‘Principles for a New Australian Democracy’
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES IN CULTURE AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

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Abstract

‘Principles for a New Australian Democracy’ is the title work in the exhibition Homeland #2: Provisional Designs for a Post-Colonial Homeland which forms the creative component in this research project. In the research I have explored the concept of Australian national identity by interrogating the idea of culture itself in terms of its creative processes. To this purpose I have proposed a glossary of terms as the basis for a language of strategies used by artists in cultural practice.

I first considered the possibility of a systematic language for describing the creative process and cultural value when I noticed the language used in common by artists and economists: interest, risk and speculation and are just some of the terms we both habitually use. The chapters Commerce, Bonds, Face Value, Realisation and Reconciliation describe the artistic processes of four contemporary artists from Melbourne, including myself, using their own terminology to explore the implications of these words in both art and economics.

I have proposed that culture and economics share this language because they both express concepts of value. The advantage to artists of economics is its systematic naming of the aspects of value and how they interact with each other: how risk, for example, increases interest. It does not determine what is valuable, but how their values are created and exchanged.

The shared vocabulary of culture and economics, I suggest, dates back to the eighteenth century when financial value was split off from the concept of moral value with the publication of Adam Smith’s The Wealth of Nations. This book, which is considered the founding work of modern economics, was preceded in 1759 by Smith’s earlier work, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, in which he describes the economics of social value as a ‘system of happiness’.¹ For his contemporaries this was the essential background reading to The Wealth of Nations and these two works form the basis of my argument on the relationship between economic and cultural value.
This research is used in the thesis in two ways: to describe a theory for the creative process in contemporary artistic practice; and to reconsider the value systems of the past and how those inherited through colonisation could be used in contemporary cultural practice to inform a new concept of Australian national identity.

The creative work submitted for examination, entitled *Homeland #2: Provisional Designs for a Post-Colonial Homeland*, is the second in the *Homeland* series of exhibitions. It consists of two components:

‘Simple Orientation Devices 1-12’, constructions of bamboo, thread, seeds and shells based on a Marshallese ‘stick chart’, selected from the *Homeland #1* exhibition in 2010; and

‘Principles for a New Australian Democracy’, a woven, three-dimensional sculpture constructed of the same materials.

A third work, ‘The New History of Australia’, is still in development and I have not discussed it in the thesis because I believe that if I do include it in the exhibition it will be in a substantially different form.
Declaration

This is to certify that (i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the Masters, (ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used, (iii) the thesis is 14,090 words in length, inclusive of footnotes, but exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Harriet Parsons
Preface

*Homeland* is a continuing project in which the submitted creative work, *Homeland #2: Provisional Designs for a New Australian Democracy*, forms the second in the series of exhibitions. The project was initiated by a development grant in 2008 from the Australia Council for 12 months research which resulted in the prototype for 12 sculptures exhibited in the first year of candidature at Blindside Gallery in 2010 as *Homeland #1.*
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Barbara Bolt for her support, advice and insights that have helped me put into writing ideas about the value of art that I have been thinking about for 15 years, and in many ways all my life; Rosemary Shepherd for over a decade of hospitality, support, advice and friendship; Hamish Maxwell-Stewart for reintroducing me to Australian history and getting me through my first conference paper; Professor Anne Salmond and her colleagues for their kind help with the interpretation of Captain Cook and Tupaia’s map of the Society Islands; Jacqueline Dougherty for her assistance with the text for Andrew Mc Qualter’s Vision Statement and Study for Untitled (Pioneer) as well as many other favours; and the artists Paul Knight, Stuart Ringholt and Andrew McQualter for their confidence and assistance.
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Introduction

Richard Bronk begins the preface to *The Romantic Economist*,

Our understanding of the world is structured and limited by the language and metaphors we use. Each individual’s vision is partly socially constructed by shared frameworks of interpretation; but it is also the product of particular life-experiences and an imaginative capacity to invent new perspectives.²

The *Homeland* project is an exploration through the work of artists of the implications of the colonial mandate for contemporary Australian identity. The dilemma the colonial heritage presents arises from the practical nature of culture. Culture provides not only artistic practice but also the structure of the institutions, laws and the language that we inherit from the past that define how we understand the world and speak to each other as a society.

The chapters that follow consider how Australian values are used in contemporary culture. Chapter 1, Commerce, traces their provenance through the language of artists to the gestures of First Contact between the Enlightenment and the Pacific. The relatively recent attribution of the sketchbook known as the work of ‘The Artist of the Chief Mourner’ to Tupaea, the Raiatean who joined Cook’s *Endeavour* voyage in Tahiti, provides an opportunity to re-examine Bernard Smith’s interpretation of the colonial relationship in the light of an Indigenous record. The Sketchbook, the drawings of the botanical artist Sydney Parkinson and the maps of Captain Cook and Joseph Banks show the men working collaboratively in a form of conversation. The three chapters Bonds, Face Value and Realisation, use the collaborative practices of contemporary Australian artists to suggest insights into the colonial past and the final chapter, Reconciliation, proposes the ‘provisional designs for a post-colonial homeland’, the title of the present exhibition.
I first began to consider the idea of the Australian cultural debt to the colonial past in 2000 in a research project which experimented with the idea of contemporary art as an Australian ‘cultural practice’.

The idea for the project was to improvise working radios by hybridising two distinct practices: weaving and ham radio electronics. Through the work I hoped to suggest an Australian cultural relationship to the perception of distance, created in historic communications devices such as the pedal radio used by the School of the Air and the Flying Doctor. To this I drew a parallel between the patterns of Morse code communications and the coded messages recorded in the textiles of the Pacific to propose a hypothetical Australian communications system which might have grown out of the relationship to the region.

The first object in this experiment was a crystal radio made from packing straps, salvaged copper wire, thread, seeds and electronic kit components.

*Figure 1:* Untitled (Crystal Radio), *packing strap, copper wire, seeds, thread, electronic kit components, 10 x 10 x 14cm, 2000.*

I did not pursue the theme of Australia’s colonial past in the exhibition that eventually resulted, *Call Signs*, although the image of remote islands in communication remained important.
Figure 2: Call Signs #1, fuse wire, thread, electronic kit components, sound installation

*Call Signs* combined lace with electronics in Morse indicators which appeared to signal to each other across the installation space. Needlelace was used in these objects as a form of drawing for trees, reeds and flowers, which referred to recurring dreams. There were 13 exhibitions in the series in all from 2001-2005.

Figure 3: Call Signs #4, fuse wire, thread, electronic kit components, plastic scourer, 2002 Artists’ Show, 200 Gertrude St Galleries, 10 x 6 x 10cm, 2002.
In 2008 I read Simon Schama’s *Landscape and Memory* in which he describes landscape as ‘a repose for the senses’ that builds up its scenery ‘as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock’.³

One of the landscapes he explores is the Polish woodland wilderness, the *puszcza*, a ‘haunted land where greatcoat buttons from six generations of fallen soldiers can be discovered lying amidst the woodland ferns’.⁴ The idea of landscape as a layered history appears to create cultural heritage as a concrete reality; but it is an imaginative history that builds up, as Schama observes, an ‘unstable identity’.⁵

The national identity embedded in the Australian landscape has been regularly revised since 1788 and in 1960 the publication of Bernard Smith’s *European Vision and the South Pacific* radically changed the way Australians imagined the colonial relationship once more in a movement that would reach its zenith in the program of government-sponsored history ‘celebrating’ the bicentennial of colonisation in 1988; declining in the 1990s in the political controversy dubbed the History Wars.

In the *puszcza* Schama captures the concept of indigeneity at the heart of the Western idea of landscape. The resistance of generations of Poles to the colonisations of ‘Lithuanian Kings, Teutonic knights, partisans and Jews; Nazi Gestapo and Stalinist NKVD’⁶ is the same authority asserted by Australia’s Aboriginal artists of indigeneity over the landscape in memories which ‘had now assumed the form of the landscape itself… [a] metaphor [that] had become a reality’.⁷

The landscape painting genre became one of the central vehicles for the discussion of colonialism from the 1970s into the 1990s when, under the influence of semiotics and related philosophical movements, historians began to analyse colonialism through the ‘signs’ of cultural power. W.J.T. Mitchell, writing in 1992 in *Landscape and Power*, described the ‘semiotic features of landscape’ in the Classical and Romantic genres of painting as a ‘discourse of imperialism’,

which conceives itself precisely (and simultaneously) as an expansion of landscape understood as an inevitable, progressive development in history, an expansion of
‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ into a ‘natural’ space in progress that is itself narrated as ‘natural’.  

This interpretation of the discourse of imperialism relies on a concept of cultural evolution which adapts to colonial use the authority of indigeneity that Schama identified in *Landscape and Memory* by proposing the colonist as a natural heir, superseding rather than displacing the original inhabitants.

The revision of colonial history that took place in the decades after 1960 had a profound impact on Australian identity, exposing the assumptions of race and class embedded in the national narrative. The strength of the old myths warranted a forceful response but in order to debunk the old discourse *European Vision and the South Pacific* and its successors had to find another. In 2011, 51 years after its first publication and in the context of Smith’s recent death, the history deserves re-examination.

Bronk proposes in *The Romantic Economist* that our understanding of the world is structured and limited by language and metaphor; the metaphors of one discourse replace another, but all theories, he quotes Adam Smith, are ‘imaginary machines’ which satisfy curiosity, or ‘sooth the imagination’, according to the culture of their times.  

Smith used the example of the history of astronomy to prove his point:

> Let us endeavour to trace it, from its first origin, up to that summit of perfection to which it is at present supposed to have arrived, and to which, indeed, it has equally been supposed to have arrived in almost all former times.  

Smith’s purpose was to warn against the error, into which economists after him would repeatedly fall, of mistaking theory for the ‘real chains which Nature makes use of to bind together her several operations’.  

The concept of reality lies at the heart of economics because in order to decide what is valuable we first have to decide what is real. Concepts and materiality only come into conflict in the measure of value; a diamond and its beauty are clearly distinguished
until the measure of value makes both seem equally real. This was the essence of the battle between the Romantics and the Utilitarians at the birth of economics from which Bronk’s book takes its title.

Value is a cultural concept which can have no objective reality. Smith’s imaginary machine is not an argument for the futility of reason but the incorporation of creative imagination into the rational process. Recognition of theories not as machines for doing but machines for thinking, anticipates their obsolescence.

The avant-garde’s engagement with novel perception consciously addresses culture’s imaginary machines. From race to class, femininity, the heavenly ‘spheres’ or the curved ‘shape’ of space, Bronk argues, this skill in the recognition of theories that have taken on the appearance of reality is vital to academic research.

Theory and practice are not essential to each other in art, as they are, for example in medicine, but artistic practice nevertheless has the potential to fulfil a vital function within the university. The academic ‘moment’ in the creative process is recognition of a metaphor in another field for what it is, a product of the imagination, and expose every facet of its construction. That is the aspiration of the Homeland project in relation to the history of possession in Australia.
One of the archaic meanings of commerce is conversation; the Oxford dictionary uses the example, ‘the warmth of commerce in the room’. Adam Smith, writing at the time the *Endeavour* set out on its voyage noted the relationship between language and trade in *The Wealth of Nations*. First Contact necessarily develops from a vocabulary of gestures. The letter to the expedition, known as ‘Lord Morton’s Hints’, from the President of the Royal Society James Douglas Earl of Morton who sponsored their voyage, suggests that ‘Opening the mouth wide, putting the fingers towards it, and then making the motion of chewing, would sufficiently demonstrate a want of food’. Gestures create the first vocabulary of a language which in the colonial Pacific was mediated at First Contact through trade, violence and sex.

*Homeland* began as an attempt to expand the personal landscape of *Call Signs* into a larger exploration of Australian national identity. But embedded within the idea of home is possession; and if as I have suggested the Australian government mandate relies on the colonial legacy, an ‘Australian’ homeland cannot be expressed outside the history of colonial possession. In contemporary Aboriginal art practice, the Western concept of landscape reinforces the authority of indigeneity, but a non-Indigenous, colonial expression of homeland requires another mechanism.

*Colonial Possession*

The narrative of Australian possession begins on Cook’s *Endeavour* voyage. The first complete catalogue of its art, charts and maps was undertaken by Bernard Smith and Rüdiger Joppien for the Australian bicentennial year in 1988. The revision of colonial history after 1960 depended on the interpretation of race and class and in *Landscape and Power* Mitchell describes the colonisation of the Pacific as program completed in the European imagination before it was even begun:

The South Pacific provided, therefore, a kind of *tabula rasa* for the fantasies of European imperialism, a place where European landscape conventions would work themselves out, virtually unimpeded by ‘native’ resistance, where the ‘naturalness’ of
those conventions could find itself confirmed by a real place understood to be in a state of nature.¹⁴

The oral traditions of Pacific cultures leave a blank in the European historic record but the Indigenous experience is essential to any credible analysis. Tupaia, the Raiatean who joined the *Endeavour* in Tahiti, has received comparatively little attention in the histories but his presence on the voyage provides the opportunity for vital insights into the attitudes towards European possession in the Pacific.

Tupaia’s Sketchbook, a collection of drawings and paintings on paper, has only been identified relatively recently and comparison with the work of his companions reveals them working collaboratively.¹ These works offer an account of the voyage in a gestural language, different from the familiar text of the journals and other documents, which can be used to test the imaginary machine of colonial history.

In the nineteenth century Tupaia was personified in history painting as a black servant.² In more recent descriptions he has been credited as a navigator, pilot and interpreter. However, according to the historian Anne Salmond in the mid-eighteenth century his home island of Raiatea was the centre of an extensive maritime network and as an *arioi* his role in the Pacific was overtly diplomatic.¹⁵ The *arioi* were the navigators who carried the worship of the god ‘Oro to other islands. They were an exclusive society of priests, sailors, warriors, orators and lovers. They included artists who tattooed, painted bark-cloth, performed music, dance and drama on warlike and erotic themes and in New Zealand Tupaia re-established a historic relationship with the Maori which had only been known previously to the two nations by tradition.

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¹ Bernard Smith attributed the sketchbook to Joseph Banks in 1988 based on the evidence of the title which was in his handwriting, but the discovery by Banks’ biographer, Harold B. Carter, of a letter led to its reattribution in 2003. See, Sir Joseph Banks, Letter to Dawson Turner, Fellow of the Royal Society, 1812, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Banks Collection, MS 82. See also Keith Vincent Smith, ‘Tupaia’s Sketchbook’ eBLJ 2005, Article 10, for the account of the identification of the Artist of the Chief Mourner.

² John Alexander Gilfillan, ‘Captain Cook Taking Possession of New South Wales, 1770’ presented to the Royal Society of Victoria in 1859.
His relationships on the *Endeavour* become much more interesting when his passage to Britain is regarded, in the light of the New Zealand experience, as a political mission.

The British-Polynesian micro-culture that developed on the *Endeavour* is explored by Salmond in *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog*. I have been obliged to summarise my analysis of the collaborative works in which this culture is evident for this thesis and I will focus instead on the key reference for the project, the map of the Society Islands made by Cook and Tupaia.

![Figure 4: James Cook, Tupaia, Map of the Society Islands, 1769, © British Library Board, Add. 21593 C.](image)

The map is a hybrid of European and Polynesian cartography. The practice of drawing islands as coastlines is European but the place names and annotations are in Cook’s Pigeon Tahitian. The four directions are indicated in the margins and roughly equate to the compass points but the islands are organised according to a Polynesian

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ii Tupaia’s original drawing has been lost but Cook’s copy is held in the British Library.
system, in arcs around the central point of ‘home’, Raiatea. The distances are indicated by days’ sailing, taking into account the influence of currents.\textsuperscript{v}

![Image]

\textit{Figure 5: Sailing Chart, Marshall Islands, wood, shells and vegetable fibre, 100 x 67cm, collected by Admiral Davis during the cruise of HMS Royalist, 1890-93, © Trustees of the British Museum, London.}

The stick-chart is the traditional device of Polynesian navigation; a sculpturally beautiful object constructed from palm ribs bound by coconut fibre with shells representing islands. The sailing chart in Figure 5 above was the model for \textit{Homeland #1} in 2010 which consisted of 12 constructions. It was used as the basis for a system mapping the dream landscape to which the \textit{Call Signs} exhibitions referred which is explained in Appendix 1.

\textsuperscript{v} Cook was known as ‘Toot’ in Tahiti and I wondered whether the directions at east and west which include ‘Tootera’ and ‘Ohetoottera’ could be references to him. However, Professor Anne Salmond, Jean-Claude Teriierooiterai and Professor Bruno Suara from Tahiti very kindly provided the following translation. \textit{Opatoarow} and \textit{Opatoa} translate directly into North and South but the directions of east and west are reckoned by the position of the sun in the sky:

- Extreme left: \textit{Tereati Tootera} ("Te rä, tei to'o'a te rä") ‘The sun (it) is in the West’
- Extreme right: \textit{Tetahieta Ohetoottera} ("Tei te hiti'a, ua tū te rä") ‘It is in the East, the sun is up’
Figure 6: Homeland #1: Chart #7, Port and Pacific Ships, bamboo, thread, shells and seeds, 34 x 27cm, 2010 (photograph: Christian Capurro)

Of the three types that are known, only the mattang is entirely indigenous. The meddo which shows swell patterns and the rebbilib which describes the islands of the archipelago, have probably been influenced by Western navigation. The names of places and their locations are traditionally memorised and these charts emphasise the skills of ‘landfinding’; the ability to recognise land by the behaviour of currents, birds and the weather and find direction by the sun and stars.

In the Cook-Tupaia map, four small drawings of ships flag Cook’s annotations. Cook’s poor Tahitian hampers the translation but Robert Langdon interprets his notes as follows:

Tahiti: ‘In the time of the ancestors’ parents of Tupaia a hostile ship [arrived].’

Raiatea: ‘In the time of the ancestors of Tupaia a friendly ship [arrived].’

For further detail see D. Lewis, We the Navigators: the ancient art of landfinding in the Pacific, 2nd ed., Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1994, pp. 244-9.
Oanna: 'Tupaia [says] men from the ship [were] killed (or injured)’
or ‘Tupaia [says] men from the ship killed (or injured) [people on shore].’

Ohevatoutouai: ‘Food the men [got], ship(s) big, small the ship of Britain [in comparison]’

The language demonstrates the orientation of this conversation towards Polynesia and the content shows the subject to be previous European contact. Cook’s first act on disembarking in Raiatea, Tupaia’s home, was to take possession. This apparently callous act of colonisation seems at odds with the cooperative relationship the map suggests between the two men. Cook’s actions turn on of the legal meaning of the word possession which was radically reinterpreted in Australia in the nineteenth century. The map is normally cited as evidence of Tupaia’s skill as a navigator and the assistance he may have given Cook in the exploration of the Pacific, but when Tupaia’s diplomatic role is taken in conjunction with the contemporary interpretation of possession in Cook’s orders, the act of possession and the map as I will show later in this chapter, it could be argued, form a trade agreement.

Appropriation

The Call Signs exhibitions defined a broad model for Australian identity based on the history of communications in which intimate connections were filtered through the perception of distance that the Morse-code sound calls to mind. In Homeland this conversational landscape had been refined in the Cook-Tupaia system based on geography, narrative and the influence of currents. However the historic reference was not explicit and I felt I had made an uncomfortable use of Polynesian culture that was risking appropriation.

Appropriation creates a false trail of legitimacy that invokes ‘real’ values, such as beauty, as a right to possess. The measure of value that makes concepts and materiality seem equally real is established in language by the link that is formed between words and ideas through the intervention of a gesture. In 1996 Jill Bolte Taylor lost her ability to recognise language after a stroke which transformed her
concept of reality and its values. Bolte Taylor is a neuroanatomist and in 2011 she described the experience in a conference paper.\textsuperscript{vi}

The stroke had no effect on her voice or hearing but silenced what she calls her internal brain chatter. Without language she had no means of naming herself or any of her past experiences and the loss of language also deprived her of memory. Without the tool of narrative she was unable to conceive of the past or visualise mental images. This state of being, unmediated by language, erased her awareness of her separation from the world:

You know you wake up in the morning and the first thing your brain says is, ‘Oh man, the sun is shining’. Well imagine you don't hear that little voice that says ‘Man, the sun is shining’. You just experience the sun and the shining.\textsuperscript{17}

The loss of language extinguished the capacity for reflection and she now believes that the boundaries that create identity, that divide off an internal self from the external world, are contained within this internal narrative:

Language is an ongoing information processing. It's that constant reminder: I am. This is my name. This is all the data related to me. These are my likes and my dislikes. These are my beliefs. I am an individual. I'm single. I am a solid. I'm separate from you. This is my name…\textsuperscript{18}

Bolte Taylor’s idea reflects an argument familiar from philosophy that the experience of reality is created in the naming of things. But she adds a dynamic dimension which is performative; it is not enough that things have a name, those names have to be spoken. It is this ‘verbal gesture’ of naming things that materialises the external world, separating ‘the sun’ from ‘the shining’.

The ‘vocabulary’ of materials artists develop, John Nixon’s orange paint on masonite or Bianca Hester’s particular shade of blue, define a quality of colour and materials together which through repeated use becomes a cultural value recognisable outside the gallery. It follows that the limits of language determine the limits of perception;

\textsuperscript{vi} delivered to the annual American TED conference held in Long Beach.
and that the structures or habits of language then direct our interaction with a materialised world.

The development of an artistic vocabulary alternates between use and speculation, investing materials with meanings that become more narrowly defined with each repetition. In the Homeland project the red cotton thread that binds its constructions became the material that defined its vocabulary.

Red was an uninformed, aesthetic choice that was not suggested by the Marshallese stick-chart on which the work was modelled. However, Joseph Banks describes its value in the Pacific in his journal, comparing it with the European trade in ‘purple’ (indigo, woad and ‘dyers weed’). The women who used the dye, Banks wrote,

industriously preserve the colour upon their fingers and nails upon which it shows with the greatest beauty. They look upon it as no small ornament and I have been sometimes inclind to believe that they even borrow the dye of each other merely for the purpose of dying their fingers; whether it is esteemd as a beauty, a mark of their housewifry in being able to dye, or their riches in having cloth to dye I know not.19

The Endeavour sailors readily assimilated the value of red into their commerce, developing a regular trade in red feathers for their needs on the ship, but the symbolic power of the ‘red coats’ also enters into this vocabulary.

The botanical artist Sydney Parkinson witnessed an attack on the Tahitians soon after the Endeavour’s arrival in which the marines targeted the people ‘as if they had been shooting at wild ducks’. The ship had 12 marines for its protection who were under the command of the naval officers. When the senior officers went ashore the soldiers came under the command of the midshipmen, officers as young as 13. Parkinson, himself only 23, describes the midshipman at the centre of this event as a boy. The marines were distinguished from the sailors by their red coats and took no part in the sailing of the ship, creating relations that were often resentful. All these strains can be read into the subtext of Parkinson’s account:

A centinel being off his guard, one of the natives snatched a musket out of his hand, which occasioned the fray. A boy, a midshipman, was the commanding officer, and,
giving orders to fire, they obeyed with the greatest glee imaginable, as if they had been shooting at wild ducks, killed one stout man, and wounded many others. What a pity, that such brutality should be exercised by civilized people upon unarmed ignorant Indians!

‘Ignorant’ in this context, I suggest, does not mean uneducated or unsophisticated, or in Bernard Smith’s evangelical interpretation, ignorant of God and their destiny, but ignorant of the British capacity for violence.

In 1966 Alan Moorhead in *The Fatal Impact*, one of the seminal works in the movement to revise colonial history, imagined the Tahitians on seeing the *Endeavour* for the first time as childlike innocents:

They might perhaps have been compared to village children at the arrival of a travelling circus; they came forward to the encounter with a sort of timid, wondering excitement, eager to see the show, ready to be amazed, but a little fearful of approaching too close until they were sure that all was well.20

In 1769 the Tahitians were well acquainted with violence. Raiatea and Bora Bora had been at war since 1740 and on more than one occasion members of the *Endeavour* came across the jawbones of the enemy among the trophies of their friends. Violence was understood as a language by both sides. Like the Maori haka, the British marines materialised a way of walking, speaking, dressing and presenting, even to the expression on a soldier’s face. Violence, real or ceremonial is ‘social’ in the meeting of war machines. It devises strategies of engagement and negotiation which are alert to the language, movements and emotions of the other side. Communications and reactions are amplified and, like a game in which the cards picked up and discarded by one player determine the opportunities and strategies of the other, it commits the protagonists to a relationship, regardless of what kind.

The better known currency on the Endeavour is iron nails which had endangered Captain Wallis’ ship the *Dolphin* in Tahiti in 1768 in the trade for sex. Nails and hooks were pulled out of the hull and the currency became so devalued that it threatened to make essential provisions for the ship’s return journey unaffordable.21
The spread of sexual disease through the Pacific that this trade created and the gradual transition of women’s sexual freedom into exploitation became increasingly obvious to Cook with every return voyage. Contemplating their future prospects, Cook demanded in his journal on the second voyage to New Zealand, ‘let [anyone] tell me what the Natives of the whole extent of America have gained by the commerce they have had with Europeans.’

The ‘fatal impact’ of European contact on the Pacific was the theme of the revised history of the 1960s, but the other side of the Enlightenment’s encounter with sex in the Pacific that has received little attention was the coincidence between the Polynesian worship of ’Oro which Tupaia practiced, in which sexuality was an integral part, and Joseph Banks’ scientific researches into a European concept of sexual freedom. Banks was a lifetime member of the Society of the Dilettanti who were libertines but they were also motivated by the discoveries of the antiquities of Rome, especially the excavations at Pompeii, to question the religious basis Christian sexual morality and pursue extensive research into the pagan origins of its traditions.

*The Wealth of Nations* was not published until after the *Endeavour’s* return and it is Smith’s earlier philosophical work on ethical values, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, that was current in 1769. The influence of *The Wealth of Nations*, which would become the keystone of Classical economics, would not be felt for another seven years.

*The Theory of Moral Sentiments* describes a dual system of value in which commerce is the shadow of the moral economy. Just as the financial system balances income and expenditure against assets and liabilities, in Smith’s ‘system of happiness’ self-interest and the interests of others are balanced against self-respect and reputation. From these four countervailing forces he derives all the variations on motivation that drive human behaviour.

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It is a system that represents value not as an absolute ideal but a compromise negotiated between competing points of view. *The Wealth of Nations* is credited as the champion of liberal free trade, but seen in conjunction with *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* Smith’s approach to value is perhaps more reflective of a system of government than ideology in which, in his own parliament, the debate of citizens (in the House of Commons) is reviewed by the traditional landowners (in the House of Lords); and Smith’s attacks on government in *The Wealth of Nations* are balanced against his endorses of the aristocracy in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.\(^\text{viii}\)

In the eighteenth century the Lords dominated parliament and the line between the public interests of government and the private lives of its Lords was far from distinct. Social and administrative functions frequently overlapped, as for example when the news of Cook’s promotion after the first voyage reached him in a letter not from the Admiralty but the socially connected Banks.

The drive for social advantage in Smith’s system of happiness still plays on the concept of self-interest but it is an identity that defines itself through social relations rather than the heroic individualism or *tabula rasa* of European imperialist fantasy.

*The Wealth of Nations* was one of the defining works in the development of the Stadial Theory of human progress in which the Enlightenment notion of civilisation was developed. It postulated that societies developed as social and economic organisations by stages in a fixed order: hunting, shepherd, farming and commercial; and certain social, legal, political and psychological traits were believed to correspond with the achievement of each stage, linking the moral and commercial economies. As Pat Maloney explains:

> It was a conjectural history of the world whose apogee was Europe. Those nations most advanced in civilization and whose commerce brought them in touch with virtually the entire globe had a responsibility to help raise higher up the ladder of civility those savage nations displaying progressive tendencies. By the later nineteenth century

\(^{\text{viii}}\) Compare for example, Smith’s discussion of the ‘invisible hand’ (p. 292) and civil government (p. 413) in *The Wealth of Nations* with the ‘doctrine of Nature’ on submission to authority in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (pp. 65-6).
social-Darwinist ideas 'scientifically' classifying humanity into racial groups with fixed traits, and positing a fundamental 'struggle for existence' among these distinct groups, were to eclipse this earlier history and its 'enlightened' policy of assimilation and development.  

Although it framed the interests of imperialism in an evolutionary framework, Stadial Theory nevertheless acknowledged the cultural impact of its commercial agenda.

Cook’s orders to seek out a southern continent and take possession are contained in secret orders he received from the Lords of the Admiralty that required other British vessels not to hinder his passage or demand sight of his orders. But the letter addressed to all the party from the Royal Society, ‘Lord Morton’s Hints’, makes clear that the *Endeavour’s* ‘secret mission’ was well known to all on board: ‘When that business [observation of the transit of Venus] is finished, other matters may be attended to. *Particularly*, the discovery of a Continent in the Lower temperate Latitudes’.  

Out of context Morton’s instructions appear almost a stream-of-consciousness. He begins, ‘A Continent in the higher Latitudes, or in a rigorous climate, could be of little or no advantage to this nation’. After advice on the features which might distinguish the discovery of a continent from an island, he continues,

> The most populous Nations are generally found on large Continents.

> Populous nations are commonly the most civilized.

> The Hottentots at the Cape of Good Hope, are described to be in no great number.

> The same observation holds with respect to the Savage Nations in North America.

> If the Ship should fortunately discover any part of a well inhabited Continent, many new subjects in Natural History might be imported, and usefull branches of Commerce set on foot, which in process of time might prove highly beneficial to Brittain.

Stadialism dominated French and Scottish debate from 1750 and produced three major works of the Scottish Enlightenment: Adam Ferguson’s *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* in 1761, John Millar’s *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*
in 1771 and in 1776, Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*. Of these three only Ferguson’s was published at the time of Morton’s letter.

Morton appears to rely heavily on Ferguson’s theory of climate and latitudes and the emergence of civilisations. The veto on a continent ‘in the higher Latitudes, or in a rigorous climate’ seems to accept his proposition that ‘[g]reat extremities, either of heat or cold… prevent the first applications of ingenuity, or limit their progress’\(^\text{27}\).

Ferguson also describes the kind of landscape most likely to support a society in a highly advanced state of commerce:

> Some intermediate degrees of inconvenience in the situation, at once excite the spirit, and, with the hopes of success, encourage its efforts. ‘It is in the least favourable situations,’ says Mr. Rousseau, ‘that the arts have flourished the most’… For this reason, clusters of islands, a continent divided by many natural barriers, great rivers, ridges of mountains, and arms of the sea, are best fitted for becoming the nursery of independent and respectable nations.\(^\text{28}\)

And he paints a vivid picture of the kind of society to expect:

> The distinction of states being clearly maintained, a principle of political life is established in every division, and the capital of every district, like the heart of an animal body, communicates with ease the vital blood and the national spirit to its members. The most respectable nations have always been found, where at least one part of the frontier has been washed by the sea. This barrier… gives the greatest scope and facility to commerce.\(^\text{29}\)

However the principle motor for change in Stadial Theory was considered to be population growth which it was believed put pressure on resources and forced innovation, leading Morton to conclude, ‘Populous nations are commonly the most civilized’ adding that the ‘Hottentots’ and the ‘Savage Nations of North America ‘are described to be in no great number’.

His final note on the commercial and scientific benefits of trade with a well-inhabited continent reiterates in another form his original instruction, that the expansion of
contact with nations which had not yet reached the stage of commerce ‘could be of little or no advantage to this nation’.

Stadial Theory is, or had the potential in the eighteenth century to become, a race-based theory. But it was then still speculative and its ultimate course was still open.

The other theme that runs through Morton’s ‘Hints’ and Cook’s orders is the apparently contradictory attitude towards Aboriginal sovereignty in which Indigenous people are on the one hand ‘Lords of the country’ and ‘the natural, and in the strictest sense of the word, the legal possessors of the several Regions they inhabit’, and on the other, may be persuaded, in exchange for ‘presents of such Trifles as they may Value’ to surrender ‘Convenient Situations in the Country in the Name of the King of Great Britain’.

In modern law, possession excludes ownership; tenants can have the right to possession of a house, for example, but they are excluded from ownership. Merete Borch argues in ‘Rethinking the Origins of Terra Nullius’, that in 1770 British and international law had well-established concepts of Aboriginal sovereignty and a theory of the rights of indigenous peoples which had been developing since the seventeenth century. Cook seems to emphasise the distinction between possession and ownership in the significance of the words he crosses out. In the claim to the Society Islands he claimed ‘possession’ but without the right to their ‘use’:

At 1pm I landed in company with Mr Banks and the other Gentlemen. the first thing done was the performing of Tupia’s ceremony in all respects as at Huaheine I then hoisted an English Jack and took possession of the Island & those adjacent in the name and for the use of His Brit’ Majesty, calling them by the same names as the Natives do.

Cook’s orders, his claim to possession of the Society Islands, Morton’s Hints and Tupaia’s compliance with his actions all become consistent when possession is read in the context of an agreement in the pursuit trade. The map showing all instances of previous European contact according to Polynesian witness becomes an important legal document for the protection of a British monopoly.
However the people of New Holland and their continent presented none of the promising signs of commerce specified in ‘Lord Morton’s Hints’. The term ‘terra nullius’, Borch explains, was introduced into international law relatively recently, chiefly through the Mabo judgement of 1992 and relies on a nineteenth-century retrospective interpretation of legal precedent:

Given the prominent place of Australia in this development, one may wonder at the insistence with which Australian scholars have ascribed it to earlier centuries. There are probably several reasons for this; one may be that this historical inaccuracy was part of the legacy of nineteenth-century legal reasoning on this matter. Once it had become established that inhabited land could be acquired through settlement as if it was uninhabited, legal writers went to great lengths to find precedents for this, since it is of vital importance for the common law system to appear firmly rooted in past practices and not to be subject to whimsical change. In the process, eighteenth century and earlier legal perceptions were reformulated and reinterpreted in important ways. 34

The Mabo case was tested in Australian law and consequently Cook’s act of possession which took place under British and international law was excluded from consideration. But Morton’s opening paragraphs, although scattered with moral and religious sentiments, provide a clear summary of the contemporary law:

To have it still in view that shedding the blood of those people is a crime of the highest nature…

They are the natural, and in the strictest sense of the word, the legal possessors of the several Regions they inhabit.

No European Nation has a right to occupy any part of their country, or settle among them without their voluntary consent.

Conquest over the people can give no just title; because they could never be the Agressors. 35

The American colonies were still in British hands in 1770 and new territories would be redundant until the War of Independence in 1776, but the American experience provided the major context for the British policy on colonisation. In international law
Borch quotes Francisco de Vitoria in 1539 on the discovery of a country inhabited by non-Christians that by itself ‘gives no support to a seizure of the aborigines any more than if it had been they who discovered us’ and Hugo Grotius in 1625, ‘Equally shameless is it to claim for onself by right of discovery what is held by another, even though the occupant may be wicked, may hold wrong views about God, or may be dull of wit. For discovery applies to those things which belong to no one’.

Cook’s claim to New South Wales seems to explicitly lay claim to possession by right of discovery, but like the Raiatean claim, it distinguishes between possession and ownership in the phrases he crosses out:

Having satisfied myself of the great Probability of a Passage, thro’ which I intend going with the Ship and therefor may land no more upon this Eastern coast of New Holland and on the Western side I can make no new discovery the honour of which belongs to the Dutch Navigators and as such they may lay claim to it as their property but the Eastern Coast from the Latitude of 38º South down to this place I am confident was never seen or viseted by any European before us and therefore by the same Rule belongs to great Brittan. Notwithstanding I had in the Name of his Majesty taken possession of several places upon this coast I now once more hoisted the English Coulers and in the Name of His Majesty King George the Third took posession of the whole Eastern Coast from the above Latitude down to the place by the name of New South Wales together with all the Bays, Harbours Rivers and Island situtate upon the said coast after which we fired three Volleys of small Arms which were Answerd by the like number from the Ship.

The effect of this claim, I suggest is not to impose British sovereignty but to exclude the claims of others, especially the Dutch. It establishes a trade monopoly over a region which ‘could be of little or no advantage’ to British commerce; and the exclusion of property rights from the British claim allows him, ‘by the same rule’, to extend the same exclusion to the Dutch.

In English law the doctrine of conquest was originally established in a statement made in 1608 by Chief Justice Edward Coke in the case of Calvin, that the English were always at war with non-Christians. This pronouncement provided the basis for the extinguishment of local law or native title by British conquest, but the doctrine was
continually modified thereafter, by a royal commission in 1665 that concluded, ‘no doubt the country is [the Indians’] till they give or sell it, though it be not improved’;\textsuperscript{39} by Lord Northey in 1703, when he said as Attorney General that the charter of Connecticut was ‘not intended to dispossess the Indians who before and after the grant were Owners and possessors of [their lands]’;\textsuperscript{40} and in 1774 in \textit{Campbell v. Hall} when Lord Mansfield rejected the ‘mad enthusiasm of the Crusades’ and overruled ‘[t]he absurd exception as to pagans’.\textsuperscript{41}

The precedents on which legal minds in the nineteenth century relied most heavily in British law were William Blackstone’s categorisation of the grounds for colonisation in 1756 into ‘conquest’, ‘cessation’ and crucially, ‘uninhabited lands’\textsuperscript{42} which were then interpreted as lands that were uncultivated by referring to the philosopher John Locke. However Borch argues that Locke, writing in relation to the American colonies, was of the belief that there were genuinely uninhabited places which could be appropriated through occupation, without consent, without displacing the Indigenous people to whom, he argued, God had given the World ‘in common’.

Arthur Phillip’s failure as first Governor of New South Wales to negotiate a settlement with the local inhabitants, despite finding many more people than he had been led to expect, created the legal embarrassment judicial cases would attempt to redress in the nineteenth century by the establishment of new precedents; in 1822 a case was reported by James Stephen, legal council for the Colonial Office, arguing that the country had been acquired ‘through occupation of a desert and uninhabited land’;\textsuperscript{44} and in 1836 Justice Burton found in \textit{Rex v. Murrell} that the Aborigines ‘had no sovereignty’.\textsuperscript{45}

The final element that can confuse the interpretation of colonial policy in the eighteenth century is the unexpected appearance of sarcasm in government documents. Morton’s instructions on sign language quoted earlier were made in response to reports of massacres from other expeditions:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Particularly}, a single man who was killed in attempting to Swim towards one of the Boats. – If this account be true there was not the colour of a pretence for such a brutal Massacre: – A naked man in the water could never be dangerous to a Boat’s Crew.\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}
The many alternative forms of communication he offers as hints to the captain become much more plausible when read in the spirit of eighteenth century acerbic wit:

Amicable signs may be made which they could not possibly mistake – Such as holding up a jug, turning it bottom upwards, to show them it was empty, then applying it to the lips in the attitude of drinking. The most stupid from such a token must immediately comprehend that drink was wanted.47

The debt of Australian sovereignty to colonial possession has so complicated our identity and history that even returning to the primary documents themselves does not necessarily provide a clear indication of the attitudes of the past. Culture and economics have always been considered polar opposites but they share a common language. In the following chapters I show how the vocabulary of the colonial Pacific and its countervailing economic forces influence the contemporary cultural practice of Australian artists and illuminate the past.
2: Bonds

Sydney Parkinson was among the first of the British to be tattooed. The Polynesian tattoo contains information about genealogy and family history that is recorded in the pain of the ritual as well as in ink on the skin. It declares a bond between the individual and the community.

The body that both manipulates and is manipulated, asserts power and submits, is central to Paul Knight’s conception of the human bond. In Some Notes on Bonding he uses the metaphor of the American Waltz to explain a relationship in which partners alternately exploit and support each other in a language of sexual and emotional gestures:

The human bond is not a condition but a regulatory system he suggests that seduces as it restricts, imposing a kind of ‘soft violence’ on its subjects by defining both freedom and confinement within the same boundary. The binding force between the dancers is coercive in the sense that the impulse to move is mirrored in the impulse to yield.

In the previous chapter I suggested that the gestures that have been transmitted through the colonial Pacific in the language we inherit as Australians were made at First Contact in commerce, violence and sex and these three ‘languages’ form the basis of Knight’s exploration of the human bond. The idea that cultural meaning is ‘materialised’ as a value through the performance of gesture is expressed by Knight in the series of photographs of architectural interiors he began in 2000 that can be traced back to a moment of ‘first contact’.

Implicit within the hyper-sensuality of the manufactured surfaces of ‘Untitled #15’ are the echoes of an original human meeting between materials and a gesture that has been repeated and reproduced or allowed to remain in a visual language that transmits through surfaces by daily touch. ‘I see evidence of this system of language in most things’ Knight said in 2009, ‘the surface chosen to laminate a bench, the
colour of a carpet, the level of finish applied to an interior or the level of use that is allowed to … be evident in a space.\textsuperscript{49}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure7.png}
\caption{Paul Knight, ‘Untitled #15’, Type-C photograph, 94 x 230cm 125 x 320cm, 2001.}
\end{figure}

For Knight the original gesture to which all the signs of human contact revert is a sexual surrender to the experience of touch when the hand that has become a tool is allowed to reconnect to the body.\textsuperscript{50} The marks of the body left by use and design describe what Knight calls a ‘system of need’ and Adam Smith the system of happiness.

Rather than a ‘glue’ that binds us together, Knight like Smith sees the connections between people in terms of countervailing forces; a system of sexual need driven by soft violence.

Bonds are a share in government debt. They finance capital works, the institutions through which the national culture is enacted: schools, public housing, transport, communications. They expose investors to the risk of government by making them susceptible to the will of the community.

Knight’s photographs of surfaces in 2000 explored the sexual language of gestures. The work that followed examined the mechanisms of coercive power.

Bernard Smith called Sydney Parkinson’s use of drawing in 1770 ‘a kind of assertion of European power’ which ‘depended in no small measure upon [the] brutal use of force… Art in this respect, like trade, followed the flag.’\textsuperscript{51} His argues that the
scientific context of Parkinson’s practice invoked the authority of objectivity, establishing the ‘currency’ of future commerce between Europe and the Pacific that would soon be felt in his sitters’ material lives.

Smith’s observations on the relationship between the artist and the sitter were formed into a question in Knight’s work in 2005 in a practice which had since 2000 gradually transferred its subject matter from the photograph to the process of conversation.

Knight’s first strategy to avoid ‘the assertion of European power’ over his sitter had been to deliberately absent the body. But in 2005 it was restored in the Constructed Couples portrait series. These imaginary scenarios overlapped sexual fantasy with the lives of his models who were friends, strangers and professionals, creating emotional challenges which required lengthy negotiation.

Figure 8: Paul Knight, 'Untitled', Type-C photograph, 125 x 145cm, 2005.

Emotional and sexual exposure in photography produces the same potential for exploitation that Smith indicated in the colonial relationship. But Smith also endowed the visual image with an autonomous power, independent of the artist and his strategies. He acknowledged that Parkinson’s practice of drawing depended on his capacity to ‘utilise the social space created by friendship’ but for Smith, the artist
was powerless to influence the meaning his vocabulary would ultimately transmit.\textsuperscript{53} Knight’s strategy addressed the exploitative potential of the visual image by investing in the social bond.

The negotiation process could take as long as eight months over which time the model was asked to consider a variety of scenarios. The process required a level of emotional exposure and accountability to the artist that was insulated by confidentiality. The prospect of the exhibition created a situation of risk counterbalanced by cultural value. Over the series Knight developed this process of conversation into a form of artistic practice.

Risk is the element that is missing from Bernard Smith’s analysis of the colonial relationship. The American Waltz Knight uses as his metaphor is an improvisational dance. The excitement of its performance comes from the dancers’ ability to act originally and risk transgression while staying within the rules.

They swirl around the floor, guiding each other through turns and break-a-ways from the boundary… turning the patch of space that they have into an infinite ocean bounded by no land…\textsuperscript{54} The bond produces a single culture from a multiplicity of autonomous individuals by providing a mechanism through which they can adjust like a shoal of fish to a constantly shifting system of values.

Sydney Parkinson is considered the most fluent linguist of the British on the \textit{Endeavour} based on the extensive list of words and phrases he collected and his journal shows that he used portraiture to introduce himself to new people.\textsuperscript{ix} But how he implemented this strategy is apparent in the use he made of his paper and like Knight these drawings show an active relationship, open to risk that provides insights into the dynamics of their conversations.

\textsuperscript{ix} Parkinson describes making social use of his drawings at his first meeting with Toubourai, who would act the part of the Chief Mourner, on April 21. ‘I shewed him some of my drawings,’ he writes, ‘which he greatly admired, and pronounced their names as soon as he saw them.’ This encounter he followed up the next day with drawings of the family.
Parkinson and Tupaia’s sketches show them frequently drawing together: the costume of the Chief Mourner, a view of the Bay of ‘Oware’ (Fare), a dancing girl wearing a bodice, a dancing girl bare breasted, are all subjects duplicated by the artists. Bernard Smith used the botanical detail in Tupaia’s painting of the Bay of Fare to support his original attribution of the work to Joseph Banks. It could be argued that Smith’s speculations on the botanical interest of Banks on this occasion can now be attributed with the painting to Tupaia in his conversation with Sydney Parkinson.

Parkinson also demonstrates a habit of working across the page with other artists. Another drawing of the costume of the Chief Mourner by an inexperienced and anonymous hand is on Parkinson’s stock of paper and beneath it are his smaller portraits of two Tahitians [BL Add. MS 23921, f39a’]. The arrangement in my view suggests that the two portraits which have been fitted into the space below the larger drawing belong to the same occasion, suggesting the page has been passed back and forth.

A fish in Parkinson’s style also appears at the point of a fisherman’s spear in Tupaia’s painting of three Australian Aborigines fishing in Botany Bay [BL 15580, f10(a) 10]. Finally a smaller, extremely detailed map in the style of the Cook-Tupaia map of the Society Islands annotated in Banks’ hand is illustrated with the peaks of Bora Bora [BL, Add. MS 15508, f16] which have been copied, as Bernard Smith points out, from one of Parkinson’s drawings of the island [BL Add MS 9345, ff. 50v-51]. Smith attributed this map to Banks, like Tupaia’s sketchbook, based on the evidence of his handwriting but the similarity of the cartographic style to the Cook-Tupaia map suggests it can reasonably be assumed to be a collaborative work by Tupaia and Banks with contributions from Sydney Parkinson.

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5 ‘The drawing seeks to convey typical information: the structure of war and sailing canoes, of a long house, and of, from left to right, pandanus, breadfruit, banana, coconut trees and the taro plant. The keen interest in plants revealed here suggest that Joseph Banks was the draughtman.’ The Art of Captain Cook’s Voyages, Vol. I: The Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-71, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985. Plate 1.66 [A Scene in Tahiti], British Library, London. Add. MS 15508, f12.

56 Parkinson produced a large volume of drawings of fish from this voyage. Compare for example plate 13, Sciaena lata and plate 14, Chaetodon incisor published in Drawings of Fishes from Captain Cook’s Voyages, P.J.P Whitehead (ed.), London, Trustees of the British Museum (Natural History), 1968.
Parkinson’s artistic practices show him immersed in a social world in which his perceptions are constantly matched against Tahitian vision. The emotional impact of the experience of tattooing also cannot be discounted. Collaborative practices such as working on the same page as another artist create an emotional bond that combats the imposition of the ‘scientific’ objectivity Smith attributes to Parkinson in this multifacetted relationship.

Risk straddles the gap between what is known and unknown by responding with a generic principle. Speculation provides a systems for making decisions in the absence of certain knowledge like race, class and sex. But speculation becomes oppressive when risk is eliminated. If there is no choreography, speculation and risk make a system for dancing. They can also provide a system for gambling. ‘Working the system’ has an addictive attraction that makes these ‘imaginary machines’ persuasive even beyond the limits of rationality.

*Intimate Couples* in 2008 took the risk of personal exposure to its logical end, stripping away the paraphernalia of fantasy and inviting long-term couples to be photographed in sexual intercourse.

It required Knight to minutely examine his ‘utilisation of the social space created by friendship’ between the artist and the sitter in his practice:

> If I do become too close to them, like a friend, then for the sake of the shoot, the notion of friendship can get in the way. There is a level of security in the unfamiliar, like how people will confess their all to a stranger. So there is a fine balance in creating a safe place for them, whilst at the same time not doing this how you would normally to create safety for a loved one or a friend. The trust needs to be built in a place at a remove from my personal world.56
In 2011 *The Proposition* took the language of negotiation to another extreme. The project was an open invitation to contemplate a proposition to take part in a film by meeting with another stranger for sex. But although the project produced approximately 80 hours of recorded conversations and other communications his final participants never came forward. Knight pursued the production of the film but it was in fact a device to support the act of conversation with the artist. This last development in Knight’s investigation returned the original sexual connection of language to the gestures of conversation itself.

Both Knight and Stuart Ringholt, whose work is the subject of the next chapter, have commented on the effect their artistic practices have had on their participants, who
have found themselves confiding their ‘deepest grief’ and ‘all their regrets and sorrows’ in them.

Knight’s 12 years of experiments refute Bernard Smith’s basic assertion of the relationship between the artist and the sitter as a colonial relationship which the artist is powerless to avoid. Knight reinterprets artistic relationships as countervailing forces improvised in the body. A common expression among ethnographers is that when you lose a language you lose a world. Language is not imposed on the present by images from the past but lived in the body. In 2003 Andrew Ford interviewed Bob Copper at the age of 88, a member of the Copper family, who have been known as folk singers in the English village of Rottingdean for centuries. Copper described an adolescent memory of a cultural bond formed in the gestures of the voice of another boy singing in his chest:

[M]y cousin Ron, that’s Uncle John’s son, the shepherd’s son was about 18 months older than me... When our voices first broke, he got this tremendous reverberating voice, and I remember we used to as kids – arms round each other, singing when we were 16 or 17 – have a few pots of beer, long before we should have done, really and when he was singing I could feel his voice vibrating in my chest. It was so low, it was a sort of buzz, you know, absolutely tremendous, and I know we made a [r]ow, because we loved the old songs...
3: *Face Value*

*Figure 10: Stuart Ringholt, Embarrassed: ‘On Wednesday he wore a prosthetic nose’, documented performance, Basel, 2003 (photograph: Lanie Stockman).*

Adam Smith was using an archaic form of ‘embarrassment’ from the root ‘bar’, ‘block’ or ‘inhibit’, when he wrote that before the advent of money, trade ‘must frequently have been very much clogged and embarrassed in its operations’.\(^6\)

The emotional turmoil of embarrassment is not internal to the individual but systemic in Smith’s system of happiness. Individuals are like a series of dams or lochs, holding back the flow or allowing it to pass, each making its own contribution to the ultimate character, strength and direction of a complex social system.

Stuart Ringholt’s practice developed out of research into embarrassment’s debilitating effect. He experienced a hash-induced psychotic breakdown in India in 1996 in which the trauma of mental illness was only repeated on recovery by the stigma of mental illness and his memories.

In his first experiment in performance, *Love* in 2000, he reconstructed the story of his breakdown by re-enacting his delusions in the sequence in which they had been
experienced, reassembling the jumble of conflicting accounts into a single narrative. He later published his experiences as *Hashish Psychosis: what it’s like to be mentally ill and recover*; but the cathartic effect the performance had on him was entirely unexpected and became the subject of the work of the following years.

The interpretation of a life story as a series of embarrassments that has come to define a way of behaving in the world could describe the term coined for Australia by A.A. Phillips in 1958, the ‘cultural cringe’.  

In 1901 Australia celebrated federation by re-enacting Cook’s landing at Botany Bay in which the character of Daniel Solander is made to declaim:

As shadows flee before the dawn of day  
So the dark tribes of Earth in terror flee  
Before the white man’s ever onward tread;  
and all the night of ignorance and sin  
Doth vanish as the light of Truth’s fair day  
Dawns in the East and spreads o’er all the Earth!  

Phillips put down Australian insecurity to a sense of British inferiority, but it has also often been described as a feeling of rootlessness. White alienation from the land has been in continuous expression, from McCubbin’s ‘The Lost Child’ in 1886 to Ted Kotcheff’s nightmare outback landscape in 1971 in the film of *Wake in Fright*. The racial policies that shaped White Australia for most of the twentieth century are remembered now as a political rather than a medical history, but until the Second World War, scientists, especially the highly influential Melbourne medical school, virtually dictated Australian population policy. In 1926 G.L. Wood wrote in *The Economist* that a very real contribution to the solution of our ‘greatest national problem’ had been made by lifting population policy ‘from the arena of party politics to the laboratory of the scientist’.  

Scientific opinion on Australia’s racial destiny was divided between the influence of heredity and environment. T. Griffith Taylor, a prominent geographer and environmental determinist proposed the hybridisation of ‘superior’ Asians and Whites
to provide preadapted tropical settlers, while at the 1920 Australasian Medical Congress Dr A.T.H. Nisbet argued that White women in the tropics were prone to giving up tidiness and wearing the kimono, risking the production of ‘degenerate generations willing to live on rice and bananas’.

In the stark, black shadows cast by White men on the rocks in Russell Drysdale’s ‘The Rabbiters’ from 1947, resonances of the Adelaide nationalist literary movement, the Jindyworobaks, can be detected. Jindyworobak, according to one of its founding members, Rex Ingamells, meant ‘to annex or join’ and in this movement they envisaged in the 1930s grafting an idealised version of the primitive nomad onto the White Man who was at home in the bush. Warwick Anderson, in *The Cultivation of Whiteness*, traces one of the sources for the movement’s inspiration to medical research from South Australia in the 1920s and 1930s which led to the proposition that Australian Aborigines were in fact ‘dark Caucasians’.

These were the cultural interpretations which developed around a rapidly evolving science driven by an urgent political agenda, much like the pressures climatologists are faced with today. Epidemiology was in its infancy and governments were right to fear the spread of diseases such as polio, smallpox and the Spanish flu ahead of the science. But decisions, in so far as they prioritise one thing ahead of another, are made on a moral not a factual basis. Wood’s expectation of the transfer of executive power from party politics to the laboratory was that it would take the ‘guesswork’ out of government policy. But neither right and wrong nor facts are absolute. Adam Smith was using the idea of the imaginary machine to make a distinction between persuasive power and reason when he argued that in history the most persuasive scientific theories had always been those that made the most sense of our culture.

Moral decisions are improvised solutions. Ballroom dancing is a responsive skill developed between partners in a framework of rules that has evolved over generations. Turning to science for moral decisions is an attempt to take the risk out of human free will; but science proceeds by trial and error and as I noted in the last chapter, the extraction of risk can make speculations oppressive. The idea that wearing the kimono leads to degenerate children was an improvisation on scientific
research. The strategies of artists are interventions in the public imagination, designed to reveal the human origins of beliefs that culture makes to appear to come out of nature. It is government’s ability to be creative that allows it to lead the way out of oppressive speculations in an environment laden with error.

The absurdity of the beliefs of the past is a testament to culture’s plausibility. It’s ability to bring new ideas into circulation by ‘soothing the imagination’ is the efficiency of face value, the value we rely on for our daily transactions. Face value is an apparent value, printed on a coin or note that binds the community together through a system of credit. It relies on belief because as Adam Smith writes, if our money ‘could be exchanged for nothing, it would, like a bill upon a bankrupt, be of no more value than the most useless piece of paper.’

Face value substitutes a generic value, usually a number, for a meaning. It relies for its efficiency on its ability to pass without scrutiny; but it is regulated against cultural value by the daily transactions that exchange its numbers for things. If this process of ‘realisation’ – exchanging numbers for ‘real things’ – is postponed the two values start to diverge. Gambling creates an adrenaline rush from the high-speed exchange of face value for face value. Trading in ‘financial products’ sold on the derivatives market (which included the CDO: collateralised debt obligation) caused an enormous discrepancy between face value and things which was hidden from view for years until it was finally realised in 2008 when American houses started to sell at a loss resulting in the collapse of the housing market and a global financial crisis. The discrepancy between face value and things that causes the most frequent public consternation is the multi-million dollar corporate salary which has no plausible meaning in culture. Face value backs all transactions equally, regardless of merit, with the credit of the community.

More than most Ringbolt recognises that what we experience as reality is based on what we believe. He inhabited multiple identities during his illness including the ubiquitous Jesus Christ. His delusions of grandeur and his embarrassment were both exaggerated perceptions but they were nevertheless, equally ‘real’ in life experience.
Numbers reduce the inherent risks of trade by providing absolute values in place of the improvised values of culture. Financial derivatives such as the CDO are known as ‘financial innovations’ and the concept of risk is essential to their value; but the ‘innovations’ or improvisations of the financial markets have no basis in the human gesture. The risks of financial ruin or embarrassment that face value makes seem real need to be regularly tested against the risks of human gestures.

Ringholt’s performances in *Embarrassed* from 2001 to 2003 were literal realisations of the absolute risk of embarrassment. The improvisations examined the mechanism he had discovered for the release of self-respect in *Love* by embarrassing himself in public; walking around with snot on his face, standing in a square with toilet paper hanging out of the back of his pants. The experience of performance literally transformed the value he put on himself and in the *Anger* and *Funny Fear* workshops he began to consider the possibility that art could be literally ‘useful’ for changing the value of things. ‘I don’t know if it is’ he said in interview in 2004, ‘but I am interested in finding out. I am interested in finding out whether art can be super practical beyond the immediate visual and sensory experience... Can art literally improve my life on an interpersonal level?’

The workshops developed a concept of the relationship between anger and fear that echoes Knight’s ‘soft violence’. The impulse to move that is met by the impulse to yield is also expressed in the relationship between anger and fear. But where Knight’s dancers are attracted to risk, anger and fear recoil from it. In Europe Ringholt had missed much of the Australian response to the terrorist attack on the American World Trade Centre in the years immediately after 2001 which had been amplified by our own ‘Bali Bombing’. These events had suddenly accelerated a process of radical cultural change that had been underway for some years in Australia in the ‘Race
Debate’ revived by Pauline Hanson, ‘The Poverty Wars’, xi ‘The History Wars’ xiii and the emergence of Christian right in Australian politics.xiv

Community breakdown was the common theme of these movements often expressed in the positive terms of ‘Australian values’, ‘family values’ and ‘Judeo-Christian values’. The workshops pointed to these concepts as face value and anger and fear as the forms of embarrassment deflecting attention away from the need to scrutinise the system of Australian credit that was backing their exchange. The workshops played on the theme of self-improvement in a pastiche of new-age philosophies, inspirational self-help ideologies and contemporary art, inviting participants to join him in a practical intervention in the public imagination to lead the way out of oppressive speculations by making their own contributions, like a series of dams or lochs, to the ultimate character, strength and direction of the Australian system of happiness.

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4: Realisation

The financial crisis of 2008 was a crisis of real value. The economic language of our times had so abstracted our culture that what our finances were meant to represent was no longer obvious and real value threatened to collapse.

Finance deliberately abstracts cultural values by translating them into numbers in order to manipulate them free from the influence of meaning, but the exercise becomes literally meaningless if the values are not translated back into culture at the end of the process by realisation.

Real value was the battleground between the Romantics and the Utilitarians at the turn of the nineteenth century. The philosopher John Stuart Mill called the Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Utilitarian Jeremy Bentham, the two great seminal minds of England in their age. For Bentham, value’s existence was realised in pleasure and pain; for Coleridge, it was buried in the imagination.

The divide between culture and economics on the meaning of real value comes from the visceral knowledge that every individual has of ‘what is real’. One of the anecdotes made famous by Samuel Johnson’s biographer, James Boswell, was Johnson’s response to Bishop Berkley on immaterialism: ‘I refute it THUS!’ said Johnson and kicked a stone.

It seems counter-intuitive that it should have been Bentham’s materialism and not the Romantics’ ‘imaginative emotion’ that became the foundation of modern human rights, but it was Bentham’s attack on the imagination that allowed citizens to become equal before the law. Connecting nominal values (or face value) to real value orders experience according to culture. When Jill Bolte Taylor was asked whether she was able to have thoughts after she lost her language she answered, ‘I just had joy.’ Without language all experience becomes undifferentiated. The recovery of words transformed experience into reality by creating her awareness of herself as an identity, separate from the rest of the world.
The imposition of order on experience that language necessarily entails creates a moral order by prioritising one value ahead of another. Bentham’s system of pleasure and pain tried to separate the value of the individual from the moral order by dissociating words from their meanings. Words like ‘lust’, he argued, contain a moral imperative that dictates their interpretation as well as their meaning and in *The Book of Fallacies* he sought to eradicate this ‘instrument of deception’ by which ‘the moral sense (if so loose and delusive a term may on this occasion be employed) advanced in growth’.

In every part of the field of thought and discourse, the effect of language depends upon the principle of association, – upon the association formed between words and those ideas of which… they have become signs.

Bentham’s criticism was an attack on face value: the uncritical association of words with ideas which we rely on for our daily transactions. For Mill, the Utilitarian philosopher who was rescued from depression by the poetry of Wordsworth, ‘imaginative emotion’ was ‘not an illusion but a fact, as real as any of the other qualities of objects’. But at base, they both assert the same need to interrogate the relationship between what we say and what we believe.

In 1974 the economist Friedrich von Hayek advocated the radical transformation of nominal and real values in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize for Economics entitled ‘The Pretence of Knowledge’. The theme of the speech was the futility of economic policy: not the failure of economic theory, but the misguided government objective ‘of replacing spontaneous processes by “conscious human control”’.

Hayek told his audience that economists had adopted a ‘scientistic’ attitude in which they had attempted to claim for themselves the authority of an empirical science. What was needed, he said, was ‘a lesson in humility’:

If man is not to do more harm than good in his efforts to improve the social order, he will have to learn that in this, as in all other fields where essential complexity of an organized kind prevails, he cannot acquire the full knowledge which would make mastery of the events possible. He will therefore have to use what knowledge he can achieve, not to shape the results as the craftsman shapes his handiwork, but rather to
cultivate a growth by providing the appropriate environment, in the manner in which the gardener does this for his plants. There is danger in the exuberant feeling of ever growing power which the advance of physical sciences has engendered… to subject not only our natural but also our human environment to the control of a human will.\textsuperscript{78}

Hayek’s experience as an economic refugee after the First World War had made him suspicious of government authority and his economic solution proposed to safeguard liberty by side-lining government altogether and entrusting real value to the self-organising systems of the economy. His argument that ‘knowledge which in fact we do not possess, is likely to make us do much harm’\textsuperscript{79} declared a loss of confidence in the capacity of government to realise the difference between right and wrong. Hayek urged politicians to abandon realisation and manage their governments on economic value alone. The loss of trust in the markets in 2008 reflected on the integrity of the banks but the loss of confidence was in the ability of money to represent real value.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{vision_statement.png}
\caption{\textit{Andrew McQualter, Vision Statement, pencil, watercolour, dimensions variable, 2001.}}
\end{figure}

Andrew McQualter’s artistic practice of wall drawing and collaborative projects revives the Romantic-Utilitarian debate on the real value of art and culture and considers the role of the human gesture in the production of meaning.

\textit{Vision Statement}, a wall drawing first exhibited in 2000, is a flow-chart in the form of a tree illustrating the artistic process as a function of culture.
The text in the diagram presents processes as a series of statements that build up in a gestural way a language of artistic practice which is then categorised under headings such as ‘Community’, ‘Cultural Studies’, Communication’ and so forth:

COMMUNITY

An affiliation with a group, an organization, or a way of thinking & doing

Thoughts are materialised in objects & images

Our practice is a means of participation in a community

The community we seek is constructed – maintained – by dialogue and discourse

Our discourse is concerned partly with ideal forms of community and communication.80

Figure 12: Andrew McQualter, Study for Untitled (Pioneer), pencil, watercolour, dimensions variable, 2002.

In the work that followed, Study for untitled (Pioneer), the text described the Utilitarian process that had separated signs from their ideas and the loss of cultural confidence in the representation of real value:

4. We believed then that we had discovered a world of signs - a vast language system that need only be graphed, plotted, elaborated – we have journeyed toward the metaphysical - the meta-metaphysical.

5. Each achievement is not an arrival – but a disappointment. And we find the world is lost.81

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In the discussion of the colonial Pacific I suggested that the values signs carry are
derived from the gestures of First Contact which produce a system of communication
that eventually encompasses an entire culture of relationship embedded in the historic
past. In Study for Untitled (Pioneer) the artist’s gesture is literally illustrated in the
two artists, waving in the gesture of First Contact to the alien frontier, who replace the
naked man and woman on NASA’s Pioneer F Plaque.

Computerisation in the 1970s allowed for the increasing abstraction of financial
transactions, gradually distancing the human gesture from the exchange of value. An
error in ‘high volume trading’ which allows vast quantities of shares to be traded in a
fraction of a second was one of the theories touted as a possible cause of the crash in
2008 – ‘somebody pushed the wrong button’.

The creative gesture became central in McQualter’s collaborative works for Parable
in 2003, ‘Studies for Sculpture’, ‘Studies for the Shape of Democracy’ and ‘Studies
for a New Architecture’ and in 2010 ‘The Double Coincidence’ in Since We Last
Spoke exhibited collaborative drawings made in ‘explanatory encounters’ between the
artist and economists. The collaborations began as a conversation between the two
participants on the economy or the project into which they would gradually begin to
incorporate drawings on paper.

The relationship between culture, value and the human gesture was compressed into a
single image in the untitled window drawing made during a residency at the Static
Trading Co in the UK this year. The drawing shows a coin being transferred into a
slot like a money box in the palm of another hand.
One of the greatest obstacles to the new economics, Hayek warned, would come from the humanities in which he saw the ‘vested interests of established university departments’. The 1980s saw radical, global reform in the tertiary education sector that was both bureaucratic and philosophical.

In 1992 the Australian sociologist, Michael Pusey in his study of the Senior Executive of Federal government bureaucrats explained that his respondents’ had ‘clear-cut criteria’ for deciding what counted as a ‘vested interest’:

Wants, needs, goals and the like… were reckoned to be ‘political’, and perhaps even ‘social’, phenomena up to the very moment that they are expressed as actions, or as ‘things’ that are intentionally proffered for exchange in the marketplace. In that moment political and social factors and actions are redeemed and naturalised into ‘the economy’ and were seen predominantly as economic factors rather than ‘political’ and ‘social’ interests.

The old balance between the economy, the state and society ‘with its underlying priority of reconciling coordination with identity and culture’ was now under
challenge he wrote, ‘both from the practice of an invading economic rationalism, and from the post-modern high theory within some of our social science disciplines’.  

Pusey saw Post-modernism as taking hold ‘somewhere around 1984’ and by 1985 Bernard Smith was complaining, in the preface to the second edition of *European Vision and the South Pacific*, that since 1960 the book had been subjected to ‘extreme relativism’:

> The use of the term ‘European vision’ declared a belief in a cognitive theory of perception: that seeing is conditioned by knowing. But the book nowhere suggested that Europeans... are incapable as individuals of seeing what is actually before them...  

In Canberra, Pusey argues that Post-modernism had opened the way in the 1980s for a new Senior Executive Service dominated by economists to openly assert that ‘culture and identity no longer have any practical relevance’ in government:

> [Post-modernism] offers itself instead as a saving response to the ‘universal’ emergency of unmanageable diversity and thus to a crisis produced by the failure of every other attempt at rational deliberation and agreement... Culture and identity dissolve into arbitrary individual choices, and moreover, institutional arbitrariness is no longer a sign of failure but is instead put forward with deadly seriousness as a necessary condition, at the steering level, for the smooth and rational operation of a self-referential system.

The Romantic-Utilitarian argument that puts materiality and the imagination in competition makes reality slip back and forth like the Rubin Vase puzzle; the visual puzzle which could be a vase or two faces in silhouette, depending on which way you look at it.
McQualter’s ‘A form made by constructing a coiled pot in the space between Geoff and me’, made a literal object of the Rubin Vase in the space between the two artists. At the centre of the puzzle is the hand-built vase, the record of time and relationship, making us think, ‘Surely this must be ‘real’ value?’.

The cultural order language imposes creates awareness of being imaginatively separate from the world. But space itself is an awareness created by the social realisation of language; of connection and separation that produces the space between us. The final implication of language is not that we speak to be real, but that someone is listening.

The experience that makes both objects and concepts like love, honour, right and wrong seem real is realisation. The sudden realisation of having done wrong or the reality of kicking a stone rely on the same imaginative process that makes the implications of reality suddenly concrete.
Adam Smith defined real value as ‘trouble and toil’; what everything really costs ‘is the trouble and toil of acquiring it’; and what it is really worth ‘to the man who has acquired it… is the toil and trouble which it can save to himself and which it can impose upon other people’.88

Realisation draws a line between a nominal value and its real value. *Yiwarra Kuju: the Canning Stock Route*, was an exhibition of Aboriginal art at the National Museum of Australia in 2010 that commissioned artists connected with the Canning Stock Route to paint their stories in a six-week ‘return to country’. The Stock Route is a string of water-holes that runs 1,850 km from Halls Creek to Wiluna and many of the artists remembered family stories of the brutal methods used in Alfred Canning’s survey in 1906, when those who would not help were made into a kind of ‘drawing machine’ by forcing them to drink brine to make them lead the way to the next water hole.

The line on the map of the Canning Stock Route is its nominal value, the real value is the trouble and toil of the bodies who made it and realisation makes the connection between the two.
5: Reconciliation

The process that makes the Australian relationship with homeland so controversial is reconciliation. In accounting reconciliation traces a continuous historical record from the past to the present. It balances the record of debits – material things – against its credits – a system of belief. This conjunction between belief and the material world is where the financial and moral economies of the Western value system meet.

The terms accountant and auditor originate in medieval times when the accountant explained while the auditor listened. Every transaction is recorded as a debit and credit with a ‘narrative statement’ explaining its purpose. Reconciliation demonstrates the accountant’s narratives give a complete account.

Kevin Rudd’s apology as Prime Minister to the Aboriginal Stolen Generation in 2008 was considered an act of vital importance to Australian reconciliation, but on the eve of his speech the Aboriginal lawyer Noel Pearson wrote in the Australian that the meaning of reconciliation was inseparable from financial compensation:

[I]f the commonwealth is tomorrow assuming moral responsibility on behalf of the country, why not assume the responsibility for redress?... It is not possible to say those entitled to legal redress can chase their claims through the courts…There are thousands of Bernie Bantons [advocate of the James Hardie asbestos victims] involved here. How sincere is it to say sorry and then leave them to the pain, cost, inconvenience and uncertainty of interminable court proceedings?

The art critic Rex Butler later wrote in his analysis that the Prime Minister’s attempt to ‘turn a new page in Australian history’ had revealed a logical impasse:

…the assumption that we are already ‘fully reconciled’ to our past, unconsciously betrays, I would argue, the fear that there is no connection between [the apologiser and the one who is apologised to]; no way, politically at least, of passing from one to the other. And in any true apology… we (and I mean all of us) don’t know for whom or what we are apologising, and to whom and in the name of what we are apologising.
In the financial process of reconciliation apology is not the point. A new page cannot be turned in the accounts if the historical record does not satisfy its auditor. Without reconciled accounts businesses have no alternative but to declare themselves bankrupt. Noel Pearson continued in his article:

Most white Australians will be able to move on [tomorrow] (with the warm inner glow that will come from having said sorry), but I doubt indigenous Australians will. Those people stolen from their families who feel entitled to compensation will never be able to move on. Too many will be condemned to harbour a sense of injustice for the rest of their lives. Far from moving on, these people – whose lives have been much consumed by this issue – will die with a sense of unresolved justice.

If Australian national identity has one abiding characteristic it is ambivalence. The quality that distinguishes a landscape, especially a homeland, from just land is the sense of an unbroken connection to the past. Landscape painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries seduces its observer into investing in its ideal spaces by creating a way of recognising ourselves in its visual language, materialising an idea of ourselves in its vision of the land, that makes us feel at home. The mythical birthplace of the Australian soul created in the nineteenth century, terra nullius, put Australian legal writers to great lengths to find precedents for the colonisation of inhabited lands since, as Merete Borch writes, ‘it is of vital importance for the common law system to appear firmly rooted in past practices’.  

The narrative of colonialism in Australia has never succeeded in ‘soothing’ the Australian imagination. It has always been troubled by ambivalence towards its own presence in the landscape.

One of the meanings of investment is ‘to put on as a garment’. Investing either money or belief encourages identification. A ‘speculation’, on the other hand, is literally a look-out tower. Speculation recognises the limitations of its own perception and deliberately seeks out ‘higher ground’, other points of view, that will allow the insights that our sense of personal investment might prevent us from seeing.
The avant-garde uses speculation to change our cultural investments and encourage a paradigm shift. The title of the exhibition accompanying this thesis is *Homeland #2: Provisional Designs for a Post-Colonial Homeland*. The exhibition ‘takes its bearings’ from the * Homeland charts, renamed ‘Simple Orientation Devices 1-12’. The Devices are instruments for ‘landfinding’ using the principles of Cook and Tupaia: the narrative of a colonial Pacific reckoned by the currents of trade, violence and sex in the history of commerce between the Enlightenment and the Pacific and measured in the social space of the distance from home that lead to an Australian homeland.

‘Principles for a New Australian Democracy’ is a practical instrument of cultural communication, woven in the materials used for *Homeland #1*. Two helmets are connected by a speaking-tube for filtering the social space of conversation through the commerce of the colonial Pacific.

I began this thesis by proposing that culture was the fundamental instrument of communication that provides not only the content but the structure of our institutions, laws and language; and the ‘principles’ of this instrument are for a new Australian democracy.

Aboriginal sovereignty lies at the heart of reconciliation and I have suggested it was well established in British and international law in the eighteenth century and may have been recognised by Cook himself in the claim to Australian possession. However, as an artist, the argument of this thesis is not legal or historical but cultural and the solution ‘Principles for a New Australian Democracy’ proposes to the problem of the colonial mandate is cultural not political. The instrument of government known to Cook and Adam Smith was a system of democracy based on the two Houses of the British Parliament, the democratically elected House of Commons and the House of Lords, known as the traditional landowners. The two houses balance the interests of society in Smith’s system of happiness, between personal interest, the interests of others, self-respect and reputation.
'Principles for a New Australian Democracy’ is designed as a way of speaking together as a society that does not transmit but ‘materialise’ a language, culture and identity. It proposes a cultural process of reconciliation to restore lost face, create a government bond and realise a common law system that is firmly rooted in past practices.
Bibliography


Appendix

Each of the Homeland charts represents a district of dreams and the exhibition was accompanied by a key. As an example, Chart No. 7 describes a composite region of beaches and ocean around Sydney, Western Australia and the Pacific and the numbers on the diagram correspond to the key which provides the narrative for each location.

In the diagram below the narrative for location 6 describes a dream about diving in the Pacific which links to a port in another dream where the ship comes in to dock:

Figure 15: Key to Chart #7, numbered diagram showing locations of the narratives at points 6 and 7 on the chart.

Location 6:

I haven’t been diving for a long time and never in the deep ocean. I put on my mask and regulator and we drop into the water. We start to descend and I try to remember what to do. We go down a few meters and start to swim. So far above the seabed
there’s not much to see. In the middle-distance there’s a very big shadow. I get separated from my buddy but that’s OK. I keep my eyes open.

The sharks start coming in. I stay calm. I feel them brushing against me. I realise I’ve gone too deep. I need to get back up but I still have to off-gas. I hang about beneath the surface. Only five minutes to go. I hope the ship’s still there.

Location 7:

We come into port. To the right is a path that becomes quite tropical and leads to a Pacific island. I’m on holiday. I’m in deep conversation with someone, planning our trip. I have a map of the world.


10 *Ibid*, p. 46.


22 J.Cook, quoted in A. Salmond, *op. cit.*, p.188.


28 *Ibid*.

29 *Ibid*.


41 Ibid, p. 227.


43 Ibid, p. 231.


47 Ibid., p. 4.


50 P. Knight, *Some Notes on Bonding, op. cit.*, p.15.


52 Ibid, p. 47.

53 Ibid, p. 47.


56 P. Knight, ‘Paul Knight’ in *Patterns of Creative Aggression, op. cit.*, p. 25.

58 P. Knight, ‘Paul Knight’ in *Patterns of Creative Aggression, op. cit.*, p. 25.


65 Ibid, p. 142.


*Ibid*.

*Ibid*.


A. McQualter, text for ‘Study for Untitled (Pioneer)’, courtesy of the artist, 2002.


F.A. von, Hayek, *op. cit*.


M. Pusey, *op. cit*., p. 21.


91 M. Borch, op. cit., p. 239.
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