-world of children. See FA Fairer-Wessels and JW Wessels, "A Critical Discussion of the Art Styles used by Selected Illustrators of South African Children's Books since 1950," *Musaion*, 25:1 (2007), 117-140, at 123.
4. Other titles by Bouwer, all illustrated by Katrine Harries, include: *Hennetjie met Kuikens* (Little Hen with Chicks) (1971); *Abdoltjie. Ses Verhaaltjies oor 'n Maleiertjie van die ou Kaap* (Six Stories of a Little Malaysian Boy from the Old Cape) (1958), which chronicles the life of a Muslim boy in nostalgic manner; and *Stories van Rivierplaas* (Stories of the River Farm) (1955), which is similar in style and narrative to *Bergplaas*, the biggest difference being that the protagonist is a little girl.
5. Fairer-Wessels and Wessels, "A Critical Discussion," 124.
6. D MacCann and YA Maddy, *Apartheid and Racism in South African Children's Literature, 1985-1995* (New York & London: Routledge, 2001), xvi.
7. TWJ Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power*, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 1.
8. JH Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xiv.
9. For Casid, "landscaping" refers to a variety of colonial (and neocolonial) practices that engage with the land such as commercial farming and gardening, but also cultural representations of landscapes such as farms, the wilderness and human settlements. Similarly, Jeremy Foster argues that the social practices that constitute identity formation connected to nationhood, community and belonging are found not only in representations of the landscape, but through a variety of embodied uses of the nation's territory including agriculture, botany, scientific exploration, geology and mining and, in turn, in artistic and literary explorations of these practices that probe their meanings and cultural capital. See J Foster, *Washed with Sun: Landscape and the Making of White South Africa* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 2008), 16. "Landscaping" thus includes both actual and literary, visual or imaginary interactions with the land.
10. Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 13.
11. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power*, 6.
12. M Steyn, "The Ignorance Contract: Recollections of Apartheid Childhoods and the Construction of Epistemologies of Ignorance," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 19:1 (2012), 8-25, at 9.
13. *Ibid.*, 22.
14. JH Casid, "Epilogue: Landscape in, around and under the Performative," *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, 21:1 (2011), 97-116.
15. Foster, *Washed with Sun*.
16. *Ibid.*, 3.
17. JM Coetzee, *White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), 37.
18. Quoted in Coetzee, *White Writing*, 39.
19. Coetzee, *White Writing*, 37.
20. L Van der Watt, "Thomas Baines and the Colonization of Space," *de Arte*, 28 (1993), 23-31, at 24.

21. Mahmood Mamdani notes Jan Smuts' characterisation of the black "boy" in his Oxford Rhodes Memorial speech of 1929, where he stated that the "child-like human cannot be a bad human" and that as a result of his temperament he is always happy. Mamdani also cites Christopher Fyfe's remark that black persons are "Peter Pan children who can never grow up, a child race." See M Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3-4.
22. MacCann and Maddy, *Apartheid and Racism*, 102.
23. Steyn, "The Ignorance Contract," 12.
24. Casid, *Sowing Empire*, xiv.
25. Scientific name: *Erythrina corallodendron*. Michael Cook, editor of *African Wildlife Magazine*, wrote in 1984: "Curiously enough, although the recent adoption of the name 'coral tree' for 'kaffirboom' is a commendable attempt to remove the now derogatory word 'kaffir' from the South African vocabulary, the name 'coral tree' has its own pedigree." The African coral tree was in fact introduced in 1776 under this name, when specimens were planted in Cape Town by botanist Johann Auge (see also note 28 below). The vernacular name *kaffirboom* is however used consistently by Collier in this book, even though she engages with Auge extensively.
26. Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 8.
27. M Speciale and G Domina, "On the Real Identity of the *Strelizia* Cultivated in Sicily's Historic Gardens," *Webbia*, 71:2 (2016), 209-11, at 209.
28. Johann Andreas Auge (1711-c1805) was a German gardener who came to the Cape in 1747. After being promoted to superintendent of the Garden by Rijk Tulbach, he accompanied Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), described by many botanists as "the father of South African botany," on several botanical expeditions. Specimens of *Strelizia alba* were collected by Auge and Thunberg on one such expedition in 1772, on what is today known as the Garden Route. Auge brought the plant to Cape Town and planted it in the Companies Garden. See B Nordenstam, "Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), 'The Father of South African Botany,' his Contribution and Legacy," *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa*, 49:2 (1994), 161-74, at 164.
29. Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 12.
30. Ibid., 14.
31. Own translation. Original Afrikaans: "soos sandkastele voor die meedoënlose gety van die noodsaak ..." See J Collier, *Ou Kaapstad* [Old Cape Town] (Cape Town & Johannesburg: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1961), 2.
32. Own translation. Original Afrikaans: "Ofskoon daar nou geen afsonderlike Hottentot-ras betstaan nie, kan die kenmerke van hulle ras – die plat gesig en koperkleurige huid – nog soms onder die Kaapse kleurlinge bespeur word." Collier, *Ou Kaapstad*, 6.
33. Steyn, "The Ignorance Contract," 16.
34. E Jenkins, "Adult Agendas in Publishing South African Folktales for Children," *Children's Literature in Education*, 33:4 (2002), 269-84, at 270.
35. Ibid., 281.
36. Scientific name: *Aloe cooperi*; also eaten by Zulu people and believed to relieve the pains of childbirth.
37. CJ Langenhoven was not only a well-known author, but also wrote a regular column for *Die Burger*, an Afrikaner nationalist publication. He was also a member of the white supremacist organization, the Broederbond, and a member of parliament. According to Stefan Sonderling, Langenhoven did not distinguish between everyday speech, political utterances and imaginative writing in literature. He fervently believed in the political power of literature in establishing nationalisms. Langenhoven presented himself as a spokesperson for white nationalism in South Africa and had a narrow and moralistic outlook on tradition, race and sexuality, which he tirelessly advocated in his writing and his speeches in parliament. His utterances were not merely discursive; he put his politics into action by being actively involved in law-making. He notably advocated for the introduction of the Immorality Act, which prohibited sexual relations between white people and people of "other" races, although this law was not promulgated until almost 20 years after his death. See S Sonderling, "The Politics of a Cultural Controversy: Langenhoven and Pornography in 1930," *Journal of Literary Studies*, 14:3-4 (1998), 322-47, at 337.
38. R Godfried, "Ideology, Myth and Politics in Children's Literature. A Close Reading of 'Die Krismiskinders' by C.J. Langenhoven" (Masters diss., University of Utrecht, Utrecht, 2011), 16.
39. Steyn, "The Ignorance Contract," 10.
40. Ibid., 21.
41. Ibid

Part 2

SPACE, PLACE & PLANNING



Un-designing the 'Black City'

Pfunzo Sidogi

The 'Radical Imagination' in Twentieth-Century South African Black art and the 1940s Squatter Movement

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore select artistic portrayals and the historical dynamics of the "black city" in South Africa. Commonly referred to as "townships" and/or "squatter camps,"¹ black cities were conceived and designed by white politicians and urban planners who sought to cleanse the industrialised Western city and its suburban areas of a permanent black presence. However, black residents for whom the black city was created 'un-designed' it through their lived and representational practices.

In order to fully appreciate the importance of the dissident and imaginative artistic remakes of black cities, I first outline how these racialised sites were systematically produced. This is achieved through a detailed reading of the development of Orlando near Johannesburg during the 1930s. Orlando would eventually become the South Western Townships (Soweto), the largest black city in South Africa. I then focus on the "radical imagination" and transgressive agency performed by black people who resided in this iconic black city during the 1940s. Finally, I discuss how this defiant imagination manifested in select works by black artists who depicted the black city in their art. While much of the history of the black city predates the apartheid years (1948-94), it was the apartheid regime that refined, perfected and ultimately massified the development of black cities throughout the country.

Throughout the chapter, I evoke the notion of the radical imagination in order to make sense of the defiant feats – political and artistic – of residents of the black city during twentieth-century South Africa. In an assessment of slavery, colonialism and, more recently, apartheid, Anthony Bogues reminds us that, for the oppressed who lived through these histories, "the spectacle of violence

was the everyday ordinary.”² Within the South African colonial and apartheid context, this normalisation of violence was actively countered by the individual and group actions of black people who subverted the segregation masterplan, which was itself an act of bureaucratic governmental force. To make sense of these everyday political and extra-political practices, Bogues evokes the notion of the radical imagination, which he defines as specific social practices and “critical thought” that “breaks the boundaries/horizons of the status quo of the everyday.”³ The radical imagination accounts for the disobedient and often destructive⁴ deeds of those who were ‘otherised’ and ‘bastardised’ by hegemonic regimes such as apartheid. Bogues sees the radical imagination as the transgressive performativity of freedom, not in its Western enlightenment conception, but freedom as part of redeeming, decolonial “practices of self-creation.”⁵ For Desiree Lewis, this kind of radical subjectivity enables the subjugated to “transcend” their “oppressive realities.”⁶

In this chapter, the radical imagination accounts for the ordinary, the political and the artistic exploits of urban-based black people who subverted the compromised, segregated spatialisation of South African cities. Although the twentieth-century modernist city the world over was weaponised for the enforcement of hegemonic systems, or what Michel Foucault termed governmentality,⁷ the refractory nature of people in their masses within densely populated urban spaces provided fertile ground for the manifestation of radical, imaginative thinking and praxis. For Runette Kruger, such radical imagination is emblematic of the notion of distopia,⁸ which harmonises the binaries of anarchy and renewal, destruction and creation, self and other, to create “a specific kind of space established through counter-cultural praxis and dissent and conducive to equity, human rights, and cultural pluralism.”⁹ These qualities were engrained within the urban-based black masses who, on the one hand, sought to undercut the racialised systems that defined colonial and apartheid South African cities, yet equally wanted to advance their own political, educational, economic and cultural interests through the very same apparatus.

Finally, the artworks cited in this chapter embody what Liese van der Watt has framed as an adversarial aesthetics that decentres “whiteness as norm.”¹⁰ Although van der Watt argues that this unsettling must be approached by making “whiteness visible first, in order to work for its disavowment,”¹¹ the artworks discussed here do not overtly reference whiteness, but nevertheless

metaphorically and stylistically puncture its hegemony over twentieth-century urban planning by un-designing the black city.

Within design thinking, the work of un-designing is essentially the process of undoing design inequality. While design is often complicit in validating hegemony, un-designing, as Maja van der Velden and Christina Mörtberg propose, exposes “who and what is made invisible or silenced in the design.”¹² Talking specifically to the gendered nature of design praxis, they add that “un-designing the design is thus a perpetual state of challenging” and “dismantling” or, within the context of their argument, “un-gendering” design.¹³ Un-designing is therefore the creative and ethical act of transcending “boundaries of social exclusion” through the “field of design.”¹⁴ To evoke Bogue once more, imaginative un-designing helps us “grapple with dead and erased bodies which speak.”¹⁵ In this paper, I show how these erased black bodies used their agency to reorder and reimagine the black city.

Designing Black Urbanisms: A Colonial and Apartheid Construct

The black city is a twentieth-century phenomenon, yet its ideological genealogy dates to the seventeenth century, when Jan van Riebeeck planted the infamous hedge demarcation between his Dutch East India Company encampment and the ‘Khoisan’ community in what became Cape Town. This colonial impulse to establish segregated urban spaces along racial lines marked South Africa’s race relations for centuries, finding its most concrete and purest expression at the dawn of the twentieth century when urbanisation exploded in the Witwatersrand region after the discovery of gold. There are pre-twentieth-century examples in cities like Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth),¹⁶ Durban¹⁷ and, most famously, Ndabeni in Cape Town, where black people were forcibly placed into settlements specifically designed to keep them away from the city.

Referring to Ndabeni, which was established during the late 1890s, Nicholas Coetzer recounts that “the dominant rationale for its establishment was that ‘natives,’ who were finding rental accommodation in places such as District Six, were being tainted by ‘civilisation’ and *were best isolated from the bad influences of the city*”¹⁸ (my emphasis). That is, black people were not only a nuisance, but it was also believed that the Westernised city was threatening African cultural purity. But, ultimately, the colonialists used urban planning to solidify the boundaries between black and white, urban and rural, traditional

and modern and, as Sophie Watson confirms, such false binaries were used “explicitly as a tool of control and repression.”¹⁹

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Johannesburg emerged as the most industrialised city in South Africa and it subsequently set the tone for urban-based race relations in the country. A precedent for the removal of black people from the Johannesburg inner city was set in 1904 with the advent of the bubonic plague,²⁰ which enabled the Johannesburg municipality to relocate 5000 black inhabitants to Klipspruit²¹ in 1905, where the now iconic corrugated iron shelters were erected. Following this relocation, various laws were enacted to prevent blacks from securing permanent residence in the city including the Native Land Act of 1913 and the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. Learning from the Ndabeni experiment in Cape Town and the New Brighton native location in Gqeberha, and in keeping with the desire to sanitise the city of blackness, the Johannesburg council designed and developed Orlando²² in 1931, a township designed “to house the black population” a safe distance away from the city centre and the white neighbourhoods.²³

The authorities marketed the area as the grandest and most idyllic space, where black Africans could participate in the modern Western industrial complex, but at arm’s length. An enthusiastic view of Orlando was captured in one of the leading newspapers for urbanised blacks at the time, *The Bantu World*:

This will undoubtedly be somewhat a paradise and to a greater extent enhance the status of the Bantu within the ambit of progress and civilisation. It manifests the growing co-operation between the two dominant races domiciled in this Southern part of the African continent and shows clearly that some of our rulers have now realised that closer co-operation and brotherhood are the keys of harmony and peace ... This will enable them to create a civilisation that will be the envy of other nations.²⁴

This article, written by Emmanuel Taabe, a black reader of *The Bantu World*, is revealing in its embrace of the teleological progression from the rural and so-called uncivilised peasantry towards a modern civilised subjectivity that black people would experience as a result of their insertion into the urban paradigm through spaces like Orlando. However, although Orlando was branded as a space

that would define black urbanisation in positive terms, its reception by its target audience was ambivalent. The realities of living in Orlando were far from the glossy vision presented by Taabe. Besides the hopelessly inadequate ‘match-box’ homes, the major drawback was problematic and inefficient transportation, which made commuting into and out of Orlando – and virtually all black cities in South Africa – a nightmarish experience.²⁵ Roads were limited, and the trains were always overloaded. There were not enough schools in the area, while cultural and sporting amenities were virtually non-existent.

The underlying logic that had motivated and guided the construction of houses in Orlando and other black urbanisms was inherently racist and paternalistic. In a speech to the National Assembly in 1950, two decades after the opening of Orlando, EG Jansen, Minister of Native Affairs, professed that it was not the duty of the state to provide the black urban dweller “with a house which to him resembles a palace and with conveniences which he cannot appreciate and which he will not require for many years to come.”²⁶ Put differently, black people did not deserve the conveniences and advancements that had come with modern home and urban design. Dwellings for blacks had to be consistent with their perceived primitive status. In 1953, Douglas Calderwood²⁷ published a thesis, *Native Housing in South Africa*, that embodied this ethos of paucity. Calderwood completed house designs in collaboration with Barrie Biermann at the National Building Research Institute. For Calderwood, as Bremner argues, the functionality and living ergonomics of the house were superseded by “questions of cost in relation to quantities of houses to be built.”²⁸ How black users experienced their homes was not as important as the massification of black urbanisms.

Ultimately, Orlando was not to embody the scenic urban geography that Taabe had expressed in *The Bantu World*. The host of pre-planned deficiencies led the inhabitants of Orlando to form their own “independent forum for the residents’ demands,” known as vigilance committees, which would interface with the top-down advisory councils instituted by the Johannesburg municipality to handle grievances from its black constituents.²⁹ These vigilance committees were an attempt to insert black voices into decision-making platforms, as they had been mere bystanders in relation to the development of urban projects designed for them.

Due to the government’s ambivalence towards the accelerating urbanisation

of black people and the fiscal constraints that characterised the Second World War era, in 1940 the Johannesburg municipality halted construction of new houses in Orlando, and between 1942 and 1944 only 200 houses were added.³⁰ By the late 1940s there was a reported deficit of 154,000 houses for urbanised blacks living in Johannesburg.³¹ As a result of the insufficient housing delivery, blacks who already had homes saw this as an opportunity to make additional income by renting out a portion of their property or backrooms at “inflated rents” to desperate black tenants, thus worsening the already abnormal occupancy and density rates in Orlando.³² The cries for new homes fell on deaf ears. The people-run vigilance committees entered the scene in an attempt to ameliorate the plight of the urban black. It is worth highlighting that before the 1940s, urbanised black people had been poorly represented by the black political vanguard, and no major socio-political or economic victory had been achieved for their benefit.

The 1940s Squatter Movement

The 1940s Squatter Movement in Orlando emerged as the unlikely trailblazer of an urban-based civil insubordination movement that unsettled the grand urban designs of the racist South African state.³³ Significantly, the dissident and courageous countermoves by these activists forced the Johannesburg municipality and central government into altering the initial plans they had made with regard to the black city of Orlando.

The Squatter Movement is responsible for the creation of Soweto,³⁴ the most important site of black subjectivity and political agency in South Africa’s modern history.³⁵ A key protagonist, who remastered the layout of Orlando and facilitated the insertion of blackness into the remaking of black urbanisms, was James Sofasonke Mpanza.³⁶ Mpanza settled in Orlando in 1933 after he was removed from a backroom in the suburb of Bertrams in Johannesburg as part of the purge of black people from mixed-race suburbs.³⁷ Mpanza initially served as a member of the Orlando Vigilance Committee, but branched out to form his own Sofasonke Party in 1935. In 1936 he was elected for the first of many terms onto the municipality-ordained advisory board,³⁸ during his tenure, his singular aim “was to press the City Council to provide accommodation for the numerous sub-tenants in Orlando.”³⁹ In 1944, after repeated and failed attempts to get the Johannesburg council to respond to reasoned pleas regarding the provision of adequate housing for black people, Mpanza masterminded and coordinated a

mass squatting campaign in vacant municipal land adjacent to Orlando.

In a soliloquy explaining the squatting campaign he had almost single-handedly inspired, Mpanza set out his tactics:

The segregation provisions of the Urban Areas Act prevent the Natives from acquiring land and from buying, building or hiring houses except in the locations, where, in the case of Johannesburg, no land or houses are made available for us except houses built and owned by the Municipality. By applying the segregation provisions and not setting aside any land on which we may build ourselves, the Municipality has taken on itself the duty of providing us with houses. But it has not carried out that duty; there are no houses for us. Very well, then, we shall go and sit down on municipal land and wait for the Municipality to come and put a roof over our heads.⁴⁰

Mpanza's undertakings had no precedent, and there was fear amongst the squatter community that the authorities would deploy the military to handle the dissent. Since the notion of squatting connotes both legal and illegal forms of settlement,⁴¹ Mpanza capitalised on this ambiguity by methodically engineering the occupation of land that was not set aside for use by black inhabitants, but was lying dormant while thousands of black residents in Orlando lived in overcrowded and substandard dwellings. Commenting on the actions of Mpanza, Kevin French eloquently summed up his strategy: "Far from spontaneous[,] it was a well measured and calculated step spearheaded by a leader with a very shrewd understanding of his constituency, of the significance of the issue at hand and a confident assessment of his following."⁴² Those interested in settling on the land Mpanza and his followers had occupied had to pay a once-off nominal fee of six shillings to the Sofasonke Party, a further amount to access the site and a weekly fee "for the running and policing of the village."⁴³

After six days of occupation, the Sofasonke Party had registered 1500 families in the camp, a number that peaked at 4000.⁴⁴ Mpanza carefully managed all aspects of the camp. Coal, milk, sanitary goods for women and building materials were rationed to dwellers. Traders and entrepreneurs organised cooperatives where food and basic necessities were sold, at even lower prices than the government-sanctioned stores in Orlando. Mpanza had opened several shops within the camp and levied a fee as high as £25 on businesses that

sought to trade within the location.⁴⁵ This internal tax, which was immediately suffocated by the municipality, led to the Sofasonke Party amassing over £500 within a short period.⁴⁶ The Squatter Movement took advantage of the policy inconsistencies between the central government and the Johannesburg housing administrators. The Johannesburg council wanted to respond harshly and swiftly, but the Union Government “insisted that no order for ejection could be made unless alternative accommodation were provided, even if it were the barest minimum.”⁴⁷

Philip Bonner emphasises how “women were at the centre of squatter politics,” on account of their hands-on involvement in the revolution.⁴⁸ When men went to work, they continued erecting makeshift dwellings in the camp and organised themselves to partake in the daily protest rallies. The other important attribute of this ‘urban village,’ which speaks to black agency, is that everyone participated in the building of the site, especially when bricks were being laid for the permanent residences. Furthermore, because the people who moved there were well-intentioned and, in most instances, working folk, there was hardly any crime reported during the first weeks of the camp’s existence. At that time and throughout much of the twentieth century, state policing within black urbanisms concerned itself only with offences against pass laws, liquor license infringements and the like. Law enforcement rarely involved itself in domestic disputes, crime and violence amongst black people.⁴⁹ In response, the Squatter Movement introduced community policing, which was later recognised and reluctantly subsidised by the municipality. According to French, the “success” of this movement “gave a new sense of pride and self-respect to Johannesburg blacks.”⁵⁰

Importantly, the newly formed squatter camps, although enclaves of poverty and disease, “were self-administered and totally out of the control of the authorities.”⁵¹ This was a historical first, as black people had never been in a position to dictate and design the terms of their own urban development. Thus, the Squatter Movement was emblematic of black determination and showed the potential of an urban-based people’s revolution. With a keen sense of the historical significance of the Squatter Movement, Mpanza demanded that the area be referred to as Sofasonke Township and not Shantytown, the official name given to the area by the municipality. A man steeped in symbolism and ritual, Mpanza wore elaborate gowns that were more than just fashion statements,

but rather, as Stadler puts it, a visual strategy “to clothe his power in prophetic authority.”⁵²

In the wake of the Squatter Movement, the Johannesburg municipality unwillingly agreed to build temporary housing, which was constructed without cement with the expectation that the bricks would be reused in more permanent dwellings. Nonetheless, these temporary “unmortared rooms” stood until the 1960s and beyond.⁵³ Mpanza was also mindful of how the squatter revolution was shaking the hegemony of repressive land tenure and ownership laws. In a statement about the needs of the black squatters, he declared: “I asked the Native Commissioner to give us some trust farms together with tractors and necessary implements so that those who cared to, could go out and live there. They would then be away from town, free from pass raids and be able to till the soil voluntarily for a living.”⁵⁴

While the central government was unexpectedly sympathetic to the Squatter Movement, the threat it posed to the broader political and economic establishment was an unacceptable probability. The Johannesburg municipality launched a covert political offensive aimed at Mpanza and his party, vilifying and subverting his charismatic “arrogation of power” and portraying him as a dictatorial character that was out to enrich himself.⁵⁵ But more decisively, as French argues, “by discrediting Mpanza’s committee the Council was also lending weight to the argument that blacks were incapable of running their own affairs.”⁵⁶

One of the main strategies in the council’s counteroffensive against the movement was reclaiming commercial and business rights by issuing trading licenses within the camps; only three were provided to service the entire settlement.⁵⁷ Progressively, free and unregulated black businesses were mercilessly thwarted. However, the municipality-licensed shops were openly attacked by the residents of Sofasonke Township, who saw these enterprises as another system of control and exploitation. The municipality also instituted rents for stands within the camp at 15 shillings per month, which was higher than the 13 shillings charged to occupants of the two-roomed houses in Orlando, a move that Stadler calls “tortured logic and parsimonious calculations.”⁵⁸ The municipality hoped that the unreasonably high rents within the camps would deter future movements with similar aims; instead, they resulted in the city’s first mass rent boycotts.⁵⁹

In late 1944 a law was passed to remove the squatters, and although this immediately applied to unemployed squatters in Alberton, who were relocated to tents in Hammanskraal, north of Pretoria, those in Sofasonke remained protected because of their economic value to Johannesburg.⁶⁰ In 1946 the council plotted to banish Mpanza to Ixopo in KwaZulu-Natal, but the residents of Orlando protested his deportation. He was eventually arrested for his leadership role in the movement. Following back-and-forth court cases, Mpanza was acquitted and Edward Kumalo emerged as the new leader of the next phase of the Squatter Movement in Orlando.

The second wave of the movement got underway in 1946 when further squatter camps sprung up around the Rand region. In 1947 there were over 70,000 squatters across various locations around Johannesburg, a fifth of the black population of the city. When the National Party assumed political control in 1948 and instituted apartheid, it immediately accelerated the building of houses and between 1947 and 1951 5233 houses were erected on the site Mpanza had first occupied, which grew into Soweto.⁶¹ Although critical of the separatist dimension of South African urbanisms, Marc Scargill nevertheless saw the detribalised “melting pot” of spaces like Soweto, more so than any other city in Africa, as fertile ground for the emergence of a truly borderless ‘urban African.’⁶² After the 1950s, the state stopped the building of workers’ hostels and those who desired to take occupancy of new homes in Soweto needed to do so as a family. Men would either bring their existing wives from their rural homes or started new relationships on a whim to satisfy the authorities.⁶³

In many respects, the squatters had forced the white administrators into undesired action. They had, for the first time and against all possible odds, shaped the character of urbanisation for black people. Celebrating this people-centred urban revolution, Oriel Monongoaha, a leader of the squatter revolution during the 1940s, remarked:

The Government is beaten, because even the Government of England could not stop the people from squatting. The Government was like a man who has a cornfield which is invaded by birds. He chases the birds from one part of the field and they alight in another part of the field ... *We squatters are the birds.* The Government sends its policemen to chase us away and we move

off and occupy another spot. We shall see whether it is the farmer or the birds who get tired first.⁶⁴ (my emphasis)

This heartfelt and near-poetic affirmation of the movement's character is testament to the radical imagination that motivated many of the defiant actions of residents of the black city throughout the twentieth century. Destitute, landless, homeless, jobless and vulnerable to the military force of the state and its security agencies, the squatters still saw themselves akin to birds – free to nestle where necessary in order to survive, free to move defiantly across lands that were legally not theirs. Monongoaha's words also reverberate with the fervour of potentiality. The Squatter Movement had achieved the first meaningful victory for the urban black in almost half a century of opposition to and activism against the country's repressive urban laws. In many ways, the Squatter Movement had managed to redesign the urban landscape in ways that the educated black intelligentsia of the early twentieth century had been unable to achieve. Perhaps the most emphatic part of this history is the reality that it was James Mpanza – an ex-convict and not a part of the ANC's (African National Congress) pantheon of political saints – who was “the most engaging and notorious of the squatter leaders.”⁶⁵

By 1989 there were almost 50,000 shacks erected in various informal settlements on the peripheries of the cities of Johannesburg, Kempton Park and Pretoria. While the lifting of influx control mechanisms is often seen as the prime enabler for the increase of informal settlements, it was the inability to arrest this growth on the part of the municipal authorities “rather than total withdrawal of control” that heightened the crisis.⁶⁶ The apartheid urban designers had failed to regulate the black city. Although a product of racist ideology, the black city had evolved into a dynamic, irrepressible and organic form of urban settlement for black people that had permanently remodelled the South African urban landscape.

The Black City as an Imagined Construct

While the black city in South Africa is a real phenomenon, we also need to appreciate it as fictional and imagined space. Its fictioning was most evident in the mapping and cartographic practices of successive white governments throughout the twentieth century. Maps paradoxically provide what is perceived

as objective data, on the one hand, and slightly abstract information about the geographic concentration of people and territories, on the other. Within the framework of urban planning, maps are central to the allocation of resources and essential services but, more significantly, maps predetermine the movement (or lack thereof) and location of people.

Referencing the history of colonial and apartheid cartography in South Africa, PJ Stickler outlines how throughout the twentieth century, “large black settlements” – the black city, which bordered the industrialised white cities – were “downgraded or *made invisible* in maps of South Africa”⁶⁷ (my emphasis). Stickler is bemused by how these black settlements, that had a population density four to five times that of many small white towns, were omitted or given less prominence on the map. This resulted in what he has called “an increasingly false representation of the urban landscape.”⁶⁸ Stickler cites black cities like Botshabelo (“place of refuge”) near Bloemfontein, Khayelitsha (“a new home”) near Cape Town and Winterveld on the outskirts of Pretoria as prime examples of inappropriately mapped urban spaces where black people resided.

This symbolic and literal erasure on South Africa’s maps of spaces inhabited by black bodies was consistent with the bipolar desire to literally cleanse the streets and suburbs of the industrialised white cities of the black presence, while at the same time magically retaining the labour and human resource capabilities of the very same despised bodies. The tactile existence of the black city is irrefutable, as evidenced by the millions of black people who experienced urban living in and through those spaces. Yet equally true is the fact that the black city was fictional, a grand scheme of a racist regime – confirmed by how it could be made invisible on official maps, thereby sanctioning its sense of non-being.

Besides its fabricated genealogy, the black city is almost always represented as the embodiment of the backward, disordered anti-city. As AbdouMalik Simone infers, the black city “is considered a spectral effusion of excess – too many bodies, too many things, too many trades, too many intensities, too many demands of what is offered as available – infrastructure, services, rights of ways.”⁶⁹ Black cities, not just in South Africa, are projected as sites of mal-development, a dysfunction which is ironically induced by their systemic exclusion from the arteries that feed and maintain the ordered white city. For Simone, “‘black cities’ came to represent particular dangers, and to a large extent could become the danger they represented.”⁷⁰ According to Clinton Keeler,

in puritanical Western thought, the black city “was the ‘vulgar fringe,’ the playground removed at a sanitary distance from the white City.”⁷¹ Referencing this racial character in American cities, Richard Hatcher shows how the black city where Africans and Asians were systematically “abandoned” was a “swampland of human waste breeding every type of social deviate.”⁷²

More insidious was the fact that these ghettoised spaces denied their inhabitants “not merely equal opportunity, but the barest stake in the future.” While acknowledging the malignant problems associated with the black city, Simone advocates the dismantling of representations that confine these spaces to perpetual stasis and backwardness. He further conjectures that black people “have long earned the right to say something about the [black] city that nobody else can.”⁷³ Black people or those who are residents of the black city must create counter narratives or, in the case of artists, counter images that un-design such spaces beyond their racialised and bigoted heritage. Aesthetically un-designing the black city is crucial for redeeming black urbanisms as sites of self-actualisation, agency, family, play and possibility.⁷⁴

Un-designing the Black City through Art

From the early twentieth century, black artists from around the country have concerned themselves with depicting the black city in their art. These images were infused with a Black Consciousness ethos that privileged the black voice as the authority for expressing urban-based black subjectivities. One of the avenues used by black artists to un-design the black city was mapping, the very modality used by colonial and apartheid governments to make a fiction of black settlements. Mapping is an act of power, not just over the land or environment, but also over the people who inhabit that land. By reclaiming this power, albeit symbolically, black artists were inserting themselves into a realm that enabled them to reorder and redesign their spaces, and consequently their place within those spaces.

While numerous black artists have charted South African cities during the twentieth century, it was Titus Matiyane (b. 1964) who produced the most emphatic maps, or what he calls panoramas, of both white and black urbanisms. In his elongated, mixed-media illustrations of South African cities, Matiyane undoes and re-engineers the discursive and problematic invention of the black city. Drawing on a Post-African logic that implores us to transcend racial, ethnic,



Figure 25

Titus Matiyane, *Panorama Atteridgeville* (detail), 1990/1992, Mixed media drawing, 6m, Museum Africa (de Kler 2007:21). Reproduced with permission from the artist.

national and even continental subject positions in favour of an emancipated supra-colonial and planetary conception of selfhood,⁷⁵ Matiyane's expansive drawings regenerate these racialised spaces into modern urban utopias.⁷⁶ By reinventing the black city in his art, Matiyane, like many other black artists, unsettles the normative white gaze that diagnoses black urbanisms as inherently non-urban, rural and non-modern. As Melinda Silverman argues in her reading of his *Panorama Atteridgeville* (Figure 25), "Matiyane refuses to indulge white perceptions of the township as a place of poverty and deprivation. To Matiyane, the township is a modern space ... The township is not a space of otherness, but a place where modern urban Africans engage in modern urban life."⁷⁷

Produced in 1990, the *Panorama Atteridgeville* is among the first of Matiyane's large-scale portrayals of black cities. As a resident of Atteridgeville his whole life, Matiyane relied on his lived experiences of the place to produce this artwork and claims that he never referenced any maps. Yet he was still able to transcend the limitations of his ground view, to conceive the town from an aerial perspective which very few local residents ever get to see. Matiyane takes on the gaze of an all-seeing modern satellite, only this time Atteridgeville is remade after his own image and designs. Through his panoramas, Matiyane performed the function of a black town planner during a time when professional urban planning in South Africa was the preserve of white men. Referring to the radical, world-making potential of Matiyane's panoramas, Kruger comments:

The drawings are cosmically vast, yet simultaneously so detailed that one can determine where one lives, where one works, where acquaintances or loved ones some distance off might be finding themselves at that very moment. This coincident zoomed in and zoomed out geographical experience is also an exercise in temporal simultaneity, allowing one to occupy a city one knows in a different way, through an utterly new means of embodiment, in a different time that is not merely a past, or a future, but more wonderfully altered.⁷⁸

Besides re-imagining the black city from a bird's-eye view, black artists also un-designed the city from within. David Mogano's (1932-2000) painting of Pimville is one such artwork that captures how residents of the black city imagined their ideal urban environment. In 1934, the area of Klipspruit, where urban blacks in Johannesburg were first relocated in 1905, was rebranded as Pimville, as a tribute to a city councillor, Howard Pim, who had played a significant role in "the 'upliftment' of Africans in Johannesburg."⁷⁹ As noted above, Pimville was a precursor to Orlando and later Soweto. Sadly, like many other black cities, Pimville was poorly administered by the Bantu Administration and Development Department, and systemically denied basic services in a calculated attempt to make urban life unbearable for black residents.⁸⁰ Mogano's watercolour painting *Old Pimville T.ship* (1993) is emblematic of counter-artistic narratives that were determined to visualise black cities as idyllic, liveable spaces (Figure 26). Although created in 1993, the composition is a nostalgic illustration of Pimville during its 'golden' era. In the 1950s there were repeated attempts to relocate the black residents of Pimville to the newly formed Orlando township, as Pimville sat on land reserved for occupation by white people; however, on account of the people's defiance, the relocations were not successful.

Mogano's painting is a picturesque vision of a typical day in Pimville, comparable to Gerard Sekoto's iconic painting *Yellow Houses – Sophiatown* (1940). The actual picture of black urbanisms such as Pimville and Sophiatown during the mid-twentieth century – seen in photographs by Martin West,⁸¹ for example – was one of underdevelopment, non-existent service delivery and squalor. However, Mogano's painting edits out these troubling realities. Instead, the aura of 'normal' urban life is palpable throughout Mogano's composition, with several renditions of lovers in warm embraces, children playing together and neighbours in conversation. Besides the formal and aesthetic qualities of the



Figure 26

David Mogano, *Old Pimville T.ship [sic]*, 1993, Watercolour on paper, 65.5 x 86 cm. The Bongi Dhlomo Collection, The Javett Foundation. Photograph: Thania Louw. © The Javett Foundation. Reproduced with permission.

artwork, it also serves as an important historical record of early black urbanisms from the viewpoint of the black artist. Old Pimville, as the title suggests, was as important as the erstwhile and iconic Sophiatown, because it was an incubator where black people, of all types, first experienced the urban environment during the early twentieth century. Mogano's artistic impulses save Pimville from the monotone tyranny of squalor and dirtiness that residents had to live through and transports it into the realm of order and humanity.

The duty of restoring the dignity of the black city as a place, and the dignity and humanity of those who occupied these sites of non-being, also manifests in twentieth-century black art, especially in depictions of non-settled communities. Urban-based white and black people alike have looked on informal settlements with contempt,⁸² seeing squatters as unwanted invaders, aliens contaminating the orderliness of the city. There was a widely held assumption that the increase in informal settlements during the second half of the twentieth century was caused by new migrants flowing into the cities, but this view is not accurate. A census taken in 1989/1990 discovered that more than 50 percent of the residents of the



Figure 27

Vusi Khumalo, *Phumalong Informal Settlement [sic]*, 1997, Mixed media painting, 37.5 x 60.5 cm (Strauss & Co 2015). Reproduced with permission from the artist.

Gauteng informal settlements (namely, Pretoria, Johannesburg and Vereeniging) had been born in the region, with only 16 percent having relocated there after 1987.⁸³ The majority of black people who took up residence in these informal settlements did so because they had been forced to move from the backyards they were renting, or in many instances were descendants of urban-based families that could no longer absorb them as adults. The point is this – whether or not the squatter dwellers had any legitimacy to the land they occupied, they were nevertheless urban natives who were born and bred in the city, and were therefore entitled to exist within the urban paradigm.

Many black artists have explored the subjectivities of informal communities, but very few – Vusi Khumalo (1951-) is one example – have dedicated their entire creative career to cataloguing the texture and, most importantly, residents of informal settlements. In *Phumalong*⁸⁴ *Informal Settlement* (1997), Khumalo explores this largely unknown informal community based in Mamelodi, Pretoria (Figure 27). Using his distinctive collaged painting style, Khumalo recreates, in high definition, the mostly ignored inside world of non-settled communities. Khumalo also takes the viewer on a journey of discovery into the individual



Figure 28

Kagiso Pat Mautloa, *Mkuku*, 1995, Installation (Powell 1995:28). Reproduced with permission from the artist.

personas of the people he depicts. The exceptional detail with which he paints each character draws the viewer closer to them and although they remain anonymous, we can speculate about their personhood via their clothing, poses and colourful demeanour. Khumalo invites us to identify and sympathise with these inhabitants as human beings. Once again, the care with which he treats the shacks they inhabit enables the viewer to appreciate that while these are precarious and non-permanent structures, they nevertheless are spaces where people and families congregate and take refuge on a daily basis. Furthermore, Khumalo's depiction of children at play reminds us that innocence survives and thrives in these sites where violent and criminal elements often inflict havoc.

Bogues reminds us that the radical imagination “requires us to ask the

question, ‘And what about the Human?’”⁸⁵ That is, at the centre of all radical imaginative practices is the human – not as an abstract rhetorical spectre, but as a knowable individual and self-actualising being. While Khumalo’s work re-centres the human in his paintings, others have attempted to domesticate the black city and the homes where black subjectivities are performed on a daily basis. In 1995, Kagiso Pat Mautloa (1952-) co-created an ambitious installation, *Mkuku* (1995), which re-created a life-size shack in a gallery space (Figure 28).⁸⁶ The room was furnished with items found in most shacks, with the aim of giving audiences who lack access to the black city the tactile feeling and phenomenological experience of life in black urbanisms. Further to this aim, this installation was an effort at getting audiences to step into the homes and spaces where millions of urban-based people lived on account of colonial and apartheid spatial segregation.

However, while impressed by the overall gravitas of the work, the critic Ivor Powell wondered whether the “familiar strategy of bringing the real world of life into the gallery” was a continuation of the sanitisation and mystification of the black urban experience through art.⁸⁷ Powell was critical of the fact that this artwork, and almost all artworks created by urban-based black artists, were made in “the ways that whites, as the market for such art, wanted to see the lives of blacks projected.”⁸⁸ As he further argued,

Township art styles, in which nearly all black artists worked until the mid-1980s, sustained a rigorous fiction of black life which, while it often dwelt on a sort of causeless and sentimental pathos, never showed the realities of forced removals, police brutality, squatter camps, the litany of South African abuses. Many if not most whites had never so much as been inside a township. All of that history is somewhere to be read in the confrontation with the rusted scrap of corrugated iron ... At every level the world that is evoked has been excluded.⁸⁹

In other words, although Mautloa’s installation was a genuine attempt to make tangible the living conditions of most urban blacks, it was rendered impotent because it was consumed in a world completely indifferent to their interests. By many measures, many of the stakeholders in South Africa’s art world were directly and/or indirectly complicit in perpetuating the tyrannies that beset the

urban black. As Powell concluded, “[w]hat is at stake here, though in oblique and meditative form, is whole sensibilities, whole worlds.”⁹⁰

Mautloa’s installation was more than a simulation of a shack; it was a politicised recreation of the injustices urban blacks had to endure. The shack should be reclaimed from characterisations that deem it an unwanted nuisance and stain on the ordered industrialised city. The shack is the most rudimentary manifestation of the agency of those who were denied urban rights. Mautloa himself noted that the installation was an attempt to show the innermost recesses of an urban black subjectivity: “I use the wall as a metaphor. The walls can reflect life inside and outside as a skin which covers the inside of the souls. I use colour to reflect the hope that has vanished in the people.”⁹¹ For Mautloa, the shack is not a symbol of poverty and illegal occupation. His installation sought to show that the shack did not define or limit the potentialities, possibilities and humanness of those who resided in it. While black people in the apartheid city throughout the twentieth century were confined to the shack and the squatter camp as their place of being, they were equally not bound to the black city or by it.

Conclusion

Much of the focus of this chapter has been on the formation of Orlando during the 1930s, and how the Squatter Movement led by James Mpanza was dictated by the inadequate housing and overpopulation within this black city. The Squatter Movement is a formative reference point for appreciating the character of black imagination and social agency that sought to counter the segregationist and racist urban design policy and practice of the colonial and apartheid authorities. Although black people performed an active part, both in revolutionary and moderately complicit terms, in the formation of black cities, the main architects of such racialised spaces were white politicians, social engineers and municipal administrators who were bent on excluding black people from the centre of urban life in South Africa. However, the residents of the black city were defiant in actively un-designing South Africa’s ethnic-orientated urban ecosystem through their dissent and artistic praxis. According to David Smith, although black urbanisms were fictional constructs of successive segregationist regimes, these racialised sites “have taken on a life of their own, rebounding on the system to its discomfort and ultimate demise.”⁹²

In many respects, the political manoeuvring that transformed South African

society during the late 1980s and early 1990s was predicated on a transgressive reordering of the urban hierarchy, which in turn directed pressures on the central government that could not be ignored. Among other factors, the Squatter Movement, trade union marches, transport and rent boycotts and the weight of political protests forced the apartheid ideologues to reconfigure the race-based political system so as to include black participation at the high table of politics and governance.

This chapter has appraised some of the black artists who utilised the radical imagination to un-design the normative and regressive representations of the black city. Their and other artworks showcasing the black city are praiseworthy for their historical, artistic and philosophical potency in the ongoing remaking of the black city. The various artworks I have discussed throughout this chapter – and much of twentieth-century black art dealing with urbanisation – were not only invested in depicting the black city as it was. Rather, they were actively (re)presenting the black city in forms that progressively un-designed these sites of exclusion and segregation away from the racism and bigotry that created them. There is a pathos within these works that compels the viewer to see black urbanisms in redemptive and humanising ways.

Disclosure statement

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Notes

1. The Department of Human Settlements in South Africa has adopted the term “informal settlement” as the politically correct alternative to “squatter camp.” While I support this renaming, due to the historical nature of this paper and in order to stay true to recognised political and activist campaigns like the 1940s Squatter Movement, I reuse the term “squatter camp” throughout this chapter. However, in some instances I refer to these spaces as informal settlements or non-settled communities.
2. A Bogues, “And What About the Human?: Freedom, Human Emancipation, and the Radical Imagination,” *boundary 2*, 39:3 (2012), 29-46, at 37.
3. *Ibid.*, 45.
4. Rob Breton suggests that acts of destructive violence and aggression by oppressed people, especially within revolutionary moments, also engender traits of the radical imagination. See R Breton, “Violence and the Radical Imagination,” *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 44:1 (2011), 24-41.
5. Bogues, “And What About the Human?,” 46.
6. D Lewis, “Feminism and the Radical Imagination,” *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, 72 (2007), 18-31, at 30.
7. W Gabardi, *Negotiating Postmodernism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 82.
8. Coined by Kruger, dystopia is a neologism that characterises “a subversive and disruptive utopia created to challenge lingering global deep-structural biases, specifically with regard to race and culture.” Kruger arrived at this notion by marrying the revolutionary qualities of dystopia with the progressive and imaginative aptitudes of utopia. According to Kruger, the core of dystopian philosophy is a desire “to disrupt socio-political othering.” More significant to my argument here is that dystopia seeks to rationalise the subjectivities and histories of urbanised people. See R Kruger, “Distopia: The Utopia of Dissidence and Cultural Pluralism in Three Generations of Dutch Artists” (PhD thesis, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 2017), 3 and 113 (quotations).
9. Kruger, “Distopia,” 83.
10. L van der Watt, “Exiting Whiteness: Unthinking Race, Imagining Different Paradigms,” *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, 16:2 (2004), 93-120, at 105.
11. *Ibid.*
12. M van der Velden and C Mörtberg, “Between Need and Desire: Exploring Strategies for Gendering Design,” *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 37:6 (2012), 663-83, at 675.
13. *Ibid.*
14. E Constandius and H Botes, eds, *Educating Citizen Designers in South Africa* (Stellenbosch: AFRICAN SUN MeDIA, 2018), i.
15. Bogues, “And What About the Human?,” 34.
16. See DH Reader, *The Black Man’s Portion: History, Demography and Living Conditions in the Native Locations of East London Cape Province* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1961).
17. See B Freund, “The City of Durban: Towards a Structural Analysis of the Economic Growth & Character of a South African City,” in *Africa’s Urban Past*, eds DM Anderson and R Rathbone (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 144-62.
18. N Coetzer, “Langa Township in the 1920s – An (Extra)ordinary Garden Suburb,” *South African Journal of Art History*, 24:1 (2009), 1-19, at 2.
19. S Watson, “Spaces of the ‘Other’: Planning for Cultural Diversity in Western Sydney,” in *Text, Theory, Space: Land, Literature and History in South Africa and Australia*, eds K Darian-Smith, L Gunner and S Nuttall (London: Routledge, 1996), 201-14, at 202.
20. The first reported cases of the disease emerged in Cape Town in 1901, and quickly spread to other coastal town like Gqeberha. The outbreak of this plague gave these colonially administered cities the impetus and legitimacy to segregate the urban inhabitants based on race, as much as on medical grounds.
21. Klipspruit was situated 15km southwest of Johannesburg.
22. The development of Orlando during the early 1930s also marked the first phase of the forced removals campaign within Johannesburg, and in 1935 the permit system was introduced as an influx control mechanism.
23. L Blokland, “Mental Health Care in Mamelodi: Disadvantaged Geographical Positioning in a South African Township,” *De Jure*, 47:2 (2014), 175-88, at 179.
24. EDA Taabe, “Orlando Township,” *The Bantu World*, 14 May 1932, 4.
25. R Bester, “City and Citizenship,” in *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945-1994*, ed. O Enwezor (Munich: Prestel, 2001), 219-224.

26. South African History Online, "Johannesburg the Segregated City," *South African History Online*, 2011, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/topic/johannesburg-segregated-city> (accessed 30 January 2017).
27. Douglas Calderwood, a graduate of the University of Witwatersrand, later became manager of the architecture division at the National Building Research Institute.
28. L Bremner, *Writing the City into Being: Essays on Johannesburg 1998-2008* (Johannesburg: Fourthwall Books, 2010), 13.
29. KJ French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party in the Development of Local Politics in Soweto" (MA thesis, University of Witwatersrand, 1983), 33.
30. *Ibid.*, 65.
31. Bremner, *Writing the City into Being*, 12.
32. P Bonner, "African Urbanisation on the Rand between the 1930s and 1960s: Its Social Character and Political Consequences," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21:1 (1995), 115-129, at 119.
33. The African National Congress adopted its Programme of Action in 1949, a policy "that prepared the way for civil disobedience against the apartheid regime in the 1950s" (A Tambo, *Oliver Tambo Speaks* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2014), 48). Thus the Squatter Movement of 1944 had pioneered the use of civil disobedience before the ANC, the political vanguard for black people, accepted it as a viable strategy against the racist state.
34. See Philip Bonner's and Lauren Segal's *Soweto: A History* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1998) for a thorough account of how Soweto evolved following Mpanza's intervention in Orlando.
35. Bonner and Segal, *Soweto: A History*.
36. Mpanza's life story is near-fantastical. In school, he was a bright learner who was only held back by his poverty. However, after impressing the white community in Natal through his exceptional communication skills, charm and productivity in the workplace, he was legally exempted from Native Law in 1908 to become an "honorary white" (French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 8). However, this promise came to naught as he would become a thief and hardened criminal, sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering an Indian shopkeeper. In jail, Mpanza underwent a religious conversion and fate led to his early release from his life sentence. After his release from prison, Mpanza relocated to Johannesburg and worked as a pastor, hawk and later teacher until his life of politics began when he was forcibly taken to Orlando.
37. French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 37.
38. The advisory boards were developed by the municipality to act as a conduit between the white administrators and the black residents. Gary Baines acknowledges that these committees were materially ineffective, but also stresses that they were "an important channel of mobilisation in urban African communities," especially before the Second World War. See G Baines, "The New Brighton Advisory Board c.1923-1952: Its Legitimacy and Legacy," paper presented at the Fifth Triennial History Workshop of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1990, 1.
39. French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 50.
40. Quoted in French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 75.
41. H Sapire, "Politics and Protest in Shack Settlements of the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Region, South Africa, 1980-1990," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18:3 (1992), 670-697, at 673.
42. French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 75.
43. *Ibid.*, 78.
44. *Ibid.*, 83, 88.
45. AW Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield: Squatter Movements in Johannesburg, 1944-1947," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 6:1 (1979), 93-123, at 102.
46. The party's income was further bolstered by a security force linked to the Native Affairs Department which earned £6 per month with benefits. To place the income the Sofasonke Party had generated into perspective, using a standard year-on-year inflation calculator £500 pounds in the mid-1940s would be equivalent to over 440,000 ZAR (South African Rands) today. The municipality was quick to thwart Mpanza's operation because it was undercutting its revenue collection in black urbanisms. See French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 92.
47. Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield," 98.
48. P Bonner, "Family, Crime and Political Consciousness on the East Rand: 1939-1955," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14:3 (1988), 393-420, at 418.
49. P Bonner, "African Urbanisation on the Rand between the 1930s and 1960s: Its Social Character and Political Consequences," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21:1 (1995), 115-129, at 126.
50. French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 94.
51. Bonner, "African Urbanisation on the Rand," 121.
52. Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield," 107.
53. *Ibid.*, 97.
54. Quoted in French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 186.

55. Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield," 105.
56. French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 98.
57. Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield," 102.
58. Ibid., 103.
59. Led by Abel Ntoi, the rent boycotts resulted in only 43 tenants out of 1,750 paying rent in May 1947. By 1948 only one out of six households were honouring their rent obligation. The response from the authorities was swift, snuffing out the boycott on account of its potential long-term political and economic ramifications (Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield," 104).
60. French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party," 110.
61. Ibid., 190.
62. DI Scargill, *The Form of Cities* (London: Bell & Hyman, 1979), 239.
63. Bonner, "African Urbanisation on the Rand," 122.
64. Oriel Monongoaha (quoted in Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield," 93).
65. B Freund, *The African City: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 116.
66. Sapire, "Politics and Protest," 672.
67. PJ Stickler, "Invisible Towns: A Case Study in the Cartography of South Africa," *Geo-Journal*, 22:3 (1990), 329-33, at 329.
68. Ibid., 333.
69. A Simone, "The Black City?," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, blog post, 2017, <https://www.ijurr.org/spotlight-on/race-justice-and-the-city/the-black-city/> (accessed 21 November 2019).
70. Ibid.
71. C Keeler, "The White City and the Black City: The Dream of a Civilization," *American Quarterly*, 2:2 (1950), 112-17, at 115.
72. RG Hatcher, "The Black City Crisis," *The Black Scholar*, 1:6 (1970), 54-62, at 35.
73. A Simone, "It's Just the City After All!," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40:1 (2015), 210-218, at 217.
74. In his exploration of how black people transformed the black city into home, Jacob Dlamini stresses that we should never forget that there is "a richness, a complexity of the life among black South Africans that not even colonialism and apartheid at their worst could destroy." Here Dlamini is gesturing that joy, self-actualisation and positivity existed in racialised and underdeveloped black urbanisms. See J Dlamini, *Native Nostalgia* (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2009), 19.
75. D Ekpo, "From Negritude to Post-Africanism," *Third Text*, 24:2 (2010), 177-87.
76. For a detailed Post-Africanist interpretation of Matiyane's drawings of African cities, see P Sidogi, "Visioning the Africa We Want: Post-Africanism and the Art of Titus Matiyane," In *New African Thinkers. Agenda 2063: Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development*, ed. O Bialostocka (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council Press, 2018), 121-34.
77. M Silverman, "The Drawing Table," in *Titus Matiyane: Cities of the World*, ed. A De Kler (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2007), 18-33, at 22.
78. R Kruger, "Distopia: The Politics of Fantasy," unpublished paper presented at 10th Annual Conference of the Gesellschaft für Fantastikforschung: The Romantic Fantastic, 18-21 September, Freie Universität, Berlin, 2019.
79. J Ball, "'A Munich Situation': Pragmatic Cooperation and the Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Department during the Early Stages of Apartheid" (MA diss., University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2012), 106.
80. C Glaser, *Bo-Tsotsi: The Youth Gangs of Soweto, 1935-1976* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000), 100.
81. Martin West was a photographer who documented black urbanisms during the twentieth century. His pictures of spaces like Pimville can be accessed online at <http://www.martin-west.uct.ac.za/items/show/10335>.
82. Jacob Dlamini cites the words of a black woman who saw the squatter camp shacks and their dwellers in a negative light. For her, squatter camps residents had destroyed the innocence and peace of her township. She laments: "It was a quiet place with no violence ... There are too many outsiders. I don't even know where they come from" (Dlamini, *Native Nostalgia*, 4).
83. Sapire, "Politics and Protest," 677.
84. The name of the squatter settlement is incorrectly spelt as Phumalong (instead of Phomolong) in various catalogues and write-ups about this artwork.
85. Bogues, "And What About the Human?," 46.
86. The artwork was shown at a gallery in London as part of the "On the Road" exhibition in 1995 featuring ten artists from southern Africa. The exhibition was curated by Linda Givon, owner of Goodman Gallery.
87. I Powell, *On the Road: Works by 10 Southern African Artists* (Johannesburg: Goodman Gallery, 1995), 6.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid.
90. Ibid.
91. Quoted in Powell, *On the Road*, 28.
92. D Smith, "Introduction," in *The Apartheid City: Urbanisation and Social Change in South Africa*, ed. D Smith (London: Routledge, 1992), 1-10, at 1.



Figure 29
Reconciliation Plaza at Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga. Source: History Trust of South Australia, 2016.
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Reconciling the Australian Square

Fiona Johnson and
Jillian Walliss

The urban square is one of most enduring colonial imports into Australian cities, culturally and politically. Adelaide, Australia's celebrated colonial planned city, features five public squares, with the largest, named Victoria Square (until 2002), occupying the centre of Colonel Light's 1837 grid. Conceived without a square, Melbourne is considered to have lacked a civic heart until the competition for Federation Square in 1997. It is therefore not surprisingly that the political intent to enact processes of Reconciliation in the urban domain has drawn designers, planners and politicians towards the re-conceptualisation of the square in the Australian city.

This chapter explores how Adelaide and Perth, two capital cities with a strong contemporary Indigenous presence, have reconceived the role of civic squares. Adelaide's Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga Square, dissected and bounded by major roads, has struggled for decades to perform as a vibrant civic space. This is despite the square being significant to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It is notable, for instance, as the first place in Australia to fly an Aboriginal flag in recognition of land rights for Aboriginal people. In 2009 landscape architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean (TCL), in collaboration with architects Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, led the development of a revitalising masterplan which aimed to enable "a new civic life reflective of our 21st century culture to emerge."¹

In contrast to Adelaide, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority (MRA) sought to develop a new civic square for Perth as part of a city-wide plan to better connect the central railway precinct to surrounding suburbs and introduce an entertainment precinct, public open space and commercial redevelopment. Opened in 2018, Yagan Square was designed as a collaboration between Lyons

Architects in association with Iredale Pederson Hook Architects and ASPECT Studios.

Collectively, these squares have won numerous design awards.² However, there has been hesitancy to engage with the cultural and political complexities of these spaces in terms of design critique, instead defaulting to the view that any aspiration towards Reconciliation is positive. While this is true, this shying away from a more comprehensive interrogation of these new civic outcomes does little to advance knowledge and practice.

Working across policy, masterplans and design outcomes, in this chapter we examine how the twin agendas of civic space and Reconciliation manifest in these twenty-first century squares. This comparison reveals that the design of contemporary civic space in Australia remains an evolving cultural and economic challenge, requiring the negotiation of two new influences: Indigenous communities who have historically been absent from the conceptualisation of urban civic space, and the ongoing dilemmas of funding the civic realm. We reveal the rise of 'creative' placemaking as a key influence, highlighting a critical distinction in the conceptualisation and politics of this role. In the case of Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga Square, creative placemaking strategies are aligned with postmodern approaches driven by non-Indigenous designers and curators and are strongly influenced by the theoretical positionings of the new museum. In contrast, Yagan Square was developed using strategies of co-creation, bringing together non-Indigenous and Indigenous designers, artists and communities into a cross-cultural relationship of authorship. Offering evidence of a growing maturity of Reconciliation processes, we argue that this transition demonstrates a critical step towards the decolonising of design processes, moving from *recognition* of Indigenous perspective to *dialogue* between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Decolonising the Civic

The design of civic space has generated extensive discourse over the past 60 years. Beginning in the 1960s with a focus on morphological and social aspects of urban space, attention in the 1980s turned to Henri Lefebvre's concept of the *right to the city*, with scholars such as David Harvey, Leonie Sandercock and Peter Rowe warning of the dangers of neoliberal capitalism. Responding to the political and technological influences on the twenty-first-century city, theorists

now challenge the expectation that public spaces operate as the primary sites for civic practices. Urban scholar Ash Admin, for instance, observes that “sites of civic and political formation” are now distributed in a variety of civic practices “that are not reducible to the urban.”³ While this is true, the urban civic spaces of the streetscape, plaza, park, garden or waterfront remain critical spaces for the city, conceived as an interaction between the individual and the state. Representative of both collective and individual experience, ‘civic space’ is broadly symbolic, and yet grounded in the particular and the everyday.

This expanded notion of the civic has been paralleled by the rise of *creative* placemaking, along with the emergence of the professional *place-maker*. Definitions of placemaking are elusive, ranging from an “ideology, a theoretical framework for urban policy and design to a technique or set of tools for practitioners.”⁴ Distinctions are drawn between the neighbourhood activism placemaking strategies advanced by Jane Jacobs, at one extreme, and the concept of creative placemaking which promotes the movement of the arts from the studio into urban spaces, at the other.⁵ The latter concept in particular has been broadly embraced in Australia through policy adoption and strategic governance as a broadly positive approach to bringing coherence and meaning to locale.⁶ As Chris Ryan articulates:

Place-making aims to turn public spaces into places; places which engage with those who inhabit them, places through which people do not merely pass, but have reason to ‘stop and become involved’; places which offer rich experience and a ‘sense of belonging’; places in short, which have meaning, which evoke pleasure or contemplation, or reflection and, most importantly, an appreciation of cultural and environmental diversity.⁷

The idea of the creative city is often regarded as somewhat of an urban cure-all through placemaking, revitalising the public and social life of the city while also activating the local economy through the regeneration of the built environment, resolving “the city’s ‘urban problems’ in general.”⁸ While this strategy is appealing to urban policymakers, the key indicators of a successful creative city are largely measured through increases in speculative land value and decreasing vacancy rates, which are also economic indicators of the displacement of marginalised, low-income city residents.⁹

In the Australian context, concepts of civic space are further complicated by legislative requirements to respond to Reconciliation as the nation recognises its moral obligations to redress the legacy of colonialism. Civic space within a framing of Reconciliation offers the opportunity to explore shared histories, experiences and practices, between indigenous and settler subjectivities. In his book *Civic Realism*, Peter Rowe defines “urban public spaces that are civic in character” as “belonging to everyone and yet to nobody in particular.”¹⁰ According to the definition given by Rowe, civic space:

is at once familiar, pluralistic, and critical – at least to the extent that this last quality can be sustained architecturally. It is also specific, socially relevant, transcendental, and concerned with everyday life, including matters of both individual and collective experience. Furthermore, it is inextricably bound up with the continual advancement of the expressive means by which it is made and elaborated.¹¹

More simply, civic space encompasses singularity and pluralism; critique and accord; fluidity and transcendence; familiarity and development; and the collective and the individual.

However, this definition of *civic* is problematic within the settler context, where space and politics are inherently *unsettled*. Universalist definitions of the *civic citizen* sit uncomfortably in a place where the importation of Western ideologies has left a violent and traumatic legacy for indigenous people. Anne Lewinson suggests that civic spaces in colonial cities are never neutral, as the politics of control inherent in the colonial project have usually touched these spaces.¹² In this context, Gavin Malone argues that civic space is an effective medium through which to ‘read’ sovereign politics, that, “as a space of both contestation and reconciliation, can be seen to reflect not only the more recent reconciliation process but also the evolution of the recognition and social inclusion of Indigenous people in Australia.”¹³

Without any formal Treaty between the traditional owners and the British settlers, Australia has struggled to address the ramifications of colonisation, legally and culturally. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, legislative changes recognising native title attempted to rectify some injustices. However, the avoidance of fundamental issues such as sovereignty has led to limited

success. Over the last decade this challenge has been tied into processes of Reconciliation, which began formally in 1991 with the passing of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act. Ambitions have evolved from addressing the misunderstandings of Australian history and race relations towards instigating policies and practices which encourage relationships and dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, along with questions of equity and equality.¹⁴

Australia's 'unfinished business' has left professionals working in the realm of the civic without clear legislative and policy frameworks for engaging with Reconciliation.¹⁵ In contrast, following the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975, New Zealand has formalised legislative and policy processes of decolonisation such as the Resource Management Act which offer clear guidance for designers and planners in urban and non-urban areas. This lack of clarity in the Australian context, beyond affirmative action models of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), highlights why it is so important to document the processes and theoretical underpinnings of civic projects emerging over the past decade. Focusing on the two key precedents of Adelaide's Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga and Perth's Yagan Square, we explore the ideas and concepts (built and unbuilt) that underpinned the development of these urban civic spaces between 2008 and 2018.

Spatial Foundations

The two state capitals of Western Australia and South Australia have maintained a strong contemporary Indigenous presence, following a long history of Indigenous occupation that predates the colonial cities of Perth (1829), and Adelaide (1836) by thousands of years. The traditional owners of the southwestern area of Western Australia are the Noongar people,¹⁶ representing one of the largest Aboriginal cultural blocs in Australia.¹⁷ The Whadjuk Noongar specifically are the traditional owners of the Perth region, and today over 27,103 people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent live in greater Perth.¹⁸

The colony of Perth was established on the banks of the Swan River (known as Derbal Yerrigan in the Noongar language) by Lieutenant-Governor James Stirling on 12 August 1829.¹⁹ Originally, the landscape of the Swan River plain consisted of a series of freshwater wetlands which flowed to the west.²⁰ It has been estimated that up to 80 percent of the urban landscape of Perth is built on

reclaimed wetlands.²¹ Early contact between settlers and Noongar were initially amicable, though quickly deteriorated. The area occupied by the colonists was of great economic and ceremonial significance to the Noongar community, and tensions swiftly escalated. Disease, violence and the loss of food-gathering sites had a significant impact on population numbers by 1864.²²

As in cities throughout Australia, the spatial containment of Aboriginal people in Perth was enacted through urban planning and social policy. In 1833 the Mount Eliza Depot for Aborigines was established on the site of the Old Swan Brewery as a means of segregating them from the rest of the settlement.²³ The Noongar community was restricted from King's Park, as "an Aboriginal presence was judged to disrupt the visual and social ordering of the city."²⁴ Later social policy, in the form of the Native Administration Act 1905 (WA), saw Aborigines banned from the Perth Metropolitan area until 1954.²⁵ Aborigines were not eliminated from the city, but lived on reserves, in state-allocated housing and as 'fringe dwellers' in informal camps.²⁶ In the mid-1950s, social policy shifted towards assimilation.²⁷

In spite of this history of dispossession and displacement, in 2006 Noongar were successful in their landmark claim of native title rights over Perth, the first of its kind in an Australian capital city.²⁸ However, the claim went through a protracted appeals process, attaining registration in October 2018, with a \$1.3 million dollar settlement which formalised six existing Indigenous land use agreements.²⁹ Many contemporary landmarks and public spaces are now recognised in Perth's urban fabric as culturally significant to the traditional owners of the city, while parts of East Perth and Northbridge continue as important contemporary gathering spaces.

Adelaide occupies the Tarntanya plains of Kaurna Country.³⁰ This indigenous landscape is characterised by grasslands and open grassy woodlands in the western coastal hinterland, and forests to the south of Karrawirra Parri/the Torrens River.³¹ Kaurna culture remains an enduring presence within the Adelaide area, with ancestors having occupied the southern Australian landscape for at least forty thousand years.³² The area where Colonel Light surveyed Victoria Square is identified as the main campground or "headquarters" for the Kaurna in the region.³³

The city of Adelaide is notable in Australia as the country's only planned free settlement, and is exceptional in terms of race relations. The Colonial Office in

London was aware of the Indigenous settlement of the general area and over time developed policies to provide some form of protection for the Indigenous inhabitants and to ensure that colonists displayed just conduct when establishing a new colony.³⁴ However, the settlement of Adelaide was plagued by a conflict between legislative protection for the interests of Indigenous communities and demand for land by settlers. Building on the generation of civilisation through ‘cultured’ society, the settlement was planned to include provision for the establishment of public institutions, alongside five village squares, with Victoria Square as the six-hectare central civic space at the ‘heart’ of colonial Adelaide.³⁵

Notwithstanding the ongoing marginalisation of Kaurna people within the city, the formal squares of Adelaide are resilient public spaces for Indigenous sociality and solidarity.³⁶ Most significantly to the nation, the newly designed Aboriginal flag was first unveiled at Victoria Square on National Aborigines Day, 12 July 1971.³⁷ This event is symbolic of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, given the history of civil and land rights movements. In terms of land rights, in March 2018 the Kaurna people were successfully granted native title for the area from Myponga to Lower Light, encompassing Adelaide, inclusive of native title right to 17 parcels of undeveloped land not held under freehold lease.³⁸ This just beat the Noongar claim to Perth as the first metropolitan agreement registered, although it took 18 years to achieve, having first been tabled in 2000.

Given this history, the intent to develop contemporary civic squares for Perth and Adelaide offer distinctive design challenges. Rather than create a ‘new’ space, it was recognised that Adelaide’s Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga Square had existed since Light’s 1837 colonial plan. As a European civic space, Victoria Square has suffered under the weight of expectations established by the primacy of its central position. Over time, the square had struggled to perform as a vibrant civic space, disconnected from the major cultural and entertainment activities located on North Terrace. The space has been dissected by various experiments in planting, fencing and circulation, directing pedestrian flows and vehicular circulation. As illustrated in Figure 30, there were six spatial iterations of the square in its first 130 years, an extraordinary number given the centrality of the space to the major civic institutions of the state capital.

The will to revitalise Adelaide’s squares emerged at a planning level through the 1986-1991 City of Adelaide Plan Review.³⁹ A series of redevelopment

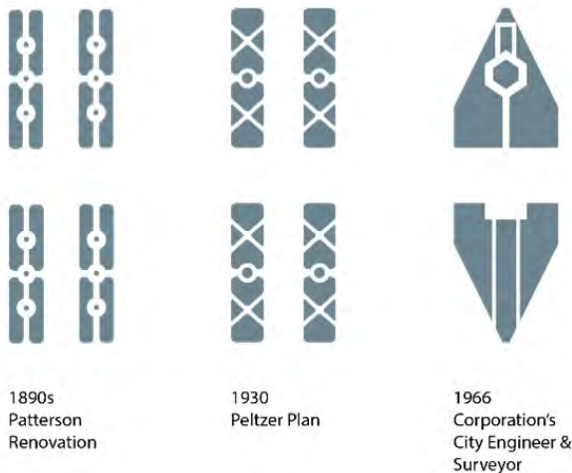
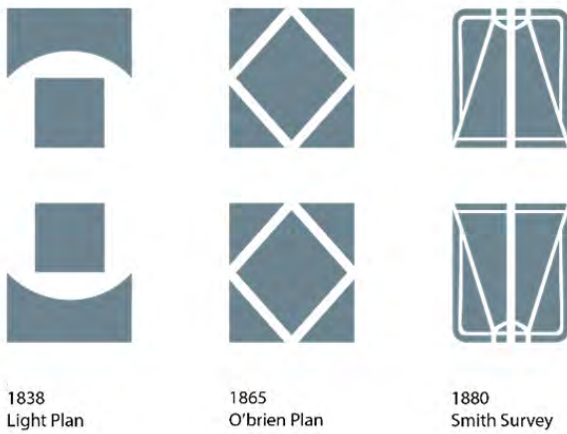


Figure 30

Victoria Square: planting and circulation patterns from colonial foundation through to modernism. Source: Authors' diagram.

strategies aimed to address the languishing of the space were proposed throughout the 1990s and 2000s. The 2002 Urban Design Master Plan was particularly significant as it was the first to conceptualise a direct design response to Reconciliation, through a symbolic Arts and Culture strategy of “cultural layering.”⁴⁰

While this scheme failed to gain political support, in 2008 a Community Ideas Competition for the Victoria Square was held by the Adelaide City Council in partnership with the state government of South Australia.⁴¹ Building on the ideas generated by the competition, council issued the *Victoria Square/ Tarntanyangga Vision and Guiding Principles* brief in October 2008 and sought

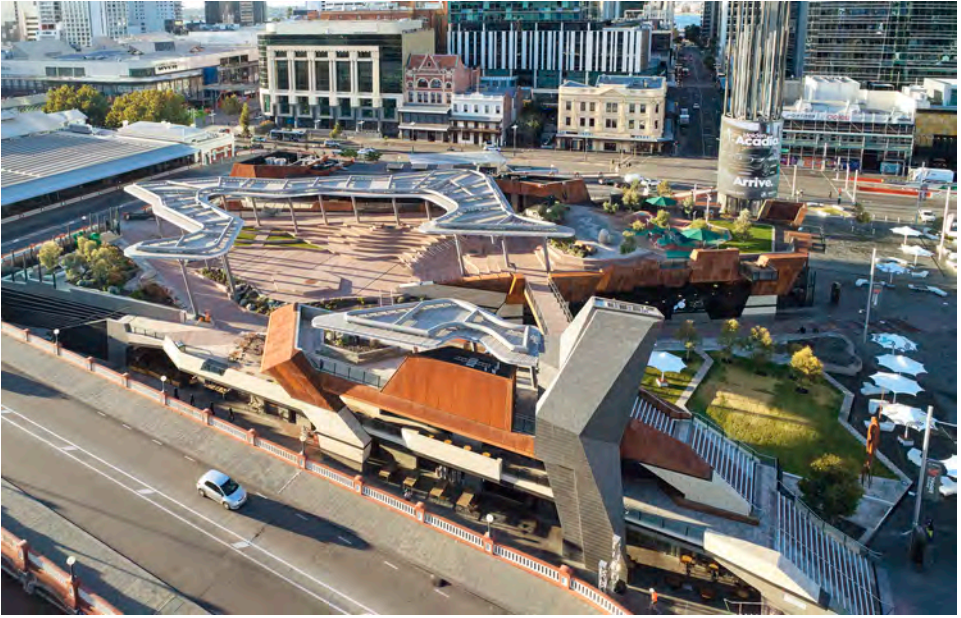


Figure 31

The new urban space of Yagan Square is nested between the historic William Street Horseshoe Bridge and Perth railway station. Source: ASPECT Studios; photography Peter Bennetts, 2019. Used with permission.

expressions of interest. Through direct consultation with the Kaurna community, designers were asked to interpret the spiritual significance of Tarntanyangga to enhance the identity of the space, as well as to “creatively introduce” Aboriginal culture into Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga through education and celebration, drawing on practices of dance, music, performance, interpretation and design.⁴²

In May 2009 landscape architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean (TCL), along with architects Tonkin Zulaikha Greer (TZG) and engineers QED, were announced as the successful team to develop the masterplan for the six-hectare Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga Urban Regeneration Project. The design team worked on design and interpretation in collaboration with Kaurna Indigenous consultant Karl Telfer and cultural curator Peter Emmett.⁴³ It is the outcome of this consultancy that forms the focus of this analysis.

In contrast to Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga, Perth’s Yagan Square was an entirely new urban space. The square was conceived and managed by the MRA, which emerged in January 2012 following the amalgamation of four existing state government redevelopment authorities across metropolitan Perth.

More recently, the MRA has merged with LandCorp, the state government land development agency, to become DevelopmentWA in 2019.⁴⁴ Working across regulatory planning and land development, the MRA offered a comprehensive approach to planning, development, management and activation.

Yagan Square forms part of a series of infrastructure projects including Elizabeth Quay, Perth Cultural Centre and Perth City Link in support of expanding Perth's population by four million by 2050. The site emerges through the bridging of railway lines adjacent to Perth Railway Station and reclaiming space within the 'arms' of the historic Horseshoe Bridge. This new spatial insertion forms a critical part of the City Link plan to better connect the city to surrounding suburbs by sinking railway infrastructure and infilling with an entertainment precinct, public open space and commercial redevelopment.

In an important point of distinction, the MRA champion their role as "Place Manager, Planning Regulator and Developer," claiming to be the only Australian government developer to have "all three functions in-house."⁴⁵ This governance alignment is particularly powerful for embedding Reconciliation goals across a diverse range of activities, with the MRA delivering its first RAP in July 2013-2014. Designed as a collaboration between Lyons Architects and iredale pederson hook architects and ASPECT Studios, Yagan Square opened in 2018.⁴⁶ The complex resolution of level changes and movement patterns demanded by the insertion of this new space resulted in a stepped architectural form punctuated by ramps, staircases and constructed peninsulas. A central gathering space located at the upper level accommodates up to 1000 people and is framed by a signature canopy structure (Figure 31).

In contrast, the master plan for Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga has only partly been realised. Construction of Stage One (only 25 percent of the plan) was completed in February 2014, at a cost of \$28 million.⁴⁷ As shown in Figure 32, the master plan proposed a far more complex built program including an arbor promenade, the largest gesture to reconcile the square into a collective space, alongside a culture centre and a mosaic of gardens for the southern part of the square. Without the comprehensive redevelopment model of the MRA, Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga suffered from a lack of funding assurance.⁴⁸ Regardless of this incompleteness, for the purpose of this chapter it is still extremely valuable to examine the placemaking strategies lying behind the two schemes.

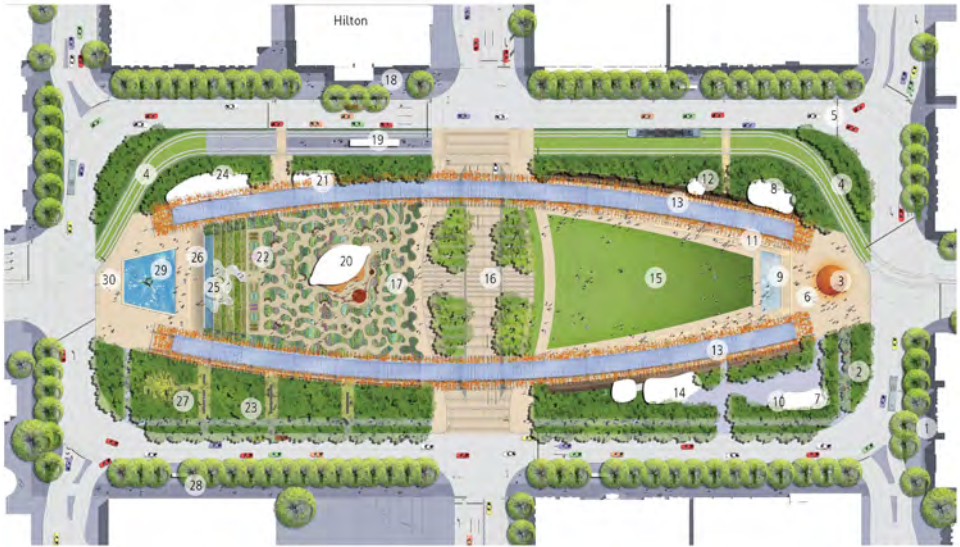


Figure 32

Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga Masterplan. Source: Adelaide City Council and TaylorCullityLethlean and TonkinZulaikhaGreer, *Victoria Square | Tarndanyangga Urban Regeneration Project Design Development Reports* (Adelaide: Adelaide City Council, The Government of South Australia, 2011), 18.

Reconciling Placemaking

Broadly speaking, the creative placemaking approaches adopted in the design strategies for Yagan Square and Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga share a common intent to re-inscribe precolonial stories and environmental histories onto contemporary urban space. However, a closer look reveals a major transformation of the politics of authorship, moving from postmodern-inspired representations of cultural plurality, inclusive of Indigenous stories (but curated by non-Indigenous designers), to processes which bring non-Indigenous and Indigenous artists, designers and communities together in a cross-cultural convergence. This difference owes much to the maturing of policies and framings of Reconciliation which establish influential contexts for designers to work within.

As discussed above, the renewal of Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga was shaped by a planning agenda tied to creative placemaking, which occurred in concert with the introduction of Reconciliation policy at a local level. The Adelaide City Council was the first local council in Australia to adopt a Reconciliation Vision Statement (1997), which included an obligation to

recognise Kaurna heritage through the physical features of the city.⁴⁹ This commitment has been expressed through civic placemaking in two ways – firstly through the installation and commission of public arts, and secondly through a widespread strategy of dual place-naming, such as Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga.

Responding to these imperatives, the proposed creative placemaking strategy at Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga, an ethos of site activation which has been termed the *new civic*, was driven by cultural curator Peter Emmett. Known for his role in the development of the Museum of Sydney (1995), Emmett is noted for his *art and artifice* approach to museum curation, maintaining a focus on material culture while also engaging with the *poetics of place*. Emmett typically worked with an array of creative practitioners (including Paul Carter, who will be discussed below in relationship to Yagan), eschewing the conventional dominance of the writer, “to both compose and liberate the metaphor of place.”⁵⁰ This approach to museology practice, described as the ‘new museum’, emerged in the 1990s, reflecting the increasing understanding of the contingent nature of evidence and historical truth.⁵¹ The new museum typically deploys technology and interaction to demonstrate its image of newness.⁵² Displays were reconfigured to present plural and inclusive storytelling, often through the adoption of postmodern techniques of bricolage and montage.⁵³

The new museum was particularly influential in shaping the new postcolonial national museums emerging in Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand in the late 1990s (including the Museum of Sydney), challenging curatorial practices considered elitist and anti-democratic and the reinforcing processes of imperialism and colonialism.⁵⁴ Emmett’s *new civic* focus for Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga, underpinned by pluralism and diversity, shares these philosophies. According to Emmett, the *new civic* shifts “the paradigm of urban culture from grand city symbols, strategies and master-narratives to many stories about personal and collective memory of its citizens, interpreting place through spatial experience and interaction with others. Place becomes experience and not thing. We ask not what is this place but what is taking place here?”⁵⁵

The new museum’s emphasis on the intersection of art, new media and museology clearly shapes Emmett’s creative placemaking strategy, “The Curated Square” which highlights an “integrated approach to public art, design, interpretation, heritage, digital interactions and wayfinding.”⁵⁶ This philosophy is

most evident in three proposed design elements, framed by exhibition practices:

textual inscription – *The Arbour Text*

installation – *The Arcadian Grove*

technology – *The Digital Sigh*

These are deployed through techniques of juxtaposition, fragmentation, inclusivity and pluralism. For example, using interpretive signage *The Arbour Text* directs the scattering of text fragments amongst the pillars of the Arbour structure of the square. This installation seeks to represent the “collective unconscious of Adelaide” and promote inclusivity and diversity by presenting “fragments of past mutterings about civic life.”⁵⁷ For instance, official announcements and regulations are juxtaposed with protest references and more everyday observations such as the lateness of trams. Emmett suggests that this “musing and debating over who has the right to be or not to be in this place?” enacts “new civic values of acknowledging difference and diversity.”⁵⁸

Elsewhere, *The Arcadian Grove* focuses on four colonial-era statues in the square, proposing that they be “metaphorically knocked off their pedestals” and repositioned within a “ruin-like” installation in the south-east corner.⁵⁹ With the pieces removed from their heavy bases, the public would have the opportunity to engage with the historical values of the statues, an activity enhanced by a commissioned soundscape installation. This soundscape reconceives the statues as “The Oracles of Victoria Square” which act as witnesses to past events in the square, with the audio content curated to promote a civic rights story.⁶⁰

The new civic alluded to the potentials of new technology to extend the cultural curation of the square. *The Digital Sigh* project, for instance, sought to collect daytime use data (registering places of congregation and pedestrian desire lines) and transforms this information into a light projection which expressed the daytime presence of citizens on the space at nighttime.⁶¹ Other digital concepts include the incorporation of screens for digital graffiti and the insertion of digital information pods throughout the square.

The mirroring of the museum as a typology is extended to the framing of interactivity in the passive recreational spaces of the proposed Native Garden in the southern Stage Two of the masterplan. Mirroring the *docent* activity of the museum, the design team propose that the garden will be inhabited by trained

cultural guides and gardeners, “hosts” who provide visitor interaction and information.⁶² These interactions have the potential to take on a theatrical quality of orchestrated surprise for the visitor, as ephemeral pieces of performance.⁶³ This deployment shifts modes of interactivity traditionally found inside the architectural envelope of cultural institutions into the exterior space of the square.

Turning to Perth’s Yagan Square, a significantly different framing of authorship and Reconciliation is evident. Underpinning the MRA Reconciliation Plan is the intent to co-create “dynamic, authentic and sustainable places for people” in *partnership* with the Whadjuk Noongar community.⁶⁴ This vision emerged during 2016-17 as part of an innovative Aboriginal engagement framework process, developed for the MRA by Noongar man Dr Richard Walley OAM, known as Kaart Koort Waarnginy – Head, Heart, Talking (KKW).⁶⁵ Conceived as a new community heart and central public space of Perth City Link, Yagan Square formed an important pilot project for KKW. When considered against the processes of Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga, different power dynamics relating to how Indigenous people are included in the project are apparent. For instance, Dr Richard Walley replaces Peter Emmett as a central figure, while the Whadjuk Working Party (the nominated representative working group of the Traditional Custodians in the Perth metropolitan region) assumes the position of Indigenous cultural curator Karl Telfer.

As part of this process, the concept of a creative template forms an important tool for defining a *sense of place* for the project and, critically for the designers, gathers local stories in a single document, thereby creating “a common language that can inspire all aspects of the development process and integrate key architectural, landscape and public space elements.”⁶⁶ Developed as a collaboration between Paul Carter, the project artists and designers, along with Dr Richard Walley, the creative template establishes “common ground between Indigenous and white settler heritages, and uses these to generate new forms, symbols and stories.”⁶⁷ The creative template identifies points of site convergence between Indigenous and non-Indigenous stories including the significance of tracks and tracking, the integration of the local and the cosmic, the site’s role as a gathering place and the importance of the black swan to Noongar and European culture.⁶⁸



Figure 33 (top)

William Street Mall entrance to Yagan Square featuring the *Wirin* statue by Noongar artist Tjyllyungoo. Source: ASPECT Studios; photography Peter Bennetts, 2018. Used with permission.

Figure 34 (bottom)

Waterline, by artist John Tarry. Source: ASPECT Studios; photography Peter Bennetts, 2018. Used with permission.

The decision to name the square after Yagan – an influential Noongar warrior and leader who was murdered (and beheaded) in the early days of the colony – is a particularly powerful gesture. Controversially, Yagan’s head was exhibited in a London museum before being buried in a Liverpool cemetery in 1964. For decades, the Noongar community lobbied for a memorial to recognise Yagan, with a life-size bronze statue constructed in 1984 on an island in Perth’s Swan River. However, in 1997, within weeks of the repatriation of Yagan’s remains to Perth, the statue was beheaded (twice) by vandals using an angle grinder.

Naming such a prominent space in Yagan’s honour reflects the acceptance of his significance to Noongar people and his importance in understanding the full story of Perth’s colonial history. This decision is far more confronting than the now common policies of dual naming in Australian cities (such as Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga). As Stephen Gilchrist highlights, a difficult and uncomfortable history is inscribed into Perth’s new meeting place.⁶⁹ This decision by the WA state government was inspired by an observation by Noongar elder Ken Colbung who, on the return of Yagan’s head to Australia, expressed the hope that “the spirit of Yagan would now be able to join the continuum and could perhaps live on in a new body.”⁷⁰

Throughout Yagan Square, a diverse range of public artworks explore stories and sites of convergences, ranging from the nine-metre tall *Wirin* statue designed by Noongar artist Tjyllyungoo (Figure 33), which greets visitors on the William Street frontage, through to artist John Tarry’s *Waterline* – a 200-metre water feature carved from Western Australian granite which references the wetland ecology of the site (Figure 34). This work physically brings water into the site, transforming from a small trickle over urban steps close to the amphitheatre into free-flowing water channels and finishing in a shallow reflection pool at street level.

This agenda extends into the potentials of *new media* and real-time data to encourage public interactivity. In a further evolution of creative placemaking strategies, digital technologies are applied in a more comprehensive manner than discussed for Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga – a reflection of technological advancements. Two digital surfaces project image and sound (night and day) and introduce a public digital art gallery which can show visually dynamic representations of stories, histories and artworks from community groups, emerging and established artists. The high shade canopy framing the

amphitheatre reflects digital content from above and below, while a digital tower on the street frontage adjoining the square projects visuals into the surrounding urban fabric, forming a major digital “totem” for Perth’s CBD.⁷¹

Developed over a decade, these two projects offer evidence of a maturing of Reconciliation processes and ambitions, along with the conceptual differences in reworking an explicitly colonial square – subverting dominant narratives and symbols – versus developing concurrently stories of encounters and convergence in a new space. Furthermore, they also provide a valuable insight into the economic realities of funding civic spaces, an area which is often given little attention in academic discourse on the public realm.

Much discourse on civic space in the late twentieth century warned of the dangers of neoliberal development. For example, writing in 1997, Rowe highlighted the challenges of producing design that resist “the whims” of the private developer, the “consumerist pabulum of market forces” and the “co-option by states in the form of grandiose projects.”⁷² Informed by many post-industrial redevelopment schemes such as London’s Docklands or Melbourne’s Southbank, this type of development has resulted in relatively soulless urban form, primarily commercial in nature. However, it has become increasingly clear in the new millennium that few governments are in a position to entirely fund public works, let alone the ongoing management, maintenance and funding of programs and events essential to any new civic space. The contemporary square, therefore, is as much a commercial venture as it is a cultural stage.

Who Finances the Civic?

In December 2017, the Victorian government announced plans to demolish Federation Square’s eastern building and replace it with an Apple Global Flagship store. With no consultation with the public or Melbourne City Council, yet with a charter claiming the square under community ownership, this development shocked the public.⁷³ Many were outraged that a much-loved Melbourne place would now be branded by Apple. The relevance of a global brand to Federation Square’s cultural and civic charter was argued through the language of creative placemaking, championing innovation, creativity and cultural expression. Apple is particularly astute in this realm, with the design of physical spaces considered their “largest physical product,” aiming for their stores to become “one with the community.”⁷⁴ The debate over Apple is not

unique to Federation Square, but has been replicated in other parts of the world as the company aggressively inserts itself into culturally significant public space.⁷⁵

Apple's tactics of focusing on creativity and community building make the debate increasingly difficult to negotiate. However, given government reluctance to fund the public realm, is private sector engagement with creative placemaking and civic space so problematic, particularly if the alternative is nothing being constructed or managed? For example, missing from the Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga development was the proposed Mullabukka Cultural Centre, which was conceived as a "Living Kultja" – a place for the transfer and activation of the knowledge of country, ritual, song, custom, memory, place and belonging.⁷⁶ Surrounded by a mosaic garden of South Australian native plants, the centre was intended to offer visitors an orientating experience of Indigenous culture and the unique environment of South Australia before they headed into other regions of the state.⁷⁷

The fact that this stand-alone centre has not been realised is not surprising, given the difficulties arising from Indigenous cultural centres constructed throughout Australia in the 1990s. The concept, as presented in the development document, replicates major mistakes of earlier endeavours by focusing solely on architectural form and design intent, without considering more critical questions of governance, organisational structure and the dilemma of ongoing funding.⁷⁸ Whether the cultural centre and garden will ever be realised is questionable. Adelaide City Council, which funded stage one, are requesting the South Australian state government to provide funding for Stage Two. The state government is reluctant to invest until after the redevelopment of the nearby Adelaide Central markets.

The largest challenge for the realisation of the vision for Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga is therefore economic. Without any permanent cultural or commercial attractor, it remains unfinished, suffering many of the same problems which inspired its revitalisation. Beyond hosting feature Adelaide events and occasional recreational activities, such as a temporary ice-skating rink, the day-to-day use of the square is low-key and passive.

In contrast, Yagan Square was constructed with a commercial program centred on food and entertainment. The complex is devoid of museums, galleries and cultural centres, an omission explained by its proximity to major cultural

institutions such as the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, located just 200 metres down the road. A market hall stretching over two floors houses small food stalls (many of which originated from local food trucks), featuring Western Australian specialties such as farm-to-plate dining, lobster rolls, toasted sandwiches and produce from a honey farm. A playground is located behind the central amphitheatre, while an Asian-themed food street, and more food, drink and entertainment establishments, are positioned away from the central gathering space along the street perimeter. Yet questions have been raised over the Yagan Square's commercial viability. A year after opening, some businesses had closed, with tenants expressing disappointment at low levels of pedestrian traffic (around half of the predicted numbers) from the transport hubs and the CBD.⁷⁹ Weekends are particularly empty, with the interior food court failing to be noticed by passing pedestrians. Whether Yagan Square will suffer from a similar economic fate as Federation Square is still unclear. However, its popularity is expected to be bolstered by the continuing urban development in the precinct. For example, a new \$695 million campus for Edith Cowan University will be built close by, accommodating up to 9200 students and staff.⁸⁰

The Future Civic

Designing Australian urban civic space in the early twenty-first century is a complex affair, requiring the negotiation of the increasingly blurred boundaries between the civic, cultural and commercial realms, along with the growing cultural and political ambitions of Reconciliation. In this chapter we have highlighted how the maturing of Reconciliation processes has reshaped design processes constructing civic space, shifting attention from the *recognition* of Indigenous stories and histories to the *co-creation* of places. In the absence of formal redress, legislative change and the subsequent revision of urban and environmental history, Indigenous-led frameworks such as Kaart Koort Waarnginy and the associated creative template form essential tools to guide government, developers, designers and the Indigenous community in an inclusive and innovative manner.

Although incomplete, Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga continues to be an important place of Indigenous gathering in the city of Adelaide. In a major symbolic gesture, the central plaza was named Reconciliation Plaza (Figure 29)

in 2014 and constitutes as an important stage for civil expression, as evident in the recent convergence on the square for Adelaide’s Black Lives Matter rallies in July 2020.⁸¹ Lacking any ‘big ticket’ drawcards, the square can still be considered a successful civic space, fulfilling many of Rowe’s indicators – representative of collective and individual experience, broadly symbolic, and yet grounded in the particular and the everyday. While its physical form may remain distinctly colonial, its enduring value to Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination and now Reconciliation aligns it with the aspirations of twenty-first-century Australia. Perhaps this will suffice? Only time will tell whether Yagan Square’s strong conceptual and developmental framework can achieve the depth of cultural meaning and economic vitality expected of such a civic investment. Despite the best intentions, sometimes good development process and design are not enough.

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Figure 35

Twizã Kayira, *Exterior View of Ponte*, 2018. Johannesburg, South Africa. Photo: Courtesy of the artist.

Remnants of Apartheid in Ponte City, Johannesburg

Denise L Lim

Introducing Ponte City

Like a matryoshka doll, Ponte is a building nested in spatial scales of its own city, country, continent and globe. Located in the inner-city suburb of Berea in Johannesburg, this residential high-rise is recognisable from various vantage points throughout the city due to its great height, unusual cylindrical shape and bright red Vodacom sign that wraps around the exterior of the tower's topmost floors (Figure 35). As a notorious Johannesburg landmark that incongruously challenges and reinvents what it means to be a 'world-class' city in a global context, this residential tower is imbued with complex social, cultural and political meanings.

Built in 1975, Ponte was imagined as a utopia dreamed up by a white supremacist state. The 54-storey tower was designed to be a self-contained 'city within a city' for the upwardly mobile middle classes who could take an elevator straight to their luxurious apartments in the sky or descend into a promenade lobby stocked with every amenity imaginable. The lobby, also known as Ponte Nucleus,¹ was designed for tenants to enter their own private shopping complex complete with up to 54 different stores, including an "estate agency, building society, food market, bottle store, dry cleaners, home-movie depot, art gallery, book shop, several clothes shops, a shoe shop, a record, hi-fi, radio, camera and TV shop, a florist, a chemist, and a fruit shop."² Furthermore, as urban designer Melinda Silverman adds, there were plans to include a pizzeria in keeping with the building's Italian name.³

Designing Ponte as a 'Little Europe' reflected the racialised fears and fantasies of the apartheid regime, where access to the building was highly restricted and securitised to ensure a 'safe' white space. Ponte was also

influenced in large part by the character of the neighbouring suburb of Hillbrow. The manufacturing boom of the 1950s brought many European immigrants to fashionable districts like Hillbrow and Berea, given its close proximity to Johannesburg's commercial centre. In 1946, Johannesburg removed the height restriction for buildings.⁴ Hillbrow and Berea's elevated geographic location made it ideal for constructing modern high-rise apartments boasting impressive city views. By the early 1970s, Hillbrow became an entertainment centre filled with jazz clubs, late-night book stores, record shops and cafes with European urban names such as Café Pigalle, Café Zürich, Café Wien, Café de Paris and Café Florian.⁵ Proposing that Ponte retain that same imaginary European flavour, the architects engineered a way to insert Hillbrow's cosmopolitan ambiance into Ponte Nucleus' design and layout. White residents who enjoyed the aspirational lifestyle of Hillbrow could live out their fantasies of a 'civilised' African city in Ponte, just a few blocks away. Tenants would never have to leave their inner-city paradise.

One cannot think about the politics of Ponte as a socially constructed place without theorising how it is also troubled by the material sediments of time. Ponte is commonly described in the spatial and temporal language of post-apartheid politics. But the use of the prefix *post-* in relation to apartheid is both ironic and oxymoronic. Its use does not assume a linear understanding of historical time or geopolitical space, but rather challenges conventional understandings of synchronic events and functions more precisely as a relational ontological state. Apartheid was not simply a finite period of physical and material suffering, but a collective trauma defined by deep structural violence that persists in the present. Apartheid lives on as a haunting memory where its stigma is mapped onto sites like Ponte through intense cultural work. Suffering collectivities "do not exist simply as material networks. They must be imagined into being."⁶ *Post-* is less a past-tense adjective describing the end of a political regime, but more a critique of present-day democracy and the perceived lack of social transformation since 1994. The term draws attention to how little apartheid has been collectively forgotten in the South African public imagination. Though Ponte was not originally designed for the people of colour who would later fill it, this meant that there would always be a reckoning with the troubling histories found amongst the remnants of Ponte's architectural footprint and visual catalogue.

Memories of the modernist dreams that apartheid architects, property developers and urban planners harboured for Ponte bespeak the prominent influence of American and European modernity in Johannesburg architecture. Standing at 173 metres high, Ponte held the ranking title for tallest residential tower in all of Africa for 45 years. South African architects Mannie Feldman, Manfred Hermer and Rodney Grosskopf were originally commissioned by the property development company Nasbou for the job, but the build site of Ponte belonged to an Italian client whose surname was Ponte. In Italian, *ponte* means bridge. As Grosskopf recalls, “they created the marketing and said it [Ponte] was a bridge between heaven and earth – a palazzo in paradise.”⁷ In interviews, Grosskopf claimed that it was his idea to make Ponte a cylindrical tower with a hollow core.⁸ Though Ponte’s notorious shape is credited to Grosskopf, there is no doubt that the architectural style was deeply informed by Feldman’s time in London working in the studio of Brutalist architect Ernő Goldfinger.

Goldfinger was born in Budapest, Hungary, to a Jewish family. After moving to Paris in 1921, it was there that he began to converse with French architects such as Auguste Perret, Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, famous proponents of modernist architecture and the earliest predecessors of what architecture critic Reyner Banham described as “New Brutalism” in 1955. Architect Clive Chipkin interpreted Ponte’s design as inspired by the Trellick Tower that Goldfinger built in 1972, a Brutalist residential building designed to replace outdated public housing. The building featured several space-saving designs meant to accommodate a high number of residents. But like Ponte, Trellick Tower was associated with crime, vandalism, and moral deviance by the 1980s. As it turns out, the imported avant-garde traditions of the British metropole also experienced a demise comparable to Ponte’s own brutal tale.

The Brutalist Aesthetic

In England, New Brutalism had already been formalised and propagated by British architects Alison and Peter Smithson in the late 1950s. What they retained from modernist interventions was the attention to the interplay between collective and individual compartmentalised space, geometric form, and landscape as a tool for architectural inspiration. By the early 1970s, New Brutalism found its way to South Africa “through the offices of the Transvaal Institute of Architects and the Witwatersrand School, who invited the Smithsons

to visit South Africa.”⁹ In an interview with Silverman, Chipkin stated that Feldman was known for “his sense of drama, geometry and monumental scale [which] had been acquired in Ernő Goldfinger’s atelier, in London, where he had worked after qualifying at Wits. Like Goldfinger, Feldman saw buildings as giant sculptural forms modelled to promote vigorous expressionism.”¹⁰ Needless to say, the influence of New Brutalism on Feldman was evident in Ponte’s design.

Characterised by its monolithic and blocky appearance, the rigid geometric lines of Ponte’s exterior and interior can feel unwelcoming, cold and impersonal. The visuality of every hallway window’s jutting geometric scaffolds, frames and lines are designed to exude the austerity and self-confidence of the institutions they represent. It is no wonder that since Johannesburg’s most famous Brutalist buildings are state-owned or government institutions, town planners saw the potential for Brutalist design to provide housing solutions to dense urban living or to serve as physical symbols of state power. Brutalism came to inspire “visions of the bleak, grey housing estates of London: lives brutalised by an uncaring system. We imagine oppressive expanses of concrete – big, featureless, impenetrable buildings. Words such as monolithic, monumental, massive, and monstrosity spring to mind.”¹¹ Though the popularity of Brutalist architecture in the 1970s was initially conceived in terms of triumphalist demonstrations of the apartheid state, Ponte was later associated with the negative connotations that Brutalist buildings worldwide share – social inequality, moral deviance and urban decay.

Though the English word ‘brutal’ describes something that is cruel, violent or harsh, the term Brutalism was derived from the French phrase *béton brut*, meaning ‘raw concrete.’ As an architectural mode of expression, the modifier ‘raw’ was meant to describe the process of leaving concrete unfinished after being cast. This was done in order to display the geometric patterns and seams imprinted in the architectural formwork of a built structure. “The idea was that architects expressed the raw materials of the buildings, rather than covering them up. It was seen as honest – a celebration of the making of the buildings themselves, their materials and mechanics, and of the craft that went into it. It was an attempt to find beauty in truth.”¹² Rodney Grosskopf spoke fondly of Ponte’s concrete design and form, also using words like ‘honest’ to describe the beauty he saw in what others deemed “the second ugliest building in Johannesburg.”¹³ Though Brutalist buildings have enjoyed a recent aesthetic



Figure 36

Denise Lim, *Hollow Core*, 2016. Johannesburg, South Africa. Photo: Courtesy of the artist.

revival, Ponte itself was more reviled than loved after white residents fled the inner-city suburbs in the mid-1980s to early 1990s. The semantic shift toward the English word ‘brutal’ is still resonant when one looks at Ponte today.

Ponte’s Hollow Core

Nonetheless, Ponte’s core remains an architectural marvel to onlookers of every variety. It continues to capture the imagination of tourists, journalists, artists and social researchers alike. The core undoubtedly remains the most photographed area of Ponte, with captured angles highlighting the most palatable views for a curious consuming public. Thousands of images are posted publicly on social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, creating a visual archive of Ponte that only increases each day as photographs and videos are automatically catalogued and linked by a shared geotag location and hashtags. The visual wonder and oddity of the core inspires a multitude of eccentric descriptions – a “shaft of light,”¹⁴ a “concrete tube,”¹⁵ a “toilet-paper tube,”¹⁶ a “trash chute,”¹⁷ a “giant hair curler,”¹⁸ a “chute reminiscent of the *Star Wars* Death Star”¹⁹ or “an exit chute on the *Battlestar Galactica*.”²⁰ Nuancing

the meanings of each of these descriptions seems to capture the difficulty of understanding the core's design. These descriptions both reinforce and deconstruct a series of stereotypes about Ponte, its neighbourhood and its city.

When standing at the centre of the hollow core's rocky foundations, one sees a shaft of light enter from the open rooftop of Ponte where a neon red Vodacom billboard is mounted above and wrapped around the exterior of the building's uppermost residential floor. The cellular phone company's unapologetically monstrous sign remains the 'grey matter' of Ponte's brain and skeletal frame. It generates Ponte a supplementary income of R500,000 per month. Measuring approximately 15 metres in height and 132 metres in length, the advertisement is powered by 7000m of LED lights that shine brightest at night. At midday, as the sun's rays beam straight down into the interior centre of the building, light is refracted by the curving hallway walls and windows of each floor. The view from the middle of the core's rocky foundation looking straight up at the sky is awe-inspiring. The light appears as a white pinhole – an oversized aperture through which light travels (Figure 36). Standing inside the staircases of the plinth within the base of the tower, one can see slices of the inner core through the gaps of wooden boards that function as makeshift walls. But the light that seeps into the stairwells and passageways of Ponte is but twilight. The austere darkness of the surrounding concrete absorbs what limited light remains after one descends deep into the abyss of Ponte's negative space.

These multi-sensory descriptions of Ponte are reminiscent of philosopher Edmund Burke's theory of sublime art, where he defined "the sublime as an artistic effect productive of the strongest emotion the mind is capable of feeling."²¹ According to Burke, "whatever is in any sort terrible or is conversant about terrible objects or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime."²² Burke argued that the sublime was a category analytically separate from the beautiful. For him, there was a precise distinction between the pleasure one derives from positive attributes such as love and the pleasure one derives from pain. Burke associated the sublime with that which was dark, gloomy, intense and terrible. The analogous material referents used to describe Ponte as rubbish, a toilet-paper roll or a dystopic science-fiction battleship hold such extreme and unflattering connotations that its most popular discursive markers indicate just how sublime Ponte's architectural form truly is. Ponte's immense scale and aura of dread inspire all the emotions that Burke claimed

made for truly great art, and is perhaps what puts the ‘art’ back into architecture. Ponte resonates as boldly disturbing, scary and dystopic, even if the community within experience bouts of momentary lightness and joy in the mundane and unexceptional events of everyday life. Voyeurs derive pleasure from the uncertainty of knowing whether the urban legends are true. Ponte is fascinating precisely because of its enigma.

Ponte was one of many architectural projects that conjured apartheid’s delusions of grandeur. Considered the “ultimate in chic and sophistication,”²³ what is most striking about discursive constructions of Ponte is the consistent use of the term *utopia* to describe the kind of life architects imagined would fill the building’s form. Ponte City was designed to bring “Utopia to life” and was supposed to stand as living proof that “South Africa has caught up with the world’s urban centres.”²⁴ The etymological roots of ‘utopia’ are found in the ancient Greek enclitic *ου-*, meaning ‘no’ or ‘not,’ and the suffix *-τοπία*, meaning ‘place.’ This compound word is arguably a far more faithful description of Ponte’s ontological status as a dream rather than a social reality – utopia truly is ‘no place’ at all. Yet the semantic shift in the word *utopia* was more commonly (but incorrectly) associated with the Greek enclitic *ευ-*, meaning ‘good.’ *Utopia* in contemporary usage is not imagined as non-existent, but rather is a viable, aspirational place or state of being. The pessimism of the Greek enclitic *ου-* morphing into the optimism of the adverb *ευ-* functions as commentary on the limitations of what is and is not possible in a white South Africa. Apartheid society was imagined by its greatest supporters as utopian precisely because it had to be inconspicuously *dystopian* for someone else. Ponte existed as two sides of the same proverbial coin – the utopia imagined by a white power elite and the dystopia of the racialised other.

The interplay between objects, time and specific localities in space disrupts what one conventionally understands as a linear social experience of spacetime. Past, present and future move together in an entangled web and can be read materially into Ponte’s design, structure and components. Traces of the past explode, recede, recycle and transform the present even as the ever-moving present envisages a future bound by its own unfolding pasts. The focus on urbanistic apartheid posed serious challenges for urban planners, designers and architects. Architecture became more than the mere technical practice of engineering and constructing a building. Built into Ponte’s visual logic were

the fraught political ideologies that motivated the division of space by social constructs of race.

Apartheid Architecture

Architects must assemble a design team with technical, environmental and construction experience and knowledge, and hire specialists in structural, mechanical and electrical engineering. Whilst collaborative work is a necessary part of the architect's job, what remained a unique but disturbing practical challenge for Feldman, Grosskopf and Hermer were the added restrictions enforced by both the Johannesburg Department of Development Planning and the Non-European Affairs Department (NEAD). In a letter sent from Manfred Hermer, Feldman and Grosskopf dated 11 December 1969, the architects proposed to the NEAD an architectural plan that would include 22,963 ½ square feet of subdivisible shops, new plans for a road from Lily Avenue, a swimming pool and 42 floors of 13 flats per floor, making a total of 546 flats. These would be a mix of bachelor, one- and two-bedroom flats. Tenants began occupying floors 11 to 19 as early as 1974, but the 'topping out ceremony' was held for the completion of Ponte's highest floor in 1975. By the time all flats and shops were completed by 1976, the final plans reduced the total number of flats to 467.

Given Ponte's unprecedented height, the architects insisted that retaining the practice of placing servants on the roof would prove too cumbersome. The architects wrote:

We hereby apply for permission to erect servants [sic] quarters as shown on plan and site plan. Servants [sic] quarters on the roof would tax the lift system very heavily, and we believe Bantu servants would be hesitant to live at this height. The Servants' quarters as shown, have been designed and positioned in such a way, as to screen them from view, both from the road and neighbouring buildings, and the design is such that they should prove no nuisance either visually or from a noise point of view.²⁵

The original plans for Ponte suggested that the servants' quarters be located at the base of the building, though this was an unusual proposal at the time.²⁶ Servants, domestic workers and maintenance staff were often housed on the roofs of high-rise buildings. But as the architects argued, if Black workers were

to remain unnoticed and segregated from the white tenants they served, placing servants at the base of the building was far more practical than placing them on the roof. The architects chose flats near the base that rendered domestic workers invisible from public roads outside. The flats were far enough away so that the sound of servants' movements would go unheard by residents living high above. However, Department of Development Planning Director JC de Villiers stated in a letter to the city engineer that Ponte's original sketch plans were "not in order" because "the Bantu quarters are situated on the same floor level as the caretaker's flat."²⁷ De Villiers insisted that a compromise be made over this issue.

In a subsequent letter, de Villiers wrote that whilst the amended plans sent by the architects were suitable, it did not mean that the department could "accommodate any Bantu in these quarters" unless the following conditions were met: there was to be one boiler attendant, one watchman, one "Bantu servant irrespective of sex, whether employed by the owner or a tenant, for every full unit of 5 flats" and one "Bantu servant irrespective of sex for every full unit of 10 flats for compassionate cases."²⁸ The NEAD insisted on a very specific ratio of Black servants to white tenants, and the architects proceeded to design spartan rooms on the topmost three floors for roughly 42 servants. Though the architects suggested building sundecks for tenants on the roof, the 'solution' they came up with to circumvent the NEAD's anticipated concerns would be to construct windowsills that were six feet above the ground, so that Black staff could not see or look out into the flats and sundecks of white residents.

Native Locations in the Sky

'Living high' meant something quite different for white tenants than it did for the labouring class who made luxurious living possible. People of colour were architecturally stowed away from plain sight. As a variation of the old racist adage goes, "White is right; if you're brown, stick around; if you're black, get back."²⁹ So long as Ponte's conspicuous population remained white, residents could freely enjoy paradise without thinking about the human cost of 'white-washing.'

But the practice of placing servants in 'locations in the sky' was reminiscent of a much earlier segregationist practice, beginning in Johannesburg's colonial mining days. Between 1897 and 1912, the number of married white men with families in the gold mines increased from 12 percent to 42 percent, and saw

another spike after the First World War.³⁰ Though the stands of the inner town were valuable and expensive, the materials used to construct some of the oldest housing in Johannesburg were cheap and temporary, given that they were constructed in a rush.³¹ As Johannesburg became more than a provisional satellite town for miners, there were intermittent periods where the inner-city suburbs were sometimes less attractive to wealthy white residents. Though there was a revived interest in living in the high-rise blocks east of the town centre in the 1920s and 1930s, a significant proportion of upper-class whites also began looking to northern suburbs like Parktown to settle and establish larger, luxurious homes and estates. Parktown quickly became a hub for the rich and powerful landlords who abandoned their inner-city properties for larger residential acreage.³² As the demand for accommodation soared, local administrations began to formalise residential segregation laws as early as 1904. Klipspruit was designed as a ‘native location’ southwest of the main town centre. Local authorities forcibly relocated African labourers, disallowing mobility into the land adjacent unless an individual was proven to be a servant of a white employer.

The formation of Klipspruit also laid the groundwork for urbanistic apartheid. The first decades of the twentieth century required extensive social engineering that pathologised urban land as needing “racial sanitation.”³³ The 1923 Native (Urban Areas) Act specifically targeted the restriction of Africans’ mobility in cities. This law labelled urban African residents as “temporary sojourners” and created influx controls to reduce free movement between African locations and the city.³⁴ The inner-city slums prompted the conversion of backyard space as informal housing, with a high number of cramped shacks and people sharing a small plot of land with little or no delivery of basic services and resources.³⁵ This is a story that would eventually be repeated in Hillbrow and Berea in the 1990s, where “exploitative rentals, subletting and overcrowding, the strain on services and sheer neglect took their toll” and turned the area into a slum.³⁶

Just as the living conditions of these historical slum yards were predictably inferior, the later creation of the apartheid-era townships was no better. The city councils did not provide refuse removal or sewage systems, rubbish was often left scattered around people’s homes and the sludge from repeated laundry washing, dishwashing, cooking and toilet use remained fixtures on the streets of old Johannesburg.³⁷ The perceived dirt that surrounded these disenfranchised

workers meant that wealthy white residents would later complain about these African residents' very presence in the city.

Eager to expunge 'non-whites' from the city, Black, Coloured and Indian people were forcibly removed, relocated and discarded to the shifting peripheries of the metropole. If the history of migrant labour and segregated living in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sounds familiar, it is because these same tactics of recruiting cheap labour – but deflecting the permanent settlement of Black, Coloured and Indian workers near whites – remained a persistent concern well beyond apartheid's legal abolition. If white South Africans wanted to employ domestic workers in their new high-rise flats, the most convenient way for them to do so was to find and provide workers housing within close proximity. Instead of relegating domestic workers to far-off 'native locations' and townships several kilometres outside central Johannesburg, tenants of Hillbrow and Berea's fashionable block of flats would instead transform the dark, hidden and cramped quarters of high-rise buildings into small-scale 'native locations' for their service sector.

Once confined to spartan servants' quarters and peripheral townships, Black Africans were able to spatially distribute themselves more broadly across several of the inner-city's high-rise buildings. Yet the perception of decline in Hillbrow was often attributed to changing racial composition rather than to the unethical and unsustainable nature of apartheid policies. By the mid-1990s, crime rates in Hillbrow and Berea escalated to unprecedented rates. Ponte was one of many buildings within its vicinity that was demonised as a 'vertical slum'. Though Hillbrow became a majority Black neighborhood, that did not mean it was without shifting ethnic tensions. On the contrary, xenophobic prejudice and violence was on the rise as Black South Africans became suspicious and hostile towards immigrants flooding Johannesburg from diverse African countries including Angola, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, the Republic of Congo, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The inner city could not boast of either an inclusive cosmopolitan atmosphere or a pan-Africanist consciousness to replace a politics of division.³⁸

After the first democratic elections in 1994, Johannesburg sought to reinvent itself in the euphoria of a 'new' South Africa. Coca-Cola was the original advertiser for what later became Ponte's massive Vodacom sign, but the Coca-colonisation of Ponte became a marker of United States consumerist rule.

Ponte went from being imagined as apartheid utopia to neoliberal dreamland; democratic transition was interpreted as an opening of borders to multinational corporations and foreign investors who treated Johannesburg as an experimental breeding ground.

The Kempston Group – a trucking and logistics company – bought Ponte in 1995, the same year as the Coca-Cola contract, holding on to that same enduring hope that they could be the ones to return the building to the life Ponte was originally intended to live.³⁹ Kempston Group’s spokesperson, Jason Kruger, recounted that in the past, “Ponte Towers [*sic*] was the place to be. We realise it will never return to its former glory, but our goal is to restore dignity to Ponte and create a safe and inviting environment for people to live in.”⁴⁰ Though different sources give conflicting figures regarding how many storeys of trash were piled inside Ponte’s core at any given time – some claiming three storeys and others suggesting as high as 14 storeys – these heaps were created by residents who would chuck their rubbish out the broken hallway windows facing the interior core. The fascination with the rubbish as sinister materiality was imagined by the press as proof of Ponte’s declining character.

In 2012, construction and maintenance manager Quinton Oosthuizen told South Africa’s *Mail & Guardian* that the job “was nasty; we pulled out some very funny things. Anything from mattresses, rubble, loose steel, kitchen and bathroom fittings – even dead stray cats.”⁴¹ When Kempston hired husband and wife team Danie and Elma Celliers as landlords in 2001, Danie claimed that the flats were in such deplorable condition that he found a tomato plant growing in the sink. “Jeez, it was bad. Nothing was working,” he recounted. “In one flat I found a tomato plant growing out of the sink. It filled up the whole kitchen. It was a tree, that thing. Big tomatoes on it, too.”⁴² The use of hyperbole in Celliers’ anecdotal tale speaks to how material encounters with abandoned property are read as archaeological evidence of the moral condition of past tenants, who were stigmatised as “unsavoury types.”⁴³ It was as if Kempston viewed their overhaul of Ponte as a public service.

‘Cleaning Up’ Ponte

By the early 2000s, the literal trashiness of the building’s core was conflated with the figurative ‘trashiness’ of its tenants. Kempston controversially deemed it a necessity to deploy the services of the Red Ants to forcibly evict unwanted

Ponte residents. The Red Ants are a notorious private security company that specialise in evicting “illegal invaders” from various private and public properties.⁴⁴ Officially incorporated in 1998 as Red Ant Security Relocation and Eviction Services, they are best known for militaristic tactics reminiscent of the brute force applied by the apartheid police. Feared by many South Africans, the Red Ants are trained to carry firearms and have reportedly killed tenants in an atmosphere of brutality and assault.⁴⁵

Often raiding a ‘hijacked’ property in a force of up to 200 security officers,⁴⁶ the men hired for the job are themselves “from impoverished small former mining towns, from distant provincial villages in parched mountains, from Soweto, from hardscrabble neighbourhoods half hidden amid the urban sprawl of Johannesburg. Most are young. Many are without basic educational qualifications. Some have criminal records. A few are former convicts. All are poor. They are paid the equivalent of \$10 (£7.50) a day, plus some food. Many are squatters themselves.”⁴⁷

Though official statistics were never recorded, there were an estimated 10,000 residents ‘illegally squatting’ in Ponte in the early 1990s before Kempston Group began its first rejuvenation cycle.⁴⁸ Deploying the Red Ants was seen as one of many tough but necessary measures for ‘cleaning up’ Ponte’s act. Crime rates in Hillbrow and Berea had escalated in the 1990s and incarceration rose to unprecedented rates. South African prisons had become so overburdened and overcrowded that, in 1998, Johannesburg city authorities invited American architect Paul Silver to the city to survey and select existing buildings that could be converted into a high-security inner-city prison:

American architect Paul Silver, a practitioner with considerable expertise in prisons was invited to South Africa to identify sites for possible transformation. He recommended Ponte City and stated, ‘It’s a lousy apartment building, but a perfect prison.’ Responding to his charge, the owners of Ponte City submitted an application to rezone the building into a correctional facility. The minister of correctional services held a conference in February 1998 announcing that Ponte City would be transformed into a prison in the following year.⁴⁹

The building was only one of several outlandish alternatives considered. There

was discussion of converting the abandoned mineshafts at the outer edges of the city into spaces of incarceration, too. Reflecting the tactics used by mine managers in Kimberley's deep-level mines in the late nineteenth century, mineshafts were yet again imagined as punishment for inmates "so barbaric ... they did not deserve to live above ground."⁵⁰ A former office building that belonged to South Africa's Anglo American Corporation in the Johannesburg central business district was also under consideration for the prison conversion project. South African mines began as a colonial venture of mostly European prospectors who greedily looked to extract South Africa's most valuable natural resources, transforming thousands of Black and Chinese people into a seemingly inexhaustible supply of cheap, disposable labour. Not only were mines spaces of indentured servitude for populations of colour, but the labour was fatal. It is ironic that an industry that functioned to oppress, control and exploit both Africans and indentured Chinese for the benefit of a powerful white minority would later consider its own industry a suitable space for criminal incarceration.

Conceptually reminiscent of Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Ponte is uncannily designed like philosopher Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, an architectural blueprint of a prison that allows all inmates to be observed by a single watchman. It is the negative space of Ponte's hollow core that functions as Bentham's watchtower. For Foucault, the punishment for crime shifted from the theatre of public torture to a new economy and politics of the corporeal body manifested in discipline. The tortured body disappeared from public view and modern institutions created prisons that individuated the punishment of the criminal body by disciplining the mind. One effective method of individuation is the spatial distribution of inmates into a series of identical and impersonal cells. Much like a prison, high-rise apartment buildings are also divided into a series of individual flats.

The cylindrical shape of Ponte is where Foucault's analysis of the Panopticon is most apposite. Foucault argued that the round architectural form itself was a material exemplification of the disturbing horrors of the modern disciplinary institution. Docile bodies are constantly watched by an 'unequal gaze' where there is always the possibility of constant surveillance. Inmates no longer need the theatre of public torture to experience punishment. This seemingly 'humane' method of punishment is hidden within the walls of a high-security facility and works to subjugate both the body and mind in ways far more profound than

Figure 37

Mikhael Subotzky and Patrick Waterhouse, *Apartheid-era Bathroom Signs*, 2008. Johannesburg, South Africa. Photo: Courtesy of the artists and Goodman Gallery.



previously imagined. Fear and subjugation to authority is motivated not by the public performance of corporal punishment, but by the privatised micro-physics of power that penetrates the enigmatic human soul. Foucault's genealogy of the modern soul is one in which the physical body is no longer judged. Punishment shifts to the disciplining of the human psyche and operates within larger institutional structures that develop their own political economy of the body.

Though Foucault did not use postcolonial contexts to apply his panoptic theory, the physical observational tower or watchman need not be present for surveillance and subjugation to operate. The panoptic device can shift from a physical watchtower to CCTV cameras or the digital surveillance tools of internet browsing. The circular shape of Ponte's hallways meant that residents could always be seen, but the difference was racialised. White residents of the 1970s had the privilege of performing their sophisticated lifestyles and hiding their Black servants, whereas residents of colour were constantly subject to the unequal gaze of surveillance, first by white residents and building security guards and later through the development of surveillance technologies such as CCTV cameras and fingerprint technology at security gates. These panoptic devices still do what Foucault claimed – implement social control that are repackaged as security measures.

The gaze is unequal in the sense that people of colour are disproportionately criminalised and surveyed relative to their white counterparts. Ponte is a keen example of what sociologist and urban planner Martin J Murray referred to as

“defensive urbanism” or the “new fortification aesthetic.”⁵¹ This paranoia is historically linked to the slow dismantling of apartheid policy, which cultivated fears amongst mostly white, propertied, middle-class residents of the inevitable urban decay that segregation would bring. Those who benefited from apartheid indulged in the stereotypes of Johannesburg as an ungovernable environment in the post-apartheid era. Stories of theft, carjacking and violent assault are never imagined as perpetrated by white assailants, but by the Black unruly body. The pessimism around the new political order was reflected in the fragmented spread of “fortified enclaves unevenly distributed over a vast and highly differentiated territorial expanse.”⁵²

Remnants of Apartheid in the ‘New’ Ponte

By 2007, all 467 flats had been cleared and renovated and Ponte was 97 percent occupied.⁵³ The potential of Ponte soon caught the attention of two property developers, David Selvan and Nour Addine Ayyoub of Investagain. In anticipation of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the Johannesburg Development Agency approved the investment of an estimated R900 million in rebuilding and developing the city, particularly the neighbourhoods of Hillbrow and Berea. Investagain decided to buy Ponte and invest a projected R200 million. Redubbing the building ‘New Ponte,’ Selvan and Ayyoub had grandiose dreams of constructing fully furnished upper-market units, including six penthouses with 265 square metres of space and three floors. They would revive the idea of the 1975 Ponte Nucleus, but give it a more contemporary upgrade by including an upmarket restaurant, grocery store and a Virgin Active gym.⁵⁴ Selvan and Ayyoub planned to sell Ponte units as sectional title offerings starting from floors 11 through 34. The prices were to open at R340,000 for a bachelor flat and cap at about R900,000 for a three-bedroom flat.

Despite the extent to which Ponte was stigmatised, the hope of achieving utopia in Ponte never truly dissipated. The fantasy of what ‘could be’ endured, even when the legacies and consequences of apartheid rendered those attempts wilfully misguided. The erection of the Legacy Group’s Leonardo in Sandton in 2019 – overtaking Ponte for the title of Africa’s tallest residential tower – is testament to the fact that Johannesburg never stops looking to fulfil its dreams of becoming another Dubai, London, New York or Tokyo.

Artists Mikhael Subotzky and Patrick Waterhouse began visiting Ponte during

and after Investagain's short takeover as New Ponte, and produced a memorable series of photographs for their art book and exhibition, *Ponte City* (2014).⁵⁵ After Selvan and Ayyoub's investment fell through, Kempston bought the building back and hired a new construction team to continue cleaning out the construction rubble left behind in the hollow core. In the midst of this third wave of renovation, Subotzky and Waterhouse found an old public restroom in one of Ponte's parking structure levels (Figure 37). Though the photograph was taken as recently as 2008, the image lingers as evidence of Ponte's troubling apartheid past. With two red-coloured walls built adjacent to one another, the white letters of the hand-painted signs match the colour of the doorway frames and the electrical light switch situated on a diagonal relative to the word *Dames* (Afrikaans for 'ladies.'). The light switch is designed like a curved single block that one must forcefully push inward at the top or bottom in order to turn the bathroom lights on or off.

The image shows that the door of the European ladies' bathroom is left open and touching the wall behind it. The shadows cast on the bathroom walls make the door look black, though the natural light on the uppermost portions of the door give visual clues as to its original colour. Looking at the right-hand corner where the 'European Gents' bathrooms are, one sees white linoleum bathroom tiles with gridlines. There appears to be grime on the bottom rim of the white tiles closest to the concrete floors. Though one can see signs of wear above the red walls, it is surprising how pristine the sign is despite the passage of time between the construction of these bathrooms in 1973-76 and when the photograph was taken in 2008. One might speculate whether these bathrooms were still used after white residents had fled Ponte. How would it have felt to view these material remnants of apartheid and still use these facilities regardless? The building holds palimpsests of its difficult histories, and transient residents of the building's past often carry these traces in the present.

Ponte can be read as both anonymous and specific. Visual representation and material remnants offer the illusion not only of time travel, but of space travel. It is "a space of flows, of flux, of translocation, with multiple nexuses of entry and exit points."⁵⁶ Ponte's various dimensions are informed by a spectrum of lived complexities and daily encounters with nature and artifice, comprised of "actual people, images and architectural forms, footprints and memories."⁵⁷ Architectural design and historical sociological analysis serve as rendezvous

points for intellectual engagement. The spaces seen can shift from the actual corners, walls and rooms of the apartment building to the intangible connections made between people, places and things. Materialities of alterity require deep ethnographic study that reorient the senses and force researchers to look and read slowly, closely and with a decolonial imagination.

Visual culture is often left to cultural critics and art historians to analyse, archival records for the historians, material artifacts for the archaeologists. But remnants of uncomfortable and challenging geopolitical temporalities and realities are often hidden, buried and dismissed as either wholly determined by Western models or irrelevant to ‘empirical’ social scientific research. The so-called ‘urban decay’ of Hillbrow and Berea is often attributed to racially charged fears of the shifting demographic composition, but what is neglected in these analyses is the “climate of neglect” prevalent amongst neighbourhood landlords, managers or local city authorities⁵⁸ that drove Hillbrow’s physical decline, beginning in the late 1980s. Academic researchers must press the question of decay further, and challenge its acceptance as the dominant narrative. Though Ponte was not originally designed for the people of colour who would later occupy it, one can see how apartheid ideology was codified into Ponte’s design and form. The inclusion of diverse visual and material resources of data can prompt researchers to decolonise Western ecologies of knowledge and provide a means to include subaltern voices and experiences.

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Figure 39

An example of a physiology-enhancing birthspace design – the occupants select their music preferences, lighting, temperature and the natural imagery projected onto the surrounding walls using a modified tablet device located at the entrance to the room. Reprinted from *Contemporary Clinical Trials Communications*, Vol 14, Iben Lorentzen, Charlotte Sander Andersen, Henriette Svenstrup Jensen, Ann Fogsgaard, Maralyn Foureur, Finn Friis Lauszus, Ellen Aagaard Nohr, “Study protocol for a randomised trial evaluating the effect of a “birth environment room” versus a standard labour room on birth outcomes and the birth experience”. Starting page 100336. © 2019, used with permission from Elsevier.

Whakawhanaungatanga – Making Families

Suzanne Miller
and
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The Sociocultural Politics of Birthspace Design

Birthspaces designed for ‘housing’ the psycho-physical expressiveness of the woman and child, and the emotive and affective expressiveness of the family require a radical shift, built on an understanding that physical spaces are not only our spatial environments but also places of the soul within us.¹

Introduction

As nascent human beings, our first exposure to a design aesthetic is the room that we emerge into when we are born. It is fair to say that our consciousness about this space may be limited at this time, but the evidence is clear that the room itself has already had a profound influence on the people who give birth to us, and those who are there in support of our birthing – whānau² and health practitioners. Birthspace design is strongly shaped by the ideologies ‘hidden in plain sight’ of medical men, managers, architects and economists. In Aotearoa New Zealand, birthing whānau, health practitioners and Māori are rarely at the forefront of design decision-making. While ‘consultation’ inevitably takes place with these groups whose needs should be paramount, typically their pleas for recognition of the extensive literature on optimal birth-space design are subjugated to limited resources within the wider aesthetic needs of hospital systems. Unless birth is taking place at home, intimate spaces that enable birthing women and their families to express themselves fully are rare and are practically non-existent when the needs of Indigenous māāmā³ and their whānau, hapū⁴ and iwi⁵ are considered. While increasingly embracing te reo Māori⁶ and indigenous imagery in an effort to be inclusive, a more nuanced look at how the birthspace is set up reveals an expectation that one support person will be present during birth with the provision of one chair, that birth-giving (tapu) and

food consumption (noa) can co-exist,⁷ and that māmā hou (new mothers) can remain alone as they navigate the early hours and days with their new pēpi.⁸

Spiritual and cultural well-being are intrinsic components to safe birthing practices, which include birthspaces that value Indigenous ways of knowing and being in an effort to support connection, a sense of belonging and honour Māori cultural revitalisation. Examples of design that positively address these issues are offered alongside a critique of birthspaces that fail to meet the needs of tangata whenua⁹. For example, a centrally-located obstetric bed which enables ‘ease of access’ to a birthing woman’s intimate body space is almost ubiquitous, sending a silent message that the bed is the appropriate place to give birth, ignoring women’s needs for privacy, and normalising a medical ideology that insists that birth cannot take place without assistance, surveillance and external control over bodily movement. For the birthing woman, the feelings of whakamā¹⁰ associated with this can disrupt her sense of mana Motuhake,¹¹ diminish her mana,¹² and limit the opportunities for her whānau to support her in ways that are meaningful. We contend that the design of the ‘typical’ birthspace is shaped by a technocratic birth paradigm that privileges a risk discourse and the need for surveillance and control, over a humanist paradigm that values the unique normalities of birthing māmā, and marginalises their needs for emotional and cultural safety. For tangata whenua, birthspace design compromises their ability to honour tikanga,¹³ creating a potential for cultural dislocation at the very time an opportunity for cultural ‘vitalisation’ presents itself. The purpose of this book is to explore the ways in which postcolonial design continues to play out the politics of privilege. This chapter will focus on birthspace design, and we argue that rather than being ‘postcolonial’ – which implies we are beyond colonisation – we remain firmly ‘intra-colonial’ when it comes to the spaces within which we expect birthing whānau to accommodate themselves.

Setting the Scene: Theorising Birth-space Design

The design of functional spaces needs to meet the needs of all those who will use them.¹⁴ A growing literature in evidence-based healthcare design is exploring these concepts and affirms that well-designed spaces are safer, promote healing and are better for health workers.¹⁵ A key concept is that of a good “occupant-environment match” which promotes physical, functional and psychological comfort and enhances sociocultural interactions between its occupants.

Unsuccessful matches are associated with decreased satisfaction and decreased work performance.¹⁶ An increased focus on sustainability and low environmental impact begs us to consider the wisdom of such artefacts as energy-intensive birth technologies and single-use plastic consumable supplies for birth – predicated on the need for safety and sterility. Electronic labour surveillance mechanisms are not recommended for well women with uncomplicated pregnancies¹⁷ and birth is anything but a sterile process. The burgeoning science examining the neonatal microbiome and epigenetic sequelae of highly interventionist birth practices¹⁸ could force a reconsideration of this rationale.

The concept of “birth territory” has been extensively theorised and it is recognised that birthspace design is typically planned on paper according to a pathological view of birth.¹⁹ The psychobiological dynamics of birth instead belong to a sensitive and sexual sphere, so optimal spaces for birth are those where women can feel safe, private and in control. The birth territory is comprised of:

- the *terrain* – its physical features
- the *sanctum* – privacy, comfort, ease, control
- *surveillance* – being watched over, and
- *jurisdiction* – the power to do as one wants, which in the birthing context is consistent with ideas about who holds the power – women or clinicians.²⁰

These ideas informed the development of the Birth Unit Design Spatial Evaluation Tool (BUDSET) – a systematic checklist for design quality. BUDSET was informed by extant literature about birthspace and healthcare environments design, data from interviews with midwife clinicians and researchers, and followed by assessment by an expert panel of researchers and architects.²¹ The tool was later validated for use by midwives and women in a caseload model of care²² but attempts to validate it with indigenous populations and other diverse groups proved less successful.²³ BUDSET is commonly utilised in birthspace design, including in the Aotearoa New Zealand context. Setola’s²⁴ recent systematic review summarises the optimal components of birthspace design as a “space of possibilities” which:

- Supports the woman's changing needs as labour and birth unfold;
- Enables variable atmospheres that foster relaxation, distraction, intimacy;
- Has flexible configurations that enable privacy or sociability – modular furniture and fittings;
- Includes ancillary spaces for storage of belongings and equipment;
- Allows flexible use of labour support equipment;
- Is optimally sized – spacious enough to accommodate family members but with the potential to create intimate zones;
- Contains a “nest” zone which is a cosy, protected space to minimise disturbance and support physiology.

With one exception from Australia,²⁵ notably absent from the birthspace design literature is consideration of the perspectives of Indigenous women and their whānau, or of rainbow communities. The voices and needs of birthing tangata whenua and takatāpui²⁶ have historically been marginalised. There is increased emphasis placed on consultation, incorporation of te reo Māori signage and adornment of maternity services with imagery, sculpture and carving from Indigenous artists. Some hospitals even recognise the importance of windows that open to allow release of the spirit when a stillbirth has occurred. But a closer assessment reveals a continued lack of appreciation of how birthspace design dis-ables the practice of tikanga and disrupts the wairua²⁷ of many birthing whānau. Colonisation is indeed alive and well in our maternity services.

Why Does it Matter? How Birth Environments Optimise or Undermine Physiology

Birth unfolds smoothly and safely under the influence of a finely balanced orchestration of hormones, notably oxytocin (the hormone of aroha). Oxytocin stimulates uterine contractions and has significant beneficial effects for maternal bonding, breastfeeding and nurturant behaviours in all mammalian species.²⁸ All mammals seek privacy for giving birth and warm, dark spaces, providing safety from predation, are their preferred locations. This is because these conditions optimise the release of oxytocin. Where external threats are present, stress hormones directly inhibit oxytocin production, resulting in a ‘fear cascade’ which reduces the efficiency of birth by decreasing blood flow to the uterus.²⁹ In humans, this leads to medical interventions such as the administration of

synthetic oxytocin to augment labour and the use of epidural analgesia which further disrupt the physiology of birth and present risk to the labouring person and their as-yet unborn baby.³⁰

The birth environment has a direct impact on the labouring person because the sensory stimulation provided by light, sound, colour, textures, smells, temperature and ambience activate the amygdala and neocortical pathways associated with the release of corticosteroid (stress) hormones.³¹ Several studies have confirmed that the birthing environment is correlated with intervention rates, and therefore morbidity, for birthing women and babies. High-stimulus (technology-focused) birthspaces are associated with increased length of labour and perception of labour as painful,³² increased use of epidural,³³ labour augmentation,³⁴ episiotomy³⁵ and emergency caesarean section.³⁶ Design features also take their toll on support people, with an “unbelonging paradox” described by supporters who report there being no space for their belongings, minimal opportunity for attending to their own sustenance and physical comfort, and “being needed” but feeling “in the way”³⁷ and therefore unable to adequately fulfil their role in support of the birthing person.³⁸ The practice of midwives is similarly affected by the built environment. Their interprofessional communications,³⁹ physical ability to provide responsive labour support with reasonable comfort,⁴⁰ and increased stress levels that result from frustrating interactions with the built environment, may compromise safe practice.⁴¹

The paradigms of birth and their relationship to birth-space design. The midwifery (social or humanistic) birth paradigm champions a partnership relationship between the woman – and those important to her – and their midwife, and this is positioned as optimally conducive to the ‘guardianship,’⁴² or *kaitiakitanga*, of normal birth. Midwives value ‘multiple ways of knowing’ and so are open to and accepting of the proposition that women are the experts about their bodies and their babies. For well women, birth is viewed by midwives as a normal physiological process, which is anticipated to be straightforward unless it proves otherwise. Physiology-enhancing birthspaces are characterised by low-stimulus surroundings (Figure 39, p. 2010); quietness, dim lighting, stillness, warmth, comfort, invited touch, freedom of movement, and the presence of natural imagery and artefacts. These environmental conditions promote endogenous oxytocin production and a feeling of safety and protection for the

labouring woman.⁴³ Studies that have examined women's needs during labour in relation to the birthspace attest to the value placed upon soft surfaces and colours, being able to modify the room at will in terms of placement of furniture, personal control over lighting, temperature, and ventilation, and having multiple options for freedom of movement including birth pools, hanging ropes, benches and wall railings that support upright positions.⁴⁴ Nielsen's⁴⁵ study examining 'healing architecture' additionally found that environments that "show respect for meeting the family's needs" and that demonstrate "support for relieving the woman's concerns for her partner's well-being" by provision of nourishment, resting space and ablution areas are valued by women.

This model is contrasted with the so-called medical (biomedical or technocratic) paradigm which positions birth as 'only normal in retrospect.'⁴⁶ The medical model champions the use of technology and pharmacology and promotes a fetocentric approach to labour management which involves close surveillance to secure a positive outcome, and which positions doctors as the experts who call the shots. Whilst striving to achieve a supportive ambience in individual birth rooms, the 'typical' hospital birthspace tends to be characterised by busy-ness, activity, bright light, constant sensory stimulation from the sound of footsteps outside the door, emergency bells, electronic fetal monitors, moving beds and trolleys in the corridors and so on. The presence of emergency equipment in full view or even 'hidden' by screens or in cupboards is loaded; surely being poised for imminent deployment. As Mondy⁴⁷ describes "...an analysis of space and place requires recognition that relatively concealed or secret components will reveal the power of place as certainly as those that are more readily accessible."

The risk-averse anticipation of abnormality which characterises this birthspace can create a heightened sense of vigilance for the labouring woman, and the constant neocortical 'engagement' required to navigate this environment can disrupt her physiological hormonal flow. Moreover, uncomfortable shiny hard surfaces (for ease of cleaning), the obstetric bed which can readily be transformed to accommodate forceps and caesarean birth and *birth philosophy vectors*,⁴⁸ such as posters on the wall describing emergency management of labour complications or postpartum haemorrhage, all contribute to the level of anxiety a labouring woman, her support people and clinicians may experience. The expectation of passivity communicated by the need for tethering to



Figure 40

A 'typical' birthspace in a hospital setting. Note that one chair is provided for a support person. Photo: George Ruiz, 'Labor - the delivery room shortly after the epidural was administered', licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>).

monitoring equipment sends a powerful message about her lack of agency and bodily autonomy. The woman becomes a “patient” and birth *happens to her*, controlled by others, rather than being a powerful life event that she is in control of herself.⁴⁹ This birth environment with its emphasis on a (false) perception of what makes birth ‘safe’ may well meet the needs of the medical clinicians who work within it. The serially arranged, highly replicable, standardised spatial configurations of room layout and furniture placement no doubt meet the needs of architects and hospital managers with responsibility for the purse-strings. But they certainly do not meet the physical, psychological or cultural needs of birthing families.

Whakawhānau – Giving Birth in Pre-colonial Aotearoa

An appreciation of what is important for māmā hapū⁵⁰ and their whānau during birth, and why, is best understood with reference to both personal reflection from Māori māmā and mātauranga⁵¹ gifted within more formalised kaupapa

Māori research⁵² endeavours. This has resonance with the whakatauki⁵³ ‘kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua’ which speaks to the need for walking backwards into the future with eyes fixed on the past. We shift our focus now to an exploration of traditional Māori birthing practice and how this tikanga has shaped contemporary expectations about the need to honour the sacred in birth, by acknowledging tapu⁵⁴ and noa,⁵⁵ and how birthspace design subjugates these needs. We acknowledge that birthing practices across different iwi vary, and the following description may be true for some iwi and not others.

As with many birthing cultures, traditional birthing practices for wāhine Māori⁵⁶ were influenced by status and economics.⁵⁷ Birthing practices varied with wāhine considered to be high ranking, for example the wives or daughters of rangatira⁵⁸ being attended by tohunga⁵⁹ and traditional birth attendants or kaiwhakawhānau/tapuhi. Wāhine who were not rangatira would give birth attended by whānau members, often their own husband. It was not uncommon for kaiwhakawhānau to be men, and since tohunga could also be men it was normal for the tāne⁶⁰ of the hapū to be involved in both hapūtanga,⁶¹ labour and birth. Highly ranked wāhine typically birthed in a specially-constructed whare kōhanga – a temporary hut-like structure that was purpose built and would be destroyed by burning following the birth. “The architecture of traditional Māori building structures depict te whare tangata, as exposed internal beams depict a backbone and ribs, and the entrance represents the vagina. Visitors are welcomed into this space in a formalised process that mirrors sexual and reproductive consent.”⁶² Te whare tangata (‘house of humanity’) is also the name for the uterus. The wāhine⁶³ would move into the whare kōhanga⁶⁴ towards the end of her pregnancy or close to her birthing time. She would be attended by kaiwhakawhānau or tohunga and her whānau and would usually stay until she had recovered and waiū⁶⁵ was well established. The whare kōhanga was a place of tapu or sacredness.

Those who were not of rangatira status would often move off to a special place to give birth. Some hapū had sacred trees or rocks where wāhine would go to give birth to their pēpi with a whānau member or a birth attendant, and then return to their own whare⁶⁶ in the kāinga⁶⁷ once the baby had been born.⁶⁸ Wāhine also birthed in streams or warm springs and used water both as a form of pain relief and for cleansing. In terms of mātauranga Māori, wāhine Māori were considered tapu during their hapūtanga, as was the birthing whare hence its

destruction once the baby had been born. Other tikanga included karakia⁶⁹ and oriori (incantations) to the atua⁷⁰ that were recited from the time of conception, throughout the hapūtanga journey and into the postnatal period. Karakia are regarded as rongoā⁷¹ or natural medicine for protecting the wairua or spiritual well-being of the wahine and pēpi. Oriori would also be recited to pēpi in utero, these often reflected the unborn babe's whakapapa.⁷² Mirimiri and romiromi⁷³ were used to help wāhine keep their tinana (physical body) strong in pregnancy and could also be used during the labour to ease the birth.⁷⁴

The well-being of the baby was paramount. The birth of any baby is welcome and pēpi are cherished as taonga within Māori whānau.⁷⁵ Birth is always a celebratory event; in traditional times marriages and births were often planned for strengthening the hapū and creating relationships. To secure the wellbeing of the pēpi, hapū māmā would be given the best food and would have certain restrictions imposed around mahi (work). Some would be unable to work in the gardens, collect kaimoana⁷⁶ or prepare kai for others. This is connected to being in the tapu state and was intended as a demonstration of caring for the hapū wāhine. There were more restrictions placed on wāhine of the rangatira lines; tapu was in place to protect hapū wāhine and to protect the whakapapa or genealogy of the whānau, hapū and iwi through safe birthing. Rose Pere recalls that when she was a child, the tribal fathers would gather the best food from the forest for the hapū wāhine, for example, kererū was considered an important food that mothers ate and Pere recalls how the mothers were given the choice bits and the fathers ate what was left over.⁷⁷

'Tapu' and 'noa' are concepts of balance and unity. In her Te Wheke model for Māori wellbeing, Pere⁷⁸ describes tapu as a religious or secular restriction. Tapu can be used as a protective measure, a way of imposing kawa, rules or social order. It was used as a form of protection, for example, to warn of an area of a river that was considered too dangerous to swim in, or an area of ngāwhā⁷⁹ that was considered dangerous. Tapu helps us to develop and understand an awareness of spirituality and its implications and gives us an appreciation and respect for other human beings, other life forces and life *per se*. Anything that is tapu should be treated with respect and reverence.

Noa is to *make free from tapu* or to lift restrictions and make ordinary again. Noa is created through purification. With respect to birthing, tapu extends to activities that can occur in the birthing space. For example, within many iwi, it

breaches tapu to consume food (noa) within the same space as giving birth. But today wāhine are commonly offered refreshments both during and following birth, acknowledging that nutrition may be important for supplying energy for the work of labour and replenishment following birth, though this necessity is debated.⁸⁰ Regardless, the design of the birthspace should reflect knowledge of tapu and noa, by including a separate designated area for kai preparation and consumption within the birthing area.

One of the key traditions of Māori birth is ‘whenua ki te whenua’ or returning the whenua (placenta) to the whenua (land). The whenua is returned to Papatūānuku to nurture her as she has nurtured both the wahine and pēpi throughout the hapūtanga journey. The whenua nurtures the pēpi not just in a physical sense but it also holds the mauri and mana of the baby through the wairua connection.⁸¹

Birthspace and Tikanga: Reflections from Teresa Krishnan as a Māori Midwife and Māmā.

If I think about what I believe is one of the most important aspects of birthing for wāhine Māori now, from my experience working as Kaiwhakawhānau and tikanga from my own whānau I think it would be whānau connection in both the spiritual and physical sense. Wāhine Māori rarely come to birth spaces on their own. During labour and birth they have whānau with them, frequently this means many whānau including her tāne, mother, perhaps her mother-in law, sisters, aunties, cousins, Nanny might come and even her Koro (grandfather) might be there. They may not be a constant presence in the birthing room, but they will patiently wait outside the birthing room, making themselves comfortable in the hallways, ignoring the stares of the staff and others. They bring kai to share, aroha⁸² and kaha⁸³ to the labouring māmā, they provide tautoko⁸⁴ for those who are in the birthing room supporting the labouring māmā. They bring their tamariki,⁸⁵ and it is a lovely space to sit in when birth is made normal for tamariki. They sit waiting patiently, excited, sometimes they come in and out of the birthing room checking all is okay and enjoying being among whānau. There is a beautiful wairua that you can feel in the birth space, an innate sense that these wonderful people are here to awhi⁸⁶ and protect their loved wahine and that she is stronger for it. So they all come, and I think that part of the reason they come goes back to knowing

that the hapū māmā should be protected and that the whānau and hapū would collectively care for her and keep her birthing space safe.

For me, tikanga also adds to this safety net, viewing the birth space and the hapū māmā as tapu means there is an extra layer of protection and respect given to hapūtanga which it deserves. 'Kaiwhakawhānau' means the kaitiaki or guardian of the creation of whānau, and again reaffirms how important whānau is. In my experience wāhine Māori are not scared of labour and birth. I rarely hear fear of pain expressed by wāhine Māori. Growing up I always knew that I would have children, I was surrounded by a large whānau and there were frequent additions to our whānau, new babies at every whānau gathering much to my delight. I always knew that I would be a māmā and looked forward to having my own children, I never thought of it being scary. I never heard my Mum, Aunties or Nanny talk about being fearful of labour and birth, they never recounted their birth stories as being a time where they were fearful of the pain of birth but they did talk about how they felt the place (the hospital itself) and the staff there were scary.

Hospital practices impacted traditional birthing practices in a number of ways. Mikaere⁸⁷ discusses how in the hospital setting the control or power was in the hands of the medical professionals, how tāne and whānau were restricted from being present so a wahine was completely isolated from her loved ones and surrounded by strangers. Instead of being free to labour and birth in upright positions and fully mobile, to squat or lean, wāhine were expected to lie on their back in a bed with their feet in stirrups. My mother talks about the examinations she endured, how medical students would also practise on them, how there was only a curtain between beds, no privacy and how whakamā (embarrassed) she felt when being questioned about her age and number of children.

Probably one of the most significant impacts was the interruption of whenua ki te whenua. Once birth had moved into the hospital setting during the mid-twentieth century, the whenua was either incinerated or thrown into the rubbish. Tikao⁸⁸ describes how her tipuna tāne⁸⁹ believed that the Pākehā doctors had removed the mana of the child and destroyed their mauri⁹⁰ by

incinerating the whenua. By the turn of the twenty-first century, the whenua was commonly offered back to wāhine but placed in empty food containers and stored in fridges, and wāhine were advised to store it in a freezer until they could take it back to their whenua to bury. Food is noa, the whenua is tapu, so by putting the whenua in with the food you are making all the food tapu and diminishing the mana of the whenua and the pēpi. Placing the whenua into a container with soil that can be sealed or covered is a good way to keep the whenua until it can be taken back to whānau whenua to be buried. Ipu whenua or clay vessels to hold the whenua for burial may also be used – and birthspaces could easily accommodate these elements of appropriate storage for whenua into their design.

What would the perfect birthspace that honours tikanga look like?

It would need to be large enough to accommodate plenty of whānau comfortably. There should be a space within it that honours the notion of tapu, where food and birthing are not co-located, where karakia can be recited and waiata⁹¹ sung to welcome the new pēpi and guide them in their journey from Te Whare Tangata into Te Ao Mārama.⁹² Bringing kai into the space where a wahine has just birthed, where the whenua may be, is breaching tapu. There should be a separate space for preparing kai and for eating, and for the whānau to gather, sit and wait for the pēpi to arrive. There should be access to the outdoors so that wāhine and whānau can connect with the environment, perhaps a place where soil and sealable containers for the whenua to be stored can be kept. There could also be poles or pou installed for wāhine to lean on for support while labouring.

Linking Cultural Safety to Birthspace Design

In Aotearoa New Zealand, our most recent figures from 2018 demonstrate that the majority of wāhine Māori (81 percent) give birth in (technocratic) secondary and tertiary hospitals, despite not always requiring this level of care.⁹³ These birth settings are typically configured similarly to the birth room depicted in Figure 40. A further 15 percent of wāhine Māori give birth in (humanistic) primary units more similar to Figure 39 – a higher rate than for women of other ethnicities – or at home (four percent).⁹⁴ Wāhine Māori achieve the highest normal birth rate, lowest epidural rate, lowest episiotomy rate, lowest caesarean section rate and lower rates of induction and augmentation of labour when

compared to women of other ethnicities.⁹⁵ Dixon et al. surmise that “... our partnership model of care, which enables the woman to be central to decision-making, is attractive to our indigenous population who value the opportunity to be supported in birthing practices which are culturally safe and which may be more easily honoured in homebirth/primary unit settings.”⁹⁶ Primary birthing units are usually smaller and are often stand-alone or separate from the main hospital area so there are not sick or dying people in the same place a baby is to be born. There are fewer staff around, fewer unfamiliar faces, and less chance of exposure to racism and culturally unsafe practice. The birthing room is typically sizable which means there is more room for whānau, and there is increased likelihood of attendance by clinicians whose birth philosophies are accepting of traditional birthing practices being incorporated.

Women who birth in primary birthing units are attended by a Lead Maternity Care midwife so they have an established relationship with a known caregiver who has journeyed with them throughout their pregnancy,⁹⁷ much like in traditional times. The practice of these midwives is guided by the principles of Tūranga Kaupapa – a set of philosophical principles that provide insight into Māori cultural values in relation to birthing,⁹⁸ and when applied to practice these contribute to kawa whakaruruhau – the provision of culturally safe care. When cultural safety is incorporated into clinical practice, Māori whānau may feel more comfortable to practise their birthing traditions. Tūranga Kaupapa principles could also be used to inform birthspace design.

To return to the politics of privilege, wāhine Māori and their whānau are perhaps caught at an intersection between the paradigms of birth where tension may exist between humanistic and technocratic birth philosophies that influence the design of birthspaces but which lack recognition of a Māori world view. This sits alongside the need for a commitment to decolonising birth by utilising tikanga-based practices and enacting willingness to tackle inequities in care provision. For example, policies that restrict the choice to give birth in a primary birthing unit by pathologising maternal size may unfairly consign Māori māmā to birthing in high-tech environments and acceptance of medical interventions that limit their mobility, disrupt their wairua and jeopardise the meaningful support they can expect from their wider whānau.⁹⁹ To be *post-colonial*, the design of our birthspaces needs to include the voices of tangata whenua from the earliest stages of planning and ensure these remain audible throughout the

development and construction processes to manifest the creation of spaces that reflect and incorporate Te Ao Māori. “Birth environments are understood as power structures containing views of women’s bodies as birthing machines and delivery rooms as surveillance environments.”¹⁰⁰ Our mahi going forward is to enable movement towards sanctum which honours mana motuhake and maintains physical and cultural safety.

Ka whānau mai ahau ka rongo i te aroha o ētahi atu

I feel the love others have for me during my birth

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2. Family.
3. Mothers.
4. Kinship group, subtribe.
5. Tribe.
6. Māori language.
7. The concepts of tapu and noa will be discussed in detail later.
8. Baby.
9. Local people, people born of the land, indigenous people.
10. To be embarrassed, shy.
11. Autonomy, self-determination.
12. Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status.
13. Cultural custom or practice.
14. Lepori, "Mindbodyspirit Architecture," 93.
15. Roger Ulrich et al., Craig Zimring, Xuemei Zhu, Jennifer DuBose, Hyun-Bo Seo, Young-Seon Choi, Xiaobo Quan, Anjali Joseph, "A Review of the Research Literature on Evidence-Based Healthcare Design," *Health Environments Research and Design Journal* 1, no. 3 (2008): 61-125.
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26. Some Māori who identify as LGBTQI+.
27. Definition: spirit, essence.
28. Sarah Buckley, "Executive Summary of Hormonal Physiology of Childbearing: Evidence and Implications for Women, Babies, and Maternity Care," *The Journal of Perinatal Education* 24, no. 3 (2015): 145-153, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1891/1058-1243.24.3.145>.
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48. Setola et al., "The Impact of the Physical Environment," 89.
49. Miller, "Moving things forward," 198.
50. Pregnant mothers.
51. Knowledge.
52. Māori approach to research.
53. Proverb.
54. Sacred.
55. To be free from tapu – note that the terms tapu and noa are discussed more fully later in the text.
56. Māori women.
57. K. Tikao, "Iho – a Cord Between Two Worlds. Traditional Māori Birthing Practices," (Master's thesis, University of Otago, 2013), 27.
58. Chief/s male or female.
59. Priest, skilled person, expert.
60. Man/men.
61. The period of pregnancy
62. Jade Le Grice and Virginia Braun, "Mātauranga Māori and Reproduction: Inscripting Connections Between the Natural Environment, Kin and the Body," *AlterNative* 12, no. 2 (2016): 151-164, <https://doi.org/10.20507/AlterNative.2016.12.2.4>, 156.
63. Woman.
64. Birthing place, literally 'nest house'.
65. Breast milk.
66. House.
67. Village.
68. Tikao, "Iho – a Cord Between Two Worlds," 28.
69. Prayers.
70. God/s, ancestor with continuing influence.
71. Medicine.
72. Genealogy, lineage.
73. Types of massage.
74. Tikao, "Iho – a Cord Between Two Worlds," 40.
75. Le Grice and Braun, "Mātauranga Māori and Reproduction," 153.
76. Seafood
77. Ngāhuia Murphy, *Te Awa Atua: Menstruation in the Pre-Colonial World*, (Ngāruawahia, NZ: He Puna Manawa Ltd, 2013), 71.
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81. Tikao, "Iho – a Cord Between Two Worlds," 60.
82. Love.
83. Strength.
84. Support.
85. Children.
86. Embrace, assist.
87. Ani Mikaere, *The balance destroyed: Consequences for Māori women of the colonisation of tikanga Māori*, (Auckland: The International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, 2003), 92-93.
88. Tikao, "Iho – a Cord Between Two Worlds," 61.
89. Great- or great-great Grandfather.
90. Life principle, vital essence.
91. Songs.
92. World of light and life, physical world, Earth.
93. New Zealand Ministry of Health, "Maternity Clinical Indicator Trends in New Zealand," (accessed 19 December, 2020) <https://min-healthnz.shinyapps.io/maternity-clinical-indicator-trends/>.
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Part 3

IMAGING, IDENTITY & PLACE



'It's Fun In South Africa'

Harriet McKay

Interior Design for the Union-Castle
Shipping Line 1948–1977

Sometime in the autumn of 2007 John Graves, the Curator of Ships' History at the National Maritime Museum, Royal Museums Greenwich, took design historian Professor Anne Massey and I on a research visit into one of the museum's conservation studios. He wanted us to look at an object that was being treated for preservation. On a table in the studio lay a large, beautifully coloured poster: an advertisement for the Union-Castle shipping line. In my memory, the poster exists as being a considerable size (at least two metres in height by one-and-a-half metres wide). I was therefore surprised when revisiting the Maritime Museum's online records to discover that it is in fact only 1020mm long and 635mm wide.¹

That the poster should have assumed such large proportions in my mind, and that it should have made such a striking impression upon me, was not simply due to the object's quality. Rather, it was the imagery and message that I encountered that day which became engraved on my mind and which, 13 years later, provide the leitmotiv for this chapter. The poster presents a chubby, smiling black toddler, wearing what might, at the time, have well been labelled "native dress," jubilantly dancing barefoot in the sand. The object, dated circa 1960, broadcasts the message, "It's fun in South Africa" (Figure 41).

Of course, somewhere in South Africa, circa 1960, black children might have danced and felt joy on occasion. However, that an entire nation should be marketed according to a knowing obliviousness was what burnt the poster's imagery onto my mind. More specifically – that at the height of the apartheid era, the viciousness of that regime, along with the enormously complicated political, socio-economic and infrastructural systems of a police state, should be deliberately hidden behind such a caricature is staggering. This chapter provides



Figure 41

Union-Castle advertising poster, 'It's fun in South Africa', c. 1960. Source: Copyright National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London, accession no. F8515. Used with permission.

a brief discussion of themes most salient to understanding how the apartheid system and interior design coalesced to create Union-Castle's passenger accommodation.

Investigating such issues calls for a cross-disciplinary approach. The history under scrutiny here begins with the election of the pro-apartheid National Party government in 1948 and ends shortly after one of the most notorious events of the apartheid era, the Soweto Uprising of June 1976.² While the two nations were closely bound, the relationship between Britain and South Africa throughout this period was by no means straightforward.³ That national politics should be visible through interior design on board ship is a concept which is heavily indebted to Anne Wealleans' seminal charting of the politics of decorative schemes on board ocean-going passenger liners, *Designing Liners*.⁴ The argument presented here is predicated on Wealleans' arguments that interior design communicates messages about national identity, and borrows from Susie McKellar and Penny Sparke's book *Interior Design and Identity*.⁵

Setting the scene, the interiors of early postwar ships sailing the Cape Route (Southampton in the United Kingdom to Cape Town, South Africa), Royal Mail Ships (RMS) *Pretoria* and *Edinburgh* Castles,⁶ are explored for their significance as a marker of the continuing colonial exchange apparent between London and South Africa. This relationship was particularly strained when it came to London–Pretoria politics. Emblematic of the old tensions between Briton and Afrikaner and, in that context, harbinger of the rise to power of the far right, these were historical frictions and hostilities that, it can be argued, fed into the apartheid ethos. Despite the historical foreboding embodied in the early postwar ships' passenger accommodations, in desiring to signal British heritage and 'pedigree' as superior to a supposedly subordinate former colony, notions of genteel leisure, pleasure and discreet fun were also very clearly written into the interiors of sister ships *Pretoria*, *Edinburgh* and also *Kenya Castle*.

Surveying the postcolonial period, it becomes apparent that messages about pleasure-seeking and leisure were inscribed into the marketing campaigns and interior design of Union-Castle's ships of the 1960s and '70s. In my discussion of RMS *Windsor* and *Transvaal Castle* and of Sailing Ship (SS) *Reina del Mar*, I propose that the idea of pursuing a completely carefree life as a passenger became vital to Union-Castle's marketing armoury as a denial of the system of Grand Apartheid⁷ that flourished in the 1960s. I argue further that this ethos is

embodied in interior design schemes which otherwise expressed subservience to Pretoria. The twin focal points of this discussion are thus the politics of representation and the representation of politics.

Union-Castle's origins lie in the founding of the Southampton Steam Shipping Company in 1853. Significantly, throughout its long history the shipping line took the leading role in the conglomerate of European shipping lines which operated on the Cape Route. Not only did Union-Castle dominate its rivals but, since it represented the fulcrum of the wider trading partnership between Britain and South Africa in the postwar period, it was also critical to wider relations between the two nations. To maintain the continuing success of the Pretoria–London economic shipping alliance, and in line with the promotional gambit represented by the “It’s fun in South Africa” poster, British Pathé News⁸ was deployed to record news items featuring the launch and maiden voyages of Union-Castle ships. Produced as ten- or 15-minute narrated screenings ahead of feature films, this promotional material was screened extensively in UK cinemas.

One of these promotional films featured the crowd-pleasing comedian Sid James, well-known to British audiences and at the height of his fame as Cockney wise-guy and key member of the cast of the *Carry On* films.⁹ Titled *38a Bus to Cape Town*,¹⁰ it features James as an irascible London bus driver stuck in traffic who lapses into a daydream about Union-Castle's new ship, RMS *Transvaal Castle*. In the film, James's narrated reverie is prompted by passing a South Africa tourist information centre and seeing a travel advertisement for Union-Castle. The film then charts *Transvaal*'s journey to Cape Town, extolling all that she had to offer on board: “The number one escape route to the sun ... everything you could want, or even think of wanting, is right here on board,” rhapsodises James; “isn't that better than coughing your way down Piccadilly?”¹¹

Employing James to deliver the message was a calculated ploy on the part of Union-Castle's managing organisation, British and Commonwealth Shipping Limited (B&C). Throughout the period, Union-Castle's eleven-and-a-half-day voyage to Cape Town was promoted as a journey of hedonistically uncomplicated ease to an equally untroubled land of opportunity. This was a gambit that, as I explain below, gained particular importance during the 1960s. However, just as the guffawing jollity of the *Carry On* series was dogged by the behind-the-scenes enmities and the less-than-jovial preoccupations and rivalries

of its leading actors,¹² so too did the marketing and interior design of Union-Castle's 1960s and '70s vessels mask dark secrets, skeletons in cupboards which make the earlier colonial and patriarchal messages associated with the passenger liners of the 1950s appear benign, if pompous, by comparison.

Fitted out – their interiors and furnishings put in place – around the time that the National Party government was sworn into office (June 1948), *Edinburgh* and *Pretoria Castles* were advertised as providing an onboard life of sociable comfort. At the same time, however, their interiors carried portentous messages derived from an aesthetic conveying a gravitas also based on historicist styling. This was achieved through a conservative and, for the period, rather old-fashioned, part-Art Deco, part-‘Tudorbethan’ idiom, passenger accommodation featuring heavy dark-wood furniture, panelling and, particularly in first class, leather-upholstered, Chesterfield seat furniture. The aim of this decorative approach can be read as an attempt to remind white South Africans that although self-governing autonomy within the Empire had been granted in 1910, they were still expected to behave as loyal subjects of an Empire whose dignity and heritage was enshrined in the oaken furniture and fittings of Union-Castle's ships.

These were ideas – particularly significant in first-class areas on board – which, allowing for some levity, nevertheless spoke of the probity of Empire and British colonial superiority, adopting decorative schemes through which the old colonial assumption of a kind of ‘necessary authority’ might be transmitted. After all, in the words of a Board of Trade pamphlet, entitled *British East Africa* and published when *Pretoria* and *Edinburgh* were being built, there remained a sure need for British support in the region since “It must be appreciated that the African people are still largely in a somewhat primitive state and that they are being plunged into the complications of twentieth-century civilisation without having the assistance of the slowly leavening influences of the intervening centuries.”¹³

Thus the atmosphere into which passengers entered upon embarkation was one in which the weight and responsibility of Empire informed a decorative culture which eschewed fashionable statements in favour of communicating a message of unchanging dependability. For example, the upper-middle class rituals and markers of these staunch standards, afternoon tea and sherry before ‘Luncheon,’ would always be available in the rather drab but highly appropriate galleries and smokersrooms on board a Union-Castle ship.



Figure 42
'Afternoon Tea in the Long Gallery', Union-Castle, *First Class to South and East Africa*. Source: Author's ephemera collection.

Just as the United Kingdom had a complicated relationship with colonial East Africa, so too, of course, British–South African relations had been historically fraught. Important to this discussion of the way in which British interior design and apartheid coalesced on board ship is the argument that the tensions between the British imperial project in South Africa and Afrikaner nationalism sowed the seeds for the apartheid agenda. For example, as Wessels comments, the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902 can be understood as an event that triggered consequences which had lasting implications for the relationships between different population groups within South Africa.¹⁴ The collateral damage inflicted by that conflict included the trans-generational trauma caused in part by the experience of forced internment in the new British invention, the concentration camp. Thus Wessels argues:

The Afrikaners who suffered in the internment camps, stored the negative experiences in their memories ... In some cases, many years later, even in a succeeding generation, these traumatic experiences once again gained prominence, and sometimes manifested themselves in one or other political view, for example in the apartheid policy ... The Afrikaners ... who had been humiliated and oppressed earlier became the new oppressors (of black, coloured and Asian people) from 1948 onwards under the banner of separate development (apartheid).¹⁵

Always complicated, relations between B&C and the National Party government became even further knotted from the 1960s onwards, particularly after South Africa left the Commonwealth in 1961. These complexities were reflected in Union-Castle's interior design, with passenger accommodation during this period – now designed by genteel lady-decorator Jean Monro (1916-2013)¹⁶ – speaking paradoxically of putting parvenu Pretoria in its place while *at the same time* being minutely careful not to do anything that might be seen as offending the Republic.

By the time that Sid James's marketing film and the featured liner *Transvaal Castle* were launched in 1960, the National Party had been in power for 12 years and its political agenda was well advanced. Furthermore, just as Hendrick Verwoerd (the 'Architect of Apartheid' who was largely responsible for cementing the apartheid republic) took up the premiership (1958-61), B&C Chairman Nicholas Cayzer was raising the stakes as to what was and what was not permissible in terms of interior design on board his ships. On the Cape Route, for example, the B&C made it their business to become intimately involved with Pretoria and employed Union-Castle's interior design as a signifier both of national status as regards the Republic and as a marketing tool through which to advertise the country itself. However, as far as marketing of its ships and the design of their interiors was concerned, B&C was at pains to appear entirely apolitical.

Advertising materials for the shipping line (of which the 1960 "It's fun in South Africa" poster was the apotheosis) existed in a constructed oblivion that protected financial interests by projecting a message of leisure and fun, and appeared, at least on the surface, to be blissfully oblivious to the circumstances surrounding its operations. The fact that in 1961 B&C should have produced

SHE'LL BE
10° BROWNER
BY THE TIME
SHE REACHES
THE CAPE



Our winter is South Africa's summer, and it's sunshine most of the way by Union-Castle. Three days to Madeira, four days to Las Palmas. Perhaps it's bathing on deck already. All told, fourteen days and thirteen nights of blissful, romantic lazy holiday.

the going's good by **UNION-CASTLE**
THE BIG SHIP WAY TO AFRICA



Mailships leave Southampton for the Cape every Thursday at 4 p.m. There are 'Holiday Tour' reductions in the First Class fares (from £245) in November and Tourist Class (from £136) in December. You can also book an African Sea Safari to take you to Cape Town and back by mailship, and sightseeing (e.g. big game, gold and diamond mines, Victoria Falls, the Kariba Dam) by air, train and motor coach in Southern Africa. From £260 each if two or more passengers (37 days, Southampton to Southampton). Liners of the East Coast service leave London for Durban via the Mediterranean every month. Ask your Travel Agent. Or Union-Castle, Chief Passenger Office, Dept. 148, 19-21 Old Bend Street, London, W.1. NY De Park 8420.

Figure 43

'She'll be 10° browner by the time she reaches The Cape', Union Castle promotional material. Source: Author's ephemera collection.

a magazine advertisement for travel to South Africa via *Transvaal Castle* announcing “the going’s good by Union-Castle, The Big Ship Way to Africa” was indicative of this approach. As a riposte to the growing threat posed by air travel, during this period the ocean crossing to South Africa was increasingly marketed as a holiday in itself.

Mailships leave Southampton for the Cape every Thursday at 4 p.m. You can also book an African Sea Safari to take you to Cape Town and back by mailship and sightseeing, (e.g. big game, gold and diamond mines, Victoria Falls, the Kariba Dam) by air, train or motor coach within Southern Africa ... Ask your travel agent. Or Union-Castle, Chief Passenger Office, Dept.14B, 19-21 Old Bond Street, London W1, Hyde Park.¹⁷

As if selling trips to diamond and gold mines – which were centres of dangerous work and slave wages during apartheid – was not evidence enough of a denial of South Africa’s treatment of its majority population, the advertisement’s main copy indicates the extent to which B&C was clearly protecting its interests. Positioned above a white, bikini-clad, sunbathing woman, the advertisement reads, “She’ll be 10 degrees browner by the time she reaches the Cape.”¹⁸

Messages of a carefree lifestyle on board are particularly evident in the ‘hotel ship’ accommodation offered in Tourist Class on *Windsor* and *Pendennis* and *Transvaal Castle*’s One Class. Following Jean Monro’s appointment as ships’ interior decorator for B&C, Nicholas Cayzer instructed her that *Windsor*’s Tourist Class rooms should be characterised by “great comfort but with a less formal atmosphere [than First Class] and with plenty of gaiety in all the rooms.”¹⁹ A brochure for *Pendennis Castle* (c1959) introduces the ship accordingly: “Her decks are very wide ... long and comfortable new deck chairs are set in gaily coloured ranks facing the rails. Spaces are marked out for deck games.”²⁰ Drawings of the Tourist Class dining room and smoke room on board (Figure 43) follow suit: “the smoke room is one of the gayest rooms in the ship, with a Harlequin Bar”²¹ Monro’s own description of her scheme reads in just the same way:

Gaily coloured in pink, grey and lime, the Tourist Class Lounge will have a recessed dance floor in the middle of the room.



Figure 44

Tourist Class Dining Room and Smoke Room illustrated in promotional brochure, *Pendennis Castle*, 1959. Source: Author's ephemera collection.

The Tourist Class lido and swimming pool will be a very gay area. The verandah café, with bar and soft drinks kiosk, will have soft furnishings of chintz with a bright fruit and flowers pattern, and a wooden teak floor. Round the pool will be covered Promenade and Dance Decks.²²

In her notes Monro also remarked that “A feature of the 1st Entrance Hall will be the very fine square of shops, while a gay shopping area will be arranged in the Tourist Class Entrance Hall.”²³

Despite being intended to mark the dynamic and assured entrance of B&C onto the world shipping stage, both *Windsor Castle* and *Transvaal Castle*'s interiors reveal a reverence for historical Britain and, as witnessed in the interiors of *Pretoria*, *Edinburgh* and *Kenya Castle*, provided spaces that were both reverential of the British upper class and pointed reminders of an imagined superiority to South Africa and its government. At the same time, they created a



Figure 45

Couple dining in front of RMS *Windsor Castle*'s First-Class Dining Room mural. Source: Copyright National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, accession no. F81857. Used with permission.

smokescreen behind which the government's policies might be politely hidden from view. Both *Windsor* and *Transvaal*'s passenger accommodation employed English country house²⁴ style in their public spaces and cabins and, on board *Windsor*, made direct reference to the royal palace itself. Symbolic of land-based permanency and the durability of the British Establishment, representations of the castle or country house and its interiors were used in a number of the line's ships during the 1960s.

British national associations represented by Union-Castle's interior design, literally drawn (and painted) out for first-class passengers on board *Windsor Castle* in its dining room mural, for example, (Figure 45), were themselves informed by a design practice that was embedded in cultural and social expectations that wholeheartedly disavowed politics. Jean Monro's appointment by B&C, for example, was itself redolent of English upper-class genteel practice, as it does not appear to have been accompanied by any formal interview, nor

indeed a brief. Rather, her lineage as a society decorator appears to have been taken as evidence enough of her qualifications to tackle the job.

Similarly, the B&C periodical *The Clansman* recorded of *Windsor Castle* not long after her maiden voyage that she “was received with acclaim, and soon, during her peak booking period, her passenger list began to read like extracts from Debrett.”²⁵ Significantly, the silencing of politics that *Windsor* and *Transvaal*’s alternatively “gay” and jovial or mannered and conformist interiors represented were to become anthropomorphised as that epitome of apoliticism, the British monarchy. On board the ship for *Windsor Castle*’s final sailing, liberal Afrikaner (and friend of Prince Charles) Laurens van der Post recalled the ship’s last departure from Southampton in August 1977: “Dressed overall, as we saw her in that long level light of the morning of August 15th, she looked like a debutante waiting to be conducted to her first ball ... she eased herself with the grace of a young queen from the quay ...”²⁶

This notion of the regal was to play out rather differently on board the last ship to sail the Cape Route under B&C auspices, “Queen of the Sea,” SS *Reina del Mar*. First chartered by Union-Castle in 1964, and then purchased outright from the Pacific Steam Navigation Company in 1973, *Reina* (her original name remaining unchanged) was, like *Transvaal*, a one-class ship. Unlike her predecessors, however, no lavish interiors were created once she became part of B&C’s fleet. Rather, a functional modern style, significantly reminiscent of a contemporary airport lounge, was adopted in public passenger spaces, while her ‘cheap and cheerful’ bedrooms were, according to documents held by the Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool, derided in the British press as looking as though they belonged to the resort chain, Butlins.

Of all the ships discussed in this chapter – her short Union-Castle career notwithstanding – *Reina* was the one for which a marketing message of jollity was most forcefully pursued: “You have the whole run of this mighty ship because she’s all one class. So, everything’s friendly and informal – she’s a happy ship.”²⁷ Branded by B&C as a “fun ship,” this message was reinforced through descriptions of life on board this egalitarian cruise-liner:

The siren sounds; a cheer goes up from the quayside ... ‘We’re away!’
Yes, away on the best holiday you ever had, a cruise on *Reina del Mar* [sic]
Union-Castle’s beautiful 20 000 ton liner. Ahead of you lie magic days and

nights at sea ... wonderful living and entertainment, good company, new friends. ...

Lie on a reclining chair in the sun ... swim in one of the deck pools, play various deck games ... And later there's the cinema, bingo, dancing, maybe the Captain's cocktail party or a 'Black and White Minstrel's show.'²⁸

That so dubious a form of entertainment as 'blackface' should surface on board a Union-Castle liner en route to Africa is again indicative not only of what were considered acceptable 1970s British cultural norms, but also of a complete failure to acknowledge the increasingly vicious treatment of the real black populations in the country of arrival. Examining *Reina's* marketing material, one has the feeling that the message of the fun to be had on a Union-Castle voyage has reached fever pitch. The extent to which this aspect had developed is indicated by a 1972 *Reina del Mar* brochure in Afrikaans. Advertising luxury cruises, alongside its cover image featuring the bra-less back of a bikini-clad blonde, written in bold contemporary lettering is the message, "VROLIK EN VRY MET DIE KONINGIN" ("cheerful and free with the queen"). That such a risqué image should have been produced in the very conservative South Africa of the time can be read as an almost desperate urgency to appear enticingly, merrily relaxed.

South African officials had by now joined the clamour. A 1976 typescript in the Union-Castle archive in the Cape Town campus of the National Library of South Africa, entitled *Sailing South Africa* and written by a Mr Roy L Allen (whose professional affiliation is not mentioned), demonstrates just what was perceived to be at stake. The vehemence of the argument for South Africa's need to generate 'goodwill' suggests that it may have been written during the second half of the year, in the months following the Soweto uprising of June 1976.

If a country is to develop a very real, very lucrative industry of tourism in a big way, grandiose ideals are useless unless the material aspect of supplies logistics are not [sic] thoroughly investigated and necessary supply services organised accordingly.

South Africa is a tourist country. Goodwill on the international scale can be built up through it and by it. That is why it is in the vital interest of the

Republic that all obstacles must be pushed away, all barriers dismantled, all lethargy must go in the tourist context. Tourism is destined to become one of South Africa's major industries.²⁹

No doubt the growing threat from air travel, coupled with the severe shock to the apartheid system in the light of global reaction following the Soweto uprising, prompted an increased emphasis on promoting tourism, as advocated by Allen. Of huge significance to the interior design of the liners at this time was the resultant move by B&C to market its ships as coastal hotels:³⁰ "Business can be conducted while in port or underway. In port clients can come aboard for discussions, conferences and other gatherings. There is the added attraction that they may enjoy entertainment facilities if they wish."³¹

More significantly still, on 23 December 1975, a memo, marked "important," was circulated around Union-Castle offices in South Africa giving notice that, "Among the following travelling with you on the coast we would specially commend the following and anything that can be done to promote their voyage will be much appreciated: Mr P A Vorster, son of the Prime Minister and [his wife] Mrs Vorster."³²

It was not only businessmen and dignitaries for whom Union-Castle's doors were opened. Like many white South Africans of her generation, a friend of mine, Joanne McGilvray, remembered as a teenager in the 1970s being able to board the ships for visits while they were berthed between voyages at the docks in Cape Town. In her view, Union-Castle's ships had not only been regarded as redolent of British style, but had also presented an escape from the police state, and offered a view of something assumed to be very British: democracy, the rule of law and social justice.³³ However, as I have hinted throughout this chapter, there is a rather different and much darker side to this story.

In late 1957, four years before South Africa would leave the Commonwealth, a B&C managers' meeting determined that "[t]he British National anthem should not be played on board ship unless followed by Union's anthem," that "Her Majesty's picture should not be screened at the end of cinema performances" and that it had been "quietly agreed to drop the showing of the Queen's portrait on the SA coast."³⁴ Is it coincidental, then, that on neither the Suez (East African) nor the Cape (South Atlantic) route did Union-Castle interiors contain *any* representation of, or reference (visual or otherwise) to, black Africa?

Also sailing a Union-Castle route, the shipping line British India saw fit to include images derived from destination countries as well as gifts from local African stakeholders – for example, from the Bugandan King³⁵ – as part of their interior decorations. On board Union-Castle ships, by contrast, depictions of a native population extended only as far as the literally white, Cape Dutch architecture of South Africa’s early European colonisers. Also, apart from dockside labour, B&C employed very few black administrative staff on land and none, apparently, on ship. Was it simply happenstance that B&C, a company that bowed to Pretoria’s wishes with regard to the representations of the British monarch, also excluded references to the majority South African population? The evidence suggests not.

The June 1976 issue of the British shipping journal *Time and Tide* features an interview with Nicholas Cayzer. In it he is quoted as saying that conducting business with South Africa was the only “sensible thing to do.” “We trade where we can,” he continued, because “in a tumultuous world where emotion gets the better of common sense, we cannot afford to lose any of our trade.”

One must get a sense of proportion about South Africa ... We are always listening to the humanitarian viewpoint but if we were to cut off our trade to South Africa it would do a great deal of harm to British industry ... [and it] would also do a lot of harm to the South African economy and particularly in this context we should do harm to the black South Africans working in industry. We trade where we can trade. That is our job. And this is the most civilizing thing that we can do ...³⁶

Within British industry in the 1970s this stance was by no means exceptional; indeed, that Cayzer was awarded a peerage in 1982 by Margaret Thatcher, notorious for never taking a stand against apartheid, was indicative of a shared mindset. South African anti-apartheid activist Ruth First’s 1972 book, *The South Africa Connection* (an exposé of Western investment in South Africa during apartheid), lists B&C among the companies trading with and investing in the Republic, an indictment that is backed up by papers in the Union-Castle archives. Throughout the postwar years, these papers reveal, funds were deposited in South African banks and ventures, first by Union-Castle itself and later by B&C and holdings by Cayzer’s other companies.³⁷

Of equal significance, a memo dated 1977 and now in the National Maritime Museum notes that “Sir Nicholas was, until last November, President of the UK-South Africa Trade Association ... He is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Graduate School of Business, Cape Town University and a Trustee of the South Africa Foundation.” The memo continued: “The UK-South Africa Trade Association, of which Cayzer is President ... is a non-political body set up to do everything possible to further trade with South Africa ... [It] exists to interpret South Africa to the world.”³⁸

In his 1979 article on the South Africa Foundation (SAF), Galen Hull noted that it was “no secret in Johannesburg or abroad, that the South Africa Foundation is a ‘front organisation for government.’”³⁹ In 1984, Dave Nellist, the Labour MP for Coventry, was temporarily banned from the House of Commons following a fracas relating to allegations he had made, accusing Sir Ian Lloyd (Conservative MP for Portsmouth) of being on the SA government’s payroll. Lloyd, a South African, denied this charge, but later admitted to having accepted “hospitality.” Lloyd had been a long-serving executive of B&C as the company’s director of research between 1956 and 1964 and its economic adviser during the period in question (until 1983).

While duplicate copies of correspondence and general office administration fill archives in both Greenwich and Cape Town, the South African holdings also contain numerous files absent from the papers of the London archive. The London papers were donated to the Royal Museums Greenwich by the Cayzer family themselves. A box marked “Top security” contains a letter written in 1973 by the Durban Union-Castle office to B&C’s London headquarters that gives an insight into the history of the “very close liaison” between the shipping line and the South African police and security authorities:

We have promised our assistance at any time to the authorities should incidents become known to us which might be of interest to the police in combating crime or subversive activity. In return we are assured most definitely of the immediate and fullest co-operation of the police and any other security authority at a time of general unrest or if we require them to deal with any specific incident.⁴⁰



Figure 46
'Office Staff', Union Castle, 1961. Image courtesy of the National Library of South Africa: Cape Town campus.

No wonder that in August 1960, on the arrival of the *Windsor Castle* into Cape Town, Mayor Joyce Newton Thompson wrote of the newcomer to the Union-Castle fleet:

With the entry of the *Windsor Castle* into the listings of the U-C mailships, we welcome also the belief in the future of South Africa. From the moment visitors by sea are welcomed at the pleasant new passenger terminal and drive up the Heerenracht into the Mother City, they will appreciate the beauty, the steady advance and the hospitality of Cape Town.⁴¹

This "pleasant new passenger terminal" was at Berth F in the harbour and not far from the shipping offices in Union-Castle House. Also in clear view of Union-Castle House is Jetty 1. From here, not long after the *Windsor Castle* first sailed out of port, so too, from 1961 onwards, did political prisoners bound for

Robben Island. In the period up until 1977 when the final Union-Castle sailings were made from Cape Town's harbour, activity on the jetty – the movement of prisoners onto boats bound for incarceration – must have been known to Union-Castle officials.

If the ship, as Foucault suggests, is a heterotopia, a “floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea,”⁴² then surely Table Bay contained two such heterotopic spaces during this period: the luxury interiors of the Union-Castle liners and the sealed confines of a maximum-security prison.

In the 1960s, during the era of Grand Apartheid, Union-Castle – or rather the shipping line's managing company, B&C – was at the forefront of the British-owned, non-political organisations which took on the role of presenting South Africa to the British public. Cayzer's avowed mission was not to antagonise Pretoria and thereby risk damaging his profits. In line with this goal, the disposal of images of the British monarch on ships bound for the Republic and, more importantly, the denial of the realities of black Africa – to promote instead ideas of merriment and indulgence – succeeded in creating a self-contained, untroubled world where the status quo of both the National Party regime and the British/South African political economy remained not only unquestioned and accepted, but supported and maintained. In this way, B&C were able to turn a heterotopia into a utopia.

The cinematic equivalent of the “It's fun in South Africa” poster the Sid James promotional film can be read as an endorsement of the apartheid system. As *Transvaal Castle* is pictured entering Table Bay, James's voice-over continues as a Routemaster bus is driven off the ship. Continuing his narration as if driving the bus around Cape Town and along the city's coastal beaches, over shots of white bodies surfing and sunbathing on a segregated beach, James enthuses about “lots of lovely space where people can spread themselves and begin to live ... *there's something marvellously uncomplicated about life out here* [emphasis added]. It's just like life on board and when you look back on it you realise it was the voyage that set the tone for the whole trip.”⁴³

His musings interrupted by car horns sounding around him back in Piccadilly, the closing scene of the film shows James as the bus driver verbally giving the finger to a nearby driver (“And bon voyage to you too, mate!”). Just as his message switches to one of ultimate belligerence, the one representation of

black South Africa to be found in archives in either Greenwich or Cape Town belies the far less jovial reality of what was actually at stake in determinedly continuing to conduct business with South Africa during apartheid. A photograph (dated 1961) belonging to the Union-Castle archive in the National Library, Cape Town, captures a large group of the shipping line's South African office staff seated and smiling for the camera. They form a phalanx of contentment as they beam away over the head of their one black colleague, seated cross-legged on the floor below them (Figure 46). It is as if he does not exist, and the impassive camera does not record any lingering discomfort amongst fellow office staff. The photograph is simply labelled "Office Staff" in biro on the reverse.⁴⁴

As a tool in the production of a particular construct of British identity, the wilful ignorance of Union-Castle's interior designers created an aesthetic that spoke of white supremacy and polite avoidance, sunshine, amusement, good living and above all, plain, old-fashioned joviality. In this way, it was possible to legitimise the shipping company's relationship with the apartheid government despite the dark secrets that were involved in this exchange and the menace of their implications. Remaining shielded from the apartheid regime, Union-Castle passengers would indeed have found that there was great fun to be had in South Africa, so long as they were able to buy into that carefully designed message.

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- National Maritime Museum, Brass Foundry, Historic Photographs and Ship Plans, Woolwich (BF NMM).
- National Maritime Museum, Caird Library, Greenwich (CL NMM).
- National Library of South Africa, Cape Town Campus, Cape Town (NLSA).
- Reina del Mar*, 1970. Author's ephemera collection.
- South Africa by Union-Castle, 1953. Author's ephemera collection.

Notes

1. "It's fun in South Africa," Royal Museums Greenwich, <https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/207533.html> (accessed 26 February 2020).
2. Often hailed as the event that marked the beginning of the end of the apartheid system, the Soweto Uprising is remembered for the brutal police reprisals – including murder – against students protesting the government dictat that Afrikaans be the official medium of instruction.
3. While historians disagree about the reasons for the highly complicated ties that historically bound Britain and South Africa, all agree on the symbiotic, though labyrinthine, nature of that relationship. For example, Ronald Hyam and Peter Henshaw take issue with "the dominant revisionist historiography [which has] written an overall economic determinism" into the nature of the relationship between Britain and South Africa in the postwar period. They argue instead that the reasons for the "uneasy special relationship" are myriad and intrinsic to multivalent histories of the two nations. See R Hyam and P Henshaw, *The Lion and the Sprinkbok: Britain and South Africa since the Boer War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.
4. Anne Wealleans, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).
5. Susie McKellar and Penny Sparke, *Interior Design and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004). For a further discussion of interior design and identity on board ship, see Fiona Walmsley, "Pragmatism and Pluralism: The Interior Decoration of the Queen Mary," in McKellar and Sparke, *Interior Design*, 155-73.
6. Sister ships *Pretoria* and *Edinburgh* were both launched in 1947, with their maiden voyages in 1948.
7. Adopted in the 1960s and continuing through the 1970s, Grand Apartheid involved ever more stringent measures to ensure racial segregation, including the wholesale removal of black populations from designated white areas and the creation of black homelands.
8. Founded in 1910 by Charles Pathé, British Pathé News was a producer of documentaries and newsreels until 2006.
9. Produced between 1958 and 1979, the *Carry On* films, whose English white male working-class heroes systemically – and wherever possible, with maximum innuendo – deride upper class 'toffs', authority figures and foreigners, present an on-screen, heteronormative world in which women are either hardidans or 'dolly birds', and where blackface is not only permissible but *de rigueur*.
10. *38A Bus to Cape Town*, dir. John Karie (London: British Pathé News, 1966).
11. *Ibid.*

12. This disharmony is referred to in *The Kenneth Williams Diaries*, for example. See K Williams, *The Kenneth Williams Diaries*, ed R Davies (London, Harper Collins, 1994).
13. AGC Deubar, *Overseas Economic Surveys: British East Africa. Economic and Commercial Conditions in British East Africa (Kenya, Tanganyika and Zanzibar in the Immediate Post-war Period)* (London: Board of Trade, HMSO, 1948), 2.
14. A Wessels, "The Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) and its Traumatic Consequences," in *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition: A Global Dialogue on Historical Trauma and Memory*, ed. P Gobodo-Madikizela (Opladen, Berlin and Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016), 160-73.
15. *Ibid.*, 168.
16. Although her autobiography is unclear about exact dates, Jean Monro took up work for British and Commonwealth Shipping in about 1954. See J Monro, *11 Montpellier Street: Memoirs of an Interior Decorator* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988); Wealleans, *Designing Liners*; and Harriet McKay, "Conservative Flagship: Interior design for RMS *Windsor Castle*, 1960," in *British Design: Tradition and Modernity after 1948*, eds C Breward, F Fisher and G Wood (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic 2016), 77-88.
17. Holiday Tours by Union-Castle, 1961. Author's ephemera collection.
18. Union-Castle, undated.
19. Wealleans, *Designing Liners*, 145.
20. *Pendennis Castle* brochure, 1959.
21. *Ibid.*
22. NMM CL CAY/22, cited in McKay, "Conservative Flagship," 88.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Actually the inter-war creation of the American interior decorator Nancy Lancaster (1897-1994), country house style provides an example of English mythologising around an imagined past. Adopting chintz fabrics and floral motifs, the style was associated with a supposedly unpretentious and therefore appropriately 'British' accommodation offering a combination of comfort and luxury. For an adroit discussion of the style, see Louise Ward, "Chintz, Swags and Bows: The Myth of the English Country-House Style, 1930-90," in McKellar and Sparke, *Interior Design*, 92-113.
25. NMM CL CAY/232. *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage* is a guide to the British peerage – the titled aristocracies of England, Scotland and Wales.
26. L van der Post, *The Times*, 24 September 1977; cited in McKay, "Conservative Flagship," 81.
27. *Reina del Mar* brochure, 1970.
28. *Ibid.*
29. NLSA MSC 59.16 (9).
30. McKay, "Conservative Flagship."
31. NLSA Union-Castle, MSC 59.
32. NLSA MSC 59.16.
33. J McGilvray, interview with Harriet McKay, 2 April 2008.
34. NMM CL UCM 3-4, cited in McKay, "Conservative Flagship," 85.
35. Marion Browning and the SS *Uganda* Trust, *Uganda: The Story of a Very Special Ship* (Broadstone, Dorset: SS *Uganda* Trust, 1998).
36. NMM CL CAY/249.
37. Excerpts from Union-Castle managing directors' minute books:
8 August 1947
It was recorded that an investment of funds in South Africa had been made. Two sums of 50 000 each were being placed by the Cape Town [Union-Castle] branch with the Standard Bank of South Africa and Barclays. (NMM CL UCM 3/4 (3545))

30 April 1958
It was recorded that monies were to be paid to the National Veld Trust since Mr McIntyre of he [Union-Castle] Local Board strongly supported the appeal, he did so since Mr van Heerd ed, Veldt Trust Trustee carried very great influence in Afrikaans-speaking circles,
amongst whom the publicizing of the benefits of sea-travel would be [to] the ultimate benefit of the Company.

14 August 1969 *The Daily News* [South Africa]
Multi-million rand office and shop development creates the largest block of flats in South Africa is taking shape in Durban.

Commissioned by Cayzer Irvine, the R7 000 000, 35 storey complex will radically change Durban's skyline. (NLSA MSC 69 6 8).
38. NMM CL CAY/249.
39. G Hull, "South Africa's Propaganda War: A Bibliographic Essay," *African Studies Review*, 22:3 (1979), 79-98, at 94.
40. NLSA Union-Castle MSC 59.16 (3).
41. J Newton Thompson, "Cape Town appreciates Benefits Conferred by Mailships," *The South African Shipping News and Fishing Industry Review*, 8 August 1960, 10-16; cited in McKay, "Conservative Flagship," 78.
42. M Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics*, 16:1 (1986), 22-7.
43. Karie, *38A Bus to Cape Town*.

44. Apart from this image and one of an elderly newspaper seller who worked on Cape Town docks and who – according to a note in the National Library of South Africa archive (Cape Town Campus) – was known by the repugnant name ‘Snowball’ by Union-Castle staff, I have found no further images of black staff or passengers on board any of the ships in question. Although black passengers were allowed on board ship, it seems unlikely that, politicians and ambassadors or celebrities aside, very few would have been in a position to avail themselves of the opportunity. South Africa’s black population was of course kept deliberately impoverished during apartheid and was severely limited in movement by the draconian *dompas* (passbook) laws.

The majority of Britain’s black population during the years in question (frequently also suffering discrimination and employed in low-paying jobs) had a closer relationship with the Caribbean than with Africa, and thus less need to travel to the continent. To date, I have gained no insight into the experience of non-white passengers (and indeed staff) on board Union-Castle ships.



Figure 47

Tim Gibson, Garage Project 'Hāpi Daze' beer label and packaging, 2014. Used with permission.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

“Do Something New, New Zealand”

Caroline McCaw
& Megan
Brasell-Jones

Considering New Zealand’s Language of Landscape Imaging

To introduce our chapter, we would first like to introduce ourselves.

We are Caroline McCaw and Megan Brasell-Jones, design educators at Otago Polytechnic within the Communication Design degree. We are both Pākehā New Zealanders, who have primarily learned about design through New Zealand education systems and through magazines, books, films and online resources. Among other things, we have taught the somewhat fraught history of design to students who are more interested in doing design than writing about it.

Published histories of design notoriously draw upon examples from Europe and more recently the United States. Over the last ten years working through this canon, we have attempted to weave New Zealand histories and themes into courses in order to help contextualise the ideas, values and concepts of Aotearoa New Zealand for our learners. This chapter begins by drawing upon a conference paper first presented to design educators in Europe in 2015¹ in which Caroline McCaw examined the history of landscape images brought from Britain in the nineteenth century and reproduced in the processes of settler colonisation in early New Zealand. We expand on this by considering the role that contemporary designers have played in reproducing those images both within and outside of tourist narratives. We reveal the political lens of the coloniser and the shadow it has cast in the ways we present ourselves and our landscapes through marketing strategies incorporating graphic design and photography. We then reflect on critical challenges to these traditional depictions of New Zealand landscapes employed in contemporary graphic design. New Zealand – once remote, distant and living under the colonial shadow of Europe – is changing, and we argue that the way designers visualise our landscapes needs to change too. We identify contemporary design examples of old and new narratives, and examine

contemporary events that might help us to see differently. And we consider our roles as design educators to take up the challenge of Rittner² that the teaching of design can be a site of change, in pursuit of inclusive design languages. For Aotearoa New Zealand, this must include new models of representing ourselves and our landscapes.

Long Journeys

New Zealand's history is marked by stories of arrivals after long oceanic journeys. Historian Michael King describes the feats of early Pacific voyagers (as early as 5,000 years ago) as prodigious.³ Evidence of early migration to New Zealand indicates confident, extensive and widespread voyaging throughout the Pacific up until around the fourteenth or fifteenth century CE. Although Dutch explorer Abel Tasman first sighted New Zealand in 1642, no further European expeditions were made to our southern islands until 1769, when British explorer James Cook visited, primarily for scientific reasons. However, Cook's journey marked the beginning of a new era of British colonisation, spreading European institutions and culture. The first Europeans to make New Zealand their home were sealers and whalers, followed by Christian missionaries in the 1830s. By the mid-late nineteenth century, larger numbers of mainly English and Scottish settlers were moving to New Zealand and they brought with them the contexts of a Britain left behind. In 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi)⁴ was signed by representatives of the British government and, over the following months, 540 Māori rangatira (chiefs). The Treaty is a broad statement of principles on which the British and Māori made a political agreement to found a nation state and build a government in New Zealand. Different understandings of the Treaty have long been the subject of debate, and it is common now to refer to the intention, spirit or principles of the Treaty.⁵ In these complex personal, cultural and political perceptions and values, surrounding the islands we live on, are found bicultural histories and ongoing negotiations between two main cultural groups in New Zealand: indigenous Māori, and European settlers (known as Pākehā). We consider the diverse, and at times contradictory, meanings of lands and landscapes practiced by these two main cultural groups (Māori and Pākehā), and the reproduction of these meanings through visual communication design.

Images that Shape Us

European traditions of seeing lands as scenes emerged out of Dutch painting during the sixteenth century, and the word 'landschap' was quickly adopted into the English language (as 'landscape') with its artistic sense intact, and used to denote "...a picture of natural (esp. inland) scenery."⁶ Images continue both to shape and limit our experiences of land, and by the time of New Zealand's settlement in the nineteenth century, European images of natural landscape represented both the expansion of the world's boundaries and an idealised 'lost Eden.' At this time, British industrialised cities were becoming busy, crowded and dirty. Nostalgia for the English countryside was growing and landscapes were undergoing a reimagining. Concepts of tourism were also becoming defined during this time. In this context, Aitchison, McLeod and Shaw, wrote:

As rural Britain engaged with a fully capitalist system of production, distribution and exchange, the economy of the countryside was transformed. Through the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, agricultural production was intensified and mechanised to supply expanding urban markets...in this context, 'unspoilt' and 'natural' countryside acquired a special mystique.⁷

This re-imagining of the British countryside was reinforced through Romantic art and literature. Terms such as 'sublime', 'picturesque' and 'beautiful' were employed to describe British rural landscapes previously seen as sites of pastoral labour. As an example of values in Europe at the time of colonial settlement in New Zealand, we draw students' attention to Caspar David Friedrich's iconic *Wanderer Above the Sea Fog* (c.1818).⁸ In this often-reproduced image, an adventurous explorer stands atop a mountain peering into the mists, uncertain of the future, but driven by Romantic notions and a desire for an untouched utopia. Brought with the settlers by ship, these perspectives of seeing and representing landscapes are reflected in the early settler paintings of New Zealand. They were primarily aimed at enticing British citizens to travel across the world to a distant country of unspoilt landscapes, where settlement of this land was considered a fresh start.

Over 160 years later, the myth of New Zealand as a 'lost Eden' continues to pervade our national imaginary and is perpetuated through acts of design,

both internally and through outward-facing tourism branding.⁹ Our rural countryside, like that of nineteenth-century Britain, has been radically reshaped through intensive agricultural production. Nevertheless, these landscapes are marketed by New Zealand's official tourism website¹⁰ and its enduring place-base branding campaign as "100% PURE."¹¹ The campaign and its plethora of photographic images arguably reproduces nineteenth-century Romantic values and attitudes, and frames our countryside through a particular historic lens.

New Zealand, once remote and distant, is now connected to the world through high speed travel and the internet. In recent years, and with fast growing tourist numbers, we have been forced to reconsider how or whether distance still defines us. And if our remote and unspoilt lands are not a fair measure of our settler nation identity, then what might be? How might we see beyond these inherited and powerful visual tropes, images historically used as tools of the coloniser? In our role as image and message producers, what role might designers play in transforming these messages? And how might we better prepare design students for this task?

We looked towards contemporary graphic design for an example of landscape images that reinforce these tropes. It is not hard to find many images of remote, and unspoilt landscapes representing a freshly discovered 'New Zealand-ness' incorporated into sophisticated marketing strategies. The branding of Garage Project, an independent New Zealand craft brewery based in Wellington, New Zealand, is an example of one such strategy. Founded by brothers and a childhood friend in 2011, theirs is a quintessential story of the settler variety. Like James Cook before them, they adapted age-old brewing techniques to incorporate local ingredients, developing and selling their unique combinations of craft and flavour. With over 400 different beers to date, the brewery innovates and is celebrated locally and internationally for both ingenuity and flavours. No doubt a part of the brewery's success story has been their unique approach to label design. With no brand style (aside from their logo) Garage Project decided to create every new beer with different label art.

In a blog post on the brewery's website, co-owner and brewer, Pete Gillespie, writes:

Great beer art only elevates the experience of drinking a beer. I'm a strong believer that every beer should tell a story. When you engage with a beer,

the experience begins well before you open the can or bottle. The art draws you in, you want to pick it up and look at it more closely. Read the blurb on the label and it draws you in further, then finally, crack it open and pour it out ... For us, it's a holistic experience we take pride in.¹²

Garage Project commission art from a wide range of image makers, from graphic artists, tattooists, game designers, painters, illustrators and typographers, and in 2019 produced a self-published book (*The Art of Beer*) to celebrate their plethora of visual communication.

In this example (Figure 47) we see the packaging of both bottle labels and box of a beer they have named “Hāpi Daze,” drawing from the te reo Māori word for hops (hāpi) and using the term in a vernacular and anglicized phrase. ‘Happy days’ refers perhaps to both holidays, and nostalgia for a time past. The beer is a ‘Pacific pale ale’, a New Zealand adaptation of the European and American pale ale approach, offered by numerous local craft brewers.

The label depicts a popular landscape image of Mitre Peak, a mountain located in Milford Sound/Piopiotahi (Fiordland). In Te Ara, New Zealand’s online encyclopedia, Milford Sound is identified as one of New Zealand’s early tourist hotspots despite its relative inaccessibility and distance from larger towns or cities.

By 1914, Milford Sound had become one of the country’s top resorts, despite the fact that most visitors had to walk in (some came by sea). Numbers increased exponentially after the Homer Tunnel opened in 1953, providing road access.¹³

In 2019 – still relatively remote – Milford Sound/Piopiotahi expected around a million (mostly international) tourist visitors. Mitre Peak erupts out of the fiords and represents our remote and untouched landscapes: beautiful, picturesque and sublime. The mountain has been painted and photographed many times since early settler times, and the graphic design depicting the scene on this beer label reproduces principles of leisure, tourism and a mobile middle class, alongside those of European landscape painting centuries earlier.

The graphic design of this label invites us to peek through the forest to see tourists on the beach lounging under sun umbrellas as they watch the sun set into

the ocean beyond the famous peak. Presumably they are drinking beer. If the well-recognised mountain silhouette was not enough, indigenous natural icons in the foreground, namely the fantail bird (pīwakawaka) and tree ferns (mamaku), confirm ‘New Zealand-ness.’ The limited colour palate and flat shapes reference earlier printing methods and a simpler time, alongside the 1950s style beach loungers, create a nostalgic packaging image intended to “draw you in.”

The image seems innocuous enough, and reflects a comfortable and well-known vista for the consumers of Garage Project’s brew, but we question the effects of reproducing images from the nineteenth century that omit any reference to New Zealand beyond this touristic gaze, aside from two 1950s loungers.

Norwegian writer, Gunhild Setten, identifies these collective approaches of looking at landscapes as a kind of “gaze” and draws upon Nash who claims that “visual desire is always dependent on a position of domination or pleasure always oppressive.”¹⁴ A visual symbolic notion of landscape or “landscapes of gaze”¹⁵ such as that depicted and referenced in the Hāpi Daze beer packaging are cemented in a European approach to redefining lands as landscapes, “able to be measured, bought and sold, and finally represented.”¹⁶ While once remote, disconnected and living under the colonial shadow of Britain, there are (at least) two critical challenges to the kinds of narrative presented through depictions of New Zealand landscapes such as this. We describe these through biculturalism, and travel and communication technologies.

Challenging Ourselves

New Zealanders today are on a cultural journey towards biculturalism. Swartz and Unger define biculturalism as a mode that “represents comfort and proficiency with both one’s heritage culture and the culture of the country or region in which one has settled. It is applicable not only to immigrants who have come from other countries, but also to children of immigrants who ... are born and raised in the receiving society....”¹⁷ In Aotearoa New Zealand, this might be represented through a weaving of cultures, where each retain their own identity but are connected in part through woven, mutual understandings. Deeply embedded in this comfort and proficiency is the requirement to relinquish notions of oppression and domination embedded in settler colonisation.

For Māori, very different notions of lands endure. We cannot not do

justice in this chapter to describe adequately the kaupapa¹⁸ that inform these understandings and customs. However, two key concepts might be useful to introduce some of these fundamental differences. The first is found in the te reo Māori¹⁹ name for land: whenua, a name shared by both the earth and the human placenta. “The human body and the physical landscape are metaphorically united” explains Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal in the *Te Ara Encyclopedia*. “The idea of being born from the earth is the foundation for kinship between earth and humankind. There is no sense of ownership of land – rather, one is the child of the earth.”²⁰ This deeply social relationship between humankind and earth permeates Māori traditions. Whakapapa²¹ allows this relationship to embed human genealogies and the earth in layers that intersect different kinds of knowledge. McKinnon et al. describe this as more than remembering, but a mode of interpretation, of seeing and being associated with the world through “descent, kin, connections.”²²

And yet these deeply spiritual and social relationships that Māori have with their lands were not widely understood by European settlers. In the process of colonisation, McKinnon et al. observe “(c)olonists sought to remake the physical and spiritual ‘wilderness’ they encountered into an image of their own homeland.”²³ Charting and surveying, renaming, replanting and reusing landscapes were all a part of the colonists’ toolkits. Painting, writing and image-making were part of the colonial communications that shaped how the rest of the world came to see and know New Zealand.

From 1840, New Zealand’s natural environment suffered extensive and rapid change as the burning and clearing of forests and the draining of swamps made way for pastoral farming. Although economic values drove most of the decisions of early settlers, New Zealand was not colonised without resistance. An example retold in the *New Zealand Historical Atlas*²⁴ describes chief Te Heuheu Tūkino confronting the government, concerned that his sacred mountains would be sold to Pākehā and that his mana would be impaired. The Tongariro National Park Act of 1894 saw two volcanos protected from private sale, and the Land Act 1892 (and subsequent Scenery Preservation Act 1903) provided protection of some further areas of scenic value. These have subsequently become national parks, such as the Fiordland National Park, in which Milford Sound/Piopiotahi is located. The protection of lands in this way reflects the dual values of the two cultures, despite conflicting worth perceived in visual and spiritual terms.

Secondly, while once remote and distant, travel and communication technologies have enabled New Zealanders to travel widely and for others to visit us. In 2020, national carrier Air New Zealand celebrated 80 years of operating flights. On their website they suggest that flight to and from, as well as within New Zealand, has contributed to our sense of nationhood, “Whether it’s technology, our aircraft, or places we fly to, we’ve grown together as a nation, and as an airline.”²⁵ Although international flights did not start in earnest until the 1960s, steamer ships were moving immigrants and New Zealand travellers to and from Europe and North America regularly after World War II. In 2018, a New Zealand Government report identified roughly four million tourist visitors annually, predicting a rise to five million by 2024.²⁶ Our physical distance from Europe is no longer a barrier for literally millions of tourist visitors. Along with the connection we make with our many visitors, New Zealanders are adventurous travellers, and can remain connected via highspeed internet, virtually simultaneously with people on every country on earth. Once defined by our distance from others, this is no longer the case. Ironically, our own sparse population is probably the best example we have of physical distance, with some roads less travelled by locals than by tourists, including the long road to Milford Sound/Piopiotahi.

So why do designers and marketing strategists return to these old frames, and choose to represent New Zealand consumers through touristic vistas and remote, isolated landscapes? How might we reconsider the role designers have to play in developing better ways to see, to show others as well as ourselves, what a bicultural and connected New Zealand looks like? How might we make better images of nature, and consider what is represented and what is omitted in this visual storytelling? And ultimately, how can visual communication design become a set of more critical practices, that engage in the sorts of negotiated practices we find elsewhere in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand? This call to action echoes another we found in recent writing by New York-based design educator Jennifer Rittner.²⁷ Designers, she argues, build and perpetuate mental models: cognitive biases, frameworks and rationalisations. Rittner is writing in the context of recent Black Lives Matter protests across the United States in 2020. She comments “The ‘thingness’ of design does not exist absent a social construct that is laden with values. Design is object and intention. It is our beliefs made manifest.”²⁸ She claims furthermore that design educators are

implicit in the reproduction of these beliefs and values. “Design shapes culture, and so design schools need to educate designers to be responsible analysts of culture beyond the normative constraints of a single design narrative.”²⁹ Rittner argues that we need to build new systems for design education, including the construction of our schools, the content of our lessons, and the context of our learning – a radical and comprehensive approach to change.

Recent design scholars have also written about new mental models required by designers when apprehending a partnership approach to designing with nature. Jana Thierfelder, for example, calls for practices of “thick descriptions”³⁰ of nature that may open designers to using more and different kinds of language (including visual communication). Thierfelder argues that “The way in which nature is visually presented to the public impacts people’s behaviour towards nature. These prevailing representational practices and their consequences, thus, have to be reflected on and critically rethought with the help of designers.”³¹ Canadian academic Louise St Pierre advocates for a shift of attention, and refers to (among other strategies) Buddhist practices to support other ways of knowing.³² St Pierre describes working with students and indigenous teachers in order to open designers to “humility, understanding and relationship”³³ in order to create models that fuse ecological theory and embodied research.

Thinking and Action, Communicating Care

So, with the task of conceptualising new mental models for understanding, representing and communicating our lands through design and design education – and in a New Zealand context – we turn to contemporary writing around decolonial approaches written here. Ocean Ripeka Mercier describes this: “(v)ery basically, decolonisation involves rethinking and then action. Educational theorist Graham Hingangaroa Smith puts it as conscientisation, resistance and transformative action.”³⁴ We have recognised that the Romantic reproduction of images of landscape such as that employed by the Garage Project designer as representing outdated mental models. There are fewer guides about how to create transformative action.

Nevertheless, while reflecting on our year as design educators, we found ourselves returning to a dominant theme of care. Wellington-based designer Noel Brown visited our design school an external monitor recently, in a role that triangulates the voices of students, staff and management. He shared a keynote

address at a student symposium we had organised framed around the theme of ‘Design Futures.’ In this, (and a subsequent document he was writing for his design agency DNA³⁵) he paraphrased Justice Joe Williams in a recent public talk given entitled “Ko Aotearoa Tēnei”:

(Williams says) that the foundation principle of tikanga Māori is Kaitiakitanga³⁶ – the mutual duty of care to those with whom we are related. And everyone is related, and everything is related. People, birds, rivers, seas, soils and mountains are all one interconnected and interdependent system. If we Pākehā chose to look at our world through a Kaitiakitanga lens we could see what often escapes us now.³⁷

Brown (and through him, Williams) were not the first to offer “care” as a solution to us this year. On March 21, 2020, amid the rapid spread of the Covid-19 global pandemic, the New Zealand Government introduced a four-tiered alert level system. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced that New Zealand was at Alert Level 2. Mindful of the increased stress on New Zealanders, Ardern encouraged people to “be strong and be kind”.³⁸ A central element of the national approach to the pandemic was an ongoing media campaign with public service announcements in distinctive yellow and black. The key and enduring message was – amid public health actions – to “be kind.” On 25 March, 2020, New Zealand’s borders were closed.

In this pandemic context, tourists were quickly repatriated to their home countries and a long queue of New Zealanders waited to return. Once again, our distance from other countries began to define us, but in new ways. We are here together and with new national messages “Unite against Covid-19” and “Be Kind. Check in on the elderly and vulnerable.”³⁹ This is a new, New Zealand.

Over the coming months, we began to observe new visual narratives begin to emerge. How are these changes affecting our experiences and imaginings of New Zealand landscapes and identities, and in what ways are these changes being expressed? We look at two more examples of contemporary graphic design to help us identify approaches. For designers, the pandemic has, on one hand, meant job losses, study interruptions and creative efforts resulting in unsatisfying cancellations. On another hand, however, it has given rise to opportunities to do what designers are trained to do: to communicate, to engage with audiences, and

to continue sharing our stories in rich and innovative ways. Covid-19 is part of Aotearoa New Zealand's current, challenging story.

One of the pandemic's detrimental effects for New Zealanders has been its impact on mental health. For its annual wellbeing campaign, Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW), the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation (NZMHF) employed the services of McCarthy Studios to design a comprehensive visual campaign to develop awareness and support called "Getting Through Together." Echoing the Government's Covid-19 Unite message, this dynamic but gentle campaign includes a series of images that incite an arguably bicultural view of New Zealanders in their own environments. It is useful as an example of visual communication design because it reflects an expanded perspective of our natural environment. Rather than reproduce the postcard-picturesque vistas of the past, these compositions place people as integral to the landscape, whether relaxed, involved in activities or just sitting and smiling. Rather than being positioned as spectators, consuming the landscape, individuals are interacting with, and equally positioned within nature. The use of a circular frame is perhaps intentionally referencing associations with wholeness, life cycle, and balance. The MHAW poster series as a whole, presents a number of supportive and connected themes:

- Reimagine Wellbeing Together/He Tirohanga Anamata
- Rediscover Everyday Wonder/Wairua
- Refresh Your Mind/Hinengaro
- Return to Nature/Hono ki te taiao - Whenua
- Recharge with Others/Whānau
- Refuel Your Body/Tinana.⁴⁰

All six themes are presented with people in the natural landscape (featuring trees, hills, sun, clouds, wind, sea, plants, animals, mountains, rivers). Ignoring the traditional landscape format, there is no hierarchy and limited depth. It is not painterly but presented through bold, simple graphic forms. Stylised computer-generated, hard-edged forms include recognisable elements of the unique flora and fauna of Aotearoa New Zealand, for example whale, tūī, young fern fronds, and kererū.⁴¹

WHENUA HONO KI TE TAIAO

Ko te whenua ko au, ko
au ko te whenua.
I am the land and the
land is me.



**GETTING
THROUGH
TOGETHER**

WHĀIA E TĀTOU TE PĀE TĀWHITI

www.mhaw.nz

Figure 48

McCarthy Studios for the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation, "Getting Through Together", Mental Health Awareness Week poster in te reo Māori and English, 2020. Downloaded public health resources <https://mhaw.nz/mhaw-resources/download-resources/>. Used with permission.

In the example presented here (Figure 48), connection is represented both through the image of two people supporting each other. They represent both Māori and Pākehā and are outdoors, in nature. There is a native bird (a tūī), and in some regards the framing is not so different to the Hāpi Daze beer label example. However, in this design people are the focus, and the hills in the background are not separated, sublime or touristic. The trees frame the scene, and the sun is similarly setting in the background. Rather than peering through forest at this scene, we are invited to find a place for ourselves in the image. On the left-hand side, the text reads “Whenua hono ki te taiao” or “Return to Nature” and on the right, in smaller type a whakataukī or Māori proverb also reflects the poster’s message, “Ko au te whenua, ko te whenua ko au, I am the land and the land is me.” This message reinforces a relationship beyond care, to one of connection and belonging, within the overall message of “getting through together.”

Although not as explicitly framed as a public health message, another advertising campaign caught our attention. With closed borders and no tourists able to enter New Zealand, our second biggest industry (tourism) looked doomed to collapse. After effective containment of the virus, the Government actively encouraged New Zealanders to go on holiday. With public health plans in place a new Covid-19 campaign has emerged “Make Summer Unstoppable,”⁴² and with it a parallel tourism campaign aimed at our domestic market. Although delivered by the same organisation that sells “100% PURE New Zealand” the campaign is delivered with humour and song, and depictions of many different locations around New Zealand include cultural and subcultural references, museums, galleries as well as lakes and forests. And most importantly, there are always people in them. The perspective is from within the frame, no longer peering from outside at remote landscapes.

Supported by a catchy song and video performed by two well-known New Zealand comedians, the “Do Something New, New Zealand” campaign showcases some of our celebrated but also lesser-known wonders. The usual tropes of an isolated, pristine New Zealand landscape are reframed for a local audience and draw on a sense of humour that is often associated with local culture. At the same time, nature is presented in a different way. This reflects Theirfelder’s claim that visual representation of nature can affect people’s behaviours towards it and in this case designers have clearly played a role.⁴³



Figure 49
Special Group, Tourism New Zealand, “Do Something New, New Zealand”, domestic tourism campaign, 100% PURE New Zealand, 2020. <https://www.specialgroup.com.au/nz/work/do-something-new-new-zealand>. Used with permission.

In the case of one poster (Figure 49) the designer offers us, not sublime landscape as backdrop, but a close-up of nature that puts the viewer into the action. It is the activity of engaging with nature that is the focus, and not passive visual consumption of a scene or vista. The brief messaging “Have you met this lot?” echoes the causal, colloquial tone of the campaign (as opposed to highly organised, professionally presented and packed tours) and treats the seemingly serendipitous surfacing of a sea creature as a local. As this campaign need not be understood by foreigners but is aimed rather at those residing in New Zealand there is a certain vernacular approach, both visually and through language, suggesting that we revisit activities that we may have taken for granted in pre-Covid-19 times. Once again distance defines us, and our gaze is redirected towards national opportunities not just to visit, but in order to experience nature in social terms. This creates recognition of the relationships we have with

nature and strengthens our roles as protectors of it. The campaign also includes examples of urban and indoor settings. These alternative experiences challenge the idea that tourism is not only about landscapes. Inclusion of galleries and other public spaces of interest work to erode an invisible delineation between the indoor and outdoor that has often perpetuated the notion that nature is “out there.” In acknowledgement of the role of the designer and their impact, Theirfelder notes that by providing better images of nature, the scope of human action can be triggered.⁴⁴

Design Education – Doing Something New

Through examining these two examples, the direction offered by other design academics and reflection on our New Zealand context and voices, we return to the themes of kaitiakitanga, connection and care. And we consider what our roles as educators might bring to the problem of designers communicating uncritical mental models when representing landscapes of Aotearoa New Zealand.

We accept Rittner’s challenge that design education has not yet adequately critiqued the cognitive frameworks – in our case, settler colonisation – in order to address the more complex perspectives of living here that can be addressed by design. We agree that design curricula, content and courses must be reconceived, from the ‘ground up’ and in partnership with local iwi with Māori relationships and perspectives, in order to start to reconsider these mental models and develop culturally responsive pedagogies.

We agree that through our work we need to expand perspectives and create more flexible and critical learners in pursuit of inclusive design languages. For Aotearoa New Zealand, this must include new models of representing landscapes, as one way of seeing ourselves. We conclude by considering possible critical interventions within a New Zealand Design curriculum.

A Proposed New, New Zealand Design Curriculum of Kaitiakitanga: Care and Connection

- Increase bicultural balance. The start of this is to include Māori language and concepts in all that we do and teach, and also work to promote cultural practices and literacies that include the way in which the land is experienced by Māori and Pākehā. This is necessary to build new mental models that keep culture in the centre of design. We believe both design and teaching

are professions that rely on developing and maintaining strong relationships. This action must begin and maintain relationships with local iwi Māori that foster care and respect. Only through these relationships can we look for design project opportunities where there is a shift in this direction away from inherited British notions, towards different ways of seeing and engaging with (and through) the landscape.

- Teach and learn in te taiao/nature. There is no ‘perfect’ way to represent the landscape, but how and why we relate to our natural world should allow for practices of experience-based being in the natural world. In this way, we aim to develop many opportunities to teach and learn outside as a way of making connections with nature and develop better understandings of worldviews other than colonial ones.
- Model practices of care. Visual communication designers allowing the conversation to take place, opens up opportunities for multiple and ongoing imaginings that ideally encourage a reciprocal kaitiakitanga between people, and between people and nature. In this respect, and beyond our Covid-19 context, we need to encourage practices of care, both for each other and for our environment, as part of decolonising social and cultural practices.

While our students continue to show more enthusiasm for creating over critiquing visual communication, it is our role as design educators to foster flexible and critical thinking that enables change. As Rittner asserts, we need to ask the right questions that will allow us to break away from entrenched thinking and looking. In Aotearoa New Zealand, this will always require working with Māori: listening as well as asking; participation and engagement; and learning to know differently as part of a practice of care.

As we enter a world confronted with global issues of environmental and human wellness, design educators must begin by knowing, and sharing the process of knowing, the ground beneath our feet.

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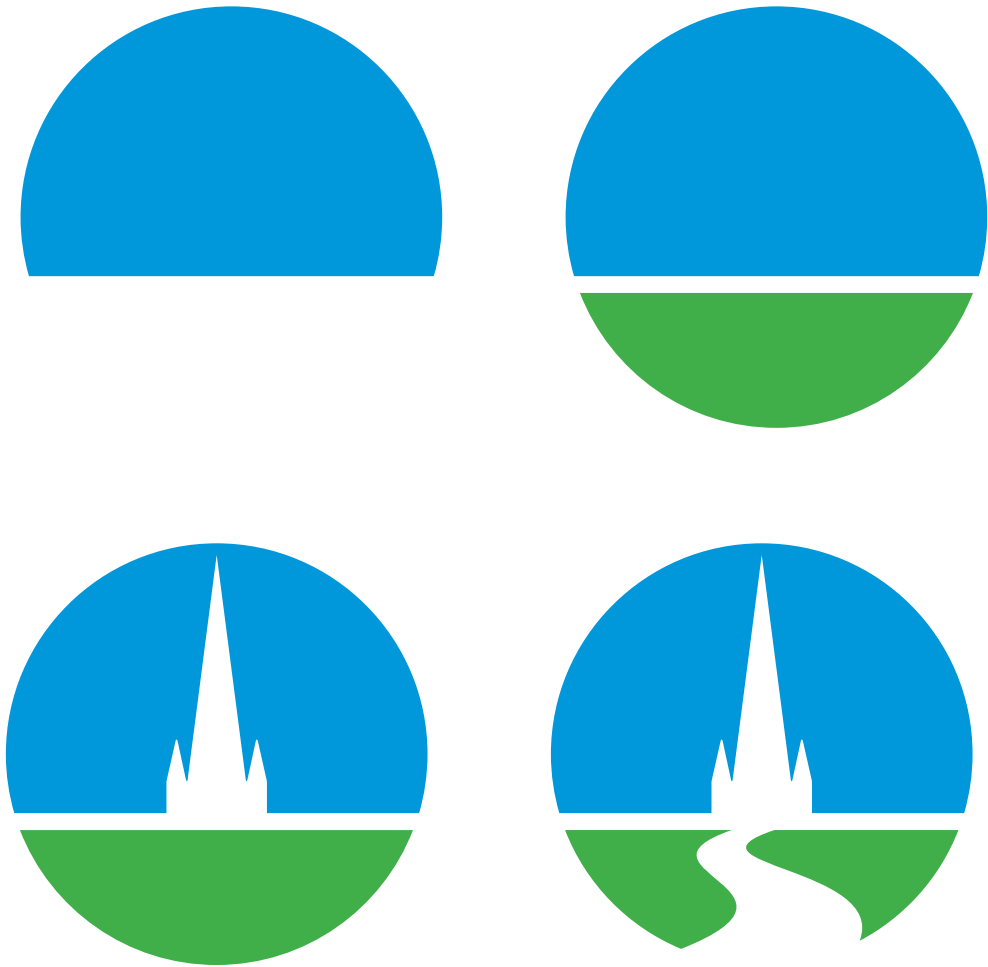


Figure 50

A deconstruction of the current Christchurch City Council (CCC) logo showing the different elements making up the image. Image used under creative commons permissions

Art Over Nature Over Art

Matthew Galloway

(Re)Imaging Ōtautahi Christchurch

Place branding increasingly stands as both a visual practice and a modality of governance. That is what makes it slippery. There is much more to branding than a logo or style. It is a manifestation of power.¹

On February 22, 2011, a shallow 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck Ōtautahi Christchurch, a small city in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. This earthquake – and the swarm of aftershocks that plagued the city in the months afterwards – severely damaged much of the city’s central business district, its Anglo-centric cultural heritage buildings, and low-lying coastal suburbs. In the weeks, months and years following this event, the political process of red-zoning and condemning entire suburbs – alongside much of the city’s key architectural monuments – has had major implications for how notions of place-making and identity are understood by both residents and visitors. At the very centre of the city, the Christchurch Cathedral was destroyed by the quake, in the process disrupting a sense of identity closely associated with the building, due to its strong link to the city’s English colonial heritage, and its symbolic representation as part of the city’s logo.

The erasure of what seemed so permanent opens up questions of how we understand and define place. How does a city and its communities regain an understanding of place when the built environment and cultural fabric of that place has been erased? How can such a collective identity – built on histories and time – be understood and rebuilt? And what role does branding and design have to play in this process? Additionally, the hegemonic nature of branding a place leads to questions of power: who is controlling the message, and to what end? From this follows a further series of interlocking questions around

perception of place; can the façade-like exercise of branding ever *really* alter how a place is perceived from both inside and outside? Most likely, the success of such a process relies little on how a brand might look, or the story it is trying to tell, but more so on how wide the gap is between the perception of a place via its brand narrative and perception gained from a firsthand, on-the-ground experience of that place.

In the case of Ōtautahi Christchurch, beyond the real loss of lives, homes and the trauma, by dismantling the built environment, the earthquakes also explicitly exposed the façade of colonial narratives that have informed much of the city's history and identity. These narratives have formed an important part of defining and promoting Christchurch as a place to both live and visit, since the formation of the Canterbury Association in the mid-nineteenth century, when initial city maps were proposed. These maps aimed to drain swamplands that acted as gathering grounds for Ngāi Tahu in order to make way for a new city, and in the process pushed any tribal settlements outside the proposed city borders. Alongside the mapping and demarcation of this land for settlement, a key to the selling of this new city to potential European settlers was a cultivated narrative defining Christchurch as the most English settlement outside of England.² At the centre of this early exercise in branding was the Cathedral, an architectural beacon to the homeland, a piece of broadcasting architecture that served as an important landmark monument in the city. As previously mentioned, the cathedral proved so successful in its task of defining place that some 140 years later, a stylised image of the building was inaugurated as the logo for the Christchurch City Council.

However, in the ten years since the 2011 earthquake, the Christchurch Cathedral has remained a derelict shell of its former self – acting as a major example of the damage done to Ōtautahi Christchurch's built environment, and in doing so it has become a controversial symbol of the slow rebuild process within centre city. Running parallel to these discussions, this complicated new era for the building and the city also allows us to ask how existing colonial narratives might be deconstructed. By focusing on the symbolism embedded into – and extracted from – the Christchurch City Council (CCC) logo, this chapter will examine how design and branding in Ōtautahi Christchurch has worked to uphold and cement colonial identity narratives in the city. From this starting point, I will consider how a natural disaster has unsettled these narratives, and



Figure 51

Archival image of an early version of the Christchurch City Council logo. Image used under creative commons permissions.

in doing so provided a chance for reconsideration, new ways forward, and the potential for a bicultural approach to place-making. How have post-earthquake responses to city-building and place-making been seen to consider Māori perspectives and design processes aligned with tikanga Māori?³ More broadly, how was the public engaged in the task of rebuilding Ōtautahi Christchurch's identity? And how have post-quake acts of participatory design both encouraged buy-in from the public, while also serving as a soft power tactic for political decision making? Through the examination of these pre- and post-earthquake contexts, this chapter will address how branding and design have the potential to act either as an invisible agent to uphold the status quo; or a set of inclusive practices to drive change.

Art Over Nature

Identity, we might already conclude, is not a truth embedded in the history and experience of a community but a construction, its meaning contestable, adaptable, even disposable.⁴

In order to understand the current destabilisation of identity that dawned in the light of post-quake context of Christchurch, it is important to engage with the complex histories that existed prior. According to Māori academic and historian Dr Te Maire Tau, Ngāi Tahu's sense of place and understanding of the Canterbury landscape can be linked to the wind unlike any other tribal group within Aotearoa New Zealand.⁵ The region's famous nor'west wind – Te Māuru e taki nei – is a descendent of Pokoharua Te Pō, the source of all winds, and the wife of Raki (the heavens). In the wind, Māori identify hau – the breath of life. To Māori, 'hau' represents the essence of life, the vitality of existence, and the 'vital essence of the land'. Te Māuru e taki nei is intimately connected with the mountains that frame the horizon to the west and north of the Canterbury plains, with a particular relationship noted to a mountain known to Ngāi Tahu as Maungatere. "Maungatere, brought by the wind to the Canterbury plains," was a refrain used by Ngāi Tahu Ancestor Moko as a challenge before battle. In this tradition, Maungatere and Te Māuru e taki nei hold meaning in representing life through hau, while also acting as a harbinger for death.⁶ In this way, the landscape can be understood as being intimately woven into lives and stories, as Te Maire Tau further illustrates:

The mental structure that allowed Ngāi Tahu to understand and interact with their landscape was whakapapa (descent)... For Māori, whakapapa is the principle from which order and chaos may be understood. It places order upon space and time. It is the binding agent between opposites and connects the living with the dead... the intangible with the tangible.⁷

In contrast to this reading of landscape and our passage through it, upon the arrival of settlers in the mid-nineteenth century, the colonial process of divide and conquer sought to order the Canterbury plains in a different manner. Incorporated by the Royal Charter in 1849, the Canterbury Association

envisaged its settlement of Christchurch as a “transplanted model English Community.”⁸ Seeds were brought from England and Scotland on many of the first ships to arrive in Lyttleton harbour,⁹ in response to the call to transform the swamplands underfoot into an “English garden” – the most English city outside of England.¹⁰ The European settlers viewed this as a process through which nature was “subjugated, divided and reorganised in the name of wealth creation,”¹¹ systematically changing the environment they had chosen to inhabit in order to make it familiar and marketable. Embodied in this approach was a preconceived notion that this land was for all intents and purposes *terra nullius* – land unowned, in a wild state that needed taming.¹² The cultivation and construction of a Western ideal of civility upon the landscape in Canterbury is acutely illustrated through the words of Jane Deans, matriarch of one of the city’s most prominent pioneering families, writing, “All (of the Canterbury Plains) was waiting on the advent of a white race of people to reclaim them and make them useful or as beautiful as a garden.”¹³

The founding myth of Christchurch as an ‘English garden’ was further cemented in 1864 with the laying of the Christchurch Cathedral’s foundation stone – a cathedral being seen as the central ingredient in the establishment of the ‘Englishness’ of the place, and a statement of progress towards a cultivated, built environment. It is key to understand the link here between the settler mindset and the Christian traditions they brought with them. Progress was seen as an act of transformation, of enlightenment, and yet paradoxically a return to the true state of nature – closer to the true form of creation, which of course began in Eden with a garden. This attitude aligns with the Pākehā approach to nature as one of human dominion; the God-given right to cultivate what was considered useless wasteland into productive land for progressive schemes of civilisation.¹⁴

While Māori understood Te Māuru e taki nei blowing across the plains from Maungatere as part of a deeper rhythm of life, death and relationship to whakapapa, settlers were quick to map and divide; renaming Maungatere ‘Mount Grey,’ after the governor who oversaw Ngāi Tahu’s loss of lands, to make way for the English garden. As early as 1885, the narrative of the Garden City – and the colonial mindset underpinning it – had gained prominence as a tool for promoting Christchurch as both a place to live and a place to visit. In the *Illustrated Guide to Christchurch and Neighborhood* (1885) what would become

the Botanic Gardens on the edge of the central city was referred to as “a fine instance of the triumph of art over nature.”¹⁵

The Tyranny of Visual Form

It was in the city’s Botanic Gardens that the CCC logo was first launched in a special ceremony on April 6, 1990. As stated in its brand manual, the logo is made up of four descriptive elements: the blue skies represent the clear open air of the Canterbury Plains, the green land represents the lush spaces of ‘The Garden City’ (a phrase which has also served as the city’s slogan underneath the logo), the winding line represents the Ōtākaro Avon River, which in turn leads the eye up to the centrepiece – the iconic Christchurch Cathedral.

It is interesting to consider the role this descriptive logo has played in cementing notions of identity in Christchurch. A descriptive logo operates by referring directly to its object – the company or product in question. In the case of an effective and successful descriptive logo, a clear and simple signification occurs because the relationship between logo and product is easily determined in the mind of the viewer. In this way, the well-groomed, stylised river, weaving through flat greenery to the man-made centre/heart of the city that is the Cathedral was a highly motivated, highly descriptive signifier of ‘English Christchurch.’ Building from this understanding, it is important to note that – though a relatively recent addition to the Christchurch identity – this logo was far from a rebrand, but more of a graphic formalisation of an identity initiated from the very moment the Canterbury Association in London designated the swamp lands of Canterbury for their new city. In this way, the logo acts as a final stamp of approval, a certification of perceived pre-existing truths. In doing so, the logo also acted as a further subjugation of Ngāi Tahu, their relationship to place, and their narratives. In this case, and many others like it, there is a stealth tyranny to the visual practice of branding; the CCC logo becomes shorthand for the version of history as told by the colonising force. The logo becomes a manifestation of power, a modality of governance.¹⁶

As the graphic formalisation of long-standing place-making narratives in Christchurch – and in the pre-quake context of the city – the CCC logo felt like an inevitability. By utilising the built environment of the city, the logo also had an air of permanence and establishment. However, ten years after the logo’s release, in an astoundingly prophetic statement, historian Eric Pawson wrote:

“The blandness of the logo thus hides the history of the land. It also hides the hazards of developing a heavily populated ‘garden’ on such a site.”¹⁷

From 12.51 p.m. on February 22, 2011, the CCC logo could no longer be classified as descriptive. The swarm of earthquakes that beset the city throughout 2011 severely damaged the Cathedral, along with the majority of same-era heritage buildings that defined the ‘England-of-the-south’ Christchurch brand.

In light of these events, I want to consider what the CCC logo has become, what it now represents, and what the shifting identity has uncovered about the nature of the logo and its original meaning and intention. Nearly a decade removed from the event of the earthquake, the Cathedral remains in a state of disrepair; a cordoned-off pile of rubble in the centre of the city. In the process, an ever-widening gap has appeared between the visual identity of the city, and the facts on the ground. But on a much deeper level, the erasure of these built aspects (both the physical buildings and meta-physical brand) serve not only as a reflection on a new reality, but hints toward a return to a pre-colonised state; before Christchurch was imagined by European Settlers as an ‘English City of the South’; before stone cathedrals and intersecting roads erased the wetlands beneath them that had served as productive gathering grounds for Ngāi Tahu; sandy ground that came back with a vengeance, erasing the passage of time; the city’s sense of permanence and the colonising effect of the built environment.

Logo as Façade

What is perhaps most striking about these circumstances is that it brings to light just how vulnerable identity is, especially visual expressions of identity. A logo exists as a veneer, a façade that by itself means very little. The moment the product that is being represented changes or ceases to exist, the logo loses its worth and its functionality, or its meaning is changed entirely. At the same time, when playing the job of the messenger well, a brand identity is able to connect the viewer with the subject, to intercede, and in the case of a city, to represent something that is essentially too big for the eye to take in all at once. The logo serves to represent intangibles. No one can ever fully ‘see’ a city, one is only left with a growing impression of place. The city is, in a sense, invisible; communities, buildings and products brought together in a certain location and defined by a set of driving values and ideals. It needs a logo to stand in its place; to represent and speak for it. The logo, though a shallow, two-dimensional

form, has the ability to represent something bigger than itself, both tangible and intangible. And in the case of the CCC logo, logo-as-façade is a doubly appropriate way to think about it: the stylised Cathedral is represented as such – a flat, two-dimensional representation of the building; it could literally be a façade. A façade augments the underlying nature of the content it represents. It is a front. In architecture, the façade works to give shape and meaning to what is often a bland shed of a building sitting directly behind it. In a similar way to a corporation, the building – in its box-like ubiquity – is in a sense intangible. Though the content sits inside it, the building needs the façade to intercede with the passer-by, to broadcast what they will find upon entering the shed.

This common function of the façade and the logo holds the potential to create what architect Jeffrey Inaba calls “broadcasting architecture” a term that is expanded upon by design researchers Metahaven:

In the process of (...) ‘broadcasting architecture,’ iconic buildings multiply as they turn into globally exchanged images. A physical building, its photographic image, and its geometric shape are to some extent interchangeable. The extent to which they are interchangeable determines the potential for broadcasting.¹⁸

As the façade is essentially a two-dimensional shape, it has the ability to not only act like a logo, but to BE a logo – the same shape, but represented as ink on a page. As an example of this, the Christchurch Cathedral is broadcast as the CCC logo and in turn the logo points us back to the building, reinforcing its status as an icon of the city and emphasising its importance as an exportable symbol and marker of identity.

However, echoing the words of Pawson, the simplicity and assumed truth of the CCC logo in representing Christchurch as a place in fact belies the truth – the built environment of the city is itself a façade; supplanted onto a landscape not fit for bricks and mortar. Deeper still, it represents a façade of cultural identity and significance supplanted onto pre-existing identities and narratives. By operating as the visual front for these narratives, the logo completely negates any acknowledgement of the Treaty of Waitangi as the founding document for a bi-cultural Aotearoa New Zealand. The façade of the logo not only represents an architectural cultural heritage not fit for the land on which it was built, but

an entire politics of identity that has been imposed on tangata whenua¹⁹. In this way, design acts as a colonising force, a tool as violent in its ability to subjugate as any other. Design – the messenger – through its ability to visually formalise content, acts to legitimise a message, making it seem official; thought through; established. As a result, the colonial narrative in Ōtautahi Christchurch is given authority, and presented through the polished language of branding; logos, slogans and marketing strategies.

This functionality of the branded message works both in presenting a promotional message to outsiders, but also as a means of both strengthening and modifying ideas of identity and place to those inside; the residents of the city and by extension the rest of the country. As a result, the dominant narrative presented to the public about Ōtautahi Christchurch is at once euro-centric and steeped in Christian tradition, a narrative that continued to be reinforced relatively undisrupted throughout the city's history.

However, as the dust settled on the central city post-quake, how was the exposed façade of identity in Ōtautahi Christchurch confronted? And what new possibilities for placemaking emerged?

Share an Idea – Identity in Post-quake Christchurch

The concept of network power reveals complexities in the connection between the idea of consent and the idea of freedom A standard is pushed toward universality, and its network becomes poised to merge with the population itself. It is “pushed” by the activity of people evaluating consequences and, ultimately, choosing to adopt a dominant standard because of the access it allows them to forms of cooperation with others.²⁰

By May 2011, with the Cathedral cordoned off and crumbling, and the Avon River polluted and winding its way in and out of the central city red zone, a severe dissonance existed between the way the city had been represented and the reality on the ground. Undoubtedly, this new reality had a profound effect on perceptions of the city as both a place to live and a place to visit. In the direct aftermath of the rebuild, the narrative of Ōtautahi Christchurch was one defined by natural disaster and resilience. But, after the triage of early response, it became increasingly clear that a strong rebuild narrative was needed for the city to move toward a future not defined exclusively by what it



From the community's responses, five key changes formed the basis of the draft Central City Plan:

1. Green city
2. Stronger built identity
3. Compact CBD
4. Live, work, play, learn and visit
5. Accessible city

These changes are reflected in this Recovery Plan.

Build the whānau and you will build the city.
Aroha Revell-Crofts, Ngāi Tahu

Need a good mix of business, retail, cultural and residential activities to attract people and give the city life day and night.
Margaret and Glen, St Albans

Integrate nature - with the urban form: expand riverside green spaces, link with many green pockets elsewhere, recreate native ecosystems.
Linda, Steve and Ben, Ōhāwera

Low-rise retail/commercial/residential space. Let's make it a city where people want to work in.
Paul and Xanthe, Sumner

A green Cathedral Square - grass, trees, gardens - outdoor cafés sheltered from the wind. A place where people want to linger.
Mervyn, Pōwhiri

Figure 52 & 53 Examples of the Share an Idea campaign visuals. Images used under creative commons permissions.

had lost. In an attempt to fill this vacuum of identity, on the 5 May 2011 then Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker launched the *Share an Idea* campaign. A mass forum facilitated by the CCC, it consisted of Post-it™ notes and comment boards filled with messages from the people the city concerning what they wanted their new city to be. The campaign – spearheaded by local marketing and design agency Strategy – was labeled as a success, attracting over 100,000 ideas. Sold as a crowdsourcing “creation process,”²¹ the visual language of the campaign combined bright colours and pictures of residents revolving around a speech bubble motif that both illuminates and extends what could be seen as the true motivations of the campaign: to begin rebuilding a sense of place, and to promote a sense of democratised power.

Given this context, *Share an Idea* can be seen as a sort of covert rebrand, as opposed to a simple crowdsourcing campaign. As much as it was about pegging down grand ideas of future cities flying around in the heads of its residents, this was an exercise in brand perception. *Share an Idea* was asking what Ōtautahi Christchurch looks like post-earthquake, and answering the question at the same time: a place where the people are listened to, and where new cities are designed collectively by those who will live in them.

Share an Idea could also be seen as an exercise in network power,²² where a feeling of public consensus is gained through notions of collective responsibility; people choose to agree because of the inherent sociability this permits. By painting a picture of democratic process, the CCC was subtly able to sell a brand of governance and assert a level of control over outcomes of the campaign through obtaining consent and buy-in from its citizens. The visual language of the campaign reinforced these concepts. The speech bubble design – which forms the central motif of the brand – overtly signifies freedom of thought and opinion. Building from this starting point the design implies vibrancy, youth and diversity through a layered, multi-coloured arrangement, giving the effect of many voices stacked upon each other, collecting together into new forms and new conversations. As the campaign developed and ideas were shared, this common theme of a collective voice – and the power of that voice – was continually reinforced and built upon. In conjunction, pictures of real people grounded these visual concepts. Residents who contributed ideas were paired with speech bubbles that hovered over their heads, each idea given a face, a name and even the suburb where they hailed from. Again, *Share an Idea*

can be viewed as a place branding exercise that employed design as both a visual practice, and a modality of governance, but unlike the authoritative formalism of the CCC logo as a representation of colonial narratives, this campaign felt inclusive, open and willing to listen.

After the initial *Share an Idea* campaign roll out, the same imagery of real people alongside their ideas for a new Ōtautahi Christchurch was employed throughout the CCC's Draft Central City Plan, a bold document containing the beginnings of a vision for a new city. Crucially, this document reflected a willingness to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi by integrating Māori principles into the planning. Ngāi Tahu identified key Tikanga Māori principles to be embedded in the plan.²³ Rangatiratanga (leadership and authority) was practiced through appropriate consultation and involvement of iwi²⁴ and hapū.²⁵ This led to a co-planning approach between the Crown, local authorities and Māori, including Ngāi Tahu setting up Matapopore – its own earthquake recovery committee.²⁶ Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) was another principle key to the recovery plan, with a strong link to sustainable resource management, but also acknowledging the place of tangata whenua in relation to the land and its ecologies.²⁷ In this context, the Draft Central City Plan (CCP) specifically recognised the role iwi have in maintaining long-standing relationships with important places and species. In fact, the plan deeply integrated consideration of tangata whenua into intended outcomes, with a specific spatial layer included that identified sites of both contemporary and historic significance to Ngāi Tahu within the plan area.²⁸ The plan specifically called for “opportunities to integrate the Ngāi Tahu narrative into the new city through planning and design of anchor projects and precincts.”²⁹ In assessing both council and government level plans for the rebuild, Dr Rebecca Kiddle and Amiria Kiddle signal the chance to revisit an identity that was mostly colonial prior to the earthquakes.³⁰ In this opportunity, they advocate for place-making informed by Ngāi Tahu identity as contributing to “the creation of unique places given that these histories cannot be found elsewhere in the world.” When considering the post-quake response as a chance to renegotiate notions of place and identity, this level of consideration for tangata whenua exists in stark contrast to the deletion of any land for iwi inside the original maps of the city commissioned by the Canterbury Association in the 1850s. However, both in those early post-quake stages and now, as the political process of the rebuild

in Christchurch has continued to unfold, it has become increasingly harder to identify what good intentions have turned into real change.

An early indicator how plans might be complicated came later in 2011, when Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, Gerry Brownlee was – according to the legislation that created his ministry – granted unprecedented powers; including the right to ‘direct’ and “specify ... any changes to the draft recovery plan that he thinks fit.”³¹ With this legislation in hand, Brownlee worked to set aside much of the CCC plan and public consultation, directing a new central government unit to create an ‘implementation plan’ in 100 days. Through this action, the democratic process and perception of power that *Share an Idea* promoted was undermined. Regardless of this shift in decision making, the visual language of *Share an Idea* continued to be employed and expanded. On the cover of Brownlee’s 100-day plan – named the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (CCRP) – numerous multi-coloured speech bubbles of different shapes and sizes overlap one another and are placed on top of the Avon River and central city streets, creating an abstract visual expression of the city regenerating through word of mouth. By co-opting the visual language of *Share an Idea* like this, Brownlee’s plan trades off the original campaign’s good will; branding the city as a place rebuilding through democratic process. At the launch of this second version of the plan, Minister Brownlee presented the vision for the rebuild with more green space allowed on the banks of the Avon river as it circles the central city, creating what he called a “city in a garden.”³²

Nature Over Art

As a tool for governing, the visual practice of branding in Christchurch was able to formalise a well-cultivated brand first initiated by European settlers to the Canterbury plains in the mid-nineteenth century. As a result, the visual identity of the city – spearheaded by the CCC logo – can be seen as an example of how design can uphold and forward harmful narratives, cementing imposed cultural viewpoints as the norm, and in the process subjugating others, in this case Ngāi Tahu. There is often a murkiness involved in how branding methods manage to operate in this way. This murkiness can be exemplified in post-earthquake responses to identity-making in the city. The *Share an Idea* campaign was able to exist in this space, seemingly inclusive in its intentions, while reaping questionable outcomes. Although an inclusive approach to the rebuild has

been evidenced, with a strong voice given to local iwi, whether this results in a meaningful change to how Ōtautahi Christchurch rebuilds both its physical spaces, and its perception of place, remains a work in progress.

For much of the decade following the earthquakes, whether the Cathedral was to be demolished or restored remained an unresolved, rolling controversy, but the decision to restore was finally put into action in late 2019. In the meantime, the gap between how the city is represented through its visual identity and the reality of its current state points toward something of a slow-moving identity crisis. Any move to replace the CCC logo has never been seriously considered. Far from a descriptive logo, how might this mark currently be defined? As metaphoric perhaps? But a metaphor for what? The logo exists as a kind of graphic memorial to pre-quake Christchurch; a stoic figure standing against change; a reminder of the well-cultivated brand that existed pre-earthquake and has remained since, despite the gap between the message and the messenger. While the Cathedral continues to cast a solitary red-zoned figure over Cathedral Square, it can still be seen standing tall in the many incarnations of the logo. When you go for a walk on the Port Hills you see the logo on walkway signage, when you receive your rates bill in the post, the logo sits atop the letterhead; and on the front cover of both the CCP and CCRP, you will find the logo stamped beneath speech bubble imagery – often times accompanied by the phrase *Your Council, Your People, Your City*.

Most recently, with the decision to rebuild the cathedral ratified, a printed canvas façade has been added to the red-zoned structure. A device used by many such iconic buildings around the world while undergoing repairs, the printed canvas depicts a digital, full-scale representation of the cathedral as it once was, and promises again to be. Through the semi-opaque canvas, the ragged line of the cathedral can still be seen, creating the definition of reality behind the fabric façade. Interestingly, this fabric image of a built cathedral exists as both projection and memory, a thought that has the potential to open up new ways of understanding how monuments and symbols might be used in more speculative, poetic ways. During 2012, in what I now understand as my own way of both processing loss and the changing perceptions of the city I grew up in, I attempted to redraw the CCC logo, examining different ways in which the image could react to identity being pulled out from under it. I drew four logos (Figure 54). The first remained the same, but it was re-cast as a memorial to an old way of thinking,

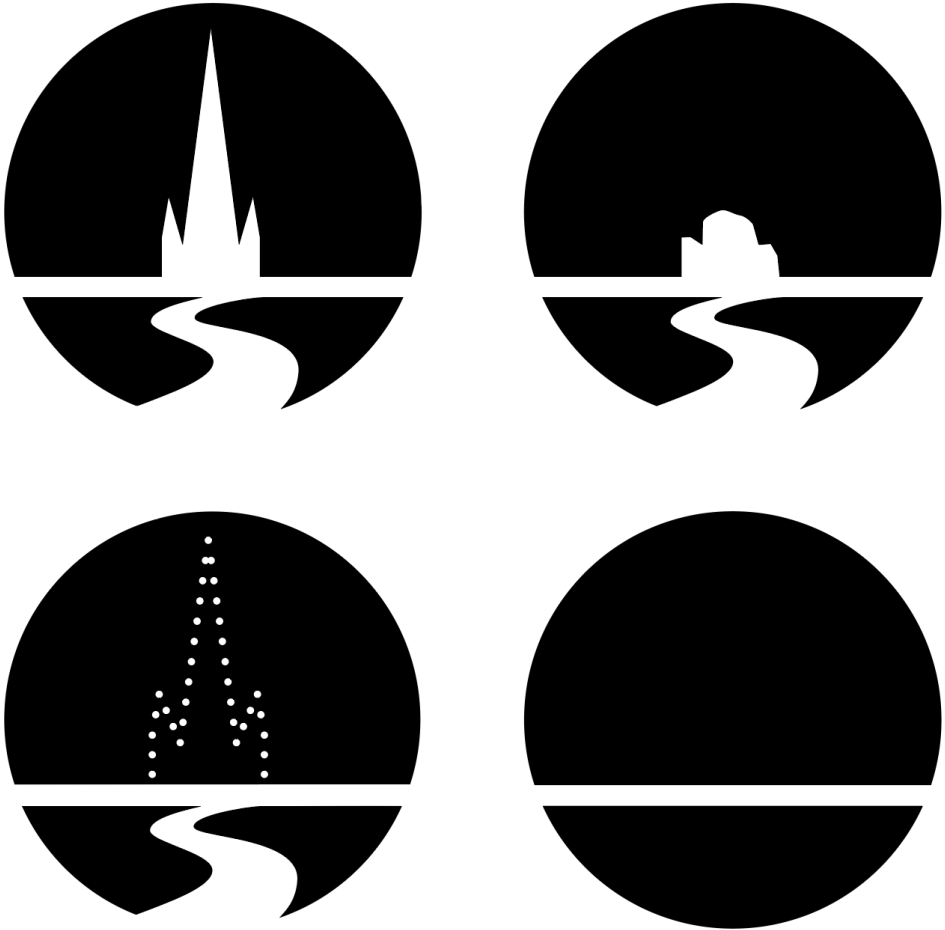


Figure 54

Four re-drawings of the CCC logo, courtesy of the artist.

a reflection on the past as a way to reconsider the future. The second depicted a crumbled cathedral, allowing the logo to continue as descriptive; an image that dealt in realism as a sort of coping mechanism. The third represented the cathedral as a dotted line – a memory, a built structure that no longer exists, but whose traces continue to have impact. The fourth dispensed with both the cathedral and the river, leaving only a circle with a line through; a horizon separating land from sky. I proposed this as a fail-safe logo, unsusceptible to changes in the built environment, or perhaps pre-dating the built environment completely.

For me, each of these drawings in their own way represent a deletion of some kind; a deletion of meaning, imagery, representation. But each also demonstrate

ways in which the formal language of branding and graphic design can be opened, added too, and used in more poetic ways. None of these drawings are meant as suggestions for a new logo, they are not my attempt to stamp identity upon identity. They are simply a way of acknowledging that any process of labelling is fraught; filled with moments of divergence, contradiction and problems. In this way, these drawings represent a speculative process; a chance to peel at the label; the façade, and see what new meanings can be discovered, or what might have been lost.

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2. John Cookson, "Pilgrims' Progress – Image, Identity and Myth in Christchurch," in *Southern Capital Christchurch: Towards a city biography 1850-2000*, ed. John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 13.
3. Māori customs, practice.
4. Cookson, "Pilgrims' Progress," 14.
5. Te Maire Tau, "Ngāi Tahu and the Canterbury Landscape – a Broad Context," in *Southern Capital Christchurch*, ed. John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 42.
6. Ibid.
7. Te Maire Tau, "Ngāi Tahu and the Canterbury Landscape," 41.
8. Cookson, "Pilgrims' Progress," 15.
9. Eric Pawson, "Confronting Nature," in *Southern Capital Christchurch*, ed. John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 66.
10. Cookson, "Pilgrims' Progress," 14 – 15.
11. Pawson, "Confronting Nature," 63.
12. Te Maire Tau, "Ngāi Tahu and the Canterbury Landscape," 55.
13. Pawson, "Confronting Nature," 63.
14. Ibid.
15. Pawson, "Confronting Nature," 62.
16. Metahaven and Marina Vishmidt, *Uncorporate identity* (Baden: Lars Müller, 2010), 451.
17. Pawson, "Confronting Nature," 61.
18. Metahaven and Vishmidt, *Uncorporate identity*, 451.
19. Local people, indigenous people.
20. David Singh Grewal, *Network Power: The social dynamics of globalization*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 4.
21. Mayor Bob Parker speaking at the launch of the Share an Idea campaign, 5 May 2011. Mark Cornell, "Share your ideas for city development." *Stuff*, May 07, 2011, (accessed 5 May 2014), <http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/christchurch-earthquake-2011/4972131/Share-your-ideas-for-city-redevelopment>.
22. Grewal, *Network Power*, 4.
23. Craig Pauling, Shaun Awatere and Shadrach Rolleston, "What has Ōtautahi revealed?: Māori urban planning in post-earthquake Christchurch," in *Once in a Lifetime: City-building after Disaster in Christchurch*, ed. Barnaby Bennett, James Dann, Emma Johnson and Ryan Reynolds (Christchurch: Freerange Press, 2014), 460.
24. Tribe.
25. Sub-tribe, clan.
26. Pauling, Awatere and Rolleston, "What has Ōtautahi revealed?" 460.
27. Ibid, 461.
28. Ibid.
29. Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, *Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (CCRP)* (Christchurch: Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2013), 17, accessed May 21 2021, <https://ceraarchive.dPMC.govt.nz/documents/christchurch-central-recovery-plan>.
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Figure 55
 Thomas Chambers (1724-1789) after Sydney Parkinson (c. 1745-1771), *Head of Otegoongoon, Son of a New Zealand Chief, the face curiously tataow'd*, 1773, engraving on paper, 262 x 200mm. Sydney Parkinson was an artist (along with Alexander Buchan) on Captain James Cook's first world voyage, 1768 -1771. This image is of one of the plates in Parkinson's *A Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, in His Majesty's Ship: the Endeavour*. Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, 17, 412. W. Downie Stewart Bequest, 1960.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

He moko kanohi, he tohu aroha

Jani Katarina Taituha
Wilson (Ngāti Awa,
Ngā Puhi, Mātaatua)

(A tattooed face, a sign of affection):
Māori Facial Tattoos in New Zealand
Feature Film History

A promise to Niwareka

Niwareka, e ngaro nei, kei hea koe? (The lost one, where are you?)
Kai whakaputa mai Niwareka, Niwareka! (Come forth Niwareka!)
Nau au i kukume iho mai ki raro nei (It was you who lured me below),
Niwareka! Niwareka! E kai ana nei te aroha (Love devours me),
Niwareka! Niwareka! Here pu rawa koe i au (I need you to forgive me).^{1, 2}

Uetonga was the chief of the tūrehu³ in Rarohenga, the underworld. He had the most stunning daughter named Niwareka. She ventured up into te ao tūroa⁴ where Mataora – a mortal chief – won her heart, and they married. Comparatively pale amongst the dusky people from the world above, Niwareka stood out and drew much male attention. An insecure and jealous Mataora abused her, causing her to flee back to the refuge of Rarohenga and the peaceful tūrehu. Although the pathway was fraught with dangerous physical obstacles, an inconsolable Mataora secretly pursued her below. The tūrehu ridiculed him because of his poor treatment of their beloved Niwareka, but they sniggered and sneered too about his muddied appearance.⁵ When finally, he confronted Uetonga face-to-face, Mataora was ashamed as his tribal face paint was surely smeared from tears and exhaustion. Unlike his smudges and stains, Their intricate patterns⁶ were carved onto the faces of the tūrehu.⁷ Doubly humiliated, Mataora begged Uetonga's forgiveness. As both a challenge and promise to never hurt his daughter again, Mataora asked Uetonga that his face be marked like theirs. In this sacred practice,

an incision was made into the epidermis with an uhi;⁸ the gash was opened enough to insert a special pigment formulation made from ash and water. Grooved much like a wood carving, a blue/green scar remained. Knowing that receiving a moko kanohi⁹ was excruciating – potentially unbearable – Uetonga agreed. As the expert in tā moko,¹⁰ Uetonga performed it himself. Mataora lamented for Niwareka through what felt like countless cuts and gouges. Still oblivious of Mataora’s pursuit below, Niwareka heard the dirge and recognised the voice. She peeped into Uetonga’s tent to investigate the singer’s identity. The man’s face was smeared with tears, blood and ash. Edging closer and closer, and hearing the lyrics more clearly, she realised the grotesque man was Mataora taking on the painful moko kanohi for her. Niwareka was filled with love and compassion and agreed to his request to return to te ao tūroa.

To Uetonga, Mataora proclaimed, “e kore e taea te horoi. Ko tēnei ao ki a au me o konei mahi,” literally: “it cannot be washed out. I will adopt in the future the ways of this world and its works.” Mataora brought with him to our world the practice of tā moko, the traditional skin decoration and the protocols.

Mataora, the living face, became the name of the man,¹¹ and the male moko kanohi is so named to remember him. The female moko kanohi, primarily situated on the chin, is known as moko kauae. Those who carry the privilege and burden of moko kanohi are widely known as mau moko.

Introduction

The story of Mataora and Niwareka, narrated here in quite a cobbled and bland fashion, aims to put into context the initial purposes and practice moko kanohi. It tells us that Mataora received the full facial tā moko as a tohu aroha, a token or insignia of deep love and affection for Niwareka, and a multifaceted promise to her, Uetonga, the tūrehu, their potential descendants, and to those who would eventually don moko kanohi. All moko kanohi designs are an artistic replication of one’s whakapapa,¹² a semiotic of one’s line of rangatiratanga,¹³ and a mark of mana.^{14, 15} Indeed moko kanohi are designed to leave no doubt as to a person’s identity, particularly since the resurgence of mataora over the last decade and a

half. However questions of mau moko identity, who can, who deserves, and who should wear moko kanohi, are becoming blurred.¹⁶ Regardless, when someone is mau moko, the person is the art, and their story; even times prior to their conception and birth exist within the design they bear. Intricate designs, each with distinctive meanings, are incised into the face's epidermis, disclosing to onlookers the wearer's narrative,¹⁷ exemplified through an ongoing commitment to and aroha¹⁸ for their people, and – needless to say – an extraordinary pain threshold.

At the time of writing, there are three mau moko parliamentarians. Nanaia Mahuta, who has stood for Labour in the Waikato region since 1996, was recently sworn in as the first female Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mahuta received her moko kauae in 2016, the first female parliamentarian to carry this tohu, which garnered much support and backlash from non-Māori commentators and keyboard warriors. In 2020, Te Pāti Māori¹⁹ co-leaders Rawiri Waititi and Deborah Ngarewa-Packer were both elected into Parliament in the Te Waiāriki and Te Hauāuru²⁰ electorates; mau moko television news reporter, Rukuwai Tipene-Allen has delivered the reo Māori²¹ news on the Māori Television news network (New Zealand's Indigenous television network) for some time, similarly has Whatitiri Te Wake on Television New Zealand's *Te Karere*,²² Māori news in te reo Māori, but on a mainstream broadcaster. It was only a matter of time until a mau moko news reader would present the mainstream news, which transpired in 2019 when Oriini Kaipara became the first mau moko to anchor TVNZ's mainstream news. Although small, these are paradigmatic shifts towards normalising moko kanohi in New Zealand politics and broadcasting, and soon – as this chapter rouses – across New Zealand society.

This chapter is centrally a challenge to New Zealand screen producers to be courageous; to utilise screen production – among many other things – as a mechanism to regularise moko kanohi in New Zealand feature film by casting mau moko into 'normal' characterisations. By exploring how mau moko roles have been portrayed throughout New Zealand film history, it looks at how early European art historical and cinematic depictions of moko kanohi may have contributed to antagonistic public perceptions of Māori, mau moko and otherwise, and when. At the same time, it questions how New Zealand screen production might facilitate in the reversal, or at least a rethink, of an unfortunately widespread apprehension to mau moko, and the reconstruction of a

screen future that includes ‘normal’ characters, cast and indeed actors, who bear these ancient cultural emblems.

Following a brief synopsis of early European art historical depictions, *He moko kanohi, he tohu aroha* primarily presents a historical overview of New Zealand fiction feature films depicting mau moko roles. The overview focuses on how mau moko characters are introduced to a film to consider their initial impression and how these views are significant in forming views about Māori. For many, moko kanohi is intimidating on and off the screen, and thus to understand how film has influenced how mau moko are seen in society, and recognising the impact such representations have on audiences, may support the normalisation and acceptance of moko kanohi on and most importantly offscreen. Within this, Māori and non-Māori screen producers may be more conscious and aware of the first impression mau moko characters might have on potential viewers. Thus, the analysis in this chapter pivots on viewer’s ‘first looks’ at mau moko characters.

Portrayals of mau moko have been in a continual flux since film production ventured to New Zealand which this chapter surveys through close textual analyses. These range from early silent cinema, through to the early transition to sound synchronicity. Te Wheke in *Utū*²³ is a most important mau moko role, a narrative that closely aligns with the story of Mataora. Flashing forward a decade to the designer gang’s tattoos in *Once Were Warriors*,²⁴ the Toa (the film’s fictitious gang) moko kanohi are deconstructed. And finally, an outline of Paraiti, the medicine woman in *White Lies*²⁵ demonstrates how mau moko can be approached in a way that could help enable normalisation and acceptance of moko kanohi, moving forward in New Zealand film.

Although not without criticisms, Te Riria and Simmons’ *Moko Rangatira*²⁶ is a useful text to deciphering what moko kanohi designs can mean, and in particular what the symbols on certain parts of the face are intended to project about the wearer, their personal history, and the history of their people. Te Riria and Simmons clearly show symbolisms in the various divisions or quadrants of the face for mataora, such as where one would most commonly find the symbols for one’s rank, position in the tribe, position in the subtribe, one’s marriage(s), one’s personal signature, predominant job, status/prestige and birth status.²⁷ Similarly for moko kauae, they unpack the points where one’s descent line, status, rank, marriage and knowledge are positioned.²⁸ It is important

when attempting to decode mataora and moko kauae that the designs are read rather than simply presuming a person's countenance because they wear moko kanohi. Equally significant is the evolution of hapū²⁹ and iwi³⁰ designs, and the ongoing development of kaitāmoko (tā moko artist) who are likely to veer from prescription in their own style, rather than maintain the motifs and positionings Te Riria and Simmons exemplified in *Moko Rangatira*.

Early European Art Historical Depictions

In early art historical depictions, mau moko were commonly represented through a kind of bust profile (Figure 55), such as the recognisable Sydney Parkinson's *Portrait of a New Zealand Man: Otegoowgoow*,³¹ and *Portrait of a New Zealand Man: Rongowhakaata*,³² and John Sylvester's *Te Pēhi Kupe: Ngāti Toa*.³³ Te Pēhi Kupe is a particularly detailed iteration of an early mataora, said to have been by his own design, himself a master carver³⁴ which according to Te Riria and Simmons is displayed through the second line of spiral patterns on his lower jawline. Many Goldie and Lindauer paintings are close-up, mid- and long-shots of ancestors; some smoke pipes, others are repeat sitters, but in all of the poses, the blue-green, grooved skin is indeed a momentous component. Meanwhile, other depictions were by memory; some were memories of people who were never present. For example Joseph Merrett's *New Zealand Musket Wars*,³⁵ Horatio Robley's *Haka with muskets at Maketū*,³⁶ and The Illustrated London News' *The War Dance of the Ngaiterangi*,³⁷ displayed men performing haka,³⁸ wielding weapons, poking tongues, gnashing teeth, and sometimes displaying bare (tattooed) buttocks, and mataora. Of note here is *The War Dance of the Ngaiterangi*, engraved initially by artists in a London news agency based on sketches by Robley, but who were not even in the same hemisphere at the time. The manufactured, indeed imagined piece, is only one of a multitude of engravings to show moko kanohi and posted in Britain and other international news agencies. Len Bell³⁹ assessed that colonial constructs such as these were specifically fashioned to exotify and barbarise rather than accurately record. Bell's examination, which looked at artists' notes and paintings in their various iterations, showed the European artists proclivity to 'tidy up' moko designs, so patterns kowtowed to European notions of 'good design' purportedly "made by Europeans for Europeans."⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the blatant disregard of the cultural significance within the patterning was overlooked. Constructing "Māori worth

remembering”⁴¹ in early European art historical depictions was fundamental to building a fit for purpose curio; a marketable product, and an expectant, fascinated and eventually profitable audience. Setting up ‘Māoriland’ was indeed important for establishing the ambivalent, rugged vistas required in New Zealand’s earliest cinema where the land, and its inhabitants, were equally unpredictable.

Differentiation in Early ‘Māoriland’ Cinema

When screen production ventured to Aotearoa, it was little surprise that moko kanohi fit well into early ‘Māoriland’ feature films. Fortuitously, the standard ‘Three Act Narrative Structure’ so popular in successful cinemas required an antagonist, and in ‘Māoriland’ the easiest way of projecting antagonism in a silent film was by colourising them. D. W. Griffith’s exponentially successful *Birth of a Nation*⁴², the world’s first feature length blockbuster – and a first to exploit the colour component – was followed by a myriad of others. It made commercial sense to model New Zealand’s earliest films on a thriving narrative structure such as this. Early film stock was quite literally discriminatory against darker complexions too, as they required more lighting and precious production time, therefore Polynesian skin tones were more practical.⁴³ Further, as Gaston Méliès discovered, despite having no formal acting experience, Māori were comparatively skilled performers. According to Rudall Hayward⁴⁴ Méliès’ wife was ‘browned-up’ with cocoa to make her appear Māori in one of the early Hinemoa films, but Méliès was most unhappy with the footage. In a letter he wrote, “The Maoris (sic) are born actors; in this respect they knock all the other natives we ever came across endways.”⁴⁵ An unpredicted advantage of producing films in Aotearoa was that ‘black-face’ was unnecessary as Māori were brown *and* could act.

Oxidisation prevents any meaningful analysis of Gaston Méliès’ 1913 ‘Māoriland’ triptych (*Hinemoa, How Chief Te Ponga won his bride, and Loved by a Māori Chieftess*⁴⁶), and George Tarr’s Hinemoa.⁴⁷ However, stills from both Hinemoa features show the eponymous character as mau moko. A preliminary analysis of the costuming in the film’s remaining stills exhibit moko kauae as an important and identifiable locative prop, alongside huia⁴⁸ feathers, korowai,⁴⁹ and the dark, tousled loose hair. But moko kauae, at least in these productions, were an outward signifier of Hinemoa’s puhī⁵⁰ birth status. In the remaining reel

of *The Romance of Hinemoa*,⁵¹ neither Hinemoa or the Te Arawa chiefs are mau moko. Hinemoa and Tūtanekai is an important and infamous iwi pūrākau⁵² of the Ngāti Whakaue people where, because of tribal hierarchies, the young couple are forbidden to be together. Despite tribal decrees, using gourds as flotation devices, Hinemoa swims to Tūtanekai located on Mokoia Island, following the sound of Tūtanekai's kōauau⁵³ in the distance. The two reunite, and, because of their union, the tribes form an unlikely and enduring alliance. It is unknown why Pauli opted not to follow Méliès and Tarr's suit to display Hinemoa as mau moko, however there are other visual devices in place that decipher Pauli's Hinemoa from the other female cast, and here I unpack only two. Firstly, Hinemoa is more 'conventionally' beautiful than the others. Maata Hurihanganui who played Hinemoa is reasonably fair skinned in comparison with her darker complexioned entourage. Their hair is fuzzy, and hers is fine. They have missing teeth in their smiles, and she does not. Hurihanganui has noticeably strong European features.⁵⁴ Casting to maintain international cinematic norms is also the case in other silent films such as Monika (Mere Kingi) in *The Te Kooti Trail*⁵⁵ and Mara (Ngawara Kereti) in *Hei Tiki*⁵⁶ exemplifying the shift to conventionalise Polynesian beauty according to European tastes. Secondly, rather than don mataora, the Te Arawa chiefs sport moustaches and beards. At this time, facial hair was another differentiating mechanism in early New Zealand cinema history, as Pākehā⁵⁷ characters were predominantly clean-shaven. Hayward's first feature *My Lady of the Cave*⁵⁸ shows Māori warrior Rau with a thick beard, and the chiefly figure in excerpts of *The Birth of New Zealand*⁵⁹ wears a relatively heavy white moustache. As a consequence of technological limitations, silent cinema tended to layer signifiers, such as costuming and gestures, to eliminate the possibility of misunderstanding who protagonists and antagonists were.

Hei Tiki has one mau moko character. The narrative follows a chief's daughter Mara (Ngawara Kereti) who meets Manui (Ben Biddle) from a nemesis tribe during one of her sneaky midnight hiatus' from the marae⁶⁰ and to escape the heavy burden of her chiefly line. Knowing that her tribe believes in a feared volcano god, Manui decides to 'trick' Mara's father by pretending to be the god using smoke bombs to appear, to take Mara as his bride, and to disappear. Manui is a smiley, romantic, and cheeky character, but in the deception scene, he chooses to don a full face mataora, likely to exemplify the god's

‘otherworldliness,’ connecting with long held anxieties about Māori spiritual philosophies.⁶¹ According to Te Riria and Simmons’ design structure in *Moko Rangatira*, Manui’s disguise mataora comprises tīwhana⁶² lines inscribed above the eyebrows known to represent tribal position, and downward rays from the nose to the chin as a personal signature. There are at least four sets of spirals not placed quite correctly,⁶³ and on the right side of Manui’s face are two small ink flecks, likely in error. However, there is at least an attempt at utilising mataora design, and although naïve, it does appear to be at the very least a respectful effort.

Transition to Sound

Rudall Hayward’s silent version of *Rewi’s Last Stand*⁶⁴ centres on a romance between a young Pākehā couple during the New Zealand Civil Land Wars. Available stills of the battle scenes show that while the Māori cast were in full garb – piupiu,^{65 66} headbands, cloaks, feathers in the hair and wielding weaponry – none were mau moko. Contrastively, the sound remake, also known as *The Last Stand*,⁶⁷ pivots on a romance between Chief Rewi Maniapoto’s fictitious niece Ariana (Ramai Te Miha) and Robert (Leo Pilcher) affectionately dubbed Rōpata by the smitten Ariana. The couple unofficially court which threads the Māori/settler narrative more meaningfully with a potential cross-cultural romance trajectory for viewers to invest into. *The Last Stand* goes beyond *The Birth of New Zealand*, *My Lady of the Cave* and *Hei Tiki*, by conveying a predominantly mau moko Māori cast. Yet despite her chieftainship, Ariana was not mau moko, likely a strategy to ensure the attraction between she and Rōpata did not have the added layer of relational complication. Would and could a Pākehā man be attracted to a Māori woman with a moko kauae?

Late in the narrative, there is a scene where a squad of Maniapoto’s men come to ‘rescue’ Ariana from Rōpata, and a taiaha⁶⁸ scuffle between Rōpata and the leader ensues. A small group of Maniapoto onlookers spectate the skirmish from a distance. They are all mau moko, bare-chested, and wear piupiu, but unlike the combatants they wield guns, not taiaha. In the moment Rōpata is forced to the ground, Ariana intervenes, begging and shrieking for his life in exchange of hers. In this case, despite a move to synchronised sound where difference could have been easily projected, moko kanohi were useful tools to indicate to audiences which Māori groups could be perceived as ‘friendly’ like Ariana, or not.

Immediately following *The Last Stand*, there were a number of films that included sizable mau moko casts such as *Green Dolphin Street*,⁶⁹ *The Seekers*,⁷⁰ and *In Search of the Castaways*⁷¹ which follow travellers who find themselves amongst angry natives in ‘Māoriland.’ It must be said that whilst the films should be noted for their inclusion of mau moko casts, they are merely there to form a Māori backdrop to verify the film’s exotic locale behind a non-Māori story, the space which actor Cliff Curtis coined as ‘the Blackground.’⁷² These are not considered New Zealand fiction feature films because their creative teams, a majority of the cast, the locations, and funding are international. Another film not considered fiction feature is Rudall and Ramai Hayward’s drama documentary *To Love a Māori*⁷³ which shows kuia⁷⁴ mau moko in a short passage of documentary footage in the film’s establishment scenes. The production oscillates between fiction and documentary, which justifies its exclusion as the focus of this chapter is specifically fiction feature. For over forty years, New Zealand fiction feature film was without any notable mau moko characters, and thus those that are recorded until this point are indeed very significant.

Utu

Arguably no other mataora portrayal in New Zealand film history is more important than Te Wheke in *Utu*. The film is set during and in the civil Land Wars, immediately post-Raupatu Whenua.⁷⁵ It follows Te Wheke (Anzac Wallace) initially a kūpapa⁷⁶ working with the Crown’s constabulary, tasked with ‘clearing’ the land. When the constabulary venture into his home region, they stumble upon Te Wheke’s village. His tribe are all dead and the houses torched. As revenge for the genocide of his Ngāi Maramara people, Te Wheke defects and rises as a leader seeking to unite the tribes, to defend their lands. Te Wheke’s brother Wiremu (Wi Kuki Kaa) remains with the constabulary as a trusted Māori advisor, and watches his brother’s progression in dismay. Unbeknown to Te Wheke, he is also being tracked by Matu (Merata Mita), a woman seeking revenge for the death of her relation at his hands.

Utu is an exponentially important text in the context of moko kanohi because the audience witnesses Te Wheke’s inner narrative change when he reframes his life from supporting the Crown to honouring Ngāi Maramara. The paradigmatic shift is sealed when he receives his mataora, a sacred ritual that viewers witness

for the first time in New Zealand feature film history. During the introductory scenes, Te Wheke scoffs at a small sect of Pākehā soldiers lost in the forest in Ngāi Maramara country. He leads them through a small clearing where one of the soldiers makes a quip about city slickers being lost in the mist before he is shot in the neck by a sniper who exclaims “POKOKŌHUA PĀKEHĀ!!” literally to “boil Pākehā heads.”⁷⁷ The frame cuts to a close-up of the sniper, a silver haired elderly man donning a faded, but decipherable mataora. The design is based in the central triangle of the forehead to represent the man’s rank, but the gun and foliage obstructs the rest of his face. After a fleeting kerfuffle over the downed soldier, Te Wheke and a mate head into the bush to confront the sniper. Although his eyes are open and the shotgun is still cocked, he is already dead by way of cuts to the back of his neck. Te Wheke removes the gun from the man’s grasp, and the mataora falls to the ground. Te Wheke reveals this Ngāi Maramara sniper is his uncle. The mataora is utilised here to decrypt the land defenders from the kūpapa soldiers working with the Crown. More significantly, the dead sniper uncle indicates a key message that at some stage Te Wheke has absconded from familial/hapū loyalties.

A scene later, Te Wheke enters the Ngāi Maramara village, and discovers the carnage of bodies and smoky, burnt out buildings; his people, his home. He measures his own pigment next to the hand of his dead nephew, and notes that his constabulary brother’s skin is different. He shoots him, and sends the other back to his now former colonel, with a message of warning that Te Wheke will “catch up” with him, then pronounces:

Me mate i au te Pākehā! Ki a ai au i aku mate! Ka oti au ki a rātou, kāore au i whai atu ki tēnei āhuatanga...pause... (I shall kill the Pākehā until they’re dead, I’ll end them, and I will not stop chasing this) ... I would rather die.

Immediately, the film title appears, the sound design oscillates from a wood-wind/strings composition to a tapping of wood on wood and a tonal karakia ritenga⁷⁸ sung in a typically dulcet and peaceful tonic triad. The sounds are melded with a singular bass note, likely a cello. Woodwind and stringed sounds interlude at various moments, but the karakia is the central aural component. As the karakia progresses, a tilting, angularised panning shot reveals a tohunga⁷⁹ incising Te Wheke’s spot-lit face in a shadowy room. The ornately carved uhi

patiently plots lines along the cheekbones, commemorating Te Wheke's promise to his ancestors and fallen hapū, an inward promise to himself, and an outward statement to the world not to confuse who he stands with and for, from today onward. His blood intermittently spills. An upward facing point-of-view shot shows the tohunga deeply absorbed in executing the sacred art, as if tracing the viewer's face with the story too. Do we allow the tohunga to continue carving the designs of our history onto our face for the world to see, or do we sit up and continue to conceal it? The audience is confronted to rethink one's own position on Māori and Pākehā relations and the history exposed by the fictional Utu that is based on events in Aotearoa's past.

How Murphy frames and paces this sequence is quite remarkable. It begins with a side shot of the tohunga whose focus is downward, and the frame descends in a slightly leftward tilt, until Te Wheke's profile is captured in its entirety. The camera adjusts itself to the left to ensure a fuller view of the strain shown in Te Wheke's nostrils, so that viewers may gauge the pain threshold necessary for receiving a mataora, the private and humble suffering. The cinematics of this passage are far from straight forward, particularly in the inclusion of karakia, the welcome attempt to maintain the sacredness of the mataora process. Furthermore, by interspersing the upward facing shot of the tohunga at the same time as hearing the voice in-karakia, this can also be considered an effort to exemplify mauri,⁸⁰ the life-force. Four years later, Merata Mita would stage a matakite⁸¹ receiving a message in Mauri⁸² in very much the same way. It could be possible that Mita, an instrumental filmmaker herself, may have had an influence on this passage, or vice-versa.

Further into the story, Te Wheke is re-introduced to the narrative sporting the completed mataora during a momentous church service scene. The vicar (Martyn Sanderson) reads from the gospel of Matthew and concentrates on the scripture, "all thee that take the sword, shall perish with the sword." The juncture is interrupted by the premature ringing of the church bell. He proceeds to inspect the bell-ringer room, where the chimer now hangs from the bell rope, until a gun shot from the rear pews interjects. In a wide-shot, a gunpowder gust subsides above Te Wheke's head; he's gloriously dressed in colonial military drag: a black peak cap, a red coat, and brandishing a gold pocket watch. The camera quickly advances towards Te Wheke, and perches below him in an upward tilt to ensure he appears dominant in the mid-close-up; his hair is thick, loose shoulder

length, and the full face mataora completes the peculiar ensemble. Key to this scene is the reintroduction of Te Wheke, now mau moko. The first impression is most likely intended to shock. Prior to receiving the mataora, it would have been unclear which army he served. Therefore, it is important that Te Wheke's new appearance, in military garb and sporting a mataora, clarifies who and what he is committed to serving until his brother Wiremu shoots him at the film's abrupt conclusion.

Designer Gang

Unquestionably *Once Were Warriors* (*Warriors*) has impacted strongly on how moko kanohi are perceived as a sign of intimidation across the film's global audience. It is a modern-day urban tragedy about Jake and Beth Heke (Temuera Morrison and Rena Owen) who live with their five children in a welfare dependant, predominantly Polynesian unnamed suburb in a New Zealand city. Nig (Julian Arahanga) and Boogie (Taungaroa Emile) lack positive male role models and default to poor company, but sensitive sister Grace (Mamaengaroa Kerr-Bell) is the peacemaker in the Heke house, and the conduit forward to a past left behind.

Nig abruptly departs the Heke house on discovering his father has beaten his mother in a drunken party the night prior. The introduction of *Warriors*' moko kanohi is in Nig's next scene. An old brown V8 Chevrolet passes a police car in an industrial area, demonstrating the driver is clearly dismissive of Pākehā law. The car too is characterised by moko: a mokomokai⁸³ is attached to the front bonnet, so that prior to audiences seeing the tattooed members of Toa, there is already a sense of foreboding threat. The shrunken head is understood as a kind of trophy, and in contact times were exchanged as a kind of currency by traders. However, mokomokai remains an important part of Māori society. By having a person with them beyond death, the person's family are reminded of their good qualities celebrated through the mataora markings.⁸⁴ The car's exterior then, relies on the audience's likely misinterpretation of the toi moko⁸⁵ cultural practice, and consequently the car's interior is reliant on equal misunderstandings of tā moko and moko kanohi.

Tamahori was criticised for the Toa 'designer gang' largely because of the overstated and beautified leather gear worn by the gang's members.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the hyper-embellishment, and over-exaggeration of the gang's

tattoos is equally responsible for the critical reviews. The first impression of the Toa members is likely to appal, much like Te Wheke. Once the scene ventures inside the Chevrolet, Nig appears young and striking in comparison with the Toa gang. An important identification to make is that in the 1990s, mataora had all but died out since the Raupatu Whenua, particularly in the cities.⁸⁷ To resurrect mataora in such a brazen scene must have had an ulterior motivation. The two in front, Taka (Calvin Tuteao) and an unnamed driver, model largely matching moko kanohi, with the exception of slight details around the ears (uma, indicating marriage), chin (wairua/mana, prestige), neck, and one more ray above the eyebrows (ngūnga or tīwhana, position in the hapū/iwi) for the leader. The members in the rear, flanking a glamorous rottweiler, share the rays above the eyebrows and the spiral patterns on the cheeks (uirere, rank in the subtribe) with those in front, but differ both down the neck and the triangle in the middle of the forehead (ngākaipikirau, chiefly rank). That there are definitive mataora components worked into the designs is indicative of tā moko artists' consultation. However, it would be remiss not to recognise that what fuels the level of intimidation in the gang scenes is that quite literally, all of the member's shown skin is 'inked.'

Such a conflated appearance of the Toa gang is evidence that authenticity was not necessarily the filmmaker's aim. But herein lies the extraordinary problem that off-screen Māori have withstood since this film's release: a story written by Māori, transitioned into a screenplay supported by a group of Māori 'leaders' when the idea was presented to the New Zealand Film Commission,⁸⁸ a Māori sound design, a film directed by and acted in by Māori, has a much higher probability of being accepted as authentic by a fascinated, expectant, yet unknowing audience who are unaware of the purpose, privilege and burden of moko kanohi. A major difference between the introduction of mataora in *Utu* and *Warriors* is that Te Wheke suffers loss, disconnection and guilt before he takes on the moko kanohi as an inward and outward promise, and then viewers see him suffer physically and emotionally as he receives it. Contrastively, Toa is introduced as part of the wider narrative of Nig's gang initiation which culminates in him taking on half of a mataora which unfortunately has been known to indicate the wearer is 'only a boy' or 'half a man.'⁸⁹ Viewers can assume Toa have experienced cultural disenfranchisement and loss, but there is no emotional connection with them. This is part of a device character strategy

where Toa are simply a means of getting Nig to a point in the narrative where he can eventually be unafraid of intervening between his mother and father. Although only device characters, the initiation phase in *Warriors* is regrettably a most well-known passage in New Zealand film history featuring moko kanohi, and one of the toughest to shake.

White Lies Moko Kānohi in the Future

The last film in this overview is *White Lies*, set in early colonial New Zealand after the Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) which among other things, barred Māori healing experts from practicing traditional medicine. It centres on and around Paraiti (Whirimako Black), an orphan groomed by the old people in Māori medicine, who grew into a tohunga rongoā.⁹⁰ Marāea (Rachel House) approaches Paraiti to help her unkind Pākehā mistress who recently moved to the area with her wealthy politician husband. Marāea's request is that Paraiti, using her skills in rongoā, discreetly perform an abortion before her mistress' husband's return from overseas.

The adult Paraiti's introduction to the *White Lies* narrative differs from the previous productions. In the establishment scene, a small Māori village is attacked by Crown forces, and following the callous murder of the rest of the villagers, an adolescent Paraiti (Te Ahurei Rakuraku) is knocked to the ground with a burning baton, assumed dead. On regaining consciousness, she is the sole survivor, and takes to the healing waters of the river. The connections between adolescent and adult Paraiti is the burn scar on her temple and the respectful handling of the foliage, a throwback to the initial scenes of her koroua,⁹¹ the mentor who instilled reverence for such things in her. In quite the polar opposite of how Toa were introduced to *Warriors*, there is no such fanfare to suggest this mau moko character should be feared, and rather, the reverse is true. Paraiti leads a majestic white horse through a forest, as she forages for ferns and other plants. She wears modest clothing, and her hair is held back by a headscarf, revealing the scar. The scene is peaceful, and Paraiti simply concentrates on ticking off what herbs are needed via a series of wide and mid-shots. The first impression of Paraiti then, opposes that of Te Wheke and the Toa gang. Her moko kauae, much like the scar, is simply part of Paraiti, helped by the fact that Whirimako Black has been mau moko for well over a decade.

Another effective component to how ‘normal’ moko kauae is in *White Lies* is the passage directly following Paraiti’s introduction. She heads to the local marae, and having rummaged in the forest for longer than planned is late, as underlined by a boy who scolds her, saying everyone is waiting for her to start the service. When eventually she enters the whareniui,⁹² a Hāhi Ringatū^{93, 94} service begins. As the kaiminita⁹⁵ commences, a slow dolly shot tracks the disciples down the aisle, showing the faces of those gathered, intently listening. While there are no mataora in the group, most of the women portrayed have moko kauae which aligns with the time in which *White Lies* is set, and was particularly so of the Tūhoe region. As Paraiti is mau moko in a relatively large group, her moko kauae appears unexceptional, and I argue boldly normal.

Despite the brevity of the analysis of *White Lies*, it is the film I carefully selected to decrescendo this discussion because earlier, I asked how we might reverse and reconstruct negative perceptions of moko kanohi in film, and the approach to characterising Paraiti is fundamental to understanding how this could occur. I also asked, what might the normalisation of moko kanohi on a medium that partook in the construction of the negativity entail? Casting mau moko Whirimako Black as Paraiti, an unremarkable introduction to the narrative, and setting an early scene in a peaceful and healing environment where Paraiti was amongst other mau moko, were key components to audiences perceiving people who bare moko kanohi as approachable. Fundamentally, screen media have been a significant component in vilifying mau moko, but it must be acknowledged that they are equally empowering to the process of collapsing stigmas by a steady regularity of imagery to disrupt the – nearing a century long – status quo.

Conclusion

The focal message of this chapter has been the importance of propagating prospective screen producers, writers, casting agents – Māori, Indigenous and otherwise – to be brave, and to show mau moko characters, and even more courageously, to cast actors who have them. Such boldness will inevitably enable general viewers to see moko kanohi is a tohu aroha, a promise, rather than an emblem of terror. The potential for a much wider, and deeper study of cinematised and screened mau moko – and the conceivable impacts on the future of screen production where moko kanohi have been to where they sit currently,

and where they could be in the future – is undeniable. To consciously show moko kanohi will – with time – rupture the norms, and allay fears and anxieties toward these significant insignia. Therefore, I challenge screen producers – as I do in my own film productions classes – to take courage and show mau moko characters as the teachers, shop keepers, call-centre workers, sports mums and dads, lawyers, and doctor characters we commonly see on our screens, because that reflects the reality of who mau moko are. I challenge screen producers to cast mau moko actors. The audience is ready.

For all of my beautiful, humble mau moko whanaunga; he rōpū tino hūmārie āku whanaunga, mā koutou katoa tēnei tuhinga mai i taku aroha.

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Notes

- To some, 'moko' is a reference to Rūaumoko, the god of earthquakes and volcanic activity. According to legends, the seventieth and youngest child of Ranginui and Papatūānuku who was unborn, sitting just beneath Papatūānuku's skin and creating grooves and scars in the landscape. Uetonga is thought to be a direct descendant of Rūaumoko. R. Higgins, "Tā moko – Māori Tattooing. Page 1. Origins of Tā Moko," *Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, (2013), accessed December 4, 2020, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/ta-moko-maori-tattooing/page-1>.
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- Tūrehu - fair-skinned, mythical beings or fairy folk.
- Te ao Tūroa - the world of light, natural world, enduring world.
- R. Jahnke, "He taitatanga ahua toi: The house that Riwai build/A continuum of Māori Art," (PhD diss., Massey University, 2006): 52; N. Te Awekotuku, "Mata Ora: Chiselling the Living Face, dimensions of Māori Tattoo," in *Sensible Objects*, ed. E. Edwards, C. Gosden and R. B. Phillips (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2006) 22.
- Moko - Māori tattoo designs.
- S. Edsett, C. Whiting, and W. Ihimaera eds., *Mataora: The Living Face: Contemporary Maori Art*, (Auckland: D. Bateman, 1996), 13.
- Uhi - chisel used for puncturing the skin.
- Moko kanohi - facial tattooing.
- Tā moko - traditional Māori tattooing.
- N. Te Awekotuku, "Moko Māori: An understanding of pain," in *Anthropologists, Indigenous Scholars and the Research Endeavour: Seeking Bridges Towards Mutual Respect 5*, eds. J. Hendry and L. Fitznor (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2012), 208.

12. Whakapapa - genealogical layers, genealogy.
13. Rangatiratanga - chieftainship, sovereignty, autonomy.
14. Mana - prestige, power, control, status, influence.
15. Lisa Taouma directed a fine documentary (on YouTube as a series) called *Marks of Mana* (2018) dedicated to the various forms of female tattooing throughout the Pacific.
16. Here, I am specifically referring to a case underlined across mainstream and Māori medias in 2018 where a Pākehā life coach was accused of wearing a moko kauae for marketing purposes, which caused a furore, particularly with some high-profile Māori academics. Initially, the artist declined the request until the person's husband, a tane who wears a mataora, permitted her to receive the moko kauae and implored the artist to perform it. Indeed, this important discussion deserves much more exploration.
17. N. Te Awēkotuku, "Moko Māori," 214.
18. Aroha - love, respect, compassion, sympathy.
19. Te Pāti Māori - The Māori Party, a political party/movement founded in 2005.
20. Te Waiāriki - Bay of Plenty (North Island) region, *Te Hauāuru* - Western/Central (North Island) region.
21. Te reo Māori - the Māori language, Māori voice.
22. *Te Karere*, 1982 – present, Television New Zealand. Just after the time of writing, Te Wake was recruited to *Te Ao Mārama*, a reo Māori news programme on Māori Television.
23. *Utu*, directed by G. Murphy (Utu Productions: New Zealand Film Commission, 1983) colour, sound, 118 mins.
24. *Once Were Warriors*, directed by L. Tamahori, (Communicado Productions: New Zealand Film Commission, 1994) colour, sound, 102 mins.
25. *White Lies (Tuakiri Huna)*, directed by D. Rotberg (South Pacific Pictures: New Zealand Film Commission) colour, sound, 99 mins.
26. K. T. Riria and D. R. Simmons, *Moko rangatira: Māori tattoo*, (Dunedin: Reed, 1999).
27. *Ibid.*, 23.
28. Riria and Simmons, 65-66.
29. Hapū - sub-tribe, clan.
30. Iwi - tribe, bones.
31. S. Parkinson, *Portrait of a New Zealand man: Otegoowgoow*, 1796, pen and wash, British Library, London. Image taken from a collection of drawings made in the countries visited by Captain Cook in his first voyage 1768-1771.
32. S. Parkinson, *Portrait of a New Zealand man: Rongowhakaata*, 1796-1770, pen and wash, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. A portrait of an unknown young Māori Chief.
33. J. Sylvester, *Portrait of Te Pehi Kupe* (detail), 1826, watercolour, National Library of Australia, Canberra.
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36. H. G. Robley, *Haka with muskets at Maketiū*, 1865, medium not cited, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
37. Illustrated London News, *War dance of Ngaierangi: Native games at Te Papa Camp, Tauranga*, Black & white print (newspaper) following a painting by H. G. Robley, 1866.
38. Haka - Māori posture dance/performance.
39. L. Bell, *Colonial Constructs: European Images of the Maori, 1840-1914* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2013).
40. *Ibid.*, 2.
41. J. K. T. Wilson, "The cinematic economy of Cliff Curtis," (MA diss., University of Auckland, 2006), 24.
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44. B. Babington. *A History of the New Zealand Fiction Feature Film* (New York/Manchester: Palgrave/Manchester University Press, 2007), 34-25.
45. *Ibid.*, 35.
46. *Hinemoa* (G. Méliès Productions, USA, 1913) black & white, silent, 42 mins; *How Chief Te Ponga won his bride* (G. Méliès Productions, USA, 1913) black & white, silent, 42 mins; *Loved by a Māori Chiefess (sic)* (G. Méliès Productions, USA, 1913) black & white, silent, 42 mins; all directed by G. Méliès.
47. *Hinemoa* directed by G. Tarr (Edward Anderson: New Zealand, 1914) black & white, silent, 42 mins.
48. Huia – a glossy, now extinct bird.
49. Korowai – traditional, woven commemorative cloaks.
50. Puhi - noble, high-ranked woman.
51. *The Romance of Hinemoa* directed by G. Pauli, (Gaumont/Sphere Productions: United Kingdom, 1927) black & white, silent, 11 mins.
52. Iwi pūrākau - tribal story.
53. Kōauau - wooden flute.

54. J. K. T. Wilson, "Whiripapa: Tāniko, Whānau and Kōrero-based film analysis," (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2013), 144.
55. *The Te Kooti Trail* directed by R. Hayward (Whakatāne Films: New Zealand, 1927) black & white, silent, 103 mins.
56. *Hei Tiki* directed by A. Markey (Alexander Maarkey Productions: USA, 1930/5) black & white, silent, 74 mins.
57. Pākehā – New Zealander of European/British descent.
58. *My Lady of the Cave* directed by R. Hayward (Bay of Plenty Films: New Zealand, 1922) black & white, silent, 71 mins.
59. *The Birth of New Zealand* directed by H. Reynolds (New Zealand Cinema Enterprises: New Zealand, 1922) black & white, silent, only excerpts remain.
60. Marae - traditional residence.
61. M. Mead, "Note from New Guinea," *American Anthropologist* 34, no. 4 (1932): 740.
62. Tīwhana - patterns that look like rays, over the eyebrows (male).
63. A good proportion of Māori design is geometrical, symmetrical and exceptionally meticulous.
64. *Rewi's Last Stand* directed by R. Hayward (Māori War Films: New Zealand, 1925) black & white, silent, only excerpts remain.
65. Piupiu - flax kilt.
66. I want to make it clear that piupiu are worn for their distinctive sound in performance, and are not designed for everyday use. It is a preposterous idea for piupiu to be donned for combat as they eliminate the element of surprise and are simply impractical.
67. *Rewi's Last Stand/The Last Stand* (remake) directed by R. Hayward (Frontier Films: New Zealand, 1940) black & white, sound, 112 mins.
68. Taiaha - long-handled wooden weapon.
69. *Green Dolphin Street* directed by V. Saville (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer: USA, 1947) black & white, sound, 141 mins.
70. *The Seekers/Land of Fury* directed by K. Anakin (George H. Brown Productions, United Kingdom, 1954) colour, sound, 86 mins.
71. *In Search of the Castaways* directed by R. Stevenson (Walt Disney Productions: USA, 1962) colour, sound, 98 mins.
72. As cited in W. Harawira and D. Husband, "Cliff Curtis in Hollywood," *Mana: The Magazine for all New Zealanders*, Issue 32, February/March, 37(2). (2000).
73. *To Love a Māori* directed by R. Hayward, and R. Hayward (Rudall and Ramai Hayward Film Productions: New Zealand, 1972) colour, sound, 103 mins.
74. Kuia - elderly woman, grandmother.
75. Raupatu Whenua - land confiscations.
76. Kūpapa - traitor, Māori collaborators with the Crown.
77. Pokokōhua, to boil someone's head, is the closest to a swear word there is in te reo Māori. The head is tapu in Māori society, and thus to boil it is considered the ultimate insult/threat.
78. Karakia ritenga - intoned ritual chant.
79. Tohunga - a skilled, chosen expert person, priest.
80. Mauri - life force, vital essence.
81. Matakite - a seer, prophet, visionary, a person with special intuition.
82. *Mauri* directed by M. Mita (Awatea Films: New Zealand Film Commission, 1988) colour, sound, 101 mins.
83. Mokomokai – preserved tattooed heads.
84. C. Palmer and M. L. Tano, *Mokomokai: commercialization and desacralization* (International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management, Denver Colorado, 2004) https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Christian-Palmer/publication/266473796_Mokomokai_Commercialization_and_Desacralization/links/551afbb50cf2bb754078787f/Mokomokai-Commercialization-and-Desacralization.pdf (accessed November 28, 2020).
85. Toi moko – art of preserving tattooed heads, a practice that honoured loved ones who have passed away.
86. See the catalogue listing, "Once Were Warriors leather jacket," Webbs Auction Portal, <https://auctions.webbs.co.nz/m/lot-details/index/catalog/81/lot/12218/Once-Were-Warriors-Leather-Jacket> (accessed 28th November 2020).
87. Moko kauae remained, mostly in the provinces and some were illustrated in Harry Sangl's *The Blue Privilege, Te Kuia Moko: The Last Tattooed Maori Women*, in 1980. However, the group of kuia Sangl painted were indeed not the last as the title suggested. In 1921, James Cowan wrote that he remembered only seven men, five of Ngāi Tūhoe, one each of Te Arawa and Ngāti Maniapoto in his time.
88. L. Shelton, *The selling of New Zealand movies: The inside story of the deal-making, shrewd moves and sheer luck that took New Zealand films from obscurity to the top of world* (Wellington: Awa Press, 2005), 139-140.
89. I remember when I first performed competitive kapa haka that one of our tāne opted to perform with a half kanohi, and this was a kōrero (discussion) circulating in the background.
90. Tohunga rongoā - expert traditional healer.
91. Koroua - elderly man, grandfather.
92. *Wharenui* - meeting house, large house.

93. Hāhi Ringatū - Church of the Up-Raised Hand, a faith pioneered by land defender/ prophet Te Kooti Te Turuki Arikirangi.
94. Hāhi Ringatū is a belief system founded and taught by the prophet and land defender Te Kooti Te Turuki Arikirangi in the mid-1800s. Te Kooti studied the Bible intensely and committed great sections of it to memory in te reo rangatira ('Māori' language) using rangi (melody) as the mnemonic tool, never again using the written version. The Hāhi Ringatū is practised on the twelfth of every month, known simply as "Te Rā" literally "the day." For more, see J. Binney, *Redemption Songs: a life of the nineteenth century Māori leader Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki* (Hawai'i, USA: Hawai'i University Press, 1997).
95. Kaiminita - minister.

Part 4

ARTEFACT, TECHNOLOGY, LEARNING



'The Boeing's great, the going's great'

Federico Freschi

South African Airways, Apartheid and
the Technopolitics of Design

Shortly after midnight Universal Time on 28 November 1987 the *Helderberg*, a South African Airways (SAA) Boeing 747-200BM Combi en route from Taipei to Johannesburg via Mauritius, crashed into the Indian Ocean, killing all 159 passengers and crew on board. It was, and remains, by far the worst accident in the history of the airline, which by then had been operating for 53 years. Terrorism was immediately suspected. This is unsurprising, given that SAA was the national carrier of the pariah apartheid government, flying a problematic route from the pariah state of Taiwan via an African country that, for reasons of economic expedience, was not observing the Organisation of African Unity's ban on overflying or stopping rights.

An extensive commission of inquiry into the crash, which entailed the recovery¹ and reconstruction in a hangar at Johannesburg's international airport of as much of the wreck as could be salvaged, was led by Justice Cecil Margo.² The commission ruled out terrorism and concluded that the crash was caused by an out-of-control fire that had developed in the main deck cargo hold.³ Further conclusions that were drawn about inadequate fire detection and suppression facilities on this type of aircraft would lead to safety innovations across the entire Boeing fleet, not least the outlawing of the 'combi' principle of incorporating a cargo hold on the passenger deck. However, questions regarding the actual cause of the fire, the cargo that might have ignited it, and who or what body should ultimately be held accountable remained unanswered.

Inevitably, given the volatile political atmosphere in South Africa at the time and the South African government's militaristic facing down of the 'total onslaught' of resistance to apartheid, rumours immediately began to circulate about the potentially sinister nature of the cargo that might have caused a fire of

the intensity required to bring down the aircraft. In the wake of the commission, circumstantial evidence began to emerge that added substance to rumours that throughout the apartheid years, SAA may have used its airliners to transport *matériel* for the state's arms company, Armscor.⁴ Armscor was engaged, amongst other things, in building nuclear weapons, and it has been widely speculated that the *Helderberg* was a casualty of this highly illegal and dangerous activity.

Indeed, the credibility of this speculation resulted in a special hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) held in camera in June 1998. The committee was tasked with testing these allegations before various individuals who had been associated with the airline and Armscor during the 1980s. Ultimately, the TRC hearing was inconclusive, noting that “many questions and concerns remain unanswered” and that “further investigation is necessary before this matter can be laid to rest.”⁵ Nonetheless, although no definitive conclusions were reached regarding whether illicit cargo had indeed caused the crash, the TRC's findings, when they were released in May 2002, brought into sharp focus what had previously been the spectral presence of the airline's dubious relationship with the apartheid regime.

In this chapter I argue that the national carrier's role as an enabler of apartheid goes beyond the geopolitics of its sanctions-defying route networks and alleged complicity with the illegal transporting of arms. I demonstrate that while these aspects are fundamental to understanding the psychological and ideological importance of the airline to the social and economic apparatus of apartheid, the role of *technology and design* that sustained the airline and its operations deserves closer scrutiny. Proceeding from Paul Edwards and Gabrielle Hecht's definition of technopolitics as “hybrids of technical systems and political practices that produce new forms of power and agency,”⁶ I argue that the technical innovations in commercial aviation that arose in response to SAA's specific operational requirements under apartheid essentially constitute a technopolitics of design.

These technopolitics cast long shadows when one considers the benefits that accrued to the airline's suppliers Boeing, Airbus, Pratt & Whitney and General Electric through the technologies they advanced in meeting its requirements. These technologies not only contributed to Euro-American dominance in the commercial aviation sector during and beyond the Cold War, but were ultimately to the benefit of all commercial aviation. This in turn raises important moral

questions that arise from what Langdon Winner identifies as the “politics” of artefacts.⁷

“A Great Psychological Safety Valve:” SAA and the Jet Age

The arrival of the jet age⁸ in the late 1950s coincided with the geopolitical shifts of the Cold War, and the shrinking world that was enabled by faster and more democratised international travel was one of the key concerns of Cold War international relations. Global airline routes and airspace became ideologically contested arenas as the United States sought to limit the influence of the Soviet Union, which from the mid-1950s had begun seeking rights to fly to newly decolonised countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.⁹

At the same time, for these new nations jet-powered commercial aviation became one of the key signifiers of modernity and global status. In 1961 Duncan Cumming, the adviser on African affairs to the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC, the forerunner of British Airways), remarked that “the mobility that air travel confers has had a profound influence on political events in Africa.”¹⁰ He posed the question whether the “cost of ‘political aviation’ is not too high for some countries that need their resources for more urgent needs,” particularly for countries like Ghana and Egypt (and one could well say the same for South Africa) that were “perfectly frank about using their national airlines for reasons of political prestige.”¹¹ As Jenifer Van Vleck notes with reference to the American government’s drive to support and influence airlines in the developing world during the Cold War, “The commercial airplane was a potent tool of modernization not simply because it enforced the USA’s national interests, but because its transnational appeal and symbolism encouraged foreign governments to appropriate aviation for their own purposes.”¹²

South Africa was no exception. While to the rest of the world the establishment of the white supremacist republic in 1961 was a regressive act that harked back to the colonial world order, for Afrikaner nationalism it represented the supreme achievement of independent nationhood. From the apartheid government’s point of view, South Africa was entering the new world order as a decolonised nation, with a strong ideological imperative to establish an image of itself as technologically sophisticated, modern and deserving of its place as a ‘Western’ nation. I have argued elsewhere how the aspirational modernity of mid-century Afrikaner nationalism was enacted in the Afrikaner

nationalist government's adoption of the aesthetics of high modernism in art and architecture. Public buildings were designed in a style that enthusiastically embraced the principles of postwar New Brutalism, overlaid with a pseudo-regionalism derived from Brazilian modern architecture.¹³ The abstract decorative programmes in these buildings, "with just enough 'earthiness' to register [them] as African,"¹⁴ proclaimed both a sense of the 'Africanness' of the Afrikaner nation – what Saul Dubow describes as "acquired indigeneity"¹⁵ – and a sense of worldly sophistication.

From the moment that it took control in 1948, the nationalist government recognised the strategic importance of expanding and maintaining international aviation links and began investing substantially in the growth of the national carrier. At the same time, it passed anti-competitive legislation¹⁶ that gave SAA a complete monopoly on routes, airports and landing slots. The nationalist government was also quick to respond to the commercial promise of the jet age, which had in fact been inaugurated at Palmietfontein Airport¹⁷ on 3 May 1952 with the arrival from London of a BOAC De Havilland Comet carrying the first fare-paying passengers in the world to travel on a commercial jet. The trip took half the time that had previously been required, and its cruising altitude high above the atmospheric turbulence that affected piston-engine aircraft "transformed the experience of air travel."¹⁸ SAA immediately became one of the earliest customers for the Comet, leasing two aircraft from BOAC in 1953 for its profitable 'Springbok' route between Johannesburg and London.¹⁹

Fast and reliable commercial aviation was strategically important in mitigating the country's geographical isolation, and symbolically important in enabling white South Africans with the means to maintain links with the white metropolises of the northern hemisphere – as Ieuan Griffiths puts it, for better-off whites "foreign travel, particularly in Europe, [was] a great psychological safety valve."²⁰ Practically, this was done by investing heavily in purchasing the most up-to-date fleet and expanding route networks to four continents. Symbolically, it was enacted in 1960 by replacing the old silver, white and blue livery that the "flying springboks" had sported since 1934 with the orange, white and blue of the republic's flag, incorporating indigenous plant and animal motifs into the interior design of the aircraft, and building new International Style airports that proclaimed the modernity and sophistication of the apartheid state.²¹

The cover of a route timetable published in December 1960 advertising the

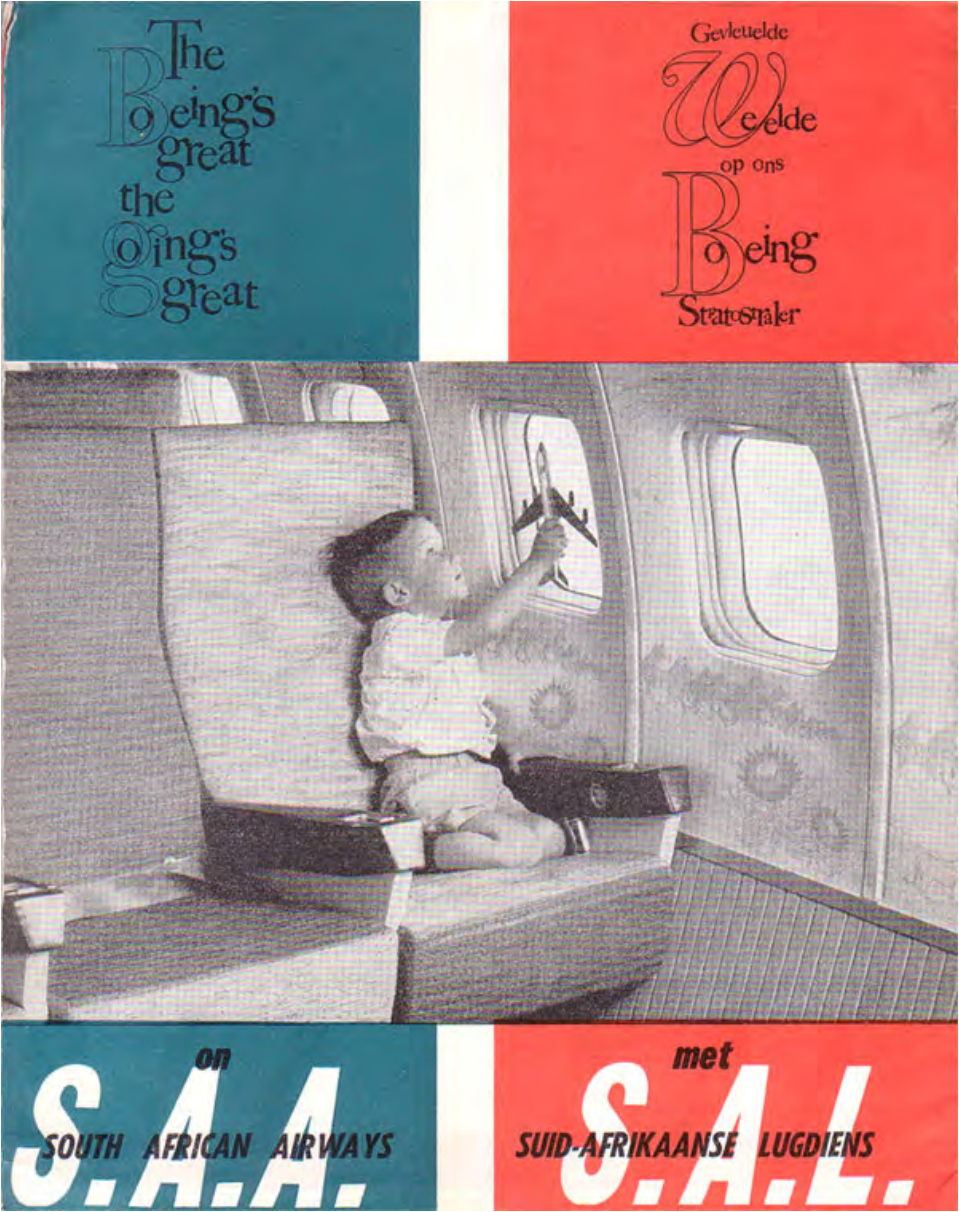


Figure 56
The cover of a South African airways route timetable, December 1960, advertising the services of the airline's new Boeing 707 fleet. Image courtesy of the Transnet Heritage Library Photo Collection.

services of the airline's newly acquired Boeing 707 fleet captures something of the spirit of the time (Figure 56). A tow-haired, blue-eyed little boy perched on an aircraft seat holds up a model Boeing 707 in SAA livery against the aircraft window, which is set in a panel decorated with motifs that evoke the stereotypical romance and wildness of Africa – proteas, herds of springbok and zebra, a lion. The scene, redolent as much of boyhood storybooks of adventurous aviation as of an unquestioning sense of white privilege, is captioned: "The Boeing's great, the going's great."²²

Certainly, for SAA, the going with Boeing was great. The airline took possession of three Boeing 707 'Intercontinentals' in July 1960 for use on both regional and international routes, and by 1968 it had a fleet of ten.²³ It began replacing turboprop aircraft on domestic and regional routes with Boeing 727s in 1965, and by 1970 had augmented these with Boeing 737s. By the end of the decade SAA had also ordered its first Boeing 747-200B 'Jumbo jets,' which entered service in November 1971. The airline's international route network expanded substantially in the 1960s in response to the long-range capabilities of the Boeing 707. In addition to the long-standing 'Springbok' route, SAA began flying to other European destinations, starting with Paris in 1961, followed by the first non-stop flight to Europe – Johannesburg to Athens – in 1962. By 1969 SAA was operating Boeing 707s to destinations on four continents: regionally, to Botswana, Lesotho and Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe), and internationally to Las Palmas, Lisbon, Madrid, Rome, Zurich, Athens, Frankfurt, Paris, London, Mauritius, Sydney, Perth, Rio de Janeiro and New York. With a growing number of Boeing 747s in the fleet, by 1975 the route had expanded to encompass Buenos Aires and Hong Kong via the Seychelles, and Tel Aviv in 1978. By 1979, 29 of the airline's fleet of 36 aircraft were Boeings, the remaining fleet comprising four Airbus A300 aircraft (twin-engine, wide-bodied jets) and three Hawker Siddeley HS-748s, the last turboprops to be used by SAA. By 1984 the airline operated an all-jet fleet, largely comprising Boeings.

The airline's international route network had developed throughout the 1960s despite a ban that barred SAA overflying or landing rights over much of the African continent. This ban, enacted by a number of Central, North and West African countries at a heads-of-state meeting in Addis Ababa in August 1963, followed the United Nations General Assembly's non-binding resolution urging member states to sever all diplomatic, trade and transport relations with the

apartheid government.²⁴ It was followed by similar bans by India, Indonesia and (then) Yugoslavia.²⁵ The latter were of minor consequence to the airline since they did not materially affect its Indian Ocean routes, while the Yugoslavian ban on airspace had no impact on its European routes. The African ban, however, necessitated an expensive and time-consuming detour around the bulge of West Africa, flying what Anthony Sampson describes as “‘the dictators’ route’ via Lisbon and Luanda in Portuguese West Africa”²⁶ rather than the more direct route through Kenya used by other airlines.

Because of the rerouting, SAA’s flying time to its European destinations increased substantially. The flight to London now took two-and-a-half hours longer than competitor airlines, and four hours longer to Athens. To mitigate this, SAA entered into pooling agreements with other airlines (Figure 57). It also offered better service than its competitors, the vaunted “winged luxury” (see note 22) effected by generous seating configurations and elaborate meal and beverage service. Since the additional distance added to the journey was beyond the capacity of existing airline technology, the government was compelled to negotiate refuelling and technical stops with such African countries that could be persuaded, for reasons of economic expedience, to oblige. Intermediate stopping points for flights to Europe and the United States were thus implemented at Las Palmas, Funchal, Luanda (at least until Angola achieved independence in 1976) and, from 1976, at Abidjan (see n. 59).

The laws of competition should have dictated that SAA would be forced to price itself out of what was becoming an increasingly profitable market. However, notwithstanding their shorter routes, other airlines exploited the situation by pegging their fares to SAA’s “circuitous round-the-bulge route,”²⁷ thereby cynically demonstrating that profit was paramount.²⁸ As with many other aspects of the West’s relationship with apartheid South Africa, this is symptomatic, as Hennie van Vuuren puts it, of the “large network of business people across the globe ready to step into the breach regardless of sanctions provisions. There was, after all, enormous profit to be made.”²⁹

From the early 1960s the apartheid government invested considerably in constructing a new international airport outside Windhoek against the contingency of Angolan independence, as well as in providing a long-term loan to the Portuguese government to build a new airport on Ilha do Sal in Cape Verde. In effect, as Sampson notes, “the island airport of Ilha do Sal was built



Figure 57
 A South African Harbours and Railways publicity photograph showing a South African Railways police officer assisting passengers at Jan Smuts Airport (now OR Tambo International Airport), Johannesburg, 1978. The Solari display board shows the network of international and regional destinations served by South African Airways and other airlines. Courtesy of the Transnet Heritage Library Photo Collection.

and run by the South Africans for their airline.”³⁰ Given the bulk of traffic that it was routing through Ilha do Sal, the airline soon became the principal source of revenue³¹ for the impoverished island nation and landing rights for SAA thus continued after Cape Verde achieved independence in 1975. Despite the airspace embargo, route closures and “general hostility directed toward one of the most visible ambassadors of the apartheid regime,”³² throughout the 1970s the airline maintained stable operations on its European and Indian Ocean routes, and indeed increased its trans-Atlantic network with a service between Cape Town and Buenos Aires. Resistance from the anti-apartheid lobby in the United States

notwithstanding, by the early 1980s the North American route was also extended to include a flight to Houston in addition to the long-standing service to New York.

Given South Africa's distance from sources of supply and isolation from major airline maintenance facilities, the government took the strategic decision "to turn a deficit into a strategic asset"³³ and invested in the establishment of state-of-the-art aircraft maintenance and training facilities at (then) Jan Smuts airport in Johannesburg. This strategy certainly paid dividends. Not only did the airline become largely operationally independent, the strength of its technical capacity and expertise, unrivalled in the region, also meant that throughout the 1970s SAA provided technical services to neighbouring African states that were otherwise inimical³⁴ to the South African government, including maintaining Air Madagascar's entire Boeing fleet until that country severed ties in 1976. The airline's drive to self-sufficiency was essential from the point of view of operational reliability, but – like the state's nuclear and oil-to-coal programmes that were developing at the same time – it was also fundamentally a technopolitical strategy, designed, as Edwards and Hecht argue, to expand "the apartheid state's apparatus and [display] its power."³⁵ In turn, the "technopolitical orientation of apartheid"³⁶ made the problem of airspace embargoes – like that of arms and oil sanctions – not one of moral or ethical accountability, but "perceivable only as one of efficiency, solvable by better technology."³⁷

"That Kind of Customer is Always Fun to Work With:" SAA and the Aircraft Manufacturers

Increasingly, the strategic imperative for better-performing aircraft that could provide greater fuel efficiency without sacrificing payload became of central importance to mitigate the expense and inconvenience of refuelling stops. From the early 1960s SAA had worked closely with Boeing to find technological solutions for its geopolitical requirements, a relationship that was to lead to substantial innovation that contributed to the manufacturer's pre-eminence in the commercial aviation sector during and beyond the Cold War. SAA was, for example, the first airline to fly Boeing 707s with full-span leading-edge flaps, a device that enabled additional lift for taking off with full payloads in the hot, high-altitude conditions of Johannesburg and Windhoek airports.³⁸

In an interview for a documentary film, commissioned by the South African

Broadcast Corporation to celebrate the airline's 50th anniversary in 1984, Frans Swarts, SAA's Chief Executive Officer (1982-83), commented on the longstanding relationship between Boeing and SAA in advancing aviation technology, presenting South Africa's political isolation simply as an inconvenience that required a technological solution: "Right from the early stages of the development of jet aircraft we've had the Boeing equipment and we have a very good relationship with Boeing. I think *with our particular political problems* [emphasis added] they, with the manufacturers of the engines Pratt & Whitney, have *allowed us to develop aircraft that would meet our own requirements*" [emphasis added].³⁹

For the aircraft manufacturer, in turn, it seems that the benefits that could accrue to it from the research and development it was undertaking into solving SAA's "own requirements" far outweighed any latent moral or ethical considerations arising from the inconvenient truths of the "particular political problems" that underscored them. For the eminent aeronautical engineer Joe Sutter, Executive Vice-President of Boeing in the 1980s and celebrated 'father' of the Boeing 747,⁴⁰ Boeing's relationship with SAA was simply about the joy of solving technical problems: "South African Airways ... has a difficult job to do, which makes the airplane very important to them. So they do a good job of telling us what the airplane needs to be, and that kind of customer is always fun to work with."⁴¹

The 1984 documentary is in fact very revealing about the extent of the relationship between Boeing and South African Airways and, by extension, with the engine manufacturers Pratt & Whitney. In it we learn from Boeing executive W Jerome Kane⁴² that the relationship between SAA and the manufacturer went considerably beyond "fun." In fact, the airline's "difficult job" of having to contend both with the geophysical characteristics of its airports and the geopolitics of its problematic national status meant that SAA had a direct influence on the development of the Boeing 747, which in turn benefited the industry as a whole:

Because of [the airline's] route structure, we've had to put together some features in the airplane that allow the airplanes to take off on a hot day at high altitudes, and we were able to work with Pratt & Whitney to get what we call a 'thrust bump' that allows the engines to be over-thrusted for a short periods

of time to get payload out of high, hot airfields. *We've developed several different features for the airplane as a result of South Africa's influence* [emphasis added], one of which was a seventeen-hundred-gallon fuel tank that was installed on the lower covered compartment that allowed additional range or additional payload to be carried on long legs. We've worked with the flight and cabin crews on additional crew rest areas [and] additional galley servicing features that have been *useful for both South Africa and other customers* [emphasis added].⁴³

SAA's longstanding relationship with Pratt & Whitney preceded the pre-eminence of Boeing aircraft in its fleet, since it had used the manufacturer's engines in its aircraft from the start of its operations in 1934. Richard J Coar, President of the Pratt & Whitney Group, remarked not only on the longevity of the relationship with the airline, but also how the changes to its route requirements had in fact directly contributed to technological innovation (while entirely ignoring the political reasons for the route changes). He noted that, for the past 50 years, "South African Airways has had in operation the latest Pratt & Whitney engines powering some aeroplane. ... Well, our most recent jet engines, JT9 class, have been *designed specifically to meet South African's route requirements* [emphasis added], which are among some of the longest-range in the world. And several of our engines' specifications have been laid down specifically to meet those requirements."⁴⁴

Robert E Rosati, Senior Vice-President, took this a step further:

On a trip to South Africa on a delivery flight the Boeing representatives ... and ourselves got together and on paper, so to speak, designed the JT9D-7Q engine. *It basically was a South African engine* [emphasis added], and it was developed and put on the 747-200s which they're currently flying. Its reliability has been excellent, it's been a very good engine for us in its service around the world, and it all started here.

The acquisition of the Boeing 747s whose range had been extended in response to SAA's "particular requirements" meant that the airline could operate its long-haul routes non-stop, with intermediary stops only when these were desirable or required to maximise capacity. Following the acquisition of its first Boeing

747-244 Super B aircraft, in 1973 the airline inaugurated what was then the world's longest non-stop route from Johannesburg to London around the bulge of West Africa. The Indian Ocean route was also expanded in 1974 with flights to Hong Kong via the Seychelles, while the delivery of six Boeing 747SPs in 1976 (Figure 58) further increased the airline's non-stop flying capacity on its European and North American routes. The 'SP' stood for 'special performance,' or ultra-long-range capability and, as noted above, was designed partly to meet SAA's need for non-stop, fuel-efficient long-haul flights, particularly on the New York route.⁴⁵

The growth of the fleet occurred despite the fact that for most of the 1970s the airline was operating at a loss.⁴⁶ The government's insistence on maintaining the airline therefore speaks to the important role it played as its most visible emblem of international status and prestige, effectively part of the symbolic apparatus of what Edwards and Hecht call "the fantasy of technical control" that was crucial to sustaining apartheid ideology.⁴⁷ At the same time, it is self-evident that in maintaining efficient and consistent transport networks to the rest of the world, SAA was one of the key enablers of the apartheid government's sanctions-busting mechanisms, both through facilitating business networks and, albeit to a lesser extent, the importing and exporting of cargo. Whether the latter included weapons and matériel intended for Armscor, as alleged during the TRC hearing into the *Helderberg* disaster, remains a matter of conjecture. However, given that the airline was operating at a highly visible intersection of technology and politics, its status as a technopolitical agent of the apartheid regime is beyond doubt.

SAA's acquisition of its first four Airbus A300B wide-bodied twin-jet aircraft in 1976 for use primarily on its domestic and regional routes was, like the Boeing relationship, celebrated by both manufacturer and customer for the mutually beneficial new technology that arose out of a 'special' relationship born of "particular requirements." For "Duke" Davidson, Technical Director of Engineering at SAA, the deal established the carrier as a "breakthrough airline" for Airbus since it was "the first airline of any repute" that had not been involved with the manufacture of the aircraft to acquire it, and consequently "they had a sort of special thing for us."⁴⁸ According to Davidson, the original Airbuses that were bought:



Figure 58

South African Airways' newly acquired Boeing 747SP aircraft ZS-SPB *Outeniqua* and ZS-SPA *Matroosberg* outside a hangar at Jan Smuts Airport (now OR Tambo International Airport), Johannesburg, 1976. Courtesy of the Transnet Heritage Library Photo Collection.

... were called the A300-B2K, the K standing for Krüger, which wasn't to do with the president [Paul Kruger] but with the leading-edge flaps. *And those leading-edge flaps were designed for Johannesburg* [emphasis added]. And they're a standard feature of all A300s that are built now, [they all] have got Krüger flaps. But ours was the first, with our special requirements, and [Airbus] responded just like Boeing did for our particular requirement.⁴⁹

Like the Boeing and Pratt & Whitney executives, Roger Béteille, Executive Vice-President and General Manager of Airbus Industrie, reaffirmed the bond that was born of technological savoir faire between SAA and Airbus, while blithely ignoring the political context that underscored it:

South African Airways is well known. It's, I would say, a group of real professionals, and not only because they have been there since [sic] fifty years but because they are professionals in air transport. And being basically an ingenious company in Airbus [sic] we had a lot of things in common [with SAA], that is, trying to do a good job and squeeze everything out of the technology.⁵⁰

The Airbus aircraft were powered by General Electric engines. Asked to comment, General Electric executive Edward C Bavaria reiterated the importance of a close working relationship between the two companies and focused on the narrative of technological self-sufficiency:

From the very beginning the close working relationships ... that had been established, worked very effectively. South African Airways has a reputation of technical excellence and excellent service, and a desire to become self-sufficient in all aspects of maintenance and engineering and operations. So, I would say that our relationship has been a very cooperative one, and one that has now resulted in the airline being totally self-sufficient in terms of engine maintenance and repair.⁵¹

Indeed, much is made of SAA's technological self-sufficiency in the South African Broadcasting Corporation documentary, with the Pratt & Whitney executives remarking that "the equipment and procedures that South Africa uses are the most advanced in the industry" and that consequently the airline's operational reliability data was used "as an example to other airlines of how their engines should be maintained ... if they're not doing so well."⁵² While SAA's record of technical maintenance, innovation and self-sufficiency was certainly impressive for an airline of its size – as Jaffe notes, by the late 1970s, SAA had "nearly three times the technical staff ratio of US carriers at the time"⁵³ – in the context of a documentary film produced by the mouthpiece of the apartheid government there is clearly more at play. The emphasis on technological efficiency is a ruse designed to draw attention away from the more sinister aspects of the airline's role as a technopolitical agent of the apartheid regime. As such, it is a case of what Edwards and Hecht describe as "apartheid elites [using] technological narratives to erase political histories and downplay or displace political tensions."⁵⁴

“My People ... Have no Desire to be Merchants of Death:” Resistance to Support for SAA

While the manufacturers’ executives may have turned a blind eye to doing business with the apartheid government, the fact both of SAA’s continued presence in the United States and Europe, and that it was dependent on American and European technology in order to continue operating did not go unnoticed by anti-apartheid activists. In 1969 anti-apartheid activists protested the introduction of the Johannesburg to New York service via Rio de Janeiro (operated in partnership with Pan Am), which ultimately led to Congressional meetings about revoking SAA’s landing rights in the United States. These protests had no actual impact on SAA’s continued operations in the United States, but created much visibility around the notion of the airline as the “carrier of apartheid.”⁵⁵ In the same year, the Attorney General of New York further brought the problematic nature of SAA’s continued presence in the US into public debate by filing a complaint with the New York State Division of Human Rights. The charge was made that SAA “was practicing racial discrimination in the transportation of passengers to the Republic of South Africa. The complaint stated that SAA published advertisements inviting Americans to visit the Republic but that the Republic’s consulate in New York refused to issue unrestricted visas to black persons and that the carrier, in turn, would not transport persons lacking visas.”⁵⁶ SAA’s subsequent appeal to the New York Supreme Court was upheld on the grounds that “Our courts and administrative agencies have no power to act when the remedy sought calls into question the sovereign power of a foreign government.”⁵⁷

Aware of the need to mollify its international audience, by the late 1970s the airline made a token attempt at professing non-racialism by including black people in its publicity materials (Figure 59). However, the fact that this took place during a time when the government under Prime Minister BJ Vorster was attempting détente with black African leaders⁵⁸ (including Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, which led to the use of Abidjan as a stop-over for SAA⁵⁹) speaks more of expedience than a concerted attempt to counter its image of being the flagship of white South Africa. The design of international airports and airliners presented something of a special case for the apartheid government. Then as now, once past passport control international airports were international



Figure 59

A South African Airways publicity photograph showing black passengers being served in the cabin of a Boeing 747, 1978. Courtesy of the Transnet Heritage Library Photo Collection.

zones where the separate entrances and amenities that characterised South Africa outside the airport were unfeasible, while the interior constraints of modern jetliners made any notion of separate amenities entirely impracticable. As evidenced by the case brought to the New York State Division of Human Rights, the only mechanism the apartheid government had to segregate its travellers was through its immigration policies and its criteria for granting visas.

Ultimately, the inconvenient truth that doing business with South Africa effectively meant condoning apartheid could not be ignored, and this informed much political and philosophical debate during the 1970s and 80s. For example, the African-American Congressman John Conyers Jr, writing in 1974, argued that the challenge posed by the United States' continued trade with the apartheid regime was essentially a moral one. "Is the United States prepared to continue sacrificing the legitimate human rights and aspirations of twenty million blacks living in South Africa and Namibia to the convenience and profit of American

corporate interests?” he asked. “But the most pressing need,” he continued, “is for a thorough and critical re-examination of American corporate investments in South Africa.”⁶⁰ As it was, the United States’ technopolitical dealings with the apartheid government – like those of Europe and the United Kingdom – trod a fine line between observing the United Nations resolution calling for boycotts and preserving its own commercial and ideological interests. The United States, for example, followed a limited arms embargo that would deny the apartheid regime the supply of matériel that could be used by the police force, but would supply it for the purposes of major military defence in the free world – in other words, in support of maintaining the Cold War balance of power in the region.

There was also considerable latitude, as is clearly evidenced by SAA’s relationship with its American suppliers, regarding the export of non-military technology.⁶¹ The general argument in support of continued trade was that the failure to do so would cause more misery for already impoverished black South Africans. This argument would be parlayed into an article of faith for Ronald Reagan’s policy of “constructive engagement” as well as Margaret Thatcher’s dealings with the apartheid government, which were both underscored by the belief that apartheid would eventually give way to the imperatives of the neoliberal, free-market economy. In the interim, as van Vuuren argues, their brand of neoliberal politics in effect “wanted apartheid ‘reformed’ without fundamentally challenging white rule.”⁶²

European members of the G7 were similarly engaged in dealings with the South African regime, both strategically in terms of maintaining the Cold War balance of power in southern Africa, and commercially.⁶³ SAA’s relationship with Airbus was made possible through France’s long-standing diplomatic ties with South Africa, which strengthened in the 1970s under Valéry Giscard-d’Estaing’s centre-right government. Indeed, French technopolitical trade with South Africa was substantial during the 1970s, not only in the provision of aircraft from Airbus and locomotives from Alstom, but also in the fields of telecommunications, gas and nuclear energy.

The financial journalist Claude Bourillon, writing in the conservative *La Nouvelle Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1978, noted how French investment in South Africa had doubled in the course of the decade, and quadrupled since 1965. He attributed this to a growing awareness amongst French industrialists that “the capital invested there not only enjoys one of the highest returns in

the world, but also total freedom of transfer as regards profits made.”⁶⁴ He questioned the appropriateness of sanctions on, and the severing of business ties with, a “natural ally of the West, who otherwise endeavours to resolve its problems sensibly”⁶⁵ echoing the French government’s stance, concluded that commercial self-interest and the need to ensure a bulwark against Communist expansion in southern Africa should determine ongoing policy: “We can bet that if we lose our ties of commerce and friendship with the country, others will not hesitate to take our place.”⁶⁶

Ultimately, it would take until 1986 before Congress would pass the United States Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act that, in addition to curtailing American investment and trade, immediately banned SAA from the United States and severed all bilateral air agreements. The Australian government followed suit, substantially disrupting SAA’s operations. Hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on African Affairs in 1987 in the wake of the Act shone a light on the relationship between SAA and the American manufacturers. Debating the extent to which sanctions would hurt the United States rather than the South African economy, Senator Jesse Helms argued that:

South African Airways uses only American jet engines on its aircraft ... both Pratt & Whitney and General Electric jet engines ... Now the South African Airways will be buying its Airbuses from Europe. Those planes, for the moment, come only with American engines. But I understand that if a buyer were to order the planes with Rolls-Royce or some other engine ... the American dominance in this business would be lost, and there would be obviously a loss of jobs at General Electric and Pratt & Whitney here. Now, I guess the question I am asking ... is do you think the United States Government should refuse to license the export of jet engines for use on SAA planes?⁶⁷

Senator Lowell Weicker of Connecticut (where General Electric was headquartered), was quick to respond: “I don’t think that any of the workers, very frankly, at Pratt & Whitney, in Connecticut, or indeed, the executives of General Electric ... would care to go ahead and make profits due to the misery of the blacks in South Africa. I think they would be glad to forego that portion of their business.”⁶⁸ In response to Helms’ reply that, “[w]hat I’m hearing you

say to me is that you think American workers should lose their jobs and suffer unemployment ... so as to send a political signal, which is not working by the way,” Weicker retorted, “My people in Connecticut have no desire to be merchants of death. It is as simple as that. They would rather go ahead and get their employment from some other place.”⁶⁹

Conclusion: The Moral Problematics of Technological Innovation
Commendable as the good senator’s rhetoric was, it had little practical effect. The United States and Australian sanctions may have “undermined the airline’s pride, status and influence as an international operator,”⁷⁰ and they certainly forced it to lease out some of its aircraft to offset the loss of revenue. Nonetheless, SAA continued acquiring both Airbus and Boeing aircraft equipped with General Electric and Pratt & Whitney engines after the 1986 Act. Also, within five years, following the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 and the systematic dismantling of apartheid prior to the democratic elections of 1994, geopolitical tensions eased, and trade relations opened. By 1991 the airline could fly over West Africa for the first time in 28 years, “a fortune [having been] spent on aircraft and fuel to navigate around the continent”⁷¹ over the preceding decades.

As we have seen, for the apartheid government this was a “fortune” well spent, with the technopolitical benefits of maintaining SAA’s state-of-the-art fleet and complicated route structure far outweighing the expense – as indeed it did regarding the government’s other significant technological investments in nuclear capacity, oil-from-coal extraction and computerised population administration systems. Like the latter, SAA’s position at the intersection of political ideology, policy and technology was instrumental in constructing an imaginary of white progress and civilisation for the apartheid regime. At the same time, its narrative of technological self-sufficiency and industry-leading maintenance standards deflected attention away from the human rights abuses that underpinned that regime.

Ultimately, the technological innovations developed by SAA and its suppliers in response to the apartheid government’s ‘special needs’ benefited all commercial aviation. That these ‘special needs’ were the consequence of the systematic and brutal oppression of the black majority raises difficult moral questions about technological artefacts and how they develop out of political

opportunism and corporate greed at the cost of human misery. In his 1980 essay “Do Artifacts Have Politics?,” Langdon Winner suggests that wherever politics and design intersect the moral conundrum is inevitable:

[M]any of the most important examples of technologies that have political consequences are those that transcend the simple categories of ‘intended’ or ‘unintended’ altogether. These are instances in which the very process of technical development is so thoroughly biased in a particular direction that it regularly produces results counted as wonderful breakthroughs by some social interests and crushing setbacks by others. In such cases it is neither correct nor insightful to say, “Someone intended to do somebody else harm.” Rather, one must say that the technological deck has been stacked long in advance to favour certain social interests, and that some people were bound to receive a better hand than others.⁷²

One might well argue that this moral dilemma is essentially one of the Anthropocene age.⁷³ The beneficial effects to society at large of technological advancement during wartime, for example, is indicative of the trade-off between misery and progress that we have come to accept as one of the inevitable, if unintended, consequences of our mastery of the world around us. As regards the world of commercial aviation, the manufacturers’ relationship with the apartheid regime continues to cast long shadows: every time we board one of the long-haul, non-stop flights that have become the mainstay of international travel we are, in effect, benefiting from apartheid design. In the final analysis, this begs the question of the extent to which other ‘benefits’ of apartheid design may still be hidden in plain sight.

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Notes

1. The search, known as Operation Resolve, was carried out at depths greater than 4.5 kilometres.
2. Cecil Margo was himself an airman whose service with the South African Air Force during the Second World War earned him the Distinguished Service Order and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He had previously presided over several other high-profile air crash investigations. These included the 1961 crash over (then) Northern Rhodesia in which the Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, was killed, as well as the 1986 crash, just inside South African territory, in which Samora Machel, the President of Mozambique, was killed.
3. Cecil S Margo et al., "Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Helderberg Air Disaster/Foreword and Synopsis," *Wikisource*, 14 May 1990, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Report_of_the_Board_of_Inquiry_into_the_Helderberg_air_disaster/Foreword_and_Synopsis.
4. According to the Margo Commission Report, "the Chief of the South African Defence Force confirmed that no weapons or explosive devices were carried in the aeroplane for the SA Defence Force. The Executive General Manager of Armscor confirmed that there was no consignment of cargo to or from Armscor on the aeroplane" (Margo et al., "Report of the Board of Inquiry"). Airline executives at the TRC hearing reiterated this, emphasising that the airline's core business was the transporting of passengers rather than cargo. Anecdotal evidence from former pilots, SAA ground staff and their associates contradicted this, with one pilot claiming he had seen missile parts being loaded onto his aircraft. The wife of the ill-fated *Helderberg's* pilot, Dawie Uys, claimed that Uys had been forced to fly a cargo of live ammunition from London, and had sent a copy of the cargo manifest to his home address to protect himself. Hennie van Vuuren notes more compelling circumstantial evidence in the form of "a secret cable from the military attaché in Brussels to Armscor in 1977 [in which] coded reference was made to the shipment of 'Twenty S plus W' (thought to be from the gun manufacturer Smith and Wesson). The cryptic message said, 'Shipment per SAA.'" See Hennie van Vuuren, *Apartheid Guns and Money: A Tale of Profit* (London: Hurst & Company, 2018), 124.
5. David Klatzow, *Steeped in Blood: The Life and Times of a Forensic Scientist* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2010), 127.
6. Paul N Edwards and Gabrielle Hecht, "History and the Technopolitics of Identity: The Case of Apartheid South Africa," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36:3 (2010), 619-639, at 619.
7. Langdon Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Politics?," *Daedalus*, 109:1 (1980), 121-36.
8. Jet technology developed during the Second World War had been successfully applied to commercial aviation at the start of the decade, first in Britain by the aircraft manufacturer De Havilland, hotly pursued by Tupolev in the Soviet Union and, by the end of the decade, Douglas and Boeing in the United States.
9. Jenifer van Vleck, "An Airline at the Crossroads of the World: Ariana Afghan Airlines, Modernization, and the Cold War," *History and Technology*, 25:1 (2009), 3-24, at 4.
10. Duncan Cumming, "Aviation in Africa," *African Affairs*, 6:242 (1962), 29-39, at 35.
11. *Ibid.*, 36. Remarking on the effect of aviation on Cold War politics, Cumming noted that travel to countries behind the Iron Curtain had become as commonplace for African politicians as travel to Europe: "Tokyo and Peking are certainly not too far away. How much easier is it for land-locked Czecho-Slovakia to make contact with Guinea, or for Peking to send experts to the West coast by using aeroplanes" (36).
12. Van Vleck, "An Airline at the Crossroads," 7.
13. Federico Freschi, "From Volksargitektuur to Boere Brazil: Afrikaner Nationalism and the Architectural Imaginary of Modernity, 1936-66," in *Troubling Images: Visual Culture and the Politics of Afrikaner Nationalism*, eds Federico Freschi, Brenda Schmahmann and Lize van Robbroeck (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2020), 66-91.
14. Federico Freschi, "Afrikaner Nationalism, Modernity and the Changing Canon of 'High Art,' 1948-1976," in *The Visual Century – Volume 2*, ed. Lize van Robbroeck (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2011), 9-25, at 24.
15. Saul Dubow, *A Commonwealth of Knowledge: Science, Sensibility and White South Africa 1820-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 14.

16. The International Air Services Act (Air Services Act No. 51 of 1949) regulated domestic air services in favour of SAA and gave it a monopoly on international routes emanating from South Africa. The Act required airlines wishing to compete with SAA to prove, amongst other things, that a need existed, and that SAA was delivering an inadequate service. As Luke and Walters argue, these requirements “were virtually impossible to meet in the presence of the domination of SAA.” Rose See Luke and Jackie Walters, “Overview of the Developments in the Domestic Airline Industry in South Africa since Market Deregulation,” *JTSCM Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management*, 1:7 (2013), Art. #117, <https://jtscm.co.za/index.php/jtscm/article/view/117/173> (accessed 3 February 2020).
17. In 1948 a wartime airforce base at Palmietfontein, south of Johannesburg, replaced the Rand Central Airport – which could not accommodate larger post-Second World War airliners – as Johannesburg’s international airport while Jan Smuts Airport (now O.R. Tambo International Airport) was being built.
18. Jenifer Van Vleck, *Empire of the Air: Aviation and the American Ascendancy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 242.
19. The first SAA Comet was delivered on the same day the new Jan Smuts Airport opened, with the first jet service in SAA livery commencing the following day (see Ben R Guttery, *Encyclopedia of African Airlines* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1998), 187). One of the SAA Comets, designated G-ALYY, was the same aircraft that had made the inaugural flight and was also among the first passenger jets to crash. The loss of G-ALYY, the second Comet to fall from the sky without any immediately obvious cause, led to the grounding of the Comet fleet while the cause of the crash was determined. Metal fatigue as a result of continued pressurisation and depressurisation of the fuselage was found to be the problem. The American aircraft manufacturers Douglas and Boeing benefited from De Havilland’s misfortune, and although the redesigned Comet continued in operation, it never regained its commercial foothold as airlines switched their allegiance to the faster and more spacious Douglas DC-8 and Boeing 707 aircraft.
20. Ieuan Griffiths, “Airways Sanctions against South Africa,” *Area*, 21:3 (1989), 249-59, at 254.
21. See Freschi, “From Volksargitektuur.”
22. The Afrikaans parallel caption, “geveulde weelde op ons Boeing stratostraler” [winged luxury on our Boeing jetliner (or literally, strato-jet)], follows the same principle of internal rhyme, if less catchily.
23. One of these, named *Pretoria*, crashed on take-off from Windhoek en route to London on 20 April 1968. With the loss of 123 people (with five survivors), it was the most lethal crash in the airline’s history before the loss of the *Helderberg*.
24. This would be followed by a decision taken at the UN General Assembly in 1973 to declare apartheid a crime against humanity.
25. GH Pirie, “Aviation, Apartheid and Sanctions: Air Transport to and from South Africa, 1945-1989,” *GeoJournal*, 22:3 (1990), 231-40, at 234.
26. Anthony Sampson, *Empires of the Sky: The Politics, Contests and Cartels of World Airlines* (London: Bloomsbury Rader, 1984), n.p. E-version, A&C Black, 2012.
27. Pirie, “Aviation,” 238.
28. As Griffiths noted at the height of airways sanctions in 1989, “European airlines are reluctant to give up routes which are commercially successful because of strong business links with, and large, prosperous European immigrant communities in, South Africa” (“Airways Sanctions,” 254).
29. Van Vuuren, *Apartheid Guns and Money*, 124.
30. Sampson, *Empires of the Sky*, n.p.
31. This was made clear by Aguiinaldo Lisboa Ramos, Cape Verde’s Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, who, following the United States ban on SAA in 1987, told the *New York Times* that “There is no other country as dependent on South Africa as we are. South Africa has provided our single major source of income” (Clifford D May, “Fighting Apartheid Despite the Cost,” *The New York Times*, 2 July 1987, 3). The effect of the US ban was devastating on the Cape Verdean economy, cutting its income by seven million dollars per week.
32. Steven D Jaffe, *Airspace Closure and Civil Aviation: A Strategic Resource for Airline Managers* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2015), 160.
33. *Ibid.*
34. As Pirie noted in 1990, “The economic dependence of the Republic’s southern African neighbours on their political adversary has dissuaded them from joining an anti-apartheid air blockade. Likewise, the penalties to black African states of denying overflying, landing and traffic rights to west-European airlines plying the South Africa route have diminished the force of the air embargo” (“Aviation,” 231).

35. Edwards and Hecht, "History," 620.
36. *Ibid.*, 626.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Jaffe, *Airspace Closure*, 160. Johannesburg airport's elevation is 1680 metres above sea level and it has an average temperature of 25 degrees centigrade. Windhoek is at 1719 metres, with an average temperature of 28 degrees centigrade.
39. Lionel Friedberg, *Springbok in the Sky Episode 3: Wings Across the World*, dir. Lionel Friedberg (Johannesburg: SABC Television, 1984).
40. Joe Sutter is known as the 'father' of the Boeing 747 as he was the chief engineer who oversaw the project of building an aircraft of unprecedented scale within a very tight timeframe: the production schedule required that the aircraft be rolled out two-and-a-half years after the completion of the first technical drawings.
41. Friedberg, *Springbok in the Sky*.
42. Identified in the film as 'Bill,' Kane was the director of sales in the Middle East for Boeing's Commercial Airplane division before his retirement in 1978. See Nancy Bartley, "W. Jerome 'Jerry' Kane, Former Boeing Exec Dead at 91," *The Seattle Times*, 17 December 2007, <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/boeing-aerospace/w-jerome-jerry-kane-former-boeing-exec-dead-at-91/> (accessed February 2020).
43. Friedberg, *Springbok in the Sky*.
44. *Ibid.*
45. The delivery flight of the first Boeing 747SP set a record for the longest non-stop flight by a commercial aircraft, at a flying time of 17 hours and 22 minutes.
46. Guttery, *Encyclopedia*, 190-191.
47. Edwards and Hecht, "History," 638.
48. Friedberg, *Springbok in the Sky*.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*
53. Jaffe, *Airspace Closure*, 161. Jaffe further notes that in addition to ensuring well-stocked maintenance warehouses, SAA engineers built their own galleys for the Boeing 737 and 747-300 fleets and developed computer programmes that were "used proactively to search for maintenance tasks required that could avoid costly engine shut-downs" (*Airspace Closure*, 161).
54. Edwards and Hecht, "History," 638.
55. Pirie, "Aviation," 234.
56. E Alona Evans, "South African Airways v. New York State Division of Human Rights. 315 N.Y.S. 2d 651," *American Journal of International Law*, 65:2 (1971), 403-05, at 403.
57. *Ibid.*, 405.
58. Griffiths puns that diplomatic relations with black African leaders were "Vorstered" during this period ("Airways Sanctions," 254).
59. President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, acting ostensibly for 'humanitarian' reasons but actually out of reasons of economic self-interest, opened Abidjan to SAA for technical and refuelling stops after secret engagements with the South African government. See Emmanuel Ndzeng Nyangone, "South Africa's Relations with Gabon and the Ivory Coast" (Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, History, University of Stellenbosch, 2008), 93.
60. John Conyers, Jr, "The United States' Growing Support for Racism in South Africa," *The Black Scholar*, 6:4 (1974), 32-8, at 36.
61. Computer technology was one of the most significant imports for the apartheid government, since its elaborate, race-based bureaucracy required increasingly complex systems to document and track citizens. See Edwards and Hecht, "History."
62. van Vuuren, *Apartheid Guns and Money*, 11.
63. Both Germany and France were involved in supporting the South African nuclear industry. Furthermore, in 1986 the Green Party in Germany exposed plans by the West German and South African governments to break the UN arms embargo. These discussions were led at the highest levels between the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and South African President PW Botha. See Open Secrets, "Declassified: Apartheid Profits – German U-boats," *Daily Maverick*, 16 November 2017, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-11-16-declassified-apartheid-profits-german-u-boats/> (accessed 25 February 2020).
64. Claude Bourillon, "La France doit-elle abandonner l'Afrique du Sud?," *Le Nouvelle Revue des Deux Mondes*, January 1978, 209-15, at 213. My translation of: "*Bien des industriels français avaient pris peu à peu conscience de l'intérêt qu'il y avait à travailler avec ce pays. C'est que les capitaux investis là-bas jouissent non seulement d'une des plus hautes rentabilités dans le monde, mais aussi d'une totale liberté de transfert en ce qui concerne les bénéfices réalisés.*"
65. Bourillon, "La France," 213. My translation of: "*... d'un allié naturel de l'Occident, qui par ailleurs s'efforce de résoudre ses problèmes avec bon sens.*"
66. Bourillon, "La France," 215. My translation of: "*Gageons que si nous perdons nos liens commerciaux et d'amitié avec ce pays, d'autres ne manqueront pas de prendre notre place.*"

67. 100. U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *United States Policy Towards South Africa: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on African Affairs, October 22, 1987 and June 22, 23 and 24, 1988*. One Hundredth Congress: First Session (Washington DC: GPO, 1988), 8.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid., 9.
70. Pirie, "Aviation," 236.
71. Guttery, *Encyclopedia*, 191.
72. Winner, "Do Artifacts," 125.
73. I acknowledge Bridie Lonie for this observation.



Figure 60

Donna Campbell, *Mahuika*, 2018, pingao, muka, 1200 x 800 cm. Exhibited in Kura: Embodied Mana Wahine, Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, New Zealand, 14 February to 1 March 2019. Modelled by Wini Waitoki. Collection of the artist.

Whiria te Whiri – Bringing the Strands Together

Donna Campbell

The Māori Fibre Arts as Spaces of Reclamation and Decolonisation

Since I was a child, I have always made things. I was taught how to sew, to knit, to crochet, keeping the hands busy and productive. I always enjoyed the transformation of thread to textile, and the practice of making and creating was as gratifying then as it is today. My experience was one of creativity and practicality and I am forever grateful to my mother passing on these skills to me as her mother did for her. However, the fact that I was taught these European arts and not our Māori arts is an example of the marginalisation of Māori knowledge and artistic practice. For me and other Māori children like me, the learning of European art forms established colonial arts and crafts as the norm, acceptable and superior to Māori arts. I did not realise this as a child, yet sewing, knitting and crochet was not an innocent pastime. Rather, it was another way in which Māori knowledge, language and culture was disrupted and devalued.

Several decades later, I am a Māori visual artist, or kairaranga (weaving artist) with a recently completed doctorate in contemporary Māori design in the woven arts, entitled *Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa*.¹ In this chapter, I provide examples of Māori design in the fibre arts as holistic affirmation of cultural connectedness despite the effects of colonial settler dominance. These art forms are a political praxis in that they are assertions of embodied identity and pathways to decolonisation.

Māori visual arts – raranga and whatu² in particular – provide an access point to our unique expression of the Māori world. The spiritual, intellectual and physical connection of woven textile design and the Māori world is acknowledged in creative practice. Embodied knowledge within these

cultural practices arises through a tactile and kinetic engagement, leading to understanding and awareness of cultural identity. Raranga and whatu are a union of theory and practice that embody ancestral memories. These memories are embedded within the cultural body of the weaver and the native weaving materials of the land. Re-connection to these memories through engaging with these art forms provide avenues of resistance and decolonisation.

Māori creative practice in all its forms is concerned with representation, the understandings mediated by the artworks, the intention of the maker and the perception of the audience. Representation then is not only about the right to determine ourselves politically, it also supports a form of voice through creative expression. This chapter provides three representations of my creative works Hinetitama, Hinenuitepō and Mahuika.

The chapter unfolds as follows. I first discuss some of the effects of assimilationist policies on Māori knowledge and practice. Weaving is one way to move past such hegemony. Second, artistic practice as resistance is discussed to highlight the ways cultural practices within weaving arts claim indigenous space and voice. Third, Kaupapa Māori³ and Mana Wahine⁴ theoretical frameworks are introduced to confirm and validate research from a Māori worldview and through my embodied practice as a kairaranga. Fourth, I turn to the notion of the cultural body as this encompasses the mind, body and spiritual connections. Following this, in the fifth section, I provide some details about the making of the creative works. Finally, the chapter turns to the creative works. Here the creation of contemporary woven garments for specific atua wāhine (Māori female deities) brings their stories into the present, re-visited and re-remembered. The re-centralisation of atua wāhine within our present-day realities, disrupts the colonial patriarchal discourse of the Māori world, and a reclamation of embodied Māori knowledge emerges.

Weaving Our Way Out of Assimilationist Policies

Assimilationist policies in Aotearoa meant that Māori were educated to believe that our arts, knowledge systems and cultural understandings were of no value. Māori artists, however, are talking back to these colonising strategies. The disruptions that underpin the marginalisation of Māori knowledge systems are due to colonial control that can negatively impact a cultural sense of self. Systems of European settler colonialism have been delivered through

the assimilationist policies of the education system since the 1840s.⁵ Moana Jackson⁶ describes education as fundamental to the colonising process. We were educated to believe that our own knowledge systems and cultural understandings were not worthy in order to “dispossess us of our lands, lives and power.”⁷ These pervasive systems of colonialism have the effect of subverting the autonomy of Māori knowledge structures. The absence of Māori art forms and abundance of the European was an insidious symptom of the colonising process.⁸ As a result, I was growing up in a world that reinforced a disdain for Māori thinking and knowledge, which resulted in denial of cultural identity, and connectedness for me. This sense of loss has only become apparent to me after many years of reclamation of the “being” of being Māori through the arts. The learning and teaching of raranga and whatu consistently renews my cultural sense of self, identity, and mana wahine through reclaiming of Māori knowledge through creative practice.

Weaving acknowledges Māori ways of knowing, through the practice of tikanga⁹ associated with the art form. When we harvest prepare and weave our materials, we engage in tikanga that has been handed down from our tūpuna¹⁰ through karakia,¹¹ tikanga and practice of time-honoured techniques. The daily performance of these cultural imperatives assist and remind us that knowing our culture, our indigeneity, is central to our well-being, providing access to sources of awareness of, and resistance to, our colonised realities. Connecting with a collective practice similarly provides an antidote to the individualism of the modern Western world we live in.

The arts of raranga and raranga whatu are often carried out through wānanga, a collective practice that creates an environment of support, of sharing and learning and a sense of solidarity. Wānanga use Māori approaches and cultural learning contexts, very different from other forms of Pākehā¹² learning sites. Wānanga provide a context that supports a holistic approach to the purpose of gathering together. This can be in a teaching and learning space or dissemination of research, or practitioners coming together. Through the methods of wānanga, physical, spiritual and intellectual development can be sustained. Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal¹³ talks about the term wānanga as referring to methods and processes that brings about the creation of new knowledge. He advocates wānanga as an activity that creates common understanding held within a group of people,¹⁴ and as a process enabling the creative mind or conscious awareness

to emerge. The wānanga process enables cultural pedagogy that facilitates the practice of tikanga Māori and is a powerful vehicle to learning and re-learning information.

In a similar way, the pedagogy of wānanga engages in what Graham Smith¹⁵ calls indigenous transforming praxis, bringing together theory, action and reflection emergent as conscious awareness and transformation. In terms of raranga wānanga, the passing on of techniques, applications and design theory is part and parcel of working within a collective that acknowledges the whakapapa¹⁶ of the art forms. These wānanga create the space for critical reflection in the sharing of Māori creative practice grounded in Kaupapa Māori theories.

Artistic Practice as Resistance

The practices of raranga and whatu engage all the senses: frequently an internal understanding of self, otherwise unarticulated, can be brought forth. Through the feel, the sound, and the smell of the harakeke,¹⁷ the opportunities and challenges of creating taonga¹⁸ that your tūpuna have made before you can connect one to embodied Māori knowledge that has transformative power. Raranga and whatu are active processes on an essential level. These practices unite mind and body, “embracing the totality of our sensual perception and experience rather than intellectual activity alone.”¹⁹ Accordingly, experience can become knowledge, you know because you have been in it. These practices are taonga, which is defined by Rose Pere as “the highly prized practices and beliefs of our forebears, our ancestors.”²⁰ Putting these beliefs into practice is to manifest mātauranga Māori²¹ drawing on every experience of life. As the practices of raranga and whatu are passed on to us from our ancestors, they are imbued with mātauranga Māori. As Pere²² illustrates, the knowledge of ancestors is valued in the present, and through creative practice in the fibre arts we can maintain and pass on these treasures.

While contemporary taonga created in the fibre arts draw on collective memories, they can also address dominant artistic boundaries of Māori art through the weaving arts. Like other Māori artists, contemporary kairaranga are not always content to replicate the taonga examples left for us, but to push the artistic limits to create works that engage and challenge. We can engage in what bell hooks calls cultural legacies.²³ For me, the cultural legacy is raranga

and whatu, the legacy of innovation our tūpuna have left us. bell hooks reminds us that “cultural legacies can sustain us, protect us against the cultural genocide that is daily destroying our past.”²⁴ Through working with Māori fibre arts practice, we keep our customary practices present and evolving;²⁵ tapping into this knowing or mātauranga Māori, we are potentially empowered to heal and transform our lives. Margaret Randall states “authentic power comes from a fully developed sense of self, possible only when both individual and collective memory is retrieved.”²⁶ I agree with Randall that understanding how one is located within the collective, past and present is key to coming to know the self. Essential to the experience of the weaving arts is the collective expressed as whanaungatanga (kinship rights and obligations), connectedness and development of reciprocal relationships. I suggest that when practising the cultural legacies embodied through the weaving arts, we are reminded of collective memory embedded in our bodies, minds and spirits. These are tūpuna memories, treasures and ceremony that affirm Māori knowledge as vital and valid in the modern world.

Retrieving collective memory potentially begins with individual transformation, the conscientisation that Smith writes about.²⁷ The conditions for transformation need to be created, spaces such as weaving wānanga where the space is Māori centred and co-created with those involved. In these transformative spaces, each individual experiences the expression of individual and collective truth and beauty through working with Kaupapa Māori principles. Creating transformative spaces for me is engaging in the practice. The very act of using our native plants, continuing and perpetuating our tūpuna gifts, creating new innovative taonga from taonga tuku iho²⁸ is the practice. This is how I claim being an authentic, empowered Māori Indigenous being; whole and complete. For me, as a wahine Māori, authenticity and empowerment is expressed in how we practise our art forms, representing from a Māori voice, through the taonga we create.

Kaupapa Māori - Mana Wāhine

Kaupapa Māori theoretical praxis is developed from within Māori communities to reclaim self-determination or tino rangatiratanga.²⁹ Leonie Pihama explains Kaupapa Māori as “conceptually based within Māori cultural and philosophical traditions,”³⁰ and as such these theories are naturally

privileged in my creative practice research. Graham Smith further argues “the deliberate co-option of the term ‘theory’ has been an attempt to challenge dominant Pākehā notions of theory and provide “counter-hegemonic practice and understandings” in terms of how theory is constructed, defined, selected, interpreted and applied.”³¹ One of the key qualities of a Kaupapa Māori approach is an organic, cyclical design process that is fluid and cumulative. Graham Smith positions Kaupapa Māori praxis as “a viable, organic ‘theory’ of transformation of Māori educational and cultural crises”³² reminding us of the need to develop our own theory(ies) to talk back to dominant hegemony. Cyclical refers to the nature of becoming; the design work and research is always in a state of becoming, and at times it is also in a state of unknowing. These stages are a dynamic cyclical flux the centre of which is where the magic of creative research happens. The cyclical in Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) is illustrated by the kaupapa³³ set down by our ancestors³⁴ a view of the natural environment. This is pertinent to design praxis in raranga and whatu since the harakeke responds to the seasons, day and night, dormancy and flowering. The life of the plant flows vigorously from the roots, through the leaves, through the flowering korari.³⁵ The plant is dormant in the winter, until the spring where the putiputi (flowers) attract the tūi (parson bird), and then the renewal cycle begins. Kaupapa Māori theories and methodologies make provision for a non-linear approach, such as the life cycle of the harakeke plant, to the design research. Where I begin with the material, with an open mind, then through the doing, ideas arise, responding to the environment, an organic process of creation.

The adoption of Kaupapa Māori theory in Māori design research affirms our cultural ways of knowing upholding Māori belief systems and practices. I experience Kaupapa Māori praxis daily in my creative work and lived reality, as I believe many Māori do. However, the extension of everyday practices of Kaupapa Māori applied to theoretical approaches are designed to challenge “Pākehā dominant interests’ [through] a cycle of conscientisation, resistance and transformative action.”³⁶ I suggest that through the practices of raranga and whatu we can become aware of our present state of being. Awareness and sometimes more importantly unawareness of self becomes apparent through engagement with the cultural knowledge and tikanga of the weaving arts. As Smith³⁷ states, we cannot become conscientised if we are not aware. Therefore, the weaving arts can be a catalyst to a critical cultural awareness. Through the

practice we learn about ourselves, how we function as individuals, how we contribute to a collective and how the collective contributes to us. Becoming conscious can set the conditions for a critical resistance to existing realities that are not supportive of Indigenous self-determination. As a lived experience, raranga and whatu are practiced from the principles of tikanga, which inform the principles of Kaupapa Māori theory. Kaupapa Māori theoretical approaches frame creative processes that can contribute to transformation of people affected by the corrosion of Indigenous knowledge's through colonisation. Linda Smith suggests that colonialism and imperialism are interconnected, colonialism being one of the expressions of imperialism.³⁸ Both these forms of power suppress Indigenous peoples politically and economically, resulting in a loss of faith in Indigenous knowledge by Indigenous people. Kaupapa Māori methodologies centralise Māori knowledge in challenging the privileging of Western knowledge within academic institutions.

Kaupapa Māori principles applied in my creative practice inform the design and creation of new works. As the harakeke plant is transformed into a textile so Kaupapa Māori is a transformative theory that is enacted through Māori creative practice. Graham Smith presents these principles as crucial 'change factors' in Kaupapa Māori praxis. Aspects of these principles inform and give meaning to my creative work and are illustrated. Aspects of Tino Rangatiratanga, the principle of "self-determination and relative autonomy,"³⁹ are carried out within Māori creative practice research via the researcher developing ideas with communities to benefit said communities. Cultural identity affirmation through re-connecting to whenua⁴⁰ through the fibre arts provides aspects of control in life, which are often missing in a marginalised, disenfranchised society.

The principle Taonga Tuku Iho, the "validation and legitimation of cultural aspirations and identity,"⁴¹ is inherent within the creation of taonga from the whenua, and from and through our taonga plants. The reality of creating something from one's own cultural identity that belongs to one's own culture; from the land that one belongs to creates an awareness of disrupted identity. Focused healing and awareness can then occur through artistic praxis. Ako Māori the "incorporation of culturally preferred pedagogy"⁴² underpins the sharing of raranga and raranga whatu; learning in collective environments instils a belonging to something bigger than ourselves, as creating an awareness of whakapapa, of the art form and ultimately of the self.

Whanaungatanga arises through the praxis of raranga and whatu that “incorporate structures which emphasise the ‘collective’ rather than the individual.”⁴³ Creating functional as well as culturally embodied taonga can contribute on many levels to the “kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga principle of mediation of socio-economic difficulties”⁴⁴ through commercial and culturally appropriate decision making, by the weaver and collaborators. The collective nature of the practice brings weavers together through shared and collective vision/philosophy. This collective vision and philosophy includes involvement of collaborators, a collective investment that provides agency for all involved through the art form. Individuals involved in the collective experiences their own development through their own praxis all the while contributing to the whole.

Mana Wahine theory and discourse is often understood to be a type of Māori feminism. Fundamentally, Mana Wahine theory is about raising consciousness of the diverse expressions of wāhine Māori.⁴⁵ As Māori, we can draw on feminist perspectives, however Mana Wahine is drawn from Māori understandings. Mana Wahine theory is a Kaupapa Māori theoretical framework based in mātauranga Māori that challenges colonial patriarchal structures by providing a platform with which to critique said structures. Mana Wahine theory takes into account multiple issues faced by wāhine Māori, including issues of patriarchy, colonisation, language and culture loss, and marginalisation. Naomi Simmonds writes that Mana Wahine “as an extension of Kaupapa Māori, is located in the wider indigenous struggle that has emerged because ‘we’ were unwilling to continue to try and ‘find’ ourselves in the world, text and images of others.”⁴⁶ Mana Wahine is of this place Aotearoa, developed from the Māori experience. Wāhine Māori have the right to express and define ourselves through our own experiences of the world, and to state our own positions in our own world. Mana Wahine theories embrace the diversity of wāhine Māori worlds. In saying this though it can never be assumed that all wāhine Māori have similar understandings.⁴⁷ Our experiences of the world and how we see it are diverse and unique to each one of us. To reclaim our voices, the development of Mana Wahine theories by Māori women for whanau,⁴⁸ hapū⁴⁹ and iwi⁵⁰ is critical.⁵¹

Leonie Pihama states that there is a “need for Māori women to speak to and for ourselves.”⁵² Māori women’s artistic expressions are manifestos for challenging discourses of patriarchal and colonial dominance by reclaiming our voices and speaking back. On Māori women’s creativity, Kathy Irwin reminds

us “creativity is a highly discursive process, that it doesn’t happen at set times like at nine o’clock on a Monday morning.”⁵³ I can relate to this as my creative practice involves working around everything else that is happening in life. Creativity cannot be turned on and off, subsequently much of my design work formulates when I am doing other things, driving, gardening, writing, through dreams and meditation. When I can find space to manifest my design thinking and create, I have a settled sense of wellbeing. Irwin goes on to say:

Writing, painting, singing, [weaving] our world’s is a critical part of Māori women’s survival kit! Telling about what life is like for us, in our diversity, makes our stories visible. It allows us to ‘stand in sunshine’ in our own right, not in the shadows of others nor as reflections of anyone else’s image. It allows us to be whole, real and visible, as ourselves.⁵⁴

The creative works selected for this chapter are underpinned by Mana Wahine theories; the works are woven sculptural body adornments that represent aspects of particular atua wāhine, while also reflecting aspects of human traits. These creative works embody mana wahine, mana tāne and mana tangata⁵⁵ and are referred to as female. They are taonga drawn from whakapapa Māori, made from the whakapapa of raranga and whatu, and from our native plants. They are each named as they were created. Māori taonga are named as a cultural practice, we name taonga to acknowledge the mauri⁵⁶ inherent within and they are always referred to in the personal pronoun.⁵⁷ Transformation is at the heart of raranga and whatu creative practice focusing upon the transformation of harakeke to vessel, but also transformation of Māori cultural affirmation in colonised spaces.

The Cultural Body

Colonisation has designated the indigenous cultural body as inferior, a site of colonisation constructed by physical and spiritual violence.⁵⁸ I draw on the notion of the cultural body to frame the discussion of the selective creative outputs from the completed doctoral project *Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa*. The cultural body is the Māori body and is constructed through Māori worldviews. I use the cultural body notion as a theoretical space in which the creative works are realised, sourced deeply from this place, this land, informed by Māori ontology. Selected works presented here are exemplars of Māori design

that speak back to colonial patriarchal ideologies that do not acknowledge inherent indigenous Māori knowledges, specifically knowledges within the feminine spheres. Linda Tuhiwai Smith points out that Māori women have been effectively written out of history through written accounts of ethnocentric researchers.⁵⁹ “Māori women belong to the group of women in the world who have been historically constructed as ‘Other’ by white patriarchies and white feminists.”⁶⁰ This has resulted in a double devaluation of the embodied wisdom in contemporary understandings of the weaving arts – non-male and non-white. The common thread experienced by many is the marginalisation of the feminine, within the Māori and the Pākehā worlds. Western constructs of gender are surpassed by the interpretation of mana wahine as the embodiment of all the facets of the feminine essence, as well as the masculine essence. Mana Wahine theories contribute to the deconstruction of gender constructs by acknowledging fluid expressions of identity and the many facets that make up a person. Expression of key elements of the self are constricted by binary gender roles where one is expected to act, to dress, to take on roles dictated by Western constructs of gender. These works stem from the theory of the cultural body as a political stance critiquing the colonial project that erased, marginalised and suppressed Te Ao Māori. As such, I claim my creative body of work, like my physical body, is a body of resistance to colonisation.

Indigenous Māori knowledge is deeply rooted through many generations in the land. The cultural body notion developed from my own belief systems and ontology is a decolonised site. The theory of the cultural body encompasses the mind, body and spiritual connections. An idea of a body that knows its indigenous self, that draws strength from the earth where all knowledge resides. Through this notion, Papatūānuku, the earth parent, and Ranginui, the sky parent, are the cultural bodies that are the source of life.

Papatūānuku and Ranginui are the cultural bodies that envelop us, and as such I am aware of their relationship from a kairaranga perspective. The artworks that are created through and of raranga and raranga whatu are imbued with Te Ao Māori, and a manifestation of the relationship between these two cultural bodies; a kairaranga is the conduit through which these two bodies come into connection with each other. The mist that rises from Papatūānuku and the rain that descends from Ranginui are physical manifestations of the longing these two atua have for each other.

Consequently, the creation of a work of art from te pā harakeke,⁶¹ a manifestation of mist and rain, Papatūānuku and Ranginui, is also a physical manifestation of their relationship and would not be possible without their nurturing of the worlds we dwell in and on. Therefore, weaving spaces can be ritualised spaces that validate Māori centred cultural practices, which guide the mahi⁶² being created. Whatever form they take, these woven works are considered as cultural bodies of knowledge being vessels, that embody tikanga and whakapapa. Be they kete (basket), kākahu (garment) or sculptural works, they are sources of knowledge when read from a knowledgeable cultural base or Māori worldview. By creating taonga that manifests from these cultural bodies, an affirmation of the cultural Māori body becomes available.

Becoming and identity are intertwined when we can access our cultural bodies of knowing. We can also acknowledge our own bodies as cultural bodies. Through raising consciousness, or conscientisation, the cultural body we inhabit becomes known as aware Indigenous bodies, thinking, feeling, doing, and being through the process. The Indigenous body as a colonised vessel has no control but to be subsumed by systems of Western power. The notion of the cultural body as kaupapa encompasses the hinengaro⁶³ and wairua⁶⁴ of a person as inseparable in the expression of being. Through fibre arts design and practice, the cultural body of the kairaranga thinks through the practices of raranga and whatu becoming aware of the treasures our tūpuna have left us that can heal and restore us.

Papatūānuku and Ranginui are connected creating a whole, existing in a holistic relationship, so too can we mindfully experience our cultural body and cultural thinking as one in a holistic manner. Therefore, our mātauranga encompassing mind-body-spirit connections, links us intrinsically with the Māori world. I suggest that weaving is a portal to access our mātauranga that affirms and celebrates us holistically. To consider Papatūānuku and Ranginui as cultural bodies is then to reflect on our own bodies as created of, and from Papatūānuku and Ranginui. The practices of tikanga around and for the body, the mind and the spirit are performed as integral to our Indigenous worlds. Through the practices of raranga and whatu, we can free our minds to allow the gifts of our tūpuna to flow through us. When the conditions are beneficial, we can re-remember our original instructions inscribed on and through our bodies.

Notes on Making

These works are reflections of the goddess within us: they are with us wherever we are, we can commune with them drawing strength and mana wahine guidance. In my studio the praxis of creative practice encompasses making and thinking, responding to, and resolving design issues all the while keeping in mind the original vision. I like to make work that challenges me in technique, form and design. The process is very much a dialogue between the material, Te Ao Māori and me. It is a reciprocal relationship where the material responds, and the maker responds, at times vice versa, but always an interchange. An example of the materials speaking is when I am having difficulty with a whakairo or pattern that I am familiar with but just cannot get right. In these moments I need to slow down, listen and reflect on the state of mind I am in as to why there is struggle. The material is demanding more attention. More often than not, I realise that I need to be more mindful, to honour the challenge inherent within the material and the whakairo and bring humility to the process.

These moments are in-between knowing and not knowing. Spaces of unknowing are often experienced in my practice where this dialogue arises, and I am guided by what the material is willing to do with my manipulation. Trinh T Minh-Ha talks about the “manifestation of the infinity, of letting things come to oneself in all liveliness, maintaining infinity listening to the intervals manifesting the in-between.”⁶⁵ Her words accurately describe the state of unknowing, of the in-between space of allowing the material to speak while at the same time thinking through the body that is making. Minh-ha calls these moments out in or inside out moments, which I interpret as a fluid state of moving between the material and oneself then back again. I call it listening to the material, allowing the material to stay true to itself, while at the same time manipulating the material to my vision. A kind of dance, that is for me the magic of the creative process. These out in and inside out moments are woven together through the creative process and never ending. To borrow the words of Kiyomo Iwata “evolution is so much a part of life. That’s what the creative process is about. There is never an ending.”⁶⁶ Even when the work is created there is reflection, observation and critique brought to the work, to develop and build on what has gone before. In what follows, the selected works are the atua wāhine Hinetetitama, Hinenuitepō and Mahuika. These pieces are

Figure 61

Donna Campbell, *Hinetitama*, 2018, harakeke, muka, synthetic dyes, 1200 x 800 cm. Exhibited in Kura: Embodied Mana Wahine, Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, New Zealand, 14 February to 1 March 2019. Modelled by Waikaremoana Waitoki. Collection of the artist.



named for aspects of atua wāhine and are designed to represent their mana. The materials and form denoting their status within pūrākau,⁶⁷ acknowledging key roles they play. Aroha Yates-Smith writes that “atua wāhine held powerful positions in Māori cosmology, their roles complementing those of their well-known male counterparts and providing a balance within the pantheon.”⁶⁸ These works centralise the powerful female influence of atua wāhine in one of the most popularised pūrākau in Māori cosmology, where the demigod Māui is the protagonist and his kuia or atua wāhine are made invisible in contemporary retellings. Māui is a cultural hero throughout Polynesia⁶⁹ nevertheless it is clear

that he would not have succeeded in his endeavours if were not aided by his kuia or atua wāhine.⁷⁰ These creative works situate atua wāhine in the Maui narratives as the catalytic forces, vital to the success of his achievements.

Hinetītama – Hinenuitepō

These two works reflect the transformation of Hinetītama of the Dawn to the deity Hinenuitepō of the Night. These pieces represent the phases of transformation she went through to finally express her own mana wahine. Hinetītama is known as the mother of humankind, the first true human “being a fusion of the godly and earthly elements and born of woman.”⁷¹ She was the daughter of the deity Tānemahuta and Hineahuone who bound earthly night to earthly day. After discovering that Tānemahuta was not only her husband, but also her father she discarded the form of Hinetītama to become Hinenuitepō the protector of souls. This corset represents the liminal space where Hinetitama chooses to transform into the state of Hinenuitepō.

The piece *Hinetītama*, (Figure 61) is framed by a dark weave, within the weave are ridges and whiri indicating the confusion she faced when discovering her father and husband were the same man. The piece reflects a fragmentation of self, a breaking apart and coming back together at the same time, in the form of the whakairo karu hāpuku.⁷² The piece represents her self-reflection and her ultimate decision to become Hinenuitepō. As she decides to alter her state, she informs her partner pragmatically, “you will take care of our living mortal children and I will care for them when they die and move to next plane of existence.” Hinetītama ultimately decides her own fate reclaiming her influential feminine mana.

Hinenuitepō

Hinenuitepō translates as the Great Lady of the Long Endless Night. This body adornment (cape) (Figure 62) is created from an exploratory conical raranga textile, designed to reflect the mana of this atua wahine. In the pūrākau of Hinenuitepō and Māui, he attempts to make men immortal by entering her body, by way of her vagina to eat her heart and emerge from her mouth. She is wakened by his attempt and crushes him between her legs. In the case of the Hinenuitepō works, the conical textile is intended to exude beauty, danger and power. They encapsulate female sexual power, while protecting the wearer. I am

Figure 62

Donna Campbell, *Hinenuitepō*, 2018, harakeke, muka, synthetic dyes, 1200 x 800 cm. Exhibited in Kura: Embodied Mana Wahine, Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, New Zealand, 14 February to 1 March 2019. Modelled by Nadia Jones. Collection of the Waikato Museum. Hamilton.



interested in designing and creating sculptural garments that become animated when worn and can stand alone as art objects.

Mahuika

Mahuika (Figure 60) is the atua wahine who possesses fire in the Māori world. The collar is woven from raranga method with pingao. Pingao is a rare and coveted material for the contemporary weaver because of its various shades of gold, and its scarcity, used in this piece as acknowledgement of the gift of fire Mahuika brings to the world. Muka⁷³ is also used here and has been extracted from harakeke rau⁷⁴ that have light discolorations or flecks on the rau. These flecks are made by fungal infections that make pinkish red patches through the

rau which then affect the muka (flax fibre). This muka was used intentionally in the creation of Mahuika as the whenu are tinged with red pinkish patches. These tinges of colour denote not only the fire children Mahuika contained in her fingernails and toenails, they also allude to the singed wings of the hawk that Māui transformed into trying to escape the flames of Mahuika's fire. The piece Mahuika is a deconstructed kākahu,⁷⁵ using traditional methods of miro to spin the whenu, and whatu to weave the whenu together. I love to work with muka, through creating customary korowai⁷⁶ my experience is of containing, controlling and restraining the fibres, with this work I felt a liberation of the materials, as well as myself. The freedom of fire, the power of Mahuika, this piece celebrates these qualities expressed through mana wahine.

In Conclusion

Many of the processes of raranga and whatu are spaces where the mind can be present in the moment accepting an unconscious emotional connection to the customary materials. Through the senses of smell and touch, potentially embodied knowing that dwells in muscle memory is triggered. I am suggesting here that tūpuna memories are embodied within the muscles of our bodies, and that engaging in these practices, this knowing can be accepted and acknowledged. Like Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine theories, raranga and raranga whatu are cultural forms and expressions of praxis. As kairaranga, we create taonga informed by the creative genius of our tūpuna from the native plants of the land. These ageless practices and the taonga we create are permeated with our own present realities. The taonga then carry this tūpuna knowledge into the future in multiple forms. The practices of raranga and raranga whatu not only transform the materials the kairaranga is using, but also the kairaranga themselves. These practices become self-affirming, culturally affirming and ultimately decolonising.

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2. Raranga – weaving of leaf material; whatu – finger twining of the fibers extracted from the leaves of the harakeke plant (*phormium tenax*).
3. Kaupapa Māori theory is based in Māori understandings. The legitimacy of te reo Māori, tikanga and mātauranga Māori is centralized. Māori ways of knowing, doing and understandings are validated.

4. Female Mana. Everyone has innate mana, a person with mana although spiritually powerful, influential and courageous, they are humble. Mana can be handed down, handed down by generations of tūpuna, and can be conferred to people for their great words and deeds.
 5. J. Simon, ed., *Nga kura Maori: The native school's system 1867-1969* (Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 1998).
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 7. Ibid., 39.
 8. R. Panoho, "Maori: At the centre, on the margins," in *Headlands: Thinking through New Zealand art*, ed. M. Barr (Sydney, Australia: Intelink Pty Ltd, 1992), 123-134.
 9. Tikanga are cultural imperatives enacted with respectful ritual and ceremony. Contemporary Māori life is imbued with tikanga and integrated into daily actions. Tikanga from a Māori world view is the 'right way of doing things.'
 10. ancestors
 11. Karakia are incantations acknowledging connections to the environment, to Māori atua, and used to clear spaces to the spiritual realms.
 12. New Zealander of European origin.
 13. Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, *Wānanga: The Creative Potential of Mātauranga Māori*. Wellington, New Zealand: Mauriora-ki-te-Ao/Living Universe Ltd, 2011.
 14. Ibid., 43.
 15. G. Smith, "Kaupapa Māori Theory: Indigenous Transforming of Education," in *Critical Conversations in Kaupapa Māori*, eds. T. Hoskins and A. Jones (Wellington, New Zealand: Huia Publishers, 2017), 79-94.
 16. Genealogy, lineage. The Māori worldview is that Māori whakapapa or genealogy connected with the land as well as with ancestors, and ascendants often retold in pūrākau or narratives of place, space and time.
 17. Harakeke is the native plant (*Phormium tenax*) used for raranga.
 18. Valued possession, object
 19. A. Schneider and C. Wright, *Contemporary art and Anthropology*, (Oxford, United Kingdom: Berg, 2006), 16.
 20. R. Pere and Te Kohanga Reo Trust, *Ako: Concepts and learning in the Māori tradition* (Wellington, New Zealand: Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 1994), 69.
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 23. B. Hooks, *Art on my mind: Visual politics* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1995).
 24. Ibid., 162.
 25. See M. Pendergrast, *Feathers & fibre: A survey of traditional and contemporary Maori craft* (Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books Ltd 1984); A. Tamarapa, "Ngā kākahu o Te Papa: The cloaks of Te Papa," in *Whatu Kākahu Māori Cloaks* ed. A. Tamarapa (Wellington, New Zealand: Te Papa Press, 2011), 94-175; M. Evans and R. Ngarimu, *The Art of Māori weaving* (Wellington, New Zealand: Huia Publishers, 2005); T. Maihi and M. Lander, *He kete he kōrero: Every kete has a story* (Auckland, New Zealand: Reed Publishing, 2005); and D. Campbell, "Weaving the Skin," (Master's diss., Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design, 2005).
 26. M. Randall, *Gathering Rage: The Failure of Twentieth Century Revolutions to Develop a Feminist Agenda*, (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1992), 171.
 27. G. H. Smith, "The development of kaupapa Maori: Theory and praxis," (PhD diss., University of Auckland, New Zealand, 1997).
 28. Heirloom, something handed down, cultural property, heritage.
 29. G. H. Smith, "The development of kaupapa Maori: Theory and praxis," (PhD diss., University of Auckland, New Zealand, 1997).
 30. L. Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework" (PhD diss., University of Auckland New Zealand, 2001), 94.
 31. Smith, "The development of kaupapa Maori," 455.
 32. Smith, "The development of kaupapa Maori," 450.
 33. Philosophy, background or subject of process.
 34. R. Panoho, "A Search for authenticity: Towards a definition and strategies for cultural survival," *He Pukenga Korero* 2, no. 1 (1996), 20-25.
 35. Flower stem of the flax.
 36. Smith, "The development of kaupapa Maori."
 37. Ibid.
 38. L. T. Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*, (London, United Kingdom: Zed Books Ltd, 1999), 21.

39. G. Smith, "Kaupapa Maori Theory: Theorizing Indigenous Transformation of Education & Schooling," Paper presented at Kaupapa Maori Symposium, NZARE / AARE Joint Conference (Auckland, New Zealand, December 2003), 8, <https://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/2003/pih03342.pdf>.
40. Smith, "Kaupapa Maori Theory," 8.
41. Whenua is the Māori word for land, which also translates as the placenta. It is customary practice to bury the whenua (placenta) and pito (umbilical cord) of newborn babies in the earth, to return it to the land. Most often the whenua is buried in a place with ancestral connection, and is considered a physical and spiritual link to the place of birth. Retrieved from: <https://homebirth.org.nz/magazine/article/whenua-to-whenua/>.
42. Smith, "Kaupapa Maori Theory," 9.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., 10.
45. See Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies*; N. Te Awēkotuku, *Mana wahine Māori: Selected writings on Māori women's art, culture and politics* (Auckland, New Zealand: New Women's Press, 1991); Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring our Voices"; and N. Simmonds, "Mana wahine decolonizing politics," *Women's Studies Journal*, 25, no. 2 (2011), 11-25.
46. Simmonds, "Mana wahine decolonizing politics," 13.
47. Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring our Voices."
48. Whānau translates as extended family including physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions based in whakapapa.
49. Hapū can be described as sub-tribes or political units consisting of many whānau determined by genealogical descent.
50. Iwi can be translated as tribe or a confederation of tribes.
51. Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies*; Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring our Voices."
52. Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring our Voices," 25.
53. K. Irwin and I. Ramsden, *Toi wāhine the worlds of Māori women* (Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin 1995), 11.
54. Ibid., 12.
55. Female mana, male mana and the mana of all people. Everyone has innate mana, a person with mana although spiritually powerful, influential and courageous, they are humble. Mana can be handed down, handed down by generations of tūpuna, and can be conferred to people for their great words and deeds.
56. Life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions - the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity.
- Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located. Retrieved from: <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?dictionary=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&histLoanWords=&keywords=mauri>.
57. Te Awēkotuku, *Mana wahine Māori*.
58. See Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring our Voices."; Simmonds, "Mana wahine decolonizing politics."; L. T. Smith, "Māori women: Discourses, projects and mana wahine," in *Women and education in Aotearoa 2* eds. S. Middleton and A. Jones (Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books, 1992).
59. Smith, "Māori women," 170.
60. Ibid., 33.
61. Te Pā harakeke is the physical plantation of harakeke and also embodies the theories and philosophies, the mātauranga Māori of creative practice in the Māori fibre arts.
62. Work.
63. The mind, the intellect.
64. The spiritual side of a person.
65. Trinh T. Min-ha, "Just Speak Nearby, day 1 excerpt," 356 Mission, May 25, 2016, YouTube video, at [13:56], retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYpXm4E63S0>.
66. K. Iwata, "Kiyomi Iwata," interview by Seth Casana, *Whurk*, 28 (June 2015), retrieved from: <http://whurk.org/28/kiyomi-iwata>.
67. Māori narratives.
68. Aroha Yates-Smith, "Hine! E Hine! Rediscovering the feminine in Māori spirituality." PhD thesis., University of Waikato, 1998, 1.
69. Ibid.
70. Female elders.
71. P. Kahukiwa, and P. Grace, *Wahine toa women of Maori myth* (Auckland, New Zealand: William Collins Publishers Ltd, 1984), 70.
72. A raranga pattern.
73. Prepared flax fibre.
74. Leaves of the harakeke plant.
75. Kākahu is the general term for Māori clothing, in this context used to describe customary Māori clothing.
76. Korowai are defined as garments made by hand from customary materials, usually adorned with hukahuka or rolled muka tags.



Figure 63

Black Lives Matter/Stop Black Deaths in Custody rally on Gadigal Lands, Sydney, June 6, 2020. The 50,000-strong crowd was welcomed by Elder Aunty Rhonda Dixon Grovenor who then moved into the smoking ceremony amongst the parted crowd. Photo: Jason De Santolo.

Towards Design Sovereignty

Jason De Santolo
and Nadeena Dixon

Introduction

Over the past few years, Jason De Santolo and Nadeena Dixon have critically posed “Colonisation by Design” as a series of formative lectures in the School of Design at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). The conditions surrounding the 2020 lecture series created a space for deeper ‘yarns’ on shifting notions of sovereignty and self-determination for our people. Our reflections vibrated with concern and care for our lands, waters, Elders, kids and communities. If decolonising design education was to have a genuine long-term effect, then the pathways towards “design sovereignty” would have to Indigenise specific local pedagogies by challenging everyday injustices and the impacts of dispossession and state violence. This chapter is a reflexive first attempt towards articulating the contextualisation, intent and energy of our shared teaching experiences as a key factor in framing the emergence of an Indigenous-centred research hub that works towards design sovereignty on unceded lands.

During the semester the authors faced the challenge of providing critical lecture moments to design students, many of whom grew up in Australia but may have never met or talked to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person before. We attempted to share critical insights into Aboriginal knowledge systems as continuing practices cultivated over thousands of years. The lectures provided brief storied encounters of the ongoing role of design in the violent colonisation of Indigenous Peoples in Australia and were delivered across various classes and in increasingly complex and uncertain times. On reflection, there was always something missing, a feeling of not quite reaching the audience. The stories/teachings did not seem to make sense to the entire cohort, or inspire action.

For the teachings to relate to place, the studio model also demanded more practice-driven contexts and real-world research ecologies. In 2019 and 2020 the climate crisis, bush fires, Black Lives Matter movement and Covid-19 combined to dramatically reveal a raft of unsettling foundations to the design discipline and to the higher education model itself. The lockdown inspired us to think about how to create trust and emphasise individual and collective wellbeing. Major shifts occurred in the university model, Zoom emerged as the classroom, and immediately we were also developing new modalities for respectful teaching and learning models. It became clear that we could not separate the transformation of design education from the pandemic, or from the politics of our own cultural resurgences and global climate justice movements.

In 2020 the university sector was blatantly disregarded in the schema of Covid-19 incentives offered by the Australian government, including the Job Keeper wage-subsidy programme. Yet as the sector imploded, the School of Design at UTS remained committed to enacting a high-level framework guided by the Indigenous Education and Research Strategy and Policy 2019-2023 (Indigenous Strategy). The Indigenous Strategy provides guidance for university faculties as they transform and build the capacity to serve the Indigenous community and to engage with our knowledge systems in respectful, non-extractive ways. This means facing some of the larger unconscious racism and bias implicit in the colonial systems that founded these educational institutions.

In collaboration with partners and School of Design colleagues, we were able to begin a caring process of slowly visioning a way to navigate this complex decolonising process of re-orientation. By recognising the inherent limitations and failures of the sector, we also align with our casual and precariously contracted colleagues operating in various spaces, whether that be rank-and-file union involvement, design activism, design justice or decolonising design. Design Sovereignty will strategically undertake partnered projects and investigations that align with (the institutional) Indigenous Action Strategy 2020-2023. As a written codification, it will ensure a fluid, ongoing context for Design Sovereignty's emergence, and angle foundational projects within what Nadeena Dixon terms *Naa Murru* – in Gadigal, a dedicated pathway of re-orientation.

Dismantling Colonisation by Design: A Global Challenge

Our Colonisation by Design lectures covered political, cultural and creative design practices, often through a relational trajectory alongside the struggles of local Aboriginal movements. This was coupled most importantly with what was happening at community level, in terms of events, demands or actions arising at the time. During the 2019 and 2020 classes it was imperative to align with mass mobilisations, international solidarity and high-impact ecological contexts. In the classroom, students learnt about the importance of land-based healing in the Sydney Basin even as Covid-19, Black Lives Matter and Climate Justice disrupted business-as-usual. For the first time, students garnered first-hand contemporary accounts of the resilience of some very ancient practices and why they were so important to the matrix of solutions moving forward. More importantly, this co-teaching model was dedicated to privileging Gadigal and Sydney Salt Water People's wisdoms and perspectives. It became clear that the Australian school system had not prepared design students with accurate accounts of their own nation's violent history or the vast potential of the practices that sustained Indigenous society here for over 80,000 years.

In 2019 and 2020 two major movements gained widespread attention. The Dixon-Grovenor family shared the beauty and strength of the Gadigal cultural resurgence. Local families took up leadership roles in the massive Black Lives Matter rally (50,000 people on 6 June 2020) and the School Strike for Climate Justice (SS4C) (80,000 people on 25 September 2019). We resonated most with these two moments as they were both in the Sydney city region and, in particular, on Gadigal lands where the School of Design is situated. Aunty Rhonda Dixon Grovenor, a Gadigal, Bidjigal, Yuin Elder, was asked to take up a leadership role in mass mobilisations, and she undertook this role with welcome ceremonies and powerful speeches. The family is well respected due to the leadership of Chicka Dixon, an Elder statesman of the Aboriginal Rights Movement.

In a moment of global pandemic, the Black Lives Matter uprising resonated more broadly across global media and our communities. Prominent Indigenous health scholars and activists Dr Chelsea Bond and Dr Lisa Whop asserted and reminded us to acknowledge all Black families who have lost loved ones in police and prison custody, and who have been leading the Stop Black Deaths

in Custody protests. These movements have mobilised thousands and raised significant awareness of the violent impacts of entrenched racism in the Australian criminal justice system. In an article published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Bond and Whop critically analysed the endemic anti-Black racism in the Australian health system, framed against the backdrop of the massive Black Lives Matter protests that took place across Australia in June and July 2020.¹ They challenge the hypocrisy of Commonwealth Minister Greg Hunt, who refuses to address the lethal racism in the Australian health system, yet publicly criticised Black Lives Matter rallies for putting the public at risk.² According to Bond and Whop, it is our own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities themselves who are to be praised for swift, self-determining action in responding to Covid-19. These communities enforced border closures and lobbied for mobilisation of health resources long before the government acted decisively.³

Tragically, there have been over 440 Aboriginal deaths in custody in Australia since the 1991 Royal Commission.⁴ Enforcement, judicial and prison systems are knowingly prejudicial to Indigenous Peoples. As a result, we see alarming rates of Indigenous youth incarceration in the juvenile justice system, most notably in the Northern Territory. The intention of colonisation by design is all too clear, as Indigenous peoples are taken out of their families, communities and Country. Once removed from our significant places of origin, our traditional homelands are more easily accessed and vulnerable to interested parties. Our knowledge practices and presence in stories of place are key to our custodial role. Removing people from places of significance is part of the ongoing colonial project, with apparatuses such as the prison system being essential to its design:

Never let us forget the mothers, the children, the cousins and the spouses weeping outside coroners' courts, bearing photos of their loved ones in their hands and on their clothing, simultaneously appealing for care and for justice. Moreover, let us not for a second dismiss the anguish of having to fight for the release of recorded footage of your loved one's final moments, to be replayed over and over, in which they too plead vainly, "I can't breathe."⁵

Indigenous author and activist Tony Birch insists on the central role of Indigenous people and Indigenous philosophies in the creation of "narratives

of place” that can challenge the destructive ongoing forces of colonialism. Birch speaks in particular about the importance of *Birrarung* (Yarra River) to his childhood: “Behind the vacant factories lay a place of hidden treasures, the *Birrarung* (Yarra River).”⁶ Just like the Cooks River in Sydney, the Yarra River has been massively degraded. This speaks to the nature and the design of the city – the artifice of the city has acted as a form of colonial control of the river and “yet, its beauty and tenacity remain a force.”⁷ The idea of natural force reminds us also of the energy and flow of the breath in the body, the seasons and the waterways, all life-sustaining. Birch argues that this “sense” of place is very important for the development of an ecological consciousness that builds alliances and is necessary for all people to overcome alienation from the natural world: “In an age of diverse and at times fractured political allegiances, we desperately need to connect, cooperate and build sustainable alliances. If we don’t, we have little chance of combating the vandalism and violence leading us to certain destruction.”⁸

The authors’ families addressed the School Strike for Climate (SS4C) at *Djarrbarrgalli* (The Domain) on Gadigal lands, Sydney city, on 25 September 2019.⁹ The speakers all highlighted the destructive nature of colonisation and the importance of the strikers forging Indigenous climate justice alliances through First Nations leadership and self-determining sovereignty movements in Australia. Elder Aunty Rhonda Dixon Grovenor and author Nadeena Dixon welcomed SS4C strikers and all of the militant workers who joined them under threat of legal action, pointing to the importance of *Djarrbarrgalli* and the urban waterways in Sydney city as a living source for local resurgences. There was a clear unity shown over the importance of water and consideration for workers in what should be a publicly funded, just transition to renewables. The absolute degradation of Gadigal waters became a stark reality on that day – thousands called for urgent action on remediation and healing under Gadigal authority.¹⁰

These issues pose important considerations for the School of Design and the way design is taught, researched and engaged with on Gadigal lands. As our knowledges are assimilated and increasingly commodified, there is a growing pressure to fit within institutional parameters or to assimilate to dangerously out-of-touch research agendas. In the School of Design, there is a need for a dedicated strategy for protecting Indigenous knowledges and practices while attuning ourselves to the self-determined aspirations of future ancestors. How

are other institutions dismantling white supremacist ideologies and extractive processes, both of which are inherently ingrained in the foundations of the discipline?

Indigenous authors Uncle Charles Moran, Uncle Greg Harrington and Prof Norm Sheehan have written on the importance of staying strong to this task by connecting decolonisation to Country, place and respect for Indigenous knowledges. “Colonization is a denaturing project that can be identified by the patterns of disregard and self-regard that fuel exploitative social machinery.”¹¹

By identifying the “denaturing” features of colonisation we are able to develop a clearer understanding of what it is to decolonise. Their article contrasts conceptions of design found within Indigenous Knowledge with what the authors call “colonising design:”

Indigenous knowledge operates upon the assumption that design is a natural and naturalising power because it is common across all human cultures, is often evident in the actions of other species, and is a constant power in environments. Design is how all living beings co-operate to co-create. By contrast, colonising design tends to singularise to attract attention and compete or establish hierarchies to disrupt co-operation.¹²

A collective of design scholars and practitioners developed the Decolonising Design manifesto to transform and “decolonise” the discipline:

To date, mainstream design discourse has been dominated by a focus on Anglocentric/Eurocentric ways of seeing, knowing, and acting in the world, with little attention being paid to alternative and marginalized discourses from the non Anglo-European sphere, or the nature and consequences of design-as-politics today ... We believe that a sharper lens needs to be brought to bear on non-western ways of thinking and being, and on the way that class, gender, race, etc.. [sic] issues are designed today. We understand the highlighting of these issues through practices and acts of design, and the (re)design of institutions, design practices and design studies (efforts that always occur under conditions of contested political interests) to be a pivotal challenge in the process of decolonisation.¹³

The Decolonising Design manifesto is important and useful in terms of naming and challenging the historic integration of design scholarship and practice with colonial power. But why were we feeling concerned with this concept as a framing? Firstly, it does not clearly define what is meant by colonialism and what is meant by decolonisation – a notably difficult task to address. In a settler-colonial context such as Australia, it is crucial to recognise the particular oppression of Indigenous peoples who have developed specific philosophies, practices and sovereignties connected to specific ecosystems over thousands of years. Decolonisation is not just about championing ‘plurality’ in general, but recognising the specific and particular law of the land in any given territory, and the particular history of dispossession and the assertion of distinct sovereignties grounded in place. The other weakness of the manifesto is that there is no reference to social movements and the need for large-scale political struggle to transform those structures. There is limited vision for ‘radical transfiguration’ of the structures of colonial power that are currently served by dominant design practice. A movement to decolonise design needs to be connected to real, large-scale anticolonial struggle if it is to make any significant gains. The manifesto also reveals what we know to be a genuine challenge in the School of Design. The use of the term “decolonising” is in jeopardy of being misguided and lacking in the original intent in which we had been using it.

Others have reflected on the manifesto. In 2019 a collection of statements was collated in an article that reflects critically on the formation of the Decolonising Design group who issued the initial manifesto. Matthew Kiem makes a cogent point about the extent to which “decolonising” has become a buzzword in academia that is in danger of losing any real meaning or radicality:

Academics and designers are adept at mimicking the representational dimension of movements – “political or otherwise” – without necessarily generating or supporting the substantive changes that political concepts are designed to bring about ... In most academic contexts, it is all too easy for people who possess a great deal of cultural capital to make the token gesture of learning a new set of terms or adding a few different texts or examples to the curriculum.¹⁴

Kiem quotes Frantz Fanon on the need for “decolonisation” to be rooted in

radical political struggle “that seeks to challenge, upset and reconfigure modern/ colonial institutions rather than fit comfortably within them.”¹⁵

Ahmed Ansari discusses the relationship between colonisation and the development of “artifice as a necessary condition of modernity.” Colonisation creates the “artifice” of the city on Indigenous lands. Gadigal sovereignty has been negated through the design and construction of the city of Sydney. Radical challenges are required in order for genuine reclamation of land and space to take place. Ansari asserts that the fracturing of the colonial artifice is a key aspect of decolonising design:

Decolonial theory lacks any substantial theoretical reflection on the history of the artificial as it developed after the industrial revolution from regionally bound, culturally specific technical trajectories into a global technical system; the role that artifice has played in giving shape to and sustaining and perpetuating forms of colonial power; and the nature of the artificial especially as it relates to ontological differentiation.¹⁶

Tristan Shultz, an Indigenous designer/scholar and member of the Decolonizing Design group, agrees that “decolonization” is at risk of becoming a hollow buzzword: “I too have noticed the currency of the term ‘decolonizing’ being reduced to a hollow gesture. I fear it is traveling in a similar direction to the way the term ‘sustainability’ was co-opted for neoliberalist means in design.”¹⁷

Ahmed Ansari argues for the importance of appreciating the very specific ways that colonisation has occurred in different regions of the world and the specific forms of destruction and resistance that this produces: “I believe that designers committed to a decolonial politics do the work of delving into their own civilizational histories.”¹⁸ Danah Abdulla continues to reflect on the earlier theme: “I fear that decolonizing design is going in this direction and becoming a synonym for ‘improving things.’”¹⁹

The Red Nation Collective on Turtle Island have been examining issues of Indigenous sovereignty and movement leadership, and ideas around decolonisation, extinction in struggles for climate justice and opposition to police brutality. The Red Deal Indigenous Action to Save our Earth contextualises the importance of Indigenous sovereignty for all living beings and ecologies:

There is no hope for restoring the planet's fragile and dying ecosystems without Indigenous liberation. This isn't an exaggeration; it's simply the truth. Indigenous people understand the choice that confronts us: decolonization or extinction. We have unapologetically renewed our bonds with the earth by implementing our intellectual traditions in our movements for decolonization. There is no turning back; these bonds are sacred and will never be broken. This is why Indigenous water protectors and land defenders throughout the world are criminalized and assassinated on a daily basis. We have chosen life, therefore we've been marked for death. Despite this grim reality, Indigenous people continue to caretake the land even under threat of daily attack. Like mothers, nurses, and educators, Indigenous water protectors and land defenders perform one of the most important types of labor we depend upon as a species for social and biological reproduction: caretaking.²⁰

According to Ali Musleh, who writes about design practice within the Israeli weapons industry, decolonising design practice also means challenging unbridled military technologies and the “logic of elimination” in settler colonialism. Indigenous people in Palestine have become a “design problem” that is overcome through the design of genocidal technology, which is then tragically marketed across the world for deployment against all manner of oppressed and marginalised peoples.²¹ Musleh highlights how technologies of colonial control developed in Israel are being rapidly deployed across the world:

Magal, the Israeli company that built fences around Gaza, has been awarded contracts for “security solutions” for correctional facilities in North America. Magal has been participating in the American carceral state through designs it developed in Palestine while building on accumulated experiences of internment and mass incarceration in the US ... [T]hese projects of control are connected. The violent designs emerging in one site proliferate in the other, and so do the techniques of designing.²²

Musleh points to the crucial importance of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS), initiated by Palestinian civil society groups in 2005, and the solidarity that has been built with the Black Lives Matter movement in the US as important examples of global solidarity and alliances:

The Palestinian international movement has also committed itself to the Movement for Black Lives and to stand in solidarity with Indigenous movements in Standing Rock, the Pacific and beyond. These solidarities can be seen as an acknowledgement of the interconnected nature of colonial projects ... The struggle to decolonize design must inhabit these spaces and world through networked solidarities and the relations of kinship that must be nurtured in the course of struggle.²³

The work of this group is critically important, and we will continue to contribute to and support it through the Indigenous community and the leadership of others, including Tristan Schulz, co-author of the Decolonising Design Manifesto.

Towards Design Sovereignty

The Gadigal resurgence has had a huge influence in 2019-20. The project of challenging hegemonic ideas and practices within the academy has gone hand-in-hand with involvement in mass rallies that have fought back the power of police on the streets, and with a climate strike movement that sought to disrupt business as usual through alignment with unions and other collectives. This brings us back to Tony Birch's assertion that there is an imperative need for alliances that connect stories of place and that forge deeper ecological thinking and healing. Birch concludes his article by describing a group of Aboriginal Elders, all from families displaced from Country, who meet regularly in a community centre in the far western suburbs of Sydney:

What they do is write and paint stories of the love of the places they live in, outer suburban streets, lounge rooms and backyards. They also write about a profound attachment to, and love for places they have never seen, not in this life, as one of the Elders explained to me. They make stories of the places, the country they were stolen from. In a material sense, the group is as marginalised as it gets. To an outsider they may appear powerless, perhaps inarticulate. They are neither. They have a story to tell, a story that they happily share. To love country and to be loved by it is the basis of their survival, and ours.²⁴

Activist and historian Paddy Gibson writes from the position of solidarity as a

key historical context in Australia, emphasising local impact and the urgent need for continued massive global strike action:

It is workers that keep the wheels of capitalism turning, and workers that can grind them to a halt. In moments like these, you can see the outlines of a new, revolutionary society, a socialist society where we decide collectively how to use our labour to look after each other and the earth, rather than destroy it for the profits of a few. Building escalating strikes for climate justice is the most urgent task facing the growing movement trying to stop the war on our planet and lay the basis for a lasting peace.²⁵

In considering ways to maintain this critical connection of teaching this year with strike actions and mass mobilisations, we recognised the need for combined solidarity strategies, as well as the critical importance of linking thinking with action, of alliances across scholarly activism, cultural revitalisation and decolonisation. Relations of kinship and commitment to change were also strong points of call in our reflections. Elders contributed to this work, guided the content and mediated the spiritual and emotional dimensions of bringing this knowledge into the academy. We are especially grateful to the local and family Elders who have supported this sharing. These include Uncle Max Dulmunmun Harrison and Aunty Rhonda Grovenor Dixon; Wiradjuri Elder and Community Scholar Educator Uncle Jimmy Smith; and Garrwa Elders Nancy McDinny and Stewart Hoosan. We acknowledge other Elders, senior knowledge holders, practitioners and colleagues from other disciplines, and our international contacts who also contribute to our and other lecture series in DAB (School of Design, Architecture and Building, University of Technology Sydney).

All of this important work is sourced from specific land-based knowledge systems and contexts, and in this way has offered provocations for the design academy that sit beyond the Western design canon.²⁶ The Australian Indigenous Design Charter provides formative aspects of this critical framework, described as “a cultural innovation tool to be used by designers to explain the benefits of authentic cultural representation to their clients and to help them to understand the process required when referencing Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge/culture in design.”²⁷ From our experiences of teaching and conversations with colleagues, the challenge became clearer – there was a lack



Figure 64
 Nadeena Dixon, Experimental tintype project documenting Aboriginal women and the strength of ancestral ties, 2020. Photo: Nadeena Dixon.

of cultural understanding by students, and this limited their ability to connect to a deeper sense of place and meaning through the modalities of shared knowledge we were using.

Amidst the immense challenges of 2020 it was hard to see beyond the current crisis. With outbreaks of Covid-19 continuing into 2021, it seems even more pertinent to create something from these conditions, in resonance with what Arundhati Roy has termed “pandemic as portal.”²⁸

The Colonisation by Design lectures notably reflect aspects of the UTS Indigenous Strategy; they seek to align with the broader commitments expressed in the strategy and the faculty action plan into the future. In this context, we



Figure 65

Warburdar Bununu shoot on Garwa homelands, 2018. Gadrian Jarwjalmar Hoosan directs the camera to the audience paying tribute to a long lineage of film activism stemming from the landmark documentary *Two Laws* (1981), which was co-produced with the community. Photo: Jason De Santolo.

are committed to actioning Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination through delivery of world-class education and Indigenous-led, community-driven research according to the highest-level principles contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the National Indigenous Higher Education Accords.²⁹ Although every area of UTS is within the ambit of the Indigenous Education and Research Strategy, it is the faculties that are responsible for developing specific action and implementation plans. It is in this context that the authors share work done by various teams and administrators in the development of an action plan in the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building at UTS.

The authors realised that there had indeed been a response to the challenges of creating meaningful teaching experiences that make sense to the design students. That response had been slow and frustrating for the uninitiated. But, with considered intent, we felt a shift in the way we understood our role as

educators in the higher education space. Rather than assimilate the way we presented to fit the parameters of the course or thematic, it was clear that we must stay true to ourselves and to the collective knowledge we were sharing. Tewa Elder Scholar Gregory Cajete refers to the formative concepts of resonance and renewal and the constant flux of re-orientation that takes place where these concepts are implemented.³⁰ We turned inward and focused more on our own practices – Dixon with weaving and revitalisation of culture/language and digital art (Figure 64), De Santolo on creative research practice and film (Figure 65).³¹ We focused on local pedagogy and local movements and created storyworld moments as best we could in the Zoom interface. We kept hold of our own modalities of teaching and attached significant importance to Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights.³² In trialing this work we debriefed, consulted with Elders, design colleagues and practitioners and started to map some of the changes we felt in delivering this work in the university and beyond.³³

When a major rally or action took place, we would attend to support family and the Gadigal resurgence, and we noticed more of our design colleagues and collectives and networks showing solidarity (Figure 63). We started to see things that were not as obvious to us. We began to take more time to listen deeply to ourselves and to Country and the different environments we worked in. We noticed that we would naturally be more present, and started to meet in places that were alive and connected such as parks, communal gardens and art studios. We started to reconsider some of the bigger picture from outside the institutional parameters, asking how can a School of Design re-orientate its Western-centric foundations towards a more generative and relational expression of design intent? Can a re-orientation towards Indigenous design education contribute to the dismantling of structural racism in the sector and professional practice? The complexities of teaching in the public university paradigm helped to identify some of the broader influences. It also enabled a reflection back on the decolonising research and Indigenous storywork principles³⁴ and Indigenous cultural fire practices³⁵ as instructional aspects of sustainable design education.³⁶

The new Covid-19 landscape and ethics of place is critical in order to ensure that the emphasis is placed on Indigenous knowledge and community as connected to Country. But this demands a radical re-orientation to place through the First Peoples and through Country itself. The development of a code of care helped this to take effect in Emergent Practices, a third-year

Visual Communication project convened by Jacqueline Gothe and Jason De Santolo (Figure 66). The code of care was created with the premise that all those involved in the teaching space have agency and are to be respected and cared for. On reflection, it can be considered as a re-orientation tool – a way to see the learning journey in the light of shared experience.

Our communities have a story, every one of them, no matter where we live or what lifestyle we choose. Stories can be deeply historical or creational or contemporary – we value them in creating connections and a deep sense of place. Indigenous research values and principles are helping us forge ways to share the significance of ancient practices of the land. Our stories have significant potential to resonate with sensory meaning, raise consciousness and expose issues, major inequalities and injustices inherent in the status quo. These differences expose what Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes as “issues that have emerged from the suppression of stories as a way to colonise Peoples.”³⁷ Taking up these challenges aligns an ability for sensing deeper meaning with change driven by demands for justice.

Design Sovereignty emerges respectfully from Gadigal lands in the global pandemic conditions of late 2020, truly a moment of immense flux and change. It forms a critical aspect of the DAB Indigenous Action Plan that draws on the three pillars of transformational educational experience embedded in the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building: *Resurgence (cultural, land-based)*, *Self-determination (Indigenous-centred, liberational)* and *Decolonisation (Naa Murru [re-orientation/pathway], emergence)*. It strives to create vibrant and safe conditions for emerging DAB Indigenous scholars and practitioners who will guide the next cycle of growth and renewal. We hold true to intergenerational values as aspirational guides: *All our Relations, Lifelong Learning, Practices of Renewal, Living Landscapes and Ethical Impact*.

In tracking the foundations of Design Sovereignty we became aware of guidance from our heart, mind, body and spirit and, as author Nadeena Dixon suggests, from Naa Murru and Gadigal understandings: Naa Murru is a guiding pathway for re-orientation; Naa-nurra means to see Country; Ngarra-nurra means to hear Country through deep listening, to know and understand; Biyalla nurra means speaking Country. These concepts will focus within and scope the potential for re-orientation of the key collaboration areas in the School of Design, Visual Communication, Fashion and Textiles and Material Ecologies.



Figure 66

Teaching in Covid-19 for Emergent Practices in the School of Design at UTS, Sydney, 2020. Using Indigenous self-determining local pedagogies and co-teaching principles, this project was led by (from left to right) Elders Aunty Rhonda Dixon Grovenor, Uncle Jimmy Smith, Jason De Santolo and Nadeena Dixon and Associate Professor Jacqueline Gothe. Photo: Jason De Santolo.

From the seminal work of Prof Aileen Moreton Robinson³⁸ to the decolonising methodologies work of Linda Tuhiwai Smith;³⁹ to the heart, mind, body and spirit of Jo-ann Archibald’s Indigenous storywork; to the assertive self-determination work led by Larissa Behrendt; to Uncle Max Dulmunmun Harrison’s ceremonial wisdom,⁴⁰ we know that the urgency we feel is driven from the legacy of so many others before us and amongst us. We must listen to the families that are suffering the violence of a system that has been created to divide us and take us from the sustenance our lands and waters once provided.⁴¹ And, as Tony Birch iterates, we must value the strength of alliances and the pivotal role of education through our knowledge systems and practices: “In an age of diverse and at times fractured political allegiances, we desperately need to connect, cooperate and build sustainable alliances. If we don’t, we have little chance of combating the vandalism and violence leading us to certain destruction.”⁴²

Conclusion

Design Sovereignty aspires to renewal and growth in our communities and demands the dismantling of outdated Western thinking and practices of extraction. In delivering Colonisation by Design in 2019 and 2020, we were able to connect to social movements that have grounded the intent of this work. Insights are offered through the experience and challenge of teaching as we looked towards design potential in the storying of sovereignty through self-determining processes and the influences of Indigenous and decolonising theories, methodologies and practices. In looking towards Design Sovereignty, we take up an anticolonial stance to challenge the hegemonic trappings of the discipline. Through key collaborations, the process has started to open up to genuine potential for re-orientating aspects of design education and practice-led research through a foundational partnered project and investigation. This is shared through a code of care, where a collective rekindling of self-love⁴³ facilitates an opening up of Design Sovereignty as a genuine call for the return of well-being, and healing of Country, for all.

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Contributors & Index



Contributor Biographies

Rod Barnett is an independent landscape architect investigating landscape emergence and nonlinear making. His publications include interpretations of historical landscapes, indigenous place-making, and landscape systems as emergent conditions in sites as far-flung as the coastlines of Tonga, the under-served districts of rustbelt U.S. cities and the stone alignments of Carnac. His books on landscape architecture include *Emergence in Landscape Architecture* (2013) and *The Modern Landscapes of Ted Smyth: Landscape Modernism in the South Pacific* (2017). Formerly Chair of the graduate program in landscape architecture at the University of Washington in St Louis, he now maintains an experimental design practice that participates in competitions and exhibitions, exploring the co-creation of social ecologies in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Benjamin Bowen is CEO and Co-Founder of Shared Path Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation, an Aboriginal-run and -owned organisation based in Sydney, Australia, that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities to build business on Country. He has collaboratively built business on Country around Australia through focus on building an entire ecosystem of business and economies to be owned, run and directed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In more recent years he has worked with new technologies to support the scaling up and protection of First Nations peoples and communities through education to protect Cultural Intellectual Property, Human Rights, Culture, Lore and Country. Ben provides cultural education as a guest lecturer at the University of Sydney.

Megan Brasell-Jones is a senior lecturer in visual communication design in the School of Design, Te Maru Pūmanawa | College of Creative Practice & Enterprise at Otago Polytechnic | Te Kura Matatini ki Otago. Through practice and research, she blends her interests in education, design and ecology to contribute to a more sustainable future. This includes engagement with creative communities to seed positive behaviour change and restorative practices. She has a student-centred approach to teaching that encourages creative, critical, bi-cultural and sustainable thinking. Recent collaborations include working with scientists for the Art + Science 2021 exhibition. <https://www.op.ac.nz/industry-and-research/research/expertise/search/researcher/Brasell-Jones,%20Megan>. ORCID | <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8065-3527>

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Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Donna has worked on many community projects. She is a passionate advocate of the fibre arts as contemporary expression and continues to extend the current discourse of fibre arts practice in Aotearoa. Her current research is grounded in kaupapa Māori approaches focusing on cultural empowerment through creative practice in Māori fiber arts and the regeneration of mātauranga Māori in contemporary creative practice. ORCID: 0000-0002-7413-1586.

Ko Aoraki te mauka, Ko Waitaki te awa, Ko Kāi Tahu te Iwi, Ko Kāti Huirapa, Kāti Hawea me Kāti Ruahikihiki ōku hapū, Ko Puketeraki tōku marae, ki t taha o te awa ko Waikōuaiti, Mai i Karitane ki kā roto i karikari a Rakaihautu te takiwa, Ko Wybrow tōku whanau, Ko **Lynette Carter** ahau. Lynette Carter holds a PhD from the University of Auckland, where she taught for many years before moving to the University of Otago. Lynette was formerly a Senior Lecturer at Te Tumu, School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies at University of Otago before retiring in 2020. Lynette's main areas of research and teaching were Indigenous Development and the social impact from climate change. She continues to be actively involved in climate change issues and currently represents Kāi Tahu Otago Rūnaka on the Queenstown Lakes District Council Climate Reference Group; the Strategy and Planning Committee for Otago Regional Council; and the Age Friendly Advisory Board, Ministry for Social Development. Lynette continues to work for her Rūnaka, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki in environmental and social matters.

Jason De Santolo is a researcher and creative producer and holds a Doctorate of Creative Arts from the University of Technology Sydney. His tribal affiliations are Garrwa and Barunggam. He is Associate Professor in the School of Design and Director of Indigenous Excellence in the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building at the University of Technology Sydney. He previously worked as a Senior Researcher in Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research where he led New Media and the Indigenous Research Synergies strategy. Jason co-edited 'Decolonizing Research: Indigenous storywork as methodology' (2019) with Jo-Ann Archibald and Jenny Lee-Morgan (Zed Books). His latest documentary Warburdar Bununu/Water Shield (2019) explores water contamination in his homelands and Borroloola, Northern Territory.

Nadeena Dixon is a Wiradjuri, Yuin and Gadigal (Dharug -Boorongberrigal clan) Indigenous Multi-disciplinary Artist. Her practice encompasses print making, multi-platform production including photography, animation, video, editing, sound, webpage design and integration. She is recognised as a Master Weaver in Indigenous Cultural Traditions and her cultural practices include dance, song, language, song writing, contemporary theatre storytelling, and contemporary ceremony. She is an experienced guitarist, singer and performance artist. Nadeena has a Post Graduate Degree in Indigenous Arts Management from the University of Melbourne and a Masters of Fine Arts from the University of New South Wales.

Federico Freschi is Professor and Head of College Te Maru Pūmanawa | Creative Practice & Enterprise at the Otago Polytechnic, Dunedin, New Zealand. He was formerly the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, where he continues to have a visiting appointment as a Senior Research Associate in the NRF SARChI Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture. He has held academic positions at the Universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Witwatersrand. His research focuses on the intersections of identity, politics, and imaginaries of belonging in art, design and architecture. Recent publications include the edited volume *Troubling Images: Visual Culture and the Politics of Afrikaner Nationalism* (Wits University Press, 2020) with co-editors Brenda Schmahmann and Lize van Robbroeck. ORCID | <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9515-3303>.

Matthew Galloway is a senior lecturer in Communication Design at Te Maru Pūmanawa | Creative Practice & Enterprise at the Otago Polytechnic, Dunedin, New Zealand. His practice employs the tools and methodologies of design within a gallery context. In 2019 he was a selected participant in the Cripta747 Studio Programme, Turin, Italy. In 2016 he was a selected participant in Talente International Craft Fair, Munich, Germany; and ARTifariti 2016, in Tindouf, Algeria. He received a Merit Award at the 2016 National Contemporary Art Awards for *Fountain is a Copy?*, a collaboration with Ella Sutherland. Recent exhibitions include *Optimism and its Afterlives*, Enjoy Contemporary Art Gallery, Wellington (2020); *The Factory & its Memories*, Cripta747, Turin, Italy (2019); and *The Freedom of the Migrant*, The Physics Room, Christchurch (2019).

Hannah Hopewell is an academic at Te Kura Waihanga Wellington School of Architecture, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. Her studio teaching and research is concerned with ways of seeing the materiality of the urban and the politics of landscape in urban development. Hannah has a background in the practice of landscape architecture and urban design and a creative practice PhD in Spatial Design.

Fiona Johnson is a Landscape Architect with a background as a practitioner, educator and academic. She has extensive teaching experience in digital design and representation for landscape architecture, as a design studio leader at both the University of Melbourne and RMIT. Her research and writing have been published in peer-reviewed journals and conferences, as well as co-authoring the book *Indigenous Place: Contemporary Buildings, Landmarks and Places of Significance in South East Australia and Beyond*. Fiona is Studio Director at Lucernal, a hybrid creative practice which explores modes of critical representation and immersive landscapes through architectural visualisation and video game development. In 2021 Lucernal were awarded the internationally regarded Assigned Production Investment Grant by Film Victoria for the development of their first title, *Little Ruin* (2023).

Tēnā koutou katoa, Ko Te Arawa te waka, Ko Ngongotahā te maunga, Ko Utahina te awa, Ko Te Arawa, Ko Tainui ngā iwi, Ko Ngāti Whakaue te hapū, Ko Tūnohopū te marae, Tēnā tātou katoa. **Teresa Krishnan** is the National Lead for Māori of Te ara o Hine – Tapu Ora | Midwifery Department at Te Wāngana Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology and is based in Auckland, Aotearoa. Her current role is focused on growing the Māori midwifery workforce in Aotearoa. Her research interests include Kawa whakaruruahu and cultural safety for midwifery academics while working towards a Te Tiriti honouring framework and curriculum, and enablers and challenges to success for Māori students in the midwifery undergraduate degree.

Denise Lim received her PhD in Sociology and her MA in African Studies from Yale University. She was formerly a lecturer at Yale College and a graduate alumni fellow at the Yale Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage. Denise has taught courses on the sociological imagination in African fiction and on questions of space and time in the African city. Denise also implemented a survey evaluating the impact that Covid-19 has had on cultural heritage training programmes throughout the African continent. She is currently a postdoctoral scholar at Stanford Archaeology Center and continues to serve as an external examiner for the University of Johannesburg's Graduate School of Architecture. Denise's research is focused on developing visual methodologies for studying the politics of South African urban heritage, design, and material cultures.

Caroline McCaw is an Associate Professor and Academic Leader in Communication Design at Otago Polytechnic. She is involved in a wide range of local community and regional development projects often working with collaborative student-staff teams, and local community groups. Her research investigates how we come to understand our landscapes, local knowledge, and regional cultures and contexts through collaborative creative practice. She asks how we may work around colonial ways of seeing to visualise and understand our shared histories and sites more socially. A recent project involved collaborating with whale researchers, artists and technology designers in seeking empathic relationships with the more-than-human. In 2014 Caro was awarded a national AKO Aotearoa Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award and in 2016-17 she was a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at SUNY Canton, in Upstate New York. She is co-ordinator of the DESIS Lab at Otago Polytechnic.

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