Cosmopolitan Nationalism in Australian Social History Museums: Assembling Histories, Negotiating the Past

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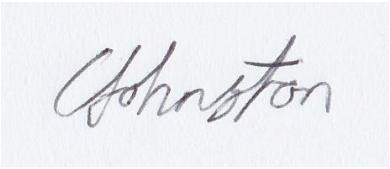
Statement of authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.



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Abstract

Cosmopolitan nationalism in the Australian context is a form of national identity whereby to 'be Australian' is to engage with other cultures and peoples. Positioning cosmopolitan nationalism as a localised set of practices that people participate in as part of their performance of national identity, this thesis examines how social history museums in Australia are responding to the shifting expectations of their visitors to produce histories that focus on transnational patterns of connection, cross-cultural encounters, and the cultures and practices of First Nations peoples. Bringing research in national identity and public history into the museum studies field, this thesis examines how museums engage with national metanarratives, social history objects, and cross-cultural narratives to inform/enable their visitors' practice of national identity.

Conceptually, the thesis draws on 'assemblage thinking', a theoretical approach that focuses on networks of diverse actors (both human and non-human) that, through their desires and associations, align to create and stabilise society. Assemblage thinking informs the research methodology utilised in the thesis, which combines site analysis, curator interviews, and exit questionnaires to examine how national history is designed, produced, and received in response to two case study exhibitions across three museums. First, I examine the touring exhibition *Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800–1804* at the National Museum of Australia and the Western Australian Maritime Museum (WAMM), comparing each institution's efforts to frame cosmopolitan histories in the exhibition space as well as visitor reception of these narratives. Second, through an examination of the temporary exhibition of *Cook and the Pacific* at the National Library of Australia, I explore efforts to reorient the metanarrative of James Cook's 'discovery' of Australia to focus on cross-cultural encounters between Cook's three voyages and First Nations peoples of the Pacific.

The thesis accepts that cosmopolitan nationalism is a default values position for Australia's social history museums, but the way individual museums present it in their histories shifts with their institutional identities. For example, both the National Library and WAMM produced histories heavily informed by their own collections, with strong object-oriented relationships between their own collections and the international objects on loan, creating histories that disconnect the past from the present. At the National Library, while contemporary First Nations voices deeply informed the exhibition, objects ultimately led the histories to be assembled while First Nations peoples provided their knowledge about these narratives and places. In contrast, the National Museum mobilised a rhetorical alignment to contemporary concerns with global connection and First Nations cultures, using their object selections to emphasise the histories produced. This orientation encouraged visitors to consider, and engage with, contemporary concerns, such as settler-First Nation relationships.

Visitors to the exhibitions at each of the museums expected to engage with traditional markers of Australian nationhood. International visitors identified banal markers of Australian national identity that were often absently considered by Australian audiences. Australian visitors used local and national markers, from flora and fauna to geographical features, to solidify both their local and national identities. All visitors also practised cosmopolitan values through the consumption of histories that featured interactions between Europeans and First Nations peoples. Visitors expressed an increased awareness of the cultural practices and beliefs of the Other, commented on local and global environmental issues, and raised concerns for present/future relationships between settler-Australians and First Nations peoples. A key finding is that both cosmopolitan or traditional markers and metanarratives of Australia are never fixed within the museum space. As museums, objects, and visitors construct, and engage with, cosmopolitan nationalism in the context of the exhibition space, they continually negotiate the terms of national identity and belonging in Australia.

Chapter 1
Introducing cosmopolitan values and Australian society in the twenty-first century

To examine the role of social history museums in the construction of national identity, my research took me to Australia's capital, Canberra, on multiple occasions. I recall arriving on one such occasion at 8:00am on a relatively frosty, southern spring morning in September 2018, having boarded a 5:30am flight from my sunny Brisbane home. I was on my way to interview curators at the National Library of Australia (henceforth National Library) and conduct fieldwork at their most recent exhibition, *Cook and the Pacific*. Until that point, much of my research and reading had been concerned with national identity, following relatively well-worn paths in the museum studies literature regarding how these institutions portray the nation and its inhabitants. My intention was to investigate how new interpretations of Australia's history – displayed and projected at the National Library – reflected shifting national identities for the country.

After giving my wife a call to let her know I had landed safely and telling the kids to have a good day at school (and behave), I walked out of the boarding and departure lounge into the open spaces of the airport's second floor lobby. This space is dominated by a large Lockheed Hudson Mark IV Bomber on extended loan from the Australian War Memorial, emblazoned with an acknowledgment that funding support had come from Lockheed Martin. I proceeded down the stairs to the ground level, looking for a taxi to take me into the city, before becoming distracted by a large advertising sign stretching four metres across the lobby wall. I recognised the place depicted immediately – the Pool of Remembrance at the Australian War Memorial (see Plate 1.1). The image in the advertisement was highly stylised, with an (unnatural) blue tint to the pool's water that did not illustrate a reflection of

any Canberran sky I'd ever seen but might better be associated with a travel brochure for the remote islands in the Pacific. But as I looked more closely at the image, I realised that the people captured in it were not the white Australian visitors that I expected to see. Rather, the image was of a family of four of Middle Eastern appearance – parents, a teenage boy and younger girl. Below them, in the water, their reflections had been replaced with historical images representing the three armed-forces, the army, navy and air force, and the image of a World War I-era army nurse. Across the image, written in large italic letters, was the phrase from the Australian national anthem 'for we are young and free'.[1]

Plate 1.1 'for we are young and free' advertising poster for Australian War Memorial. Photographed at Canberra Airport, 2018. Photograph by author.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Australia is a very different country from one hundred years ago, or even forty years ago when it was last involved in large-scale warfare during the Vietnam War. Forty years ago, the country was predominantly Australian born, with high numbers of immigrants from the United Kingdom. Today, nearly half the country's population are first- or second-generation migrants, with increasing communities from Africa, Asia and South America (Markus 2018). According to the 2016 census, the United Kingdom still represents

[1] On 1 January 2021 the Australian National Anthem had this line of the lyrics changed from 'for we are young and free' to 'we are one and free'. This change acknowledged the continuing habitation and cultural practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia.

the highest number of first-generation migrants in Australia, with 980,000 people.[2] The next four largest migrant communities arrived from countries within the region, including India (721,000 migrants), China (650,600 migrants), the Philippines (310,000 migrants) and Vietnam (270,000 migrants) (ABS 2021). Australian census data shows that between 2006 and 2016, the Australian population fundamentally shifted in key areas, such as increased tertiary education, professional workforce participation and population diversity. These shifts have worked to normalise diversity and global connectedness within educated, professional segments of the Australian population – those same members of the population who frequent the country's museums. Australians are now overwhelmingly better educated than they have been at any other point in the nation's history, with 24.3% of the population holding a bachelor qualification (or above) in 2016, compared to only 17.6% of the population a decade earlier (ABS 2017). For the Australian Capital Territory, where many national museums are located and, hence, a major audience is sourced, this percentage is even higher at 37.2%. Over the same period, state capital cities accounted for 77% of population growth, rising from 62.25% to 67% of the population, and job sectors, including professionals (10%) and managers (7.1%), all experienced well above average growth. This combination of an increasingly culturally diverse population linked to a growing educated, professional class that values global networks, has seen a rise in the awareness of, and interest in, different cultures in the Australian population.

The 'for we are young and free' advertisement to some extent reflects Australia in the twenty-first century, but it does not depict the visitors I would expect to see at the Australian War Memorial, where the narrative focus of the two World Wars and the Vietnam War incorporates predominantly white men fighting for a white Australian country (although the Memorial also includes exhibits on Australia's military involvement in more recent conflicts,

[2] The most current census data for Australia is 2016. Due to COVID-19 pandemic the 2020 Census was deferred until 2021. Release dates for the 2021 Census will not occur until June 2022. Further information available at https://www.abs.gov.au/census/about-2021-census.

peace keeping and humanitarian missions). While the stereotypical museum visitors, conceived as white, middle-class professionals and their families, is not entirely misconceived, the history that they are seeking and engaging with – the history that museums curate and create – is much more tightly aligned to the twenty-first century Australia represented in this image. In the twenty-first century, Australian national identity is being redefined, both through popular culture and official networks, through cosmopolitan perspectives and people's connection to diversity and an increasingly interconnected world. Diverse populations, particularly in major cities such as Sydney and Melbourne, are no longer seen simply as a manageable Other in the community, but are instead 'viewed as a direct and uncomfortable challenge to the routines and (supposed) rationalities of a particular, dominant group's way of life' (Skey 2011, p. 34). Similarly, social attitudes towards the First Nations peoples of settler nations also raise questions about the norms of attitudes and behaviour in white majority nations (Bell 2014; Clark et al. 2017).

These education and diversity shifts are becoming evident within a range of social attitudes studies and surveys conducted over the last decade. Since 2007, the Scanlon Survey has annually tracked social attitudes in Australia, focusing on topics associated with social cohesion, immigration, and population. It has found that there has been a slow, but continual, decline in discriminatory attitudes towards different ethnicities and religions (Markus 2018, pp. 57, 9-60; 2020, pp. 4-5, 39). Stephanie Plage et al. (2016) has also found that Australians use concepts they identify as 'national', such as 'fairness', 'openness' and 'egalitarianism', to inform/enhance their cosmopolitan outlooks. In much the same way that the 'everyday' practices of national identity have become evident, the cosmopolitan is no longer the domain of only transnational professionals, but may be practised within diverse societies, day-to-day, in a range of settings, by a range of people (Plage et al. 2016, pp. 323-4; Skrbis & Woodward 2013, p. 67).

Aims and objectives

The starting point for this thesis is a recognition that the cosmopolitan and the national are not diametrically opposed concepts, but rather operate through a range of private, public, local, and global levels. The cosmopolitan can be seen as being derived through international mobility, on occasion (and historically) linked to a professional class that moves between various cultural settings with ease (Davidson & Castellanos 2019; Haggis et al. 2017; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt 2017). But 'the cosmopolitan' is also more of a perspective, or as Gerard Delanty (2009) has put it, a 'cosmopolitan imagination' that provides communities, at varying scale, the capacity to be accepting and open to Others, an argument supported by other researchers (Skey 2013; Skrbis & Woodward 2007). This cosmopolitan *perspective* has become a key part of individual and national identities, producing a cosmopolitan nationalism, or a national identity framework that endeavours to embed aspects of openness to Others within the very fabric of what it means to be the citizen of a nation. An emergent cosmopolitan nationalism has come to define the type of history that is delivered by both regional and national museums in Australia. As memory institutions, museums draw on a transnational history to inform the narratives that they create. But memory is not boundless in the same way as its transnational narratives are. As Susannah Radstone (2011, p. 114) has outlined, 'memory research, like memory itself (notwithstanding possibilities for transmission and translation) is always located, it is […] specific to the site of production and practice'.

The aim of this thesis is to examine how memory operates in the construction of national identity through social history museums in Australia. It considers how the national and cosmopolitan are created, received, and developed, through the museums, their staff, and visitors, to present a version of history that links to contemporary dialogues relevant to the nation. All museums are steeped in solidarities with the communities they represent and engage with through their actions. Whether those solidarities are at the local, national, or

international level (or a combination of all three), there are communities that are being represented, reflected, and illustrated through the narratives that are created. If those links to the nation, as a solidarity, and the cosmopolitan, as a perspective, come into being through the transnational narrative created, then they are serving a political purpose. This purpose also puts the nation on display to the world, to international visitors and through internationally touring exhibitions. Such an approach demands a focused analysis of exhibitions to examine how diverse actors, including institutions, curators, objects, and visitors coalesce and, indeed, compete in the construction of the nation. To facilitate this analysis, the thesis uses an assemblage thinking approach to understanding the museum space, and the exhibitions they create, as part of a continual process of social (re)construction, as a myriad of actors, both human and non-human, bring a variety of desires and affects into the space.

It should be noted at this point that the term 'museum' used throughout the thesis refers to cultural institutions that: a) collect and hold social history and art collections, and b) exhibit those collections at their own institutions for the public to view. The term 'museums', then, applies to art galleries, libraries, museums, and other cultural institutions that meet this definition. This thesis sharpens this focus by homing in on *social history* museums in Australia, which can be understood as those institutions that develop permanent and temporary exhibitions in order to explore aspects of the nation's past, as well as present aspects of national solidarity and belonging within these exhibitions. This thesis creates a distinction between national museums and regional museums, with a focus on how the intersections of local, national, and international narratives are approached through the institutional context of the museums examined. For clarification, national museums are those institutions in Australia that are funded by the Federal Government and, primarily, are located in the Australian capital city of Canberra. In this study, it includes the National Museum of Australia, the National Library of Australia, and the Australian National Maritime

Museum. Regional museums are defined as those institutions that are funded at a state government or local government level in Australia, incorporating both metropolitan and country regions. Most of the regional museums examined in this thesis, including the Western Australian Maritime Museum and South Australian Maritime Museum, are based in metropolitan or suburban areas.

As part of its analysis, this thesis considers the history, cultures, practices, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples in the museum space, which requires some clarifications of the terminology used. Following a guide to writing and speaking about Indigenous peoples published by Macquarie University (Roberts et al. 2021), I have made use of the following terminology. The capitalised term 'First Nations' is used to describe 'a collective grouping of some, many, or all Indigenous Nations' (p. 2). A global term, in this thesis, it is commonly used to refer to the First Nations peoples of the Pacific.[3] While First Nations is the preferred term throughout this thesis, on occasion the term 'indigenous' (lower case) is used when referring collectively to indigenous peoples of a larger region and/or the world, particularly where I am discussing authors that have also used 'indigenous' in this context. The terminology for 'indigenous' (lower case) is also used when referring to collective terms that apply to all, or several, First Nations peoples – terms including 'indigenous heritage' and 'indigenous rights', for example.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Nations peoples of Australia. Aboriginal peoples is the collective term used for the Indigenous peoples of Australia's mainland and Tasmania, while Torres Strait Islander peoples is the collective name for those Indigenous peoples of the islands of the Torres Strait in the northern territorial waters of

[3] It is noted that the term First Nation(s) is more commonly used in North America to define indigenous peoples. The term has been used in this thesis for Māori and South Pacific indigenous peoples to create a distinction from the usage of Indigenous and indigenous, as outlined above. Collective groupings considered but not used include Pasifika and Moana Oceania.

Australia. These terms do not reflect the diversity of languages, cultural practices, world views and experiences that exist across Australia and its multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations. Where the specific nation group and/or their members are known, I use that term in place of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander' are used interchangeably at points in this thesis. The term 'settler' is used to describe those individuals and/or groups who came to a particular region during/after the period of European settlement. In the case of Australia, for example, settler peoples are those individuals and groups that arrived with and/or after the European settlement of Sydney in 1788. The term 'non-Indigenous' is used in this thesis to include settlers and visitors to this country (in this thesis most commonly with relation to international tourists).

National museums in Australia have increasingly adopted a cosmopolitan agenda, whereby their exhibitions, programs and activities progress national performances that link Australia to the world and encourage engagement with diverse cultures and perspectives (Davidson & Catellanos 2019; Levitt 2015; Mason 2013). However, these museums also have their own histories and legacies that play into the exhibitions they create and the work their staff do. In exploring the contemporary relevance of the National Gallery in London, Simon Knell (2016) argued that this institution found itself sitting in the position of a 'reference point' for the nation. As perhaps the oldest national gallery in the world, it is constrained by a combination of political and organisational factors, the least of which is an 'institutional resistance… [which] is an important attribute of national museums around the world' (Knell 2016, p. 45). This does not mean that the National Gallery was, and is, not reactive to the shifting demography of London, but rather 'sees its role as custodial, knowledge- and object-centred and art historical' (Knell 2016, p. 45).

Likewise, some of Australia's oldest cultural institutions, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales (established 1871), the Australian Museum (established 1845), and the National Library of Australia (established 1901), are constrained by tradition. For newer institutions, such as the National Museum of Australia (established 1980, without a building until 2001) and the National Portrait Gallery (established 1998), a cosmopolitan aspect of the nation has been at the forefront throughout much of their institutional history, although the transnational histories they have presented have not been without conflict (Ang 2017; Gardiner-Garden 1996; Hansen 2005; Thomson 2010; Trinca & Wehner 2006). For other older institutions, however, such as the Australian War Memorial (established 1941) and the National Library of Australia (established 1901), an engagement with cosmopolitan themes of transnational movement and representation of diversity has been much slower and, constrained by their extended histories, grounded in the 'fixed' national traditions and the dominance of their collections in the imagination of the nation (Caust 2016; Inglis 1998; Knell 2016; Mason 2014; Tiffen 2007a). While accepting cosmopolitan nationalism as an important component of Australia's national identity (and museum identities), a central concern of this thesis is to examine how histories are constructed by different museums to meet the expectations of their visitors. This aim requires an analysis of how cosmopolitan histories are constructed by regional and national museums, as well as comparisons between relatively new museums and older institutions that may have less flexibility in the way they present histories in their exhibitions. In order to achieve this analysis, my research draws from two case study exhibitions to examine how cosmopolitan themes are presented within national and, comparatively, regional museums.

The first of these exhibitions is *The Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800–1804.* This touring exhibition was a collaboration between four regional museums (South Australia Maritime Museum, Western Australian Maritime Museum, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG), and the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG)), two national museums (the National Museum of Australia and Australian National Maritime Museum

(ANMM)) and the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Le Havre, France. My focus is on the different approaches taken by the national and regional museums, drawing on research conducted at the Western Australian Maritime Museum (WAMM) and the National Museum of Australia (henceforth National Museum), where interviews were conducted with curators and visitors.

The second case study exhibition is *Cook and the Pacific*, a temporary exhibition developed by the National Library. The National Library contains Australia's largest federally owned heritage collection but only holds a regularly rotating semi-permanent exhibition space, the Treasures Gallery, and a larger temporary exhibition space. *Cook and the Pacific* was held between September 2018 and February 2019 and showcased a range of the Library's objects that were linked to James Cook's Pacific voyages. These were displayed with objects from other countries, including the United Kingdom and Hawaii. My research on *Cook and the Pacific* focuses on how cosmopolitan values were brought into the exhibition space through an exploration of cross-cultural encounters and continuing First Nations cultural practices that drew on complex object relationships. The curatorial design of the exhibition focused on Cook's experiences and engagements with First Nations peoples of the Pacific, dislocating the exhibition from the chronology of Cook's voyages to instead focus on the Pacific cultures that Cook encountered. The National Library worked closely with First Nations peoples of the Pacific to present multiple perspectives for the historical narratives of Cook's voyages that were captured in the exhibition.

Chapter outlines

This introductory chapter has set the context for the thesis by underlining how a cosmopolitan nationalism has developed in response to demographic and educational changes in the Australian society. It has also suggested how this cosmopolitan nationalism is informing the approaches museums in Australia take to developing social history

exhibitions. Chapter 2 builds on this introductory framework in order to set out how a cosmopolitan nationalism has come to define national identity in Australia. It examines how cosmopolitan nationalism relates to traditional ideas about the nation state, national belonging, and history. It also highlights how the development of cosmopolitan perspectives through a range of techniques and approaches to history, primary among them being the transnational turn in historiography, underpin a cosmopolitan nationalism in Australia and other countries. The chapter argues that a cosmopolitan national identity has emerged within the educated, middle-class audiences that attend museums. These visitors are active participants in the construction of cosmopolitan nationalism in the museums space as they bring their own values and associated expectations, influencing the exhibitions produced. An emergent multivocal nationalism informs that construction of historical narratives within the museum space, as museums aim to recognise diverse communities and perspectives, including First Nations Australians, while also highlighting transnational histories that created the contemporary national community.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology used to undertake this research. The chapter begins with an examination of how an 'assemblage thinking' approach to understanding social construction has informed my choice of methods and, subsequently, the approach taken in this thesis to understanding nationalism and national identity in Australian society. The chapter presents 'assemblage thinking' as a convergence of assemblage theory and actor-network theory (ANT), both of which are approaches used to examine social transformation and adaptation. I argue that assemblage thinking can be used to examine how societies are constructed and reconstructed over time. Assemblage thinking thus provides a theoretical framework through which to consider how cosmopolitan nationalism is constructed in museums, drawing on a variety of desires and affects that inform the histories and narratives that emerge (and may be contested) within the museum assemblage. The

chapter concludes by outlining the research conducted for this thesis, providing further details of the fieldwork conducted in relation to the two case study exhibitions.

Chapter 4 examines the development of the *Art of Science* exhibition, exploring how different approaches taken to this exhibition by the National Museum of Australia and the WAMM illustrate the nexus between the local, the nation, and the global. It commences with a discussion of the conceptualisation of the exhibition, the collaborative process of its creation, and the final points of difference that emerged in its presentation at the National Museum and the WAMM. This comparative approach allows for an examination into how the museum assemblage is constructed and reconstructed between institutions, developing aligned, but distinct, aspects of cosmopolitan nationalism between sites.

Chapter 5 shifts the analysis towards visitor reception of the *Art of Science* exhibition at the National Museum and WAMM. The chapter focuses on banal markers of nation, including landscape, animals, plants, and places, to examine how these traditional elements of belonging were retained within the exhibition, working in conjunction with cosmopolitan values to reconfigure national identity. The chapter then moves on to explore how the Australian nation is conceived by Australian and international audiences, with a focus on how objects and icons become part of cosmopolitan and global trajectories for visitors from other countries.

Chapter 6 focuses on the reception of Aboriginal peoples' histories and cultures by non-Indigenous visitors in *Art of Science*, examining how the exhibition was (re)assembled between sites. It reveals how visitors at WAMM identified points of cross-cultural encounter at specific localities that emphasised cosmopolitan practices within history but remained temporally disconnected from present concerns and cultural practices. This focus on 'fixed'

historical narratives contrasts with the National Museum, where museum visitors used the exhibition content to consider present day sensibilities. While National Museum visitors were still engaged with historical narratives of cross-cultural encounter, they also questioned whether different historical choices may have remade the present-day.

The focus in Chapter 7 moves to *Cook and the Pacific* and a consideration of the National Library's engagement with Australian and Pacific First Nations peoples that was undertaken to contextualise and enrich the exhibition. This engagement is illustrative of a cosmopolitan concern with 'rights', and, more specifically, the rights of First Nations peoples to create and shape their histories within the exhibition space. Looking at the relationships between Pacific First Nations voices, objects, and visitor reception in the exhibition reveals them as active agents for the ways cosmopolitan values are practised in museums. The chapter demonstrates how First Nations peoples, as Other, are central to defining a cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum space, while providing avenues for cosmopolitan practices of acknowledgment, respect, and understanding for different ways of being in the world.

Bringing forward the focus of assemblage thinking with the capacity and influence of non-human actors within the museum space, Chapter 8 explores the role of particular objects in the museum space and the relationships established with curators and visitors. The National Library's own collection is a focal point for the chapter, with objects, including the painting *The Death of Captain Cook* by George Carter and Joshua Reynolds' sketch *Omai of the Friendly Isles*, examined in order to understand the impact of object trajectories and object relationships in *Cook and the Pacific*. In examining these objects, and the relationship they enter with other objects (including touring objects from international collections), the chapter shows how institutional, curatorial and object trajectories can be used to construct cosmopolitan histories.

Chapter 9 examines the concluding themes of the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition, ‘Collecting Cook’ and ‘Cook after Cook’, in order to explore how the National Library addressed the difficult and contested legacy of Cook’s voyages and ‘discoveries’. Examined in tandem with visitor comments, the chapter demonstrates both the possibilities and limits of cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum space. The cosmopolitan is always tied to individuals’ receptions of difference. While museums can reflect changes within society, people are not easily swayed from their existing solidarities and connections. Museums remain one of the few spaces in which an encounter with ‘the Other’ can take place, but the reception and reconfiguring of these histories by visitors illustrates the continual (re)construction of cosmopolitan nationalism in these spaces. The final chapter is followed by a conclusion, which pulls together the arguments made by the thesis and shows how these are demonstrated across the thesis.

My research is primarily concerned with how transnational memory operates within national museums to build on a cosmopolitan nationalism that reflects the expectations of an increasingly diverse, educated, professional population in Australia. It asks how transnational history interacts with memory to challenge and contest, support, and deliver a national identity narrative that can be abided within a global age (Berger & Niven 2014, p. 145). Museums are one aspect of this memory process, normalising the transnational and progressive interpretations of historical pasts to present an everyday, cosmopolitan nationalism. There are two metanarrative concerns that national museums are forced to engage with in moving conceptions of Australia into a perspective where the cosmopolitan is a normative part of the national story. The first concerns the ways that formative national narratives are conveyed. For instance, the ‘discoveries’ of Captain James Cook and Matthew Flinders, the First Fleet, Federation, the White Australia Policy, and the two World Wars will each receive some type of revision within the context of shifting social

understandings of national identity and Australian social values.[4] The second concerns how target audiences, rather than the Australian public, inform and direct the narratives that are created, and benefit from these in practising their own cosmopolitan (and everyday) national identity frameworks.

Since the 1980s, Australia has become more culturally diverse, more internationally mobile, and more educated, reflected in both the Middle Eastern family captured in the 'for we are young and free' advertisement and the established cosmopolitan values evident in its construction. These shifts have contributed to a growing awareness of, and engagement with, different cultures and regions, developing and propagating cosmopolitan values in Australia. This thesis examines how these pressures are played out in Australia's social history museums by focusing on the presentation and reception of cosmopolitan nationalism in two case study exhibitions. The thesis aims are achieved through an analysis of the intersection of museums, curators, objects and visitors in the museum space, and the renegotiations that develop around national identity in Australia. It argues that museums today play a performative role is normalising a cosmopolitan narrative to Australia's history that prioritises cultural diversity, transnational connections, and Indigenous voices within the national story.

[4] The White Australia policy was a series of Acts of Parliament and policy actions taken by the Australian Federal Government to maintain a 'white', British character during the period 1901 to 1958. Amongst the key policies was the Immigration Restrictions Act 1901 that created requirements for immigration to Australia that excluded non-English speakers and those born outside the United Kingdom and British Dominions, such as Canada and New Zealand.

Chapter 2
Cosmopolitan nationalism, transnational history, and the twenty-first century museum

This chapter examines the emergence of cosmopolitan nationalism and the consequences for museums of these shifts in national identity. Focusing on Australia, it shows how different values of demographic groupings are creating multiple national identities that represent a complex intersection between local, national, and international attachments. This reconfiguring of national identity also incorporates traditional forms, such as cultural traits and historical achievements, alongside a more performative form of nationalism that highlights cosmopolitan concerns for the Other and the role of the nation and their citizens as global actors. This cosmopolitan nationalism is most commonly associated with demographics that include cultural diversity and high-levels of university education, where there exists a broader capacity for individuals to experience and engage with people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds – a cornerstone of cosmopolitanism (Delanty 2009; Skey 2013; Skrbis & Woodward 2013). Cosmopolitan nationalism normalises mobility, multiculturalism, and international relations as part of the national narrative, where national identity is not simply linked to one's country but can be used by people through their everyday experiences, travels, and actions, to address international concerns and engage in global citizenship.

Museums play a key role in this process, redefining national narratives through the exhibition of transnational histories and contemporary associations. In this chapter, I argue that this normalisation occurs through a process of transnational memory (Assmann 2014; Assmann & Conrad 2010; De Cesari & Rigney 2014), with memory being the process through which people and groups redefine events in the context of their lives. Through transnational memory, museums are part of a process that uses national, transnational, and international

narratives to redefine what it means to be Australian. Museums are performative institutions – they have histories to tell and perspectives that offer differing conceptions of nation, national identity, and the histories that inform them. In settler countries like Australia, the United States, and New Zealand, these broadening perspectives take in the representation of First Nations peoples. In Australia, the collection and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history is mandated in the legislation of institutions such as the National Museum of Australia and the state government run Western Australian Museum,[5] both of which are required to partner with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to effectively understand their histories and associated meanings, ready for presentation to a general audience. These issues are complicated further by the shifting, diverse nature of Australian society, where a large percentage of the population was born overseas. Finding ways to incorporate these diverse narratives of Australian history (a history that, until the 1970s, had primarily focused on a white, Anglo-Saxon population) is now a primary concern for national museums (Carbone 2019; Henrich 2013; Hutchinson & Witcomb 2014; Message 2009; Witcomb 2009). The traditional nationalist narratives of the twentieth century that provided a story of progress, showing the rise of Australia and its purpose, have been challenged in the twenty-first century as part of redefinitions of what it means to *be Australian*. The result is a reconfiguring of expectations not only for national museums, but also regional and local museums that present histories that permeate and relate to a national narrative. These histories may need to meet the expectations of a broad range of museum visitors, although the museum visitor must also be understood as a small representation of Australian society, limiting the democratic potential of these institutions.

This chapter begins by analysing how national identity and memory have been understood within Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and the United States of America before going on to examine in detail how the trajectory of globalisation and the increasing diversity of

[5] The Western Australian Museum is a network of six museums governed by the establishing legislation of the Western Australia Museum.

populations have reoriented these concepts. It argues that an emergent cosmopolitan nationalism has redefined national identity and citizenship in Australia and other settler countries. Using the concepts of 'rooted cosmopolitanism' and 'transnational memory', the chapter situates how social history museums operate within this sphere as they seek to meld the nation's, and their own, past with contemporary concerns and assumptions.

National identity and the construction of national culture

The construction of national identities has long been of interest to sociologists, historians, and other scholars, who have variously endeavoured to ascertain how nations were, and continue to be created and defined by the societies they contain. Key authors in the field, including Ernest Gellner (1983), Eric Hobsbawm (1992), Benedict Anderson (1983) and Anthony Smith (1999, 2007), have highlighted the centrality of ritual and myth to the construction and reinforcement of national identity and culture, although each take a different approach to defining these construction processes. In the prominent volume *Nation and Nationalism*, Ernest Gellner (1983, pp. 38-9) argues that the nation is derived from a series of functions inherent in the transition from an agrarian to an industrial society, including the broadening of literacy and education, which increased the 'convergence of political and cultural units'. He concludes that nationalism requires an inherent process of homogenisation and identity formation developed, in part, through the bureaucratisation and officialdom of specific bodies, such as schools, museums, and scientific communities, which direct a 'national' knowledge to the broader community (Gellner 1983, pp. 38-9). Eric Hobsbawm, in his 1992 book *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, agreed with Gellner insofar as he argued that 'nations only exist as functions of a particular kind of territorial state or the aspiration to establish one' (1992, p. 10). For both, nations are primarily a political construction that have consequences for the intersection between the state/civic affairs and its relationship to the cultural aspects of belonging. But Hobsbawm also acknowledged a second component of the nation, an ethno-linguistic nationalism, which was seen in the

context of an overarching top-down creation of the nation-state. Although he ignored the potential links between cultural belonging and the nation-state, his concern was with garnering a 'view from below, i.e. the nation as seen not by government and the spokesmen [sic] and activists of nationalist […] movements, but by the ordinary persons who are the objects of their action and propaganda' (Hobsbawm 1992, p. 11). He maintained that this process illustrated how the political construction of the nation-state was reflected by and through the people and groups that were part of the political process of constructing the nation.

Benedict Anderson's (1983) concept of 'imagined community' further developed Hobsbawm's ethno-linguistic nationalism. As Anderson sought to de-Europeanise the study of nationalism, his imagined communities rested heavily on the concept of an 'homogenous empty time', through which a 'people' can be imagined, with the concept providing the 'temporal coincidence necessary 'for "re-presenting" the kind of imagined community that is the nation' (Anderson, Benedict 1983, pp. 24-5). Anderson's thesis rests on communities imaginatively defining the nation, and the ongoing dissemination and reinforcement of this conception of nation through print media. Where Gellner's thesis concluded that the industrial revolution provided the social conditions that necessitated the rise of nation-states, Anderson's argument presents people and social groups as necessary agents in the imagination of a community. While he still viewed nationalism as a 'modern creation', Anderson argued that it is the dissemination of knowledge, most apparent with the invention of the printing press, that was key to the creation of an imagined national community.

Similarly, homogeneity is at the heart of Anthony Smith's (1998, 1999) ethno-symbolism approach to national identity construction. Rather than highlighting an 'imagined community', ethno-symbolism identifies existing ethnic and genealogical networks, a kind of pre-nation society, as the beginnings of national construction. In his volume *Nationalism and*

Modernism, Smith (1998, p. 193) conceives of the nation as the 'clusters of myths, symbols, memories, values and traditions, emerging from the shared experiences of several generations of cohabiting populations, [structured] as the defining cultural elements from which ethnic groups emerge'. It is these 'ethnie' which become the central building blocks for national identities, and either reinforce and support traditional, political, territorial national units or create the atmosphere by which 'a demotic "ethnie" is transformed largely under the aegis of an indigenous [sic] intelligentsia into an ethnic nation' (Smith 1998, p. 194). Ethno-symbolism has become an important strand of research on nationalism, underlined by a continual return to ritual and symbolism in the analysis of nationalism in a modern world that highlights the robustness of the nation and nation-state when confronted with globalisation and transnational trajectories.

In spite of the historical link between cultural and political identities throughout much of the twentieth century, their conflation has more recently been called into question within Anglosphere and European countries, particularly in settler-nations like Australia, the United States, and Canada, all three of which have become more culturally and ethnically diverse (Radaković 2019, p. 16). Almost thirty years ago, Graeme Turner (1994, p. 10) questioned the dominance of a homogeneous 'nationalism' that only 'addresses a single national culture and depends on a singular version of history'. Throughout his analysis of national identity in Australia, he highlights how this nationalism discriminated against large sections of society and fails to meet the ongoing challenges of the community (Turner 1994, p. 10). The consequence for Western democracies in negotiating diverse groups in the national story has two linked – but also competing – ideas. These include liberal nationalism, where the focus is on individual rights and multiculturalism, which focuses on incorporating distinct minority cultural groups into the national society (Kymlicka 2001, 2015). Liberal nationalism remains a philosophical bedrock of most Western democracies, but many have also enshrined multiculturalism, or a version of this concept, as part of their national values,

lauding the benefits of cultural diversity from the 1960s onwards. This liberal nationalism has supported the adoption of multicultural policies in Anglosphere and European countries, such as the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* created in Australia in 1989 or the policy focus of New Labour in Britain on multiculturalism from the late 1990s to the 2010s (Bouma 2016; Mathieu 2018).

With increased globalisation transforming the populations of Western nations, the complexity of nations in the twenty-first century has come to the fore in discussions about national identity and nationalism. This complexity has been informed by an examination of how everyday aspects of a nation and its citizens are reconfiguring values and ideas for the nation. A reorientation in the literature considering the continual reinforcement of national identity in established nations has been decidedly influenced by Michael Billig's (1995) work, *Banal Nationalism*. Billig aligns himself closely with Anderson's concept of an 'imagined community' but argues that there needs for a renewed focus on the 'daily' reproduction of nations. Rather than focus on overt displays of nationalism, such as wars or major events, Billig argues that for most people the nation is recreated through continuing and repeating associations that they take part in through their day-to-day lives. Part of these banal associations relate to a nation's history, where the histories of groups and individuals compete for the construction of the national history. In the Australian context, the relationship of this banal nationalism to history has been picked up by Anna Clark (2016) in her in-depth study of community groups and their connection to local and national history. In the book *Private Lives, Public History*, she argues that:

> Historical consciousness is composed of these intersections between collective and individual encounters with the past, such that it's sometimes hard to distinguish between the public and the personal.

> National public narratives constantly overlap with our own historical views. (Clark 2016, p. 143)

Nationalism is captured at the intersections between people and narratives that tie into a conceived polarity between a strong, overt, 'official' nationalism and what Maria Todorova (2015) defines as a 'weak' nationalism. Drawing on Billig's work, Todorova argues that there are varying scales of nationalism, between those political projects commemorating or acknowledging a military victory or key political moment and those activities that operate as less intense forms of national production that people produce in the everyday. She goes on to suggest that this 'weak nationalism […] may actually be the regular state of nationalism' that underpins the more dramatic illustrations of national identity (2015, p. 685). In this guise, state building is not simply a one-off historical event, but the convergence of overt and everyday practices from commemorative activities or national days to watching a sporting event or partaking in a national food, like Australia's 'own' Vegemite (Elgenius 2011; McCrone & McPherson 2009; Rowe 2016; Santamaría 2015; Spillman 1997). The nation is recursively created through people's daily lives as they identify with aspects of national identity and belonging to the national community.

Tim Edensor (2002) is also critical of the homogenous, stable (or slowly evolving) national identity inherent in the approaches to nationalism taken by Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson and Smith discussed above. His study of popular culture and everyday life instead argues that:

> national identity is dynamic, contested, multiple and fluid […] constituted out of a huge cultural matrix which provides innumerable points of connection, nodal points where authorities try to fix

> meaning, and constellations around which cultural elements adhere. Culture […] is constantly in a process of becoming, of emerging out of the dynamism of popular culture and everyday life whereby people make and remake connections between the local and the national, between the national and the global. (Edensor 2002, pp. vi-vii)

In these 'everyday nationalisms', the choices that people make in their everyday life have consequences for the way that society is constructed over time and for how changes in values emerge. Such complications make it difficult to maintain a politically fixed idea of nations and nationalism, even contesting those arguments that focus on a discursive construction of nation, as is the case with Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith. For McCrone and Bechhofer (2015), national identity is something separate and different from citizenship or 'nationality', both of which seek simultaneously to associate people with the legal strictures and structures of the state and/or assign them to a community or state. As McCrone and Bechhofer (2015) go on to suggest, national identity is better treated as a verb, whereby people carry out actions 'to identify with' the nation or their 'imagined community'. Within this framework people are not mindless dupes, blindly influenced to associate with activities of the nation. Rather, their associations with the nation and their 'imagined community' are more fluid, contextually defined, and relational (McCrone & Bechhofer 2015, p. 17). Separating national identity and citizenship is not to say that the state, or even society as such, will not have an influence on the individual. Rather, as McCrone and Bechhofer (2015, p. 26) go onto argue, what is important is that:

> identity in general, of which national identity is one form, act as something of a hinge between social structure and social action. Social structure constrains, but does not determine, how people behave, yet social action is not entirely a matter of free will. Identity

> provides a set of meaning and understandings through which people experience social structure and feel empowered to act.

In the main, people take their national identity for granted (Billig 1995; Bonikowski 2016; David 2004; Fox & Miller-Idriss 2008). As a result, national identity and belonging are not, and perhaps never have been, fixed within an ongoing state of homogenous realism. Under this fluidity, the barriers that emerge with respect to ethnonational identity begin to become less important, particularly as they are disassembled through increasingly diverse societies. It then becomes possible to ask what this fluidity means for the way that people and nations interact in constructing both traditional and cosmopolitan nationalisms.

Cosmopolitan nationalism contextualised in the everyday

In recent years, there has been a decided shift in the literature towards seeing the cosmopolitan as a perspective or a process through which people and societies can move to an understanding of Others, positioning themselves through their associations and movements as 'citizens of the world' (Delanty 2009). Michael Skey (2013, pp. 248-9) argues that a shift towards examining the everyday, cosmopolitan practices of individuals allows for a specific understanding of how 'openness' emerges in specific social contexts. Viewing cosmopolitanism as a practice, one that is part of the local and familiar, incorporates people into the construction of social structures and relationships as they are 'gradually and discrepantly infiltrating fields of [the] everyday' (Kendall et al. 2009, p. 11). This view of cosmopolitanism as an individual practice not only mirrors the 'everyday life' view of national identity, but also folds into practices of liberal nationalism and multiculturalism as the cosmopolitan is practised by members of stationary communities in their own places of abode. Such shifts move away from a previous focus on transnational migrants and international professionals that dominated the literature (Bray 2017; Calhoun 2003; Haggis et al. 2017; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt 2017; Skrbis & Woodward 2013). Viewing

cosmopolitanism as a practice removes the requirement for people to have the transnational mobility necessary to engage in a global world, and presents a cosmopolitan identity as emerging through their lived experiences and educational development (Calhoun 2003). By arguing that cosmopolitanism is a practice, in line with the bottom-up process of national identity creation, discussed above, along with numerous other identities, society is seen as consisting of a suite of 'intersubjective meanings and affective orientations that people can draw upon to inform their social interactions' (Bonikowski 2016, p. 428). Understanding cosmopolitanism as a practice links to everyday nationalism whereby people engage with other cultures as part of their everyday experiences to reaffirm a cosmopolitan national identity.

Whereas previously, national identity was conceived as internally oriented to the nation, more recent studies show how nuanced individual national identity can be. Eric Kaufmann (2017, 2018) has identified two streams of national belonging that have emerged in the twenty-first century, particularly in Europe and the Anglosphere, that illustrate the consequences of cosmopolitan orientations cultivated amongst tertiary educated professionals. The first of these is a traditional approach to national identity whereby people associate with aspects of their own life, such as locality, class, ethnicity, and religion, with the nation (Kaufmann 2017, p. 14; 2018, p. 153). For these people, nationality is deeply entwined with the core beliefs that are a central part of their personal identity. Kaufmann argues that locality-oriented national identity is not simply for white, working-class people, but can also be felt keenly by immigrants who closely associate their British identity with the success and acceptance they received in their new home. For these individuals, identity flowed from their personal associations at a local level before moving to the level of national identity (Kaufmann 2018, p. 153). For the second category of people, those who closely associated with their education or professional background, national identity is less overtly displayed. Analysing the Understanding Society survey, Kaufmann (2018, p. 153) showed

that only 36% of university-educated professional who said their education was important to their identity also said their nation is important to who they are. But Kaufmann argues that taking this figure at face value ignores subtle aspects of national pride based within cultural life that are central to the values of university-educated professionals.[6] It is not that these professionals are not nationalistic; rather, in contrast to the activities of the rest of the population, their conceptions of nation are highly performative, relating to the perceived status of the nation in the context of more cosmopolitan views and ideas. Kaufmann (2018, p. 152) describes this association as a 'missionary nationalism', whereby countries 'may appear to be cosmopolitan, selflessly serving a transnational ideology, but they do so in part to court the approval of other nations and win glory for themselves.'

Kaufmann argues that cosmopolitan nationalism is no longer focused on traditional markers of history, ethnicity, and language, but instead on the achieved status of the nation as reflected in progressive outcomes, including cultural diversity, global aid, and national standings with regard to living quality, individual wealth, and measures of equality. These values for university-educated professionals also emerged in Michael Skey's (2011) focus group research in the United Kingdom, where young and educated respondents drew on cosmopolitan discourses to position their own identities. Skey (2011, p. 147) argues that, rather than a distinct 'cosmopolitan' identity, these young professionals conveyed 'more conditional forms of cosmopolitanism' that, while potentially creating a dialogue between different communities, overlayed a more stable, embedded form of national identity. Such an understanding could be taken further to argue that there are in fact multiple nationalisms that inform how individual and collective identities are developed and practised (Bonikowski 2016, p. 442). Eric Kaufmann (2017, p. 21) defines this as a multivocal nationalism, whereby:

[6] *Understanding Society: The UK Household Longitudinal Survey* has been carried out in the United Kingdom since 1991, tracking changes in approximately 40,000 households. The survey also includes additional data collection around ethnicity, immigration, and social values. Kaufmann is here referring to data collected in the 2016 survey wave. More information: https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/.

> Difference energises rather than detracts from nationalism. This 'crowdsourced nationalism' means that individuals in civil society, more than state elites, become the repository of national identity. Thus, the nation as a whole is characterised by a thoroughgoing multivocalism in which multiple national identities interact – often seamlessly – within the same nation.

This multivocal approach to identity could play some role in addressing the association of cosmopolitanism with elitism identified and criticised in the literature (Calhoun 2003; Lundström 2019; Qian 2018). But if cosmopolitanism is a perspective towards the world, which is part of an individual (or even national) identity, then: a) it is not necessary for people to negate or forgo more local connections of belonging; and b) within diverse populations where culture can be accessed digitally/remotely, it is no longer necessary to travel to encounter the Other. In these two contemporary contexts, where the cosmopolitan is about openness to Others rather than an identity in and of itself, its application in local and national identity structures need not be an elitist problem. In her examination of the 2010–2014 World Values survey data, Burcu Bayram (2019) found that those respondents who identified as a cosmopolitan, world citizen also positively associated with the nation through their willingness to make 'the ultimate patriotic sacrifice of going to war for their country' (Bayram 2019, p. 759).[7] Rather than exhibiting an independence from the nation, Bayram argues that this 'dual identity' of cosmopolitan and national represents the multifaceted nature of people operating at the interface of the global and local. Correlating to these findings, Deniz Erkmen's (2015) research into transnational professionals working across different countries found that global identifications do not necessarily signal the end of national attachments.

7 World Values Survey has been conducted since 1981. It consists of a representative survey conducted in up to 100 countries, representing 90% of the world's population. More info http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp

Rather, national identity operates as an anchor for these transnational professionals, while also serving as ‘cultural signifiers’ that inform relationships with fellow expatriates and the different national communities in which these people work and live (Erkmen 2015, p. 42).

Kwame Appiah (1997, p. 618; 2005, 2018) has argued that culturally diverse polities reflect an engagement with a ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ by citizens, whereby everyone is ‘attached to a home of one’s own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different places that are home to other, different people’. Such a view can fold together with horizontal identities, reinforcing and/or realigning national narratives while opening connections to the world. The arguments of Kwame, Bayram and Kaufmann all converge on a belief that by engaging with and across various nationalisms, people may avoid an elitist position that discursively separates them from the nations, and societies, that they are a part of. As Michael Skey (2011, p. 140) highlights, there is the risk that ‘in particular contexts cosmopolitan discourse produces subject positions that can be delighted in and embraced, assigning status to oneself as an enlightened and rational being able to engage productively with other people and cultures.’

Kymlicka and Walker (2012), in the Canadian context, argue that these processes of accepting multiple nationalisms can produce a flexible national identity that integrates cosmopolitanism into the national, whereby ‘people become good citizens of the world because this is part of what it means to be a good Canadian’ (Kymlicka & Walker 2012, pp. 4-5). For national museums and their visitors in Australia, ‘good Australians’ are, similarly, good citizens of the world. Having examined these shifts towards a cosmopolitan nationalism, it is important to consider how the fields of history, museums and heritage have been reoriented along cosmopolitan values, which have consequences for how social history museums construct their histories and link into national heritage themes.

Transnational history and the museum

For most of the twentieth century, the nation-state was the cocoon within which histories were written. In the period following the Second World War, the work of academic historians remained focused on the political history of nations-states as these related to politicians, law making and state building. In the late 1960s, there was a social history turn that shifted attention away from these traditional histories towards a 'history from below', with a primary focus on members of the working class and the histories of everyday life (Samuel 1975; Thompson 1966). Women's history and gender studies also received increased attention in the academy, reflecting both increased numbers of women entering the workforce and changing views on the role women play, and have played, in society. A focus on the history of Indigenous peoples in Australia also emerged throughout the 1960s, in the same period that saw the extension of voting rights to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 1962, their eligibility to receive Commonwealth welfare entitlements, and the 1967 referendum to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the census and allow the Commonwealth to make laws regarding them (Attwood & Markus 1998). Indigenous and non-Indigenous historians in academe were also part of this campaign, many electing to devote their careers to understanding settler-Indigenous relations in Australia (Reynolds 1987; Ryan 1981). Finally, the history of migration became a concern for scholars from the 1970s onward, spearheaded by researchers in Britain where highly diverse populations congregated in former port cities, such as Liverpool and Manchester, together with the London metropolis (Scobie 1972). Academics in Australia also began researching various aspects of race relations in Australia, with volumes examining the working class attitudes (Curthoys & Markus 1978) and how teaching in schools can support multicultural practices (Grassby 1984).

These changes in approaching national history, along with the increased connection of Australia to the wider world, have shifted the ways in which museums present their histories.

The concept of Australia as a nation in which people participate and share strong values remains pertinent for national museums. But, as Middell and Naumann (2010) argue, the concept of the transnational no longer sees the nation ending at its borders but, instead, through people, practices, and institutions, exerting an influence across the globe:

> Transnational history does not deny the importance of the nation-state. On the contrary, it emphasizes its capacity to control and channel border-transcending movements. In this sense, transnational history bridges the national, the sub-national (local, regional), and the global by exploring actors, movements, and forces that cross boundaries and penetrate the fabric of nations. (Middell & Naumann 2010, p. 160)

The transnational and cosmopolitan are not interchangeable. Transnationalism is primarily concerned with movements and flows, focused on the conversations and intersections that occur between people as they move between places. These transnational intersections need not be cosmopolitan. During the eighteenth century, a time when transnational intersections grew exponentially, European powers sought to expand their command of subject territories and peoples with little concern for the Other or themselves as cosmopolitan citizens of the world. Will Kymlicka and Kathryn Walker (2012, p. 3) have highlighted the limits of the cosmopolitan within transnational historical practice as follows:

> European colonialism was often justified as a means of spreading a cosmopolitan order and ethos. The core idea of cosmopolitanism may be to recognize the moral worth of people beyond our borders, particularly the poor and needy, but its historical practice has often been to extend the power and influence of privileged elites in the

> wealthy West while doing little if anything to benefit the truly disadvantaged.

The legacy of these colonial histories has consequences for traditional forms and ideas of nationhood, and the more performative aspects of nationhood that emerge in museums. The transnational can be an important transitory process, providing openness to the Other for audiences and a context for the agency of First Nations peoples in their engagements with European explorers and settlers. In his exploration of 'historical difference' within India during its succession from Britain, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) suggested two interconnected 'types' of history. The first of these histories is concerned with a universal history that is used to form the 'usual narratives of transition to the capitalist mode of production' (Chakrabarty 2000, p. 63). This history is analytical in its focus, used not simply to create a universal narrative of capital but to create a position whereby the interplay between elements results in a 'generalised exchange' in which new elements are amalgamated into an existing homogeneity. This homogenous history is contrasted with a 'History 2', which is not separate from 'History 1', but instead 'interrupt[s] and punctuate[s] the run of capital's own logic' (Chakrabarty 2000, p. 64). Rather than being universalised, these histories open patterns of exchange that work closer to a system of barter, which produce more hybrid renderings. It is the parallel operations of both histories that lead to the complexities around capitals past and the emergence of historical difference, as Chakrabarty (2000, p. 71) goes on to argue:

> we need to think in terms of both modes of translation simultaneously, for together they constitute the condition of possibility for the globalization of capital across diverse, porous and conflicting histories of human belonging.

In academic history, these patterns have fed into an increasing focus on transnational identities and interactions. In Australian historiography, one significant exploration of transnational networks, and their consequences for First Nations and African-American peoples is Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds' monograph (2008) *Drawing the Global Colour Line*. They provide a considered analysis of how racial politics at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries developed and protected Anglophone white communities across the United States, Australia, Canada, and South Africa. In examining the consequences of racial politics across the transnational, Anglophone former British colonies, their book reaches a crescendo in outlining immigration exclusionary policies of the 1920s as the natural consequences of politics that aimed to protect white men in these countries.

This orientation towards transnational history has been highlighted in Australia through several edited volumes focused on the country's place in transnational histories. *History Australia* devoted a special issue to *Nationalism and Transnationalism in Australian Historical Writing* (2013), edited by Sharon Crozier-De Rosa and David Lowe, and more recently the volume *Transnationalism, Nationalism and Australian History* (2017), edited by Alicia Simmonds, Anne Rees, and Anna Clarke. Both collections illustrate how 'nationalism and transnationalism can and should co-exist in the historian's tool kits […] It is now hard to write histories without recognising that we have been part of changing empires, a globalising world and a range of processes that transcend national boundaries' (Crozier-De Rosa & Lowe 2013, p. 11). These forces have informed the training and research of public historians and curators in museums, influencing changes in the way that all museums, regional and national, conceive and present histories in their exhibitions and events. The contemporary museum endeavours to communicate 'cultures that are not distinct, self-contained wholes, but extensions and expressions of life that have long interacted and influenced one another through war, imperialism, trade and migration' (Message 2014b, p. 60). In museums there has been a persistent focus on migration, where these institutions have needed to strike a

balance between historical ethnic homogeneity and current concerns for a multicultural nation, as Hutchinson and Witcomb (2014, p. 228) argue:

> Representation of migration in Australian museums is unavoidably a political project that reflects the tension between public recognition of Australia as a culturally diverse, rather than Anglo-Celtic, society and the need to articulate a national identity that projects a culturally cohesive nation.

The role of museums in shaping discourses that highlight diversity, while also simultaneously endeavouring to identify patterns of unity and solidarity, has emerged as a focus in the twenty-first century (Davidson & Sibley 2011; Macdonald 2003; Message 2009; Schorch 2014; Witcomb 2009). Andrea Witcomb (2015) has outlined three changing pedagogical approaches of museums to providing knowledge and experiences for their visitors, which she titles walking, listening and feeling. These shifts in pedagogical approach have run parallel to the abovementioned shifts in historiography. Walking as a pedagogy represents the role that museums have played in constructing a progressive narrative of a locality or nation, often with chronological narratives presented in didactic panels and displays (Witcomb 2015, p. 160). The shifting historiography of the 1970s, together with a constructivist turn in the field of education, gave rise to a pedagogy of listening whereby the museum occupied a role in the 'politics of identity' to allow different groups, across gender, ethnic and cultural frames, to be represented and heard (p. 161). Witcomb identifies a limit to both these approaches to museum pedagogy, being that they only communicate messages in one direction, from the museum to visitors, stopping the free flow of knowledge and experience between the visitor, the museum, and/or the diverse people represented through the exhibitions. She argues that by moving to a pedagogy of feeling, which requires visitors to enter an empathetic dialogue with those people captured/represented in the museum exhibition, such points of dialogue may occur. Providing the exhibition *Yours, Mine, Ours*, a

semi-permanent exhibition that opened in 2011 by the Immigration Museum in Melbourne, as an example of this approach, Witcomb (2015, p. 163) outlines that through this pedagogy of feeling:

> while particular groups are certainly represented, it is the space between them that is in focus – a space that is embodied through the eliciting of feeling on the part of the visitor and the constant request to reflect these feelings on their own sense of who they are and how they relate to others as a result of that […] empathy becomes the ground on which to enact new forms of citizenship based on the idea of civic participation.

Rather than being presented with a clear, homogenous history, national museums, together with regional museums, are now moving in spheres that are uncontained by strict definitions of nation and national identity. They are becoming involved in a flow of knowledge, which decentres their space as the arbiters of culture and identity, despite some expectation from visitors that a homogenous narrative is what will be presented. As Sharon Macdonald (2010, p. 187) argues, where visitors are engaged in 'negotiating' this past 'as citizens refusing to allow history to be silenced, as moral witnesses… [they] come to know more about where [they]… stand'. A couple of questions that need to be asked regarding these complex iterations of identity are: a) do they sail gently past those for whom they are intended, their visitors; and b) do they precipitate individual (personal), group and community discussions regarding the increasingly complex layers of knowledge?

In presenting a transnational history to a predominantly tertiary educated, professional audience, national museums are working with a normative cosmopolitan nationalism that reinforces an openness to other cultures and other experiences, which has in turn become part of contemporary Australian cultural values (Edensor & Sumartojo 2018; Plage et al.

2016). While there are fringe aspects of the nation, perhaps most clearly represented in regional and outer suburban voting patterns for politically right wing, often anti-immigration, parties such the United Australia Party, the National Party, and One Nation, the more than 67% of the Australian population who lives in Australia's cities have been living with difference, and their second and third generations, for almost 70 years. In Australia, this transnational history ties into how social history museums construct their exhibitions and historical narratives, aligning them with a cosmopolitan nationalism in important ways.

Unstable collective memory in cosmopolitan nationalism

As outlined earlier in this chapter, nationalism studies positions collective memory as part of a universal project created by the state, and conveyed to its members (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1992). Collective memory has also been argued along an ethnonationalist approach to nationalism as being an emergent property that, through myth and memory, defines the nation itself along with the nation's relationship to its population (Anderson 1983; Smith 1999). The role of collective memory here is to ensure the stability of a homogenous nation, reflecting the ethnic and cultural histories of these regions. As I have shown, however, social changes in Anglosphere countries have shifted the nation, which can now no longer be thought of as 'a cultural object with a single shared meaning, but [instead as] a site of active political contestation between cultural communities with strikingly different belief systems' (Bonikowski 2016, p. 428). These changes have nullified simplistic associations between nations and their past, where previously safe associations are now being challenged by multiple parties. Collective memory, then, becomes more than a simplistic association between the nation's past and its present. As Niven and Berger (2014, p. 11) have argued:

> If there is such a thing as collective memory, then it certainly can no longer be described as something imposed, rigid or timeless. Rather

> it represents a constant shifting and fragile consensus, dependent for the form it takes at any given time upon the relative power and interaction of different memory contingents.

Collective memory, particularly in increasingly heterogenous societies, is a process composed of rhetorical and performative actions that put history to use in a range of settings, by a range of creators, for a range of audiences. Constance de Saint-Laurent (2018, p. 152) has described these uses of the past as memory acts. In using these memory acts, those normative 'truths' between a speaker and their visitors may be conceived of as a process of collective memory. Here, then, collective memory is 'socially and culturally' prescribed through the actions of people and communities (de Saint-Laurent 2018, p. 159). Viewing collective memory as the collation of memory acts acknowledges that a cosmopolitan nationalism is defined and constrained by the actions of varying 'memory contingents' where, in the museum space, the relationships between museum, visitor and object can be redefined.

Memory can be conceived of as the process through which the past becomes history, with some pasts easily adopted into the nation's official past while others are reassessed and re-historicised. Chris Lorenz (2014) has argued that distinctions between a 'cold', distant past and 'hot' and contested difficult histories has been blurred in recent years by pasts that refuse to 'cool off' and move from an affective memory into a distant, 'objective' history. Parallels can be made in this process with the weak and strong nationalisms identified by Todorova (2015, p. 696) discussed above, where weak nationalisms are informed by a cooled history and those strong nationalisms operate within pertinent presents. An obvious example of this are the strong nationalisms that emerged in the United States after the September 11 attacks, where the then present reignited a hot history process. Lorenz (2014, pp. 50-1) argues that these 'cooled' national narratives appear to be reignited through recent

research and concerns with ‘difficult’ histories in a nation’s past – particularly in settler countries where the consequences of European settlement for First Nations peoples, both past and present, remain contentious. Lorenz argues that this shift in public and academic dialogues is driven by changes from a linear and progressivist conception of history, to a nonlinear history, where the past, present and future ‘are mutually interpenetrating, meaning that the past can live in the present just as the future can be present in the present’ (Lorenz 2014, p. 46). In Australia, one of those difficult histories that remains temporally dislocated and is (re)ignited by contemporary concerns is focused on the relationships between European settlers (together with non-Indigenous Australians) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Sarah Maddison (2011, 2012, 2019) has focused much of her research on the ways that settler Australians receive and engage with the historical legacy of European occupation. Her research with Clark and de Costa found that a large minority of non-Indigenous Australians indicated a strong interest in engagement with Aboriginal peoples, especially for aspects of social justice and working with Indigenous Australians towards reconciliation (Clark, de Costa & Maddison 2017). By approaching their research through an examination of everyday experiences and practices, they show how non-Indigenous Australians can develop an understanding of the losses experienced by Indigenous peoples. Clarke, de Costa and Maddison (2017, pp. 386-7) found through their research that these people could develop empathic understanding where:

> surfacing [of] actual senses (and actual absences) of responsibility among research participants; we are recording real processes of identity-formation and identity-alignment at work, processes that in turn reveal the dynamics, inconsistencies and evolution of those broader ideological and national discourses.

While such everyday practices are part of cosmopolitan nationalism for non-Indigenous audiences in settler countries, there remain limits on how the cosmopolitan perspective can address settler-Indigenous relations. Duncan Ivison (2017) has argued that the 'historical injustices' experienced by First Nations peoples are ignored in a cosmopolitan imaginary in which liberal tenets privilege the individual over the group and the global over the local (or parochial). Ivison demands a broader cosmopolitanism that is more than the individual rights, international legal structures or a cultural cosmopolitanism that appreciates difference, diversity, and their intermingling. He argues that because:

> cosmopolitanism embodies, in a very general sense, a fundamental commitment to the equal moral worth and dignity of all human beings, and this needs to be connected to standards of justice that are applicable to all, then just because of this commitment, one must also be open to the 'different local human ways of being'. And that means accommodating the particular attachments people have and which are manifest in their commitment to states, nations, cultures, neighbourhoods, professions, regions and families, etc. (Ivison 2017, p. 83)

Ivison's book, *Postcolonial Liberalism* (2002), reflects on the experiences of First Nations peoples in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand to trace the historical uses of liberal philosophy in disenfranchising their rights. He argues that it is necessary, through land rights claims and self-government of First Nations communities, to develop the existing rights of First Nations peoples. Historical injustices become part of broader citizenship issues that raise questions of Aboriginal peoples' representations in the public sphere. As such, settler nations have a responsibility to account for their past injustices. Ivison (2002, p. 163) believes 'among the conditions required for its emergence will be [a] context-sensitive and

embedded form of public dialogue and deliberation' where a 'multilogue' is developed between First Nations peoples and people of different cultural and national groups. This 'multilogue' is very close to Kaufmann's (2017; 2018, pp. 529-33) multivocal nationalism and Kymlicka's (2015; 2012) liberal democracy, in that it is focused on civic outcomes for the nation that address and permit different ways of being.

Collective memory also operates in an environment of increased mobility, digital communication, and migration. In this context, arguments are currently being made for a 'transcultural memory' that, like transnational history, traces unbound memories through the world. Recent volumes, such as *Memory Unbound* (Bond et al. 2017, p. 2), view memory as part of the 'unpredictable mobility of objects and practices' that redefine actors through their interconnections across the globe. The memory structure may redefine local circumstances through global, cosmopolitan values, such as human rights, or, alternatively, see locality and memory scattered across and within an ever-expanding digital universe (Drozdzewski, Sumartojo & Waterton 2021). Ann Rigney (2018) has argued that while the myths identified by Anthony Smith (1999, 2007) may be fixed and rigid for extended periods of time, the associated production of memory is more fluid and, significantly, responsive to social dynamics. Her overview of the memory literature illustrates the capacity for memory to create understandings about the past that reflect the present societies that use that history. For her, memory is used 'not only for making the nation but also for remaking it' (Rigney 2018, p. 254). Transnationalism and shifting cosmopolitan nationalism offer an approach to engaging with history that shifts or transitions remembrance mechanisms to frame the value of cultural interactions, global connections, and settler–Indigenous relations in the present day.

As part of everyday and performative practices of cosmopolitan nationalism, museum audiences are shifting the ground of national 'mythscapes', reconfiguring what they expect

from the museum and their coalescing of collective memory (Watson 2021, pp. 26-7). Cosmopolitan perspectives being embraced by museums are increasingly communicated through transnational narratives in their exhibitions as tools for clarifying the links between the local, national, and global. These links provide a central mechanism for visitors to negotiate the relationship between the Self and Other so essential to the cosmopolitan imagination (Delanty 2009, p. 52). In tandem, these narratives construct social perspectives in which the cosmopolitan becomes normative in countries and communities (Delanty 2009, p. 58). Transnational memory may draw on transnational history, which is concerned with the myriad of connections that have existed across the world and across time. Museums, as memory institutions, must, and do, draw on this transnational history to inform the narratives that they assemble. But memory is not boundless in the same way as its transnational narratives are. As Susannah Radstone (2011, p. 114) has outlined, 'memory research, like memory itself (notwithstanding possibilities for transmission and translation) is always located, it is […] specific to its site of production and practice'.

Comparing the commemoration of the Holocaust in the United States, Israel and Germany, Daniel Levy and Nathan Sznaider (2002, pp. 102-3) established how commemorative activities transformed from a focus on perpetrator and victim to one where there is 'a mutual recognition' of the Jewish Other that decontextualises the Holocaust within the collective memory. They conclude that this 'cosmopolitan memory' is 'riddled with tensions and uncertainties stemming from the declining ability of the nation-state to supply meaningful categories for collective identification', feeding into cosmopolitan sensibilities in global media and commemorative networks (p. 102). Using Levy and Sznaider's 'cosmopolitan memory' concept, however, Sharon Macdonald (2013, p. 214), in her book *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today*, found that the nation-state is a potent and active agent in processes of 'othering and of bounding' through which identities are negotiated. Linking into the cosmopolitan nationalism explored above, Macdonald (2013, p. 215, emphasis in

original) determined that it 'is not so much the nation being *displaced* or 'cracked' by cosmopolitan memory as the nation presenting itself as cosmopolitan through harnessing more widely shared pasts as part of its own'. It is now necessary to examine how this cosmopolitan nationalism has been considered in the museum literature, providing the context for this thesis to examine the consequences of this complex national identity for the ways in which museums portray national histories.

Museums and cosmopolitan nationalism

Research into heritage and museum spaces demonstrates that those same professional, tertiary educated people that Kaufmann associates with cosmopolitan nationalism are similarly drawn to museums and heritage sites. Emma Waterton and Modesto Gayo (2018), reporting on survey research examining Australians' engagement with the heritage field, mapped six clusters of engagement, stretching from those disengaged with heritage (clusters 1, 2 and 3 representing 46.4% of the sample) to those heavily engaged (clusters 5 and 6, representing 44.2% of sample). Similar to earlier research in Australia, and reflecting results in the United Kingdom, they found that those engaging with heritage were tertiary educated and associated with an upper-middle class socioeconomic background (Bennett et al. 2009; Falk & Katz-Gerro 2015; Waterton & Gayo 2018, p. 279). What was distinctive at the upper end of engagement, between clusters 5 and 6, however, was the relationships between residence and the type of heritage people were engaging with. People in Cluster 5, for instance, were older (predominantly over 45 years) and lived in regional locations. They were primarily concerned with heritage from their own local area, as well as with broader domestic heritage sites containing settler heritage, readily associating with sites like Sovereign Hill Open Air Museum and Fremantle Prison. People in Cluster 6, by comparison, comprised a primarily younger population, 35–44 in age, sub/urban in residence, and most likely to hold postgraduate qualifications (Waterton & Gayo 2018, p. 279). Cluster 6 participants indicated that they had visited around half of the domestic heritage sites listed in

the survey, with an interest in all aspects of heritage except for the history of working life. The most defining feature of this group, however, was an ‘expansive international appetite [that] is mirrored by a strong interest in migrant and Aboriginal heritage’ (Waterton & Gayo 2018, p. 279).

Those characteristics that define Cluster 6 illustrate the recent shifts in the Australian population and values discussed in Chapter 1, which are emblematic of changes in museum and heritage visitors across Western countries, including Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, as well as in Europe. In these countries, however, diverse changes in the community are shifting less the demographic background of museum visitors than their perspective. Regional and traditional museums have had their relevance severely impacted, where their continued use of didactic display techniques, refusal to enter the tourism market, and failure to adapt to the changing nature of their audiences have negatively impacted on visitor numbers (Black 2016, pp. 386-87). Comparatively, large museums in capital cities are adapting to these shifts in demand for global and indigenous histories, while simultaneously taking advantage of increasing international and domestic tourism that, partnered with their blockbuster exhibitions, continue to increase general visitor numbers. What has remained small, however, are the numbers of low socioeconomic and minority groups in attendance at the museum. In her analysis of major London-based institutions, Sara Selwood (2018) found that the vast increases in visitor numbers to the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the National Gallery were largely attributable to international tourists. Her analysis also revealed that the costs associated with temporary (blockbuster) exhibitions were overwhelmingly prohibitive to those on lower incomes, decreasing the likelihood of these groups of people to make use of free access to the permanent galleries – something that has persistently contributed to museum visitation in the United Kingdom since the 1980s (Brook 2016). For Selwood (2018, p. 291), the continuing unrepresentativeness of museum audiences with regards to the broader population means that ‘rather than leading social change, museums appear to have been overtaken by it’.

While strong data is unavailable in Australia, research in other Anglosphere countries illustrates the continuing difficulty museums have in attracting diverse visitors. For instance, research at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (from here Te Papa) showed that the institution continued to struggle in attracting diverse visitors. Pacific Islanders represent 7% of New Zealand's population, but only 3% of Te Papa's audience; over 10% of the population have an Asian background, but they represent only 5% of Te Papa's audience, inclusive of overseas visitors (Davidson & Sibley 2011, p. 186). These difficulties with diverse audiences correlate with figures in the United Kingdom, which show that while the diversity of visitors to museums and galleries is increasing this participation rate for minority communities does not match their representation in the broader UK population. A report by The Audience Agency (2019) found that amongst the 26–35 years segment, audiences from Asian (10% of the UK population) and Black (6% of the UK population) backgrounds were respectively only 2% and 1% of museum audiences. In comparison, data from the *Taking Part* survey, produced by Historic England as part of an ongoing research program, has captured data illustrating a substantial decline in participation of all museum groups. In the 2013/14 capture period, 49.9% of Black and 37.4% of Asian-born residents had visited a museum. In the 2017/18 capture, these figures had declined to 37.9% and 28.6% respectively (Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport 2019).[8] This is despite previous concerted policy agendas aimed at increasing the diversity of visitors in the museum, and for museums to promote social inclusion across communities (Newman & McLean 2004; Newman, McLean & Urquhart 2005; Tlili 2008). While participation rates were at their lowest level for the white population at 51.4%, this was a small drop of less than 2% over the same period. This unrepresentative audience is a persistent issue for museums, although for some researchers the primary focus is getting visitors through the door, period.

[8] There were substantial catchment differences between these years, with 10,355 individuals interviewed in 2013/14 and 2,088 in 2017/18. Relatively consistent collection figures between 2013/14 and 2016/17 illustrate the commencement of the trend highlighted here. The *Taking Part* survey was suspended in 2020/21 due to COVID-19. It will be replaced by the *Participation* survey in 2022/23. More information at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey.

Graham Black (2016), for instance, is less concerned with museums building their representation of visitors from diverse communities. For him, museums have enough trouble attracting audiences and, therefore, should focus more exclusively on the well-educated professionals that represent the core 70% of museum visitors (Black 2016, p. 398).

Viewing the engaged museum visitor as being tertiary-educated professionals raises concerns about the capacity of national museums to present histories that engage with a broad range of citizens. Such concerns tie into broader questions about 'cosmopolitanism' being an elitist perspective reserved for those people who have the economic and cultural capital, through wealth and education, to engage with the Other (Calhoun 2003). Cosmopolitan elites may inadvertently begin 'assigning status' to themselves through the positions they occupy (Skey 2011), and some academics have argued that 'Good White People' do little, if anything, to work against their privileged position. Shannon Sullivan (2014, pp. 4-6) argues that the 'antiracist' identity of upper-middle class white people is essentially an exercise in 'Othering' aimed at disconnecting them from 'racist' lower-class white people while at the same time allowing them to do nothing to address social disadvantage among minority groups. One of the examples Sullivan uses is the treatment of slavery history by museum and heritage sites, where the difficult past can at times be disengaged from by visitors in a process she views as the 'shunning' of white ancestors (Sullivan 2014, p. 61). She argues that 'white' museum visitors take one of two options to approaching slave owners – either defending their actions within the context of the time or demonising them using contemporary values and perspectives. Both actions are part of a denial from museum visitors for their own contemporary relationship to slaveowners. Sullivan argues that, through this process, white people today are protecting their own sense of righteousness, distancing themselves from their ancestors rather than progressing a cosmopolitan agenda by engaging with the past to inform the present (Sullivan 2014, p. 76). While her comments reflect the museum studies literature that illustrates the limitations of museums in presenting (and changing visitor perceptions of) difficult histories (Savenije & de

Bruijn 2017; Schorch et al. 2016; Smith, L 2011, 2016), Sullivan's broader argument asks how a cosmopolitan perspective can slip into 'achieving a self-righteous distance from whiteness and obtaining relief from the affective burdens of white guilt and shame' (Sullivan 2014, p. 152). These distinctive shifts in the perspectives of Graham Black's 70%, moving away from domestic heritage to a concern for world heritage, from national to transnational and global concerns (and interests), has inevitably shifted the types of histories presented in Australia. In Australia, the avoidance of 'collective guilt' by non-Indigenous audiences has been noted by Sarah Maddison (2011; 2012, p. 708), who argues that they dislocate their association with past generations and/or rationalise the positive aspects of European activities during the colonial period.

Addressing the shifting aspects of cosmopolitan nationalism can be difficult for museums to do in their permanent galleries where they are limited by the need to present a more stable and consistent narration of regional or national identity. This demand for a stable, historical narrative results from the long exhibition life of these permanent galleries, with many displays in these spaces changing little (if at all) for up to a decade. The purpose of national museums as a kind of 'civic' Mecca for the nation also plays into the historical narratives selected for these permanent exhibitions, with citizens expected to visit the site once in their lifetime, even if it is only as part of a school visit sponsored by the Australian Government. In contrast, temporary exhibitions provide museums with the opportunity to negotiate a balancing act between presenting blockbuster and temporary exhibitions that focus on unique aspects of the global or national story to attract a combination of local metropolitan, and remote, visitors.

Recent blockbuster exhibitions in Australia, including *Rome: City and Empire* (at the National Museum from September 2018 to February 2019) or *Escape from Pompeii: The Untold Roman Rescue* (at the Australian National Maritime Museum from September 2017 to February 2018), both of which were exhibited close to temporary exhibitions focused on

Australian history, such as, respectively for the same institutions, *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters* (at the National Museum from September 2017 to February 2020) and *Bligh: Hero or Villain* (exhibited at ANMM from July 2019 to February 2020). The choices made for the curation, design, and promotion of temporary exhibitions in Australia seek to balance the results for their target audiences between international and domestic themes, with an overt focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in the latter category. For national collecting institutions located in Canberra (the ANMM in Sydney is the only national social history museum located outside Canberra), the Australian Capital Territory is the largest source of repeat visitors. I have noted previously the increasing rates of university qualifications held by the Australian population, but for these national collecting institutions, residential visitors represent those well-educated professionals – the result, in part, of the high number of government employees in the nation's capital. As noted earlier, at the 2016 census 37.1% of the Australian Capital Territory's working population held university qualifications, compared to 24% in the broader Australian population (ABS 2017). For metropolitan museums, located in Canberra and the nation's largest capital cities, Sydney and Melbourne, the importance of this demographic group was made apparent by research conducted by Museums and Galleries NSW (2010). In a survey of visitors to galleries across New South Wales they found that, in comparison to regional locations, metropolitan visitors to galleries were younger (41% under 44 years old against 30% aged 45+), were more likely to be employed full-time (33% against 26%), and more likely to hold tertiary qualifications (60% against 46%) (Museums and Galleries 2010). Subsequent visitor studies into museum audiences across Australia by Museums and Galleries NSW (2015) confirmed these patterns, while also highlighting how similar the demands facing metropolitan museums across the country to curate collections and deliver exhibitions that meet expectations from these audiences that impact national museums.

Despite an increase in demand for international, migrant and First Nations heritage, there are strong political and visitor expectations that national museums will communicate,

particularly in their permanent galleries, a distinctive and chronological story of the nation's past that provides context for the nation's present conditions (Dodd et al. 2012; Elgenius 2015; Roppola et al. 2019; Yeoh 2017). In 2018, the Australian Government led a parliamentary inquiry into Canberra's cultural institutions that examined the governance, funding, public engagement, and visitor participation for Australia's federally funded institutions, including museums, art galleries, and science centres. The Inquiry Committee was critical of the divergent narratives and histories presented across Canberra's cultural institutions, where they felt that the divergent histories and objectives of these institutions impeded their capacity to 'justify why that story needs to be told, and how that adds value to the nation' (Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories 2019, p. 20).

The first recommendation from the Inquiry's final report, titled *Telling Australia's Story – and why it's important*, displayed this expectation of a distinctive, chronological history of Australia's past that communicated a shared value across all sixteen cultural institutions examined during the inquiry. The Committee stated 'that Canberra's national institutions develop and articulate a shared narrative that directly connects them with Australia's story. That expression of shared value should underpin the work of all of the national institutions, individually and in collaboration' (Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories 2019, p. xvi).

These expectations also appear strongly in Dodd et al.'s (2012) research into visitation practices at national museums in Europe, where they found visitor expectations that these museums would present an authoritative account of a nation's past, which contained and defined the country being visited (Dodd et al. 2012, p. 176). When exhibitions depart from a 'stable' national identity, research has found that it can often only influence those visitors who are actively willing to engage with the subject matter, which has consequences for the

possibility of attracting new and diverse audiences (Schorch et al. 2016; Smith, L 2014, 2016). In the case of 'difficult histories', whether the visitor is engaged through a cognitive or affective approach, it requires the viewer to be sympathetic or open to these narratives, willing to illustrate empathy for others in the museum space (Witcomb 2013, p. 262; see also Witcomb 2015). Some studies also show that contested narratives may work to reaffirm existing negative attitudes towards the acceptance of diversity in the nation. For example, Katherine Lloyd's (2014) study into the attitudes of secondary school students at museums in Scotland showed that for some students the inclusion of migrants into the historical narratives reaffirmed existing negative attitudes towards the acceptance of diversity (Lloyd 2014, p. 153). Therefore, in communicating, refining and creating visual, cultural and historical narratives, museums – and national museums in particular – need to represent 'multi-layered, ambiguous and even contradictory' meanings in their exhibitions in order to meet the demands of their visitors, politicians, communities and (other) agenda setters (Aronsson 2015, p. 177). As a result, museums can present a myriad of histories, inclusive of both broad metanarratives, tied to the historical trajectory of a nation, together with transnational intersections that contribute to a heterogeneous, cosmopolitan national identity. These divergent narratives create multiple histories of the past that may or may not align with those views brought by visitors.

In contemporary settings, the role of museums in exhibiting difficult histories has become increasingly important, as shifting attitudes, particularly in settler nations, demand an increasingly complex, multifaceted approach to their narration and presentation. Kylie Message (2014a, p. 238) has examined such shifts in the United States, where her investigation of the place of America's national cultural institutions, focused on the National Mall and its Smithsonian-run museums between 1964 and 2008, shows the capacity of museums to collaborate with, and be illustrative of, derived outcomes from 'social activism' of various groups, including Native Americans. And if museums are not able to take direct actions within these discussions and outcomes, her research illustrated that 'they can and do

register in a very real way changing attitudes towards and practices of representative democracy' (Message 2014a, p. 231). As we reflect on continuing shifts in attitudes towards First Nations peoples' histories and culture in Australia that have taken place since the latter half of the twentieth century, the role that museums have played, and can play into the future, need to be considered.

If museums are going to take a role in these multilogues they need to provide ways to open communication and understanding between communities inside the nation. Central to this discussion is the ability of non-Indigenous audiences to engage and come to terms with a joint understanding about the value, significance, and continued relationship between First Nations peoples and their cultural heritage. In the context of Indigenous Australians film production, Therese Davis (2017) has argued that cultural production for public audiences should not simply be 'teaching' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge, but instead 'sharing knowledge' about Indigenous culture. For her, society needs to enter 'a reciprocal relationship between Indigenous screen creatives/Indigenous on-screen subjects and their mainstream audiences, opening out possibilities for greater respect and understanding of Indigenous knowledges of this country' (Davis 2017, p. 248).

Lynn Meskell (2009), introducing her edited volume *Cosmopolitan Archaeologies*, outlines a cosmopolitan ethic that she believes should focus on the representation and acknowledgement of how different people have, and continue to live their lives. Following from Ivison (Ivison 2002, 2014) and Appiah (Appiah 2005, 2018), she argues that archaeology needs to move away from a default position of preservation/protection in order to recognise how these positions can inadvertently lock First Nations people into 'some preserved ancient authenticity' while failing to recognise these peoples present day circumstances and cultural practices (Meskell 2009, p. 4). To support this objective, Conal McCarthy (2016, p. 28) believes that developing, and investigating, how museum professionals go about their work with First Nations peoples will play an important role in

dislocating museum studies from a theoretical and dialogic-based research that can obscure relationships built and developed between First Nations peoples and museum professionals. He provides Wānanga Taonga (workshop on cultural treasures), an annual weekend session run with Master of Museum Studies students at Victoria University, New Zealand, partnering with local museum professionals and the Ngati Toa community, as an example of how museum professionals can work to develop partnerships with First Nations peoples that provide cross-cultural tools for present and future partnerships. McCarthy's broader collaborative research on Māori culture and participation in museums illustrates the museum's potential to both globalise First Nations culture to expand knowledge pathways (Schorch et al. 2016, p. 62) and to establish and maintain closer relationships with First Nations peoples through engagement activities with museum collections (McCarthy et al. 2013, p. 13).

Cosmopolitan agendas can be seen here as working in tandem with efforts/attempts to decolonise the museum space, empowering First Nations peoples to access cultural heritage and reclaim their culture while effectively collaborating with museums to present their heritage and culture to museum visitors (Chipangura 2021; Onciul 2015; Tolia-Kelly & Raymond 2020; Wintle 2016). Similar to the cosmopolitan frameworks explored so far, such decolonisation has no predetermined process or endpoint (Radcliffe 2017), the 'objective' faces numerous legacies and obstacles (Tolia-Kelly & Raymond 2020) and requires both museums and First Nations communities to establish, develop and maintain effective partnerships (Onciul 2015, pp. 2, 39-40). In the Australian context, museums have moved to more fully recognise and present First Nations peoples' voices in their exhibitions. Helena Robinson (2017, p. 873), in her review of *Encounters: Stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander objects from the British Museum*, an exhibition hosted by the National Museum in 2016, argued that the museum held the ideals of a 'cultural democracy by facilitating shared authority and equity between Indigenous communities' and the National Museum. Robinson

recognises, however, that this ‘cultural democracy’ ideal may be beyond the capacity of national museums because of their own performance outcomes that need to be delivered within a tight and continually changing exhibition program. Responding to Robinson’s article, Jennifer Kramer (2017) agrees that *Encounters* failed to provide appropriate collaboration and shared authority. But she also acknowledges the power of the exhibition in creating ‘revelations [that] should be intimate, uncomfortable and hopefully will make visitors feel implicated and complicit within the work of twenty-first century decolonization’ (Kramer 2017, p. 884). While a ‘decolonisation’ of the museum may not be achieved, a cosmopolitan nationalism provides a context in which conversations that are both ‘flexible, and sometimes contradictory’ can be had (Skrbis & Woodward 2007, p. 735).

One final aspect of cosmopolitan nationalism linked to museum practice is the position of the nation and its citizens, as global citizens, in addressing climate change. Fiona Cameron, Bob Hodge and Juan Francisco Salazar (2013, p. 13) argue that museums need to play a dialogic role in developing civic awareness of climate change and its consequences, highlighting how museums should be constructing, in past and future contexts, a common world for human and non-human participants. Elsewhere, Cameron (2012, p. 325) has argued that museums are a unique space where multiple perspectives can coalesce to contribute to innovative avenues for exploring climate change. Such an idea reflects the realist cosmopolitan objectives of philosopher Martha Nussbaum (2007, p. 78), who argues that we should ‘live with concern for and in relation to animals, places and the world of nature’. The cosmopolitan concern for Others, in this context, relates not only to non-human relation to animals and nature, but is also a concern for the impacts of climate change on cultural Others across the world.

The practice of a cosmopolitan museology can be seen in settler nations like Australia as a delicate and muddled intersection of multiple priorities that coalesce around global

connections and different 'ways of being', negotiated with different communities, including national communities, First Nations peoples, minority communities, and by museum audiences. The adoption of transnational, diversity-focused historical research, both academic and curatorial, has fed into the production of histories in the museum space that are at once global and local, representing the journey to a culturally diverse national community, while also partnering with First Nations peoples to represent the history and continuity of their cultures and practices. These shifts towards a civic pedagogy informed by cosmopolitan nationalism, make demands on museum visitors to enact the empathetic and cultural capacities in these exhibition spaces.

Museum visitors and cosmopolitan national identity

A concern with the emerging cosmopolitan dimension of museums, such as those identified above, has become a recurring theme in recent museology literature (Davidson & Castellanos 2019; Mason 2013; Yeoh 2017). One of the more important works focused on a cosmopolitan museum is Peggy Levitt's (2015) *Artefacts and Allegiances*, which argues that museums, as civic institutions, form part of an assemblage designed to train 'global' citizens. Her research draws on interviews with over 180 curators, museum directors and staff across museums in five countries (Denmark, Sweden, United States, United Arab Emirates and Singapore) in order to examine how the cosmopolitan perspective of openness, curiosity, and a relationship to the Other emerges. While a special issue of the journal *Identities*, published in 2017, acknowledged the pertinence of her work for museums, authors like Ien Ang (2017, p. 5) and Brenda Yeoh (2017, p. 49) highlight the absence of museum visitors in her work. Levitt responds to these criticisms by outlining that, in exploring multiple museums across seven cities in five countries, she simply did not have the capacity to include visitors in her research. Levitt did recognise, however, that there is a need to explore 'what audiences get rather than what museum directors and curators want them to get' as she

acknowledged that ‘museum visitors […] are important pieces of the global museum assemblage I describe’ (Levitt 2017, p. 57).

Museum visitors and their reception of exhibitions have been an important part of the museum studies literature, exploring diverse themes of identity, belonging and affectation (Dodd et al. 2012; Smith 2016; Smith 2017; Walton et al. 2018; Waterton 2018, 2021). Visitor research in the broader academic literature is a combination of studies of audience attitudes to public history (Schorch 2013b; Smith 2014; Waterton 2018) and those investigating design and marketing practices and outcomes, rather than attitudinal studies that are often paired with similar ‘tourism’ institutions like galleries, science centres, and zoos (Skydsgaard, Møller Andersen & King 2016). John Falk (2016a, 2016b), for instance, has been concerned that a focus on exhibition content removes a consideration of the value visitors place on the experience they have in the museum space, even if that experience does not necessarily fold into a narrative or debate intended by the museum. While socio-demographic factors may influence a person’s likelihood of attending a museum, for Falk this is not the ‘reason’ they show up. Rather, it is for ‘a suite of self-related reasons, reasons associated with the relationship between their own roles and needs and the affordances they perceived that the museums processed’ (Falk 2016a, p. 359). By re-orientating his focus towards the ‘needs’ of visitors, Falk creates a set of five visitor types. The first type, the Explorer, is a curiosity-driven visitor, whereas the Hobbyist, Falk’s second type, is one looking to find out about a particular topic or area of interest. Both are likely to engage directly with the curatorial content of the exhibitions. For the remaining three visitor types, the museum plays a more experiential role. Facilitators, the third type, are concerned with enabling the education of others through the visit (e.g., a typical family group visit), while Experience Seekers are often concerned with attending key sites at the places they travel to, with the museum being one among many. Finishing the set are Falk’s fifth type, the Rechargers, who come to the museum as an escape, using it as a place of contemplation

and restoration (Falk 2016a, p. 359). All five types operate in spaces that Falk previously deemed as ‘small i’ identities, as opposed ‘big I’ identities such as ethnicity/race, nationality, politics, and so on.

Responding to Falk’s research, Emily Dawson and Eric Jensen (2011) criticised his narrow focus on small “i” identities (Explorers, Hobbyists, Seekers etc) as an audience segmentation strategy. For them, this reduction of visitors to their market needs has ‘overestimated the degree to which there is a shared frame of reference across different groups’ while also portraying these values upon non-visitors as well’ (Dawson & Jensen 2011, p. 133). They instead argue for a model that integrates Falk’s identities with demographic (including nationality and socioeconomic) factors in order to ‘acknowledge complexity, change over time and the interwoven and developmental nature of sociocultural variables influencing visitors’ appropriation of ideas and experiences encountered at a cultural institution’ (Dawson & Jensen 2011, p. 137). In his reply to this criticism, Falk (2011, p. 146) acknowledged that using both types of identities would generate ‘richer’ results, but believed that for the majority of visitors to cultural institutions the ‘added cost and complexity of considering “I” identities is probably unwarranted’.

Where concerns with visitors are linked directly to marketing and promotion, Falk’s dismissal of “I” identities is likely appropriate, particularly for art and science museums. But when examining how social history museums operate in these national public spheres, there is a concern with how visitors operate between the ‘I’ identities (particularly national identity, but also ethnicity/race) and the ‘i’ identities. Commenting further on the limitations of the five visitor categories, Dawson and Jensen (2011, p. 133) argue that Falk ‘overestimated the degree to which there is a shared frame of reference across different groups, for example, across groups of varying socioeconomic status or groups from minority ethnic backgrounds’. While social history museums can be seen as temporal sites where the performative actions of ‘nationalism’, ‘cosmopolitanism’ and the ‘everyday’ intersect, there are real limitations to

the capacity of museums to represent the nation effectively in all its heterogenous arrangements. This is not a criticism – in past decades, national cultural institutions have displayed a very particular form of the nation that celebrated progressive national narratives while excluding large segments of the population. It is the choices in presenting a cosmopolitan national narrative that is being explored through this thesis.

The performance of this 'cosmopolitan' national identity is crucial because it defines the narrative choices adopted by national museums, particularly the movement into transnational narratives. The cosmopolitan has historically been viewed as individualistic, focused on the intersection between the self, Other and the world, where the concern is with increasing the capacity and intent of the individual to engage with Others (Delanty 2009, p. 75). In the museum setting, then, the cosmopolitan can in effect only be broached by people themselves, including curators and museum staff, but fundamentally also visitors. With the desire to make these connections, national and regional museums in Australia, and in other Western countries, have made decisions to promote themselves to educated professional and their families through the discourses of cosmopolitan nationalism. Nicholas Thomas (2016) makes the argument that the capacity to provoke curiosity has been, and continues to be, what museums are 'good for'. While his argument draws on an ethnographic concern with museums and how they operate, what he argues is that curiosity is a learned skill that is supported through museums. This skill is important because 'we might consider the ability to respond to difference a survival skill in the connected but heterogeneous, dangerous but fragile, world we inhabit' (Thomas 2016, p. 146). Curiosity and empathy are essential and presumed skills expected of curators and visitors in the contemporary museum, tied as these institutions have become to a cosmopolitan nationalism. Kylie Message (2006, p. 202) imagined that the changes brought about by new museology in the 2000s offered 'a break to the museum's traditional project of civic reform […] with an alternative and effective framework of cultural production and engagement'. I would argue, however, that rather than breaking with this 'civic reform' project, the museum is instead transforming it into a

performative, cosmopolitan nationalism, one that normalises difference while providing avenues for openness and access to the Other.

Conclusion

As previous conceptions of the nation as a homogenous ethnic, cultural and/or political society have been challenged, national identity has been reconceptualised as a heterogenous, fluid social identity. Cosmopolitan nationalism has become an increasingly relevant aspect of national identity as increased cultural diversity, access to travel, and tertiary education reorient values in the community concerning identity and engagement with other cultures. Still operating within the performative and the everyday, this cosmopolitan nationalism encourages the development of a multivocal nationalism that, in Australia, endeavours to recognise diverse perspectives within the nation, including those of First Nations Australians, while also highlighting Australia's contemporary and historical connections with other places across the globe. These moves towards more fluid, heterogenous conceptions of national identity have serious consequences for collective memory, academic/public history, and museums, who are among the key storehouses and communicators of national identity.

In this Chapter, I have argued that the move by academic and cultural institutions away from the nation to focus on the transnational flows and engagements of people between locations has shifted the focus that museums take in constructing and presenting histories for their audiences. Museum spaces can present multiple and, at times, divergent narratives that reflect shifting values for Australia's communities. Memory is shown to be fluid and malleable as it creates connections in and between communities in different socioeconomic, ethnic, geographical, or generational settings, each of which may engage with the past in different ways. This chapter has raised questions about how national identity is constructed,

reconstructed, and performed in museums. It has also identified the tensions that arise between cosmopolitan agendas as they operate against local, national, and global concerns. In Australia, and other settler countries, this is particularly pertinent concerning indigenous and non-indigenous relations, as museums seek to progress cosmopolitan agendas for displaying and understanding 'different ways of being' in the world. Curatorial approaches to performing cosmopolitan nationalism in exhibitions are precursors of this space, but in conceiving of national identity as both dynamic and performative in the everyday this thesis raises questions regarding the process for the conception, design and delivery of exhibitions and their reception by audiences. Examination of cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum space, then, requires a theoretical framework and research approach that can examine the flexible and complex relationships between curators, visitors, objects, and the exhibition content in the museum. It is necessary to draw fully upon the agendas, perspective, views, and pasts of these actors to better understand the construction and performance of national identity in the museum. The next chapter presents 'assemblage thinking' as the chosen theoretical approach that responds to these conceptual and empirical challenges and makes it possible to examine the social changes that occur in societies. The chapter will also outline the methods used and the research undertaken for this thesis, including providing further details of the two case study exhibitions examined.

Chapter 3
Assemblage thinking for examining national identity in museums

In Chapter 2, the emergence of a cosmopolitan nationalism in Australia, and its representation in the museum sector, was explored. I argued that museums, as memory agents, are responsible for redefining history in ways meaningful to their primarily tertiary-educated, professional visitors and, to a lesser extent, international and regional visitors who attend museums on a one-off basis. The chapter set up the complex intersection of everyday 'national identity' with the presentation of performative aspects of nationalism that are active in the museum space, which is a primary avenue of exploration for this research. Museum exhibitions are a multifaceted medium, containing not only the opinions or writings of authors through the curation process, but also the influences of the objects they are composed of and the people that come to visit them. Chapters 1 and 2 both set out the research concerns for examining the dynamic construction of historical narratives, national identity, and cosmopolitan concerns within the museum space. This chapter outlines how 'assemblage thinking', a combination of assemblage theory and actor-network theory, will be used to in this thesis conceptualise the motivations of individual actors, such as museum professionals, objects, and visitors, and the social construction of a cosmopolitan nationalism in the case study exhibitions. Most importantly, assemblage thinking seeks to understand the relationships these actors enter into with each other to construct histories in the museums while they stabilise and negotiate Australian cosmopolitan nationalism. These relationships established in, and between, assemblages by diverse actors, and their desires and associations, are a primary focus for assemblage thinking in understanding how society is constructed (Dittmer & Gray 2010). In doing so, the tensions between the overarching metanarratives and the personal aspects of national identity allows one to ask the 'question of which scale to situate causal explanation at, the micro or the macro' (Tan 2013, p. 387).

‘Assemblage thinking’ is a combination of assemblage theory, actor-network theory (from here ANT) and new materialism that has been developed and explored primarily, but not exclusively, in the field of human geography (Anderson, Ben et al. 2012; Featherstone 2011; McFarlane 2009, 2011; Müller & Schurr 2016). Assemblage thinking is used in this thesis as a framework to examine how different actors, including curators, obects and visitors, enter into relationships to (re)define an Australian cosmopolitan nationalism in national and regional museums. The benefits of an assemblage thinking approach are two-fold. First, it conceives of the world as a flat ontology, where social conditions and relationships are not defined through hierarchies of dominance, but through the connections between actors and their consequent affects (the actor-networks). Second, the structure of assemblage thinking draws attention to how humans and non-human actors influence social settings. Assemblage thinking allows any assemblage that emerges from such actor-networks to be understood as incorporating not only individual assemblages, but, beyond this, the actors and assemblages that are linked to, or are ‘nested’ in, larger assemblages. Assemblage thinking thus provides an important theoretical position from which to understand museums, the nation, national identity, and their relationship to Others in local and global contexts.

Following an explanation of this theoretical postion, the chapter presents the two case studies examined and the methodology used in this thesis. As will become apparent, assemblages are continually in flux, moving between and across material and discursive constructions. As a result, assemblage thinking is particularly effective in examining moments in time, where social construction is momentary, represenational and in a process of reconfiguring. Similarly, the cosmopolitan can be understood as both the disposition of people (and collectively, societies) to engage with an Other’s views and perspectives and/or those moments in which such dispositions are acted out. These moments will shift and flex with the spaces, people, objects and relations that emerge. Examining fluid elements and agential actors, including the cosmopolitan, nation, humans, spaces and objects, my

research focuses on two temporary exhibitions, *The Art of Science: Nicolas Baudin's Voyagers 1800–1804* and *Cook and the Pacific*, both of which drew on objects from international collections and both of which were assembled and reassembled to speak for, and by, different audiences.

Conceptual underpinnings

The purpose of this section is to examine the conceptual underpinnings of assemblage thinking, focusing first on assemblage theory before turning to examine actor-network theory. Both have their own genealogies, focus and particular theoretical approaches to understanding assemblages. These conceptual underpinnings will lead into a discussion of assemblage thinking, whereby elements of both assemblage theory and actor-network theory are taken to understand the actions and desires of actors as they operate within, and across, assemblages. Assemblages are the combination of individual actors, both human and non-human, that, through their desires and actions, lead to the creation of new orders and institutions. Such a concise description, however, misses the nuance that is at the core of both assemblage theory and ANT, so I will briefly describe the development of these theoretical frameworks before examining 'assemblage thinking' itself.

Assemblage theory

Instrumental to the development of assemblage theory is the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, particularly their text *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987). As part of their wider work, Deleuze and Guattari proposed the French word *agencement* as a philosophical approach to understanding the interactions and intersections of multiple components coming together to construct a wider whole. The term *agencement* was translated into English as 'assemblage'. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari discuss three different, although inherently interconnected, types of assemblage. The first, the 'arborescence', is illustrated as a tree, a hierarchical structure that is the most stabilised

(territorialised) assemblage, but that still retains a multitude of connections. The arborescence is in contrast to the 'radicle', which represents disorder and chaos and where links and associations proliferate but fail to join (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, p. 7). The final assemblage structure they discuss is the 'rhizome', which, born of the radicle, represents stabilising networks of connections that may continue to expand and capture associated assemblages as they interact across boundaries (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, p. 10). These three types of assemblage are not independent of one another but intersect and interact to create/stabilise new assemblages. The rhizome is a major focus in Deleuze and Guattari's work, as this particular form of assemblage illustrates the broad concepts of territorialisation and deterritorialisation through which assemblages, as an organisation, individual, or mapping (a network of these combined) cycle through stages of stabilising and destabilising the relationships between actors.

While inherently heterogenous, it would be a mistake to read these assemblages as being free-flowing happenstances that come into existence. For Deleuze and Guattari, assemblages are created through models of desire, whereby actors perceive and create their wishes initially at a conceptual, virtual, level before being conceived, expressed, and, in effect, created within an actual space. The virtual plane is where abstract machines, defined through composition, function and their potential for existence operate. Will and desire play a fundamental role in these abstract machines, gaining consistency to form concrete 'machinic' assemblages that can operate within the actual realm (Goodchild 1996, p. 51). As such, assemblages commence as desires, impinged on by various actors, operating on the virtual level that have a primary effect on flows and orders of vertical and horizontal territories in 'actual spacetime' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, p. 89; see also Saldanha 2016, p. 98). At the flat level, the assemblage must be examined 'on the ground' as its multiple components are brought onto a single place of consistency. But what concerns much of assemblage theory is the process of assemblages coming, and rebecoming, into being.

Manuel DeLanda's (2006, 2016) assemblage theory draws strongly on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *agencement*. DeLanda's assemblage is deeply focused on the territorialisation of assemblages, focusing on how assemblages operate, not simply independently of one another but by continually interacting and converging to deliver more complex assemblages, at varying layers of scale. DeLanda's assemblage is less concerned with the virtual level, and the desires that instigate it, than it is with the effects of, and on, assemblages as they react to each other. As opposed to Deleuze and Guattari, DeLanda's assemblage theory is heavily contingent on the interactions of actors within an assemblage, opening to a materialist focus on both human and non-human actors. As a result, the primary concepts in DeLanda's assemblage theory – 'emergence' and 'relationships of exteriority' – are concerned with these interactions and intersections of assemblages, and how they might congregate to create 'assemblages of assemblages' (DeLanda 2016, pp. 6-7). By 'emergence', DeLanda is suggesting that the development of any assemblage is completed through the interactions of its parts – but those parts may continue to grow and develop into larger assemblages, or wholes, which are themselves defined by the relationships between their component parts. DeLanda (2016, pp. 9-10) concedes that these 'emergent properties' should not be conceived of only as the aggregate because this 'leaves open the possibility of *macro*-reductionism, as when one rejects the rational actors of micro-economics in favour of […] a society that fully determines the nature of its members'.

DeLanda uses a second concept, 'relationships of exteriority', to avoid this reductionism. These 'relationships of exteriority' posit that individual components of a whole may operate independently of the relationships inherent in these emergent properties. DeLanda argues that component parts of any assemblage, or whole, are not constrained, or defined by the relationships in which they are engaged. Given that components are defined by relationships of exteriority, it is a consequence that 'a component part of an assemblage may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage, in which its interactions are different'

(DeLanda 2016, p. 10). An inherent issue of tracking assemblages is their evolution; that is, as assemblages are remade anew there is no guarantee that the actors and non-social entities involved will interact in their new relationships in ways that match their current structure or contribution to existent wholes. For DeLanda, it is the capacity to stabilise the component parts of any assemblage, and the methodological issues inherent in this process, that represents the opportunity to understand how culture is constructed, deconstructed, and redeployed.

While assemblages are forming they remain effectively amorphous, temporary and derivative (Holland 2013, p. 58). They may also be strictly virtual, in the sense that they are objects of desires that require agents to act towards their materialisation. As such, DeLanda's assemblage theory maintains a focus on potentialities, in spite of its realist focus on the material (Müller & Schurr 2016, pp. 219-20). The(se) actors will become increasingly involved and stabilised in the assemblage through a process of territorialisation. As its internal homogeneity increases, the capacity of the assemblage to take on expressive roles also increases. But, as these assemblages enter into more complex arrangements and external interactions, a process of deterritorialisation may also occur (DeLanda 2006, pp. 12-3; Holland 2013, pp. 69-71). It is the strength of the assemblages and their respective actors, objects and intermediaries that define whether 'components become involved and that either stabilise the identity of an assemblage, by increasing its degree of internal homogeneity […] or destabilise it' (DeLanda 2006, p. 12). While at each level in these assemblages actors may have some level of autonomy, 'the emergent wholes react back on their components to constrain them and enable them [although this] does not result in a seamless totality' (DeLanda 2006, pp. 118-9). Assemblage theory provides the flexibility to analyse social constructs with these interactions of scale being the key feature.

DeLanda's second, and most recent, monograph on the topic, *Assemblage Theory* (2016), uses the concept of a 'nested set' of assemblages as the underpinning tool for examining the multi-scalar construction of, and relationships between, assemblages. The dual consequence of 'emergence' and 'relationships of exteriority' is the generation of larger assemblages, which may be defined as 'assemblages of assemblages' or as 'nested sets' of assemblages. There are degrees of scale, which assemblages occupy within a relevant micro/macro distinction depending on the level at which they are analysed. For example, the individual may be conceived of as micro against the community of which they are part, but that same community may be viewed as micro in comparison to the macro level of the national or globe (DeLanda 2016, p. 20). These intersections of micro/macro actors and assemblages have bearing on the relationships that are being established, and because component parts are conceived of as undefined by their assemblages, and open to ongoing 'relations of exteriority', there is an inherent flexibility and heterogeneity to social structures.

The contexts in which assemblages emerge have consequences for the way that individual actors and assemblages act within, and against, emergent wholes across nested levels. As assemblages are territorialised, the solidarity of their respective parts increase and the assemblage 'immediately starts acting as a source of limitations and opportunities for its component parts' (DeLanda 2016, p. 20). As such, the assemblages, as the macro level, begin to exert 'local norms' on component parts, human and non-human alike. While the assemblage's very existence is dependent on its emergence from de/territorialised relationships and is greater than a mere accumulation of its component parts, the assemblage is dependent on these components and their interactions to maintain aspects of solidarity.

Actor-network theory

Assemblage theory has influenced the development of actor-network theory (ANT), a framework that places an increased emphasis on the role of non-human actors in assemblages. Like assemblage theory, actor-network theory is concerned with identifying the points at which an assemblage fractures, breaking down to be remade. ANT endeavours to remove the levels of scale from the analysis of group and social construction through an inherent focus on relationships and associations in the present, rather than looking at the way that the social emerges. ANT was developed by John Law (1992, 1999), Michel Callon (1986a, 1991) and Bruno Latour (1987, 1993), and emerged out of the field of science and technology studies. Being based in such an object-oriented field played a crucial role in developing ANT's focus on the effects of non-human actors on assemblages, with early studies exploring assemblages containing electric vehicles, molluscs, and aircraft being illustrative of this primary concern with the material world (Callon 1986a, 1986b; Law & Callon 1992). In 2005, Latour attempted to move ANT more firmly into the realm of sociology through his volume *Reassembling the Social*. In this book, Latour positioned ANT scholars as 'sociologists of association', in opposition to traditional 'sociologists of the social'. Latour was critical of traditional sociology's belief that 'social forces' are 'always present in the background' and available to draw on, or contain, those components of society being explored (Latour 2005, p. 37). Instead, Latour holds that society is in a constant process of being constructed, arguing that there is no overarching or underpinning structure:

> there exists no society to begin with, no reservoir of ties, no big reassuring pot of glue to keep all those groups together. If you don't have the festival now or print the newspaper today, you simply lose the grouping, which is not a building in need of restoration but a movement in need of continuation. (Latour 2005, p. 37)

In many ways, this perception is captured by DeLanda (2006, 2016) via his concepts of emergent wholes and nested sets, although people and component parts are more autonomous and self-directing within an actor-network account. The variances between DeLanda's 'nested sets' that continually build on one another through territorialisation and ANT's flat networks where actors link together and break apart is the primary point of difference between assemblage theory and ANT. DeLanda's concept of 'emergence', discussed above, is focused on individual actors and components (inclusive of smaller assemblages) as these are stabilised in expanding and emergent wholes. The 'nested sets' of assemblages feed into larger and more complex properties. In contrast, ANT is primarily concerned with the interrelationships of actors within assemblages as they move between one action or association to the next. For Latour, these pretences of scale, and to an extent power, are illustrative of both stronger and multiple associations for some actors over others, and across locations. As he goes on to argue:

> Macro no longer describes a wider or larger site in which the micro would be embedded [...] but another equally local, equally micro place, which is connected to many others through some medium transporting specific types of traces. No place can be said to be bigger than any other place, but some can be said to benefit from far safer connections with many more places than others. (Latour 2005, p. 176)

As indicated above, ANT foregrounds social formations operating across networks, rather than individual assemblages themselves. ANT seeks to trace these connections as they emerge, to understand how the component parts intersect to construct the resultant assemblages (Jackson 2014, p. 40), which, in effect, involves following human and non-human actors as they move between associations. Martin Müller (2015, p. 69) argues that

this lack of an '*a priori* distinction' does not abandon the emergence of scale, but rather 'the construction of relations is what brings space and scale into being in the first place'. By arguing that scale is a consequence of assemblages, relations, and interactions, rather than an existing social force that reacts against existing social formations, ANT provides an analytical toolkit in which power relations are defined through actors themselves and their roles as mediators or intermediaries.

Assemblage thinking: Combining assemblage theory and actor-network theory

Despite some key differences between ANT and DeLanda's concept of assemblage theory, both are centrally concerned with accounting for the complexity at the heart of social constructs and finding ways to explore society that give prevalence to individual actors, as opposed to overarching structures. These parallels between the two theories have led to the development of the notion of 'assemblage thinking' in the literature – a terminology that endeavours to bring aspects of assemblage theory and actor-network theory together (Anderson et al. 2012; Baker & McGuirk 2017; Dittmer 2017; McFarlane 2009; Müller & Schurr 2016). In a similar vein, my aim in this thesis is to draw on the strength of both assemblage theory and ANT in order to focus on the relationality of individual actors and assemblages themselves, providing tools through which to explore the ways societies create, refine, and communicate knowledge and social norms. Martin Müller and Caroline Schurr (2016) argue that there are three primary 'cross-fertilisations' that ANT and assemblage theory can bring to one another. These cross fertilisations amount to: a) ANT providing an explicitly realist and spatial account of 'how relations in an assemblage are drawn together and stabilised'; b) the focus on 'multiplicities and fluidities' inherent in both since ANT's adoption in the social sciences; and c) ANT benefiting from an increased 'attention to the role of affect and desire in bringing socio-material relations into being' (Müller & Schurr 2016, p. 218). My interests lie with the first and third points. Regarding the first point of cross-fertilisation, ANT's conceptions of 'mediators' is central to understanding

that assemblages are networks of relationships that are continually under construction, providing a particular degree of agency for both human and non-human actors to the way society is structured. On the third point of cross-fertilisation, ANT has been criticised for removing the agential power of actors, as they appear simply to react against, and within, assemblages with the inference being that assemblages are constructed as much by happenstance as by the result of their actors' motions. Müller and Schurr (2016, p. 226) argue that combining the realist aspects of ANT with a renewed focus on the desire/wish aspects of assemblages, conceived of in the assemblage theory literature, provides a unique point of analysis for understanding the power of actors within assemblages and gaining insights into how these assemblages develop.

Jason Dittmer (2017) explores the blending of assemblage theory and ANT in his book, *Diplomatic Material*. Examining the transnational networks of communication apparent in British foreign policy and international relations, Dittmer pays particular attention to the question of how 'the national interest' is discursively structured within the communications taken on by his case study institutions. In doing so, he uses an 'assemblage thinking' framework to uncover how these discursive pathways are inherently formed and shaped through human and non-human actors (Dittmer 2017, p. 6). Dittmer's case studies include an examination of the use of paper (and archives) in the British Foreign Affairs Office and the use of interoperable arms between various armed forces operating in the NATO alliance. Focusing on links between the micro and macro scale, Dittmer uses the emergence frames presented by DeLanda to illustrate how 'larger scales are not simply the aggregate of various locals, they are emergent from the enmeshing and interaction of various local events and phenomena' (Dittmer 2017, p. 5). Incorporating this flexibility from ANT provides an avenue for exploring a scalar relationship that allows aspects of the 'everyday' to be folded into, or against, the larger construction of international relations, relationships of power, and the activities of the state. The causal impacts of these everyday aspects 'displace the notion

of a coherent state in favour of a metaphysics of state effects and state affects, themselves the result of improvised practices by state elites and others' (Dittmer 2017, p. 9). The major conclusion from Dittmer's work is that these are not simple processes of state enforcement of coercion but the interlinking of global and local agents in defining international relations through every day and performative actions.

The flat ontological nature of assemblage thinking introduces 'network' relationships that unfold across local and global processes, together with the de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation that frames their outcomes. As an assemblage expands, it contains more actors and the capacity of individual actors to meaningfully influence an assemblage is constrained through the influence of these multiple actors. An assemblage framed at a more local level, however, may allow human or non-human actors to have stronger avenues for control (Belliger & Krieger 2016, p. 132). As a result, in assemblage thinking the global no longer represents a new ontological scale; rather, it represents more matter, more things, that have consequences for the local. Importantly, it also means that the process of (re)territorialisation at the level of the nation is not detached from the world, but rather understood as a redefined assemblage that may be made and remade anew. Dittmer (2017), for example, sees the nation as operating through a bottom-up process, one that defines the relationships of nations in the world. He argues that these processes destroy the likelihood of eradicating national or cultural differences through a globalisation process. Within this complex framework, existing national metanarratives may be inherently beneficial to creating new, normalised conceptions of the nation as they interact across assemblages. As Dittmer (2017, pp. 136-7) argues:

> it is impossible to assume that processes of assemblage lead inexorably to the eradication of national difference, as is often assumed in the cruder versions of globalisation literature. Rather,

> because these are largely bottom-up processes, we can see the formation of order from complexity these particular quirks and historical holdovers remain potent resources for entrepreneurial subjects who seek to shape the assemblage's becoming in particular ways.

Conceiving of assemblages as emergent through their actor's desires raises questions of how processes of collective memory, explored in Chapter 2, operate when memory acts coallesce around shifting cultural norms and expectations. Vlad Glaveanu (2017, p. 256) has argued that a focus on the societal, intergroup and individual/interpersonal allows for an exploration of the dynamic atmosphere of collective memory, and its capacity to shift and change between groups and over time. Similar to assemblage theory: 'these levels are not meant to suggest hierarchies […] but simply reflect the level of generality and context dependence of the different levels: from broader, context-transcending ideologies to situational meaning-making processes' (Glaveanu 2017, p. 258).

The flexibility of assemblage thinking allows for the analysis of social changes as they occur at different scales. This provides the capacity to understand collective memory as a continuum of contestation and redefinition, working from the individual, to social groups, and to the nation, where the smallest component agent may, in turn, have the greatest capacity to begin shifts in collective memory. Also important here are the inter-group relationships between those segments of the community that, consciously or otherwise, engage with normative discourses about the nation. In these assemblages, power is transitory, and while drawing on their associations, actors may be able readily to repeat themselves with 'patterning, which in traditional sociology has then been seen as a thing in its own right (for instance, as 'patriarchy' or 'neoliberalism')' (Fox & Alldred 2017, pp. 36-7). In exploring the emergence of a cosmopolitan nationalism and its deployment in the museum space, the

concept of assemblage provides a framework through which to understand the nation as it is constructed through individual actors, components, and emergent wholes that create cultural meaning. Museums are involved in this process not only through the major permanent exhibitions that they display, providing a macro view of the nation, but, importantly for this thesis, through the temporary exhibitions and programs through which they (re)frame a nation's history. National museums provide fertile ground for the examination of these multi-scalar conceptions of nation. As institutional agents, they hold inherent power relationships and authority which, as seen in the preceding chapter, continue to inform visitors' and citizens' perceptions of the overarching national (and global) metanarratives structured through their exhibitions.

Assemblage thinking, museums and relational history

Museums are often seen as civic or state bodies that play a key role in reinforcing and supporting national identity and belonging, particularly as they work in European and Anglosphere countries where government ownership or subsidisation contribute to the infusion of the national into these institutions. As one actor among many, a museum can draw on existing connections and relationships, such as its Board and the management of the museum, partnerships and financial sponsors, or the internal policies of the museum itself. But one may argue that the influence exerted most strongly is the museum's relationship to its staff and the objects it holds. Focusing on events requires a concern that moves across and between actors. To understand the value of museums, any inquiry should move from considering what institutions 'are' to a concern with how the capacities for actions and desires are produced in these assemblages (Fox & Alldred 2017, p. 155). It makes sense to track these events, as actors come to influence an assemblage but then reside in those assemblages as new actors emerge, intersect, and depart. As Latour (2005, p. 247) frames it, 'the question of the social emerges when the ties in which one is entangled begin

to unravel; the social is further detected through the surprising movements from one association to the next.'

In his introduction to *Reassembling the Social* (2005), Latour identifies three primary ways to use ANT to examine social connections by: a) deploying controversies about associations; b) by rendering fully traceable the processes through which actors can stabilise these controversies; and c) by identifying the *procedures* through which it is possible to reassemble the social within a collective. Controversies are those actions by agents that destabilise an assemblage, demanding the broader layers of the assemblage to find ways to (re)territorialise the assemblage. The focus for Latour is on tracking how actors, texts, and concepts operate between individual places, working with and against one another. In an assemblage, it is not simply the individual actors that are important but their capacity to influence and interact within the assemblage being produced (Fox & Alldred 2017, p. 152).

Museums also inhabit a material world – via their concern with objects and the people who create them. In this context, museums automatically posit the role and strength of objects, as non-human actors, in defining aspects of social identity and solidarity. Recent research in museum studies using assemblage thinking has focused on the role of museum objects in promoting and generating affect and emotional responses from visitors and museums staff (Smith & Campbell 2017; Waterton & Dittmer 2014; Witcomb 2013). And while text-based and discursive sources are an important point of analysis for museum studies, the dominance of objects in the museum space can take advantage of the orientation of assemblage thinking towards matter and what it (matter) does (Fox & Alldred 2017, p. 153). Following on from Latour, the most illuminating moments in which to examine an assemblage are those in which they are confronted or, in other words, de-territorialised before coming together again. As such, the touring exhibition offers an ideal case study

through which to examine how concepts and ideas that are normalised or territorialised in one setting may be disassembled and reassembled into a new way of being.

These assemblages and the meanings they produce arise out of the intersections between actors, things, texts, and concepts, as they are played out in relation to each other. Following Fox and Alldred's (2017, p. 154) argument in *Sociology and the New Materialism: Theory, Research, Action*, each assemblage can be seen as an 'event', or temporary territorialised representation, that is in a state of flux and change as it proceeds through periods of territorialisation and de-territorialisation. It is in between these moments, when actors are endeavouring to impose their desires on the assemblage through the labours that they carry out, that one can most fully understand the way these assemblages operate and the effects they produce. An examination of different events (host venues displaying an exhibition), operating within the same assemblage (the temporary exhibition), may be traced, and analysed through the changes brought about (through text, discourse, and concepts) by the differing actors (developing museums, host museums, museum staff, exhibitions spaces, objects, and visitors) that come to bear on the assemblage.

It is important to understand how these theoretical frameworks have informed the discipline of history, as part of the continuing shift away from a progressive historical narrative, which I discussed in Chapter 2, towards a multidimensional conception of both historical research and the writing/construction of historical narratives. Gabrielle Durepos and Albert Mills (2012) have outlined this approach in the volume *ANTi-History: Theorizing the Past, History and Historiography in Management and Organization Studies*, where they define 'ANTi-History' as a theoretical approach to historical writing that combines critical management studies and ANT. They demonstrate the capacity of ANTi-History through a case study of Pan American Airways. Their first case study chapter examines the historiography of Pan American Airways, showing how the intersection of business representatives, authors, and

archival material produces multiple and competing business history narratives. Building on this analysis, they present an alternative history of the founding of Pan American Airways by (re)assembling the narrative to 'problematise' the role that historians (and by extension curators) have performed as they impose their own limits on the narratives created. This 'multiplicity' of the past has major consequences for the process of producing history, where those narratives are 'suggested as an effect of interest-driven actor-networks that are situated ideologically, spatially and temporally' (Durepos & Mills 2012, p. 225). In response to this multiplicity, Durepos and Mills posit a relational history that is both contextualised in the outcomes of its construction and the relationships that led to its development:

> In contrast to universal histories which are assumed transcendental and relevant to all people across all times, relational histories render transparent the ties to the communities from which they have stemmed. Knowledge of the past is always made somewhere; it is enacted in specific locations or regions […] In this sense, relational histories engender a strong political engagement with the real world. (2012, p. 59)

A 'relational history' approach can be seen in the work of Bennett et al. (2017) and Gosden et al. (2007), as they trace the people, archival records and object relationships in ethnographic museums to understand the history of the development of these museums and the nested sets of assemblages in which they are embedded. In the book *Collecting, Ordering, Governing: Anthropology, Museums, and Liberal Government*, Tony Bennett et al. (2017) use assemblage theory to examine the historical development of ethnographical collections in settler countries of the Pacific during the interwar period, from 1919 to 1937, revealing the relationships between anthropological fieldwork, Indigenous voices, and liberal governments in Australia, New Zealand and former French Indochina territories in Laos,

Cambodia and Vietnam. They argue that, in stressing the relationships between human and non-human actors, assemblage theory makes it possible to understand how particular spheres of action emerge, where studies move beyond the 'coming together' of actors to understand 'the action oriented end of assemblages' (Bennett et al. 2017, p. 30). Through this process they do not simply trace the historical development of museums in the Pacific but argue that the liberal governance processes established in the interwar period remain crucial to understanding museums in the twenty-first century. The authors' concluding chapter examines how these assemblages became entrenched in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries through processes of (re)territorialisation, as the museum assemblage and the scalar colonial governmentality assemblage are negotiated. The anthropological practices from the interwar period were, and remain, tied to First Nations peoples' rights, such as tribal governance practices in New Zealand, Land Councils and Native Title claims in Australia, and overarching processes of indigenous self-determination across New Zealand, Australia, and the United States (Bennett et al. 2017, pp. 262-5, 70-71). This work builds on earlier work by Tony Bennett examining governmental assemblages (Bennett 2013, 2015), together with his editorial work examining assemblage theory and cultural studies through the volumes *Assembling culture*, with Chris Healy (2011), and *Material powers: Cultural studies, history, and the material* turn, with Patrick Joyce (2010).

Peggy Levitt (2015) uses assemblage theory to frame her contemporary analysis of museums, arguing that the connection of multiple assemblages provides an important context in which to understand the role that museums play in communicating the nation to the world, and vice versa. She argues that by focusing on the global museum assemblage, her research provides the opportunity to examine processes, such as the influences of museum studies in tertiary education and to explore the historical lineage of individual museums, for the construction of the museum assemblage. Levitt is also concerned with following key actors in the assemblage, in particular a:

> transnational class of museum directors, administrators, curators and educators, some of whom circulate regionally if not globally, [and] form part of these assemblages but also carry pieces of it with them in their laptops, suitcases, and portfolios when they move from post to post. (Levitt 2015, pp. 8-9)

As such, those same theoretical frameworks that are used to understand a museum's development during a particular historical context, such as the Pacific in the interwar period, and the actors that influence the museum assemblage, such as private collectors and government representatives, are equally applicable to understanding not only the contemporary assemblage, but the relationships of assemblages to previous historical periods as museum practices continue through processes of (re)territorialisation. For social history museums, histories provide platforms through which to consider the influence and impact of the past on contemporary, social relationships.

In their 2019 book, *Cosmopolitan Ambassadors*, Lee Davidson and Letitia Perez Castellanos illustrate how such an approach can work in understanding the impact of two internationally touring exhibitions. The first of these exhibitions was *Aztecs,* developed by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Mexico government, and was displayed at Te Papa, the Australian Museum, and the Melbourne Museum during 2013 and 2014. The second exhibition was *E Tu Ake: Standing Strong*, developed by Te Papa for display between April and June 2011 and which subsequently toured internationally, including to museums throughout Mexico. Davidson and Castellanos (2019) argue that international touring exhibitions create important cultural encounters that are essential to advancing cosmopolitan agendas in a global context. To progress this agenda, they said that their research 'strive[s] for more clarity around the purpose, practice and potential impact of international exhibitions' (Davidson & Castellanos 2019, p. 2). Their first chapter begins this

process through a detailed examination of the exhibition development from the context of each country, through to the liaisons between staff across organisations, to the development of the design and installation. Interviewing numerous museum professionals about the process, Davidson and Castellanos (2019, p. 66) found ‘qualities, feelings and moments that reflect a cosmopolitan or intercultural approach to museum practice’ that underlined the processes that they were involved in. Finding ways to map these interconnections, however, can prove difficult, with the momentary and shifting relationships between actors hard to pin down. In their analysis, Davidson and Castellanos (2019, p. 215) discovered that:

> Every time we tried to capture the multiplicity of encounters, meanings, and practices we had identified and give it form, the images that came to mind always failed to represent everything […] nothing we could think of gave an adequate sense of flux, complexity, and movement.

Acknowledging this complexity, the networks of actors, and the multiplicity derived through their interactions provides an important context through which to understand the role of museums in society. In beginning his analysis of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), Adam Muller (2020) highlights the spatial-political considerations that come to bear on the site, including the museum building’s location on a shared North American meeting place and CMHR’s missteps and difficult early relationships with indigenous peoples, which has led to criticism of the institution for mispresenting, or failing to present, a ‘true’ picture of Canada’s own human rights and indigenous rights record. These discussions have now prompted changes from the museum, including reconfiguring curatorial narratives of the, at times, violent histories in Canada’s settlement and occupation, together with additional training of staff to improve their work with indigenous peoples and communities. Muller’s use of assemblage theory, focused on the operation of museums as nested sets of assemblages, shows the CMHR in ‘relations [that] are present and interact both within and

without the museum's walls, and indeed [show] how in many ways they serve to give those walls their meaning, as well as fix their limits and lines of flight' (Muller 2020, p. 93). Muller concludes that his analysis removes any *a priori* assumption of the role the CMHR should play, instead positioning the museum as an active agent in discourses of human and indigenous rights.

In other domains, both ANT and assemblage theory have been used by museum studies researchers to explore the intersections between visitors, objects, and narratives in the museum space, focused on both individual interactions and the perspectives that visitors bring into the museum space based on their own values and identities. This research has included examining the intersection of technology in the museum space (Kéfi & Pallud 2011; Light et al. 2018), the intersections of objects with visitors (Berns 2016), and the consequences of this engagement for the emotive and affective responses of visitors (Davidson & Castellanos 2019; Dittmer & Waterton 2019; Waterton & Dittmer 2014). With its focus on human to non-human relationships and networks, ANT has been used to analyse objects and object relationships, following objects in the museum space to better understand the ways in which these non-human actors influence the network. Introducing their edited volume, *Unpacking the Collection: Networks and Material in Social Agency in the Museum*, Sarah Byrne et al. (2011, p. 4) argue that ANT provides an appropriate theoretical framework through which to understand the agency of objects as 'ongoing in the material processes of curation and display and in the social processes of visiting, research, learning an knowing things […] which arise from them'. Wendy Griswold et al. (2013, p. 360) argue that by tracking 'bodies and objects moving through space and exerting influence on one another', art museums makes visible the interpretive experiences of visitors in the museum space. Unlike technology and scientific objects, they argue that art objects are resistant to stabilisation, which provides contexts that can increase ANT's capacity to understand how actors restrict stabilisation, what limits stabilised objects hold, and how the destabilisation of meaning occurs (Griswold, Mangione & McDonnell 2013, p. 361). This instability shows how

the assemblage or network relies on human and non-human relationships to stabilise social interactions and values.

Tina Roppola et al. (2019) have used the concept of a 'nested set of assemblages' to examine the multiple identities which first-generation migrant Australians engage with through their heritage experiences at the Australian War Memorial. They argue that these migrants engaged to varying degrees with multiple assemblages, including Australian national identity, ANZAC heritage, and their own family and faith-based practices, with each assemblage bearing on first generation Australians to varying degrees. Roppola et al. (2019, p. 1215) conclude that the visit to the Australian War Memorial (AWM) for these migrants involved processes of (re)territorialisation whereby 'it was clear the migrants in this study were […] actively processing their interrelations, with consequences for their interpretation of the AWM visit, Anzac heritage and being "Australian".' In this context, assemblage theory provided a way to trace the multiple assemblages that different migrants drew upon, using the ANZAC heritage narrative to either (or both) reaffirm or contest their feeling of national belonging. Emma Waterton and Jason Dittmer's (2014) research on the Australian War Memorial also examined how affect was produced and enacted through the museum space. Their case study exhibits, including a vignette of the Royal Air Force Bomber Command during the Second World War, the depiction of film segments in the museum galleries that simulated helicopter missions in the Vietnam War, and the Hall of Memory, each show how visitor experiences fold into the museum assemblage. They argue that assemblage theory provides:

> a framework for thinking through how affects might be historicized, engineered and transferred and bodily felt within processes of excessive and cumulative composition – [revealing] how […] are they produced and why does that process of production matter. (Waterton & Dittmer 2014, p. 136)

In concluding their article, Waterton and Dittmer (2014, p. 137) argue that the possibilities available and the potentialities apparent in the museum space have consequences for 'curators [who] have a crucial role in sculpting this possibility space in ways that are likely to produce ethical outcomes, while likewise accepting the possibility of aberrant outcomes'. Assemblage thinking provides avenues through which to explore the impact of museums on the museum assemblage and the processes through which this assemblage is (re)territorialised. In the contemporary setting examined in this thesis, it is essential to understand the context of the histories constructed in the museum setting and their consequences for the relationships established both vertically (for example with visitors) and horizontally (such as the broader cosmopolitan nationalism). I will now turn to the methods used for this research, and the case studies that are at the centre of my analysis.

Methodology

Case study research represents a primary avenue through which to trace assemblages as they emerge and come apart. Such research can be criticised for this narrow focus and magnification of single participants or objects in their analysis (Gillham 2010, pp. 1-2), but, as Fox and Alldred (2017, p. 173) have highlighted, an assemblage approach needs to focus on the 'affective flows' between actors within an assemblage in order to examine the localisation/globalisation, or de/territorialisation occurring in the assemblages that tie them together. The focus on case studies provides a central means for limiting the range of inquiry, which contributes to understanding the full complexity and multiplicity of actors as they emerge in the museum assemblage. As assemblages that have clear points of (re)territorialisation, temporary and touring exhibitions entail a deliberate 'unravelling' of social relations as objects and narratives move between sites, between localities, and between visitors, to be remade anew. These transitions provide the capacity for individual host museums to redirect the touring exhibition towards a positive (or even desired) outcome for their institution and its visitors. It is important to place value on representation of the

Other in examining how cosmopolitan nationalism is contextualised, or localised, in the museum, while understanding that this cosmopolitan nationalism is often performed by museum visitors in relation to their own national identity. In the context of museums, these processes can be best understood not simply in their final content, but through the *processes* of their creation (focused on museum staff) and their *interactions* (primarily, but not exclusively with museum visitors). As Michael Skey (2011) has argued, the capacity to understand national identity from the perspective of the everyday requires an appoach capable of examining how identity is constructed in the moment. He makes the point that:

> If a concept of sedimentation that seeks to account for individual agency provides a means for mapping the tensions between continuity and contingency in the ongoing (re)production of discourse at a slightly more abstract level, the question of how these processes, occur *in practice* also warrants greater attention. (Skey 2011, p. 14)

In the museum space, 'sedimentation' that links to 'continuity and contingency', or with the assemblage thinking context (de)territorialisation, incorporates the histories created by curators in the exhibition space, and the multiple histories emergent in the intersections between objects, visitors, and museum spaces. I now examine how this theoretical framework has informed the research methods and exhibition selection.

Exhibition selection

I began my research by seeking case study exhibitions from the National Collection Institutions Touring and Outreach Program (NCITO)[9] because I wanted to understand whether and how national identity operates differently between local/regional museums and national museums in Australia and the NCITO program provided funding to exhibitions that would meet this requirement. The NCITO program commenced in 2009 under the Kevin Rudd Labor Government with the aim of providing funding support to National Collecting Institutions, including social history museums, art galleries, and science centres, to tour their collections to venues across Australia and internationally, as well as to allow such institutions to host international collections and exhibitions in their own venues. Coordinated by the Federal Ministry for the Arts, the program supports the cost of developing and touring exhibitions, as well as the production of support materials, such as catalogues and promotional collateral. NCITO also has a defined objective for the 'promotion of the international awareness of Australia's cultural heritage through touring works from the collections of the National Collecting Institutions overseas' as well as to 'expand Australian appreciation of international cultural material through enabling National collecting institutions to bring works from international collections for exhibition or touring within Australia' (Ministry for the Arts 2021). From 2013 to 2021, the program managed a total funding pool of $1 million per annum and from the schemes' commencement in 2009 to 2021, it distributed 185 grant allocations to Australian museums (Ministry for the Arts 2021).

Using grant recipient information available through the Ministry's website, I began the process of identifying and contacting museums to seek approval to use a range of exhibitions as case studies for my research. Several potential case studies were identified at this time, and I began corresponding with the relevant museums. Unfortunately, the

[9] Information about the program is available at https://www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/national-collecting-institutions-touring-and-outreach-program.

complexities associated with the selected exhibitions, which included the involvement of multiple stakeholders and guest curators, meant that the contacted institutions and their staff were unable to be part of the research program. My focus then shifted to the touring of international collections to Australia through the NCITO program. This led to the selection of my first exhibition case study, *The Art of Science: Nicolas Baudin's Voyagers 1800–-1804*, which was a touring exhibition that featured objects from the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Le Havre, France (here on in Le Havre). The initial focus on touring exhibitions, including data collection at multiple sites, was retained with this case study because the exhibition toured to four regional locations: the South Australian Maritime Museum (SAMM) (Port Adelaide), the Western Australian Maritime Museum (Perth), the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (Hobart) and the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (Launceston), as well as to two national museums, the Australian National Maritime Museum (Sydney) and the National Museum of Australia (Canberra). Simultaneously, the international touring objects from Muséum d'Histoire naturelle provided the opportunity to explore how transnational objects and narratives were linked to the programs of social history museums in Australian national and regional contexts.

One limitation of *Art of Science* for this research was the relatively minor space the Baudin voyage holds within Australia's national histories. While *Art of Science*'s niche historical setting had advantages for the research, my selection of the second case study exhibition focused on a major historical narrative from Australia's history: the three Pacific voyages of James Cook. *Cook and the Pacific* was a single-site, temporary exhibition held at the National Library of Australia in Canberra. While the selection of this exhibition did not allow for an examination of the (re)territorialisation of the exhibition across multiple sites, it did provide a context for understanding how various Others, including First Nations peoples from the Pacific and Australia, are reimagined in a cosmopolitan nationalism. There are important considerations for how cosmopolitan nationalism frames Australia's relationship to Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and this is a key link between both case studies. Both cases studies also made it possible to explore transnational histories and narratives in the exhibition space and raised questions regarding how a cosmopolitan globalism is oriented through foundational historical narratives of the European exploration of Australia from late eighteenth century.

Research methods

The research methods used for this thesis included site visits and examinations of the exhibitions *in situ*, semi-structured interviews with museum staff, exit interviews with museum visitors, and an analysis of museum visitor books. This section provides a brief review of each of these research methods and their use in the museum studies literature, before turning to an examination of the specific research I conducted on the two case study exhibitions.[10] Much of my fieldwork time was spent analysing didactic displays, objects, exhibition spaces, and exhibition design for *Art of Science* at the National Museum and WAMM, and for *Cook and the Pacific* at the National Library of Australia. I spent multiple hours in the exhibition spaces, taking photograph, notetaking on particular elements, analysing the narrative and directional flow of the exhibition, and holding my own affectual engagement with objects. This research provided additional context to my other research with museum staff and museum visitors, as I could better understand the relationships between the exhibition design, curatorial choices, and visitors' interactions. The experience of the museum space, analysis of didactic displays, and this engagement with particular objects are all common research approaches across the museum studies literature, particularly with regards to studies of nationalism and national identity. (Dittmer & Waterton 2019; Frame & Walker 2018, p. 164; Knell 2016, pp. x-xii; Levitt 2015; Watson 2021, p. 4; Witcomb 2013).

[10] This research was given approval to proceed through the Human Research Ethics Application process and by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee under HREC ID: H12263.

Scheduled semi-structured interviews with museum and cultural heritage professionals have been used in a wide variety of research projects, such as dark tourism in heritage locations, the adaptation of ‘new museology’ approaches, aspects of performance management, and social inclusion practices (Farmaki 2013; Levitt 2015; McCall 2009; McCall & Gray 2016). The importance of conducting such research is apparent from a short statement made by Chris Greary, Teel Senior Curator of African and Global Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, when interviewed by Peggy Levitt: ‘Doing an exhibition is an interpretive act. That is important. Exhibitions don’t come out of nowhere’ (Levitt 2015, p. 68). As interpretive acts, conveying a meaning inevitably defined or negotiated by their curators, exhibitions bring with them complex levels and layers, omissions and inclusions that have a bearing on their relationships with sites and visitors. Cecilia Rodéhn (2015) used a combination of visitor interviews and semi-structured interviews with museum staff from the ZwaZulu-Natal Museum to explore the mediatory role curators play in communicating the transformation narratives in post-apartheid South Africa between 1984 and 2004. From her analysis of curatorial intentionality and treating exhibitions within a mode of performance, she ultimately concluded that ‘approaching exhibitions as a curatorial performance allows researchers to look past the rights and wrongs of exhibitions and instead to examine how curators relate to political and academic discourse when performing heritage’ (Rodéhn 2015, p. 187). Semi-structured interviews conducted by Susan Ashley (2014, pp. 276-7) with curatorial, marketing and senior staff at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, regarding the engagement strategy surrounding *Dead Sea Scrolls: Words that changed the world* exhibition likewise revealed the complexity involved in creating interactive participation while managing community expectations in the bureaucratic framework of a large, professional museum. These two examples illustrate how important curatorial interviews and inquiry are to understanding the contexts surrounding exhibitions, their stakeholders, and publics.

Visitor interviews are another common method used by museum studies researchers to unpack themes and narratives carried forward by museums, with numerous studies using variations of this method to examine ideas about 'the nation' contained within exhibitions (Berns 2015; Dodd et al. 2012; Roppola et al. 2019; Smith, L 2016; Waterton 2021). For national museums, much of this research has been focused on semi-permanent galleries, or those exhibitions and displays that may go through substantial periods without renewal of content or outcomes. The multi-site exit interview component of my own research investigated the ways that curators and museums present content in an exhibition and how it is consumed and made sense of by visitors. This component of the research conducted for this thesis used short exit interviews with visitors (approximately 15 minutes), which was determined to be a suitable amount of qualitative data to be drawn from multiple sites without placing excessive expectations on participants. Similar techniques have been used to examine themes across multiple exhibitions (Jagger et al. 2012) and conceptions of European and national identity (Dodd et al. 2012), illustrating the flexibility of these techniques in attracting relevant data across multiple sites.

Case Study 1: The Art of Science

The first case study examined for this research was *The Art of Science: Nicolas Baudin's Voyagers 1800–1804*, which involved fieldwork being carried out at two of the six host museum sites, these being the National Museum of Australia (March 2018) and the WAMM (September 2018). By the time my research project was ready to proceed with site visits and interviews, *Art of Science* had already toured to four of the six locations, including the SAMM and the ANMM. Having taken curatorial oversight of the project and as the primary sponsor of the project in terms of resources and time, the SAMM staged the exhibition first, and for an extended five-month exhibition timeframe. The exhibition then toured to the two Tasmanian venues, before travelling to the Australian National Maritime Museum. I conducted research at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra, and at the WAMM,

Fremantle. I photographed and documented all facets of the exhibition, including objects, text panels, advertisements and displays. I was also provided access to the Drobox folders used by the *Art of Science* Project Team to coordinate curatorial content and object selection for the exhibition. Permission to use gallery photographs from all six Australian museums who staged the exhibition was also given.

For *Art of Science,* I conducted five interviews with museum staff. At the SAMM, Port Adelaide, I interviewed the Project Lead Curator and the Director, who was responsible for working with the seven partner institutions to instigate the project. At the National Museum, I interviewed the Project Curator. At the WAMM, I interviewed the Senior Curator and the Assistant Director. All interviews were captured on a digital recorder, with the permission of interviewees. They were then transcribed, with transcribed content uploaded to NVivo software where they were analysed and coded. Resulting codes were linked to recurring themes that occurred throughout the interviews, with these codes identifying themes including transnational history, national identity, and various geographical features/locations. Interview participants are listed in Appendix I.

Visitor research was also conducted at both the National Museum and the WAMM. I conducted 13 exit interviews at the National Museum with exhibition visitors/visitor groups. Each interview averaged fifteen minutes in length. The interviews followed the question structure outlined in Appendix II, although further clarification and extension questions were also asked. Exit interviews were conducted over two days and carried out at the entry/exit doors at the National Museum. At WAMM, exit interviews were conducted with 22 visitors/visitor groups. Each interview on average lasted only nine minutes. Interviews were conducted over two days and were initially carried out at the exhibition exit. These interviews also followed the question structure in Appendix II. At WAMM, the *Art of* Science had a partner exhibition titled *Freycinet 2018*, which focused on the 1817 voyage of French navigator Louis de Freycinet. I realised that the *Freycinet 2018* was confusing the visitor

feedback, and so I made the decision to then conduct interviews at the intersection point where visitors left *Art of Science* and entered *Freycinet 2018*.

Interviews at both sites had high representations of people aged over 60 years, 53% at National Museum and 67% at WAMM. A high number of visitors interviewed at both sites were domestic residents in the state/territory that the museum was located. All but one visitor interviewed at the National Museum lived in either the Australian Capital Territory or the surrounding state of New South Wales. At WAMM, 39% were Western Australia residents, 18% were domestic tourists, and 25% were international tourists (three visitors did not provide residence details). At WAMM there were eight respondents who identified a nationality other than Australian. Further demographic information on museum visitors interviewed can be found in Appendix III.

Case Study 2: Cook and the Pacific

The second case study exhibition was *Cook and the Pacific*, a temporary exhibition held at the National Library in Canberra between October 2018 and February 2019. This exhibition received NCITO funding to support the loan of international collections, including from museums in the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Hawaii. The exhibition focused on the points of intersection between Captain James Cook and the First Nations peoples of the Pacific throughout his three voyages (in 1768-71, 1772-75 and 1776-80). A full outline of the exhibition structure is provided in Chapter 7, but here it is useful to highlight that the exhibition was not concerned with presenting a chronology of Cook's three voyages. Instead, the focus was on Cook's connection with different parts of the Pacific. The central components of the exhibition were geographical, with major thematic sections for Pacific locations, such as New Holland (Australia), New Zealand and Hawaii. As a result, the exhibition allowed for a confined focus on a colonial period narrative, providing an intriguing analysis of the ways in which curators and visitors positioned these foundational national

narratives within transnational histories. It also positioned the international collections that were on loan as important actors in the national narratives. For my research, these international objects on loan to *Cook and the Pacific* complemented the international touring objects on loan from the Le Havre Museum as part of *Art of Science*, which also included contacts between the Baudin voyages and First Nations peoples in the Pacific. The exhibition also offered me the opportunity to contrast the Cook narratives and their embeddedness in themes of Australian national identity, with the less well-known Baudin narratives. I hoped that such a contrast would provide an interesting reflection on the ways that 'hot' and 'cold', and 'strong' and 'weak' nationalism operates in the context of museums.

I conducted three extended curatorial interviews for *Cook and the Pacific*. The first of these was with the Manager, Exhibitions, who was the co-Curator of the exhibition. She also led me through the exhibition and provided insights into individual pieces and the reasons for their selection. I later interviewed the Curator, Maps, who was the second co-Curator on the project. My interview with him was extensive, and covered a broad range of concerns and issues, practices and processes associated with developing the exhibition. As I was interested in the processes by which the exhibition objects came to Australia, to understand how these object journeys impacted on the museum assemblage, I also interview the Assistant Director, Exhibitions, who was responsible for all object registration, logistics and project management of the exhibition. He was able to provide information about context for the movement of the international touring objects, and the relationships between these objects, the NLA and the institutions that owned them. As with the *Art of Science* interviews, these interviews were recorded and transcribed for subsequent thematic analysis. Interview participants are listed in Appendix I.

During the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition, the National Library conducted their own exit interviews through an external contractor. This research was focused on assessing the

marketing, visitor satisfaction and demographic target groups as a way of determining the success of the exhibition. As part of their contractual relationship, they could not allow other parties to conduct exit interview research at the same time as their study, which removed the possibility of conducting exit interviews for my research. While consideration was given to changing exhibitions, I decided to progress with the *Cook and the Pacific* as a case study, but to focus on curator interviews and object relationships. I was also provided with access to a copy of the visitor comment book for the exhibition, which I was able to analyse. All comments were made available, but identifying information, including demographic data, was redacted. Sociologist Simon Roger has argued that visitor comment books are social spaces in which people commit their views about the world and enter into 'an imaginary relation among those who read and write; an imaginary relation with very real effects' (Simon 2014, p. 128). Face-to-face interviews for academic research, as noted above, may see a need from participants to 'please' researchers with their responses, or illustrate their own level of sophistication. But with the removal of a social dialogue, such as the perceived opinions of the interviewer, along with the relative anonymity of the commenter, these comment books create dialogues that may be absent from other social settings. These comments, therefore, reflected opinions that could have been left unexpressed through the face-to-face exit interviews conducted at *Art of Science*.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined assemblage thinking as the theoretical model that informed the development of my research project. Assemblage thinking is the amalgamation of two related fields: assemblage theory and actor-network theory. It takes a realist approach to understanding how human and non-human actors operate in society. It has been argued that assemblages are best understood as 'events'; although they may be brief moments in time, they continually cycle through (re)territorialisation processes that make and unmake the existing arrangements. This approach draws on assemblage theory's focus on the

desires and effects of actors involved in an assemblage at any given time, to understand the drivers behind the creation of assemblages and the role these actors play in stabilising the assemblage. Assemblage thinking matches this focus on emergent assemblages with ANT's approach to using networks to understand the relationships between assemblages, and their actors, in the construction of society. This approach provides tools for analysing how aspects of the everyday, including everyday practices of national identity, and social events relate to larger scales at the national or global level. Understanding the museum as an assemblage, and the construction of cosmopolitan nationalism by human and non-human actors in this space, deeply informed the research design and the methods used for my thesis, a discussion of which was the focus for the latter part of this chapter. Assemblage thinking informed the selection of a case study research program that focused on the multiple influences that museum staff (including curators), objects, museum spaces and visitors have in construction cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum. It also led to a research program that included extended interviews with museum staff, exit interviews with visitors, and the analysis of exhibition spaces and content (including visitor comment books). The next chapter begins my analysis of the first case study exhibition, *Art of Science*, focusing on the development of the exhibition, and the different curatorial approaches taken by the National Museum and WAMM in assembling and displaying the exhibition.

Chapter 4
Collaboration, work and the curation of nation and place

This chapter examines the first case study exhibition, *The Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800–1804*. It demonstrates how curatorial choices, in both the proposal and development stages, created different experiences across host museum sites. The chapter begins with an analysis of the initial proposal for *Art of Science*, examining how the exhibition partners became involved in the project. As the primary project driver, and subsequently the curatorial lead, the SAMM's staff played a key role in establishing *Art of Science*. By following the development, construction, design, and final expenditure of the exhibition, examining how the various host institutions influenced the project, I argue that the *Art of Science* drew on a range of personal and institutional relationships to create flexible associations with local and national historical narratives. The chapter then turns to focus on two case study host museums, the National Museum of Australia, and WAMM, in order to examine the curatorial choices that differentiated the exhibition between the two sites. While this comparative analysis is informed by the local and national perspectives of the two host sites, what is central to the examination of a cosmopolitan nationalism is the intersection of the local, national, and global within the museum assemblage, as it is reassembled across sites.

Negotiating *Art of Science* as a touring exhibition

Focusing on the National Museum of Australia (National Museum), the Western Australian Maritime Museum, and the South Australian Maritime Museum, this chapter examines how each institution's histories, visions and trajectories influenced the display of *Art of Science*. Each institution had slightly different objectives that they wanted to meet through the exhibition, which were related to their history, curatorial schedule, and visitor profiles. The National Museum is a federal collecting institution operating through the mandates of its own Act of Parliament. In comparison, both WAMM and SAMM are part of larger institutions,

respectively the Western Australian Museum and the History Trust of South Australia. They are also both located outside of their respective state capital cities, Perth and Adelaide, in the former port towns of Fremantle and Port Adelaide. Unlike the eastern states of Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, and Tasmania), the history of South Australia and Western Australia is not heavily influenced by the exploration of James Cook, or the activities of the first five governors of New South Wales – Arthur Phillip, John Hunter, Phillip Gidley King, James Bligh, and Lachlan Macquarie. Instead, the history of Dutch and French exploration, together with the Matthew Flinders' circumnavigation of Australia, informs the histories and local identities of the regions. Focusing on the initial decisions to partner on the exhibition, and the subsequent curatorial choices made in relation to the presentation of the exhibition at each institution, this chapter shows how these decisions and choices influenced the design of *Art of Science* at both the National Museum and WAMM. What was important at each of these sites was the unique intersection between locality and nation.

Museums operate within constricting circles, where job opportunities mean that people are nationally and even globally mobile. In such a profession, the likelihood of knowing someone, or knowing someone that knows someone, can readily lead to partnerships and networks. Such was the case with *Art of Science*, where discussions about potential avenues for collaboration began with the meeting of two museum directors. Cédric Crémière, Director of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Le Havre, was in Australia in 2014 visiting a range of institutions and people, including John West-Sooby, Professor of French Studies at the University of Adelaide. Crémière had been talking to several Australian museums about the Le Havre Museum's collections and their relationship to Australia in the hope of promoting an exhibition, though his efforts, up until that time, had been without success.

In an interview for this thesis, Kevin Jones, the Director of the SAMM, explained that the Le Havre Museum 'had this collection from two artists who were involved with Baudin's voyage,

and he would like to send it to Australia and asked if we would be interested in hosting it' (Kevin Jones, SAMM Director). Jones saw this as a unique opportunity for SAMM, a regional museum, to take on a major international project and so he 'jumped at it'. He understood, however, that the project would require more resources than the History Trust of South Australia would be able to muster. Fortuitously, at that time the Australian National Maritime Museum was running a seminar, jointly hosted with the Commonwealth Ministry for the Arts and the French Embassy, which provided an opportunity for the SAMM and ANMM Directors to discuss the proposed exhibition. It appears this was crucial to the development of the exhibition as the ANMM became the first partner institution to become involved to bring the exhibition to fruition. Following these conversations at the seminar, the two Australian museum directors began using their networks to create enough resources to bring the project to reality, initially beginning with discussions with the National Museum. In her interview for this thesis, Diana Jones, Assistant Director at Western Australian Museums, recalled receiving a phone call from her former colleague, Matthew Trinca (Director, National Museum), seeking to bring Western Australian Museums (and as part of this, WAMM) into discussions about the project. Finally, the connections between the Baudin expedition and Tasmania, including significant artworks of Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples painted by Petit and Lesueur, which were part of the Le Havre collection, led to the involvement of both major Tasmania museums – the TMAG in Hobart, and the QVMAG in Launceston.

Jones, as the SAMM Director and having led discussions to bring the prospective partners to the table, was keen that his institution would lead the curation for the project, and my interviews with staff from other museums indicated that there were no objections to this course of action. There were several factors that influenced this decision, primary among them being an upcoming gap in SAMM's exhibition schedule (between June–December 2016) that needed to be filled. Working towards this date demanded much from participating institutions, particularly the national museums that had tighter and lengthier exhibition and

programming schedules. Kevin Jones, SAMM Director, highlighted this as an important insight from his work on the project:

> What I learned through the process was that for the larger institutions they had a lot of projects going on and their projects were a bit larger scale and for them the thing that they were short on was time because they had no staff time to invest in this project and they were very clear about that.

Crucially, SAMM had the staff resources to commit to the curatorial component of the project and were ready to commence the research quickly and within the short timeframe needed to meet the proposed display period of June 2016 for the SAMM. Another benefit of the project developing through the close working relationship between the ANMM and the SAMM was Jones' ability to highlight to the ANMM how the NCITO scheme could be used to fund part of the project. The exhibition that would become *The Art of Science* was uniquely suited to both aspects of the NCITO program, in that it was both an exhibition hosted at national museums and made up of objects from an international collection, as well as a touring exhibition that visited multiple host museums in Australia. The ANMM was able to receive three rounds of funding to support the exhibition, amounting to more than $530,000, which provided essential support for the exhibition.

As noted above, there were eventually six Australian museums that worked with the Le Havre Museum, including the National Museum, SAMM, ANMM, WAMM, the TMAG and the QVMAG. The museums met together in Hobart in 2015 to develop a Memorandum of Understanding that would guide the project and determine areas of responsibility. While SAMM took on curatorial oversight, there was a strong understanding that individual

institutions would contribute to the selection of objects that would go to their institutions. Given they had acquired funding through the NCITO program, the financial management and coordination was the responsibility of the ANMM, who allocated sufficient funding to tour the exhibition to the six host sites. Finally, coordination of international loans and registration was managed by the National Museum because of their extensive experience of hosting international collections. As a result of the restrictions associated with display periods for the artworks and objects, together with the multiple touring venues, this ended up being a large project commitment for the National Museum.

Curatorial development and collaborations

The Memorandum of Understanding coordinating the *Art of Science* exhibition was signed at a ceremony at the National Museum of Australia on 15 May 2015, with a French delegation including then Mayor of Le Havre and future French Prime Minister, Edouard Philippe, and Cédric Crémière, Le Havre Museum Director, who were joined by representatives from the six Australian museums and the Australian Federal Minister for the Arts, George Brandis. For the French delegation, the exhibition provided an opportunity to share an important connection between France and Australia, with Edouard Philippe outlining that 'possessing a treasury is good; sharing it even better […] during two years, approximately 600 of those drawings and sketches will come to Australia' (National Museum 2015). The exhibition also presented a wonderful opportunity for the French to promote the Le Havre region to Australia as an economic and tourist centre.

With so many partners involved, the curatorial design of the project was expansive in scope, drawing on the transnational narrative of the Baudin voyage. Although holding curatorial oversight for the project, SAMM needed to negotiate the priorities of regional, national, and international institutions when it chose which aspects of the Baudin voyage were to be highlighted through the exhibition. To guide this process, the partners agreed on a broad

narrative structure that followed Baudin's voyage as a scientific exploration in the age of European discovery, while also providing some scope for the local impacts of the voyage to be represented. Matthew Trinca (National Museum, Director) outlined this objective at the Memorandum of Understanding ceremony, where he commented on how *Art of Science* would be different from previous, regionally focused, exhibitions: 'This exhibition, the one that's at the heart of this collaborative endeavour, will instead frame the Baudin voyage in the context of Napoleonic France and the age of scientific discovery' (National Museum of Australia 2015).

This shift provided the opportunity for the exhibition to adopt a transnational perspective, one that placed the exhibition in the context of a world history that featured scientific discovery and the imperial intrigue of the French colonial empire. This curatorial choice dominated the central narrative of the exhibition, bringing into the conversation the multiple Others of the Baudin voyage. The focus on exploration and scientific discovery opened conversations in the exhibition space that were concerned with how cosmopolitan nationalism linked historical touch points to the multiple cultures the voyage reached, together with narratives concerning Indigenous Australians. Of particular interest to this thesis is how the exhibition partners assembled the exhibition through this transnational theme to create meaning and context for their specific visitors.

The touring exhibition for *Art of Science* was organised around six broad themes. These themes were captured in six square tower exhibition displays (see Plate 4.1) that toured with the exhibition and represented the framework that individual institutions could expand on by using both their own collections and selected material from Le Havre. The first two themes, (1) 'Napoleon's France' and (2) 'The Voyage', set out the context of the Baudin expedition, looking at the political context in France at the time, before charting the voyage's journey, stop overs and extended difficulties with the crew. Also included were explorations of the

time the expedition spent on Mauritius and several Pacific islands. The next two themes, (3) ‘The View from the Deck’ and (4) ‘The Paintbox’, explored the cartographic and artistic achievements of the expedition, providing a context for the Enlightenment focus on exploration and capturing these ‘new’ discoveries in the visual/documentary record. Another component of the exhibition focused on interactions with Aboriginal peoples. Titled (5) ‘Observing the Observers’, the purpose of this section was to illustrate the Indigenous vantage point of the voyage, while also building on the cross-cultural encounters between Aboriginal peoples and Baudin’s crew. Finally, (6) ‘Collecting the World’, focused on the European project of collecting flora, fauna, and Indigenous objects in order to create taxonomies of these discoveries in the scientific communities of France and Europe. This theme allowed host venues to draw from their own natural history collections to complement and narratively expand the objects coming from France. This same narrative also raised questions about the global agenda of natural conservation, and the historical impact of the assumed domination of the natural environment by humans.

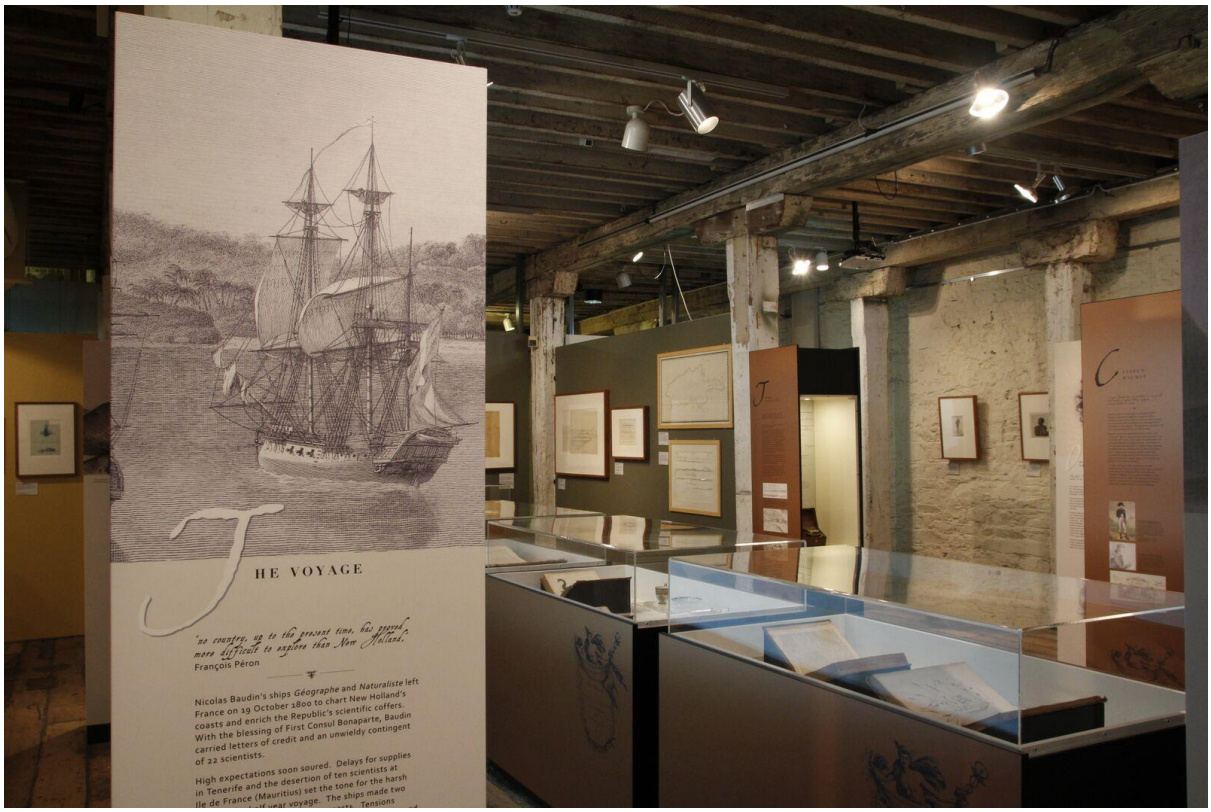

Plate 4.1 *Art of Science*, South Australian Maritime Museum. Image courtesy South Australian Maritime Museum.

The decision to frame *Art of Science* around the transnational interconnections of the Baudin voyage was negotiated with the inclination of some of the host museums to have a locality-centric focus to their rendition of the exhibition. As the SAMM Curator put it in an interview for this thesis, 'you're telling the whole story, not just your particular [region,] that's a really parochial thing to do and your audience isn't necessarily going to be [local]' (Lindl Lawton, SAMM Curator). Each of the six thematic towers contained four section panels, which included an introductory panel, associated visual components and smaller text excerpts. Of the six towers, three also included a video component whereby a screen set into the panel at eye level showed a relevant video. Together, these towers set the narrative structure of the exhibition, and although their arrangement could be reworked from museum to museum to enable a particular focus, all institutions led with the themes 'Napoleon's France' and 'The Voyage'. As Lindl Lawton (SAAM Curator) outlined in her interview:

> we all agreed as a partnership that the exhibition should trace the voyage. You could focus on your geographical area, that could be the focus, but it needed to track the voyage from France to Mauritius, Timor, to the various destinations on the Australian coast and back again.

The exhibition sought to examine the ways in which international and global connections could simultaneously link with the multiple localities that many of the smaller, regionally focused host institutions brought to the Baudin story. This objective is consistent with a cosmopolitan agenda to find ways of crafting heritage and memory across the local and the global, creating conversations between global narratives and local circumstances. Indeed, as described by Lynn Meskell (2015, p. 481), the cosmopolitan is about the globalisation of the world, providing a context and the openness through which to understand, and focus attention on, people and communities.

Beyond the six thematic towers, which acted as the central flow for the touring exhibition, the display shifted in content from one site to the next. A major curatorial and logistical problem for the museums was the fragility of the objects on loan from Le Havre, and the limitations this placed on the display period for individual items. Watercolours and paper items have a very short display life because of their sensitivity to light, temperature and humidity, elements that objects will inevitably encounter in an exhibition space regardless of the environmental controls in place. These objects can only safely be displayed for three-to-six-month periods before they begin to degrade, and so most museums display these types of objects for three months before returning them to 'rest' for a few years. While multiple uses could be negotiated for some objects on loan from Le Havre Museum and other French collecting institutions, the six Australian-based institutions often could not use artworks and other paper-based material that had previously been used by another host institution. The consequence was that each of the six Australian museums displayed significantly different sets of material.

In the end, over 350 objects were toured from Le Havre Museum (primarily), Musée national de la Marine, and the Archives Nationales de France to the six Australian museums. As Lindl Lawton (SAMM Curator) put it in her interview with me:

> I wasn't really developing an exhibition for just one institution, I was developing an exhibition for six, because I had to pick material for each of them. A different suite of paintings, different charts, page turns, I had to select and then we had to have some object turnovers as part of that as well.

This multiplicity of objects, captions, exhibition spaces and the institutional focus combined to play a significant role in the curatorial and design decisions taken by each different site. While the touring panels and a select number of international objects bedded down the thematic content of the exhibition, the choices made regarding the arrangement of the exhibition was a significant factor in reassembling the exhibition between sites. Informing the divergence between institutions was the process of object selection that was undertaken. The next section will analyse how collaboration between sites with respect to curatorial design, object selection and the write-up of the exhibition, illustrated these differing perspectives.

Negotiating regional representation

Once the thematic design for the exhibition had been confirmed, Lyndl Lawton (SAMM Curator) travelled to France to review the objects in the Le Havre Museum, as well as to explore other collections held at the Musée national de la Marine and the Archives nationales de France. These institutions were crucial to the successful display of the exhibition themes. As with the Le Havre Museum, the Musée national de la Marine, Paris, holds important objects from the Baudin expedition, such as Chronometer No. 31, which was used on Baudin's lead ship, the *Geographe*, before being returned to the French Admiralty. The Archives nationales likewise holds a collection of 211 coastal profiles taken from the Baudin expedition, capturing locations from around the coastline of Australia. These sketches provided local connection points between the voyage, its recording, and the locality of the five coastal institutions, the National Museum being the only landlocked host site. While the selection of relevant costal profiles at the host sites was a relatively simple process, there was a lot of demand for particular objects. Staff from both SAMM and WAMM recalled that the experience involved 'a lot of argy-bargy', although at the time, Lindl Lawton (SAMM Curator) was surprised by this competition for objects because:

> I had gone over to France and had a look at the original works, you don't get a sense from the digital image of just how beautiful and finely executed the works are […] It's not a matter of someone getting the best images.

This sentiment was shared by the Diana Jones (Western Australian Museum, Assistant Director), who commented that 'we really got most of what we wanted. Sometimes it wouldn't have been the specific image we would have asked for but […] where there are so many […] you say okay, [and] you substitute it for another'.

The connections between the French sailors and Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples were a defining aspect of the Baudin expedition (see Chapter 6). The French accounts of the voyage are filled with detailed descriptions of the crew's encounters with Aboriginal peoples from Tasmania and the Australian mainland, which are illustrated in detail through the artworks of French artists Lesueur and Petit. TMAG (Hobart) and QVMAG (Launceston) were keenly (almost exclusively) interested in these portraits, which were of Aboriginal peoples in Tasmania and Sydney. Lindl Lawton (SAMM Curator) recalled discussions with both institutions, who 'believed they should have all the Aboriginal portraits on display linked to their area'. Providing exclusive access to TMAG and QVMAG would have been difficult to work with, as the fifth theme, 'Observing the Observers', was heavily dependent on images of Aboriginal peoples in Tasmania and from around Sydney. As a compromise, some of these items were displayed at two venues. In the end, Lindl Lawton described some of the discussions as 'a real fight to say you've got [to] have other stuff, and you have to share it, because those Aboriginal portraits are important to other institutions as well'.

For the TMAG, the QVMAG, the SAMM and the ANMM, there were separate historical events, regions and collections that were incorporated into their 'version' of the exhibition. For example, the ANMM had recently acquired a series of British caricatures of Napoleon from the period directly after his accession to First Consul in 1800. These caricatures depicted Napoleon in a series of humorous encounters in which he is continuously thwarted by the actions of 'John Bull', the fat, rural, jolly personification of England and the United Kingdom. With these objects, and in the broader context of the exhibition, the ANMM 'almost created a subtheme' because 'they were very interested in the political context of the voyage. You know, Napoleon bank-rolling it' (Lyndl Lawton, SAMM Curator). These collections were an important representation of British, and British colonial, sentiments towards Napoleon's rise on continental Europe. This imperial rivalry was an important context for exploring Baudin's experiences in Sydney, hosted as the Frenchmen were by British officials in a relatively new British colony. The exhibition also provided a welcome opportunity to explore the intrigue behind the French voyagers' time in Sydney. Nigel Erskine's (ANMM) essay in the exhibition booklet explored a narrative focused on the detailed landscape and urban drawings of Sydney produced by Péron, including the military buildings and government sites. He concluded that while the Frenchmen's reception in Sydney displayed friendly and courteous diplomatic relations, 'Francois Péron's report clearly reveals that, for him, the friendship was a short-term convenience – a lull in the battle between France and Britain' that would soon be challenged as Napoleon considered an invasion across the English Channel (Erskine 2015, p. 89).

As noted earlier in the chapter, all six museums led their exhibition design with the (1) Napoleon and (2) Voyage themes, placing themes of European exploration at the forefront of the exhibition. What emerges across the exhibitions, however, were the shifts and interrelationships between sites, both in Australia and overseas. A trans-localism that embeds cosmopolitan values into the interrelationships between localities was evident. The

voyage was assembled in each museum not simply as an independent case study of the place of their locality in the Baudin voyage, but as an entangling of localities within relationships that come to define contemporary ideas about the nation and its influence on those localities. However, the National Museum and WAMM, operating in their own institutional contexts, had differing approaches to curating the exhibition and placing it in relation to their spaces, promotions, and programs. Like the ANMM and the SAMM, the National Museum retained the global scope of the exhibition but, in contrast to the focus on Aboriginal peoples taken at the TMAG and QVMAG, the WAMM exhibition had a local focus that emphasised the geography and environmental contexts of their region. This approach applied to the multiple locations that the Baudin expedition visited in Western Australia, from Shark Bay in the north, down along the coast and into the (future) Swan and Margaret Rivers.

Australian museums have seen increased pressures on their budgets – constraints that have not left museums run by state governments untouched. These funding pressures make collaborative projects ideal. For instance, for the South Australian Museum, it meant that a history tightly connected to the region could be shared to its full extent, with the tangible objects from the Baudin voyage on show. For the National Museum, a three-month exhibition for which they needed a relatively small design and curatorial commitment was possible despite managing an extended loan schedule. For the ANMM, the additional work required to apply for and administer the NCITO grant program was considered alongside the reduced allocation of curatorial, design and object coordination. And for the regional museums that participated, it meant access to collections and narratives that they would have struggled to coordinate independently, and without the support offered through the SAMM, National Museum and ANMM for curatorial, design, and registration. As Lindl Lawton (SAMM Curator) commented:

> people will go 'Oh, never again', but then when you said what is done is because usually big institutions are in direct competition with each other. It's like I'll bring out the crowd pleasers, and they're like 'It's only going to be at our venue, that's how we like things.' But, actually, it's much more cost efficient and time efficient to say, 'Hey, let's work together and bring out this collection and share it.' It's actually a new template for how museums work together. Never have five, six institutions in Australia worked together in this way. So, it had its real issues but it's definitely a new model of how things can work.

In contrast, Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator), was not as sure about the success of the collaboration on the *Art of Science* because of the pressures on the National Museum due to tight timeframes and low budgets, compared to other exhibition projects they had worked on at the museum:

> it is quite a unique collaboration to have six museums work on something like this. I'm not sure how quickly we would jump at the chance again because, my goodness me, the tour coordination has been, and is, unbelievable. Our registration head […] has been managing a lot of that, in terms of the movement of boxes around the country. And as I said, we had a very low budget.

Despite these reservations, however, there were definite advantages to the show, especially compared with some of the larger 'blockbuster' style exhibitions that the National Museum has put on. Commenting on the National Museum's usual reception of touring exhibitions compared with *Art of Science*, Cheryl Crilly noted:

> Ordinarily, we get a buy-in as you like to call it for our temporary exhibition, and we might add a small percentage or have a small input, a spokesperson for it, but it comes to us and then goes on its merry way, whereas this was quite different in that sense.

This process of 'buy-in' exhibitions have been noted throughout the literature as an opportunity for institutions to minimise the curatorial demands on their staff, something of increasing concern as efficiency dividends run deeper (Davidson & Castellanos 2019; Lawrenson & O'Reilly 2019). For Cheryl Crilly:

> that was quite refreshing, in a way, because it gave us a chance to actually be involved from a content perspective right through the process and not only in terms of the overarching ideas but then from our own specific shows.

From this perspective, each museum was able to assemble a 'new' exhibition that reflected the histories and narratives most meaningful to their identified communities.

Art of Science at the National Museum of Australia

The National Museum's focus in the exhibition space was to trace the transnational connections to Australia and, as will be explored in Chapter 6, to bring past and present Aboriginal peoples' practices to the fore. The National Museum did not have a definitive locality connection to the Baudin voyage, as all the other host sites did (including the ANMM) which afforded the National Museum a degree of flexibility in terms of its curatorial choices.

The National Museum selected a range of objects, including artworks, maps, and plans, that connected to multiple localities from across Australia and it used these multiple regions to encapsulate a broader national narrative. The National Museum also decided to explore the global connections of the Baudin voyage by incorporating multiple artworks featuring the places that were used as stopovers for the voyage, such as Tenerife, Mauritius, and Timor and the people they encountered. Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator) explained that this approach enabled the National Museum to explore the full scope of the voyage:

> So where did this leave the National Museum – obviously we weren't on the exhibition routes – and so that gave us the freedom to tell an overarching story and to pull it all together and include a range of works. And we tried to include works, where possible, that would speak to the entire voyage, not just a specific region.

From the beginning of the collaborative process, the National Museum was restricted by the space they could provide to the exhibition. They had already committed to an internationally touring exhibition, *So That You Might Know Each Other: Faith and Culture in Islam*, consisting of collections from the Vatican's Anima Munid Museum and the Sharjah Museums Authority, which was on display in the larger temporary exhibition gallery at the same time as *Art of Science*, which pushed *Art of Science* into the smaller 'studio' temporary gallery (see Figure 4.1 for design). Cheryl Crilly outlined for me how this 'became a big contributing factor to this exhibition [with] a very rich exhibition in a very small space, so in our studio gallery [for *Art of Science*] there are over 120 items'. While creating some tight spaces, particularly around the pop-out drawers of some of the exhibition cases, there was an intimacy to the exhibition space.

This broader focus on global connections meant that, in contrast to the other host museums, the introductory sections of the exhibition associated with the political intrigue of France at the time and the details of the voyage, themes (1) ‘Napoleon’s France’ and (2) ‘The Voyage’, become the primary concern. Visitors entering the gallery were first greeted by a model of Baudin’s ship, the *Geographe*, from SAMM, before moving on to the Napoleon tower. Proceeding into the exhibition, the transnational perspective and Australia’s place within it emerged early on.

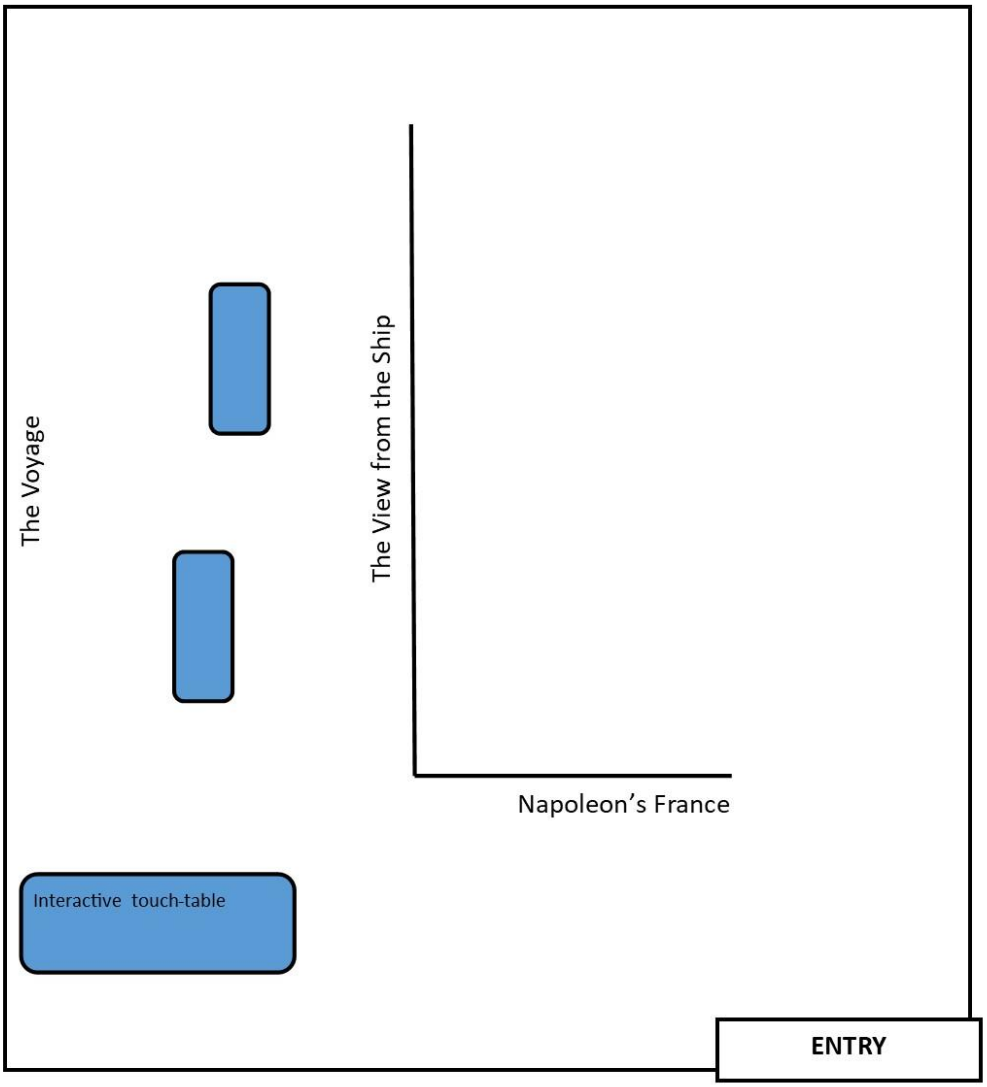

Figure 4.1 Exhibition floorplan for *Art of Science* at the National Museum of Australia

Located adjacent to the theme panel on Napoleon was a large map entitled *A New Map of the World, with Captain Cook's Tracks, his discoveries and those of other circumnavigators*, on loan from the State Library of New South Wales (see Plate 4.2). The attached label read:

> Published just days after Baudin's expedition sailed, this map reveals the slow accumulation of knowledge about the coastline of Australia […] Dutch, French and British ships had sketched parts of the continent's coast and, more recently, Bass and Flinders had revealed Tasmania to be an island. Coastlines on the south-west and south-east of the continent remain blank.

Plate 4.2 *Art of Science* at the National Museum of Australia. The object *A New Map of the World, with Captain Cook's Tracks, his discoveries and those of other circumnavigators* is hung above the display cases. Image courtesy National Museum of Australia.

These ‘blank’ spaces quite literally are that – white, blank spaces that appear to bleed into the surrounding yellow of western and central Australia and the pink of New South Wales, which at the time stretched from Bass Strait to Cape York. As with many world maps of the period, Europe is at the centre, like Jerusalem in the earliest cartographic maps. The depictions of unexplored regions present an interesting link to the next section of the exhibition, which concerned Baudin’s voyage itself. The National Museum wanted to create a strong understanding of the crew’s journey, as well as its interconnections with First Nations peoples across the area. This global focus was forecast at the entrance to the exhibition, where a watercolour by Petit featuring a Timorese girl carrying buckets on her return from the water fountain was blown up onto a large fabric display (the object, on loan from Le Havre, was also on display in the exhibition). ‘The Voyage’ (theme 2) was central to the cosmopolitan and global themes the National Museum explicitly aimed to present through the exhibition. Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator) noted that when they selected their items, the National Museum ‘very much […] want[ed] material from Mauritius, we want[ed] material from Timor, we want[ed] material from the voyage return, the stopovers, the support and supply stopovers. So, yes, it was important to try and include’. These selections significantly influenced the design of the exhibition space.

Partly as a response to the size of the space, the exhibition at the National Museum forced together ‘The Voyage’ and ‘The View from the Deck’ (themes 2 and 3 of the exhibition), with objects from the Mauritius and Timorese aspects of the voyage lining an exterior wall and the various cartographic materials placed opposite these along a temporary wall in the centre of the exhibition. In between were two large display cases, one of which contained a British admiralty passport arranged by Baudin and sponsored by Joseph Banks, an item owned by the State Library of NSW and an essential document for the Baudin voyage. While supported by Banks in the Enlightenment tradition of openness to exploration and scientific discovery, the passport was essential for Baudin to negotiate the expedition’s departure from

France through the English Channel at a time when the French and British were still at war. It also had consequences for the voyage itself, particularly the hospitality and assistance provided by Governor King at Port Jackson (Starbuck 2013, p. 66). Finally, the passport also notified the British Admiralty of the expedition's intentions, playing no small role in the final approval for Matthew Flinders' voyage to navigate the Australian coastline. This central object – the passport – epitomised the conflicting aspects of the voyage: the tensions between the French and British, scientific discovery, and the mapping of the coastline. As Cheryl Crilly put it:

> of the original passport that in English that the admiralty issued to Baudin's ships as a way of granting them safe passage through waters of countries that were at war. And so that sort of idea of transcending national boundaries as long as you have the passport – that passport was extremely important because in applying for that passport they alerted the British they were coming this way and the British sent Flinders as response. So, things like that were fairly significant to us, and we were keen to get that.

In part, the strong focus on the imperial and transnational trajectories arose early on in the project, as the National Museum and ANMM contributed content feedback on the thematic panels. Nigel Erskine from the ANMM provided feedback from this perspective, as did Michele Hetherington, the first National Museum curator on the project, who was subsequently pulled away to another exhibition project. Given their 'knowledge was fantastic in that area' (Cheryl Crilly, National Museum Curator), they were able to contribute to the writing and rewriting of the panels, which also informed the curatorial and consultative processes that the National Museum assisted with.

The National Museum partnered (2) 'The Voyage' theme of the exhibition with the third thematic section, 'View from the Deck'. Here, the cartographic achievements of the Baudin expedition in charting aspects of the Australian coastline were illustrated through a selection of detailed maps, plans and coastal surveys. The National Museum was broad ranging in its focus, with coastal profiles of Tasmania on display along with maps of the south and west Australian coastlines. By pairing these two thematic components (the voyages global journey and Australia's geographical features) along parallel walls in the exhibition, the National Museum was seeking to bridge the local, national, and international in its framing of the exhibition. But these subjects also reflect a broader concern for the National Museum and its staff to expand historical narratives beyond the purview of the nation. This cosmopolitan perspective, which operates against a parochial nationalism, is reflected not simply by the decisions taken with respect to this exhibition but is also tied to broader concerns the National Museum had for developing transnational histories for their publics. Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator) reflected on this perceived institutional mandate for the National Museum in her interview with me:

> to be honest, if I had more space and more say over the works that we selected, I would have, would probably have gone with a lot more internationally focused works as well […] you know we have a strong interest in global histories and transnationalism here at the Museum. And that is very much a preoccupation of our permanent galleries […] making sure the exhibitions are outward facing, not insular.

As will be argued in the next section, this focus on transnational narratives and global histories was the defining point of difference in the curatorial design and construction of *Art of Science*, with the WAMM incorporating the transnational perspectives of the exhibitions into a focus on the voyage's place in the history of the state of Western Australia and its

localities, which folds into an ongoing focus from WAMM on how French voyages in the Indian Ocean have shaped the history of that state.

Art of Science at the Western Australia Maritime Museum

Art of Science was displayed at the WAMM from 12 September to 12 December 2018. WAMM is located in Fremantle, a working harbour city approximately 16 kilometres south-west of Perth. In many ways, the exhibition's location mimicked that of South Australia, with SAMM located in Port Adelaide, that state's working harbour. In 1990, Diane Jones (Western Australian Museum Assistant Director) was an assistant curator in marine biology at Western Australian Museum when she was approached by the Le Havre Museum to identify crustaceans captured in the watercolours of the Baudin expedition. She worked on this collection with Madame de Baudin, who, as a Baudin descendent and major patron of the Le Havre Museum, was keenly interested in the research associated with the collection. From this project, Jones submitted a proposal for developing an exhibition on the Baudin expedition, which resulted in 1992 in the touring exhibition *Baudin: Voyage of Discovery to the Southern Lands*. This was the beginning of two decades of Western Australian Museums' engagement with French voyages in their local context, which developed a suite of research, exhibitions, and programs. Discussing the *Art of Science* exhibition with Michael McCarthy (WAMM Senior Curator), it became apparent that this exhibition was building on previous collaborations and continuing a research focus on the French voyages. This extended research program had connected WAMM with numerous maritime archaeology projects, including an examination of a French whaler off the Western Australia coast in 2000 and, in the following year, a research trip to the Falkland Islands to explore the wreck of the Louis de Freycinet-captained ship *Uranie*. This concern with the history of the French in Western Australia also led to the exhibition *Journeys of Enlightenment: French Exploration of Terres Australes*, which was on display at the Western Australian Museum for a full year between October 2008 and October 2009. This exhibition examined the six major French

voyages that charted sections of the Australian coastline ‘and in particular Western Australia’ between 1766 and 1819’ (Western Australian Museum 2008, p. 2).

Museums have histories and their own trajectories that inform the curatorial and programming decisions they make (Davies et al. 2013; McCall & Gray 2016). Both *Baudin* and *Journeys of Enlightenment* informed the techniques and object relationships taken by WAMM in *Art of Science*. They also informed the decision to create a sister exhibition to *Art of Science*, which was entitled *Return to Australia: Freycinet 1818*. Where the National Museum had squeezed the exhibition of *Art of Science* into their second temporary gallery space, the WAMM temporary exhibition gallery stretched over 420 square metres, making it too large for *Art of Science* to be a stand-alone display. To extend the content in the space a partner exhibition, *Freycinet 1818* was created. As Diana Jones explained it to me:

> [It] was only going to fill up about half. And so, we, talking with [the Curator], decided, why don't we do Rose and Louis – we've always wanted to do something and so that's how that happened. And that's why [the Curator] did so much work, because as well as *The Art of Science* he did that work […] mostly all the research for it.
> (Diane Jones, Western Australian Museum Assistant Director).

The *Freycinet 1818* exhibition expanded on the French connection to Western Australia by exploring the expedition of Louis de Freycinet, which left Paris in 1817 and arrived off the Western Australian coastline in 1818. Freycinet had been a naval officer on the earlier Baudin voyage and, leading his own voyage to Australia, spent a considerable amount of time off the Western Australian coastline, including revisiting Shark Bay. In presenting this partner exhibition, the Western Australian Museum was building on a strong organisational history, working on the connection between the state of Western Australia and the French. As I will illustrate in Chapters 5 and Chapter 6, these choices provided opportunities for

visitors to consider the transnational links between a British settler colony and its French ‘adversary’ at the turn of the nineteenth century. Louis de Freycinet served on the Baudin voyage and spent the years directly after that working with Baudin to develop the voyage maps and manuscripts for reporting and publishing. On his subsequent voyage to Australia, he completed and detailed the cartographical work done in previous voyages. This trip is perhaps best known for Freycinet’s wife, Rose, stowing away on board the ship.

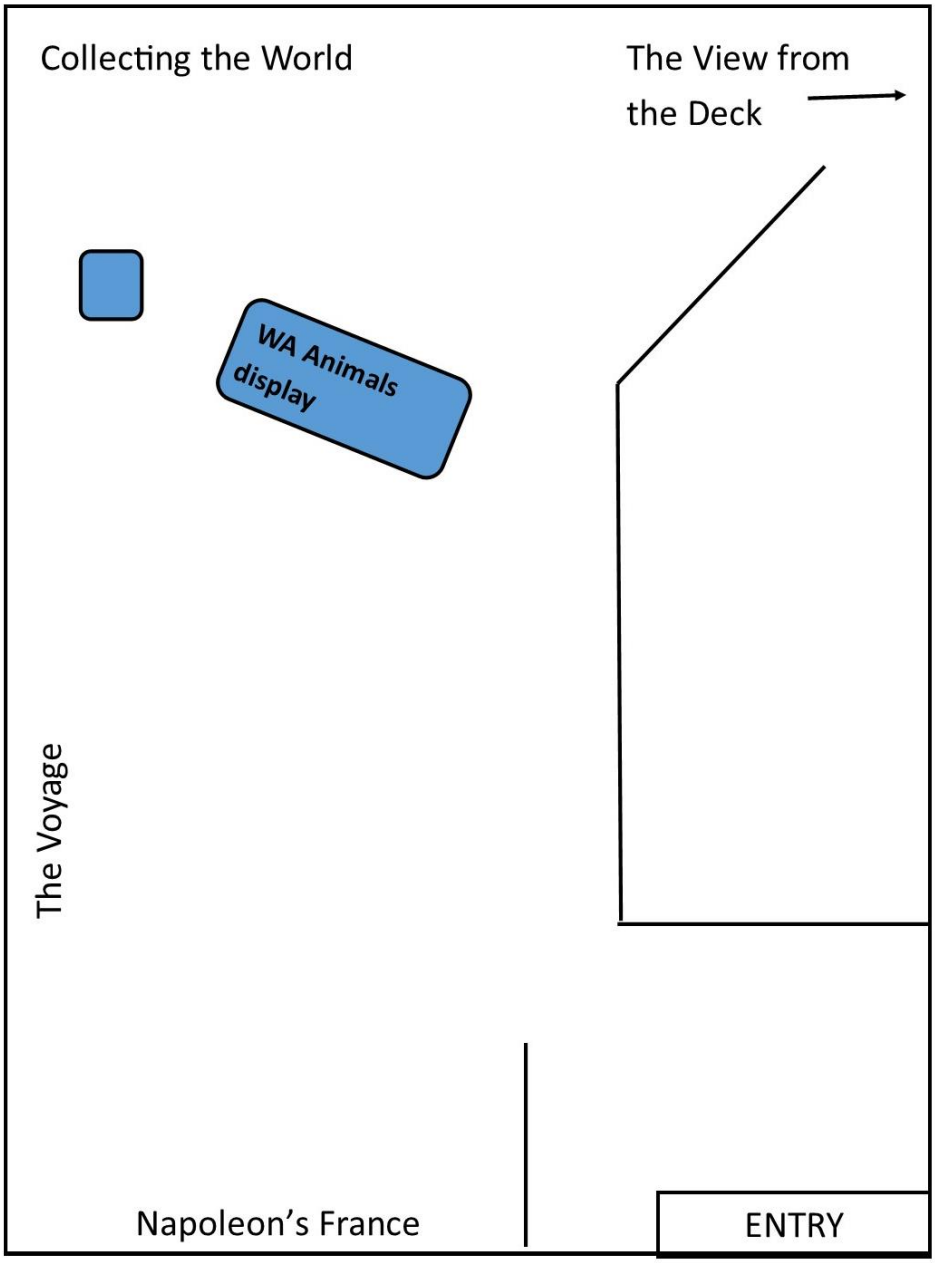

Figure 4.2 Entry foyer to *Art of Science* at Western Australian Maritime Museum.

An exhibition celebrating the 200th anniversary of Freycinet's return to Australia on the *Uranie* presented an ideal continuation of the *Art of Science* exhibition. On leaving the final exhibition space, 'Observing the Observers' (theme 5), visitors entered *Freycinet 1818*, the exhibition titled not by the dates of the voyage (which departed France in 1817), but with the date of its arrival off the west coast of Australia, near Shark Bay, in September 1818. In this way, the Baudin exhibition and the impacts of the subsequent Freycinet voyage of the *Uranie* were localised by WAMM. One of the most prominent approaches that was taken by WAMM to link *Art of Science* to the localities of Western Australia was to focus on the natural environments, plants, and animals of the state. Staff worked to established strong thematic relationships between the existing natural history collections of Western Australian Museum and the Le Havre artworks in order to underline the unique flora and fauna of Western Australia as captured through the Baudin voyage. Entering the exhibition, visitors first came into a large exhibition gallery that contained three *Art of Science* themes: (1) 'Napoleon's France', (2) 'The Voyage' and (6) 'Collecting the World'. WAMM was the only museum partner to bring 'Collecting the World' theme to the front of the exhibition, and it did this by focusing on the flora and fauna of the Western Australia coast. In contrast, the National Museum of Australia placed this theme at the conclusion of the exhibition, where the focus was on the scientific collections and research from the voyage. Diane Jones (Western Australian Museum Assistant Director) recalls that while they were unable to bring the original Le Havre collection to Western Australia in the 1990s, they obtained high quality facsimiles, which 'we displayed [with] Western Australia [natural history] specimens. We've got those in our collection, and so we could actually put them against […] the paintings to show that the artists were the cameras of the time, if you like'. WAMM adopted a similar approach for *Art of* Science where, behind large glass cases, visitors could see taxidermy specimens of possums, wallabies, and other animals unique to Western Australia and which had also been captured in the artworks of Petit and Lesueur (see Plate 4.3). There were also strong maritime specimens from Western Australia in the Le Havre collection, and so

another section featured artworks of fish (captured in watercolours off the west Australian coast) alongside specimens from the Western Australian Museum's collections, and descriptions of the fish and their habitat/location. The following are examples from the series of labels from this section:

> This particular [blue angel fish] specimen represents a juvenile. It is found predominantly in the Indo-West Pacific region.

> Moorish idols are in general found in tropical waters from Rottnest Island northwards.

> Western Clown Anemonefish are predominantly found in the Indian Ocean.

Plate 4.3 *Collecting the World* theme in *Art of Science* at Western Australian Maritime Museum. Photograph by author.

Both the Baudin and Freycinet voyages spent extensive periods in Shark Bay, which today is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognised for its natural features and richly diverse terrestrial and marine life (UNESCO 2021). Among the wildlife that is protected in the area is the Banded Hair Wallaby, an animal that is found only on three tiny islands, including Dirk Hartog Island and Faure Island in Shark Bay. According to the fossil record, this species once inhabited the entire south-western corner of Western Australia, before being declared extinct on mainland Australia in 1968. As Diane Jones outlined, 'that was where they had retreated to, because they'd obviously been killed by European man, and probably by foxes and by clearing land […] so we sort of try to tell that a little bit, to get people to think about that sort of story and the things we have found'. The Shark Bay locality flowed throughout both *Art of Science* and *Freycinet 1818*. At the same time as they hosted the *Art of Science* exhibition, the curatorial team had developed content to improve the display at the Shark Bay Heritage Centre, which created further opportunities to develop the localised content for the *Art of Science.* As Michael McCarthy (WAMM Curator) explained:

> Because you're missing part of the exhibition. One of the other things that happened with [the curator], is they went to Shark Bay to enhance the Shark Bay Heritage Centre Exhibition. And they will find more of the focus on Rose and Louis, I believe you will find a lot more […] The team went back to the spot and went in the area here to get some objects, which are in the exhibition. And Yingkarta [Aboriginal language group] and French interactions up there.

Art of Science used the flora and fauna of Western Australia to position the local context of Baudin's voyages in the same introductory space that included the global concerns of (1) 'Napoleon's France' and (2) 'The Voyage' that were heavily reinforced at the National Museum. As I will develop further in Chapter 5, this entry space was complemented by (3)

‘View from the Deck’, which focused almost exclusively on the coastline of Western Australia. This focus also stretched across (6) ‘Collecting the World’ and into the *Freycinet 1818* exhibition, underlining institutional legacies associated with the strong transnational connection between Western Australia and the Baudin voyage, while minimising the national context of the voyage. The cosmopolitan nationalism emerging through the exhibition builds on transnational histories that bind Western Australia to global networks. This will be examined further in Chapter 5, where a ‘tyranny of distance’ narrative informs for visitors a unique Western Australia perspective on the Australian nation.

Designing Australia: Freycinet’s map and the brass work of mapping the world

In 1813, a few years before his departure on the *Uranie*, Louis de Freycinet began pulling together Dutch, French, and British mapping of Australia in order to publish the first compendium map of the continent. Working with a range of professionals, including cartographers, artists, and engravers, he developed a large copper plate from which the first printed map of Australia was produced, titled *Carte Générale de la Nouvelle Hollande* (see Plate 4.4). On loan from the Musée national de la Marine, Paris, the copper plate was one of only a handful of items, including a French manufactured chronograph and dynamometer, that visited each of the six host museums. Accompanying the copper plate was a video demonstrating the intricate techniques and practices taken by modern day experts to design and engrave copper plates.

For Kevin Jones (SAMM Director), the copper plate for the *Carte Générale de la Nouvelle Hollande* was a symbol for himself and visitors, of how closely connected the world was 200 years ago:

people were genuinely surprised about aspects of our history which seem so clearly important but so unknown. So, one of the things that was exhibited was the copper plate that printed the first chart of Australia, and very, very few people know that the first chart of Australia to be published, the first published chart of Australia, was printed in Paris, not Sydney or London.

Plate 4.4 Copper plate for *Carte Générale de la Nouvelle Hollande* with *Carte Générale de la Nouvelle Hollande* at the National Museum of Australia. Photograph by author.

How the National Museum and WAMM used the Freycinet copper plate in the exhibition illustrates the intent/focus of the respective museums and their staff in assembling *Art of Science*. The object was placed by both museums in the third of the thematic sections, 'View from the Deck', but the relationships formed between the Freycinet plate and other objects in the space played a central role in assembling the exhibition, establishing relationships

between objects in the museum. The National Museum's decision to approach the voyage and cartographic elements of the exhibition as an interlocked theme placed this map within the transnational, interconnected trail of the voyage itself. The pieces were placed at the conclusion of the 'View from the Deck' section. As introduced earlier in this chapter, the National Museum used this section of the exhibition to examine multiple sites of the Australian coastline, from Shark Bay in Western Australia, through to Sydney in New South Wales. Placing the copper plate at the conclusion of this section created a natural end, from the 'incomplete' map used at the entry to the exhibition. The completion of the Freycinet map in Paris links to the transnational narratives the National Museum also sought to highlight. The copper plate was also placed directly opposite artworks depicting the peoples of Pacific and Indian Oceans, positioning the 'construction' of Australia by Europeans in the context of global networks of exploration and diplomacy. As Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator) outlined:

> Look, at the end of the day I think it is some of those messages that I have talked about – you know, we have this typical, general view of exploration history in Australia and explanations of the voyages of great white men like Banks still reign supreme in the school. The French have had a presence in this country for a long time. And it's really great to provide that alternative view from an exploration history.

In placing the copper plate in this location, the visitors were not led through an exhibition to 'discover' Australia; rather, Australia was assumed, with the transnational voyage to reach Australia viewed not as a 'discovery' but as a point of connection. This transnational connection was underlined through the strong curatorial focus on the voyage's interactions with various supply and stopover locations, and the latter relationships between the French

and Aboriginal peoples explored in Chapter 6. The copper plate was partnered with a copy of the final print, under the title *Carte Générale de la Nouvelle Hollande, 1811*, placed in direct relationship to the copper plate (again, see Plate 4.4, above).

At WAMM, the 'View from the Deck' theme was disconnected from the 'The Voyage' theme and contained in a smaller display space at the rear of the main entrance gallery (see Figure 4.2, above). WAMM used this space to focus on maps and images from both the Le Havre collection and the Archives nationales collection that displayed different landscapes from along the Western Australian coastline, including sites at Shark Bay, the Swan River, and the Margaret River. With only a few representations of other regions of Australia, the copper plate and associated map do not work in collaboration with this thematic section, but instead operate a step removed from the objects they share a space with. These objects were positioned as a stand-alone exhibit, an observation that was reflected in the panel accompanying the map that candidly states:

> This is the first ever complete map of Australia's coastline. Compiled by Louis de Freycinet in 1811, this is a print of the adjacent copper plate.

Whereas the copper plate sits in the collection of a French national museum, this print is part of the private collections of one of Australia largest media owners, Kerry Stokes. The panel accompanying the copper plate at WAMM focuses on this final product – the printed map of Australia located on the adjacent wall. It outlines in detail the process involved in transferring the image from the copper plate:

> Artists' and cartographers' work was transferred to translucent oil paper, which was used to trace an outline onto the printing plate. The

> outlines were incised into the metal […] and ink was applied. Paper was placed over the plate and fed through a heavy steel roller. Ink settled into the incisions, producing the print that was laboriously hand coloured.

The different objectives directing the exhibition curation and design at the National Museum and WAMM deeply informed the way Freycinet's copper plate was used. The National Museum's focus on global and national themes meant that it used the map to conclude the transnational interactions that had been a major focus in their assembling of the exhibition. In comparison, the copper plate did not tie directly into the locality narrative that was prioritised at WAMM, and so it was treated as an independent 'hero' object operating in a separate narrative space that was focused on the final purpose of the copper plate.

Conclusion

The *Art of Science* exhibition provided a unique, scalable touring exhibition that allowed participating museums to link their local or national remits with the Baudin voyage. In each museum, these agenda led to the creation of an exhibition that, while global in scope, could be tightly linked to the local. The National Museum created an exhibition that drew out global themes, while also creating a cornucopia of Australian locality. In comparison, WAMM presented an exhibition that focused on French connections with the western coastline of Australia. Links to Western Australia were developed further through the *Freycinet 1818* exhibition, which focused on Freycinet's time in Western Australia during his second voyage to the continent aboard the *Uranie* in 1818. This chapter began the process of unpacking the museum assemblage, providing the groundwork to analyse in more detail and in subsequent chapters the role of other actors, including visitors and objects. The next two chapters will explore how visitors engaged with three primary exhibition themes: geography; the natural environment (including flora and fauna); and the French engagement with Aboriginal

peoples. The thesis argues from this analysis that the local and national narratives presented by institutions could be, and were, stretched and folded into smaller or larger perspectives by visitors. Together the chapters illustrate how museums create in their spaces an intersection between traditional and cosmopolitan nationalisms.

Chapter 5
Representing national and cultural identity through landscape, geography, and environment

Continuing my analysis of *Art of Science*, this chapter examines how local, national, and international identities intersected for visitors at the National Museum and the WAMM. As discussed in Chapter 4, the curatorial approach taken to the exhibition reflected the mission and organisational trajectory of each institution. This chapter examines how visitor expectations intersected with those concerns. National and regional museums often create a touchstone in their permanent exhibition through which people can engage with their own sense of the nation and its place in their lives, with most visitors reflecting on their own national identity through the museum displays (Dodd et al. 2012, pp. 17-8; Scorrano 2012). Museum displays of a nation's past are designed to elicit responses from visitors that allow them to reflect on present-day concerns, finding solace in lessons about the nation's resilience to hardships that might continue (Dodd et al. 2012, p. 18). Similarly, regional museums play an important role in capturing and conveying the histories of those regions and their local identities (Smith & Campbell 2017).

Temporary exhibitions operate slightly differently, often working as a 'deep-dive' into brief periods or themes from the past. While they can present the nation along normative cultural and intellectual orientations, they may also offer an alternative perspective, as was the case with *Art of Science.* This chapter explores the consequences of curatorial choices for the reception of *Art of Science* by visitors. The focus of the first section of the chapter is on visitors' direct responses to the question 'What meaning does the exhibition hold for Australia today?' Responses to this question worked across a spectrum, with some visitors discounting the meaning/value of the Baudin expedition to Australia's national narrative,

while others saw a larger connection to present day concerns associated with multiculturalism. Many of these responses reflect the cosmopolitan nationalism agenda, where openness and engagement across cultures is a major interest (Jeffers 2013; Kymlicka & Walker 2012; Skrbis & Woodward 2007). Following this investigation, the chapter moves on to examine how themes of geography and the environment/landscape (as key aspects of national identity) were explored by visitors at the intersections of the local, national, and global. In part, these explorations and intersections are examined through a consideration of the ways in which 'the nation' and visitors' national identities are engaged with through 'everyday' narratives or connections. In particular, by focusing on areas of borders, landscape, and the natural environment, the chapter illustrates how 'everyday symbols' of nation continue to reinforce how people engage with the nation. The chapter also examines the relationship between locality and nation, with broader national concerns tied to individual sites or examples.

These relationships were not limited to content presented by the National Museum and WAMM, but also reflected the personal histories of individual visitors as they linked their own identity narratives to concepts and/or objects they encountered in the exhibition. These associations between objects, visitors, and institutions shaped the histories that were being created. The emergent assemblage of a cosmopolitan national history is, as Dittmer (2017, p. 10) has described, at once fixed and divergent, as visitors continually (re)territorialise the exhibition through their own networked relationships. As the webs of association multiply, it becomes harder to determine how a particular history has emerged in the exhibition itself for the multiple visitors and individual visitors. But tracing these associations shows how a fluid, adaptable national identity was positioned to reflect the convergence of these actors within accepted conceptions of the nation.

The chapter concludes by examining how international visitors engaged with national symbols of Australia at the *Art of Science* exhibition. Being disconnected from the 'everyday' aspects of national symbols, international visitors appeared to readily identify and associate with unique but well-known aspects of Australia and, presumably, Australian national identity in the exhibition. While perhaps reflecting a stereotyped Australian identity (Dodd et al. 2012, p. 127), international visitor responses provided an intriguing Other to contrast with the answers of Australian visitors, who often overlooked these symbols because of their familiar association with them. For European visitors, the 'young' history of Australia was often contrasted with the extended chronological narratives of their own countries and these visitors' relationship with their own sense of national identity.

Does it mean anything for the nation?

Transnational history can disorient existing metanarratives associated with the nation, contesting a universal, progressive story of the creation and development of a nation. In the case of *Art of Science*, the narrative being contested was that of a British-dominated exploration and settlement of Australia. The Baudin narrative problematises this overarching narrative by not simply displaying the cartographic achievements of French exploration of Australia but also showing how this was part of a transnational competition that links the exploration of Australia to other imperial contests around the globe. This corrective, however, makes it difficult to examine the exhibition's relationship to nation and national identity because of the large knowledge gap that exists for visitors. Many of the Australian and international visitors to *Art of Science*, at both the National Museum and WAMM, admitted to having 'very little' knowledge of the French expedition before coming to the exhibition. When asked what knowledge they had of the Baudin voyage, one visitor simply stated, 'absolutely nothing' (Female, 25–34, National Museum). However, when asked about the meaning of the content in *Art of Science* for capturing Australian cultural history or

aspects of the Australian nation relevant to Australia today, there were differences between the two sites.

The themes most commonly identified by visitors focused on mapping/cartography, landscape, the environment, and Aboriginal peoples, with some themes emerging more strongly at one site than at the other. When National Museum visitors, for example, were asked about the meaning of the content in *Art of Science* for Australia, both historically and contemporaneously, the answers flowed more freely than at WAMM, with each visitor interviewed identifying in their response, themes such as Indigenous history, geography, and animals, which they saw as relevant to the nation's cultural history and the meaning of the exhibition in contemporary Australian life. I argue that these associations came more freely to the National Museum visitors because their attendance at this national museum brought concerns with the nation's past and present to the fore. It appeared that in both attending a national institution and viewing other exhibitions that addressed themes of nation and national identity, many visitors had already considered these themes as part of their time at the National Museum. As will be explored further in Chapter 6, the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples also featured more prominently in the National Museum visitor associations than they did for visitors to WAMM.

A key narrative that emerged in visitor responses at both sites was the view of Australia as a country of migrants. This narrative has long been at the forefront of Australia's self-conception, feeding on the strong growth of cultural diversity in Australia that was explored in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. Visitors expressed that they looked to exhibitions not simply for the history that accounted for the present cultural diversity of Australia, but also for narratives that reflected the experiences of migrants from different cultures coming to Australia. As one National Museum visitor put it:

> I just suppose I'm interested in the way that exploration has sort of brought people from all over the world to Australia and whether or not their impact – you know, we don't know what the impact was at the time. (Male, 60–74, National Museum)

While aligned with the curatorial choices at the National Museum, it nevertheless appears strange that an exhibition about a French expedition, a country with no past or present sovereignty over Australia, should draw up this national narrative. Yet, this comment was not restricted to the National Museum, with one local visitor at WAMM stating:

> We all came to, I mean, even Aboriginal people, came on to the land later. And now people are still drawn by sea, in terms of the boat people and the refugees. You know in those days, there was obviously some interactions that were good. And some, that part with the Indigenous population […] and I guess it's got an impact on how we should be taking care of other people that are coming over the ocean. (Female, 60–74, WAMM)

These comments demonstrate a normative understanding of Australia as a multicultural country shaped through the movement of people, initially from Europe and then from the Asia-Pacific region, and increasingly from across the globe. Since the 1970s, multiculturalism has been part of government policy seeking to adopt new cultures into Australian society, even if racism, xenophobia and protectionism have remained troubling issues throughout its implementation (Busbridge 2018, p. 22). The 'country of migrants' narrative has continued to hold great sway over Australian society throughout the twenty-first

century, where many argue it has emerged as a core component of cosmopolitan practice for Australians (Edensor & Sumartojo 2018; Markus 2018; Moran 2011; Plage et al. 2016, p. 323). A cosmopolitan nationalism entails the acceptance of the presence of Others in the community and is actioned through an historicised past that represents a pleasure aspect, or desire, from the citizenry to not only have, and relate to, these 'Others' within the community, but for these 'Others' to become a central aspect of Australian national identity and what Australia, as a country, represents.

While the national narrative of multiculturalism emerged with respect to *Art of Science* at both sites, WAMM visitors found it more difficult to make links between the exhibition content and broader concerns for Australian cultural history and aspects of the nation relevant to Australia today. Several visitors interviewed dismissed questions that asked about the relevance of the exhibition for Australia today, responding with phrases like, 'probably not a lot'. When pressed further, one visitor discussed the lack of a formal or deep relationship between Australia and France:

> There are no trades links with France that I'm aware of, and everything's linked to Donald Trump and all his lovely decisions or with Indonesia, which doesn't seem to feature with any of the French expeditions. And they went to Timor, which Australia doesn't have a great deal to do with apart from oil, so maybe not a great relevance. School children here don't learn French as a language. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

This visitor was expressing a lack of continuity between the French connections illustrated in the exhibition and its comparative absence today, which he saw as minimising the value of

this French link in Australian history. In positioning the Australian nation in the context of a 'national interest' through foreign affairs and trade, this visitor overlooked the value/pertinence of the French historical connections. The value of the history presented was seen by some visitors as interesting but, perhaps, inconsequential. Another visitor argued that while the exhibition was an important representation of French intentions to explore and consider Australia for colonisation, their decision not to colonise locations in Australia made for an interesting footnote in the nation's past:

> I suppose it gives a good history of the intention of the French, and scientific expeditions… the flagship of Napoleon. But I'm not entirely sure it is a very important part for Australia's history. (Male, 46–59. WAMM)

For other visitors, the value of *Art of Science* was realised through linking the exhibition content to their own personal experience. Where the French may have a 'bit part' in the history of the nation and in current trade relationships with Australia today, the value for some visitors came from their own associations with France.[11] The below comment, for instance, shows how these connections were as much personal as diplomatic:

> Well, I think it is about the understanding of the history and the connections, more than anything else. Yeah, we have a daughter who live[s] […] in France […] and so there's quite a—you don't have to think too far back to see you've got some quite detailed connection there. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

[11] While France does not have a direct trade relationship (i.e., a free trade agreement) this is linked to that country's place in the European Union. Formal trade agreements through the European Union obscure trade relationships between Australia and individual European countries.

Statements such as these suggest that despite a relative disconnect between *Art of Science* and contemporary Australia, there was a strong capacity for the exhibition to trigger in individual visitors a sense of national identity that drew on transnational interconnections to outline a cosmopolitan nationalism. Linked to a culturally diverse Australia, these rooted cosmopolitan perspectives raise important questions about Australia's position in the contemporary, globalised world. Migration and trade are important aspects of global interconnectedness, with these patterns increasing in complexity and prevalence. Transnational histories underline an historical trajectory and national continuity, for cosmopolitan Australia's place and unique position internationally.

The place of the Baudin voyage in the French Government's considerations regarding whether to establish a settlement in Australia was another theme where National Museum and WAMM visitors differed. National Museum visitors could picture an alternative history of French colonisation of Australia, which for them created opportunities to explore Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships. In contrast, WAMM visitor responses to the potential French colonisation of Australia were tied directly to geography, national identity, and national belonging. Such comments could be expressed as mere sidenotes to the British–French contestation over the Australian continent that was outlined by the dominant narrative of the exhibition. In responding to a question about why they had come to the exhibition, one visitor told me they had never fully understood the French considerations to establish an Australian colony:

> So, the main fair was like, okay, great, I didn't know what happened and that France was really looking at this part of Australia. We knew that somebody could have a colony, but it didn't end up. So that was one, the history part of it. (Female, 25–34, WAMM)

The possible French settlement of parts of the Australian coastline was commented on by many visitors. For some, it represented a critical moment in Australian history that could have had major consequences for Australia's culture and national identity:

> I think it really is relevant to the country as a whole, and to that we could have ended up speaking French, if things had gone a different way. (Male, 60–75, WAMM)

> But history like this it's important to share it – we could've been French – we very nearly were. (Male, 75+, WAMM)

> but it just makes me realise that the explorers coming from different lands… I mean I just think I'm amazed by that. I think we are really lucky, and I mean how different would it have been, would have Australia been, if we had been discovered by the French. (Female, 60–74, WAMM)

Such ideas about the possible French settlement of Australia asked visitors to question their assumptions about not only the geographical boundaries of the nation but also the social and cultural boundaries that could have emerged. If the French had set up colonies in Western Australia or Tasmania, it would have redrawn the political map of Australia, with consequences for the culture(s) of a federated nation (Canada can be seen as the contemporary example of this English/French cultural amalgam). The removal of a linear narrative to the Australian nation allowed questions to be raised by visitors about the association between this past and the geographical, social, and cultural parameters that inform their own national identity. The next section considers further how nation and local

intersect in visitors' considerations of the cartographic mapping of Australia by the French through this voyage, and its historical bearing on the conceptions of national identity.

Geography, place, and the meanings of nation

Geography has always been tightly aligned to national identity, with the natural and cultural landscapes and territorial boundaries of the nation-state continuously used to reinforce everyday connections to the nation (Edensor 2002, p. 53; Skey 2017). In his work *Imagined Communities,* introduced in Chapter 2, Benedict Anderson (2006 p. 184) examined the census, map, and museum as three mechanisms used to define the modern nation, particularly in the context of South-East Asia. For him, these tools were late colonial mechanisms used to create a grammar for the places and people under imperial control. These processes, in turn, became cornerstones of the nationalist project as it progressed. And as national communities arose, new narratives were created to confirm or sustain these projections of the nation and its formation. An example of this is Australia's geographical reality as a country surrounded by the ocean, with the country's national anthem outlining that Australia is, after all, 'girt by sea'. Historically, this island nation narrative has also shaped the reorientation towards cosmopolitan nationalism, as a Christian, Anglo-Saxon dominated population has become a population that is increasingly agnostic and culturally diverse.

The ways these traditions operate with one another was visible in visitor responses to *Art of Science*. The copper plate for the *Carte Générale de la Nouvelle Hollande* (examined in Chapter 4) illustrated the strong role of French exploration in mapping Australia. For some visitors, however, the firmness of the British narrative tradition prompted them to correct the achievements of the French in completing the first published map of the continent. One Perth visitor commented:

> Matthew Flinders probably was the first one to complete the map, and then they locked him up, and did they pinch his maps, and you know that sort of thing. And so, there is a whole heap of little movies that could be made from the intrigue around that. But I find that fascinating. You look a little bit deeper than what's put on the page. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

Such correctives from visitors emerged repeatedly throughout my research, illustrating not simply people's views or beliefs, but also how they negotiate (or even disparage) a cosmopolitan national identity presented through these exhibitions. While the movement towards a multivocal nationalism is occurring, the individual choices taken by actors in the museum space will inevitably prioritise one history over others, ignoring or supressing narratives while other stories come to the fore. Nearly half the respondents at WAMM identified the coastal mapping of the geographical features and coastlines of Australia as the most relevant aspect of the exhibition for Australia today. These responses reflected the way that national themes/identity can be assigned from the local/regional level, drawing scalar associations into the national assemblage. At WAMM, exhibition visitors moved from the large foyer space and the sixth theme, 'Collecting the World', (examined in Chapter 4) to enter a smaller, darker space where the fourth theme, 'View from the Ship', was presented.

In contrast to the broad presentation of coastal profiles and maps at the National Museum, the walls of this part of the exhibition at WAMM featured the Baudin expedition's cartographic exploration of the Western Australia coast, from inlets in the north of the state at Shark Bay, to the southern mouths of the Swan and Margaret Rivers. Objects like *Sketch of the Swan River* (see Plate 5.1), by Louis de Freycinet, which features the future site of the state's capital city Perth, provided an opportunity for locals to find places and narratives that linked to their own experiences, such as this comment about the Swan River:

> my local knowledge of the Swan River I could see the detail in that. You could even see the bends in the river which we live on alongside at Guildford and you can almost pick our house out. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

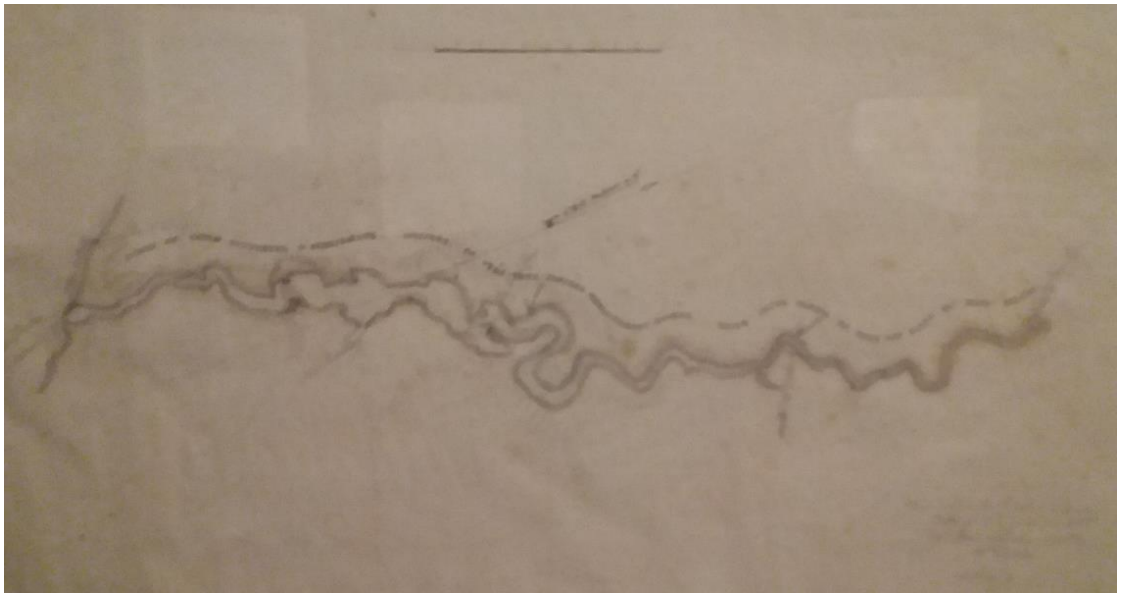

Plate 5.1 *Sketch of the Swan River*, Archives nationales de France – MAP/6JJ/4/A. Image in *Art of* Science, Western Australian Maritime Museum. Photograph by author.

For this visitor, the identified local connections were important to his own sense of identity. He continued to outline how these histories played a crucial role in his appreciation of a locality/region in the contemporary world. For him, it was not simply about knowing a little more about a region's history; rather, it was important to understand that these connections have consequences for the present and future of a locality:

> Visitor: Well, I think it's good for everyone to understand where you've come from. And I think it gives you much more connection with the land to have this type of understanding, and so I think it's very important from that perspective.

> Interviewer: Connection to the area.
>
> Visitor: Well to the area, to the history, the people and, also, to appreciation of what's there currently today. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

The life histories of visitors also informed the discussions I had with them about the voyage. For instance, one visitor reflected on his own experience of sailing along the Western Australian coast, telling me how it informed his appreciation for the bravery of the Baudin crew in undertaking the voyage. He commented:

> these blokes were pretty brave to do what they did… coming up the west coast we spent time off Margaret River and there's often an offshore wind there all the time, and a square-rigged boat doesn't go into the wind very well. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

For another visitor at WAMM, however, the connection only outlined the ‘tyranny of distance’ narrative common across much discussion about Australia and its place in the world (Blainey 2001). In contrast to visitors at the National Museum, isolation emerged as a defining factor for visitors at WAMM, not simply for the Australian continent but particularly for Perth, separated as it is by vast distances from the east coast cities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, as well as the national capital of Canberra (where the National Museum is based):

> I think it says something about our isolation, and how we've grown in a very specific way, because these reflect the fact that it was a very remote part of the world for a long time, and it remains so even after all these voyages. And so, I think it reminds us of the way in which

> particularly Western Australia developed in the early stages well into the twentieth century, we really became part of the world, so to speak. But it remained a very isolated area of the world. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

This focus from visitors on Western Australian localities can be expected, given the curatorial choices made at WAMM focused on Western Australia's geography and natural environment. Similarly, the focus of the National Museum on transnational connections and a multiplicity of Australian localities (see Plate 5.2) in the *Art of Science* was also reflected in different visitor responses to the exhibition. For example, audience responses at the National Museum drew attention to the numerous localities presented in the exhibition.

Plate 5.2 'View from the Ship' theme in *Art of Science* at National Museum or Australia. Image courtesy National Museum of Australia.

> Well, it is clearly not just about one part of Australia. I was just looking at some lovely maps and images of coastline along the top Tasmania and the Shark Bay so as to this intermingling of them from places. (Female, 45–59, National Museum)

Where visitor comments deviated from the broad narrative of the National Museum or the more defined histories of the WAMM, they did so in relation to people's own experiences. And so, at WAAM, the Western Australia narratives of place were broken by comments such as the following from a New South Welshman, who was travelling around Australia:

> I've just driven from Byron Bay to Perth right along the coastline, and you look at all the names along the coastline and there are a lot of French, a lot of English and a lot of Dutch […] and so this was to try and piece together some of this history. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

In the National Museum, this narrative about the interconnection of place was made clear through visitor comments on localities that were personally meaningful. One man recounted that his familiarity with the Baudin voyage was gained through his time living on the northern coast of Tasmania:

> I know a little bit partly because I grew up in Tasmania and a lot of the place, the coastal place names that are in Tasmania, were actually named by the people in the Baudin [voyage]… those names have stuck. (Male, 60–74, National Museum)

Even with respect to the overarching narrative presented by the National Museum, visitors were much more comfortable making associations with localities they were familiar with. The visitor quoted above, for instance, drew on his early memories of the northern coastline of Tasmania to understand the global interconnections between this region and France in the eighteenth century that had emerged through the French naming of places. That these names 'stuck' indicates a continuance between this period of coastal exploration and the context of people who live there today.

Answering the final questions about the significance of the exhibition to contemporary Australia, this Tasmanian-born visitor also found ways to localise those trans/national themes in his conversation about the north of Tasmania. He commented on a small watercolour presented as part of a series of coastal profiles of Tasmania's north coastline painted by Nicholas Martin Petit. In discussing the image, he highlighted that it contained a stream of smoke emerging from the landscape. While acknowledging that the fire causing this smoke may have been naturally occurring, he said that it may 'equally' have been created by Aboriginal peoples of the region. For him, this link was an unrecognised, but centrally important, theme for the nation. As he explained:

> So that inhabitation story, that people are coming here as visitors and explorers of a new place, and they hadn't been to before. But it wasn't uninhabited. For me that's the message that people don't get. (Male, 60–74, National Museum)

The interconnections between the local and the national and the local and the global that were drawn on by this visitor, associate cosmopolitan agendas with the acceptance of difference at a local level. Using the work of Kwame Appiah (1997, 2005) (discussed in

Chapter 2), Chikes Jeffers (2013, p. 495) has argued that it should be necessary within a multivocal, cosmopolitan perspective to ‘place the identity of the world citizen alongside our more local identities, without supplanting them’ because it is our own and others’ local circumstances that inform a heterogenous, rather than homogenous, global polity. The cosmopolitan is both global and local. As will be explored further in Chapter 6, such agendas underpinned the non-Indigenous reception of Aboriginal content in the *Art of Science*. For now, though, the key point to highlight is that the mapping and recording of the Australian coastline influences national agendas through individual associations to locality that, in turn, revealed aspects of belonging and associated communal concerns underpinning national identity.

Together, these visitor comments, focused on geography and landscape, confirm an assumed visitor expectation of national narratives from the National Museum and a locality focus for the WAMM. The local was at the forefront of visitor receptions of the exhibition at WAMM, where the global voyages of Baudin were situated at particular Western Australian localities, such as the Swan River and Shark Bay, while the multiplicity of places represented at the National Museum construct the nation through these links to the local. The National Museum used the local as part of their broader project to capture the national narrative, which was consistent with their role as a national institution. In comparison, WAMM was focused on the state, where it sought to represent/speak to the uniqueness of Western Australian identity and history, both globally and nationally. What was apparent at both institutions was how these histories provided imaginative windows through which visitors, in defining the relevance of the exhibition for themselves, could see the links between the local, national, and global. Touring exhibitions bring shifting values to the regions they visit – values that are informed, constrained, and expanded by the spaces, contexts and missions of the museums that exhibit them. Through creating narratives that met visitor expectations while, at the same time, opening a discursive space for people to move beyond set contexts,

the *Art of Science* provided a complicated assemblage of the local and global through which to position the exploration history of Australia. This history also represents the first European discovery of not only the geographical boundaries and features of a 'future Australia', but also their first contact with a range of animal species that have become undeniably linked to Australia and everyday patterns of national identity.

Natural environment, the nation and cosmopolitan practice

The historical narratives embedded in the *Art of Science* exhibition were set in the Enlightenment, a period dominated by the efforts of Europeans to measure, record, and colonise the world, with Australia representing the last great realm of discovery. In the Enlightenment, the cataloguing, collecting and examination of the natural environment became a central part of the colonial project (West-Sooby 2015, pp. 54-5). As with other scientific endeavours of the period, the Baudin expedition captured plants and animals in detailed illustrations. Some of the most detailed images were of mysterious jellyfish and sea creatures that are hidden beneath the waters off the Australian coastline. Other images were of easily identifiable Australian land creatures, including the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, the Collared Kingfisher, and the Blue-tongued Skink that is a mainstay of Australian backyards. What was intriguing is that these flora and fauna, their visuality, sounds and representation, which have become important markers of the nation, can often be overlooked by Australian citizens and residents despite, or perhaps because of, their everyday connections (Sumartojo 2017). For Edensor (2002, p. 186), these animals are part of the everyday relationship between the local and the national that allows 'each [to] make sense of each other, [as they] are bound together in common-sense enaction, everyday spaces, iconic and mundane objects and in local diversity'. Although they may be ignored by Australian citizens, these animals, the sounds they make, and the associations they create between the local and the national, inform everyday national identity.

In *Art of Science*, recognition of the above associations altered slightly between the exhibition's display at the National Museum and WAMM, reflecting their local and national focus. For National Museum visitors, there were two primary narratives of concern: the artistic qualities of the natural history artworks on display and the continuing deterioration of natural environments in Australia. From their close investigation of the detail of the French drawings of flora and fauna, some visitors seemed to think that they were constituted in what I would describe as an Enlightenment narrative that focused on scientific endeavour. The following comment shows this view:

> I think it was interesting, like as far as the document, I think the artwork was incredible and the detail. Man – and yes, I think I have a more romanticised view of exploration in the eighteenth/nineteenth century, so it was really interesting to see naturalist drawings. (Male, 60–74, National Museum)

The same visitor highlighted how the scientific enquiry, which was at the heart of the Enlightenment project, provided what he regarded as an 'objective' approach to the natural world that flowed into the present day. But his comments questioned the value of the 'objective' approach evident in these artworks because he thought it revealed a lack of concern about, and empathy for, the natural environment and minimised the cultural value of these environmental resources:

> Also, the approach to Australian flora and fauna, which I think obviously bleeds into how we approach it today. There is sort of a cultural neutrality, and it is trying to see things objectively. And that may not necessarily be the best way.

For other visitors, however, the experience was intensely aesthetic, particularly with respect to the artwork depicting marine creatures (see Plate 5.3). A blend of the uniqueness of these creatures together with the techniques employed in capturing them in the artwork, was particularly valued by National Museum visitors, as illustrated by the following statement:

> It was such a thrill to see the artwork itself, that's what I concentrated on. I mean it is just exquisite, particularly the marine creatures which I gather they concentrated on – they are like blown glass. I don't know if you have seen any Liuli glass, they make these amazing glass sculptures and it's just beautiful. (Female, 60–74, National Museum)

Plate 5.3 'Artist's paintbox' theme in *Art of Science* at National Museum of Australia. Image courtesy National Museum of Australia.

The combination of the Enlightenment, art and present threats to the environment were also linked in several comments from National Museum visitors related to objects (see Plate 5.4, below). One visitor highlighted the contrast between contemporary dangers to the natural world and the 'pristine', 'untouched' Australia found by explorers at the turn of the nineteenth century:

> I really like the drawings of sea creatures and paintings of sea creatures… I loved the scientific discovery. That there is a whole heap of creatures that someone sees for the first time that's probably the other big message and that one day we won't be able to see them again if they become extinct. That's one of the big values of understanding the diversity of species. (Female, 45–59, National Museum)

Plate 5.4 'Collecting the World' theme of *Art of Science* at the National Museum of Australia. Image courtesy National Museum of Australia.

In comparison, WAMM visitor responses did not focus on the aesthetic appeal of the artworks. As with other symbols of the nation, such as the Australian flag or maps of Australia, animals and plants emerged as ‘mindless markers’ of nation, reinforcing national belonging with little acknowledgment from the national communities, citizens and residents. It is interesting, therefore, that visitors who were interviewed at WAMM, many of them local Perth residents, did not find it necessary to equate the national with the natural components in *Art of Science*. As one Perth resident put it:

> Well, look, I would’ve walked past all the stuffed animals and so they probably are important scientific specimens, but to me they’re animals that I’m familiar with so that didn’t [attract me]. (Male, 45–59, WAMM)

Another respondent was clear that for him there were only two links to contemporary Australia. These were the French names in the Australian landscapes and the influence on flora and fauna. He outlined the latter of these in his response to my question about the influence of the exhibition on conceptions of Australia and contemporary Australian identity:

> you mean maybe the French influence. Let me think about it… anything that’s relevant to Australia today, I mean apart from the French names. ‘Cause if you live up in north headlands you notice that there are a few islands that have the French names. Other than that, I think there’s a lot of influence in terms of the science probably, but I think that’s the other way round. (Male, 45–59, WAMM)

This is an intriguing reversal of impacts – that being that the science, the flora, and fauna unique to Australia was affecting the French and their conceptions of the world in the early nineteenth century, rather than the other way around. The impact of the animals and plants, and the respect that the French scientists showed in collecting and documenting them, were also evident in other WAMM visitor comments. For instance, one respondent said:

> And on the ships, they turfed sailors out of their bunks and their rooms and, well, I thought awful for the animals that were imprisoned, but the fact that they were turfing out the sailors to put some of the animals… I still felt awful that so many animals died on the voyage back, but in those days, they were, I guess they were, so keen to show, and to make money out of things when they got home. And show people you know the animals, so trying to think through their eyes. They weren't meaning to be cruel… I think it was more the curiosity and the love of what they saw that they wanted. (Female, 60–74, WAMM)

In her examination of the scientific collection of the Baudin voyage, historian Stephanie Pfenningwerth (2013, p. 196) argues that the animals, plants and specimen had agential qualities that meant they had a 'surprising' amount of influence on voyage decisions. Her examples include the influence of seal populations on expedition priorities, and how the care of animal 'specimens' (both alive and dead) influenced decisions associated with exploration and storage. Another visitor's comment also touched on how these Australian animal specimens were both recorded in numerous scientific publications and, more intriguingly, became curiosities placed in the gardens of the French Empress Josephine Bonaparte. These historical illustrations of non-human agential power also raise questions regarding how objects representing this flora and fauna, both taxidermy and artworks, were assembled

in the museum space. In *Art of Science*, the flora and fauna were portrayed with an agential perspective that shifted from existing knowledge in European (or French in this case) science in the nineteenth century towards present day concerns for the environment. Within the museum assemblage, the non-human actor is the artwork containing these objects or relationships. As Jason Dittmer (2017, p. 127) highlights, the agency of objects does not simply reside in their material effects but 'must [also] be understood as a set of resources, inherited from the past, with which agents can improvise, adapt and enact'. As outlined in Chapter 2, the museum assemblage can be developed through the object relationships, the history of these artworks, and the contextual representation of the past in these narratives.

For visitors at both sites, the historical significance of the collections linked to concerns for the treatment of plants and animals today. Many visitors were concerned that in contrast to the scientific wonder of the Baudin voyage scientists, contemporary indifference to the environment was a major threat to the natural world. This observation on occasion folded into a larger conversation about the preservation of these natural resources, as the following visitor put it:

> I also think it's important for people to see and be exposed to the beauty of nature and it makes you realise how much natural wealth is in Australia and how maybe we should have a bit more consciousness about how we treat nature and that we should be preserving more. (Female, 25–34, National Museum)

These concerns were also raised by Perth visitors at WAMM, one of whom, for instance, said that the extinction of animal species was a serious matter. This visitor was worried that there was a lack of attention given to the slow disappearance of Australian species, a topic

that had become important to him because of his daughter's experience working in the environmental sciences field:

> I'm pretty concerned by the way our native animals are disappearing, and you know we're pretty cavalier about it and don't take much notice, well most people don't anyway. Having a daughter in environmental science in that area just sort of brings it to the surface. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

While there were definitive preferences in the institutional focus and visitor reception at WAMM (focusing on the local) and the National Museum (focusing on the national) all these conversations begin to examine contemporary concerns about a local, tangible world. In the museum space, this localised cosmopolitanism was assembled to interact at different scales and punctuates transnational histories and contemporary global concerns with local, non-human actors, such as plants and animals. The objects and narratives position visitors as, at once, concerned global citizens and active local agents in the challenges presented through climate change and the destruction of natural habitats. Visitors at both institutions engaged with the detailed renditions of the Baudin artists in documenting this 'new' world, but there were different views about whether these depictions could enact the cultural and emotional responses necessary to increase engagement with, and protection of, the environment. The next section examines how aspects of Australian national identity were received and engaged with by international visitors, predominantly at WAMM, as markers of the Australian nation.

International visitors, cosmopolitanism, and place

With reference to the work of Delanty (2009), Chapter 2 argued that the 'cosmopolitan' emerges when there is a connection between people and a cultural Other that includes an exchange of beliefs and practices and where that cultural Other may be considered as another place, culture or individual. One way these connections can occur is through recent increases in international travel and working holidays, because visits to places of cultural heritage, including museums, have become key parts of tourism and professional networks. While the COVID-19 lockdown saw a dramatic reduction of international travel in 2020 and 2021, my interviews with visitors in 2018 were conducted near a peak for international mobility. International tourism arrivals had increased globally during the twenty-first century, rising from 692 million international tourist arrivals in 2003 to 1,464 million arrivals in 2019 (CCSA 2021, p. 28). In Australia, between 2011 and 2019 inbound arrivals had increased from 5.9 million to 9.5 million, while outbound departures had risen from 8.1 million to 11.4 million, according the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (2020, 2021). While there is no definitive research in Australia, Sarah Selwood's (2018)research in the United Kingdom indicates a strong correlation between high numbers of international tourists and increases in attendance figures for London's museums. As noted in Chapter 3, I only interviewed one couple at the National Museum who identified as European immigrants. In comparison, I interviewed eight people across six interviews at WAMM who were either international tourists or on work visas and resided in Australia. While a limited sample, their discussions with me provide an impression for how the cosmopolitan can be constructed by international tourists and transnational professionals through their relationships with, or connections to, Australia as the(ir) Other. Museums provide the opportunity for international visitors to engage with and consume another culture, coming to understand those markers of national identity as they work at an in-between space where museums represent Australia to the world.

While Australian residents interviewed at WAMM struggled to make links with national themes, often overlooking everyday national markers, the international visitors I interviewed presented the Australian nation in readily identifiable terms, even contextualising it in the locally defined spaces of *Art of Science* exhibition. They swiftly identified aspects of the nation on display, often seeing elements and aspects that Australian visitors failed to mention in their interviews about the exhibition. What international visitors grasped, however, may simply be what for resident Australians are the normalised, everyday, banal aspects of nationhood. For instance, a Danish man visiting WAMM from Switzerland suggested that the value of the content of *Art of Science* was in the narrative arc it provided regarding how people came to the Australian continent and the meaning this holds for the present day:

> Anything that has something to do with your home and how it was discovered and who was there, and what it took to discover it is relevant… If I was Australian and came to this, well even not being Australian, I think its relevant there. I mean knowing our history, well you have such a young history somehow, I mean in Europe you walk around and you're just kind of surrounded by history, you're reminded every day. When you come from how it looked like at the time, who your ancestors were, and I think for a relatively young population to be reminded of how people got here, and what they discovered, I think it's definitely pertinent. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

When international visitors at WAMM were asked about the value of this exhibition to Australia or the region, there were four answers that stood out. Two of these mimicked those provided by Australian residents at the National Museum and focused on the Indigenous peoples of the country and its flora and fauna. But one consideration explored almost uniquely by international visitors was the value of history for history's own sake. For a

Scottish man who had moved to Australia a few months earlier for work, the exhibition provided an opportunity to understand a culture that was different, despite a shared language and ethnicity:

> I was moved by parts of it, and I guess that's part of the experience, you know I've been asked over here for work, and I've been over here for a couple of months and I'm starting to get an idea of a different culture. (Male, 45–59, WAMM)

Thus, he was able to create an understanding of contemporary Australia through this assemblage of its history. He went on to say:

> a country's history is what a country is, and any small aspect of that is important to the country today, and how it sees itself. You can't—you have to present it and you have to talk about it and you've got to be aware of it. (Male, 45–59, WAMM)

One of the exhibition visitors interviewed at WAMM was a Frenchwoman, aged 26–35, who had been living in Perth for the previous 12 months while she worked for a large multinational company. She attended the exhibition with her parents, who were visiting from France. She explained in her interview that she had spent the last ten years working in a range of countries across Africa and South-East Asia before arriving in Perth. She brought this experience to the answers she provided to questions about the *Art of Science* exhibition, outlining how, as an outsider, she used a range of resources to understand the countries she lived in. A prominent example she used was nature:

> the way some other nationalities and people are going to look at your country even like in Australia the major thing is nature… it tells you as well the story about the discrepancies based on the elements you have in Europe. (Female, 25–34, WAMM)

As an international professional, this woman falls into the 'cosmopolitan identity construct' that Deniz Erkmen (2015, p. 29) presents in her work (discussed in Chapter 2). According to Erkmen, transnational professionals develop a dual identity that links their professional self with broader attitudes of openness, mobility and interaction with different cultures that are commonly associated with the cosmopolitan. These professional associations further emerged in the conversations I had with this visitor about the *Art of Science* exhibition. For example:

> So, in my first place, I'm thinking how many items, how did they bring them here for so long. 'Cause I'm in business, and so that was the first place I went. That was my first out. And then I also saw that some French companies were patrons, there is one I know very well… so I was asking myself… who helped to fund [the exhibition]. (Female, 25–34, WAMM)

She explained that she did not follow the exhibition in a straight line (the narrative of the voyage), but instead 'wandered around' going to different objects as they attracted her attention. She described her approach to museum exhibitions as 'assuming' between 'here and there', which she contextualised as part of her fast-paced professional environment 'because I work a lot, sometimes like 100 hours per week, so [I focus] more on the kind of things (objects)'. Following on from her initial queries about the behind-the-scenes loans and

funding of the exhibition, her identification with objects also strongly reflected her concern for work:

> You know there's a big register thing where they were noting down, it in the drawer that you need to push to open… I really also like, how do you say… it was registering every point, and so on… So, I like to see catalogue like of things that say this is so. (Female, 25–34, WAMM).

This background, or interest, in cataloguing fed into her assessment of the exhibition, the themes it wanted to highlight, and what this told her about Australia. Responding to the question about the relevance of the exhibition to Australia today, she succinctly summarised the purpose and message as follows:

> I guess I really think it's linking three things, right. So, one, knowing the land, with the map in it. Two, nature that is always pretty up front here, and pretty unique. Like seriously, when you come from Europe and even so on, and you go down to the Margaret River, and you have kangaroos jumping like all over you... And so, nature is pretty unique. And third complement is kind of the Aboriginal culture and the encounter with, like, local tribes and so on. (Female, 25–34, WAMM)

This Frenchwoman also found the exhibition intriguing for its links between Australia and her own country, which she identified strongly with throughout her interview. She recounted the narratives of the Freycinet map of Australia (discussed in Chapter 4) together with the story

of Josephine's Garden in France, where some Australian animals were kept following the return of the voyage. For her, there were important aspects of Australia that she identified with, such as the Eucalyptus trees and various animal species that, as part of this narrative, showed 'the things, like, about Australia… and then telling me the story about something from my own country. So that's how I sort of read the exhibition'. Erkmen (2015, p. 38) argues that transnational professionals find a sense of belonging through twin means: a) a continuing (albeit critical) patriotism and connection to their home country, and b) a belief that they can 'belong to various places' in the world, thus enabling them to connect with the places they occupy in their fluid lives. In this context, 'the national' for the international visitor provides transnational associations that bridge the divide between themselves and the places they visit (Lundström 2019, p. 102). For transnational professionals and international travellers, what was underlined in the exhibition at WAMM was the value of history for defining a country and its people. Such people identified simply with their country of birth, with phrases like, 'you may tell from my accent I am French' and 'I am Danish, but I live in Switzerland', often using this national identification as a point of contrast to the isolation and newness of Australia. In engaging with their Other, however, they underlined those subtle, banal aspects of nation overlooked by Australian citizens.

Conclusion

Australian visitors to *Art of Science* reflected cosmopolitan values of Australian society in the histories they responded to. They drew on the transnational narratives of the exhibition to reflect on the modern conceptions of Australia as a country defined by immigration and global trade. Visitors still engaged with traditional metanarratives of the nation, including exploration, 'tyranny of distance', and the natural environment, but these narratives were primarily engaged with a locality focus. While the curatorial choices of the National Museum and WAMM were reflected here, it was often a combination of object relations and the personal experiences that visitors brought to the exhibition that reassembled the exhibition

across these varying scales. The intersection of cosmopolitan and traditional aspects of nationalism were often present through, for example, the linking of climate change and animal and plant extinction with Australian flora and fauna. For Australian visitors, however, the beauty of the flora and fauna, the boundedness of the continent, were broken into transnational associations that linked these ideas into broader concerns.

Although I was unable to interview many, those international visitors I did speak to readily expected and identified traditional markers of Australia in the exhibition. They were also more likely to comment on the importance of history in defining the nation and its people, with many discussing the value of retaining and presenting the nation's past. Where the opportunity presented, these visitors showed they could be deeply interested in drawing on past and present transnational narratives to examine Australia's international relationships. Primarily, they were interested in what they could learn about the country they were visiting. This chapter established that a cosmopolitan national identity can emerge with regards to the capacity of a locality to ground transnational flows and narrative. Individual places, both in the content of *Art of Science* and those brought to this relationship by the museums and their visitors, were used to contextualise the global narratives and concerns of visitors, particularly regarding migration and the environment. Often visitor concerns meld with the missions of institutions and the local or national agenda they pursue. This chapter highlighted how cosmopolitan nationalism was assembled through the relationships between museums, objects, and visitors, where national identity was negotiated through transnational histories that operate across local, national, and global domains. These relationships connect the curatorial narratives of the exhibition through the personal narratives of individual visitors. Extending these intersections, the next chapter examines how Aboriginal peoples were presented in *Art of Science*, exploring how contemporary concerns associated with settler–Indigenous relationships were navigated through the histories constructed in the museum space.

Chapter 6
Different approaches to Indigenous content and non-Indigenous reception for *Art of Science*

The previous two chapters examined how a cosmopolitan nationalism informed the design and reception of the *Art of Science* exhibition. In Chapter 4, I argued that the use of transnational historical narratives allowed the National Museum to place Australia in the context of a global narrative. In comparison, WAMM drew on local narratives in order to place Western Australia in a global context that reinforced its uniqueness as a locality. Chapter 5 showed that these choices were often reflected in the reception of the exhibition by visitors at both locations. Visitor comments illustrated how a cosmopolitan nationalism has become embedded in their own national identity, particularly those histories that linked with values concerning the environment, flora and fauna, and migration.

Building on these arguments, this chapter focuses on how a cosmopolitan nationalism positions visitors to receive, and comment on, Aboriginal history and culture as presented by the *Art of Science* exhibitions at both the National Museum and WAMM. The chapter begins with an examination of the fifth theme, 'Observing the Observers', as presented by the National Museum and WAMM. It focuses on the curatorial and design decisions made at both locations before examining how these were responded to in visitor comments. At WAMM, *Art of Science* was concerned with local Western Australian narratives that highlighted the cross-cultural, and at times cosmopolitan, exchanges that occurred during both the Baudin and Freycinet voyages. Visitor comments paid attention to moments of connection between the French and Aboriginal peoples, where the Le Havre Museum artworks, painted by Petit and Lesueur, were seen to represent unique cross-cultural connections occurring at specific locations. This transnational, local history appeared to conceal for visitors the link between the past and the present. In contrast, visitors at the

National Museum predominantly linked the exhibition content with contemporary relationships between non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities. No participants in my study identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The focus of this chapter, therefore, is on the reception of Indigenous history by settler and (more broadly) non-Indigenous audiences. Here, I build on many aspects of the museum studies literature, discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, which examine the capacity of museums to develop networks of sharing and understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through their programs and projects.

Cosmopolitan values and Indigenous voices in *Art of Science*

The cosmopolitan may be best represented in a 'rooted cosmopolitanism' that allows people to live within localities and treat others with respect (Appiah 1997; Edensor & Sumartojo 2018; Kymlicka & Walker 2012; Skey 2013). In a diverse, transnational, multiethnic society, one can live with global and/or cosmopolitan concerns that are linked to local connections in a heterogeneous community. The next step may be to ask how one applies cosmopolitan engagement with the Other in settler countries to create a cosmopolitan network between people and localities in the nation of which one is a part. In the museum space, cosmopolitan nationalism creates an important frame for visitors to engage with 'difficult' Indigenous histories of dispossession alongside narratives of European exploration and settlement in Australia. This cosmopolitan perspective is defined through the regional, national, and global contexts in which museums operate and, with respect to the *Art of Science*, the transnational narratives created. Museums are uniquely positioned to facilitate this cross-cultural dialogue because of their positions as holders of Indigenous cultural artefacts, their role liaising and working with Aboriginal communities (including as members of reference groups), and through the Aboriginal narratives and histories they seek to communicate. While awareness has increased and perceptions shifted, one underlying question for museums concerns the capacity for a cosmopolitan nationalism to generate

actions in individuals and societies to perform cosmopolitan values. As Andrew Dobson (2006, p. 169) argues, although recognising and engaging with the Other is relatively simple, for 'us to "be" cosmopolitans (principles) […] it doesn't seem to be enough to motivate us to "be" cosmopolitan (political action)'. As performative institutions, museums have a strong capacity to reaffirm cosmopolitanism, but they also have a potential, through the presentation of different perspectives, to influence the 'political action' of their visitors.

As a touring exhibition that reused the same panels, displays, and a few select objects, it is important to acknowledge the curatorial decisions behind the 'Observing the Observers' theme for *Art of Science*. As the institution that led the curatorial design, SAMM was heavily invested in the Baudin expedition because it connected with South Australia's 'ownership' of a unique event in the maritime exploration and charting of Australia – the meeting of Nicholas Baudin and English explorer Matthew Flinders at Encounter Bay on 8 April 1802. Discussing this event in the context of the exhibition, SAMM Director Kevin Jones noted that 'this history figures large in South Australia's history of exploration. Baudin's a very important figure in our history, one of two. Baudin and Flinders first charting the South Australian coast'. Lyndl Lawton, the SAMM exhibition's lead curator, determined that this moment at Encounter Bay was a significant event to focus on. SAMM's permanent galleries already included three short panels that covered the early history of exploration. As part of her research into the 211 coastal profiles from Archives nationales, Lawton found a series of images charting the South Australian coast along the Coorong region. One image featured a representation of a cloud of smoke rising from the landscape. On closer examination, she discovered that the image had been sketched on the day that Baudin and Flinders met at Encounter Bay. As Lawton explained, the artwork presented an opportunity to position this moment as a connection between *three* parties:

> the Aboriginal story isn't our focus because there is very little on it, so what I did was when I was selecting at the National archives [France], going through the coastal profiles, all 211, there was one done on the day Flinders and Baudin encountered each other in the harbour. And on the coastline, there are these very obvious plumes of smoke. And so, it was like that is our story. While there are no portraits of Aboriginal people, they were on the shore watching those two ships meet. (Lyndl Lawton, SAMM Curator)

The *Art of Science* had strong, local connections for each of the four regional museums involved in the project, as the exhibition intersected with, and recorded, the coastline of Australia, its Indigenous peoples, and flora and fauna. The SAMM, WAMM, TMAG, and QVMAG all looked to the cartographic material from the Archives nationales de France for images of their own specific region. Even the ANMM had a series of images related to Sydney illustrating the diplomatic relations between Baudin's expedition and the emerging British colony.

Locality emerged as a significant focus for the National Museum in its approach to the episodes of French and Indigenous interactions during the Baudin voyage. In Chapter 4, I showed how the National Museum, taking a comparatively broad approach in its curatorial selection of objects and captions for staging the *Art of Science* exhibition, used objects depicting, or related to, multiple localities to represent a national narrative. For the thematic section examining the interaction between Indigenous peoples and Baudin's crew, however, the National Museum focused strongly on Tasmania, drawing on its existing collection of Tasmanian Aboriginal objects, which included a range of jewellery and design pieces, to complement the objects from Le Havre Museum and Archives nationales de France. When asked about this decision, National Museum Curator Cheryl Crilly described the exhibition as

a unique opportunity to develop and promote some objects designed by the Aboriginal peoples of Tasmania that had been added to the museum's collection over the last few years:

> What we did have was strong Indigenous collection materials, which we have gathered over the years, acquired over the years through targeted collecting and work, particularly with Tasmanian communities. So, I was always keen to include those sorts of objects that have a link through to those drawings by Lesueur and Petit, and those were the shell necklaces, the hemp carrier, the woven baskets, the paperbark canoes.

These institutional collecting priorities were reflected in *Art of Science* through decisions to represent the strong history of cross-cultural engagement between the French crew and Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples in the Le Havre Museum's collection. Illustrative of this engagement was the narrative behind one of the works displayed at the National Museum, *Arra-Maida, Woman from South Cape, Tasmania*, which depicts a Tasmanian Aboriginal woman wrapped in a fur garment in which is enfolded an infant. Arra-Maida was the lead participant in an extended encounter between Francois Péron (zoologist on the voyage), artist Martin Petit, and other crew members. The encounter involved the exchange of gifts, dancing, and an intimate moment where Arra-Maida collected a piece of charcoal that she then used to colour the face of Péron and his fellow Frenchman, Heirisson. This exchange, recounted in the diary of Péron, has been described elsewhere as demonstrating the vivid personality of this leader among the Aboriginal women of Bruny Island, Tasmania (Dyer 2005, pp. 108-11; Southwood 2015, p. 113).[12] The depictions of Indigenous peoples in the

[12] Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples were severely impacted by European colonisation from 1803, with many killed during the period of the 'Black War' over the 30 years following colonisation (Reynolds

artwork of the Baudin voyage are often noted as having a strong emotional effect on viewers, something which, as discussed below, was also noted by visitors to *Art of Science*. Artworks by Petit are a primary focus of historian Jane Southwood (2015, p. 108), who argues that the degree to which Petit drew on classical models of artistic design, common to the depiction of First Nations peoples in the Enlightenment period, may be a primary influence on contemporary perceptions of the 'authenticity' and 'realism' of the artwork. As I will examine later, the perceived 'authenticity' of the artworks allowed visitors to re-imagine Aboriginal–settler relations through the frame of cosmopolitan practices.

The subsequent strength of these narratives, and their links to the paintings and drawings of Petit and Lesueur in the Le Havre Museum's collection, came to dominate the (5) 'Observing the Observers' theme at the National Museum. Other artworks from the voyage that documented the material culture of Aboriginal peoples, such as baskets, necklaces, and canoes, were complemented in the National Museum exhibition by objects from its own collections. This focus was outlined in the introductory panel, which was displayed at all host museums:

> The people of *lutruwita* (Tasmania) bartered baskets, necklaces and spears for ribbons, buttons, knives, and mirrors. The women were acutely aware of the value of their work, reluctant to part with their carefully woven baskets.

The French artworks depicting traditional Aboriginal crafts and practices have become increasingly important for contemporary Indigenous communities seeking to recreate

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2004). In 1833, the remaining Tasmanian Aboriginals were moved onto Flinders Island, off the Tasmanian coast. As a result, there is a dislocation between Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples today and their language and clan groups, which is why geographical locations are used to position Tasmanian Indigenous people and groups in this thesis. Since 1992, a language retrieval program has been creating *palawa kani* or 'Tassie Blackfella Talk' by drawing on historical records and Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples' oral traditions (Berk 2017).

knowledge of the structure and construction of traditional objects. According to Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator), the *Art of Science* exhibition was used as an impetus for the National Museum to purchase and put on display a green *Maireener*, or a green-shell necklace, created by contemporary Tasmanian Indigenous artist Lola Greeno. In addition to the Le Havre artworks, the National Museum also included numerous objects from their own collections to complement the *Maireener*, including cloth bags, drums, and spears (see Plate 6.1).

Plate 6.1 'Observing the Observers' theme in *Art of Science* at National Museum of Australia. Image courtesy National Museum of Australia.

In another display case was a small model of a paperbark canoe built by Greeno's husband Rex, an Indigenous man from Flinders Island, Tasmania, which was informed by the descriptions and artworks created during the Baudin expedition. According to Zoe Rimmer (2016), Aboriginal men in Tasmania have become increasingly interested in the Baudin voyage as an opportunity to learn about paperbark canoe construction and often use the

drawings from the Baudin expedition to develop and reinvigorate this traditional practice. While a full-size canoe was on display at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery for *Art of Science*, the National Museum could only fit a smaller replica, which used the same techniques and design (see Plate 6.2). The canoe was displayed with a Charles-Alexandre Lesueur artwork from the Le Havre Museum collection titled *View of the east coast of Schouten Island*, which featured the canoes and highlighted the continuity of cultural practice from the time of European contact through to the present today. Finding ways to engage directly with Tasmanian Aboriginal communities to capture these processes was central to the curatorial work done by the National Museum and the two Tasmanian museums involved in the project.[13]

Plate 6.2 *Tasmanian Aboriginal model bark canoe* by Rex Greeno. National Museum of Australia. Image courtesy of National Museum Australia.

[13] Although outside the scope of my research, this was also true for TMAG and the QVMAG when they hosted this exhibition.

As Cheryl Crilly (National Museum Curator), framed it:

> community consultation here at the museum is integrated into what we do, and any exhibition that's going to have Indigenous material [will] carry an Indigenous voice where we can manage that.

In contrast to the WAMM exhibition, where it occupied the space between *Art of Science* and its sister exhibition *Freycinet 1818*, 'Observing the Observers' was a concluding thematic section of the exhibition at the National Museum. Occupying a long exterior wall at the end of the exhibition, it was intended to be the last component of the exhibition experienced by visitors before they exited, with the unsurprising consequence that Aboriginal themes were prominent in visitor responses to my interview questions. Non-Indigenous visitor responses to the Aboriginal history and cultural content of the exhibition were both affective and logical. As detailed in Chapter 2, Ivison (2002, 2017) argues that while museums and similar institutions have the potential to establish multivocal nationalist discourses that engage with Indigenous peoples, culture and history, there were limits where non-Indigenous audiences, while open to discussion about Indigenous dispossession and loss, may lack the cultural context in which to consider these matters more deeply.

Framed within a cosmopolitan nationalism, national museums, and museums more broadly, play a large role in this identity formation work, including by increasing inter-group knowledge sharing. Part of these dialogues is the emergence of collective guilt for non-Indigenous visitors, as they attempt to find ways of incorporating their understanding of the consequences of these histories for contemporary Indigenous peoples. In acknowledging the effects of colonial encounters between settlers and Aboriginal peoples, and while also recognising the impertinence and impropriety of Baudin's crew through these encounters, visitors to *Art of Science* sought ways to contextualise this past–present relationship and to

imagine alternative futures. The visitor below outlined the continuing legacy of these initial encounters for Australia today:

> Yes, the part that is ongoing is a relationship of us immigrants to Indigenous people in Australia and the fact that at that moment in time the Indigenous peoples of Australia were documented in the same way that, as the flora and fauna of this place, and were potentially not considered as may have actually been. That's an assumption that may have been considered as unequal that may not have been but that seems to be at an enduring set of assumptions of Australian life that haven't really gone away… I think as a nation we are still seriously conflicted. (Male, 60–74, National Museum)

Such comments recognise that 'difference' is a defining aspect of the relationship between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. This visitor further noted his position as settler or, as he phrased it, 'immigrant' in the relationship between settlers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. He also created a direct connection between the relationship established through the acts of colonisation, in the 'assumption that may have been considered unequal', to the endurance of this relationship through to the present day. Here, he commented on the 'enduring set of assumptions', which he considered significant for aligning these aspects of difference for 'settler' and Indigenous relationships.

The narrative of Tasmanian Aboriginal woman Arra-Maida, mentioned above, was identified by several National Museum visitors as a primary example of a cross-cultural encounter. One visitor commented on how Arra-Maida played a key role in connecting the limited 'understanding' between the French and Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples:

> And then I really find the way that this one, the first time I went a few weeks ago, it is communicating about the cultural meetings. And I think that it is essential that it does that with the history because we are so used to glossing over those things. So, I like the way that it is talking quite a bit about the meetings with Aboriginal people. And then from last time, a month or so ago that one of the French explorers had an Indigenous Aboriginal woman in Tasmania learning a song he sang and singing it back. And so, a very talented linguistic, expert Aboriginal woman and I thought that must have been pretty special and we don't know enough about those type of things that people have done that. (Female, 45-59, National Museum)

In *Art of Science*, the perceived authenticity of the French depictions of Aboriginal peoples garnered comments from visitors who reflected on how this history could be accommodated in what I would describe as a cosmopolitan nationalism that, at its ideological core, respects difference. Gabrielle Durepos and Albert Mills (2012) argue that these histories should be treated as simultaneously storytelling and ordering. Because these histories (re)emerge and were (re)created, they 'open up the opportunity for perceiving of them as ever-changing, of ascribing alternative connotations to them to broaden their meaning and establish their conditions of possibility' (Durepos & Mills 2012, p. 5). In engaging through these associations, people can also seek ways to mend the present through the re-historicised past and may also re-examine that past to present an imagined alternative.

National Museum: Alternative histories towards cosmopolitan futures

In his contribution to *What If?: Australian history as it may have been*, Jim Davidson (2006) imagined how history might have unfolded if the French had settled Tasmania in 1816, rather than the British. In Davidson's imagined account, the French, finding their Mauritius

colony unsustainable, resettled colonists in 'Tasmanie', where they were provided by the French Government with large land grants. In his account, the French and Aboriginal peoples began intermingling early on, with both romantic and business relationships forming between the Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples and leading French citizens where 'promising Indigenous youth were soon educated in Jesuit schools [and] by mid-century an Indigenous family, the Lannes, were prominent members of Bellerive society' (Davidson 2006, p. 17). What is the purpose of this fictive history? In introducing *What If*, the volume's editor, Sean Scalmer, outlined that those histories constructed in the volume were not trying to create an idealised past-present (and Davidson's account certainly is a colonialist narrative of an imagined future, rather than an idealised position for Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples). Instead, he argued that the accounts make a conscious effort to 'trace the limits of the possible, and thereby the making of the world that is' (Scalmer 2006, p. 3). While it is a fictive construction of an imagined past, the objectives that it seeks to create share parallels with the 'truthful' histories presented in museums.

These imagined futures of French settlement in Australia were also glimpsed by National Museum visitors to *Art of Science* through the visual depictions by French artists. As I have argued, the detailed depiction of Aboriginal peoples and their associated material culture in the artworks of Nicholas-Martin Petit and Charles-Alexandre Lesueur possess an affective quality. Among others, the National Museum featured Martin Petit's work *Cour-Rou-Bari-Gal, an Eora man* (see Plate 6.3), which is illustrative of the techniques used by French artists in depicting Aboriginal peoples during the Baudin voyage.[14]

This artwork was the outcome of multiple renditions, progressively taking greater care to capture distinctive aspects of Aboriginal cultural practices, including scarification. As was

[14] Eora is the name given by the earliest European settlers to the 29 clans of the Sydney basin.

highlighted in the accompanying exhibition publication, and in the exhibition when approaching these artworks:

> one is led to wonder why they are so sensitive and visually alluring, whereas the description and depictions of the Aborigines [sic] of Western Australia left by the English and Dutch explorers who preceded them are often so stark. (McCarthy 2016, p. 80)

Plate 6.3 'Observing the Observers' theme *The Art of Science*, National Museum of Australia. *Cour-Rou-Bari-Gal, an Eora man* located bottom-centre. Image courtesy National Museum of Australia.

Nicolas Baudin's comments on the relationship between the British and Indigenous peoples positions a relatively progressive attitude:

> I have never been able to imagine that there was any justice or even fairness on the part of Europeans in seizing, in the name of their

> government, a land which when first seen was inhabited by men who did not always deserve the titles of ‘savage’ and ‘cannibal’ that have been lavished on them. (Quoted in McCarthy 2016, p. 80)

For many, the comparison of the scientific approaches of Baudin’s voyages and what may be perceived as the colonial endeavours of Flinders following the establishment of a British settlement fifteen years earlier at Port Jackson provide an imaginative comparison for visitors reflecting on the experience of Aboriginal peoples at the hands of the British colonisers. The reception is evident in the following visitor comment:

> [It’s] kind of a more scientific approach to, a moral objective approach, to first wave colonialism, especially of the treatment of the Aboriginals. Umm, a less aggressive [approach, with] their names and I think some, the researchers, took a little bit more care with the way that they, the French researchers, took more care with the way that they kind of treated maybe the Indigenous people, community [sic]. Whether that is true or not, we didn’t really know. (Male; 25–34; National Museum)

Sentiments associated with the ways in which these artists framed Aboriginal peoples provides an intriguing counter-position for the imagined fortunes of Aboriginal peoples if the circumstances of colonisation had been different. In this ‘gap’, visitors may challenge, contest, or imaginatively remove components of the existing social order to construct personal identity positions and ethics in the alternative histories that operate as a counter to the metanarratives of British settlement in Australia.

The contemporary Indigenous cultural objects in the exhibition, linked to images of Aboriginal peoples that they perceived as realistic depictions, permits the visitor to move the

assemblage beyond the ‘objective’ past to create ‘alternative’ histories that support a cosmopolitan perspective in defining relationships between themselves, others and the world (Delanty 2009, p. 79). As explored in Chapter 2, the capacity to engage in a cosmopolitan perspective is dependent on specific social and cultural capital that people have access to. But in order to engage effectively with a cosmopolitan nationalism, actors ‘cannot fully and accurately recognize these without introducing a tension between themselves and their social world’ (Calhoun 2003, p. 17). Here, the comments from visitors sought to acknowledge the points of difference and ways to negotiate the tensions and anxieties associated with cosmopolitan settler engagement with Australia’s Indigenous history and Australia’s present settler–Indigenous relationships. For instance, in the passage, below, a visitor reflected on the competing perspectives of French and British engagements with Aboriginal peoples and how they could provide context for the present day:

> this collection is quite different. Named individuals, named Aboriginal individuals and it is a different approach to how people are presented. I think that’s so good to see because I don’t think we get to see them enough, to appreciate that enough, and to see something that we talk about how different might [it] have been if it was French rather than English. (Female, 35–44, National Museum)

The identification of ‘named’ Aboriginal peoples was presented by this visitor as distinctive of French approaches to science and cross-cultural encounters, with the perception or assumption that the British, in the main, failed to engage at a personal or humanistic level. This naming was seen as central to the ‘appreciation’ of Aboriginal peoples, perhaps not only in Australian history but also, for this visitor, the contemporary museum. Similar comments were given by other visitors, who thought the actions of the French in engaging

with Indigenous peoples compared well with an inherent acknowledgment of guilt derived from the outcomes of British settlement in Australia (see Maddison 2011, 2012):

> it's interesting that [my wife] talked about the French being visitors and what they brought there was as mutual… conviviality between Indigenous peoples and the French. Although it was on a night and it said there, from time to time, I thought that was interesting below and with a little narrative it said it compared pretty starkly later on to the English… and I thought, yeah, there are definitely lessons there to be learnt. (Male, 60–74, National Museum)

While they were creatively distinct from the histories produced by the national museums, and reconfigured by their visitors, these 'alternative' histories play a key role in the (re)territorialisation of cosmopolitan nationalism, as visitor desires, as one actor among many, influence the museum assemblage. Here, objects like Le Havre Museum's artworks and Aboriginal cultural artefacts play a central role in constructing a cosmopolitan nationalism that seeks to incorporate Indigenous and non-Indigenous difference into the national story. The intersections of object, visitor, curator, and exhibition were essential to developing a cosmopolitan perspective, as the Other was framed in the exhibition assemblage. These networks allow visitors to engage in discursive relationships with museum narratives, using these dialogues to reinforce or shift their own beliefs regarding the present-day difficulties of Aboriginal peoples against an imagined position of what might exist. These alternative histories, through constructing an imagined present, work as framing devices through which a cosmopolitan nationalism seeks to produce a future Australia.

‘Observing the Observers’ at WAMM

The National Museum drew upon the Le Havre Museum’s collection of portraits depicting the Aboriginal peoples on Tasmania. In doing so, the National Museum’s staging of the *Art of Science* presented a localised account of Tasmanian Indigenous peoples’ traditions, cultures, and histories that visitors could reflect onto the nation. As I have outlined above, these artworks emerged through the close interactions between the French crews and Aboriginal communities on the fringes of British settlement where these Indigenous peoples had already become accustomed to the appearance of Europeans. In contrast, the Baudin crew had little opportunity to engage with Aboriginal peoples on Australia’s west coast, where they were often the first Europeans seen by the local Indigenous population. The Baudin crew’s first interaction with Aboriginal peoples occurred on the west coast, at Geographe Bay, where they encountered a Wardandi man who was spearfishing in the water and fled when they tried to talk with him. The crew then had a brief period the following day where they talked to a pregnant Wardandi woman on the beach, although she was uninterested in their gifts and slipped away at the earliest opportunity. Finally, the Baudin crew were confronted by a hostile group of Wardandi men at Geographe Bay and, rather than risk bloodshed, quickly withdrew (Bigourdan 2016, p. 69). The absence of Aboriginal peoples of Australia’s west coast from the collections of Le Havre restricted the locality focus for WAMM that had been so apparent in the rest of the exhibition themes at that museum. Instead, at WAMM the exhibition included numerous portraits of Aboriginal peoples of Tasmania and Sydney and took a broader national focus for the ‘Observing the Observers’ theme (see Plate 6.4).

Plate 6.4 'Observing the Observers' for *The Art of Science* at Western Australian Maritime Museum. Photograph by author.

Among the few representations of Aboriginal life on the west coast were two landscape images depicting bark huts. The first of these artworks, by Nicolas-Martin Petit, captures the rounded Aboriginal shelters at, what is now known as, Shark Bay (Plate 6.5) and the second, by Lesueur, depicts 'fictional' Aboriginal peoples that the artist inserted in front of their shelters on the south-western coastline at Geographe Bay.

Plate 6.5 Nicholas-Martin Petit *Rounded shelters* (possibly at Shark Bay, Western Australia). Image courtesy Museum d'Histoire naturelle, Le Havre.

The accompanying panel to the latter image describes the scene as follows:

> Two people are visible next to their hut, preoccupied either with working on their spears or possibly catching birds like those behind them. These are probably black swans.

These images depict two geographically dislocated localities, the first on the state's northern coastline at Shark Bay, the latter in the south-west corner of the state at Geographe Bay. The accompanying panel tied the exhibition content to Western Australia – marked off in the concluding remark about the state's fauna emblem, the black swan. In short, locality mattered for WAMM in their presentation of *Art of Science* to a level of specificity that the National Museum did not apply beyond its focus on Tasmanian Indigenous peoples. While perhaps unsurprising, the consequences for the visitor reception of the exhibition at WAMM was to focus on moments of encounter at localities, rather than the overarching affective response to these artworks that was seen at the National Museum. These cross-cultural encounters were framed in the conclusion of the introductory panel for the exhibition at WAAM as 'anthropological' work:

> While the expedition's anthropological work was largely neglected on its return, 200 years later, its drawings remain a precious communal record of life before the impact of British invasion.

Similar to the National Museum, some visitors commented on the level of detail in the French artists' depictions of Aboriginal peoples. The comment below from a Perth resident visiting the exhibition at WAMM reflects the perception of a disconnect between non-Indigenous in Australia and issues of race, reconciliation, and land rights:

> Some of the paintings of the Aboriginal males and that along this wall here were quite impressive. I don't think I've seen Aborigines [sic] painted in quite that sharpness of detail before, or maybe I just haven't looked before… Yes, as I say, it has rekindled my interest in finding out a little bit more about Aboriginal history and life. I hadn't really thought about that much. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

As argued in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, Shark Bay was a central link between *Art of Science* and its sister exhibition at WAMM, *Freycinet 1818*, which included an examination of Louis de Freycinet's return to Shark Bay aboard the ship *Uranie*. The use of Shark Bay as a network link between the two exhibitions reinforced these moments of cross-cultural connection between the French and Aboriginal peoples in the Western Australia landscape and reinforced the localness taken by WAMM in presenting the *Art of Science*. These were featured in artworks like *Watercolour and ink drawing of camp at Shark Bay* by J. Alphonse Pellion (see Plate 6.6), which were exhibited in *Freycinet 1818*. One visitor also described the moment the *Uranie* crew met the Malgana peoples of Shark Bay as the most important and memorable narrative from the exhibition:

> the dancing one, in Shark Bay when the French guys were approached by the Aboriginals and a bit of spears up and muskets were out and the French soldiers just started dancing in a circle and the spears came down, and they swapped gifts and things like that. That's probably the most pressing one, I would say. (Male, 35–44, WAMM)

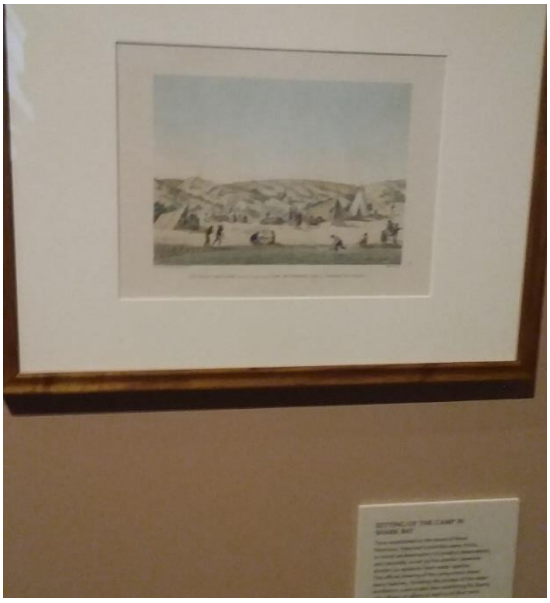

Plate 6.6 *Watercolour and ink drawing of camp at Shark Bay*, by J. Alphonse Pellion in 1818. State Library of Western Australia. On display in *Freycinet 1818* at Western Australian Maritime Museum. Photograph by author.

It was these brief moments of cross-cultural dialogue that dominated visitor comments on the 'Observing the Observers' theme at WAMM. These connections were not simply contained to narratives that occurred along the west coast, but also the more intimate encounters in Tasmania and Sydney that were the central components of the exhibition:

> One of the things I notice that I read about Tasmania, how they make contact with him [Baudin] on the east coast of Tasmania and they were exchanging cloth and trinkets and things like that, but all fell to pieces when they didn't recognise the Aboriginal traditions and their requirements [for] the diplomatic relations – yeah nothing changes. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

As at the National Museum, this WAMM visitor made a link to the present day. With the comment 'yeah, nothing changes', he sought to trace the assumptions and impropriety of

Europeans' exchanges with the Malgana peoples into contemporary Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships. But rather than indicating a cosmopolitan disposition that provides for diplomacy in intercultural encounters, the displays of trinkets and acts of exchange were viewed instead by exhibition visitors as failures of cross-cultural dialogue, a failure that operates both in the past and present. Unlike the National Museum comments, this observation does not reflect a lesson learned or an imagined, alternative past. Instead, the failures of these 'diplomatic relations' with the French were seen to demonstrate European arrogance and a feeling of superiority that limited the capacity of the explorers to engage – in earnest – with not only Indigenous peoples in Australia but, presumably, also First Nations peoples across different continents. The comment was comparative, a like-for-like analysis of moments in time, rather than a reflection on the relationships between past and present.

Narratives about Aboriginal peoples were also used by WAMM to reinforce the locality narrative I explored in Chapter 4, with respect to isolation and distance and which informs the history of Western Australia. The visitor's comment below links the content of *Art of Science* to that he had seen in the Kimberley region, where the isolation narrative was also apparent:

> And just in July, I was up in the Kimberley and there again the stories of the interactions with the Aborigines [sic] and the isolation, and the attitudes of the time reminded you just how much Western Australia evolved historically in isolation. I think it's all part of that picture. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

This comment reflects an abiding concern with local identity and perceptions of distance, as was explored in Chapter 5. The intersection of isolation narratives with cross-cultural

encounters related to a particular space dominant in the WAMM responses and reinforced the idea that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were disconnected from other cultures.

At WAMM there was also a focus on the relationships forming across cultural boundaries, reflecting seemingly benign (and perhaps joyful) interactions where the visitor could interpret the French voyages in the context of exploration and engagement, rather than settlement and control. Visitors were also impressed by the simple fact that communications occurred across massive cultural and linguistic divides, as the following comment illustrates:

> Well, you have the local population who might not, there is one story where this woman sort of runs away into some sort of scene with the Europeans arriving, it must have been pretty frightening. I mean to see these people, totally different clothes, different coloured skin, weapons too, and arrive. And the fact that they even managed to get in touch with the locals and draw them is reassuring that they must have managed to enter a dialogue somehow and put them at ease. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

Emotional reactions to the narratives in the *Art of Science* exhibition, such as comments about the content being ‘very touching’, show the capacity of the past to affect contemporary sensibilities. Some visitors looked to use experiences from their own lives to find meaning in the narratives they were encountering. For instance, a woman at WAMM recalled her own experiences of communicating across language and cultural divides during her travel to Thailand, which she used to contextualise the connections between Aboriginal peoples and the French explorers. She explained it as follows:

> we did do [living in another culture/language], in very faraway places in Thailand when we've been living at village level. And the exchanged songs with people that we couldn't communicate with directly and used music and the other things that. [Pause] Implicit in all of this is the respect for people on the other story... there's so many, respect for what people were seeing is coming through. (Female, 60–74, WAMM)

Other visitors thought these past encounters were unable to be contextualised by contemporary experiences and values. Nevertheless, they found the historical conditions for compassion and engagement to be relevant to present, cosmopolitan sentiments. For instance, one visitor said:

> Yeah, there was also some sort of chief that gave a European some kind of necklace, if I understand right, and it’s just kind of mind boggling to put yourself in those sorts of scenes and imagine yourself arriving in a totally unknown territory, where someone might have spoken to you and got some sort of interaction that has a sense, no I find that very touching. (Male, 60–75, WAMM)

These narratives of exchange and interaction between Baudin’s crew and Aboriginal peoples localised the cross-cultural encounters, leading visitors at WAMM to interpret them as historical events. They were able to create networks of association between the local narratives and the cosmopolitan histories being explained through these communications across difference, but there was not a strong, consequential, concern expressed for

contemporary settler–Indigenous relationships. Visitors at the National Museum, in contrast, reflected a settler position that expressed a desire to understand more about Aboriginal peoples, their cultures, and their practices, to progress contemporary settler–Indigenous relationships in the context of their cosmopolitan national identity. In comparison, the visitors at WAMM identified what I would describe as a cosmopolitan agenda in the history of the nation, which was viewed as an historicised past that could inform a contemporary cosmopolitan nationalism.

Cultural distancing and the cosmopolitan feeling at National Museum and WAMM

While the curatorial focus of the National Museum tied its display of the *Art of Science* to the continuation of Aboriginal culture, a focus strongly reflected in visitor comments, the approach taken by the WAMM's staging of the exhibition was organised around narratives of intercultural dialogue and connection, which prompted visitors to highlight the loss of the traditions and practices of Aboriginal peoples. These comments on the loss of Aboriginal traditional practices were perhaps highlighted most poignantly by the international visitors I interviewed who, without the historical and cultural understandings of many Australians, failed to make connections to present day Indigenous practices and experiences. For these visitors, the exhibition was an opportunity to reflect generally on the dislocation between the past and the contemporary situation. The following comment made by a visitor from the United Kingdom is indicative:

> I don't know, I just find it sort of a great tragedy, and you can't help but be aware of it in Australia, and... [sound of exasperation] Yeah, it is the whole population, a whole sub-population who must have had a very different way of thinking about these sorts of things, and so for

> us Europeans it's an age of discovery and adventure, for the Aboriginals it's the end of their culture and their lifestyle. (Male, 60–74, WAAM).

Coming from the United Kingdom, this international visitor was unlikely to be familiar with ongoing settler–Indigenous dialogues and communications in Australia. Without this context, his conclusion was that the cultures and traditions had ceased – summarised plainly as a 'great tragedy'. Unlike the *Art of Science* curatorial design at the National Museum, which involved contemporary artworks and practices, such as the shell necklaces from Tasmania, the exhibition at WAMM had few contemporary Aboriginal objects. In this context, the histories became dislocated from the present, and for visitors – and international visitors in particular – the Aboriginal peoples' story was contained to the past. Another international visitor of Danish nationality was concerned with how Indigenous peoples were living in a state of nature, and that their cultures linked in with the environment around them. He contrasted the scientific exploration of the French with Aboriginal knowledge networks:

> the Aborigines [sic] seemed to have lived here long before the current population lived here, and in a very different way. In a much more natural way, it would seem. I mean they were just in harmony with the environment. They weren't looking at building anything in particular, they were just looking at surviving, I guess, and feeding themselves. Living in symbiosis with the gods, and the nature. And these so-called scientists came for a very different purpose. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

Responses from international visitors can highlight two persistent fallacies about Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories that can be damaging to current efforts to build positive Indigenous to non-Indigenous relationships. The first misunderstanding by settler and non-Indigenous peoples relates to the sophistication of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures and practices in both the past and the present (King-Boyes 1977; Muir & Lawson 2018; Palmer 2016; Reynolds 2004; Ryan 1981; Simpson & Wigglesworth 2019). Authors have also to highlight both the sophistication of hunter-gatherer practices together with numerous and complex Indigenous enterprises in fields including farming, water management, fire control, and construction (Gammage 2011; Gerritsen 2008; Keen 2021; Rose et al. 2016; Williams et al. 2020). Tied into this minimisation of Indigenous peoples into a 'mundane' hunter-gatherer existence is the perpetuation of a 'noble savage' narrative that folds into discussions about the past and present representation of Aboriginal peoples (Bell 2014, p. 199; Moreton-Robinson 2020, p. 369). There are well-rehearsed critiques within these narratives that Aboriginal culture is no longer seen as current and adaptable but cocooned in the cultural life of Aboriginal peoples that existed at the time of European settlement. In many ways, visitors can interpret Aboriginal cultural practice as discontinued. These conversations can fix 'natural' images of Aboriginal peoples and the ways they should act, to which some visitors objected. I do not want to be inappropriately critical of international visitors because they do operate a step removed from the dialogues in Australian society that attempt to raise awareness and acknowledgment of Indigenous peoples' history and culture, particularly for settlers. However, these visitors do show how these myths can be perpetuated through historical narratives in the nation's museums. For instance, as another visitor from the United Kingdom at the WAMM exhibition said:

> Well, because of the context of Australia, I don't know, I was moved by parts of it, and I guess that's part of the experience. You know I've been asked over here for work, and I've been over here for a couple of months and I'm starting to get an idea of a different culture. And

> what they say is, parts of it has actually affected me, and parts of this exhibition have brought it out as well. Around the Indigenous people [sic], yes. I mean the announcement, you come in and there is a statement about the people here are long dead, a lot of the people have long been deceased, and the exhibition was created in the context, to being out the context of the time in which these events were happening. That shows a sensitivity. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

While WAMM visitors were more focused on these cross-cultural dialogues than National Museum visitors, they were also more suspicious of the intentions behind the perceived realism taken by the French artists in their depictions of Indigenous peoples in Australia. These historically located narratives placed WAMM visitors in a position from which they did not contemplate the alternative histories that visitors to the exhibition at the National Museum conceived. Instead, WAMM visitors viewed the French artworks as a perpetuation of European idea(l)s of the so called 'noble savage'. They could distance themselves from the views of historic actors, particularly when the actions of these historic actors were seen as perpetuating stereotypes of 'savage' Aboriginal people. The following observation of an Australian visitor to WAMM is illustrative:

> Pretty much all of them, because the early recordings of the Indigenous peoples, and the fact that the artist [laughter] was tempted to caricature them somewhat on a preconception of, you know, what they should look like, was interesting and an insight to the psychology of the time as well as the artist's ability to do that. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

Another visitor was discomforted by the *Arra-Maida, woman from Southern Cape, Tasmania*, discussed above, which he perceived as a caricature, a 'fetishism', of the Aboriginal peoples.

> I don't like the one there of the lady, it's someone's fantasy in a way, these wanted warriors. The arms in the left and the right. I suppose the artists are drawing things in the context of their own environment, training, and where they came from. Although I'm sure there was a genuine attempt in those times to be objective. I mean that program's [sic] famous for its support of the sciences [presumably the Baudin voyage] and so there must have been ulterior, other motives for exploration, you know, the scientific aspect was very strong. (Male, 46–59, WAMM)

Engagement in the museum space with an idealised – or even 'true to life' – depiction of Aboriginal peoples in the eighteenth century can create awareness and appreciation for the Other in that realm. The transfer of these qualities into the present day, however, risks perpetuating negative stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rather than contesting non-Indigenous perceptions of 'their perceived deficits, of culture, of civility of modernity – seen through a lens incapable of recognising difference' (Bell 2014, p. 200; see also Maddison 2011, p. 165). But in recognising difference, museum visitors were fulfilling one aspect of openness and engagement with the Other, which is central to a cosmopolitan agenda – a space where, as will be argued below, museums can play a crucial role in opening perspectives and understanding.

At both the National Museum and WAMM, the absence of an Indigenous voice was a concern for visitors. The presentation of a one-sided narrative of the French voyage, for

example, was an uncomfortable reminder of how Indigenous voices are, as many scholars have noted, an absent part of the colonial archive (Thorpe & Galassi 2014; Wiens 2020; Wintle 2016). While museums may aim to present an 'objective' history, supported both through the historical records of events contained within archives, images and photographs, together with oral accounts of Indigenous peoples and settlers, the limitations imposed by these sources were not enforced on the visitors' contribution to the assemblage. Christopher Hartt et al. (2014, p. 300), in their study of Air Canada, argue that historians (like curators) are engaged in two assemblages that inform their histories: a publication assemblage and, more importantly, a 'legitimate history' assemblage. These assemblages demand certain expectations from professional historians and curators, with their own assemblages of sources and fellow researchers involved. Visitors remain a step removed from these assemblages and need not operate within bounds or targets that are achievable, or even realistically approachable, in order to shift the foregrounding of their relationships in the museum assemblage. We have already seen how 'alternative' histories were developed by visitors at the National Museum, shifting the conversation from the constraints of the objects and histories presented. In recognising difference, National Museum visitors received comments from contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples who were asked to speak on behalf of their ancestors and/or nations within this absence from the colonial archive. This approach was not taken at WAMM because it would have jarred in an exhibition that was primarily oriented towards the French voyage and its scientific endeavours. Because of this absence, visitors moved beyond the limits of colonial archive to wonder what views Aboriginal peoples may have had about those early encounters with the French. Referring to the previously discussed interactions between the *Uranie* crew and Malgana peoples of Shark Bay, one visitor commented on different values that European and Aboriginal peoples brought to the encounter:

> I would be very, very interested if there was any conceivable way that the story be captured from the other side, when these ‘whities’ were offering them castanets, what did the Indigenous people think. ‘Really is that all you've got? Nothing more useful in your sack?’ And so, you know we don't really have that reflection, but yes, critically important part of Australia's history. (Male, 60–74, WAMM)

Such frustrations were also raised with me by a visitor from the United Kingdom. While acknowledging that it was valuable to understand how the European explorers received and recorded their interactions with Indigenous peoples, he nevertheless felt that it meant the past, and its subsequent historicising, was particularly one-sided:

> Well, you know it obviously stems from the very early days of European exploration of Australia and settlement, and so that's very important for Australia. And the way the settlers, well, first explorers, saw the Aboriginals is very important, but it doesn't bring out how the Aboriginals saw the explorers, to be honest. None of that, and it’s needed, I think, yeah, more of that, really. It is all a bit one sided, and you expect it to be, I think, but it is one sided. I don't know. (Male, 45–59, WAMM)

When questioned about how difficult it would be to represent an oral tradition through an exhibition that uses images, words and artefacts, this same visitor said that it was not simply the medium that made it difficult to communicate Indigenous perspectives – it was the degree of cultural separation. He went on to infer that it must be difficult to place the culture

of Aboriginal peoples appropriately in the exhibition space, given the museum's role as a Western form of cultural expression:

> Interviewer: Well, it can be difficult to pull from an oral tradition.
>
> Visitor: Yes, well, I suppose, but [put] your culture into something very, very different and that's not easy really, and it's not this exhibition, it would be another way of converting that message.

These comments show how some visitors recognised the limits of the history being presented, as a one-sided construction of the encounters that could never truly be captured. Yet, while there was an acknowledgment of the complexity behind these histories and the absence of voices of, and for, Indigenous participants within the historical record, visitors expressed a clear desire to better understand Aboriginal culture despite the limitations of the exhibition medium. Unlike the National Museum, however, at WAMM this engagement was contained in the locality narratives. Rather than expanding the assemblage to consider alternative histories, the 'objective' past (and a desire to understand Aboriginal peoples' place within those narratives) was central to the histories negotiated at WAMM, temporally dislocating these narratives from contemporary concerns and practices.

Conclusion

In constructing the 'Observing the Observers' theme for the *Art of Science* exhibiton, the National Museum and WAMM both had difficulties reconciling it with the design and narrative they had taken in curating/staging the rest of the exhibition. The National Museum's focus on Tasmania drew on the artworks of Aboriginal peoples from the Le Havre collection and contemporary Indigenous cultural objects. This locality focus was in marked contrast to the transnational histories and multiple geographical focus of the rest of the exhibition. This

choice allowed the National Museum to emphasise unique cultural productions of Indigenous Tasmanians in order to explain the complex, multiplicity of individual Aborginal nations in Australia. Visitors at the National Museum engaged directly with French depictions of Aboriginal peoples to imagine an alternative colonial history that may have had kinder consequences for the Aboriginal peoples. The convergence of the visitor, the National Museum's legislated focus on Indigenous cultures, and contemporary links with Tasmanian Aborigional peoples, created specific interactions and visions of settler–Indigenous relationships in the exhibiton that underlined the continuity of cultural practices.

In comparison, the focus of the WAMM was on locality. Its staging of the *Art of Science* exhibition was counteracted by the absence of strong narratives and links between objects from the Le Havre collection and locations on the Western Australian coast. This absence was somewhat addressed by the sister exhibition, *Freycniet 1818*, where there were stronger interactions on dispay, including between the *Uranie* crew and the First Nations peoples of Shark Bay. The focus on locality also influenced visitor comments, particularly local visitors who were familiar with, and may have been looking specifically for, moments of cultural encounter in familiar localities. These coastal encounters appeared to confirm a cosmopolitan capacity that was historically contained in the past rather than historicised into the present day. This containment within the past also contained 'authentic' Aborigional and/or Torres Stait Islander peoples' culture, resulting in visitor comments that focused on the disappearance of Indigenous culture. This framing of Aborigional and/or Torres Stait Islander peoples culture as of, and locked within, the past was a particularly common observation in the responses from international visitors who, without the context of living in Australia and an understanding of the contemporary realities for Indigenous peoples continuing cultural practices and traditions, could only surmise as to the losses that had occurred.

Visitors to the National Museum and WAMM found very different ways to contextualise the Baudin voyage in Australian history and create a context for the present day. At WAMM, the cosmopolitan was embedded in the past, with safe and mutual relationships emerging through engagements between the French and Indigenous peoples. These engagements were primarily a positive use of history, where cosmopolitan concerns with the Other were embedded in the histories being received. In contrast, the engagement with these themes at the National Museum was focused on alternative histories that were oriented towards repairing the fractured contemporary relationship between 'settler' and Indigenous peoples. Here, the past that was engaged with was not the French voyage, but an associative Anglo-Saxon history of Australia that sits uncomfortably in a cosmopolitan nationalism. Visitor attention was directed towards the present day and the process of historicising the past through these altenative histories envisioned an improved present. While not strictly 'real', the cosmopolitan intentions behind these alternative pasts prompts an imagined future where settler–Indigenous relationships are, if not 'reconciled', then repaired to some extent.

Chapter 7

Prioritising First Nations voices in *Cook and the Pacific*

From his first steps onto Botany Bay on 29 April 1770, James Cook has occupied a central (albeit contentious) position in the history of Australia. His charting of the east coast of Australia between April and August 1770 concluded at Cape York, where he raised the British flag and claimed the eastern third of the Australian mainland for the Kingdom of England and Wales.[15] He is central to the story of British colonisation in Australia, and the consequential history of European settlement and Indigenous dispossession. Cook's influence – his legacy – is not restricted to Australia, however, but has reverberations in the histories of numerous countries in the Pacific and similar consequences for the First Nations peoples of these regions. The impact of Cook on the Pacific was the central focus of the exhibition *Cook and the Pacific*, hosted at the National Library in 2018. Rather than focusing on Cook's place in Australian history, the National Library chose to place Australia in the context of Cook's three voyages to the Pacific and the numerous cross-cultural encounters that occurred between his crew and the First Nations peoples.

In line with the arguments made in the museum studies literature, the curatorial choices taken with *Cook and the Pacific* reflect an overwhelming concern on the part of the museum to exhibit previously hidden or ignored histories in order to question the meaning of these narratives for a contemporary, cosmopolitan nation (Bell 2014; Cole & Brooks 2017; Gordon-Walker 2018; Harris 2018; McCarthy et al. 2013; Onciul 2014, 2015; Robinson 2017; Tolia-Kelly & Raymond 2020). The transnational narratives contained in the exhibition (and outlined to me through interviews with the exhibition curators) link into an indigenous rights

[15] The Kingdom of England and Wales was subsequently replaced in 1707 by the Kingdom of Great Britain, when the Kingdom of Scotland was added to England and Wales. This was subsequently extended to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in 1801.

narrative that ties into a cosmopolitan nationalism and was designed to give voice to marginalised communities. In unpicking the objects, narratives and context of these national histories, an assemblage thinking approach facilitates an examination of how global networks are drawn through the museum assemblage – between First Nations communities and objects, between National Library curators and objects, and between objects and visitors. In other words, the chapter reveals how the exhibition assembled a cosmopolitan history and identifies what aspects of the present were embedded within it.

Cook and the Pacific: Beginnings

Before examining *Cook and the Pacific*, I would like to provide a brief summation of Cook's three voyages in the Pacific. Cook's first voyage (1768–1771) aboard HMB *Endeavour* had multiple objectives, primary among them being the observation of the Transit of Venus, charting the coast of New Zealand (confirming the North and South Islands), and the charting of east coast of Australia (Frame & Walker 2018, pp. 29-30). Cook's second voyage (1772–1775) aboard HMS *Resolution* and HMS *Adventure* set out to circumnavigate the globe as far south as possible, with the *Resolution* becoming the first ship known to cross the Antarctic Circle. This circumnavigation demonstrated that New Holland was not part of a great southern continent conceived of as Terra Australis (Frame & Walker 2018, pp. 119-20).

The third and final voyage (1776–1780) aboard HMS *Resolution* and HMS *Discovery* tried to find a passable route through the North-West Passage connecting the Pacific and Arctic Oceans across the top of North America. After an unsuccessful search for the North-West Passage around the north of Alaska, the ships anchored at Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii on 11 January 1778. Following a series of disagreements there was a fight between the British and the Hawaiian peoples, the consequence of which was the death of James Cook and another four British sailors, together with the death of approximately sixteen Hawaiians. The voyage,

commanded successively by Charles Clerke, and then John Gore, once again unsuccessfully sought the North-West Passage before returning to Great Britain in 1780. Additional details can be found in a timeline of the three voyages in Appendix IV.

When the National Library decided to create an exhibition focused on Cook, there were multiple ways they could have approached the task. The National Library was strongly aware, however, that the 250th anniversary of Cook's arrival in Botany Bay in 1770 would mean there would be numerous Cook and *Endeavour*-focused exhibition and event programs at many of the major institutions in Sydney (located only 280km north-east of the National Library in Canberra). The ANMM and State Library of New South Wales, for example, were both preparing major exhibitions for 2020 and, in the view of the National Library curators, it would have been difficult to compete with them. As Martin Woods (co-Curator *Cook and the Pacific*) argued, the National Library 'would be [comparable] minnows when it came to Cook anniversaries.' The dominance of Sydney in the Cook and *Endeavour* story was a significant deterrent from this style of exhibition because the greatest number of interstate visitations to Canberra, and interstate visitors for national museums, arrive as day-trippers (79%) or weekenders (65%) from the state of New South Wales, with a significant proportion coming from Sydney (VisitCanberra 2018). Rather than focus on the *Endeavour* voyage that visited Botany Bay, it was thus decided that 'it would be prudent to go early and to cover all three, allowing the exhibition to commemorate Cook's departure from England voyages' (Martin Woods, National Library Curator). While somewhat pragmatic, this decision to focus on the three voyages also moved the exhibition brief away from an emphasis on the Australian east coast to incorporate the vast swathes of the Pacific Ocean that Cook navigated between 1768 and 1779. Martin Woods (National Library Curator) described focusing on the broader context of Cook's three voyages as an opportunity to move outside the Australian context:

> We took a deliberate ideological viewpoint that we'd like to broaden people's perspectives and perhaps move away from Botany Bay and start thinking about Cook and the Pacific. So, by about 2016 we'd decided that was the direction we were going to go.

From the very beginning, *Cook and the Pacific* actively avoided the trend to explore Cook as an emblematic figure in the history of the Pacific region. Instead, Cook was often positioned in the exhibition as being between the hero and villain dichotomy in ways that blur his actions in the contexts of both the eighteenth century and the present day.

In Australia, media commentary has been mixed with regards to Captain Cook. In 2017, Stan Grant, a Wiradjuri journalist with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), questioned the appropriateness of a Captain Cook statue in Hyde Park, Sydney, bearing the words 'Discovered this territory 1770', when Aboriginal peoples have lived in Australia for 70,000 years (Grant 2017). This argument was continued in 2019 when discussion about the National Aborigines and Islander Day Observance Council (NAIDOC) Week raised concerns that, of the 25 publicly funded (and maintained) bronze sculptures of the colony's early leaders in Sydney's CBD, none were of an Indigenous person, with most of the sculptures representing prominent British officers from the early days of European exploration and settlement, like Cook, and Governors such as Lachlan Macquarie and Arthur Phillip. Nathan Moran, a Biripi Dhungutti Goori man representing the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council based in Sydney, stated 'the narrative of only knowing colonial powers and authorities is a very narrow view […] it's breath takingly hard to feel proud walking around to see statues of people that […] declared martial law on us' (cited in Kidd 2019). This prominent criticism of Cook and the increasing scrutiny associated with recognising his achievements as a soldier, sailor and explorer provides new challenges for curators seeking

to tell this history. Susannah Helman, (co-Curator, *Cook and the Pacific*) outlined these challenges as follows:

> I think it was sort of obvious that in this – the days of looking at Cook – the voyager, hero, a man by himself – which he never was – that was neither good history, nor was it a fair and objective way of looking at Cook. Nor was it a fair and objective way of looking at Cook in this day and age as well.

In examining Cook's three voyages across the Pacific, the National Library made a curatorial decision to move away from a heroic narrative of Cook's achievements to instead focus on transnational narratives of concern for the Other. *Cook and the Pacific* extended beyond the scope of Cook's five-month voyage along the east coast of Australia aboard the *Endeavour* to incorporate the full scope of Cook's three voyages into the Pacific. As part of this process, the cultural practices of First Nations peoples in the Pacific, together with their engagements with Cook and his crew, became a central concern.

Cook and the Pacific: Outline of design and structure

Cook and the Pacific was not the first attempt by a national museum in Australia to examine Cook's engagement with First Nations peoples throughout the Pacific. *Cook's Pacific Encounters*, displayed in 2006, was an exhibition developed by the National Museum of Australia using the Göttingen Cook-Forster Collection, an ethnographic collection based at the University of Göttingen, Germany. The Göttingen Cook-Forster Collection was built on the compilations of indigenous materials gathered by Johann Forster, a naturalist who was on board Cook's second voyage through the Pacific. Similar to *Cook and the Pacific*, the *Cook's Pacific Encounters* exhibition was deeply concerned with Cook's engagement with

the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, but to the exclusion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. This absence likely reflected the strength of the Cook-Forster collection on Melanesian culture, with Hawaii and the Society Islands (modern day Tahiti, Bora Bora, and Raiatea) strongly represented in the exhibition. *Cook's Pacific Encounter* had an ethnographic focus that explored the traditional cultures and practices of these First Nations peoples, which meant that the exhibition had the quality of using 'the seemingly unchanging character of the artefacts [to] suggest a journey back in time […] a harmonious paradisaical life in the Pacific [that] has subsequently inspired generations of European travellers and artists' (Hauser 2006, p. 15). With *Cook and the Pacific*, the National Library wanted to focus on the interactions and engagements between Cook and the First Nations peoples of the Pacific. The National Library tied this transnational history into contemporary global networks by engaging with First Nations peoples from across the Pacific.

While the Pacific was the focus for the exhibition, it was impossible for the National Library to entirely dislocate Cook from his impact on and legacy in Australia. This legacy was addressed early in the exhibition. After proceeding through the entry foyer of the National Library exhibition gallery, visitors approached a section that briefly examined James Cook's early life, the British context of the voyages, and a navigational and general outline of the three Pacific voyages. The first exhibition section was titled with one significant question: Who is Cook? The following text was provided in response:

> James Cook is an enigma, a complex, almost mythical figure in history. His legacy is mixed. For some, he is the great navigator, a man firm but fair, well suited to his calling. But for many First Nations peoples across the Pacific, he symbolises centuries of dispossession.

After establishing this connection to the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, the panel framed the focus taken by the National Library as being on the connection between First Nations peoples and the Cook voyages:

> The scientific achievements of his voyages were immense. Yet each Pacific encounter was two-sided, and today Cook and the impact of his voyages on First Nations continue to resonate powerfully.

From here, the exhibition led into a room that was dominated by a large model of the HMB *Endeavour*, on loan from the Australian National Maritime Museum. Around this central object, the exhibition briefly traced Cook's childhood in Yorkshire, England, and his early working life in the Whitby coal trade, before examining his recruitment to the Royal Navy and survey work in North America (see Plate 7.1). The National Library had obtained on loan a series of plans of the *Endeavour* from the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, and of HMS *Resolution* from Mulgrave Archives, UK, which were then used as touchstones for the three voyages and their achievements.

These plans were related to navigational objects also included in this section of the exhibition, such as: a brass chronometer on loan from the Royal Society, London; Shelton's regulator, an example of the type used in capturing the transit of Venus; and correspondence and letters concerning the appointment of Cook to the first *Endeavour* voyage. As Woods put it in our discussions, 'there's a few things in there that are really unavoidable when you're talking about Cook. One of them is navigation, so in that first room we managed to obtain the model of the *Endeavour* and we managed to obtain from the Maritime Museum in London the *Endeavour* plans' (Martin Woods, National Library Curator).

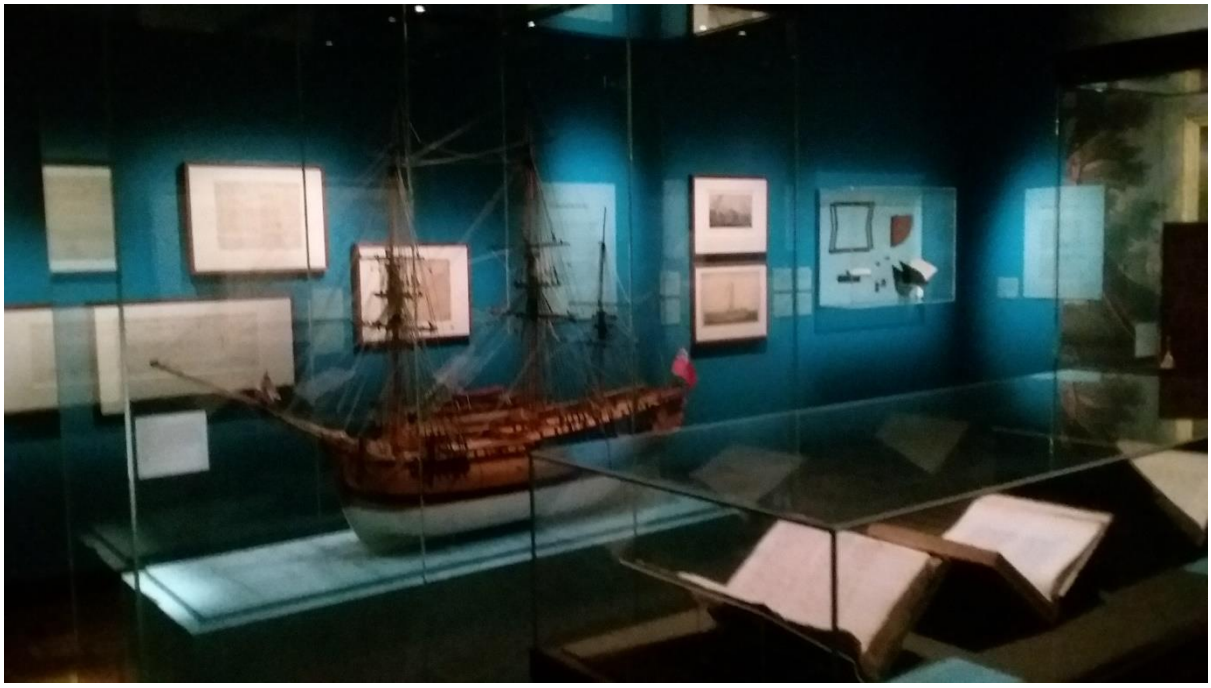

Plate 7.1 *Cook and the Pacific* navigation theme at National Library of Australia. Photograph by author.

In introducing the exhibition, the National Library focused on the complexity associated with Cook and his role in Australian and global history. Framed by sections on Cook's early life and time in Britain (at the exhibition entry), and the remembrance and commemoration of Cook (in thematic sections near the exhibition exit), the central components of the exhibition were heavily focused on the three voyages and their connections with First Nations peoples of the Pacific. Geographic regions were used to thematically arrange the exhibition, with five thematic sections established for the Society Islands, New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, and the North Pacific. Visitors were given this context in the introductory panel, which concluded:

> This exhibition revisits Cook's voyages as meetings of peoples and their knowledge sharing systems, and brings their voices to the fore through journals, objects and living cultural practices.

The first of these geographically themed sections that visitors entered was focused on the Society Islands (Totaiete Mä), an archipelago in the Pacific that includes the Windward Islands and Leeward Islands of which the largest island are Tahiti, Meheti'a, Raiatea and Taha'a (see Figure 7.1 for the layout of the exhibition entry).

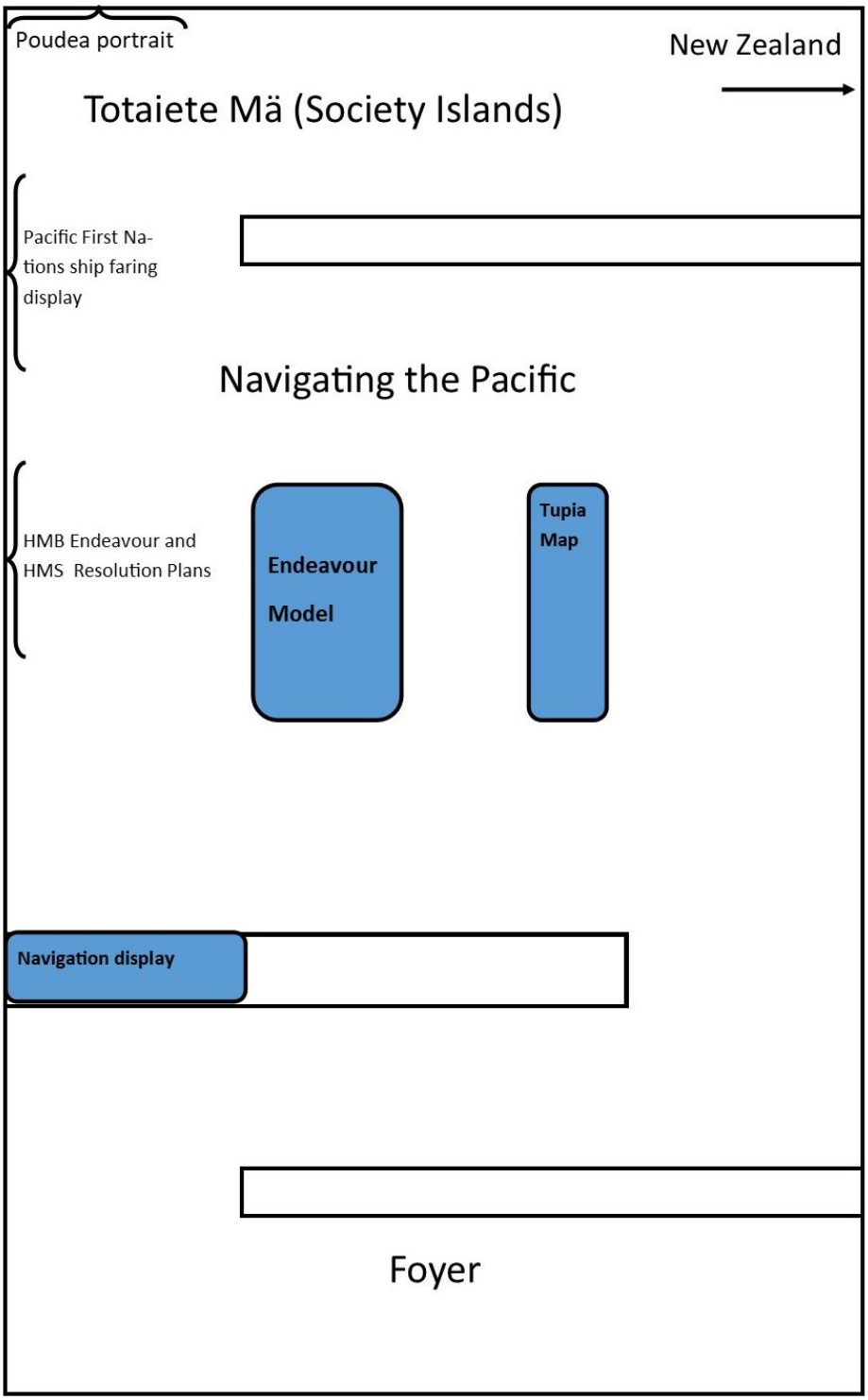

Figure 7.1 Plan of entry space to *Cook and the Pacific* at National Library of Australia.

Similar to the other geographically themed sections that made up the core of the exhibition, the section on the Society Islands consisted of a range of portraits, objects, maps, and drawings intended to illustrate the breadth of Cook's voyages and the diversity of the people he met. Among the objects was a collection of charcoal portraits by William Hodges, an artist who joined Cook's second voyage, which are today owned by the National Library, and, with the exception of Australia, which Hodges did not visit, were used in each of the geographical regions. These portraits gave a 'face' to the Pacific peoples Cook encountered, such as *Otoo, King of Otaheite* and *Tynai-mai, Princess of Raiatea*, as well as those who remained unnamed, such as *Man of Easter Island* or *Woman of New Caledonia*. These objects linked thematically with other portraits by voyage artists, including John Webber in presenting the people of the Pacific.

Introducing the volume *Museums and Migration*, Laurence Gouriévidis (2010) highlights the impact of group mobilisation on society and the role that museums, often as part of government and institutional structures, continue to play in the representation and recognition of First Nations peoples. As explained in Chapter 2, moving towards a 'cosmopolitan' agenda, museums are seen here to 'actively seek to transform ways of thinking and perceptions of others, with a view to confronting prejudice, provoking dialogue and debate and fostering understanding' (Gouriévidis 2014, p. 10). Hutchinson and Witcomb (2014, p. 248) have identified one major approach museums have taken in attempting to accomplish this dialogue through their exhibitions:

> the attempt to develop exhibitions that use Australia's migration history to develop more nuanced understandings of how cultural diversity works in the present as well as the past. Characteristically, this strategy involves interaction between cultures and highlights cultural change. It is also the most curatorially complex. It includes

> looking at personal experiences of living with cultural diversity in a particular place over time; seeking to dissolve national boundaries and embed Australia in a transnational history in which people, objects and ideas are moving constantly between places.

By focusing the exhibition on the 'meetings' of the British crews and the First Nations peoples of the visited regions, the National Library minimised the relationship between Australia and Cook, downplaying to some extent the National Library's role in telling the history of the nation. While the decision to focus on the Pacific was reached very early in the exhibition concept, what emerged as the exhibition research and development continued was a concern to communicate First Nations voices. The curators wanted to ensure that an appropriate number of voices were present and had been drawn on to inform the exhibition, as Susannah Helman (National Library Curator) explained:

> the way it changed was, I suppose, in highlighting and developing the idea of looking at voices from both the ship and the shore I think and also in highlighting the language for instance as a key element of the exhibition. That sort of developed over time.

How to bring these voices to the fore is an inevitable problem for researchers, both academic historians and social history curators alike. The issue is that the written accounts for these encounters are from the European perspective, thus containing their own biases and absences. Meanwhile, bias and absence can also impact the oral tradition of First Nations peoples, although there is a real value that this tradition provides through stories and experiences that contest and/or complement the colonial archive and are reshaping the histories being presented by researchers and First Nations peoples together (McCarthy et al.

2013; Onciul 2015; Schorch 2017; Tolia-Kelly & Raymond 2020). To negotiate these absences and bring forward the 'story from the other side of the shore' (Martin Woods, National Library Curator), the National Library began the process of engaging with numerous First Nations communities across the Pacific. This collaboration with the community did not simply seek approval for content generated by the National Library – a simple 'tick-a-box' exercise. Rather, the intention was to engage with the First Nations communities of the Pacific, diverse peoples from Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Vanuatu, Hawaii, Tahiti, and Nootka Sound in ways that provided alternative narratives in the exhibition that reflected First Nations perspectives.

Cook and the Pacific: Collaboration with First Nations communities

In the exhibition foyer to *Cook and the Pacific*, visitors were shown a welcoming video containing short narratives from members of the First Nations communities from the Pacific, including Māori and Tongan communities and Aboriginal peoples. For the Māori community, Isaac Cotter, an Elder and tutor at the Māori Performing Arts, in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, greeted visitors in the Māori language, before also providing the following English translation:

> To this building standing here, and to all the land outside, I greet you.
> To all those who have passed on before us, both yours and mine.
> We acknowledge you, we honour you, we feel about you. To us the living talking among us all.

Isaac Cotter's welcome was followed by that of the Tongan representative. Speaking a traditional Tongan language to the audience (with subtitles provided), Stella Pahula Naimet of the Canberra Tongan community, for instance, said, 'Welcome to one and all from the

Kingdom of Tonga. Enjoy your time and when you go back, we wish you well'. These comments positioned the exhibition as a world beyond Canberra and Australia – one owned by the Pacific Island and Aboriginal communities that Cook visited and engaged with throughout his three voyages to the Pacific.

This welcome video situated the exhibition as a shared domain with the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, adding important First Nations perspectives to the historical narratives of Cook's voyages and reconciling the contemporary position of Cook in local, national, and global memory. These introductory dialogues, for instance, related strongly to the exhibition's focus on First Nations languages in the Pacific that are explored later in the chapter. In particular, the exhibition showed how objects and manuscripts derived from the Cook voyages were tangled in the historical decline of those languages. It also provided insights into how First Nations communities are working to reclaim and retain their languages. A second aspect that emerged from this collaboration between the National Library and the First Nations peoples was an intention to ensure that First Nations peoples had authorship of, and authority in, the exhibition. Comments from these same First Nations participants were also woven throughout the exhibition, providing a distinct perspective in the exhibition's panels and labels that acted almost as an alternative curatorial voice. Commenting on the Library's work with First Nations communities and representatives, Susannah Helman (National Library Curator) noted that the geographical focus of the exhibition made the integration of First Nations voices essential:

> I think that working with communities, for instance, adds a dimension that if you're looking at the history of places, which we decided to do – we decided to organise the exhibition around place – have at the core a geographical core, then it made sense to look at the voyages

> as meetings of people in those places. So, yes, that did evolve over time.

The exhibition situated the consequences of Cook's interactions with First Nations peoples squarely in the contemporary period. In the context of a cosmopolitan nationalism, this transnational community message was central. What it communicated was that the representatives of First Nations communities engaged with as Other by Cook were not simply locked to their country but are here in Australia in the present day. The unfortunate consequences of museum displays are that while they capture the vibrancy and nature of the past, they can be disconnected from contemporary cultural practices in the present (Chapter 6 captured this problematic for *Art of Science*). Contained in glass boxes and removed through both time and context from the present-day communities that bear their traditions, ethnographic objects can constrain visitor understanding. Through engaging with First Nations communities in Australia and across the Pacific, the National Library sought to place the context of the exhibition in a contemporary world.

Some of the First Nations people representing the Pacific cultures in *Cook and the Pacific* were migrants to Australia who lived at locations including Sydney and Canberra, and, as a result, were transnational themselves and had brought their cultures to Australia as part of the multicultural milieu. In the 2016 Australian census, First Nations peoples of the Pacific (excluding Māori) represented a fraction of the Australian community, at 206,683 people (or 0.85% of the population), although this figure could be much larger because the census can exclude First Nations peoples of Pacific that have transited through New Zealand (Batley 2017). For instance, Jioji Ravulo (2015) argued that the actual number of First Nations peoples of the Pacific living in Australia in 2015 was approximately 279,000 people (exempting Māori and New Zealand-born people from these figures), or 1.3% of the population. There were also 128,430 people identifying with a Māori ancestry in the 2016

census (Batley 2017). While selecting representatives from the Canberra-based diaspora of these communities inevitably had a practical component, it also served to localise them.

The overlaying of connections from the present onto the past is significant because it reduces the historicity of these traditions for visitors. For instance, research examining the visitor reception of the *Aztec* exhibition at three Australasian museums (discussed in Chapter 2) identified the difficulties visitors had in associating with the exhibitions because it was not simply a relationship 'between self/Other but also past/present' (Davidson & Castellanos 2019, p. 154). This additional Othering of the content was minimised in *Cook and the Pacific* through an emphasis on how these traditions were being practised not only now, but also in the cities and suburbs of Australia. Cosmopolitan practices in the exhibition operated at global and local scales, so that while First Nations voices were central to the exhibition, with some representation from international representatives, the voices of First Nations communities in Australia played into everyday cosmopolitan practices of engagement with Other. The engagement with First Nations people in Australia, however, operated at different scales, and it is important to explore how the National Library brought Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the exhibition.

In *Cook and the Pacific*, one historical narrative the National Library explored was Cook's first attempted landing on the Australian mainland, which was not at Botany Bay but off the Illawarra coast, south of Sydney, near present day Woonona. On the 28 April 1770, the *Endeavour* got to within one mile of the shore, allowing a party to board small boats to make a landing on the beach. The severity of the waves meant that this attempt was abandoned, but from their vantage point Cook's crew had a prominent view of this section of the Australian coast. Charles Praval, an artist who joined the exhibition at Batavia, created a coastal profile, marking out important landmarks, including Pigeon House Mountain, which the Murramarang people of the Illawarra call Didthul. Prints from these profiles, on loan from

the British Library, were included in *Cook in the Pacific*. Martin Woods (National Library Curator) recalls one of the most 'memorable' experiences of researching and developing *Cook and the Pacific* being his time in Ulladulla, NSW, liaising with the Ulladulla Local Aboriginal Land Council. He describes how Aboriginal people 'took us to their sacred places and told us stories about their understanding of the [Cook] contact and so on.' These narratives found their way into the exhibition, highlighting not only the connections between Cook and the Murramarang people of this region, but how these landscapes continue to hold meaning for this community today. Shane Carriage, a Murramarang man from Ulladulla, was quoted in the exhibition as describing how Didthul in Illawarra has continuing importance as a cultural site.

> My people have lived in this area for millennia. Pigeon House, or Didthul as we call it, is a very sacred place to us. It has men's sites and women's sites; it has art sites. It is not a site that we visit constantly, but it is a place that we hold very dear to our heart.

This panel links back to the exhibition's entry video where another Murramarang man, Victor Channell, explained the value of Didthul for continuing cultural tradition as follows:

> Knowledge that we've got comes down from our Aboriginal ancestors all passed on through generations and generations. We talk about our local sites, Didthul. Places like that are part of our songlines, they connect the mountains to the sea.

The contributions from the Murramarang men demonstrated continuity in connection to place, and the traditions of their culture, that deepens the narrative of Cook's aborted

attempt to land on the Illawarra coast. For Cook and his crew, the Didthul was a landmark on the horizon, providing a point of reference for British navigation. The Murramarang men outline how Didthul is a spiritual link between the land and the sea, a sacred site where men's sites and women's sites enact cultural traditions and practices. Extending on this concern for Indigenous Australians narratives in *Cook and the Pacific*, I next turn to examine how Aboriginal peoples' voices deepen visitor understanding about a key narrative from Cooks first voyage – the time the *Endeavour* spent on Waalumbaal Birri (which Cook named the Endeavour River) – and a significant object from the National Library's own collection.

In conversation: First Nations engagement and Cook's journal

Such is the importance to the National Library of the Cook *Endeavour Journal* that it appears in its collection management system as the first among many valuable items and collections, identified as 'Manuscript No. 1'. The object has its own intriguing narrative. After the *Endeavour* voyage and once the British Admiralty had extracted necessary detail, the *Journal* was returned to Cook and remained with his wife after his death. It was eventually passed down to his nephew, Isaac Smith, who had accompanied him on the *Endeavour* and *Resolution*, before he, in turn, passed the collection down to his children. Uninterested in the collection of Cook's journal, logbooks, and associated papers, Smith's children auctioned them in 1865 (Dening 2001, pp. 5-7). The *Endeavour Journal* was purchased, along with other papers, by Henry William Ferdinand Bolckow, Esq of Marton Hall, with whom it remained for 58 years, whereupon another generational change saw the *Endeavour Journal* again go up for sale by Sotheby Auction House as part of Cook's collection of papers. It was at this point, in 1923, that the Australian Government purchased the *Journal*, with some impetus from the newly elected Prime Minister Stanley Bruce, for the sum of £5,000 (Dening 2001, p. 11). The value of this object to the Library collection was apparent in the decision by Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, National Library Director-General, to begin her foreword to the publication accompanying the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition by highlighting that the *Journal*

is a foundational item for the collection and 'the first Australian item to be included on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register' in 2001 (Ayres 2018).

Despite the dominance of the *Journal* in the National Library's collection, it was not used in the exhibition to underline Cook's first landing point at Botany Bay. Indeed, the New Holland section of the exhibition does not focus too much attention on the New South Wales coastline. There was an acknowledgment of Botany Bay through a map of the Bay under the name Cook gave it, Stingray Bay, and an associated zoological drawing of a stingray (*Urolophus testaceus*) by one of the voyage's scientist, Herman Spöring. Instead, the curators made a deliberate decision to 'broaden people's perspectives and perhaps move away from Botany Bay' (Martin Woods, National Library Curator). The exhibition focused on an alternative narrative in the New Holland section by examining the seven weeks that the *Endeavour* spent under repair in the mouth of Waalumbaal Birri near present day Cooktown. On the 12 June 1770, the *Endeavour* hit part of the Great Barrier Reef, effectively marooning itself atop the reef. Numerous supplies were thrown overboard, including a cannon that was resurfaced in 1969, together with a range of other objects from an archaeological survey, which are now on permanent display in the National Library. After re-floating the *Endeavour*, the party sailed down the coastline looking for a safe harbour to make repairs.

In the exhibition, the account provided in Cook's journal of the *Endeavour* hitting the reef and undergoing repairs on Waalumbaal Birri (named the Endeavour River by Cook) was complemented by two other versions, one generated for the British Admiralty and the other coming from the perspective of local Guugu Yimithirr people. The National Library copy of the journal provides Cook's original recording of the challenging time associated with repairing the *Endeavour*, indicating his own fears and concerns regarding their future and the continuation of the voyage. In Cook's own hand, the pages provide a glimpse at Cook the man, rather than Cook the voyager. Placed in the same display case as the *Endeavour*

Journal was an alternative version titled *Endeavour Journal submitted to the Admiralty at the End of the Voyage 1771*, which was on loan from The National Archives in the United Kingdom. Primarily written by copyist Richard Orton from Cook's own version, this account translates Cook's experiences into the tapered, bureaucratic reporting expected by the Admiralty at the time. Visually, the widely spaced, heavily annotated account of the original, which indicates the rushed notetaking of a concerned Lieutenant Cook, was transformed into an elegant, cursive hand that, as the associated exhibition panel put it, 'convey[s] none of the drama of Cook's original journal'. Placed side-by-side for the first time, these two accounts of the voyage, the first-hand concern of Cook after striking the reef and the second describing the outcomes and success of the voyage, play off against one another to question narrative choices within the history of exploration in the eighteenth century. These narrative choices were then complicated further in the exhibition through the presentation of First Nations knowledge that explained the relationships Cook had with Guugu Yimithirr peoples during the two months he stayed at the Endeavour River.

When her account in the exhibition entry video began, Agatha Hornsby, a Guugu Yimithirr woman from Cooktown, Queensland, explained that she had a 'special story to tell'. What she recounted was a narrative of Captain Cook's time at the Waalumbaal Birri (Endeavour River) while he repaired his ship, explaining how Cook did not realise that he had landed at what she described as a neutral zone:

> This Clan Land of Waymburr was a place where women from surrounding Clans came to give birth, marriage alliances were made here, conflicts were settled here. Law said that there was no blood to be spilt on this *bubu*, on this land. Not many people know that without the cultural and spiritual laws of the Guugu Yimithirr Bama, Cook would not have had a successful first voyage.

Presenting the perspective of the Guugu Yimithirr peoples in the exhibition created a multiplicity of narratives. Acknowledging previously ignored or suppressed First Nations cultural practices and laws in turn displaced the role of Cook and interrupted official/dominant histories of his crew and associated explorers in the discovery, recording and mapping of the coastline, peoples, and natural specimens of the Pacific. Contemporary voices throughout the exhibition underlined the knowledge and cultural practices that preceded Cook's discovery, and which continued to be carried, refined, and practised by First Nations communities. Museums now follow established practices of engaging First Nations peoples to talk directly about their own cultural objects. As Susannah Helman (National Library Curator) put it:

> there is practice, particularly for cultural objects… if you're displaying one of those, you should make the effort to consult communities, and we did that for all the objects.

With *Cook and the Pacific*, the Library extended these consultations to explore the multiple histories that surrounded Cook's time on the Endeavour River not simply to provide an appropriate cultural context, but to reinvigorate ongoing relationships between objects, the communities from which they were derived, and the museum assemblage of which they were a part. Sarah Byrne et al. (2011, p. 4) have discussed how the relationships between objects and communities 'do not cease with the acquisition of objects from their creator communities, but [are] ongoing in the material processes of curation and display and in the social processes of visiting, researching, learning and "knowing" things.'

As a result, objects become integrated into the transnational networks of a cosmopolitan nationalism that, in the case of this exhibition, sought to incorporate an understanding of the

Other into the national metanarrative of Cook. In assembling Cook within a cosmopolitan nationalist narrative, the National Library was drawing on associations between objects, First Nations peoples and their own institutional settings. While the *Endeavour Journal* maintains its 'national treasure' status, the performative function of the object within the assemblage was shifted and brought into relationship with a myriad of intersecting actors. As Durepos and Mills (2012, p. 253) have argued, 'understanding that history as an effect of actor-networks and thus understanding that the past is manifest differently depending on actors who enact it, may empower organisational members' and other actors to claim and redefine these narratives. These multiple histories of Cook on Guugu Yimithirr country move away from a metanarrative focused on the discovery and claiming of Australia, to align with an intersection between cultures, in practices of engagement and concern, that underpin contemporary cosmopolitan practices.

Cook's voyages, the globe, and First Nations voices

A central component of the exhibition was a large audio-visual display that visitors encountered when they left the New Holland section. The visual display, projected onto a 'globe', tracked the route and key destinations of each of Cook's lead ships on the three voyages into and across the Pacific, before tracing their return routes back to England. The display highlighted the dates each of the three voyages arrived at key locations throughout the Pacific, including when the *Endeavour* hit the Great Barrier Reef. The display was seen as an opportunity to show 'how far Cook's ships travelled' (Susannah Helman, National Library Curator) (see Plate 7.2).

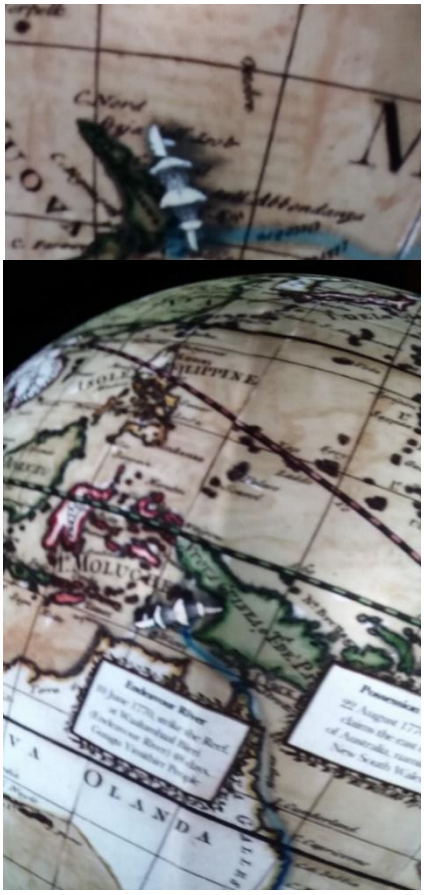

Plate 7.2 Detail of globe projection taken from ‘The Compass’ section of the exhibition. Photographs by author.

The display took upwards of seven minutes to track the ships across all three voyages, and while I was in the exhibition space visitors appeared to stay for a long time, talking among themselves about the routes and places visited. The visitor comment book also indicated that it was one of the most popular features of the exhibition, as the following three excerpts show:

> Best thing was the globe demonstrating the voyages – easy to see & follow.

> The World Map was Awesome 😊 Loved the globe.

Captivating comprehensive display especially like the ‘globe’.

The Globe was situated in a small room that opened out into the New Holland and Hawaii sections of the exhibition. It was surrounded at four points by four key objects used to explore the relationships between Cook and his men with the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, with the National Library referring to this design area as The Compass (see Figure 7.2 below). One of the points of the compass was the secret instructions to James Cook, which will be examined in more detail in Chapter 9. At the remaining three points were three items related to the First Nations languages that Cook’s voyages encountered. As the Curator put it, ‘we thought it would be a wonderful way of highlighting the voices of the voyage’ (Susannah Helman, National Library Curator).

The National Library is a document-heavy institution. Many of its most valuable collections are manuscripts and documentary records, providing detailed recordings of past events. Documentary records are difficult to include in exhibitions because they lack the aesthetic and affective qualities of artworks and objects. These resources, however, are at the heart of histories because they capture the detail of what has come before (Bryan 1991; Conde 2007). The National Library’s role as a documentary storehouse of the nation’s history means that it freely exhibits documentary items, with *Cook and the Pacific* being no exception. The exhibition included numerous diaries, notes, and journals from both the National Library and international collections. Nestled in these collections was the first written record and English translation of First Nations languages. Their importance is becoming increasingly apparent as the languages of First Nations peoples become extinct or endangered.

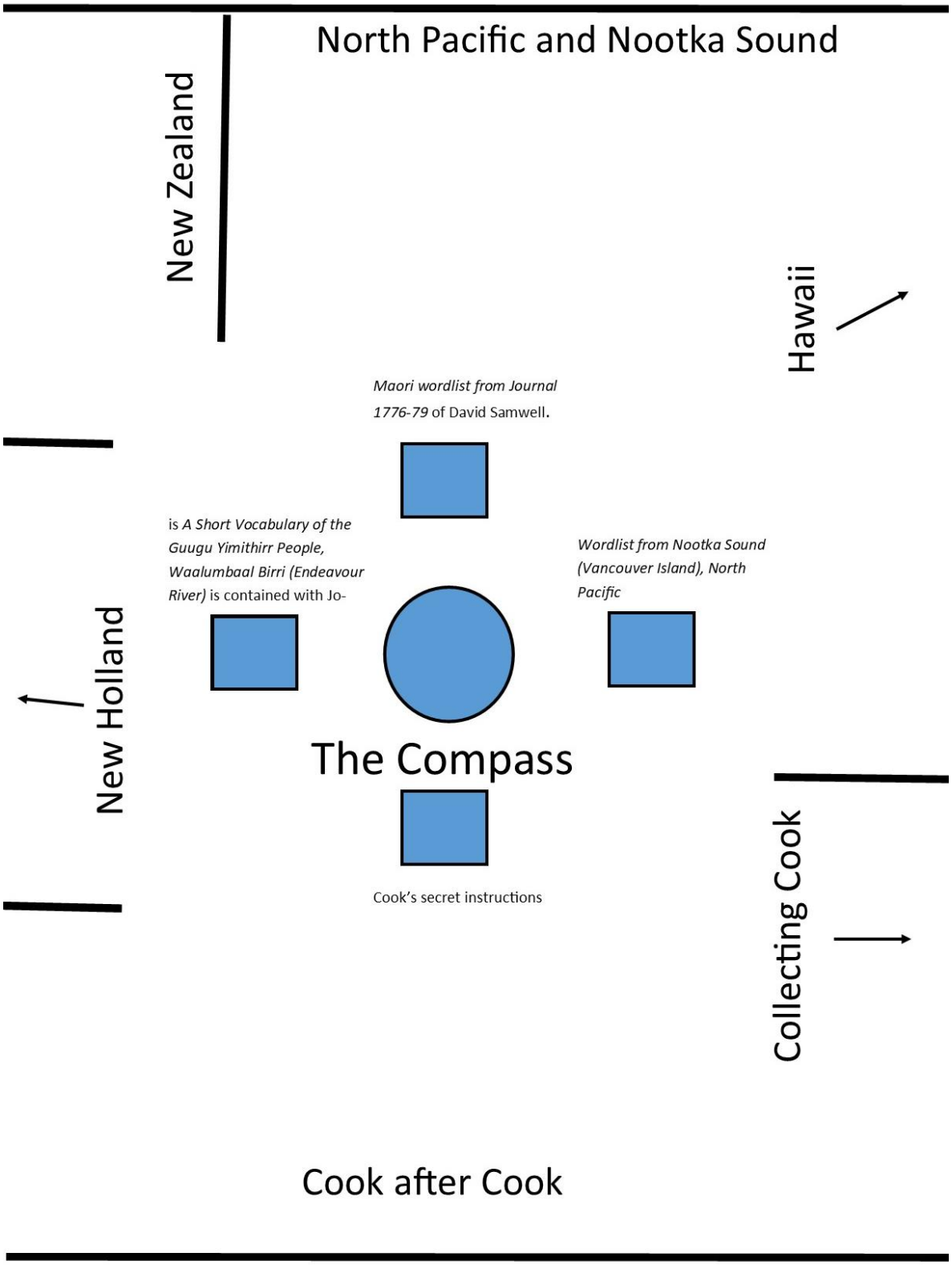

Figure 7.2 Floor plan mapping 'The Compass' display in *Cook and the Pacific*.

The exhibition includes wordlists for Aboriginal peoples, and for First Nations peoples of New Zealand, the South Pacific Islands, and Nootka Sound (Vancouver Island) in the North Pacific. Facing the New Holland section from The Compass display was *A Short Vocabulary of the Guugu Yimithirr People, Waalumbaal Birri (Endeavour River)*, held with Joseph Bank's own *Endeavour Journal*, which was on loan from the State Library of New South Wales. The second wordlist was contained in the *Journal 1776–79* of David Samwell, the surgeon on board the *Resolution*, who recorded the most substantial list of Māori words from the eighteenth century. This journal was placed adjacent to the New Zealand-themed content of the exhibition. The journal was on loan from the British Museum and provided an important link to the role of Cook in the history of New Zealand. The third and final wordlist was *Wordlist from Nootka Sound (Vancouver Island), North Pacific*, which faced out towards the thematic sections on the North Pacific and Hawaii. The item was on loan from the British Library, where it forms part of James Cook's journal of his third Pacific voyage aboard the *Resolution*. Together, the items framed the visual display of the globe that was central to 'The Compass' design feature, while giving precedence to the place of language and culture in the encounters between Cook and the First Nations peoples of the Pacific as they were mapped through this digital interaction.

To ensure the validity and accuracy of these wordlists, the National Library engaged with communities and people across the Pacific. As Martin Woods (National Library Curator) described it:

> we had an academic [Natala Montellier] in Tahiti and so she was able to give us some really good information and translation of word lists in the journals, because one thing that happened throughout was that the voyages recorded a lot of the language that they came across and in phonetic terms. It was the first time that these, to our

> knowledge, that many of these languages were put down on paper. So that was great to get people from those places reading aloud the language or correcting it in some cases, that we found. So that in talking to them, they would say, well, they've got that wrong.

As part of the community engagement process, the National Library worked with First Nations peoples to validate and cross-check the translations contained in the Cook voyage journals and wordlists. This process of engagement was vitally important as traditional speakers of language have been unable to keep many of the words alive because of displacement, death, and disconnection. For example, researchers have verified that at the time of settlement over 250 Indigenous languages were spoken in Australia, but perhaps only 100 of them are still spoken today and many are in danger of becoming lost as their last speakers die without teaching the next generation (Rumsey 2018; Simpson & Wigglesworth 2019; Tiffen 2007b). Studies have also show that only 12% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (3% of the Australian population) speak an Indigenous language, illustrating the value of these wordlists in developing and retaining these languages into the future (Karidakis & Kelly 2018, p. 102). Working through the wordlists, the National Library was able to obtain sound recordings of language spoken by communities, who also provided English translations. These were brought into the exhibition through two touchscreen displays set on either side of ‘The Compass’ exhibition component. Visitors could select a section of text from the wordlists on display and listen to First Nations peoples’ voices speaking their traditional languages. As Susannah Helman (National Library Curator) describes it:

> the communities have told us that wordlists like this are an invaluable resource for them as a record of their language. But they can also see how the language has changed and words that they know, words

> that they may not know and so, yes, it was really – and very enriching process.

The comments reflect the broader literature on threatened languages of First Nations peoples, in that culture and language are 'intimately connected', with consequences for the ways that communities can continue their cultural practices and traditions (Filipović & Putz 2016, p. 3). There is an intersection between a cosmopolitan nationalism and its commitment to the respect and empowerment of First Nations communities. Just as records and visual documentations, explored in Chapter 6, provided grounds for Aboriginal men to restore and reinvigorate their cultural practices associated with canoe building, these wordlists build global networks of knowledge that restore culture and language to contemporary First Nations communities. Cosmopolitan nationalism here moves into an acknowledgment of the continuity of culture for First Nations people – divorced, as they can be, from the local communities where this impact occurs.

Nonlinear biography, Tahitian maps, and the Pacific

While the First Nations peoples of the Pacific gave an important voice to the exhibition, the transnational narratives in *Cook and the Pacific* also provided the opportunity to displace aspects of imperial narratives from the exhibition itself. One common approach to transnational history involves following people as they move between geographical locations, with studies taking a biographical or multi-biographical approach. This has folded into studies that have highlighted the achievement and/or narratives of numerous First Nations peoples, such as Fiona Paisley's (2012) study of Indigenous Australian activist Anthony Martin Fernando or Kate Fullagar's title, *The Savage Visit* (2012), which presented research on Indigenous Australian and Native American travels to Europe and the United Kingdom. These biographies often draw on non-traditional source material to develop biographies that 'assert the complexity of their subjects' lives and their imbrication within

social networks' – a stark contrast to traditional biographies that build on institutional, government and (often) personal archives to develop the lives of 'prominent political, business and social European men' (Whitelaw 2014, p. 83). Biographies, either succinctly presented in the captions of an object, or as the basis of a large, multi-platform exhibition and program, are central aspects of museums. Some museums, such as the National Library loan partner the Captain Cook Memorial Museum in Whitby in the United Kingdom, were entirely focused on the lives of individual people. Most social history museums, however, and even art museums, are concerned with people, things and the relationship between them (Hill 2014, p. 1).

In *Cook and the Pacific*, the National Library used multiple First Nations peoples' biographies to displace the European narratives of Cook, as voyager and explorer, or Joseph Banks, as scientist and sponsor. The exhibition also dispersed Cook's biography through multiple points of cross-cultural connection using the design of the exhibition. Supported by other authors in the literature, Tony Ballantyne (2012, p. 286) argues that by splitting history into 'a larger array of smaller and more finely variegated groupings', the transnational can begin to examine previously overlooked aspects of the colonial narrative. This 'splitting' of history provides a framework for highlighting the impact of First Nations and less well represented voices where they are found only in a small array of sources in the imperial archives and/or through the narratives of their descendants (Ballantyne 2012, p. 286; Konishi, Nugent & Shellam 2015; Paisley 2012, p. xx). Taking this approach in analysing the biography of Cook as an assortment of connections removed a metanarrative of Australian history focused on European settlement and development that may lump history into one simple construct, rather than untangling the assortment of connections out of which the past is truly assembled. Similarly, adopting an assemblage thinking approach means deeply analysing a selection of actors and their interactions – with a focus on how the desires and intentions of the actors were progressed through the museum assemblage.

In *Cook and the Pacific*, these biographical histories provided an important framework through which to explore the contributions of Tupaia, a Raiatean man who joined Cook's *Endeavour* voyage as a 'go-between' to assist Cook in his conversations with First Nations peoples of the Pacific. His addition to the crew was influenced by Joseph Banks, who wished to take Tupaia back to London. Given the voyage was sponsored by the Royal Society for the express purpose of observing and recording the Transit of Venus at Tahiti, there was an increased likelihood that such a role would be taken up by a man from the Society Islands archipelago. Tupaia remained with the expedition up until his death from scurvy in Batavia (Jakarta) in November 1770, meaning he played an essential role as an intermediary and navigator around the Pacific, New Zealand, and along the east coast of Australia.

The first mention of Tupaia in the exhibition was among the charts and maps in the 'Navigation' section of the exhibition, where, contained within Johan Forster's volume *Observations Made During the Voyage around the World, 1778*, there was a map of 74 islands of the Pacific. The map is titled *A Chart Representing the Isles of the South Sea… chiefly collected from the accounts of Tupaya* [sic]. The accompanying exhibition panel read:

> Tupaia was a Polynesian *tahu'a* (priest) and navigator who remained with the voyage until his death in December 1770 […] Cook conceded [in his journal] that Tupaia's geographical knowledge was 'pretty extensive': 'He at one time gave us an Account of near 130 Islands but in his chart he laid down only 74.'

The chart, *Isles of the South Sea*, is a reproduction by Cook, and later others, of Tupaia's original maps, which are now lost. An examination of the map shows that it navigates outwards from a central Tahiti, representing the centrality of this island to Tupaia's

navigational techniques, which operated differently from those of Cook. Martin Woods highlighted that through this locus of Tahiti it 'operated on a different plane' illustrating 'two very different [navigational] systems'. As such, in the exhibition it was an important representation of how different cultures, with limited vocabulary, could contribute to the process of mapping in a way that blended British and Polynesian aspects of navigation. For visitors, this was only one of numerous objects and points within the exhibition that explained how the different cultures of the British and the multiple First Nations peoples would 'come together and negotiate things' (Martin Woods, National Library Curator).

The next encounter with Tupaia was in the 'New Holland' section of the exhibition, where he was recorded as the artist of a study of *Australian Aboriginal People in Bark Canoes April 1770*, on loan from the British Library and part of a larger collection of artworks compiled by Joseph Banks and later donated to the British Museum. The image shows two Aboriginal canoes. In one, two Aboriginal men are seated with paddles in each hand. In the second canoe, an Aboriginal man is depicted looking over the edge of the canoe, with an oar in one hand and spear in the other, and a pencil sketch of a fish about to be taken for a meal lies underneath the canoe. The panel recounts that the series of images was originally attributed to Banks, but that it became apparent that 'Tupaia had drawn one, and therefore presumably all the other similar works in the series'. Martin Woods (National Library Curator) highlights the importance of the object to the exhibition:

> That was drawn by Tupaia at Botany Bay, so it's probably the first depiction of Aboriginal people at Botany Bay… So, it's a wonderful item, but it's drawn by a Polynesian person.

Tupaia was also mentioned in a list of names in the *Endeavour Muster Book 1768–72*, where 'Tupia, Native of Polinesia [sic]', and his servant, Tarheto, appear along with the names of the British crew. His death on the 20 December 1770, together with numerous other crew members during the *Endeavour*'s stay in Batavia (Jakarta), is recorded. Tupaia is mentioned infrequently in Cook's journal, but one brief exert provides some insight into his personality. It states that:

> [Tupaia] was a Shrewd Sensible, Ingenious man, but proud and obstinate which often made his situation on board both disagreeable to himself and those about him.

In providing the personal account of Tupaia, the exhibition sought not simply to acknowledge the role of a Raiatea man aboard the *Endeavour*, but to highlight his contributions to the voyage and his culturally defined approaches to navigation and mapping. Tupaia was a personality in the exhibition space and while the descriptions do not paint him in the most pleasant light, they do show him as human. His biographical narratives were supported through the curatorial flow of the exhibition that allowed the multiple roles Tupaia played, as navigator, diplomat, adviser, and artist, to come to the fore. These choices showed how Tupaia's contribution to the *Endeavour* voyage, as a collaborator and intermediary, was an essential component of Cook's initial success that played forward into his second and third voyages.

Conclusion

In *Cook and the Pacific*, the National Library was concerned with the history of the Pacific region, collecting a range of objects and materials that track Australia's role as part of this larger geographic region. The exhibition used aspects of transnational history to bring to the

fore the interactions between Cook and the peoples of the Pacific, highlighting the degree to which these were not simply one-way impositions of an expanding imperial culture on a new dominion, but also a two-way conversation whereby First Nations peoples also influenced and affected the Europeans. The removal of a 'universal', chronological narrative about Cook the explorer allowed for a focus on moments in time and created the space to expand the cross-cultural narratives in Cook's voyage to analyse many ongoing cultural practices and traditions of the First Nations peoples of the Pacific. From here, biographies of First Nations peoples came to the fore to demonstrate not simply the to-and-fro of engagements across the Pacific, but also how First Nations people, like Tupaia, played a direct role in the achievements of Cook's voyages. The National Library demonstrated cosmopolitan nationalism intentions in showing respect for, and an acknowledgment of, the Other, and an openness to engage with First Nations peoples. To underline these aspects, the National Library incorporated both historic and contemporary First Nations voices into the exhibition, providing multiple perspectives to Cook's voyages and a deeper, nuanced understanding of Cook's legacy in the Pacific. Having established this focus on diverse cultures in the Pacific, the next chapter examines how the National Library created connections between their own collections and the objects on loan from international museums in order to reinforce the transnational narratives of *Cook and the Pacific*.

Chapter 8
Global networks and object agency in defining cosmopolitan connections

Objects are key agents in the cosmopolitan nationalism being presented in the museums that form part of this study. In Chapter 7, I examined how the *Cook Endeavour Journal* was linked to the organisational history of the National Library and, moreover, how it fed into the cosmopolitan nationalist narratives the National Library creates. This chapter develops this analysis through a focus on the non-human relationships developed in the museum space between objects from the National Library's collection and the range of objects on loan from domestic and international museums. The chapter pays particular attention to how the National Library collection performs as an active agent in the construction of the transnational and cross-cultural histories that underpin the cosmopolitan nationalism that was linked with the museum assemblage. The National Library used key objects, such as *The Death of Captain Cook,* painted by George Carter, and the pencil study *Omai of the Friendly Isles*, by artist Joshua Reynolds, from their own collection to create object relationships that construct transnational connections. These object relationships situate the National Library within an historical assemblage that ties to the historic collection of the material culture of the Pacific's First Nations peoples with contemporary First Nations communities in the museum assemblage. This chapter explores how transnational histories link to contemporary perspectives about Australia and the nation's international connections, with cosmopolitan concerns for the 'appropriate' representation of the Pacific's First Nations people. The National Library's collection has always contained links to the Pacific, with the collecting policy since the Library's establishment having a major concern with capturing existing and formative cultural relationships with the British people in conjunction with an interest in Australia's place in the Asia-Pacific (Tiffen 2007a, p. 345). In the context of Australia's cosmopolitan nationalism, these objects play a key role in the museum

assemblage to construct histories that underline a connection to the Other and an awareness of Australia, and Australians', role as global citizen(s).

The National Library, collection development and object-centric exhibition practices

This chapter examines the National Library's focus on using their own collections to construct *Cook and the Pacific*, paying particular attention to the histories of these objects and their relationship to objects loaned from international collections. Given this focus, I will begin with a brief history of the National Library to better understand how they use their collections to guide the exhibition development. The National Library collection is the largest and oldest federally administrated heritage collection in Australia (the country's oldest collections are in state-run museums, such as Museums Victoria and the Australian Museum in Sydney, which were established before the Federation of Australia in 1901). Established in 1901, the National Library's precursor institution was the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, which had a broad remit, taking responsibility for acquiring books and material printed in Australia, collecting objects and cultural material to record the nation's history, as well as taking responsibility for the Australian Government archives. The Library (along with Parliament) initially operated out of Melbourne before relocating to the new 'bush capital', Canberra, in 1927, where it had offices in the newly built Parliament House. In this early period, the Parliamentary Library acquired a range of manuscripts, objects, and associated material through purchase and donation. The largest donation the National Library received in its early days was from Edward Augustus Petherick in 1909 and comprised 17,000 items (a mixture of printed volumes, letters, and pictures). Petherick had been the London office manager for Robertson booksellers, where he selected books for the Australian market before establishing the Colonial Booksellers Agency. His donation came with the condition that Petherick would be taken on as an archivist to coordinate the collection for several years after its acquisition (Bryan 1991).

Following the relocation of the collection to Canberra in 1927, the National Library's departments specialised into two main arms – the Parliamentary Collection and the National Collection, reflecting the shifting focus of the organisation. By this time, the National Library's collection was growing exponentially because of the passing of the Copyright Act 1912, which required Australian publishers to deposit a copy of any Australian-produced volume with the Commonwealth Library. An ongoing cultural heritage collecting campaign also continued with a strong focus on the pictorial record of Australia. It was not until 1941 with the opening of the Australian War Memorial that the National Library had a comparable federally funded cultural heritage collection. The National Library was finally separated from the Parliamentary Library in 1960 with the passing of its own act of parliament. Over the next decade, the National Library was able to negotiate two of its most important collection acquisitions – the Sir John Alexander Ferguson Collection and the Rex Nan Kivell Collection, both of which were received towards the end of the 1960s. Amounting to over 60,000 items, including nearly 16,000 paintings, drawing and prints, the collections were representative of the lifelong collecting of Australiana bibliophiles and collectors. The Rex Nan Kivell Collection also contained a significant number of items related to New Zealand, his country of birth, and other islands of the Pacific. In combination with an increasing interest by scholars and researchers in South-East Asia in the aftermath of the Second World War and in the context of the Cold War, the National Library began expanding its focus in this area and developed extensive collections on the Pacific, Indonesia, Japan and Thailand (Bryan 1991, pp. 169-70).

In 1975, a Committee of Inquiry on Museums and National Collections was established by the Labor Government of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. Chaired by Peter Piggott, businessman and board member of National Parks and Wildlife Foundation, the committee included numerous government advisers and two university professors: Geoffrey Blainey, Professor of Economic History at the University of Melbourne, and John Mulvaney,

Professor of Prehistory at the Australian National University (Gardiner-Garden 1996). A major recommendation from the Pigott report was the establishment of a National Museum of Australia, a project that was finalised in 2001. The Committee also highlighted the strong role the National Library played in conserving Australia's cultural heritage, noting that it:

> holds more than 25,000 paintings, drawings, and prints […] more than 283,000 maps and over 115,000 photographs. The National Library, in the absence of other national historical institutions, has played a vital role in the acquisition and preservation of films, photographs, manuscripts and a wide range of historical material. It has been well-endowed and well-administered. (Committee of Inquiry on Museums and National Collections 1975, pp. 40-1)

Despite the increasing role of the National Museum and Australian War Memorial in collecting and exhibiting Australia's past, the National Library maintains a large collection, with, for example, nearly 1.6 million pictures (including photographs, drawing and paintings) and more than 18 kilometres of manuscript shelf space (National Library of Australia 2021). A focus for these collections, particularly with the acquisition of the Rex Nan Kivell Collection, has been on objects that capture the exploration of the Pacific, including those that visually depict the First Nations peoples of the region or aspects of their languages and cultures. The narrative traces of these objects were important because, in a similar way to the *Endeavour Journal*, they have come to define the National Library and its collecting, conservation and documentary role. When the decision was made to stage the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition it was unsurprising that the National Library also prominently displayed items from its own collection, as Susannah Helmann (National Library Curator) explains:

> All of our exhibitions, the intention is that they should be built around our own collections. The way we developed the exhibition was really to use the library's strong Cook collections, which are fantastic, as the basis and then look further afield for loans that complemented those collections and that could really highlight and bring out the strengths of the library's collections and, also, fill in some gaps.

The National Library's collections, however, were part of broader historical networks of associations between Cook, the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, and British society. As detailed in Chapter 7, *Cook and the Pacific* looked beyond the flows from Cook's narrative in Australia, to understand those transnational networks and narratives that flowed across and beyond the Pacific Ocean. I will now examine how the National Library linked international objects on loan with objects from their own collection in order to produce multiple histories of Cook's voyages.

Assembling object relations in *Cook and the Pacific*

Museums have a key role to play in the negotiation of the collective memory of settler nations, dominated as many of them are by the material evidence of the colonisation of the country by Europeans and the consequences of these actions for First Nations peoples. Contained within museum collections are opportunities to draw out transnational histories that demonstrate a cosmopolitan capacity that informs a cosmopolitan nationalism. Lynn Meskell (2015, p. 483) has talked of 'cosmopolitan heritage' as being a tool that works towards a 'shared sense of identity as emanating from the various forms of partial accommodations and negotiations that emerge over time between different people who share that territory'.

One of the factors restricting the use by national museums of these transnational histories in their permanent galleries is that the objects that are curated and displayed are almost entirely assembled from their own collections. These objects can often focus on the nation rather than drawing out narratives that reflect the interconnections and back-and-forth transitions that have occurred between nations. By drawing on international collection items, and often pairing these with items from the national collection, temporary exhibitions can create histories that encompass the complex aspects of global movements and relationships. For *Cook and the Pacific*, these relationships provided important tangible experiences for many of the National Library's visitors, as illustrated by the following three anonymous comments from the National Library visitor comments book:

> Impressive storytelling and international collaboration – wonderful to see so many things from so many places around the world.

> Fantastic! Great detail and authentic texts artworks and artefacts from National Library, Nat Archives UK, Te Papa & Nat Museum. Brilliant! Thanks!

> A climactic exhibition bringing together the primary Cook sources from around the world! How privileged could I be. Thank you to all the institutions! Congratulations.

These comments underline the power that objects have to create a tangible link with the past, one that also informs relationships with the present. Museum objects directly impact and influence the uses of the past as it informs and presents agendas through the histories constructed in the museum space. These objects work together, in line with organisational

trajectories, curators, and visitors, to construct histories that support a cosmopolitan nationalism. As an assemblage thinking approach requires, the next step was to follow those actors in order to understand how they perform while holding this assemblage together (Durepos & Mills 2012, p. 2; Fox & Alldred 2017, p. 154; Latour 2005, pp. 11-2). Tracing the museum assemblage includes examining the relationships that emerge between objects in the museum space.

Cook and the Pacific allowed the National Library to highlight their collection's considerable strengths regarding the Cook voyages, while also engaging with objects from international collections. As explored in Chapter 7, the *Endeavour Journal*, purchased by the National Library in 1923, and which continues to be seen as a foundation item to Australia's national story, was placed in dialogue with the Admiralty copy of the journal held in the National Archives in the United Kingdom. While this chapter focuses explicitly on the National Library's relations to international collections, the curator's explanation of partnering the *Endeavour Journal* with international objects provides a good example of the National Library's curatorial intentions:

> I mean, the whole idea of the exhibition was to build the collection around, build the exhibition, around our own collections, but sort of fill gaps as we've talked about. Like, I suppose, particularly in Australia, we have the *Journal*, but we've been able to build around it, some of the major records from the voyage. Also, some of the graphic records from the voyage, particularly from the British Library and National Archives. (Susannah Helmann, National Library Curator)

The process of identifying and selecting objects from international collections is often protracted, involving numerous emails and visits by curators to a range of institutions. Curator Martin Woods spent time at institutions in the United Kingdom, as well as at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Hawaii. Once objects for the exhibition had been identified it became a formal process with Peter Appleton, Acting Registrar at the National Library, in the position of Assistant Director, Exhibitions, to take responsibility 'to handle the logistics' (Peter Appleton, National Library Assistant Director, Exhibitions). The National Library borrowed 44 objects from ten international collections for *Cook and the Pacific*, providing a unique opportunity for the National Library's collections to enter a dialogue with related objects held across the world.[16] The process for bringing objects into Australia is complex, requiring that several bureaucratic procedures be followed. For instance, it was necessary to follow procedure for the Federal Government funded Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan scheme, navigate a range of customs processes, quarantine periods, and, for relevant items, obtain a weapons permit. Agency and courier staff also needed to be coordinated to ensure each object was delivered to the institution as the exhibition was being installed – minimising costs and risks to the objects:

> I would go to the freight agent… we need this material from this institution, which is either I would say it is coming in a crate this size [or] these items of this size need to be crated… I'll say, it needs to be here on this date, three couriers travelling who need to come with the objects. (Peter Appleton, National Library Assistant Director, Exhibitions)

[16] A full list of the international loans for *Cook and the Pacific* is available from: https://www.nla.gov.au/sites/default/files/list_of_international_loans_for_cook_and_the_pacific_september_2018_-_febraury_2019.pdf

The materiality of these collections and their movement across museums plays an integral role in the cosmopolitan nationalist narrative that was presented, as these objects embody the transnational mobility of First Nations cultures. As detailed in Chapter 2, with reference to Davidson and Castellanos (2019, p. 26), touring exhibitions and their 'international' objects create 'mobile contact zones' where assemblages can tackle layers of complexity while also drawing on high levels of collaboration. These layers of complexity, however, can be part of the histories of these objects. For example, of the ten institutions engaged for loans for *Cook and the Pacific,* seven were located in the United Kingdom, two were located in New Zealand, and only one, the Bishop Museum, Hawaii, was located amongst the islands of the Pacific. That is, the transience of these objects was not simply their packaging and delivery for display in *Cook and the Pacific*, but also the initial medium of exchange for these items and their provenance into the museum collections. These items may have been purchased or exchanged by Europeans in their interactions with First Nations people. They may also have been stolen or forcibly removed as part of the colonial 'project'. Both trajectories influenced their subsequent entry into the collections of museums in the Anglosphere. As object relationships were established with objects from the National Library's collections, the subsequent assemblages draw on multiple historical narratives that, within a cosmopolitan narrative, demand an acknowledgment of these object histories and efforts to heighten the voices of First Nations peoples (both historical and contemporary) in the museum space.

The first exhibition space of the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition explored the preparations for Cook's voyages and featured a range of objects that demonstrated European navigational processes of this time (see Chapter 7). Among the final objects displayed in this space were the plans of both the *Endeavour* and the *Resolution*, which were on loan from the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London. These plans provided a detailed outline of the various decks and profiles of the boats that, together with the model and navigational equipment, was intended to give visitors a strong understanding of European approaches to

navigation. After viewing these objects, visitors entered a transition point for the exhibition, as the narrative moved from British shipping and navigation to their visits to the Society Islands, including Tahiti, Bora Bora, and Raiatea. The exhibition drew on the National Library picture collection to present a series of images depicting a range of sea-capable canoes produced (and used to navigate and populate the Pacific Ocean) by First Nations peoples, created by the European voyage artists, including John Webber and William Hodges (see Plate 8.1 below). There was John Webber's *Canoe of Otaheite* and *People of Prince William Sound in their Canoes 1778.* For the exhibition curators, the relationship created between these objects was essential to underline the divergent perspectives for navigation and seafaring between Europeans and the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, as Martin Woods explains:

> In the end, we had quite a nice collection of instruments, navigation instruments and so on, and were able to tell the story, I think, to some effect, around the differences between this technical geospatial navigation methodology and a completely different non-instrument navigation methodology used essentially to establish the whole Polynesian network of nations. (Martin Woods, National Library Curator)

These differences in navigation were further underlined in the panel associated with the images which read:

> When the British reached the Pacific, they found knowledge systems to rival their own. Pacific navigators observed the stars, ocean currents and wave effects, air and sea interference patterns caused

by islands and atolls, the flight of birds, the winds, and the weather. European navigation required charts and instruments to address the critical problems of position at sea.

Plate 8.1 'Pacific Navigation' theme in *Cook and the Pacific*. Photograph by author.

The panel concludes by outlining the important role Tupaia (discussed in Chapter 7) had on Cook's first voyage, illustrating how Cook recognised the limitations of his own knowledge and the advantages that could be provided through existing First Nations peoples navigational practices. For the National Library, the section also created an opportunity to show how these practices were recorded in the National Library collection. As Susannah Helmann (National Library Curator) notes, placing these objects at this juncture point at the start of the exhibition 'would work […] because it sort of allowed us also to look at a launching off point for places… It just seemed to work'. This transition between European and Pacific ways of navigation created a 'down-the-rabbit-hole' experience for visitors, as the exhibition moved definitively away from a central focus on Cook, the crew, and the British stakeholders, to an exploration of the Pacific and, most significantly, its First Nations peoples.

As visitors entered the Society Islands section of the exhibition, the first item that was encountered was *A Portrait of Poedua* by John Webber. Poedua was a princess on Raiatea (the second largest of the Society Islands) and the daughter of King Orio. Cook had meetings with her and her father on his second and third voyages. It was during the latter event, in late 1777, that she sat for Webber. In the portrait she is shown naked from the waist up, with a white cloth (*pâreu*) covering the rest of her form. Her hair is down, and she has two flowers pinned behind both ears. While the portrait indicates a cordial relationship between the British and these First Nations people, the accompanying panel describes an event where Cook held Poedua captive:

> On 24 November [1777], two crew members deserted from *Discovery*. Cook held Poedua, her brother and her husband captive until the two men were returned. Though a later copy, this portrait dates from that time.

The episode described above, and the occasion of Webber painting Poedua, occurred on Cook's third and final voyage. From this first item in the geographically themed sections, the exhibition implies that visitors were no longer bound by the chronology of the three voyages but were instead moving into a space of examining connection points within the transnational narratives. As co-Curator Susannah Helmann described it, the decision to start with Society Islands made sense because it 'was not only the first place that they went to, but it was also the place they kept coming back to'. Progressing from the image of Poedua, visitors next came across a botanical sketch of the bread fruit plant from National Library collection. The accompanying panel reaffirms the seafaring narrative of Pacific peoples provided through the previously discussed navigation display, highlighting that 'the dispersal of the [bread fruit] across the Pacific was dependent on human seafaring'. The National Library's collection then provided the visual representations of the Society Islands from the period, with William Wake Ellis's watercolour *Inland view of Oitapeeah Bay in the Island of Otaheite 1777* and

Venus along with other items from the National Library collection.

These European perspectives were then contrasted with two cultural practices from the Society Islands – tattooing and the funerary rituals associated with the death of a chief. To explain these cultural practices, the National Library drew on the collections of external institutions. Te Papa in New Zealand provided a set of a *Ta* (Tahitian tattooing instruments) and a tattooing mallet, which were paired with eighteenth-century drawings of the same from the privately held Stokes Collection located at Mount Macedon, Victoria, Australia. Nearby, the *Chief Mourner's Costume (partial) from the Society Islands,* also from the Te Papa collection, was on display with an image of *A view in the Island of Otaheite the House Called Tupapow, under which the dead are deposited 1773*, from the private collection of Kerry Stokes, together with a William Wade Ellis picture from the National Library's own collection, titled *Inland view of Oitapeeah Bay in the Island Otaheite*. The mourning costume was the most delicate item in the exhibition and so required extensive conservation work. As Peter Appleton, National Library Assistant Director, Exhibitions, outlined, it was the most complex item to bring to the exhibition:

> probably the mourning costume was the most complex one because of the sensitivity of the item. A lot of the books and manuscripts are pretty easy to pack and secure and the chance of them being damaged is quite slim. Whereas with the mourning costume it needed conservation work on site before we could install it and then, again, specialist advice while we were installing it and it will be the same when we're de-installing it. So that was probably the most complex.

The mourning costume was one of only ten costumes collected from the Pacific by Cook throughout his voyages and was likely returned to England after the second voyage. The

costume was then purchased first by Joseph Banks and then by William Bullock, a prominent collector at the time. In 1819, Charles Winn purchased the item as part of his own collection, and through inheritance the collection eventually resided with Rowland Winn, 2nd Baron St Oswald, who donated most of the collection to the New Zealand government in 1913. Joseph Banks's early 'ownership' of this mourning costume created an intriguing link in the exhibition, as explained in the accompanying panel:

> In the funerary rituals that followed the death of a chief, the 'Chief Mourner' (usually a relative of the deceased) would rampage around the village, accompanied by a group of attendants, scaring all who crossed his path. On one occasion, on 10 June 1769, Joseph Banks was permitted to play the role of one of the attendants.

The object relationships in the exhibition pull on these networks of Tahitian cultural practices, British collecting in the eighteenth century, and national collecting activities in both Australia and New Zealand. Banks's role as an attendant in the funerary ritual simultaneously creates a narrative of cross-cultural relations and/or engagement while also communicating 'different ways of being' in the world through these Tahitian cultural practices. If, as Gerard Delanty (2009, p. 6) argues, the cosmopolitan is 'a new definition of the social reality of immanent possibilities and a conception of modernity that emphasizes its multiple and interactive nature', then it is clear that this requires more complex networks of actors to construct, stabilise and redefine the museum assemblage. I will now turn to examining how these intersections occur through the National Library's treatment of Cook's death in Hawaii.

The death of Cook and the Swordfish dagger: Hawaiian culture on display

On 14 February 1779, Captain James Cook rowed from HMS *Discovery* to the shore of Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii. This was his second stay at the Bay. On the previous evening, several Hawaiians had supposedly stolen a range of items from the British, including the *Discovery's* cutter. Cook went to shore to discuss the matter with the Chief, King Terreboo (or Kalani'opu'u), an occurrence that was not unique but part of an ongoing dialogue between the voyagers and the First Nations peoples. Captain Charles Clerke would recount later that there were some 'insolent ill-disposed fellows' among the crowd of Hawaiians who began threatening Cook, leading him to shoot from his musket a load of small shot (Williams 2008, p. 12). Rather than capitulating to Cook's actions, the men continued to threaten him until he shot one of them point blank. The response was a general attack on the British by the Hawaiians, with Cook and four of his men killed.

In *Cook and the Pacific*, the narrative arc places Hawaii at the end of the geographically themed sections of the exhibition. The prominent object featured in the Hawaii theme is *The Death of Captain Cook*, which was from the National Library's collection and was painted by George Carter in 1781 (see Plate 8.2). Cook is placed in the centre right of the image, the only British figure located adjacent to the attacking Hawaiians. Behind him, the British sailors are illustrated firing muskets, while the unarmed sailors cower from the attacking Hawaiians. At Cook's feet lays the body of the Hawaiian he shot, and behind him is Kalani'opu'u holding up a *Pahoa*, or swordfish dagger. Cook's final attacker stands directly before him in the painting, carrying a barbed spear about to land the fatal blow.

Plate 8.2 *The Death of Captain Cook* by George Carter on display in *Cook and the Pacific*, National Library of Australia. Photograph by author.

In the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition, this painting is paired with a *Pahoa (Dagger) of Swordfish reputed to be the one which killed Cook* (see Plate 8.3 below). This object was loaned by the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, where its provenance traces it to a subsequent naval visit to Kealakekua Bay by HMS *Blonde* in 1825, at which time the sword was collected by naturalist Andrew Bloxam. The British had voyaged to Honolulu to return the bodies of the Hawaiian Royal Family who, in travelling to the United Kingdom, had died of measles, to which they had no immunity. Recounting this history, the associated panel reads:

> Though eyewitness accounts record that Cook was killed by an iron dagger, stories have persisted that a swordfish-bill dagger was used […] The *Blonde* visited the morai (sacred meeting place and burial ground) at Kealakekua Bay and collected a number of relics.

Plate 8.3 *Pahoa (Dagger) of Swordfish*. Loan from Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii, displayed *Cook and the Pacific*, National Library of Australia. Photograph by author.

With this narrative, *Cook and the Pacific* created for visitors an understanding of the continuing flows and connections that occurred following Cook's death, including the journey of the *pahoa* from Honolulu to Britain aboard the *Blonde*, through auction houses and then returning to Honolulu in 1977. Martin Woods (National Library Curator) recalled uncovering a small mystery associated with the *pahoa* when he travelled to the Bishop Museum. He discovered the dagger was part of a larger display featuring a number of swordfish daggers, but the one labelled as 'probably the dagger used' to kill Cook was smaller than expected. In the end, the National Library received a much larger sword than the one viewed by Woods after curatorial research revealed that the museum previously had an incorrect item on display:

> So, in fact, through this process, the Bishop revisited their documentation… These kinds of things happen not infrequently in exhibitions of this kind. If materials haven't been visited for so long

> that in fact what research had been done at the time may be in error and it forces people into doing the additional work to actually clarify things. (Martin Woods, National Library Curator)

Together, these objects created a powerful narrative for visitors. The large oil painting in the British tradition of death painting that dominated the display was placed in direct dialogue with the weapon 'responsible' for the act perpetrated against the 'hero' of Carter's painting. These items were then complemented by a series of documentary objects that have been the basis of most accounts and research regarding Cook's death, which were placed in a large display case located directly opposite the Carter painting. Among them were some of the last words written by Cook, contained in *Fragments of the Logbook of Captain Cook, Third Pacific Voyage* (on loan from the British Library), describing the noting down of the progress of the voyage and various interactions with the Hawaiians, including exchanges of bread fruit and other goods. The accompanying panel concluded by simply stating that 'the final entry is on the 17 January 1779, when the ship is anchored off Kealakekua Bay', three days after Cook's death. Also included in the case was the *Log 14 February to 26 July 1779* of Charles Clerke (the captain aboard the voyage's sister ship, *Discovery*) on loan from the National Archives in the UK. Despite these tangible links to the event of Cook's death, some visitors to *Cook and the Pacific* were frustrated by the lack of detail presented, as the following comment shows:

> Another excellent exhibition by National Library. Cook & Co certainly got around and such interesting first meetings of cultures. Wish there was more detailed reporting from the crew about circumstances & existing atmosphere over Cook's death. (Visitor comment book, National Library)

Located in a glass display case to the left of the Carter image was a *mahiole*, or Hawaian helmet, such as the one worn by the Hawaiian king depicted in Carter's image. On loan from the National Gallery of Australia, the item was reputedly collected by Charles Clerke, creating further object associations through the display. Together, these objects did not simply assemble the past, they communicated a narrative intended to provide meanings from both sides of the dispute. This multiplicity of perspectives inherent in the Cook display mirrors a multivocal nationalism that incorporates traditional and cosmopolitan narratives associated with the Cook meta-history of global exploration and its significance for those localities and (latter day) nations. The National Library, however, also took care to narrate histories that showed how the First Nations peoples of the Pacific influenced British people during the eighteenth century, and it is to a consideration of the ways in which they attempted to this that the thesis now turns.

Collecting Cook, Mai, and cosmopolitan connection in the British Empire

On exiting the Hawaiian section of the exhibition, visitors entered a space that examined how Cook was commemorated in Britain after his death. The first narrative presented in this section, however, is concerned with Mai, a Raiatean man who was brought back to the United Kingdom on Cook's second voyage and spent two years among the upper classes of British society. From their collection, the National Library displayed *Omai of the Friendly Isles* (see Plate 8.4), a study taken by British artist Joshua Reynolds to assist with the painting of an eight foot-portrait of Mai, which was completed around 1776. Kate Fullagar (2015, p. 204) has questioned the contemporary dialogues associated with Reynolds' large portrait, *Mai*, as being demonstrative of acceptance of difference. She argues that modern sensibilities have shifted the original message and intent of the visual depiction of Mai, and Reynolds' intentions in presenting him. For her, Reynolds was primarily concerned with idealising the 'savagery' of Mai, by highlighting his tattoos, his traditional dress, and by placing him in a harsh landscape. In taking this approach, however, Reynolds also

incorporated classical forms that illustrated authority and respectability, such as the flowing robe-like shaping of his dress. The associated panel for *Omai of the Friendly Isles* reads:

> Mai spent about two years in London, where he excelled in society. This is a study for Joshua Reynolds' major portrait in oil, and was likely taken from life.

Plate 8.4 Reynolds, Joshua. 1774, *Omai of the Friendly Isles*, viewed 19 October 2021 http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135229180.

Like the depictions of Aboriginal peoples examined in Chapter 6, that this study was 'taken from life' was important for the cosmopolitan agenda. Likely sketched to support Reynolds' later realistic depiction of the features of Mai in his larger study, rather than any resemblance of respect shown by the artist for a subject he would have seen as a 'savage', the artwork can be examined as an historical representation of Reynolds' engagement with difference. Following on from Fullagar (2015, p. 205), *Omai of the Friendly Isles* can be seen as being 'fundamentally about human differences […] and presumably about our need to "accept; differences", "building bridges" to them rather than swallowing all whole within universality'.

Fullagar's argument is focused on the anachronisms that exist between the presentation of a transnational history and the historical contexts and consequences for those individuals depicted. Yet these historical consequences may also be obscured through the transnational trajectories of the objects themselves, from their Pacific homes to Britain, to the collector Kivell, and finally to a Canberra vault, where a multitude of actors converge in assembling a contemporary cosmopolitan nationalism that endeavours to acknowledge different ways of being, both historical and contemporary, in the world. In engaging with difference, the anachronism of the position of the artworks matters less than contemporary audience expectations of the Other and how they should be treated, both in the modern world and through peaks of cosmopolitan perspective facilitated via transnational histories. Indeed, Martin Woods (National Library Curator) was well aware of the limits the exhibition format presented for conveying the complexity associated with Mai:

> Omai did not do well out of the experience… they set him up on [the] wrong island and his possessions were stolen, and he's left in poverty essentially and dies a year or so — about the same time as Cook, actually. So, you have these relationships that have echoes. Of course, but in Europe, the play, the pantomime, *Omai*, is very popular and it is part of the nation building of Britain that you have these kinds of literatures emerging.

Mai's departure from the United Kingdom did little to dim his reception in the imperial imagination as a 'savage' visiting and working in high circles. His story was retold as a pantomime, providing a lavish account of Mai's life at a time in Britain, directly after Cook's third voyage, when the Pacific was at the height of its popularity. This narrative also reveals another relationship between National Library's broader collection and the Alexander Turnbull Library in New Zealand. The Turnbull Library loaned to *Cook and the Pacific* a

series of prop designs and stage designs created by artist Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg for a pantomime produced to depict the life of Mai. Among the items were designs of idols from Hawaii, together with drums and an altar from Tahiti. In the exhibition, these items were brought into conversation with one of a series of 18 costume designs for Mai that are held in the National Library's collection. The accompanying panel explained:

> On 20 December 1785 a spectacular pantomime opened at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. It was produced at a time of peak interest in the Pacific […] it was a lavish and popular production. Using the traditional pantomime format […] it was an opportunity to display exotic scenes and [for] people to retell the story of Cook's voyages and the people he had met.

These presentations of Mai also worked to present British imperialism – what Sara Ahmed (2010, p. 123) has described 'as a history of happiness' in which British people intermingled with others from a diverse range of cultures and backgrounds. According to Ahmed (2014, p. 164), these transnational networks and their rather benign figures displace the darker aspects of British imperial history in an attempt to forget what was delivered to the First Nations peoples. With the focus on Mai and his place within London's social circuits and imperial imagination through the Mai pantomime, the real consequences for Mai's return to the Pacific were displaced or rendered absent in the restricted narratives of an exhibition space. This presents a cosmopolitan agenda that tracks Mai's place as an outsider in Britain, while simultaneously capturing moments of cross-cultural connection that highlight a concern for the practices of Other in the pantomime and the shared humanity and personalisation of Mai through Joshua Reynolds' study.

In Cook's Wake, Pacific continuities, and the National Library Treasures Gallery

The National Library has two exhibition display galleries: the temporary exhibitions gallery that featured *Cook and the Pacific* and, adjacent to it, the Treasures Gallery, which shows a rotating range of objects and items from the National Library's collections. Beyond providing access to these collections, *Treasures* also provides opportunities to create small-scale exhibitions to complement the major exhibitions in the temporary gallery. In the context of *Cook and the Pacific*, the opportunity was taken to do this with the partner exhibition, *In Cook's Wake: Tapa Treasures from the Pacific.* Tapa, or barkcloth, made from the paper mulberry tree, was common throughout the Pacific, with varying designs used in clothing and other products to form an essential aspect of the visual and material culture of Pacific societies. The National Library has a large suite of barkcloth in their collection, including a range of sample booklets of cloth collected during the Cook voyages. As with *Cook and the Pacific*, some of the standout items in the *Cook's Wake* exhibition were drawn from the Rex Nan Kivell Collection at the National Library. Of those, a particular item, which covered an entire wall in the exhibition, was the *Sample of Tapa cloth – Brought back by Alexander Hood, Master's Mate, HMS Resolution*, a piece of tapa stretching 349 by 68 centimetres. As the lead panel communicated, the tapa was an integral part of Pacific society:

> The repetitive thud of tapa bast being beaten by legions of women was heard by Pacific people over centuries and commented upon by visiting Europeans.

The centrality of the tapa to Pacific culture represented through *Cook's Wake* also linked to key items in *Cook and the Pacific*. While on his third voyage, Cook sent his wife a piece of tapa he had acquired, along with a request that it be made into a waistcoat for him to wear at

Court. Creating an intriguing parallel to the production of the cloth by Pacific women, Elizabeth Cook had begun the embroidery work on the piece before abandoning it on learning of her husband's death. This tapa cloth, with the initial waistcoat design work, eventually made its way into the collection of the State Library of NSW and was loaned to the National Library to be displayed in the 'Collecting Cook' section of *Cook and the Pacific* (see Plate 8.5).

Plate 8.5 *Waistcoat of Tahiti cloth (tapa) for Captain Cook to wear at court, had he returned from his third voyage, c. 1779.* Image courtesy State Library of NSW.

The object had been a centrepiece of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London in 1886, showing how the continuing intersection of the British Empire with the Pacific informed narratives for Britain's role as a global power during the subsequent period. In *Cook and the Pacific*, however, the object was intended to demonstrate a cross-cultural dialogue – a heterogeneous convergence – cut short. The accompanying exhibition panel declared that 'this unfinished waistcoat is one of the great surviving cross-cultural objects' from Cook's expeditions. The waistcoat is indeed a strange amalgam of Polynesian cultural practice and the embroidery and tailoring practices of Europe, providing avenues for visitors to consider the multiple and divergent encounters and dialogues that were entered into through Cook's

three voyages. Through the exhibition, the National Library asked visitors to imagine Cook's place in the British Empire and reflect on how the British Empire continued to conceive of the First Nations peoples of the Pacific.

Conclusion

This chapter examined how museum objects, as non-human actors in the museum assemblage, played a central role in the transnational narratives and multiple histories presented in *Cook and the Pacific*. The selection of objects by curators reflected the National Library's role as the oldest federally funded museum institution, with the National Library's own collection a primary source of objects in the exhibition. Consequently, those objects on loan from international collections entered into complex relationships with the National Library's own collections that underlined the transnational nature of both these objects and the histories they constructed. The object relationships of the exhibition created complex assemblages that facilitated the analysis of difficult and contested pasts, including key imperial moments like the death of Cook. The exhibition partnered objects, such as Carter's painting of the death of Cook and the *Pahoa (Dagger) of Swordfish*, to create a multiplicity of histories that provided different perspectives to the universal, progressive narrative of Cook. The exhibition also complemented these histories with seemingly benign, cross-cultural encounters, such as Joshua Reynolds' *Omai of the Friendly Isles* and the *Waistcoat of Tahiti cloth*, which both created an historicised cosmopolitan concern for, and engagement with, the other. These objects unlocked parallel narratives of belonging to the Pacific's First Nations peoples, constructing histories that redefined Cook's place in Pacific history for contemporary visitors. I next turn to examine the final themes in *Cook and the Pacific* that focused on how Cook's place in British and Australian collective memory has shifted from the time of his death, and into the twenty-first century. Following the thematic choices of the exhibition, this penultimate chapter will explore how the National Library negotiated the Cook metanarrative into Australian cosmopolitan nationalism.

Chapter 9

Recursive cosmopolitanism and debate in Cook's narrative

The framework developed in this thesis aims to uncover how various actors, curators, objects, and visitors actively contributed to, and sought support from one another, to normalise (or territorialise) a cosmopolitan nationalism in Australia through the museum space. In addition to an analysis of the staging of the *Art of Science* exhibition, I have examined how the National Library's presentation of the transnational history of the voyages of James Cook through the Pacific was used to link with present day concerns for a cosmopolitan, engaged Australian nation. The focus of *Cook and the Pacific* on the First Nations peoples visited by Cook on his three voyages provided an overarching cosmopolitan nationalism narrative. Contemporary cosmopolitan concerns for, and relationships to, the cultural Other were underlined through narratives showing interactions between Cook and First Nations peoples of the Pacific that, in turn, displaced the metanarratives of Cook as a 'core' figure in the Australia's national history. Chapter 8 demonstrated how the transient histories of objects in the exhibition underlined these discussions, with objects held at the National Library and those loaned from external institutions both creating their own transnational networks and associations that mapped along an Australian cosmopolitan nationalism narrative.

This penultimate chapter examines how the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition at the National Library traced an emergent cosmopolitan nationalism in Australia through the memorialisation of Cook that occurred in Britain and Australia in the 241 years following his death. It focuses on the final two thematic sections of the exhibition, 'Collecting Cook' and 'Cook after Cook', which, unlike the central geographic themes of the exhibition, were removed from the regional context of the Pacific. Instead, these sections had the following

two thematic foci: a) how Cook was memorialised in the United Kingdom directly following his death; and b) how the Cook history, as a metanarrative, has been set within the collective memory of Australia. In doing so, the chapter examines how the figure of Cook, as presented in the exhibition, together with the narrative of his memory, was assembled and displayed for visitors. It argues that this narrative was reflective of a broad concern with charting how Cook, the 'man', has emerged ever more strongly against the idea of Cook, the 'Hero', to collapse a universal narrative of European founding and progress, and highlight instead the role and influence of First Nations peoples in a shared past.

As argued in Chapter 2, from the turn of the twenty-first century museums have tilted their focus towards minority histories, indigenous histories, and global histories, in response to shifts in historical research/writing and visitor expectations that emerged throughout this period. While visitor interviews could not be conducted at the National Library, the Library provided me with access to the exhibition's visitor comment book, which revealed that the cosmopolitan narrative was not unquestioned by visitors, who variously challenged, accepted, and expanded (perhaps all at the same time) the narratives presented. These comments reflect an active, multivocal nationalism, where voices are free to contest and debate the past, and where the cosmopolitan Other may be closer than one expects; I argue an open dialogue about contemporary Australia recognises the role of traditional and cosmopolitan values in the negotiation of national identity. The place of First Nations peoples in the Cook narrative oscillates between the local, national, and global histories. I begin this examination through an analysis of the curatorial choices made to communicate the history of Cook, examining how the curator, object and institutional relationships emerged in *Cook and the Pacific*. The chapter then uses the visitor comments contained in the comment book to explore how these narratives were reaffirmed or contested in the space.

Becoming difficult heritage: Cook and complexity in Australian history

The section of the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition at the National Library that visitors entered after the 'Hawaii' thematic section was titled 'Collecting Cook'. The death of James Cook at the hands of Hawaii's First Nations peoples (examined in Chapter 8) generated considerable attention in Britain and throughout the British Empire. The death of a national figure and the enduring interest in Cook's life created a large memorabilia and collection craze, with all manner of merchandise being created, from porcelain figures of Cook in display boxes, to a commemorative medal produced by the Royal Society, as well as numerous maps, charts, and insignia. The Wedgewood company, located in Stoke-on-Trent in England, produced portrait medallions, not only of Cook but also Joseph Banks and others, often modelled on well-known portraits produced by etchers and printmakers, multiple copies of which were on display in the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition. The introductory panel for this part of the exhibition outlined how Cook was portrayed in the period after his death:

> Cook's death attracted huge attention in Britain and across Europe […] Cook's voyages and his achievements, not to mention the man himself, were written up and memorialised in different ways, in print, image and object.

As was shown in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, the thematic structure of the exhibition focused on the geographical regions of the Pacific and included the death of Cook in Hawaii. The decision could have been made to end the exhibition there, underlining a focus on the relationship between Cook and the First Nations peoples of the Pacific. Doing so would have contained the exhibition within an essentially transnational history that endeavoured to illustrate the achievements of Pacific peoples, like Tupaia and Mai, while simultaneously focusing on the continuing presence of these interactions in the lives of contemporary members of those communities. But the curators recognised, and indeed had personally

experienced, the Cook legacy in Australia, which they believed was a crucial avenue to explore. As one of the curators remarked:

> It would have been a different exhibition, I think, if we'd ended at Cook's death… [We wanted] to bring it into the present and because Cook is one of those figures that means a lot of different things to people, but why does he? Why does he continue to resonate? We wanted to sort of look into that question. (Susannah Helman, National Library Curator)

Cook means ‘different things’ to different people, as will be explored later in the chapter. But the exhibition was also set up to highlight how Cook represented ‘different things’ to different people not only today, but throughout the 250-year period following his first voyage to the Pacific. The National Library decided to make this the focus of the final thematic section of the exhibition, which they titled ‘Cook after Cook’. The exhibition was not wide ranging in examining the memorialisation and continuing legacy of Cook; rather, it focused on how Cook has been positioned in the national and cultural memory of Australia. Following on from the collection craze in Britain, this thematic section of the exhibition focused on how the Cook metanarrative has moved into the terrain of what Sharon Macdonald (2010) (discussed in Chapter 2) refers to as ‘difficult heritage’, where the past jars with modern sensibilities and demands a history, or a revised metanarrative, that can incorporate a First Nations presence into an age of European discovery. Through her analysis of the Nazi heritage structures at Nuremberg, Macdonald (2010, 2015) has shown how the process of approaching difficult history is inherently an act of negotiation whereby multiple strategies, including demobilisation, reconstruction, education, and moral witnessing, are used as part of a process of acknowledging and accommodating the past. Research in Australia has focused on how this negotiation process has worked across commemorations and public histories,

from locally oriented histories on the Lambing Flats riots at Young, and Indigenous dispossession in the Pilbara, Western Australia, to regional and national narratives, such as the record of the Native Mounted Police and commemorative activities associated with the bombing of Darwin and the Myall Creek Massacre (Frew & White 2015; Gregory & Paterson 2015; Rowse & Waterton 2020; Schamberger 2017). Macdonald's (2010, p. 183) choice of the term 'negotiation' illustrates the 'ongoing and often contested nature of the processes involved [not] a smooth process but [one which] entails friction – an encounter with a position that is different from our own'. From the assemblage thinking perspective applied throughout this thesis, such moments of negotiation highlight points at which an assemblage shifts and is (re)created through the influences of a myriad of actors. They show the fluid territories of public history through which cosmopolitan nationalism is set and reset.

Australia's relationship to Cook and the history of the colonial era of settler–Indigenous relations has been re-examined recently to draw out this difficult history, with arguments supporting the Frontier Wars of Aboriginal peoples fighting against British imperialism, the genocide of Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples and the Stolen Generations all emerging as recurring themes in the literature (Connor 2002; Lydon & Ryan 2018; Reynolds 2013; Ryan 2012). In Australia, Cook is not necessarily seen as a national hero in a way that may be ascribed to Lachlan Macquarie, Ned Kelly, or soldier John Monash (Donaghue & Tranter 2018, p. 88). In many ways, Cook is a 'precursor' to European settlement in Australia, historically disconnected from the colonies and the Australia that emerged. Beyond this positioning, contemporary celebrations of Cook in Australia were limited by an understanding that he did not 'discover' the continent (Donaghue & Tranter 2018; Grant 2017; Williams 2018). While Cook did not 'discover' the Australian continent, he is part of a metanarrative for the 'birth' of the Australian nation, or, to put it plainly, twenty-first century Australia would not exist as it does without him. The desire of the National Library in mounting this exhibition was to unpick the complexity of Cook's legacy and its meaning for British and Australian

identity and the First Nations peoples of Australia and the Pacific. This transition between perspectives was captured in the following comment by Curator Martin Woods, who spelled out the National Library's intentions not simply to explore encounters between cultures, but also to probe contemporary value judgements regarding the consequences of these outcomes:

> to actually understand what that means is that there are encounters between cultures and there are things to be learnt, one side to another, whichever side you're on. I also felt that I wanted to explore the idea of even going into those cultures; what did that mean and was it a good or bad thing to do? (Martin Woods, National Library Curator)

In her analysis of commemorative programs associated with the centenary and bicentenary of the landing of Arthur Phillip in Australia on 26 January 1788, Lyn Spillman explains that the 'imagined community' (a concept I introduced in Chapter 2) is a shifting frame that redefines the nation and national identity to meet the demands of the present. James Cook has been part of these shifting views in Australia, with contested and difficult 'Cook' emerging from changes in society over an extended period. The introductory panel to this thematic section of the National Library exhibition outlines this narrative of the historicising of Cook:

> [Cook] has come to embody ideas of civilisation and also colonisation. To some, the voyages led to events which undermined sovereignty and initiated human tragedy. To others, Cook's legacy has been woven more readily into national histories and identities.

> The question of how perceptions of Cook have evolved since the 1770s continues to inspire artists and fuel debate.

This final section of the exhibition returned to the narrative of Cook and Australia, asking how the legacy of Cook, his actions and achievements have been received by Australians in the 250 years following his departure from Britain to first explore the Pacific. Primarily, this final section was concerned with how Cook has been remembered in popular culture, with advertising posters and cartoons featuring prominently. These shifting perspectives, and how they have repositioned the Cook narrative, were highlighted through a combination of objects and artworks that featured Cook as their subject. In the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s, Cook was tied positively into national narratives about Australia and its rise in the world, exhibited through a large poster promoting the 'pageantry and carnival' celebrating the 150th anniversary of Arthur Phillip's landing at Port Jackson (see Plate 9.1). The poster features a Cook figure in the foreground of the image, overlooking the scene of the Union Jack being raised by Phillip. In the background is Sydney Harbour, featuring the then six-year-old Harbour Bridge lit from behind by fireworks. Cook's role in shaping the modern, progressive Australian nation is unquestioned in this imagery. Similarly, this tradition of Cook as the discoverer of 'European' Australia, displacing Aboriginal peoples' narratives, continued into the 1950s as shown through a second poster advertising travel to Australia. It features a detailed Cook figure with the *Endeavour* in the background. Associated with Cook were 'quintessential' Australian objects, such as a stick of wattle representing the flora of the country, and a map of Australia showing the geographical territory claimed by Cook (see Plate 9.2). The poster asks you to 'Discover… Australia'. According to the associated panel in the exhibition, 'playing on the popular idea that Cook discovered Australia, this poster encourages overseas tourists to visit Australia'. This choice of phrase was telling of contemporary sensibilities associated with Cook, with the 'popular idea' of this period being placed in a disconnected historical context.

Plate 9.1 *Australia's 150th Anniversary: Sydney 1938*. Advertising poster [in situ]. Photograph by author.

Plate 9.2 *Discover… Australia*. Advertising poster. Australian National Publicity Association, ca. 1950 [in situ]. Photograph by author.

These ideas or beliefs about Cook have informed the identities of numerous Australians and so cannot be automatically discounted in cosmopolitan nationalism. These associations to Australian identity were commented on by Curator Martin Woods, who said that while he was developing the exhibition, he took some time to look through his old school workbooks from the 1970s. He recalled that in one workbook he had drawn a map of Australia in which he plotted the routes of all the people 'who, quote unquote, discovered Australia'. This workbook, no doubt similar to the workbooks of thousands of other students from this period, provides a window into a twentieth century perception of Cook's place and role in the 'discovery' of Australia. Woods was amazed at how seamlessly Cook became part of his knowledge through the schooling system:

> So, really quite interesting when you think about how we absorb, have absorbed, Cook over time and how that's changed over time. I'm sure a person born in 1998 and 2018 will see Cook differently. (Martin Woods, National Library Curator)

Cook is a central figure of the postcolonial legacy of Britain in Australia. His prominent role as the first European to chart the eastern coastline of Australia and claim it on behalf of Great Britain became a centrepiece of Australia's commemorative programs for the next 250 years (and more than likely beyond). Brochures, souvenirs, and photographs reflecting these acts of commemoration also featured in the exhibition, including two photographs titled *Re-Enactment of the Landing of Captain Cook at Kurnell, in Botany Bay 1970* and *Anti-Bicentenary Demonstrations, Sydney January 1988*, the latter of which, taken by photographer Regis Lansac, illustrates the challenges made to a celebratory remembrance of Cook during the Australia Day (26 January) national public holiday in 1988. The *Anti-Bicentenary* photograph captures those protesting the Bicentenary celebrations held in Sydney in 1988 with some of the placards featured in the image, including slogans like 'White Aust. Has a Black History' and '$80 Million spent on celebrations. Cuts to public health, welfare & education. What's there to celebrate'. These images are part of the continual shifting of perspectives, identified previously by Spillman (1997), but common to all comparative studies of national identity over time.

While visitors will not necessarily follow the trajectory of an exhibition as it was laid out from start to finish, the choice in the 'Cook after Cook' section of *Cook and the Pacific* to trace the memory of Cook chronologically needs to be highlighted. The narrative outlined was one of Cook transformed from 'founder' and 'hero' to a subject of contest and hostility. This section of the exhibition showed a transformation from a traditional (or even parochial) nationalism to a cosmopolitan nationalism. Cook's role morphs from the wattle-adorned 'discoverer' of a

continent into being part of the more complicated narrative of contemporary Australia whereby Cook was seen as a figure of colonial subjugation that contrasts with cosmopolitan concerns for First Nations peoples. Such a narrative places cosmopolitan nationalism as an *a priori* normative condition that was emergent through a progressive narrative of Cook's role in national memory. If histories were so readily reassembled, then the context behind these narratives needs to be brought to the fore and it must be asked which actors were involved in these assemblages and how their interactions and desires (re)territorialise a 'collective' national memory. These complexities were foreshadowed by the debate about how Cook followed the British Admiralty instructions regarding the treatment of the First Nations people of the Pacific, and the consequences of that decision for these communities and the countries they are a part of today.

Cook's secret instructions: Cosmopolitan anachronism?

When James Cook departed England in 1768, he had been given instructions from the Admiralty regarding his objectives on the *Endeavour* voyage that were presented in two parts. The first was his instructions to progress to Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus. The second instructions were sealed and only to be opened by Cook following the completion of the first task. What are now known as Cook's secret instructions were among the most contested documents in the National Library's collection. They contain the following instructions, which have been widely cited as a precursor rejection of British claims to what became the Australian nation, based on the premise of *terra nullius* (Morris 2020, pp. 15-7; Nugent 2009, p. 73):

> You are also with the Consent of the Natives to take Possession of Convenient Situations in the Country in the Name of the King of Great Britain: Or: if you find the Country uninhabited take Possession for his Majesty by setting up Proper Marks and Inscriptions, as first

> discoverers and possessors. (Admiralty, Admiralty Office of the Royal Navy 1768)

This letter is part of the debates about Native Title and Indigenous dispossession in Australia that continue to play out in the Cook metanarrative, including his claiming of Australia in the name of Great Britain. In the exhibition, however, the letter was a step removed from the examination of Cook's place in Australian cultural memory. The language adopted when describing the 'Secret instructions' in *Cook and the Pacific* was intentionally neutral, suggesting the multiple associations that can be pulled from the document. The panel with the object read:

> secret additional instructions for the voyage, which he was instructed to open after observing the transit of Venus at Tahiti. Cook is told to search for the 'Great South Land' and take possession of lands encountered if they are uninhabited, or if inhabited, with the consent of the 'natives'.

While not taking a position regarding the divergent readings of the 'Secret instructions', the exhibition does place the object directly into relationships with objects and narratives that tie into the historical consequences of Cook's voyages for the First Nations peoples of Australia and the Pacific. The literal interpretation of the letter can be debated in the context of the later eighteenth century. As Martin Woods (National Library Curator) put it:

> It's a phrase that's been borrowed from the Spanish, it's used by the French, it's used by the British throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and it's almost a code for be careful of your

> behaviour and be especially careful about not taking possession of a claim that has already been made by another European power. They were more concerned about the European powers and creating a war or continuing a war, with the Spanish or the French or anyone else, than they really were about the people who were there.

The 'Secret instructions' can thus be used to both support and contest the argument of *terra nullius*. From the perspective of the European explorers, the context of 'inhabitation' included the *use* of the land, not simply its occupation, which became part of a colonial process of positioning the First Nations peoples as 'the savage', with varying degrees of 'savagery', which influenced eighteenth century European perceptions of First Nations peoples' capacity to inhabit and possess the land. Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) has argued that the intent of the 'Secret instructions' was discounted by Cook because of his discursive understanding of First Nations peoples. In the case of Australia, she highlights the views Cook asserted in his account of Aboriginal peoples as being uninterested in trade and exchange, and more concerned with the immediate requirements of living in a state of nature. In seeing Aboriginal people as incapable of perceiving the value of the land they were on, Moreton-Robinson argues that Cook took possession of the territory by discounting the processes through which Aboriginal peoples owned that land 'to take possession of the east coast of Australia without the consent of the natives meant that they had to position Aboriginal people as will-less things in order to take their land in the name of the king' (Moreton-Robinson 2015, p. 113). Taken at face value, the 'consent of the natives' narrative falls into a contemporary sensibility whereby imperial trajectories discount and displace First Nations peoples, and these cosmopolitan histories seek to acknowledge and respect cultural Others as part of the renegotiation of this difficult past. There are limits, however, to the degree that government-funded national institutions can engage with this narrative, beyond the cosmopolitan nationalism that frames it through the object relationships.

In the exhibition, the letter was positioned as one of the four key items surrounding 'The Compass' display (discussed in Chapter 7; see also Figure 7.2). The 'Secret instructions' were located on the fourth and final 'point' of 'The Compass', and faced the concluding 'Cook after Cook' theme of the exhibition, showing how Cook's actions, in the context of the letter, seep into the present to shape contemporary discourses of Australia. The placement of the 'Secret instructions' puts the object into a conversation with a series of objects reflecting on twentieth century interpretations of Cook by First Nations peoples, primarily from Australia but also from across the Pacific. In many ways, however, these relationships emerge as happenstance. As the curator Susannah Helman commented, the 'Compass' fit out at the centre of the exhibition had key objects at four points. The word lists had direct relationships with the geographic themes of the exhibition, but the 'Secret instructions' were placed in direct conversation with the legacies of Cook. Susannah Helman had initially placed them on 'The Compass' to bring European voices into the theme:

> The reason we put the secret instructions there was […] to have voices of the voyage […] we've got two wordlists, one haka [and we] have the voices of the Admiralty as well.

However, Helman also noted that this was not the only way this object could have been placed in the exhibition, given the complexity of the curation and design of *Cook and the Pacific*: 'It's a Tetris puzzle, it's a huge jigsaw really… there are multiple places you could put things.'

Despite these multiple decisions, the constricting patterns of exhibition curation and design for objects in the museum space, often following a thematic (if not chronological) narrative, limited the desire/wish aspects of curators, objects, and visitors. As the museum

assemblage (re)territorialises and links between human and non-human actors are secured, so are the networks linking these exhibitions to a cosmopolitan nationalism assemblage (Buchanan 2015, p. 384; Müller & Schurr 2016, p. 224). Following Fox and Alldred (2017, p. 26), these objects can be seen as entwined and interconnected through their 'capacity to affect or be affected', resulting in relationships that underline those desires informing and driving them. Reflective of this, Helman noted that the objects

> seemed to work… in that [the Cook's Secret Instructions] as a major manuscript among the four. But, yes, it had a nice dialogue, I think within its surroundings.

Objects also pulled into this relationship exploring Cook's legacy were a series of papers and maps taken from the Mabo Case file, located a short distance from Cook's 'Secret instructions'. On 20 May 1982, Eddie Koiki Mabo, together with four others from the Meriam people of the Torres Strait, began a legal claim for ownership of their land on the island of Mer in the eastern Torres Strait, northeast of the Australian mainland. The case was listed as Mabo v Queensland Government (High Court of Australia 1992) and went for ten years before the final decision was reached (by which time Mabo and another claimant, Celuia Mapo Salee, had died). The final decision of the case saw six of seven judges of the High Court rule that: a) the lands of Australia were not 'land belonging to no-one', or *terra nullius*, when European settlement occurred; and b) that the Meriam people were 'entitled as against the whole world to possession, occupation, use and enjoyment of (most of) the lands of the Murray Islands' (of which Mer was the largest). This decision introduced a new doctrine for land ownership in Australia, subsequently represented through the introduction of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Parliament of Australia 1993).

The *Papers of Edward Koiki Mabo (1943–1992)* were acquired by the National Library of Australia through two acquisitions in 1995 and 2002. Together with the *Endeavour Journal* of Captain James Cook, the papers were the first Australian pieces of documentary heritage added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2001.[17] The *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition contained a small map taken from the Mabo papers that outlines the traditional familial ownership of a section of Mer (Murray) Island (see Figure 9.3).

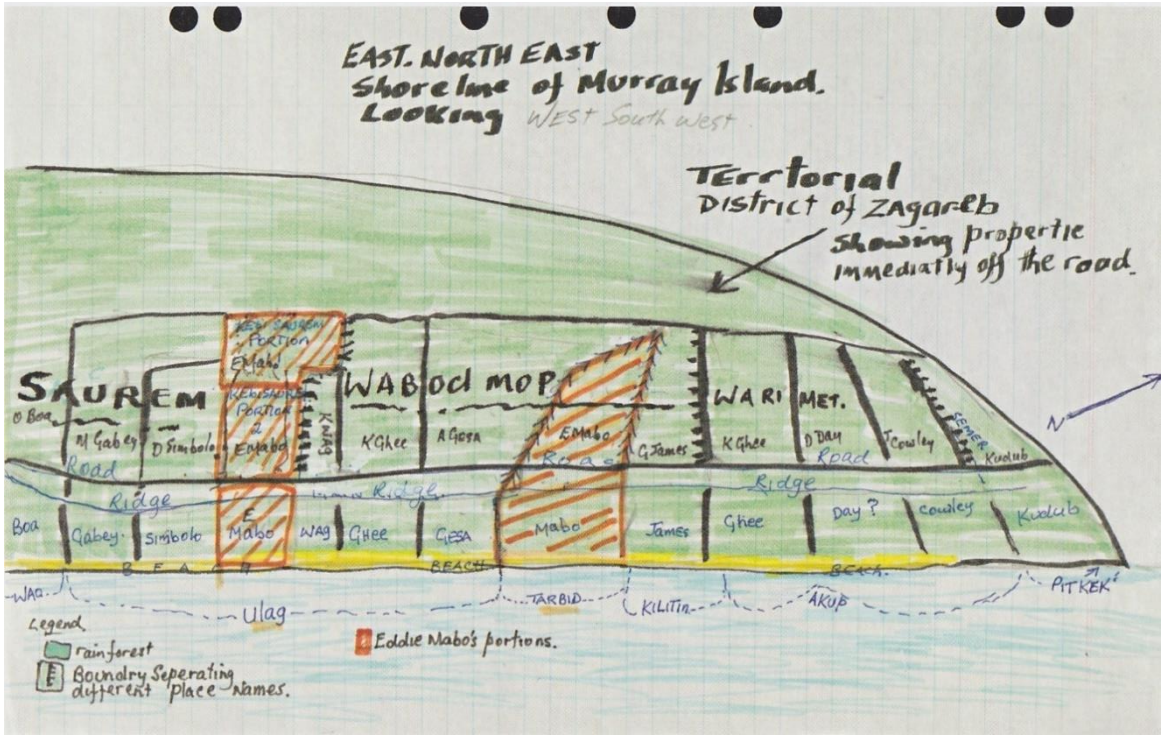

Plate 9.3 Edward Koiki Mabo. *Map of the East North East Shoreline of Murray Island, Looking West South West, Showing E. Mabo's portions*. Papers of Bryan Keon-Cohen: The Mabo Case (Manuscripts), National Library of Australia, Canberra, MS 9518, Series 1, Volume 13, item 1. Image courtesy National Library of Australia.

The curators mentioned how Cook was a precursor for numerous contestations in Australia, as Susannah Helman explained:

[17] Since 2001, four more pieces of Australia's documentary heritage have been added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register, including the Convict Records of Australia (primarily held by State Archives of New South Wales) and the 1906 film *The Story of the Kelly Gang* held by the National Film and Sound Archive.

> Yeah, one thing that we obviously learnt and become more and more aware of is that Cook is a symbol and all of these things. The consequences, I think, of his voyages are relevant to all those kinds of discussions. Cook is mentioned in the Mabo judgement, if you look at the majority of decisions.

Cook has become increasingly associated with the postcolonial legacy of Australia, as a fixed point in Australia's past that can be used to symbolise the beginning of the contemporary, Anglo-Saxon (although now increasingly culturally diverse) country. As a result, he is also deeply associated with the subsequent settlements of Australia, New Zealand, and the broader Pacific regions, as well as the pasts and presents of First Nations peoples attempting to reassert their own sovereignty over the land. The Mabo Case was the most significant land rights case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, literally rewriting the legal structures for land ownership and directly contesting Cook's original claim of ownership over the eastern half of Australia, on behalf of Great Britain. Cosmopolitan nationalism in settler countries incorporates these discussions, as the First Nations peoples (the Other in their own lands) negotiate a redefined national story. The exhibition curators decided to conclude the exhibition with a series of images created by First Nations artists that reflect on recent and contemporary consequences of Cook the First Nations peoples of the Pacific.

Cook as symbol in Australia's postcolonial legacy

The *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition concluded with a series of artworks by contemporary First Nations artists, which were significant correctives to the traditional Cook discourse. Susannah Helman (National Library Curator) acknowledged that she saw the work of these artists as important because, as part of the exhibition, they operated in 'a safe space to have difficult conversations'. Works included that of artist Michel Tuffrey, a Pacific islander artist

who engages with Cook through stylised portraits that often use the flora and fauna of the Pacific. In the statement accompanying his work, *Cookie from Aotearoa to Mangaia*, Tuffrey illustrated 'Cookie's' mixed receptions across the Pacific as follows:

> After an unfriendly welcome from the people of Mangaia […] Cookie quickly set sail north landing in Atiu; he missed the main island of Rarotonga. The hibiscus are a metaphor for his arrival to what is now known as the Cook Islands, which I've always personally questioned – how did we inherit the name 'Cook'. (Michel Tuffery, National Library, Exhibition Panel)

Also featured was Michael Cook, a mixed ancestry artist, including Bidjara Indigenous heritage, whose work *Civilised #1*, from a larger series exploring the consequences for Aboriginal peoples of European discovery of Australia, was the last item in this thematic collection of works. *Civilised #1* features an extract from Cook's diary that reads 'those [Aboriginal] people may be said to be in the pure state of nature, and may appear to be the most wretched upon earth; but in reality they are far happier than… we Europeans' (quoted in the artwork). The photographic image that Michael Cook created shows an Aboriginal man with the head of a donkey standing on a beach with ominous dark clouds in the background. The artwork reflects on how Aboriginal peoples have historically been minimised in the perception of Australian society, which, while being a persistent aspect of settler–Indigenous relationships, was positioned here as starting with Cook. Here, a cosmopolitan nationalism endeavours to empower diverse cultures in the museum space, continuing engagement with First Nations peoples into discussions about the legacies of Cook's voyages.

In positioning Cook as both an individual captured in the past and a symbol of Australia, the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition sought to complicate the Cook narrative to inform these national conversations. As these artworks and curatorial choices of the exhibition show, Cook's symbolism was not fixed but instead transforms over times and contexts. As Susannah Helman (National Library Curator) commented:

> Cook is a symbol, not just the man. He's a symbol of white people, I suppose, coming to Australia. So, in that way, that's why it's relevant to all of those kinds of discussions.

In charting this shift in Cook as memory, the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition made room for Cook the man, who may also be the Cook, at times, of error and folly. This portrayal of Cook was tied to a cosmopolitan nationalism that outlines boundaries for openness and cross-cultural understanding between the varying elements of Australian society. While this choice de-territorialises a universal, progressive narrative of Australian European history, the exhibition retools the Cook metanarrative to one of transnational and cross-cultural flows in order to reflect contemporary cosmopolitan designs for the nation, interactions that should be propagated between Australian citizens and other citizens of the world. Realigning the Cook narrative along the lines of a cosmopolitan nationalism has its own contestations – within an assemblage, the moving relationships between actors are never permanently fixed. The Cook narrative continues to be drawn on from a heterogeneous collection of agents, which means that the knowledge creation process is never isolated (particularly in a public history space like the museum). Previous chapters examined how, through museum exhibitions, First Nations, institutional, and non-human (objects) actors have solidified narratives that link into cosmopolitan nationalism. I will now add to these insights by using visitor book comments given in response to the exhibition at the National Library to examine the flexibility of this network and demonstrate how a multivocal nationalism that incorporates

multiple readings of national metanarratives allows people to engage with the Cook narrative through their own national identity arrangements and assumptions. In this context, the Cook metanarrative oscillates, and is continually (re)assembled between local and global, between collectives and individuals, and across national and cosmopolitan values.

Visitor comments on the legacy of Cook

While not as detailed as the face-to-face exit interviews conducted at the *Art of Science*, visitor comment books provide different insights into visitor experiences of exhibitions, in part due to an increased perception of anonymity. The visitor comment book for *Cook and the Pacific* was located at the entry (and exit) foyer for the exhibition, which also contained the welcome video examined in Chapter 7. Visitors completed a large circuit as they proceeded through the exhibition before returning to the foyer at its conclusion. Comments expressed a range of views on the exhibition, its themes, and its meanings for contemporary Australia. Given the placement of the comment book at the conclusion of the exhibition, it is little surprise that many of the extended comments focused on the legacy of Cook, particularly as the last section of the exhibition most visitors examined was 'Cook after Cook'.

In Chapter 2, I demonstrated that museum visitors skew towards a tertiary-educated, professional class, with consequences for their expectations from, and reception of, exhibition content. This chapter also recognised that there were diverging views among visitors about the histories presented, with existing perspectives unlikely to be altered through the curatorial and/or narrative positions of the exhibition. In the end, curatorial design, organisational content, and visitor expectations will inevitably result in an exhibition that does not meet the expectations of all visitors. As Martin Woods (National Library Curator) put it, the aim is:

> to encourage people to think in a historical sense, I mean, it's one of the things you do in an exhibition is to think. Get people thinking about the subject matter, putting themselves in that time zone and thinking from multiple perspectives and that was really, I hope, something that some people at least will take away from the whole show.

The exhibition was designed to explore Cook from a different perspective, finding ways to acknowledge common assumptions about him and probe the limits of his broader achievements outside of Australia. According to Susannah Helman (National Library Curator):

> I guess what we hope, first and foremost, is that people will look at Cook afresh. I think that there are lots of misunderstandings about Cook. That idea that Cook discovered, in inverted commas, Australia is quite out there, it is quite common.

The exhibition concludes with an image detail taken from a mural titled *Muneena from Borroloola*, which was presented at the Adelaide Cultural Festival and designed by Indigenous artists Carol Ruff and Ronnie Ansell. Muneena, an Aboriginal boy at the centre of the detail, is wearing a white singlet with the following words written in red across the front: 'ABORIGINALS DISCOVERED COOK'. Such reversals of ownership about actions and events were at the forefront of an indigenous rights agenda that seeks to acknowledge the obscuring of, in the Australian context, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives in the colonial archives (see Chapter 6 and Chapter 7). Such ideas can be taken as an overt corrective in the political dialogue required to confront perceived neglect or

displacement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concerns about traditional ownership, land title, and maintenance of cultural practices. One consequence from this corrective language was that some of the visitors may take offense or react against this position, particularly those people for whom Cook's discovery of Australia was a 'normative' position in the national dialogue. The following anonymous response to *Muneena from Borroloola* did just this:

Cook discovered Aboriginals

As depicted above, the comment was circled to emphasise the point. But the visitor also went an extra step of surrounding the circle with short lines to highlight the statement further. The bluntness of the comment illustrates the visitor's aim to insert a 'factual' corrective to the problematising of Cook in the *Cook and the Pacific* narrative. Such comments can reflect an expectation on the part of visitors that they will be offered an 'objective' narrative concerned with the 'past', rather than a subjective 'history' that links to contemporary concerns, a perspective that fails to acknowledge the fallibility of these concepts ('objective') and the multiple uses, both contemporary and historic, of the past (Durepos & Mills 2012, pp. 58-9; Jenkins 1995). This comment was not the only one of its type in the exhibition visitor book, with another comment questioning the value of cultural knowledge and practices of First Nations peoples in the Pacific, as follows:

> A complete travesty of James Cook. What did the "Indigenous people" ever discover? (Visitor comment book, National Library)

This comment rejects the overarching premise of the exhibition as a 'Cook' exhibition. In describing the exhibition as a 'travesty', it was clear the visitor expected it to be about Cook's

triumphs in the Pacific and following the man, perhaps chronologically, through the three voyages. There are many aspects of the Cook metanarrative that position Cook as the person who 'discovered' Australia. But from these reactions to an exhibition focused on the various Pacific Islander peoples that Cook encountered, engaged, and even sailed with, it appears at least some visitors view this as an inappropriate representation of Cook's achievements. The final statement seeks to underline European achievements in global exploration by subduing and minimising the position occupied by First Nations peoples in inferring that they discovered nothing and so should be marginalised from the metanarrative of the European discovery and exploration of Australia and the Pacific.

As outlined in Chapter 2, such contestations show the pedagogical limits of the museum space in contesting values related to race issues and cross-cultural understanding (Lloyd 2014; Schorch et al. 2016). From interviews with nearly 2,733 visitors to Australian and English social history museums, Laurajane Smith (2016, p. 103) reported that self-identified changes to visitors' own views in the museum space was low – only 6% of the sample. For her and Gary Campbell (2015, p. 445), most visitors go to museums to feel and 'manage' their emotions to 'engage with aspects of the past and its meaning for the present'. For some visitors to *Cook and the Pacific*, strong associations with Cook's place in Australian history, likely underlined by those same educational experiences discussed by Martin Woods above, illustrate the normalisation of national narratives and the limits to the ability of museums to shift perspectives.

As museums continue to shift their curatorial focus towards 'decolonisation' and bringing First Nations voices to the fore, it is impossible to expect all visitors to agree. In the exhibition comments there were some who were concerned with the 'politically correct' tone of the show, which, in their view, downplayed the legacy of Cook's achievements. The following two separate comments were indicative:

> Lose the Indigenous thread through it all!

> Wonderful to read the original Cook journal. But please moderate the political correctness.

Another visitor felt it was necessary to highlight the importance of individual actors in the exhibition, but simultaneously indicated their discomfort with the (perceived) circumspect nature of the history presented:

> Good/Informative on many “Egos” of the day, but, clouded by political correctness.

These comments show an abrasiveness to the cosmopolitan nationalism that is often presented in national museums of settler countries where, as discussed in Chapter 2, a major concern lies with showing First Nations perspectives and a contemporary concern for the Other through exhibitions developed in concert with First Nations communities (Mason 2013; Onciul 2014, 2015; Schorch 2013a, 2017). Cosmopolitan nationalism will not immediately be adopted simply because a person entered the museum space. There was a ‘mixed’ legacy of European colonisation, split between those who may view this history in a positive, celebratory light and the growing awareness of indigenous rights and the legacy of Cook’s claim and the subsequent suppression of First Nations peoples’ freedom to use, associate with, and manage the land in their own way. This second arm also incorporates many among the settler-descent Australians who express guilt about this consequence (Maddison 2011, 2012).

Such complexities were apparent not simply between the more negative comments discussed above, but also through the more positive ones examined in Chapter 6, Chapter 7 and below. Some visitors, for example, saw the benefit of focusing on First Nations peoples of the Pacific who engaged with Cook, but still felt that the exhibition discounted his achievements. The following entries, which appeared consecutively in the visitor book, but apparently by different visitors, are illustrative:

> Captain Cook deserves recognition for being a great navigator and celebrated. Is that possible in this country? The land where the mediocre is celebrated and greatness rubbished.

> The First Nations welcome is important. However, its placement at the commencement of Cook's exhibition is strident and off-putting. Not the result these good First [Nations] peoples would want. The exhibition is excellent.

The first statement was deriding of an Australian cosmopolitan nationalism, arguing that in highlighting the First Nations peoples the exhibition was missing what, in their opinion, is the most remarkable aspect of this past – the navigation and 'discoveries' of Captain Cook. The comment takes this a step further, arguing that the National Library, which as a national collecting institution is also a representative of Australia, was 'rubbishing' and devaluing the achievements of Cook, while celebrating those 'mediocre' actions of First Nations peoples. Similarly, the second comment questions the primacy of First Nations voices in the exhibition. The visitor clearly felt that there was a place for this narrative but the decision to commence a Cook exhibition with the voices, images, and experiences of First Nations peoples sat uncomfortably with their expectations. While they were impressed by the quality

of the exhibition design, the domestic and international objects on display, and acknowledged the scope of the exhibition, which highlighted that the 'First Nations welcome is important', the dominance of First Nations voices was 'off-putting' to some.

Examining the networked position of an individual in the exhibition space does illustrate the limits of the coherence of the museum assemblage at any one time, as others have also observed (Davidson & Castellanos 2019, p. 10; Dittmer & Waterton 2019), and while a cosmopolitan nationalism presented at national museums may appear as an *a priori* past, this history was not fixed. In this network, visitors and curators may have varying degrees of influence, depending on the relationships they draw upon. It is possible for people, objects, and localities to develop divergent narratives or associations that redefine those assemblages, and the future intersections that occur in temporal and shifting relationships. The agency that visitor disconcertion to a particular narrative holds for an assemblage may not significantly alter its form or delivery but, as a fluid and malleable representation of the nation, a shift is possible and even desirable for many actors. As will be detailed below, the focus on First Nations peoples and narratives in *Cook and the Pacific* did not necessarily obscure the Cook metanarrative, and the celebration of James Cook for visitors.

Celebrating Cook and his role in Australia

Australian visitors to *Cook and the Pacific* still overwhelmingly found cause to celebrate James Cook through their engagement with the exhibition. This acclamation of Cook was in spite of the depiction of the negative consequences of his voyages for the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, and of the negative impact on Cook's reputation that has emerged as a result (Donaghue & Tranter 2018, pp. 43, 80). Visitor comments focused on Cook's achievements as a navigator and explorer, while also highlighting his 'cosmopolitan' qualities, which they saw evidence of through the respect shown by Cook and his crew

towards (some) First Nations peoples they encountered. The following entry was an example of the praise that some visitors placed on Cook:

> Wonderful exhibition. Great tribute and should celebrate his discoveries & genius as a navigator who brought western civilisation & with instruction to treat Indigenous with [kindness? – text indistinct] & respect. Great man.

In contrast to the arguments of Moreton-Robinson (2015) (examined earlier), one visitor went as far as to link these actions to present day concerns about reconciliation.

> The deep respect for Cook and his crew. His dignity under voyages should inspire what we need to achieve for reconciliation.

The exhibition also provided the opportunity for international visitors to consider Australia's historical legacy and place in the Pacific. The comments from English speakers recorded in the visitor book were, at times, an intriguing presentation of global perspectives on the 'political correctness' of Australia, as this comment 'from America' shows:

> Stop apologising for being great! Love from America.

Like earlier comments regarding the 'politically correct' statements of Australian culture, 'where the mediocre is celebrated and greatness rubbished', this comment asks for a national narrative that is celebrated and engaged with. The 'greatness' of Australia is, in turn, linked to the 'greatness' of its discovery by Cook and others. The cosmopolitan nationalism

that is emergent in national museums aims to create points of connection between cultures (as outlined in Chapter 2) (see also Macdonald 2013; Mason 2013; Schorch 2014, p. 84), but these institutions cannot assume that, or anticipate how, their visitors will engage with a cultural Other through these narratives. One visitor commented on their own experience of examining James Cook memory and public history sites in Hawaii, where she noted a high degree of respect for Cook:

> Having just come from visiting Hawaii (including the bay where Cook was killed) I can say that the Hawaiians have a higher opinion of Cook than our country does. Indeed, they expressed shame & sorrow in killing him. Not far from the bay, in fact, is a small town called "Captain Cook". Perhaps the Hawaiian attitudes to and account of Cook's death can be included.

Despite the thematic focus on the Pacific region and its First Nations peoples, the comments of some visitors seemed to reveal a keen focus on those aspects of the exhibition that align with the celebration of Cook. These narratives not only link into a traditional metanarrative history of Captain Cook, but also fail to acknowledge those cultural encounter narratives and objects that were key to the curatorial intent of the exhibition (see Chapter 7 and Chapter 8). The following four separate comments collectively show how, for many visitors, the Cook metanarrative remained celebratory and tightly linked to European discovery:

> Please never let this historic and so, so, valuable history about what Australia is & become [sic] through the bravery, courage, and determination of wonderful explorers the ilk of Captain James Cook &

> his men. This includes the marvellous explorer Matthew Flinders, Trim his pussy cat, Joseph Banks and on and on and on Go Cook!
>
> So glad Capt. Cook landed – we have one of the best countries in the world. Freedom & Peace.
>
> Great, Cook is a massive part of Australia. Always learn something new – and a privilege to see Cooks [sic] own writing.
>
> Capt. James Cook – My hero. World's greatest explorer, seaman, cartographer & Yorkshiremen [sic].

Such comments show the dynamic tensions that arise for national museums when they have diverse audiences and, it would seem, diverse historical narratives to present in their exhibitions. Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (2015, p. 10) have argued that European national museums represent *negotiated cultural constitutions* that simultaneously must express a 'yearning for a proud and legitimate past' while also engaging with a present–and/or future–focused narrative that attempts to balance contemporary demands. The balance struck will continually be in flux – more importantly, it must be recognised that these shifts to a cosmopolitan national history are no more *a priori* than those exhibitions that celebrated Cook's voyages on the 100th or 200th anniversaries in 1870 and 1970 respectively. Museums will make political decisions regarding the histories they present, which will reflect the horizontal and vertical networks that they are involved in, including shifting social contexts. These positions inevitably complicate the memory of Cook in Australia as a myriad of oft-competing narratives ebb and flow in the exhibition space. The

emergent complexity was summarised well in comments by Martin Woods (National Library Curator):

> I was talking to someone the other day and we'd talked about Cook a few times and she'd said to me – well, I said, because I'd given a talk about Cook, and I said, look, I presented two sides of Cook, Good Cook and Bad Cook. [Laughter] She said, 'Oh, no. I thought it was really, about complex Cook, you know?' I think that's really the thing that you've got to understand, that Cook is a complex figure.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed how the memory of Cook, following his death in Hawaii, was incorporated into *Cook and the Pacific* to promote a cosmopolitan nationalism. The National Library created a narrative of him becoming a problematic figure in Australia's history, with heroic images of Cook throughout the period after his death up until the 1940s gradually being replaced by histories and narratives that commented on the negative consequences for the First Nations peoples of the Pacific (including Australia) from Cook's voyages. Object selections brought these contested narratives to the fore, as Cook's 'Secret instructions' and papers from the Mabo land titles claim attest. These documents contextualised the ongoing contestations of Indigenous peoples through Native Title claims within the history of Cook's own claims of the land on behalf of Great Britain, which were subsequently legally transferred to Australia. The National Library elected to conclude the exhibition by exploring how First Nations artists, including Michael Cook and Michael Tuffrey, have interpreted the history of Cook's time in the Pacific and reflected on its consequences for their traditions and cultural practices. Cosmopolitan nationalism in museum settings seeks to provide avenues for multiple actors to involve themselves in the national narrative. As I have shown in this

chapter, the absence of First Nations voices in the vestiges of the nation's past demands narratives from these communities in the present day.

These cosmopolitan narratives were not absently received by visitors to the museum, however, with some visitors describing them as being 'politically correct' in their focus on First Nations peoples of the Pacific. Some visitors expected the museum to present a traditional, national metanarrative of the discovery and mapping of the east coast of Australia and other places in the Pacific in the context of European discovery. Importantly, on occasion, the visitor comments disparaged the achievements (although not the cultures and traditional practices) of First Nations peoples and focused on showing their respect for the achievements of Cook in navigating the Pacific to placate and renegotiate the histories constructed in the museum space. Importantly, this chapter has shown how cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum space demonstrates the collision of actors, their desires and ambitions, as Australian national identity is continually constructed and reconstructed.

Conclusion
Reassembling cosmopolitan nationalism in Australian museums

The drafting of this thesis was finished in late 2021, following the suite of COVID-19 shutdown processes that impacted countries, communities, and economies around the world. Many of the factors that have contributed to the formation of a cosmopolitan nationalism, including international tourism, migration, international students, and international trade, were cut off as national borders – including those of Australia – closed. During 2020, Australian museums in various cities across the country were closed, with extended lockdown periods in Sydney and Melbourne. When museums did reopen, visitor numbers remained restricted, with new booking systems set up to funnel limited numbers of predominantly domestic visitors through exhibition spaces until vaccination rates reached a suitable level. While some Australian states and territories are opening borders to vaccinated international travellers, international travel will take some time to return to 2019 levels and there will remain limits on the number of international visitors and international students allowed into the country. During 2020, major exhibitions for the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's arrival to Australia were cancelled or scaled down, as the complications from border closures made it difficult to bring international objects in from overseas. But on the anniversary of Cook's landing at Kurnell in Botany Bay, three large sculptures were quietly installed along the Kurnell foreshore at Botany Bay to commemorate Cook's first steps on the Australian mainland (NSW Department of Planning and Environment 2020). Gweagal Aboriginal woman Theresa Ardler and sculptor Julie Squires drew on the traditional cultural practices of the Gweagal peoples in creating two of the sculptures, *The Whale* and *Canoes*. Similarly, Aboriginal artist and a descendent of the Walbanga and Wadi Wadi people, Alison Page and Nik Lachacjzak, were the designers of the final sculpture, *The Eyes of the Land and the Sea*, which they have outlined was an 'abstraction of the ribs of the HMB *Endeavour*

and the bones of the Gweagal totem the whale' (NSW Department of Planning and Environment 2020).[18] From the project's earliest conceptions in 2018, the memorial was focused on those first encounters between Cook and the Gweagal and Kameygal peoples at Botany Bay, reflecting cosmopolitan nationalism concerns for Australia to acknowledge and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in constructing national narratives. The public history messages behind these sculptures mimic those explored by this thesis in the museum space, where I have shown cosmopolitan nationalism to be constructed through a wide range of actors, desires and affects that intersect to redefine the narratives of national identity.

This thesis has argued that national and state social history museums in Australia have incorporated cosmopolitan nationalism through which they have placed transnational and First Nations histories at the centre of their exhibition offerings. Through these measures, public history for these institutions has tilted to an ideological position that sits uncomfortably against histories that have traditionally focused on the achievements of 'great men' in a progressive, national story. The main argument of the thesis is that in the museum space, cosmopolitan nationalism is not a complete reset of the histories previously presented, but a reorientation that continues to pull on traditional markers of nationalism while instilling recent shifts in national values. While I argue that the cosmopolitan values of educated professionals have contributed to this transformation in the museums, curatorial approaches of these institutions have focused on developing histories in their exhibitions that allow visitors to enact multiple national identities. This individual and collective practising of national identity is increasingly complicated, as people use the histories presented in the museum space to shape and place their own national and collective identities in context.

[18] Further information on *The Eyes of the Land and Sea* project can be found on the UAP website at https://www.uapcompany.com/projects/the-eyes-of-the-land-and-the-sea.

I examined the appearance of cosmopolitan nationalism in two exhibitions: *The Art of Science: Freycinet's Voyagers 1800–1804* and *Cook and the Pacific*. In adopting an assemblage thinking approach, the research examined how these temporary exhibitions, conceived as events, shifted in response to the agendas and actions of multiple actors (including curators, objects, and visitors) as they constructed and reconstructed traditional and cosmopolitan aspects of nationalism. While this thesis demonstrated the flexible nature of national identity as it operates in the museum space, the research approach taken in analysing these exhibitions was quite different and, consequently, some of the arguments have been most readily illustrated through one case study or another. In comparing the staging in one national museum and one regional museum, my analysis of *Art of Science* was able to show how different institutional contexts, objects and visitors defined the presentation of cosmopolitan nationalism, with each museum preparing a distinct (re)assemblage of the exhibition. At the National Museum of Australia, the exhibition incorporated a cosmopolitan narrative focused on the transnational history of the French voyage, while also examining how Aboriginal culture, recorded by the Freycinet voyage, had continued into the present day. In comparison, the staging of the exhibition at the WAMM focused on foundational histories of European discovery and the cross-cultural encounters that emerged between Europeans and Aboriginal peoples. A primary concern was the relationship between the exhibition and localities in the state of Western Australia.

The second case study exhibition, *Cook and the Pacific*, hosted by the National Library of Australia, framed the narrative of James Cook's three Pacific voyages against cross-cultural encounters and exchanges to underline a cosmopolitan concern for the Other. The National Library drew heavily from its own collections to construct the exhibition, as well as borrowing items from international collections. These narratives were broadened and complicated through the National Library's consultation with First Nations peoples of the Pacific during the development of the exhibition. These First Nations perspectives not only provided an

appropriate context to the cultural objects and practices discussed, but also the opportunity to explore a multitude of histories. The three separate narratives from Cook, the Admiralty and the Guugu Yimithirr peoples describing Cook's time at Waalumbaal Birri (Endeavour River), for example, demonstrate the role of historical and contemporary actors in constructing national narratives (and displacing national metanarratives) in the museum space. The exhibition concluded by exploring Cook's contested place in Australia's cultural history, as traditional, national narratives of progress and exploration fell away in the context of an exhibition that probed the relationship between Cook's actions and their consequences for First Nation peoples, a process that narrated a shift towards cosmopolitan nationalism values in Australian society.

Despite the individual priorities for both case studies, the key arguments made in the thesis hold across all the case studies, particularly in the construction and reception of First Nations histories and the concern for cross-cultural exchanges in the histories presented. In adopting an assemblage thinking approach to understanding how the museum exhibition operates in a networked relationship with a broader cosmopolitan nationalism, this thesis has focused on human and non-human actors, including curators, visitors, and objects, and how their desires, impacts and connections construct national identity in the museum space. In examining the processes of (re)construction or (re)territorialisation, the intersections of cosmopolitan and traditional aspects of national identity, and their application by human and non-human actors creates a better understanding of how museums operate. This approach set the thesis up to track chronologically the construction of cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum space, which also captured the institutional priorities, and to some extent divergent purposes, of the three museums examined. The National Museum's legislated and projected roles to obtain, share, and return Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, together with its role in presenting a culturally diverse Australia within a tightly linked transnational narrative, was evocatively captured by their approach to *Art of Science*. This

approach contrasted with the WAMM's locality focus, which prioritised Western Australian places (such as the Swan River and Shark Bay) in the Baudin narrative. Conversely, the National Library's historically embedded custodial role towards Australia was evident in its use of their own collections to inform the histories constructed through *Cook and the Pacific*. The distinct role that museums see for themselves flow into the curatorial choices made by their staff in selecting objects, writing narratives, and interviewing participants as part of exhibition development. Throughout the thesis I have shown that curators and museum staff outlined their decisions about an object placement or narrative choice as reflecting the purpose or values of the museums they were working for. Revealing the self-defined role that museums see for themselves in capturing and sharing Australia's past and present is crucial to understanding the histories that they construct following a cosmopolitan nationalism.

Museum objects also played a key role in the assembling of cosmopolitan nationalism, often central in establishing relationships to, and acknowledgment of, historical Others in the past. *The Art of Science* was conceived and developed based on a unique opportunity to bring artworks and objects from the collection of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Le Havre, France, and other French institutions, to Australian museums to highlight aspects of French nineteenth century exploration in Australia. The selection of objects by the National Museum and WAMM represented the transnational narratives that they wanted to construct in their exhibition spaces. The focus was on transnational engagements with cultures during the voyage, cross-cultural episodes between the French and Aboriginal peoples in Australia, and the retention and continuation of the First Nations peoples' traditions and culture. Artworks from the Le Havre collection also became important connectors to traditional markers of national identity, often through geographical features like the Freycinet copper plate or the map of the Swan River, or through the flora and fauna depicted, notably the Banded Hair Wallaby or marine creatures. Comparatively, the National Library used their own collections

to develop the base narrative of the *Cook and the Pacific* exhibition, with international objects loaned to complement and establish relationships to these objects. These objects played a primary role in developing the narratives that explored the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, which then also drew on international objects to reinforce cosmopolitan histories from Cook's time at Waalumbaal Birri, to the experiences and cultural impact of Mai in the United Kingdom, to the role played by Tupaia in Cook's voyages. At the same time, these objects entered into conversations with contemporary representatives of the First Nations peoples of the Pacific, to underline the continuity of these cultural practices and traditions.

Museums operate as a space between the everyday enaction of national identity and a performative nationalism that shapes identity, with consequences for how visitors engage with the exhibition space and the histories curated to inform and construct their own national identity. This research found that cosmopolitan nationalism effectively built on traditional elements of national identity, complicating the values and histories being presented, and, at times, cosmopolitan themes could obscure or displace traditional metanarratives or national markers. These cosmopolitan themes were objected to by some visitors at both case study exhibitions, although such objectors were most strikingly evident in the comment book for *Cook and the Pacific*, where visitors questioned the focus on First Nations cultural practices and cross-cultural interactions that they felt obscured the 'achievements' of James Cook. A number of visitors questioned the 'political correctness' of the histories presented, which they felt detracted from the history they expected to see in the exhibition space. In contrast, other visitors were cynical of the positive actions of the European explorers in the cross-cultural narratives presented and wary about the consequences of their own actions for these First Nations peoples today. Cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum space can, then, be seen as operating through a continuing process of (re)construction, as the histories presented in the museum space are engaged with, agreed to, and/or contested by visitors.

Contributions

This thesis has shown that rather than breaking with a 'civic reform' tradition, museums are instead transforming their civic agenda towards a performative, cosmopolitan nationalism, one that normalises difference while providing avenues for openness and access to the Other. For social history museums, this transformation is established through transnational histories and multivocal narratives, which in my case studies were most strongly evident in the First Nations peoples' voices, narratives, and cultures. In part, these histories show a desire for, and from, museums, curators, and visitors to acknowledge the interconnectedness of the modern world through the transnational histories presented. One major contribution of this thesis is to highlight the role museums perform in developing histories that reinforce cosmopolitan nationalist concerns for the Other and engagement with other cultures. The assemblage thinking framework provided grounds on which to examine national identity being performed in the museum space, drawing upon both traditional and cosmopolitan value sets in the museum space. On occasion, the assemblage concept can appear in the literature as simply an expansion of a heterogeneous society of associations – a mistake that does not fully consider the real actions that individuals take in the construction of nations and national identity, both in the everyday and through participation in commemorative events.

The second major contribution of the thesis is its analysis of nationalism and national identity in the museum space. Cosmopolitan nationalism has redefined how a large section of the population perceive their national identity, that same section that frequent museums and engage with the nation's social history. As I argued in Chapter 2, a concern for global histories and a recognition of cultural diversity in Australia have shifted the heritage and museum demands of these individuals as they seek ways to align their conception of Australian national identity and citizenship with concerns about being an active 'global citizen'. But I still found that many visitors came to the museum to simply find out more about

their country and its relationship with the world. This discovery was not an either-or exercise for visitors between traditional markers of national identity and cosmopolitan global themes, but an intersection where visitors endeavoured to move between local, national, and global domains in understanding aspects of Australia's history. This expectation was also apparent in the responses of international visitors who, in attending an Australian museum, expected to engage with traditional markers of Australia. Chapter 5 showed that traditional elements could be overlooked by Australian residents because they were everyday reminders of national identity, while they were picked up by international visitors as they sought to understand the country they were visiting. At the same time, some Australian visitors contested aspects of the cosmopolitan histories presented by the national institution, while others readily identify with these narratives. This approach, while limited to the museum space, demonstrates that national identity is a combination of fixed and fluid, traditional and cosmopolitan, associations that allow people to negotiate their position in their local, national, and global communities. At the National Library, the comments book reflected a negotiation between visitors and the histories received, where traditional aspects of the Cook metanarrative of 'discovery' and 'achievement' were brokered with First Nations peoples' voices and experiences in the museum space. Visitors could agree and disagree with the cosmopolitan values expressed through *Cook and the Pacific* and, in doing so, they drew on their own experiences and knowledge to express their national identity and their expected role of Cook within it and the nation's history.

The third major contribution of this thesis concerns how the organisational culture and legacy histories of museums play a role in the exhibitions constructed. This thesis shows how organisational culture, heavily influence by museum collections and individual objects, came to bear on the construction of histories and national identity in the museum space. This thesis has tracked those complex relationships that stabilise and destabilise cosmopolitan nationalism in the museum, and permit its negotiation in relationships between curators,

objects, and visitors. In particular, the comparative approach taken to the analysis of *Art of Science*, illustrated how different histories were constructed between host museum sites, reflecting the institutional focus of those museums, the objects they drew upon, and the visitors they targeted. Despite starting from the same base – a thematically coordinated exhibition, with fixed interpretive panels – the National Museum of Australia and the Western Australian Maritime Museum (re)designed *Art of Science* to meet their own objectives and priorities. Similarly, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 showed how these curatorial choices derived through the museum identities flowed into the engagement with the exhibition by visitors, with the National Museum visitors engaging in the construction of alternative histories that expressed desires to reconcile setter–Indigenous relations in Australia. This contrasted with *Art of Science* at WAMM, where these cross-cultural encounters appeared to be temporally locked in the past by the locality and object focus of the exhibition. It appeared that visitors' experiences of the museum site played a role in these choices about engaging with First Nations history.

The National Library of Australia has its own institutional legacy, with its copious documentary heritage capturing Australia's past from near the time of the nation's formation in 1901. The collection focus of the National Library fed deeply into the large representation of their own collection in *Cook and the Pacific*, where the narrative of the exhibition was aligned tightly with these collections. As I showed in Chapters 7, 8 and 9, these collection narratives, and the object relationship emergent in the exhibition assemblage, pulled together curatorial desires, object influences, and space constraints together in defining transnational narratives about Cook that highlighted the agency of First Nations peoples of the Pacific. Cosmopolitan nationalism is (re)constructed through all these actors, with the emergent assemblage never finalised, continually in a state of performance, and pulling on the influence and desires of existing and new actors, intersecting, and contesting the histories of nation. These key conclusions were derived through the research design and

structure of this thesis, although there are other approaches to this research theme that may be considered for future research on museums and cosmopolitan nationalism.

Limitations and future directions

A limitation of this thesis is its focus on Australian social history museums and the subsequent concern with how national identity is developed in Australia. Chapter 2 explained that cosmopolitan nationalism is a global reorientation of identity for many countries, particularly those in Europe and North America, that have a strong philosophical tradition of cosmopolitanism. Future research may consider comparative analysis of cosmopolitan nationalism in museums between countries. Museum studies can continue the analysis of nationalism and national identity, exploring differences in values and perspectives for countries, such as the European National Museums (EuNaMus) research project that examined how countries in Europe engaged with national identity in the museum (Aronsson 2013; Aronsson et al. 2012). In the context of cosmopolitan nationalism, a comparison of countries in the Anglosphere, where there is a strong philosophical tradition associated with cosmopolitanism, with countries that have different philosophical traditions, such as those in Asia and Africa, would provide an important analysis of transnational networks and cosmopolitan values in museums.

Similarly, the case study approach taken in this thesis was limited to a focus on social history museums and further research could take a broader focus in analysing the development of cosmopolitan nationalism in different cultural and heritage sites. Such an approach could investigate different historical periods and institutions, perhaps examining how exhibition design and historical narratives in the museum space shifted in the decades following the turn of the twenty-first century, when the Australian population changed dramatically. This approach could expand the examination of cosmopolitan nationalism in museums to include art galleries, heritage sites, and public installations. Anna Lawrenson and Chiara O'Reilly's

(2019) book *The Rise of the Must-See Exhibition: Blockbusters in Australian museums and galleries*, which chronologically examines the rise of the blockbuster exhibition in Australia, offers a research format that could be adopted for this purpose. Such an approach could also examine how shifts in the way key/hero objects from museum collections are used to construct national histories in different periods, and how historical figures are presented.

One last suggestion for future directions would be to expand the visitor research component to better understand how cosmopolitan nationalist narratives presented in the museum space are received by both settler communities (including culturally diverse communities), first- and second-generation migrants, and First Nations communities. My research elected to examine multiple actors within the museum space, exploring how museums, curators, objects, and visitors entered relationships to define national identity. A primary focus on visitor research and the reception of cosmopolitan nationalism presented in the exhibition space could expand on the initial findings of this thesis. Museums still have a long way to go to encourage higher visitation by First Nations peoples, as well as visitors from culturally diverse and/or low socioeconomic background communities. Understanding how histories that are developed for tertiary-educated professionals are received by the population at large may go some way towards contributing to this narrative. If the advertisement that led this thesis, an image of Middle Eastern family in front of the Pool of Remembrance at the Australian War Memorial with the phrase ‘For we are young and free’, is anything to go by, national museums have the desire to move in this direction and research should inform this transition. The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes last focused on national identity in 2013. Aligning research in Australian museums with a repeat of this topic, in say 2023, could present an opportunity to understand the differences in national identity as it is practised in museums against how it is conceived by the broader community.

Conclusion

Exhibitions play an important role in progressing a cosmopolitan nationalism that links Australian national identity to conceptions of openness, intercultural dialogue, multiculturalism, and 'global citizenship'. In the exhibition *Cook and the Pacific*, the National Library asked its visitors to reflect on Australia's place in the world, a world that was shaped by the voyages of Captain Cook that impacted First Nations communities in a range of small and large, innocuous and blatant ways. National museums, in creating such narratives, are not simply responding to the demands of their visitors, as the commentary in the National Library visitor comment book demonstrates. What they do is create questions. In doing so, I would agree with Thomas Bender (2006, p. 14) that they 'encourage and sustain a cosmopolitan citizenry, at once proud nationals and humble citizens of the world'. This cosmopolitan nationalism, however, cannot risk moving too far into a progressive realm – lest they truly disconnect from large cohorts of the national citizenry. Cosmopolitan nationalism has redefined the role of national and regional museums in the twenty-first century, providing them with a civic agenda that is focused on the acknowledgment of, and engagement with, cultural Others, including the First Nations peoples of settler countries. While these are laudable goals, my research makes it clear that these histories and values do not completely displace traditional narratives and histories of the nation, and that visitors both may and may not abide with those visions of the nation presented. The limits of cosmopolitan nationalism in museums throughout Australia may in fact be the curators who construct the histories, the visitors who receive it, or the capacity of these institutions to create dialogues in a diverse nation of settlers, migrants, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Appendix I - Interviews conducted with museum staff.

Name	Position	Date	Exhibition
Cheryl Crilly	Curator, National Museum of Australia	27 April 2018	Art of Science
Lindl Lawton	Senior Curator, South Australian Maritime Museum	21 April 2018	Art of Science
Kevin Jones	Director, South Australian Maritime Museum	21 April 2018	Art of Science
Diana Jones	Executive Director, Collections and Research, Western Australian Museum	19 October 2018	Art of Science
Michael McCarthy	Senior Curator, Western Australian Museum	19 October 2018	Art of Science
Susannah Helman	Manager, Exhibitions, National Library of Australia	22 November 2018	Cook and the Pacific
Martin Woods	Curator of Maps, National Library of Australia	23 November 2018	Cook and the Pacific
Peter Appleton	Assistant Director, Exhibitions, National Library of Australia	23 November 2018	Cook and the Pacific

Appendix II - Exit interview question sheet

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Clinton and I am conducting some research on the Art of Science exhibition with Western Sydney University. The exhibition was the first you viewed in this gallery. Would I be able to take some of your time for a short interview. Thank you. Please do not feel that you need to answer positively to the questions – we won't be offended. Your responses are completely anonymous and you may withdraw from the study at anytime. Are you happy with me recording the interview?

Firstly, can I gather some demographic information from you to help with the analysis of the data.

1. Which sex are you: ❑ Male ❑Female

2. Would you be able to give me the postcode of your residence?

3. Did you visit the museum with anyone today?

   ❑Alone ❑ Children ❑ Adults
   ❑ Organised group

4. What is your highest level of education?

5. Which age group do you fall into?

   ❑ 18-25 ❑ 26-35 ❑ 36-45 ❑ 46-59 ❑ 60-75 ❑ 75+

   Formal questions

6. Have you been to this Museum before?

7. Are you a regular museum visitor?

8. Did you plan to visit this exhibition? Why?

9. How much did you know about the Baudin expedition before you came to the exhibition?

10. How long did you spend in the exhibition?

11. What were your thoughts about the exhibition?

12. Was there a particular story that stood out for you?

13. Is this exhibition relevant to the Perth region? (Different question phrased for display at NCIs). Australia more broadly? Why or why not?

14. Were you aware this exhibition draws on collections from overseas?

15. Would that make you rethink some of the displays that have been put in place?

16. Were you drawn to some objects more than others? Which objects were they? Why?

17. Do you think these objects being displayed at the Western Australia Museum changed the way you viewed them?

    (Do you think these objects being displayed in Perth changes the way you viewed them?)

18. Do you believe this exhibition tells an important part of Australia's cultural history? Which parts? Did some objects stand out in this respect?

19. Does it remind you of any other exhibitions you have previously visited? What about it?

20. Do you think the exhibition uncovers attributes that are particularly Australian? Why or why not? Does it contain anything relevant to Australia today?

Appendix III: Demographic breakdown of interview participants for *Art of Science*

The tables presented below provide information about the gender, age, and education of museum visitors interviewed during the fieldwork for *Art of Science*. The tables also provide information regarding the postcode of visitors who were resident in Australia, together with self-identified nationalities other than Australian for visitors.

National Museum of Australia. Demographic data for visitor exit interviews conducted in March 2018.

Interview no.	Gender	Age	Highest Qualification	Postcode/City	Resident/International	Nationality	Notes
Interview 1	Female	60-74	Bachelor	2911	Resident		
Interview 2	Female	25-34	Masters	2130	Resident		Identified as a European immigrant to Australia
	Male	25-34	Bachelor	2038	Resident		Identified as a European immigrant to Australia
Interview 3	Female	45-59	Postgraduate Diploma	2914	Resident		
Interview 4	Male	60-74	Bachelor	2838	Resident		
	Female	60-74	Masters	2838	Resident		
Interview 5	Female	60-74	High School	2098	Resident		
Interview 6	Male	60-74	Bachelor	2603	Resident		
Interview 7	Female	35-44	Masters	2093	Resident		
Interview 8	Male	60-74	Masters	2612	Resident		
Interview 9	Female	45-59	Bachelor	2615	Resident		
Interview 10	Female	25-34	Masters	2130	Resident		

	Male	25-34	Masters	2048	Resident		
Interview 11	Female	18-24	Bachelor	4068	Resident		
Interview 12	Female	18-24	Masters	2197	Resident		
Interview 13	Male	60-74	Bachelor	2146	Resident		

Western Australian Maritime Museum – Demographic data for visitor exit interviews conducted in September 2018.

Interview no.	SEX	AGE	Highest Qualification	Postcode/City	Resident/International	Nationality	Notes
Interview 1	Male	60-74	PhD	Oxford	International	British	
	Male	60-74	PhD	4069	Resident		
	Female	60-74	Bachelor	4069	Resident		
Interview 2	Female	60-74	PhD	6055	Resident		
Interview 3	Male	60-74	Bachelor	n/a	Resident		
Interview 4	Female	45-59	Vocational certificate	6160	Resident		
Interview 5	Female	60-74		n/a	International	British	
	Male	75+	Bachelor	n/a	International	British	
Interview 6	Female	60-74	Postgraduate Diploma	6056	Resident		
Interview 7	Male	75+	Bachelor	6056	Resident		
Interview 8	Male	45-59	Bachelor	6722	Resident		
Interview 9	Male	25-34	Bachelor	6000	Resident		
	Female	25-34	Bachelor	6000	Resident		
Interview 10	Female	75+	Bachelor	6102	Resident		
Interview 11	Male	60-74	PhD	n/a	International	Danish	
Interview 12	Male	60-74	Bachelor	2481	Resident		
Interview 13	Male	25-34	Bachelor	n/a	Resident		

	Female	25-34	High School	n/a	Resident		
Interview 14	Male	60-74	PhD	2284	Resident		
	Female	60-74	Postgraduate Diploma-	2284	Resident		
Interview 15	Male	45-59	Masters	n/a	International	British	
Interview 16	Male	60-74	A Levels	n/a	International	British	
	Female	60-74	A Levels	n/a	International	British	
Interview 17	Male	60-74	PhD	4102	Resident		
Interview 18	Male	60-74	High School	6111	Resident		
Interview 19	Male	60-74	Vocational Diploma	6284	Resident		
Interview 20	Male	60-74	Masters	6070	Resident		
Interview 21	Female	25-34	MBA	6000	International/Resident	French	

Appendix IV: Brief timeline of Cook's three voyages

This brief timeline is provided to give a context for Cook's three Pacific voyages. For each voyage the timeline lists key dates and notes regarding Cook's arrival at locations and other actions. This timeline is informed by material prepared by the British Library.[19]

Voyage	Dates	Notes
First Voyage – HMB *Endeavour*	**1768–1771**	
	26 August 1768	*Endeavour* sailed from Plymouth, United Kingdom
	14 January 1769	*Endeavour* anchored off Bay of Good Success, Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata (Argentina)
	13 April 1769	*Endeavour* anchored in Matavai Bay, Tahiti
	3 June 1769	Transit of Venus is observed
	9 October 1769	First landing on New Zealand at Tūranganui-a-kiwa, that Cook called Poverty Bay
	10 October 1769	First meeting between British and Māori
	16 January 1770	*Endeavour* anchored at Ship Cove, Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand
	31 March 1770	*Endeavour* departed New Zealand
	19 April 1770	East coast of Australia sighted
	29 April 1770	First landing made at

[19] Further additional details regarding Cook's voyages can be found at the mentioned resource from British Library at https://www.bl.uk/the-voyages-of-captain-james-cook/timeline.

		Botany Bay
	11 June 1770	*Endeavour* ran aground on the Great Barrier Reef, off the modern Queensland coast
	18 June 1770	*Endeavour* had a landing made at Waalumbaal Birri; the British would name this Endeavour River
	22 August 1770	Cook claimed the east coast of Australia on behalf of the Kingdom of England and Wales
	11 October 1770	*Endeavour* anchored at Batavia (today Jakarta, Indonesia)
	26 November 1770	*Endeavour* left Batavia
	14 March 1771	*Endeavour* stopped at the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Colony (today Republic of South Africa)
	17 July 1771	*Endeavour* anchored in Thames River, London

Second Voyage – HMS *Resolution* and HMS *Adventure*	**1772–1775**	**Notes**
	13 July 1772	HMS *Resolution* and HMS *Adventure* sailed from Plymouth
	30 October 1772	Ships anchored at the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Colony to take on supplies before sailing to the Antarctic
	17 January 1773	*Resolution* and *Adventure* become the first ships known to cross the Antarctic Circle

	8 February 1773	Ships lost contact with one another; New Zealand was set up as a rendezvous
	11 March 1773	*Adventure* stopped at Tasmania en route to New Zealand
	18 May 1773	*Resolution* arrived at Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand, where *Adventure* arrived seven weeks earlier
	26 August 1773	Ships arrived at Matavai Bay, Tahiti
	7 September 1773	Mai joined the *Adventure* at the island of Raiatea
	2 October 1773	Ships visited ‘Eua and Tongatapu islands, which Cook later named the Friendly Islands
	December 1773	*Resolution* sailed to Antarctic Circle with Cook *Adventure* left Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand and sailed for England
	14 March 1774	*Resolution* anchored at Rapa Nui (Easter Island)
	22 April 1774	*Resolution* arrived at Matavai Bay, Tahiti
	14 July 1774	*Adventure* arrived back in Britain with Mai
	17 July 1774	*Resolution* arrived at Vanuatu (named the New Hebrides by Cook)
	6 November 1774	*Resolution* arrived at Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand before sailing east across the Pacific
	21 December 1774	*Resolution* anchored off Tierra del Fuego (off Argentina)
	21 February 1775	*Resolution* completed

		circumnavigation of the globe
	30 July 1775	*Resolution* anchored at Portsmouth

Voyage	Years	Notes
Third Voyage – HMS *Resolution* and HMS *Discovery*	**1776–1780**	
	12 July 1776	*Resolution* departed Plymouth
	12 November 1776	*Resolution* and *Discovery* convened at Cape of Good Hope
	26 February 1777	Ships stopped at Tasmania
	12 February 1777	Ships arrived at Queen Charlotte Sound, New Zealand
	28 April 1777	Ships explored the Tongan archipelago
	23 August 1777	Ships anchored at Matavai Bay, Tahiti
	12 October 1777	Mai left at Raiatea
	20 January 1778	Party landed at Waimea Bay, Kauai, Hawaii (first Europeans to visit these islands)
	30 March 1778	Ships anchored at Nootka Sound, Vancouver Island
	12 May 1778	Ships anchored at Prince William Sound, Alaska, before exploring the surrounding area
	9 August 1778	Expedition crossed the Bering Strait
	August 1778	Ships crossed the Arctic Circle and reach their highest latitude
	14 October 1778	Ships returned to Alaska, before sailing to Hawaii to

		winter
	17 January 1779	Ships anchored at Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii
	11 February 1779	After departing Hawaii, the ships returned to Kealakekua Bay after discovering the damage to the *Resolution* mast
	14 February 1779	Following a dispute over stolen material, Cook is killed on the beach with four sailors, with 16 Hawaiians also believed to have been killed
	15 March 1779	Ships left Hawaii, after Charles Clerke assumes command
	30 July 1779	Ships crossed Bering Strait, before again returning south
	9 October 1779	Ships left Kamchatka, in west Russia, by which point Charles Clerke had died, and John Gore assumed command
	1 December 1779	Ships anchored at Macao, China
	12 April 1779	Ships anchored at Cape of Good Hope
	7 October 1780	Ships returned to the Thames River, London