

‘Why should we care?’: Some thoughts on cosmopolitan hauntings

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Abstract

This essay deploys the concept of cosmopolitan haunting to explore entangled relationships with the past, the role of minoritarian and ethnicized subjects of history and the emergence of horizontal post-national solidarities. I focus on two commemorative sites or practices that challenge the limits of transnational memory and its relationship with citizenship. The first is the story of William Cooper, an Aboriginal activist whose critique of the Nazi pogrom has been recognized by a number of commemorative events in Israel, and the second is a performative ritual enacted by migrant artists to honour Australia’s early Japanese history. The case studies demonstrate the affective contaminations that provoke not just feeling but also actions that both surpass but then get caught up again within the pressures of the nation state.

Keywords

Cosmopolitan memory, haunting, *issei* history in Australia, minor transnationalism, William Cooper

Memory studies is a field developed within nation-specific paradigms. In the last decade, however, increasing attention has been paid towards globalization and hypermobility that has resulted in new critical frameworks for addressing memory cultures that exceed their national frame. The concept of transnational or global memory has been explored and established in a number of studies, most significantly with a focus on the memory of the Holocaust. Andreas Huyssen (2003), for example, has drawn attention to what he calls ‘transnational Holocaust memory discourse’ while Michael Rothberg (2009) uses the concept of ‘multidirectional memory’ to describe the transnational interplay of the Holocaust with other histories in non-Western contexts. Levy and Sznajder (2002, 2004, 2005) deploy the term ‘cosmopolitan memory’ to further develop this transnational trajectory of inquiry. Focusing on the ways in which the significance of the Holocaust in the United States, Germany and Israel has transformed over time, they describe cosmopolitanism as a process of ‘internal globalization’ through which global concerns become part of the local experiences of

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increasing numbers of people. In particular, global media representations are perceived as playing a central role in creating new cosmopolitan memories, providing new epistemological points of view and facilitating post-national solidarity in the face of impending global, cross-border concerns.

In this essay, I explore, from an Australian perspective, the relationship between nationalized memory narratives and their relocation across borders. Engagements with the past in Australia have largely reflected the predominantly national focus that has characterized memory studies more broadly. Debate centres on injustices perpetrated by the nation against its own citizens, the effects of which continue to trouble contemporary relations. In recent years, attention has shifted to the question of whether recent immigrants can or should engage with the country's troubled colonial past and whether there is a role for them in the reconciliation process. If the nation's past plays an important role in constructing contemporary notions of identity and belonging, what is the relationship between citizenship and memory?

Ghassan Hage (2003) and Ien Ang (2001) have made compelling arguments for diverse and differentiated connections between minoritarian and ethnicized relationships with dominant histories of settlement and colonialism. Ang (2001) asserts that

highlighting intertwining histories as the core constituent of the national heritage may not only help bridge some of the ugly divisions *within* Australia today, it will also help bring the Australian imagination in closer connection with the world at large – something which is desperately needed in the increasingly complex and discordant, globalized world of the twenty-first century. (p. 8)

Such assertions echo the work undertaken by Rothberg and Yildiz (2011) who have deployed the concept of memory citizenship to foreground the racialization of national identity through memorialization practices within a German context. Their examination of counter-memorial works by Turkish and other non-ethnic German migrants reveal

how a singular site of memory can accommodate a diversity of histories that resonate with each other instead of erasing each other. Prompting us to rethink both the German past and present through the tension between people and population, it suggests, among other things, that Germany's Nazi and Holocaust history might be productively rethought and remembered from a perspective that takes into account the migrant subjects who trespass on the sacred political space of the nation. (p. 33)

Aleida Assmann and Anja Schwarz's (2013) essay on the interconnections between migration, memory and guilt in Australia and Germany add further depth to this emerging area of transnational memory studies.

Haunting is a well-established concept in memory studies. Critics such as Sneja Gunew (2003) and Ken Gelder and Jane M. Jacobs (1998) have deployed the trope to bring an awareness of history to the present, and to address concerns about ethics and justice in relation to the silenced and the hidden in Australian literature. The post-colonial approach of these studies emphasizes the relationship between White Australia and the indigenous Other; less attention is paid to the relationship between non-White, non-indigenous communities within the framework of Australian hauntology. My engagement with cosmopolitan hauntings centres on concepts of transnationalism, entangled relationships to the past, the role of minoritarian and ethnicized subjects of history and the emergence of horizontal post-national solidarities. This interest crystallized around discussions among migrant communities within Australia regarding support for a national Apology to the Stolen Generations of Aborigines who were forcibly removed from their families and communities under successive policies of assimilation by the government.¹ The debate among Asian Australians

concerned the extent to which Asian Australians were implicated in the injustices of the colonial past. I repeatedly came across comments such as ‘Why should “we” care? We didn’t do it – we came much later’; ‘They did it to them. It has nothing to do with us’ and ‘It’s their history, their past, that they have to be reconciled with’. There were also opposing voices: ‘Of course it is our history – we are Australian citizens’; ‘it is our civic duty, and our moral duty to acknowledge this past’ and ‘We continue to benefit from indigenous dispossession’. The debate clarified the importance of studying the relationship between citizenship and memory and led me to explore the relationship between minority communities both within and beyond the nation.

Avery Gordon’s conception of ‘haunting’ has been particularly useful in teasing out the problematic of affect and agency.² She insists that haunting is neither pre-modern superstition nor individual psychosis, but rather a social phenomenon:

[Haunting] always registers the harm inflicted or the loss sustained by a social violence done in the past or in the present. But haunting, unlike trauma, is distinctive for producing *something-to-be-done* [...] haunting [is] precisely the domain of turmoil and trouble, the moment [...] when things are not in their assigned places ... when people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving ... (Gordon, 2008: xvi emphasis added)

Within this scheme, the ghost is not simply a dead or missing person, but rather a figure or force that triggers a different kind of knowing and acting: ‘Being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as a transformative recognition’ (Gordon, 2008: 8). In this essay, I focus on two commemorative sites or practices that challenge the limits of transnational memory and its relationship to citizenship. The first is the story of William Cooper, an Aboriginal activist whose critique of the Nazi pogrom has been recognized by a number of commemorative practices in Israel and the second is a performative ritual enacted by migrant artists to honour Australia’s early Japanese history. Both case studies can be considered cosmopolitan in that they attempt to ‘think and feel beyond the nation’ in very different ways.

William Cooper: Aboriginal transnationalism

In November 1938, a major Nazi pogrom was deployed against the Jewish community. This notorious event – now commonly known as Kristallnacht – marked the dramatic upsurge of violence, intimidation and persecution of Germany’s Jewish population. Less than a month later, on 6 December 1938, on the other side of the globe, an elderly Aboriginal man, William Cooper, led a deputation from the Australian Aborigines League to protest against this violence. Cooper and his fellow Aborigines marched down Collins Street in Melbourne towards the German Consulate and attempted to present a resolution condemning the cruel persecution of the Jewish people by the Nazi government of Germany. The Consul-General, Dr D.W. Dreschler, refused them admittance, and the resolution never reached the German authorities. The indigenous activist Kevin Foley (1997) claims that

the first group in Australia to try and lodge a formal protest with the German government’s representative about the persecution of the German Jewish community, were a group of Koori political activists representing a people who, in the previous hundred years, had themselves been subject to genocide, and in 1938 were (like Germany’s Jewish people) denied citizenship. Furthermore, Aboriginal people had also been labelled by a white supremacist society as ‘subhuman’ ... [and] also had experience of the concentration camps that white Australia had created to contain them ...

The remarkable story of William Cooper is just gaining recognition in Australia.³ Cooper established the Australian Aborigines League in 1932 at the age of 71 and assumed the role of Honorary Secretary. Despite minimal schooling, Cooper was a highly literate man and in the latter years of his life, devoted considerable energies to writing letters and leading deputations to politicians, including the Prime Minister, for the advancement of Aboriginal Australia. By 1937, he had collected 1814 signatures from Aborigines around the nation; he included these in a letter to King George VI seeking the constitutional amendment necessary to legislate for Aborigines to form a legal Aboriginal constituency. The Commonwealth Government declined to forward the petition. Bitterly disappointed, Cooper spent his last years protesting against government treatment of indigenous communities and continued to cite the rights of Maoris and Canadian Indians as an example for Australia (*ADB* online).⁴

It is believed that Cooper became aware of the assault against German Jews through newspaper articles of the day; he does not appear to have had any personal connections with this community located far away from his native country in Yorta-Yorta, at the junction of the Murray and Goulburn rivers in the state of Victoria. This makes his protest all the more remarkable. He was clearly a man who, despite the significant social disadvantages of being Aboriginal, cared for the wider human community, beyond the immediate needs of his own people. According to the Israeli historian David Silberklang,

It's quite a story [...] He certainly came across as a significant leader of his community [...] This was not some peripheral person who made a statement but rather somebody who was representing a larger group'. Although some foreign governments and labour unions had protested against the pogrom, Cooper's protest is unusual because he belonged to a minority community that 'was not exactly the power group in the community, like a church. (cited in Lyons, 2010: 4)

Cooper's solidarity with the Jewish people can be read as a form of vernacular cosmopolitanism. In contrast to traditional notions of cosmopolitanism associated with privilege and elitism, vernacular cosmopolitanism focuses on cross-cultural engagement that takes into account the social and economic limitations of the underclass.⁵ More often than not, critics approach the study of minority subjects in opposition to a dominant centre of power, analysing the centre and the margin but rarely examining the relationship between different margins, both within and beyond the nation. Consequently, the politics of minority rights has tended to lapse into a politics of recognition that reinforces the power of the dominant to determine subjectivity and agency. In response to such limitations, there is a growing body of work that explores

minor cultural articulations in productive relationship with the major [...] as well as minor-to-minor networks that circumvent the major all together. This transversalism also produces new forms of identification that negotiate with national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries, thus allowing for the emergence of the minor's inherent complexity and multiplicity. (Lionnet and Shih, 2005: 8)

With specific relevance to Cooper – who as an Aboriginal person in Australia in 1938 was still considered part of the flora and fauna of the state without citizenship rights – Lionnet and Shih (2005) assert that unlike the post-national or nomadic identities that are relatively unmoored from the control of the state and bounded territories

minor transnationality points towards and makes visible the multiple relations between the national and the transnational. It recognises the difficulty that minority subjects without a statist parameter of citizenship face when the nation-state remains the chief mechanism for dispersing and regulating power, status, and

material resources [...] [M]inor transnational subjects are inevitably invested in their respective geopolitical spaces, often wanting to be recognised as ‘citizens’ to receive the attendant privileges of full citizenship. (p. 8)

Without diminishing the courage and cosmopolitan care demonstrated by his protest about the treatment of the German Jews, Cooper’s act of solidarity can also be read within a wider context of his minor transnational strategy to affiliate with other oppressed groups abroad as part of his fight for the advancement of Aborigines in Australia. The emerging scholarship on Cooper shows that he continued to align the oppression of the Aborigines with other minority groups elsewhere in the world. In a letter to the incoming Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, just a year after his protest against the pogrom, Cooper writes, ‘I do trust that care for a suffering minority will ensure that kindness of treatment that will not allow Australia’s minority problem to be as undesirable as the European minorities of which we read so much in the press’ (Lyons, 2010: 4).

Cooper in Israel

Cooper died in 1941 at the age of 80; he did not live to see Aborigines claiming citizenship rights in 1949. His legacy has been recognized both within Australia⁶ and more interestingly in Israel.⁷ In December 2009, William Cooper’s act of protest was commemorated with the planting of five trees and the laying of a plaque at the Martyrs’ Forest in Israel. The state of Israel invited 12 surviving members of Cooper’s family, led by his grandson Alfred ‘Boydie’ Turner, to the event. The Martyrs’ Forest, established in 1951 to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, was planted near the Kison riverbed by Keren Kayemeth Le Israel–Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) in co-operation with Bnei Brith west of Jerusalem.⁸ The 6 million trees that grow there are ‘metaphorical green candles recalling the 6 million Jews who were killed by the Nazis’. A further 65 trees were planted in the Australia–Israel Friendship Forest. The total of 70 trees planted denotes the number of years since the pogrom.⁹

In a moving ceremony, water from the Murray River and soil from Yorta-Yorta country were used in the tree planting, and a plaque in honour of Cooper was established at the site. Among the dignitaries attending the ceremony, organized by the Israeli Embassy and the Jewish National Fund of Australia, were Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, KKL-JNF world chairman, and Australia’s Ambassador to Israel, Mr James Larsen. A year later, on the 12 December 2010, the Chair for the Study of Resistance During the Holocaust, in Tribute to William Cooper, was inaugurated at Yad Vashem in the presence of Cooper’s family and friends. The Chair, part of the International Institute for Holocaust research at Yad Vashem, supports research that shows ‘both Jewish resistance and non-Jewish resistance by individuals and groups, and the grassroots responses of those who would not be silent’.¹⁰ The Chair was established with the support of the Australia Israel Cultural Exchange, an organization that was founded and chaired by Albert Daddon, a leading Melbourne businessman. The inauguration ceremony was a high-profile event attended by the Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd, Shadow Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop and the Israeli Minister of Education Gideon Sa’ar. A number of senior officials and representatives from community and business networks from both countries were also present.

The tree-planting ceremony at Martyrs’ Forest and the Chair at Yad Vashem are fitting tributes to Cooper and a significant act of recognition by the state of Israel and its agencies. It is the closure of a circle, a return and reinforcement of the horizontal connection between peoples who have experienced traumatic histories. As Kevin Russell, Cooper’s great-grandson said at Yad Vashem:

This visit to Israel symbolizes for us the belief that it is possible to grow and succeed. We have learned a great deal about forestry and ecology from KKL-JNF staff, and I'm sure that we can put much of what we've learned into practice back home in Australia [...] The profound connection between Land and People is common to both Jews and Aborigines [...] We should like to invite all members of the Australian Jewish community to come and visit our home. (KKL-JNF, 2010)

However, there is a more troubling side to this picture of minor transnational commemoration, particularly with respect to the tree-planting commemoration, which we should also consider. In ceremonial and practical terms, tree planting in Israel has played an essential part in resettling the land. Symbolically, the early pioneers regarded the 'greening of Israel' as a metaphor for the people's return from exile. More practically, early afforestation projects by the Jewish National Fund paralleled the kibbutz movement's aim to make a seemingly inhospitable land inhabitable. As James Young (1993) asserts, 'as planting a tree might signify the founding of a kibbutz, the kibbutz in turn pointed toward the birth of the state' (p. 219). The link between the state's founding and tree planting is further reinforced on ceremonial days such as Israeli Independence Day and the New Year for Trees (Tu B'shvat) when ceremonial tree plantings are held around the country. Thus, '[as] a memorial gesture, tree planting remains freighted with statist meanings' (p. 220). The Martyrs' Forest was established in 1951 as a living memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Young (1993) asserts that this

forest takes on double-edged significance: it remembers both the martyrs and a return to the land. Memory of the victims is cultivated in the founding of the state: in taking root in the land, memory of the martyrs binds rememberers to the state itself. (p. 220)

In the case of Yad Vashem, the connection with the state is even more overt; its mission as a 'simultaneous custodian and creator of national memory was explicitly mandated in its law' (Young, 1993: 246).¹¹ Established in 1953, the construction of memory at Yad Vashem has, according to Young (1993), 'spanned the entire history of the state itself, paralleling the state's self-construction' (p. 250). With this in mind, the commemorative tree planting for Cooper in the Martyrs' Forest and the Chair for the Study of Resistance at Yad Vashem become more disturbing. If Young is right in claiming that the aforementioned sites bind 'the rememberers to the state itself', this would mean that the remembering subjects are the Israelis and the wider Jewish diaspora. What role does Cooper and his rememberers have in this nationalized scenario? How, if at all, does it relate to their own positions as minority indigenous citizens in Australia? The story of William Cooper's act of minor transnational critique of both German and Australian governments is now appropriated by another state as part of a discourse of political legitimation. What was initially a gesture of solidarity by one 'stateless' Aboriginal to another stateless community, the German Jews, has become part of the apparatus of the Israeli state. I am particularly unsettled by the way in which the discourse of Aboriginal indigeneity and its specific relationship to the land has been translated unproblematically into an Israeli context. I am equally troubled by the way in which Cooper's legacy has been transformed in the official commemorative events to consolidate bilateral relations between Israel and Australia. What other displacements are being overlooked in this place-making and nation-building exercise? The occupied Palestinian territories and the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as well as the ongoing disparity of standards of living between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians do not appear in this particular horizon.

Is it possible for horizontal minority transnational commemorative acts to avoid reinforcing vertical power structures? Andreas Huyssen (2003) reminds us that, 'although memory discourses appear global in one register, at their core they remain tied to the histories of specific nations and

states [...] *the political site of memory practice is still national*, not postnational or global' (p. 16, emphasis added). Cooper's act of subaltern protest was a gesture of cosmopolitan care, but the subsequent incorporation of his story into public, and specifically state-mandated practices of memorialization, gives added complexity to our understanding of minor transnationalism. Cooper's story makes visible the multiple relations as well as limitations of negotiating between the national and the transnational.

Calming the dead

I now turn to a different kind of cosmopolitan haunting between minority groups, this time within the nation. I began this essay by referring to the debates between Asian and other migrant groups regarding the Apology to the Stolen Generations of Aborigines. The question of 'Why should we care' points to the contradictory location of Asians in Australia as both colonizer and colonized, and underscores the unequal tripartite system of racialized power relations in Australia between White, Black and Asian Australia. The discourse of reconciliation, of which the Apology is an important part, has been constructed within a 'conquest paradigm' (Chakrabarty, 2001: 15) and imagined as a largely Black–White affair, which has the unfortunate consequence of absolving non-White, non-indigenous Australians like myself from being compelled to think about our specific relationship with the colonial past.

On the surface, one would not argue with assertions that 'The responsibility to come to terms with the Australian past is a morally inescapable component of what it is to be an Australian' (Poole, 1999, cited in Hage, 2003: 88). The problem, however, is that the apologizing national subject has largely been imagined as a fixed unitary position from which the subject speaks to the past. It cannot account for a differentiated field of relations by communities who may not feel sufficiently part of the citizenship in order to assume this normative role (in fact, some are actively prevented from experiencing full participatory belonging by both implicit and explicit structures of racism and economic disadvantage). Instead, scholars like Minoru Hokari (2003) advocate, following Toshio Nakano, the fissuring of the national subject at the point of political conflict, whereby different positions require different memories, responsibilities and implications in order to commit to Aboriginal reconciliation.

I focus on one such effort between minority cultures that circumvents the power of the normative centre. Mayu Kanamori first came across a list of Japanese dead buried in crumbling and unmarked graves in the small coastal town of Townsville in the Far North of Australia in 2000. These were the *issei* – first-generation Japanese who arrived in the late 1800s and died in the first quarter of the last century before the Pacific War. In response to the list that she received from the sexton of the cemetery, Kanamori said, 'I didn't really know what to do [...] and yet I felt I really had to do something. If I didn't [...] [they] would be forgotten. *Something needed to be done*'.¹² The physical ownership of the record of early Japanese settlers transforms Kanamori from an interested onlooker to a caretaker of this little-known history. The seeds of what became the *In Repose* art project¹³ arose from this initial haunting, when, to cite Gordon (2008) 'disturbed feelings cannot be put away, when something else, something different from before, seems like it must be done' (p. xvi). However, what must be done relies on recognizing what happened in the past, which, in the case of the Japanese in Australia, recalls stories of deep cross-cultural links but also presents difficult issues around the topic of the Second World War, also called in this region, the Pacific War.¹⁴

Japanese presence in Australia began in the late nineteenth century when small communities settled on the northern coast of the continent in pearling towns such as Broome and Darwin, and in the sugar-growing areas of northern Queensland. Immigration restrictions and labour conditions

meant that most of the Japanese in Australia were men who formed relationships with women who tended to be of indigenous and Asian minority ethnicities. In the early twentieth century, Townsville had such a large Japanese community that it was deemed necessary to establish a Japanese consulate there, the first of its kind in the country. This polyethnic environment changed dramatically with the onset of the Second World War when the Australian military was sent to fight the Japanese in the British colonies of Malaya and Singapore, and later suffered under the Japanese Imperial Army in the Thai-Burma railway and in prisoners-of-war camps, including the infamous Changi prison in Singapore. There were also Japanese incursions into Australian territory, with bombings on the northern coastline, including the towns of Darwin and Broome.

The outbreak of war led to the wholesale internment of local Japanese Australians and their families. After the war, there was mass repatriation of internees to Japan. After 1946, there were only 141 ex-internees who were allowed to remain in Australia. According to Yuriko Nagata (1999),

The attempted re-establishment of normal life by these Japanese-Australians may only be a small part of the history of postwar reconciliation between Australia and Japan, but their story is significant in that it paralleled the wider regrowth of trust between the two nations and remained the only actual link between pre- and postwar Japanese communities. (p. 30).

Kanamori's first inclination was to recuperate and make whole the forgotten history of these early Japanese Australians, in a manner similar to the Townsville Council's offer to clean-up the graves. She later realized that it was more appropriate to leave the graves to disintegrate into the land. The Japanese Australian artists in the project believed that it was more important to assist the dead to find peace rather than to monumentalize the past. As descendants and custodians of *issei* history in Australia, it was also incumbent on them to honour the indigenous and local communities that continue to care for the graves. And therefore, Kanamori as photographer and visual artist, along with Wakako Asano (dancer) and Vic McEwan (sound artist) and Satsuki Odamura (musician) developed the *In Repose* project – a site-specific collaborative multi-art form project that has been staged in sites of early Japanese–Aboriginal contact in northern Australia. A major aspect of the project is the extensive cross-cultural workshopping with local communities in each of the locations on the far northern coastline of Australia. Aspects of the cross-cultural work is sometimes incorporated into the *kuyo*¹⁵ performance and at other times, given a separate showing either at the cemetery or in art galleries or community centres in the towns associated with the project. At the time of writing, the project has been realized in Townsville (2007), Broome (2008) and on Thursday Island (2008). There have also been 'private' performances conducted without (living) audiences at Japanese graves in Cossack, Roebourne, Prince of Wales Island and Port Hedland. The project's website gives a detailed account of the range of site-specific collaborative activities.

It is important to stress that *In Repose* is not a 'traditional' ritual in the sense of reproducing a 'static' or 'authentic' Japanese cultural practice; rather, it is better understood as a creative re-imagining of *kuyo* from a specifically diasporic perspective and politics (Figure 1). The *In Repose kuyo* is, in the first instance, an effort to connect the living to the dead so that the departed may find peace away from the natal land. Within the context of the history of Japanese presence in Australia, however, the project takes on greater significance as an attempt to arrive at closure and perpetuation. By putting the dead to rest, the work creates an opportunity for the present generation of immigrant Japanese to create a sense of ethical homeliness that acknowledges the cold reality that non-indigenous habitation of the Australian land entails the dispossession of indigenous ownership. In places such as Broome and Thursday Island, the *kuyo* affirms the strong connections



Figure 1. Satsuki Odamura and Wakako Asano in the Japanese Section, Belgian Gardens Cemetery, Townsville, Queensland as part of *In Repose*.

Source: Photo by Mayu Kanamori 2007. ©Mayu Kanamori 2007.

between the local community and the buried. Some of the *issei* who were interned during the Pacific War were allowed to return to these settlements to their mixed-race Japanese–Aboriginal families. In the Broome performance, the Welcome to Country was enacted by Yawuru elder, Dorris Edgar. In her welcome, Edgar tells the audience that she had recently discovered that her grandfather was Japanese and is buried in the Japanese section of the cemetery. Although she did not have the information to identify his grave, it was deeply significant that her Welcome to Country acknowledged the deep kinship ties between indigenous and Japanese communities (Figure 2).

These stories of newly discovered kinship ties between Asians and Aboriginals are only just becoming known – many of these family histories were kept secret to avoid the authorities taking mixed-race children away as part of the assimilationist policies that continued until the early 1970s. As Regina Gantner (2006) points out: ‘In more ways than one, Asians in Australia are implicated in the Stolen Generation’ (p. 118).

While the *kuyo* is the heart of the *In Repose* project in each of its performance locations, it is the cross-cultural workshops with local communities that best demonstrate the potential of minor transnationalism to effect a transformation that is both individualized and collective. For example, on Thursday Island, the visitors held a storytelling workshop with local artists who drew on the participants’ personal stories and responses to death, burial and experience of attending the Japanese Cemetery. This led to the creation of a video work that contrasted Japanese and Islander perspectives on death and graves sites. The video takes, as its starting point, the difference between Japanese and Islander beliefs through the narration of Frank Moitha David and Wakako Asano. In the course of the video loop, however, points of affinity and association rise to the surface, enhanced by visual images of different grave sites and an evocative soundtrack. Both Islander and Japanese cultures believe that even in death, the spirits continue to be present and to influence the world of the living. Thus, the project plays an important role in triggering memory and enabling the



Figure 2. Dorris Edgar giving Welcome to Country at Broome Japanese Cemetery, Broome Western Australia as part of *In Repose*.

Source. Photo by Mayu Kanamori 2008. ©Mayu Kanamori 2008.

participants and the community to experience their *milieux de mémoire* through a different kind of performance, and in this way, actively participate in the refiguring of early Japanese-indigenous relations in the public domain.

The making of memory has, in recent times, been controversial in Australia, as evidenced by the so-called history wars centring on the representation of settler occupation of indigenous land. As Gay McAuley (2006) points out,

At stake, it seems [...] are not only questions concerning the moral (and financial) responsibility of the present generation for the political and social consequences of wrongs committed in the past but also a profound anxiety about the moral legitimacy of the modern nation state. (pp. 152–153)

Within this context, memory-work, and especially the making of monuments to commemorate the past, cannot be disengaged from larger issues about the politics of reproach and culpability. Such totalizing paradigms cannot accommodate the tangled web of living history that *In Repose* seeks to invoke. Instead, the project might be more suitably considered as a contra-memorial that challenges hegemonic forms of history and memory-work but which is not necessarily in binary opposition to these forms. Contra-memorialization, according to L.K. Hart (2006), ‘begins in itself and leaves open the possibility for dialogue between the dominant and the subaltern’ (p. 2). *In Repose* is not a project about recuperating the past in order to construct an alternative but equally monologic narrative of Japanese heroicism and/or victimization. The different personal stories and experiences of the Islanders captured by the performances and video work on Thursday Island demonstrate that there are diverse ways by which the Japanese have made their mark in contemporary Islander culture.

Although the works do not deny Japanese wartime assaults in the region neither do they ignore the internment and subsequent deportation of local Japanese men and women after the war. The mass deportations destroyed many mixed-race families when husbands were sent back

to Japan against their will, and their indigenous wives and children were left to fend for themselves in a society that was hostile and suspicious of their allegiances. The multifaceted works within the project capture some of these striated and contradictory memories without attempting to smooth them over into a single unified national memory; this polyphonic memory-weaving actively creates dialogic spaces between official and lived memories where Asian-indigenous and settler pasts and futures can be re-imagined and renegotiated. In this way, the project is antithetical to Nora's *lieux de mémoire*: it does not create an official memory site but rather seeks to manifest a changed and charged relationship with the past through ephemeral site-specific performances that focus on the memories that enplaced bodies are capable of creating.

Haunting implications

Significant academic attention in post-conflict and post-trauma environments has focused on the politics of remembrance. This essay is an effort to rethink memory-work both within and beyond the nation as a form of minor transnationalism. I have used the trope of cosmopolitan hauntings to point to affective contaminations that provoke not just feeling but also actions that both surpass but then get caught up again within the pressures of the nation state. My explorations concur with Levy and Sznajder's (2002) observations that the cosmopolitanization of memories involves the formation of nation-specific *and* nation-transcending commonalities: 'The cosmopolitanization of memory does not mean the end of national perspectives so much as their transformation into more complex entities where different social groups have different relations to globalization' (p. 92). Both case studies offer salutary lessons in dealing differently, with what I have termed 'cosmopolitan hauntings' and Tessa Morris-Suzuki calls 'implication':

'Implication' means the existence of a conscious connection to the past, but also the reality of being (in a legal sense) 'an accessory after the fact'. It is the status of those who have not stolen land from others, but who have lived on stolen land; the status of those who have not participated in massacres, but have participated in the process by which the memory of those massacres has been obliterated ... We who live in the present did not create the violence and hatred of the past. But the violence and hatred of the past, to some degree, created us. It formed the material world and the ideas with which we leave, and will continue to do so unless we take active steps to unmake their consequences. (Morris-Suzuki, 2002 cited in Hokari, 2003: 97–98)

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Declaration of conflicting interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Notes

1. This policy ended in the early 1970s. An official apology was finally enacted in the opening of the Forty-Second Parliament under the leadership of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 13 February 2008.
2. The term 'hauntology' is attributed to Jacques Derrida (1994) who, in *Specters of Marx*, asserts that haunting belongs to the structure of every hegemony; within every dominant system is a repressed order of value that is hidden but not eradicated, an alternative 'ontology' that threatens and perpetuates the

possibility of insurrection.

3. See Attwood and Markus (2004), Markus (1983), De Costa (2006) and Foley and Anderson (2006). See Note 6 for examples of institutional recognition within Australia.
4. According to Diana Barwick, his family connections and membership of the Australian Workers' Union made him a spokesman for the dispersed communities of central Victoria and western New South Wales who were ineligible for any aid during the 1920s drought and the 1930s Depression. However, officials ignored his complaints. In 1933, undeterred by age and deafness, he left Cumeroounga and settled in Melbourne to become eligible for the old-age pension. Available at: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cooper-william-5773> (accessed 21 October 2012).
5. For reference to vernacular cosmopolitanism, see Bhabha (2000) and Malcomson (1998).
6. A plaque commemorating Cooper's support for Germany's Jewish communities was established at the Melbourne Jewish Holocaust Museum in 2002 and a redeveloped court complex was named The William Cooper Justice Centre in Melbourne in 2010.
7. The primary source of information about the Israeli commemoration is derived from a radio documentary by Jessica Noske-Turner, 'One Blood: the Story of William Cooper', available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/awaye/one-blood-the-story-of-william-cooper/3669830>. The national television channel, Australian Broadcasting Cooperation (ABC) also featured a story about the Cooper-Israeli commemoration and is available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/awaye/stories/2009/2757236.htm>
8. Many Holocaust survivors choose to commemorate their dear ones by planting groves in their honour in the Martyrs' Forest and engrave their names on special memorial plaques. Keren Kayemeth Le Israel—Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) has established in the Martyrs' Forest a Scrolls of Fire Memorial and renovated the Martyrs' Cave. Available at: [http://my-country-israel.com/en/Jewish_National_Fund/The_Center_\(Tel_Aviv\)/Martyr_s_Forest](http://my-country-israel.com/en/Jewish_National_Fund/The_Center_(Tel_Aviv)/Martyr_s_Forest)
9. See 'Aboriginal leader honored in Israel', 28 April 2009, available at: <http://www.jta.org/news/article/2009/04/28/1004704/aboriginal-leader-honoured-in-israel> (accessed 20 October 2012) and Miller B (2012), Chapter 16.
10. Available at: http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/institute/resistance_during_holocaust.asp
11. Among the additional tasks of Yad Vashem, as defined in article 2, are 'to collect, examine and publish testimony of the Holocaust and the heroism it called forth and to bring home its lesson to the people', to promote a custom of joint remembrance of the heroes and victims' and 'to confer upon the members of the Jewish people who perished in the days of the Holocaust and the resistance the commemorative citizenship of the state of Israel, as a token of their having been gathered to their people' (Young, 1993: 246–247).
12. Interview with Jacqueline Lo and Mayu Kanamori. Sydney, Australia. December 2008.
13. *In Repose*, available at: <http://www.mayu.com.au/folio/inrepose/>
14. See Lo and Kanamori (2013).
15. An act of ceremonial prayer.

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