USE OF THESES

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KINSHIP WITH COUNTRY
Acts of Translation in the Cross-Cultural Performance Space
A case study on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands
of Central Australia

Diana Margaret James

If we cease to listen to the land
How can we hear each other?
–Dr Ian Player

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Australian National University, December 2005
DECLARATION

Except where otherwise acknowledged, all of the material in this thesis is the result of my own research.

(Diana Margaret James)  
(Date)  
18 December 2005
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With thanks to my Anangu teachers and guides:
Thanks to Anangu Pitjantjatjara Council for permission to conduct this research.

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DEDICATION

To all those who sing the land and water alive.
ABSTRACT

Background
Two maps of country represent the one continent: Australia, its lands and its peoples. One is an Indigenous map of a continent linked by the Songlines of the Western Desert Peoples’ Creation Ancestors under Anangu Law. The other is a Western map of a continent divided by the state borders of colonial ancestors under British Law. This research project was generated from the philosophical statement of Nganyinytja, a senior Pitjantjatjara elder of Anangu Law, who said:

Reconciliation means bringing two cultures together, maru munu piranya tjunguringanyi, black and white coming together. The two laws need to become one to care for the land.

(Nganyinytja 1993:23)

This thesis explores the difficulties and possibilities inherent in attempts to reconcile these two cultures of knowledge and their relationship to land in Australia today. The study examines in some detail the potential for the convergence of Western and Indigenous perceptions and values of cultural and natural resource management (CNRM) in the practice of tourism on Anangu Pitjantjatjara (AP) Lands of Central Australia. The central question for the thesis is whether Indigenous knowledge of the complex interrelationships of kinship between nature and culture can be translated across the borders of languages, cultures and disciplines so as to be understood in the Western knowledge culture.

The methodology is derived from a bi-cultural research model, developed by the Ngaanyatjarra, Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara Women’s Council, that integrates Anangu method into the framework of Western action research. The field research conforms to the protocols and accountability requirements set for Western researchers by Indigenous academics and traditional elders. In the
results section the evidence analysed is my own and others' records of the Indigenous and Western cross-cultural exchange in the context of Desert Tracks tours on the AP Lands from 1988 to 2005. These records include diaries, visitor book entries, letters and email correspondence, tour brochures, research field notes and interviews with Anangu and visitors recorded in print, on audiocassette and film over these years. The research has also been guided by the formal ethics requirements of the Australian National University.

The findings are that, while recognition of Indigenous cultural landscapes in Australian land management is not new, the integration of this holistic conceptual approach into Western knowledge is proving problematic in both theoretical and practical arenas. This can be partly attributed to the ontological divide of culture and nature, spirit and matter in the Western intellectual tradition and partly to the problems of conceptual translation of knowledge across the gaps of language and cultural difference. Within the performance space of Desert Tracks on the Pitjantjatjara Lands this gap of understanding had to be bridged to develop a successful Indigenous and Western co-management of an ecologically and culturally appropriate tourism business. Building on these findings, a schema is proposed whereby mainstream natural resource management (NRM) is able to expand into a holistic conception and practice of cultural natural resource management (CNRM), thereby joining together Indigenous and Western knowledge. The schema provides translation between the two conceptualisations of ontology, ecology, culture and economics, and the spirituality of shared tangible and intangible landscapes, providing a performance space in which knowledge translation between peoples of different cultures can occur.
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   *Kurunpa*: Spiritual connection to country.
   *Ngura walytja*: Ecological caring for country.
   *Ngapartji-Ngapartji*: Economics of reciprocity.
   *Inma Wany*: Cultural connection to country.
   *Tjukurpa*: Ontology and law.
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<tr>
<td>ACF</td>
<td>Australian Conservation Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGSO</td>
<td>Australian Geological Survey Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIAS</td>
<td>Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIATSIS</td>
<td>Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANCA</td>
<td>Australian Nature Conservation Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANZAAS</td>
<td>Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Anangu Pitjantjatjara</td>
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<td>APY</td>
<td>Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara</td>
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<td>ATA</td>
<td>Aboriginal Tourism Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATC</td>
<td>Australian Tourism Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATOA</td>
<td>Aboriginal Tour Operators Association</td>
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<td>ATSIC</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOEMAR</td>
<td>Board of Ecumenical Mission and Relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAEPR</td>
<td>Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUTHE</td>
<td>Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDEP</td>
<td>Community Development Employment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHT</td>
<td>Centre for Human Transformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CINCRM</td>
<td>Centre for Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management</td>
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<td>Cultural Natural Resource Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>Council of Australian Governments</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEH</td>
<td>Department of Environment and Heritage</td>
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<td>DITR</td>
<td>Department of Industry Tourism and Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>HREOC</td>
<td>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>IATC</td>
<td>Indigenous Australians and Tourism Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICOMOS</td>
<td>International Council of Monuments and Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Program</td>
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<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<td>ITLG</td>
<td>Indigenous Tourism Leadership Group</td>
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<td>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy</td>
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<td>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Industry Strategy</td>
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<td>NRM</td>
<td>Natural Resource Management</td>
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<td>Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council</td>
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<td>NTTC</td>
<td>Northern Territory Tourist Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKTNP</td>
<td>Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organisation</td>
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<td>WTTC</td>
<td>World Travel and Tourism Council</td>
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GLOSSARY

LANGUAGES OF THE ANANGU PITJANTJATJARA LANDS

(P) Pitjantjatjara (Y) Yankunytjatjara into English with analogous usage.

anangu (P&Y) noun
1. person, people:
   Nyara paluru anangu palya. That is a good person.
2. Aboriginal person, Aboriginal people (capital letter):
   Nyangatja Ananguku manta, walypalaku wiya.
   This is Aboriginal land, not whitefellas’.
3. live body = puntu
4. euphemism that may be used in place of kuri spouse:
   Tjinguru ananguku nyuntu watjilarinyi.
   Perhaps you’re pinning for your wife.
   anangu pulka, adult, important person
   puntu anangu, stem of a plant
Anangu Pitjantjatjara, the land-holding corporation set up under the

ananyi (P) intransitive
go, travel, move along
= (Y) yananyi

angkuwai (P) noun
creek, creekbed:
   Nyara angkuwaingku uru ngarinyi.
   Over there in the creek there’s water.
   = (Y) karu

anyma (Y) noun
hunger
   anynawarara ngaranyi, standing stretched with extreme hunger:
   Anynawarara ngarangu, anynawarara ngarangu,
   I stood with legs spread wide and an empty belly (Ngintaka Inma).

atunyananyi transitive verb
mind, look after, protect
Analogous meanings: guard, shield, defend, secure, shelter, chaperon,
encircle with arms or fence, maintain a spiritual protective barrier
against evil or sickness:
   Ka ngamana Tjukurpa nyanga pulka atunyananyi.
   And we strongly guard, maintain physically and spiritually, the Law
   and Dreaming of this country.

xviii
illi noun
wild fig (*figus platypoda*). A spreading tree whose ripe, red fruits are eaten raw. Or can be formed into a round ball and carried long distances as dried fruit, *illi kapuṭu*, which can be reconstituted when ground with water into a sweet paste.

inma noun
1. singing, song esp. traditional, almost entirely vocal supported by percussive accompaniment- clap sticks, thigh and hand clapping, heavy sticks beating on the ground. Can be associated with the performance of traditional sacred Tjukurpa (Dreaming Law) or fun stories
2. ceremony, incorporating singing and dancing.
3. separate verses of a traditional ceremony;
4. church service
inmannuru through association with particular inma:
*Inmannuru tjina uti ngarinyi*. Through telling Tjukurpa story, singing and dancing the songline, the tracks of the ancestors become clear on the surface of the land.
inmannuru the traditional law right to perform the song and dance, ceremonies of totemic ancestors pertaining to particular tracts of land along these ancestral creator inma tracks or songlines. Individuals claim traditional ownership to country through inma rights.
inma nyuti rolled headdress used in performance of inma dance.

Inma Way noun phrase
Ilyatjarri’s method of teaching visitors about Anangu kinship relationship to their country, he taught people about the traditional Law and the land by teaching them public versions of the inma –song and dance – of the ancestors who created that country in the Dreaming.

itti noun
baby, newborn to one year, babies are often not named for the first year.

itingaringu intransitive verb
be born (*ngarinyi* lie):
*Ngura nganala nyuntu itingaringu?* At what place were you born?
Traditional ownership of a place can be claimed on birthplace, or where the umbilical cord was cut (see appendix 10).

kaanka noun
crow (*Corvus bennetti, C. orru*) ancestral creator being associated with coming of the first fire to a cold world,
also associated with stealing in traditional stories;
* watikungka kaanka*, light fingered man/woman, someone who hangs about suspiciously.
kaanya ngka katingu, someone pinched it.
**kalaya** noun
emu (Dromaius novaehollandiae): 
Kalaya ngunytjungku ngampu tjunkula ngarapai, ka kalaya mamangku ngampu atunymankupai. The mother emu lays the eggs, but then the father emu looks after them.
= (F) *tjakipiri*

**kami** noun
1. grandmother, great aunt on mother’s and father’s side.
2. used by grandmother’s to their granddaughters, grand-nieces.

**kangkuru** noun
senior sister or female cousin. Your own older sister, or a cousin whose mother is the older sister of your mother.

**karu** noun
creek bed, creek
= *angkwai*

**karu-karu** noun
floodway, watercourse (without a formed creek), depression between two sandhills.

**katja** noun
1. son, woman’s sister’s son, man’s brother’s son, ‘nephew’.
2. (exclamation) oh boy! *Katja! nyawa*. Oh boy! Look at that!
*katja ukari*, woman’s brother’s son, man’s sister’s son, ’nephew’.
*katja kutjukuru*, only son (kutju one kuru eye).
*katjipiti*, groups of sons, sons’ generation.

**katjanmananyi** transitive verb
call someone *katja* son or nephew:
Ngayunya katjanmara wakuyu. He called me son.

**katjarungkanyi** intransitive verb
dawn breaking, before sun is up
(lit. *katja* son *rungkanyi* hitting)
*katjarungkantja* (nominal form) pre-dawn lighting the horizon, sometimes called ‘piccaninny dawn’ or first light.

**kuka** noun
1. edible animal, reptile or bird, game; *kuka malu* kangaroo meat.
2. meat: *Papungku kuka ngalkuru*. The dog ate the meat.
*kuka tarka* meat on the bone, *kuka ngatin* meat fat.
3. (unknown) thing: *Kuka nyaa nyangatja?* What’s that?
**kukaputju** noun
skilled, prolific hunter (-putju expert)
Ngayuku mana kukaputju nyinanyi, kuka wakalpai.
My father was a skilled hunter.

**kulilkatinyi** transitive verb
1. think about something while going along;
2. listen while going along, keep listening.
3. think through, deliberate, think about over time, keep thinking;
Rawa palurru anangi anangi kulira kulilkatira kulilkatira - ngura nyanga nyanga wanungku kulilkatira kulilkatirampa -rawu.
On and on for a long time he walked and walked concentrating on listening while going along, always listening while travelling on - following the trail of that sound through the country, listening, listening for the sound- he kept going on and on for a long time.
(verse of Ngintaka Inma).

**kulini** transitive verb
1. listen to, heed: Kulila! Listen! Kuliliya! Listen all of you!
2. hear: Ngayulu nyuntunya wanka kulini. I am listening to you.
3. think about, consider: Ngayulu tjukurpa palatja rawa kuliningi. I am thinking about and considering that story.
4. decide: Ngayulu ankunytjikitjangku kulini. I decided to go.
5. know about: Iritu lapunta kulintja wiya. In the old days we didn't know about money.
6. understand: Nyaku nyura kulintja wiya? Why don't you understand?
7. remember: Ngayulu palatja kulini. I remember that.
8. feel (bodily sensation): Palurru tiitja anymaringkula kampanyangka kulini.
When he wants to go to the toilet he feels a burning sensation.
9. have a premonition from a bodily sensation: Ngayulu muti nuunpukuntjra kulini. I’m having a premonition from my knee twitching.

**kulira** (serial tense of kulini) to think over, concentrate, to work out.
**kulirakaliyani**, plan, work out how to do something.
**wangkara kulini**, talk over, discuss and consider.

**kulilkatinyi** transitive verb
1. think about something while going along,
2. listen while going along, keep listening,
3. think through, deliberate, think about over time:
Rawa palurru anangi anangi kulira kulilkatira kulilkatira.
On and on he walked and walked concentrating on listening while going along, always listening while travelling on (Ngintaka Inma verse).
**wangkara kulilkatinyi nunu palyalkatinyi**, to keep on discussing and reviewing what you plan to do over a long period of time.
**kulpal(pa)** noun
1. mother’s brother or male cousin (uncle)
2. father’s sister’s husband
3. great-grandson

= kamuru

**kungka** noun
1. woman. In (Y) this applies to all women. In (P) minyma is used for mature women, particularly those with two or more children;
2. (P) young girl
3. (P) female = (Y) akuri
4. (with a possessive) wife: kungka nyayuku my wife

**kungkawara** (P) noun
teenage girl or young woman, childless woman = (Y) ukara

**kungka kutjara** noun phrase
1. two women 2. the major women’s law songline, Two Women
Dreaming travelling from Docker River, through Yulara to Alice Springs.

**kungkarangkalpa** noun
2. female cannibal, like tjangara, feared in drought.
3. (capitalised) refers to the Seven Sisters Dreaming.

**kuru** noun
1. eye 2. vision, eyesight 3. car headlight

**kuru** adjective
ripe [compare with mulya nose, which used of fruits means dried out but able to be reconstituted with water]:

Ngantja kuru kuru nyanara wananu
As usual following the ripe mistletoe berry trail (Ngintaka Inma verse).

**kurun(pa)** noun
1. spirit, will, self. Seen as vital to a sense of purpose:
Kurumpa pakuringu. I’ve lost interest (lit. My spirit’s tired).
Wiya kutu ngaranyi, kurun. It’s not there at all, my will.
2. sickness can be caused by kurun(pa) leaving the body. Ngankari, medicine men and women, heal by calling the spirit back to the body.
3. premonitions can come from kurumpa.
4. deep feeling: Kurumin utjuni. You’re crushing my spirit.
Kurumpa unguuru nyuntumpa mukuringanyi. I love you in my heart.

**kuta** noun
your older brother, senior brother or close male cousin (older son of uncle on father’s side).
maku noun
edible grub or caterpillar, usually found in roots. Highly prized protein source in the desert, available all year round. The grubs are often named after the tree or bush from which they are extracted is included in the name:
maku ilykuwara, roots of the witchety bush, ilykuwara, (Acacia kempeana).
maku waṯara, roots of the umbrella bush, waṯara, (Acacia ligulata).
maku palkapiti (P)/ ilytjaliti (Y), large grubs in trunks and branches of the river red gum, itaŋa/apara,(Eucalyptus camaldulensis).
maku ungangungu, grubs in roots of river red gum.

mala noun
the rufous hare wallaby (Lagorchestes hirsutus). A small hare wallaby once abundant in sandhill country, but now very rare.

malju noun
the red plains kangaroo (Macropus rufus). An important food source and totemic animal of special importance to men and initiation. Hunting, butchering, cooking ad distribution customs are strictly laid down in men’s law.

malparara noun
a person together with a friend. An important condition of working with NYP Women’s council, non-Indigenous staff must always work with an Anangu friend as co-worker or co-researcher (see Figure 8).

mama noun
1. father. 2. father’s brothers (uncle) or close male cousins. Not used as a term of address except by children.
mama puṯka, father’s older brothers.
mama malatja, father’s younger brother.
maṯa mama, thumb (maṯa hand).
tjina mama, big toe (tjina foot).

mamu noun
1. harmful spirit being, spirit-monster, ‘devil’ animal.
2. cause sickness in people and can be extracted by ngangkari.
3. invisible spirits that can be seen by dogs and driven off by elders.

maru adjective
1. dark 2. dark in colour, black.
amangu maru, black people, esp. Aboriginal people: Nyuntu amangu maruku ngurangka ngaranyi. You are on Aboriginal Land.
mula-mula active adjective
genuinely, really, truthfully (do something):
Ngangatja ngunyiji wiya, inma mula-mula! This is not pretend, this is
genuine dancing and singing, proper inma.

mungawalurru time adverb
1. dusk, twilight.
2. (Biblical) darkness: Munga mungawalurru alatjitu ngarangi. And
there was nothing but darkness.

ngaltutjara noun/exclamation
1. someone deserving pity, sympathy or compassion; (-tjara
‘having’): Ngaltutjara! Poor thing!
2. exclamation of sympathy or affection.

nganana pronoun
we (plural i.e. more than two. ‘We two’ is ngali).
nganayanya, us.
nganampa, our, for us.
ngananala, with/on us.
ngananalanguru, from us.
ngananalakutu, to us.
Nganampa Health, Anangu controlled health service of the
Pitjantjatjara lands in S.A.

nganana miri noun
(lit. we-skin) ‘our skin’: everyone of our generation and our
grandparents’ and grandchildren’s generation. Relations with
nganana miri are equal and open, marriage partners are found
within this group. Relations with the opposite moiety group
tjanamilytjan (lit. they-flesh) are more restrained, respectful and
competitive.
= nganantarka (lit. we-bone).

ngangkari noun
1. healer, male/female traditional doctor. Traditional /healers use
a range of herbal bush medicines and deep pressure massage.
They also allow their spirit to leave their body at night and take
sick spirits with them to a place of healing. They can expel mamu
(harmful spirits) and punu (foreign bodies such as pointed sticks
or bones) from inside a person’s body. These have caused the
illness. 2. healing plant or agent.

ngantja noun
mistletoe with edible berries (Lysiana exocarpi)
One of the edible seeds the ancestor Wati Ngintaka created:
Ngantja kuru kuru nyinara wanana.
As usual I follow the ripe mistletoe berry trail (Ngintaka Inma).

**ngapartji-ngapartji** adverb
1. in return, giving and receiving.
2. in turn, taking one’s turn, too
3. reciprocal rights and obligations

**ngayulu** pronoun
1. (first person singular). Note that *ngayulu* is not used in expressions corresponding to English ‘you and I’, which use the inclusive construction: e.g. *nyuntu ngali* ‘you and I’ (lit. you we two).
   *ngayunya (P) / ngayinya(Y)*, me.
   *ngayuku*, mine, my.
   *ngayula*, with/on me.
   *ngayulakutu*, towards me.
   *ngayulanguru*, from me.

**ngintaka** noun
perentie lizard, largest monitor lizard (*Varanus giganteus*). The largest of the monitor lizards, with characteristic large yellow spots. Praised for its delicious fatty meat. An important totemic animal, creator ancestor of the Ngintaka Tjukurpa and Ngintaka Inma, law and song cycle.

**ngiyari** noun
thorny devil (*Moloch horridus*). A small spiny lizard with multi coloured patches. In folk tales a woman carrying many children on her back.
= *miniri*

**ngunti** (P) adverb
1. wrongly, mistakenly, false, untrue. 2. not seriously, make believe, fun.
= *ngunyti* (Y)

**ngura** noun
1. camp, home, place where people are staying, have stayed or can stay: *Ngurakutuna ananyi*. I’m going home/back to camp.
2. site, place (often with a place-name or question word):
   *Ngura nganalanguru?* Where are you from?
3. area or tract of land of country, locality, land: *Ngura nyangatja piyan tjujaku wiya*. This isn’t white people’s land.

**ngurara** noun
Resident, local, person that lives in a place (place name appears in nominative case i.e. with *-nya* ending): *Paluru Alice Springs-anya ngurara.*
She’s an Alice Springs person (resident).

**nguraritja** noun
someone who belongs to a place, (from *ngarara* plus *(i)tja ‘of,from’).
Traditional Owner (TO).
**ngura kaputu** noun phrase
1. a traditional land-owning group’s range (recorded by Munn 1965, Vachon, pers.com. in Layton 1986:43)
2. as a cluster of important places in country towards which closely related individuals and groups of people have rights and responsibilities (Nyaningu in James, 2005: 83).

**ngura walytja** noun phrase
1. (one’s) own place, homeland, place a person belongs to.
2. traditional owner of a place, place one is kin to country through birth or totemic association.
3. country of one’s spirit Kurunpa, relationship to ngura walytja keeps one’s spirit strong and sustains health.
4. (lit. ngura place/country and walytja relative/family) intimate connectivity of one’s country and socio-cultural kinship web.

**ngunytju** noun
1. mother. 2. mother’s sister or close female cousin.

**ngunytju pulka**, mother’s older/senior sister or cousin (pulka big)

**ngunytju malatja**, mother’s younger/junior sister or cousin (malatja later one)

**nyanganyi** transitive verb
1. see, watch, look at: Ankula nyakuku? Shall we go and see?
2. find: Nyangun? Have you found it?
3. (with purposive object ending -ku-/mpa) look for.
4. (of telegram, letter etc.) get, receive.

**nyakukatinyi** intransitive verb
1. look for while going along:

**Kulilikatinyi munu nyakukatinyi**. (NYO Women’s Council Action Research) Listening and looking over a long period of time while working alongside community, not just observing but also participating.

**nyii-nyii** noun

_Zebra Finch (Poephila guttata), small birds that fly in noisy flocks._

They need to drink frequently thus are a good indicator of water sources.

Major totemic animal associated with the Indulkana Mimili region, the nyii nyii song cycle is taught to visiting Adelaide university students.

**nyiingka** noun

_a boy in seclusion before initiation into manhood, becoming a wati._

Nyiingkas, ‘bush boys’, traditionally avoided contact with all women and girls, however food was exchanged between the separate camps. They lived with only senior men for several years (now reduced to months) learning hunting, self-reliance, discipline and men’s law.
nyinanyi intransitive verb
1. sit, be sitting. 2. live, stay. 3. be in a place. 4. be in or hold a temporary condition
4. (with serial verb, in the ‘way of life’ construction) do something
generally, customarily, as a way of life:
nyinara serial tense of nyinanyi:
Ngantja kuru kuru nyinara wananyu.
Usually following the ripe mistletoe berry trail (Ngintaka Inma verse).

nyitayira noun
1. male. 2. boy

nyuma noun
seed-cake, ‘damper’ made from grass seeds.
Munu nyuma panya pakara katingu munu katira ma ungu kulpalpa.
And they took seed cakes and gave them to their uncle.

paluru pronoun
1. he, she, it (third person singular). Note that if a person is present it is
more polite to refer to them by means of a demonstrative.
2. ‘he’ may be used as the last word of a noun- phrase, indicating that
the person or thing in question is the same one as previously mentioned
Wati paluru puluka tjuta ngalya-katingu. The man brought the cattle back.
3. ‘those two’ or ‘they’, when used in front of the plural pronouns, pula
‘those two’ and tjana ‘they’, indicating the group previously referred to.

palya adjective
1. good, fine. 2. useable, suitable.
3. correct, proper, alright: Ngayulu palya tjapilku? Is it alright to ask?
4. (exclamation) Right! OK!
5. greeting (hello): Nyuntu palya? Are you well? Palyana. I’m OK.

palyanyi transitive verb
1. make (tool, shelter etc.) 2. fix, repair. 3. butcher meat in the proper
prescribed fashion, prepare food, cook food. 4. cause to be in a certain
state, make be. 5. do: Alatji palyanyi! Do it this way!

palyalkatinyi transitive verb
1. make something (e.g. plan, road) while going along.
2. keep on making something: Kala rawa palyalkatinyi. We’re going to
keep making it for a long time.
Wangkara kulilikatinyi munu palyalkatinyi. (NYP Women’s council
Action Research) Keep on discussing and reviewing what you are
making and designing as the planning progresses.

pantu noun
salt pan, salt lake: Tjintjirangka pantu ngarira. Salt lying in a claypan.
papa  noun

dog, dingo. Anangu are very fond of their dogs, old people usually have
many to protect them from evil spirits mamu and for warmth at night.
= tjitiutja

papa inuwa, wild dog, dingo.
Papa Tjukurpa, dingo Dreaming Law, an important totemic ancestor.

parka-parka  noun

a type of mistletoe (Lysiana murrayi), with long cylindrical leaves, red
flowers and small globular fruit.
parka-parka increase site – on Ngintaka Songline north of Angatja-
called ulkapatjunkunyta – where the Ngintaka vomited mistletoe berries.

pira  (Y)noun

1. moon. 2. month. 3. snail.
= (P) kinara

piranpa  (P) adjective/noun

1. pale, light (colour). 2. white. 3. white person
= (Y) piyan

pukulpa  (Y) active adjective

happy, pleased, satisfied, content, glad, able to do things you want to do.

pulyku  noun

sinew, tendon, muscle. Kangaroo sinew is used in spear making to lash
the three sections of a spear together.
Ka kutangku panya pulyku urkuiningi. The older brother was pulling out
the sinew (from the kangaroos legs).
= marpany(pa)

rawa  active adjective

persistently, for a long time, keep doing:
Rawa paluru anangi anangi kulira kulikatiya kulikatiya.
On and on for a long time he walked and walked concentrating on
listening while going along, always listening while travelling (Ngintaka
Inma story).

tjaka  noun

1. typical, habit, routine. 2.(exclamation) typical:
Ngunti wangukapai. Tjaka. They lie. Typical.
tjakangku, according to custom,law.

tjaka  active adjective

1.as usual, as a matter of course: Tjaka alatjitu. That's how it is.
**tjala** noun
honey ant, honey-pot ant (*Camponotus inflatus*). A source of sweet syrup highly prized by Anang. The women dig deep into damp earth to the storage chambers of the egg-laying females with distended abdomens and carefully harvest them. Eaten by holding the head and legs while sucking the abdomen.

**tjalpawankanyi** intransitive verb
polite and indirect speech, speak (*wankanyi*) in a polite manner. Often rising intonation showing uncertainty, disinterest and deference. Used to politely refuse a request without saying ‘no’ directly.

**tjamu** noun
1. grandfather, great-uncle, any male in your grandfather generation.
2. grandson

**tjanamiltytjan(pa)** noun
(lit. they flesh) ‘their side’; people belonging to the other moiety group than oneself, everyone of your parents’ and children’s generations. Relations characterised with restraint, respect and competitiveness. Marriage with *tjanamiltytjampa* is forbidden, but does occur infrequently.

**tjintjira** noun
1. claypan 2. swamp, marsh (claypan inundated with water).

**tjintu** noun
1. sun 2. sunlight
   = (P) *tjirripi*
   *tjintukutu*, till tomorrow

**tjintulu** noun
sun side (generational moiety)

**tjukula** noun
deep rockhole, hollow or hole in rock that holds water. *kapi/mina tjukula*, water from rockhole.

**tjukur(pa)** noun
1. story: *tjukurpa manutjara* a story about monsters.
2. individual word; 4. what someone says; 5. birthmark
3. *Tjukurpa* (capitalised) Creation Law, the Dreaming. Anangu ontology, the first principle of the creation of the universe; animal, mineral and vegetable. Anangu often prefer the word Tjukurpa to be used instead of Dreaming, as Dreaming implies the unreality of a dream or imaginal state in English usage. However, ‘Dreaming’ is preferred to ‘Dreamtime’, as Dreaming has a present continuous sense, whereas Dreamtime is in the past.
**tjukurpa** intransitive verb
The continuous action of creation: the active generative word that brings the physical world into life, being, knowing, existing, breathing, causing, continuing through time, continuing through space, activating energy of existence:
*Tjukurpa iriti ngarlingi munu kwara wanka nyinyangi.*
Tjukurpa was and is continuously alive.

**tjukuritja** adjective
1. of or from or associated with the Dreaming:
2. Traditional Owner: *Anangu Tjukuritja*. A person of a (particular) Dreaming site or tract of land.

**tjukurnananyi** ambitransitive verb
1. have a dream, dreaming
2. access to the Tjukurpa while in a dream state, new song stanzas and dance choreography can be revealed to senior law men women.
3. *Ngangkari*, medicine men and women, can heal sick people, travel to other places, and see incidents in distant locations while ‘dreaming’

**tjunguringanyi** intransitive verb
1. join or come together, assemble, meet.
2. join in (serial form).
3. (euphemism with dual subject) make love, sexual intercourse.
4. reconciliation between different peoples:
*Maru munu piana tjunguringanyi.*
Reconciliation of black and white people.

**tjuratja** noun
1. sweet substance, such as nectar, honeydew and the sugary scales on gumleaves. 2. liquor.

= **wama**

**tjuta** adjective
1. many, more than two or three, lots. 2. to indicate plural, always at end of noun phrase: *tjitji tjuta*, kids, children.

**ukalinganyi** intransitive verb
1. come or go down: *Tjitji ukaliwe!* Child come down!
2. (water) flow, run down: *Kapi iru ukalinganyi katunguru, angkuwaikutu.*
   The water runs down from up on high to the creek.
3. go south.

**ulkapatjunkunytja** transitive verb
vomit, retch, bring up something (*tjunkanyi* put):
*Ulkapatjunkunytja*. Place of the vomit (Ngintaka Songline).
= **tjuntaratjunkunanyi**
untal(pa) (P) noun
daughter, woman’s sister’s daughter, man’s brother’s daughter (niece).
untal ukari, man’s sister’s daughter, woman’s brother’s daughter (niece).
untalpiti, group of daughters, daughter’s generation.

uru (P) noun
1. water on the ground e.g. puddle, pool.
2. big expanse of water e.g. lake, ocean.
3. liquid, fluid.
= (Y) yuru

wakani transitive verb
1. (something sharp and pointed) pierce, stick into, penetrate: Puuyungku taya wakani. A stake’s pierced the tyre.
2. spear, stab, impale pierce with, prik:
Watingku malu wakani. The man speared a kangaroo.
3. stabbing pain.  4. sew.  5. crush(nits, lice).  6. grab with claws (bird of prey).  7. strike (sun).  8. write (some areas only).
tjintu wakalpa, bathed in sunlight (lit. sun struck).

wakati noun
inland pigweed (*Portulaca aff. Oleracea*), a succulent. The uprooted plants are allowed to dry out in a container to release the tiny black, poppy-like seeds, which are winnowed and yandied to remove the small capsule caps on the seeds. The cleaned seed is ground to a paste and small seed cakes are baked in hot sand with ashes and coals. Wati Ngintaka is responsible for the creation of this edible plant.

walawuru noun
wedge-tailed eagle (*Aquila audax*). A large soaring bird with a wedge-shaped tail. Totemic animal associated particularly with *ngangkari* medicine men and women. The black hole near the Southern Cross is its Tjukurpa nest.

walka noun
1. design, writing, drawing, body paint for ceremony.
2. pattern on animal or rock weathering.

walypala noun
1. whitefella, white person.
= waipala

walytja noun/active adjective
1. one of the family, a relation, a kinsman. Someone you care for and cares for you. Agangu have an inclusive classificatory kinship system, which allows any known person to be addressed in close kinship terms, regardless of blood ties. Outsiders may be included into the kinship system if they behave appropriately.
2. owner, someone who takes care of something.
3. (as active adjective) do something one’s self:
Ngayulu walytjaringka palyanu. I fixed it myself.
ngura walytja 1. owner of a place. 2. country that is one’s relative, to which one belongs and has responsibility to care for.

walytjara walytjara noun phrase
1. together with one’s relations.
2. traditional land ownership - Peter Nyaningu’s term to describe traditional patterns of land ownership on the AP Lands, caring for contiguous estates of country, which is owned by closely, related family groups.

wanampi noun
water serpent, rainbow serpent, water snake monster. Important totemic Creation Being responsible for guarding water holes from excessive use. Also manifests as a rainbow, important bringer of rain.
wanampitjara, water containing the rainbow serpent, sacred and protected, feared if approached inappropriately.

wanani transitive verb
1. follow 2. used in a special construction with a serial verb to depict an action as carried out following along a path or in a line:
wanaunu past tense of wanani.
Ngantja kuru kuru nyinara wanaunu.
As usual when following the ripe mistletoe berry trail (Ngintaka Inma).

wangunu noun
naked wollybutt (Eragrosti eriopoda) an important traditional grain, one created by Wati Ngintaka on his journey. The seed heads are rubbed off the plant, and chaff separated from the seed by pounding, singeing, winnowing and yandying. The seed is ground with water and baked to make a seed-cake or damper.

waru noun
1. fire 2. burning thing, or produced by burning e.g waru puyu smoke.
3. firewood: waru is often used to refer to mulga wood (kurku, wanari), which is the best firewood and produces long lasting hot coals purku.
4. a match, a light. 5. fever. 6. hot, too hot, burning hot.
waru tjaa, firestick lighted at one end used to carry fire while travelling or from a lit fire to another, firesticks were carried for warm in winter.

wati noun
1. initiated man, Anangu men who have not gone through initiation are derisively known as tiiti children. 2. men in general. 3. husband.

Wati Ngintaka proper name
the perentie lizard man, important Tjukurpa creation ancestor.
watiringanyi intransitive verb
   becoming an initiated man, a wali.

wiltja (P) noun
   1. shade, from tree or roof. 2. shadow.
   2. shelter or bush hut, made from mulga and spinifex, traditionally built
      by women.
   = (Y) kanku

wiltjalyuru noun
   1. faint, long shadows cast by winter sun or moon.
   3. shade side (generational moiety).
   = (Y) kankulyuru

wiya exclamation/noun/adjective
   1. no, I disagree, I don't have any, there isn't any.
   2. nothing, none, no: Kapi wiya ngaranyi. There is no water.
   3. not, isn't. 4. not having, without. 5. didn't, don't, without doing.

yuu noun
   1. shelter from the wind. 2. windbreak
(Note for a more extensive bilingual dictionary the reader is referred to Cliff Goddard, 1992, Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara to English Dictionary, Alice Springs: Institute for Aboriginal Development.)
CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION TO THE PERFORMANCE SPACE

Prologue: Two laws mapped on the land of Australia

Figure 1a: Seven Sister's Songline Map of Australia
(Artist: Josephine Mick, Western Desert 1993)

Figure 1b: Map of Australian States and the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands (Pitjantjatjara Council website accessed 11/10/2001).
Nganyinytja, a Pitjantjatjara elder’s vision:

Reconciliation means bringing two cultures together, maru nunu pijampa tjunguringanyi, black and white coming together. The two laws need to become one to care for the land.
Kulintja tjutja pakani kuwarri: many people who listen with understanding are rising up now. They want to keep the culture, ours and theirs, keep the two ways strong. Much trouble has come from people forgetting the land, the spirit. Many people are sick and have lost their spirit.

(Nganyinytja 1993:23)

In 1980 Bernard echoed her vision for Australia, saying we have two options:

Either we shall set our face against the legitimate aspirations of the Aboriginal people...and settle for a divided culture, in which a white majority and a black minority strive separately for international recognition as the legitimate culture of the continent, or we shall strive towards a convergent culture with its sources in two traditions, the one derived largely from European sources, the other derived from this ancient land.

(Smith cited in Beier 1986:105)

Two Australian elders state the central problematic of my thesis in different ways: Nganyinytja, a senior Law woman of the Pitjantjatjara people, and Bernard Smith, an Emeritus Professor of Fine Arts and the Humanities, of British descent born in Sydney. Both speak of the difficulties and possibilities inherent in attempts to actualise the desire to reconcile these two cultures of Australia. The problematic of radically different cultural conceptions of Australia, its lands and peoples, is represented by two maps of the country: one is an Indigenous map of a continent linked by the songlines of Creation Ancestors under the Law (Figure 1a) and the other is a Western map of a continent divided by the colonial ancestors under British Law (Figure 1b). The
latter shows the current restricted boundaries of Anangu Western Desert people's country cut by three state borders that divide their Dreaming law.

Australia is a society where many migrant peoples live and work together but only two different cultural land titles are legitimised in Australian statutory law: Indigenous and British. The right to own land under traditional Indigenous communal title now coexists with the British system of private property rights in Australian law. In 1981 the South Australian Parliament recognised Anangu traditional ownership, under the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act, to more than 103,000 square kilometres of arid land in the far northwest of South Australia (Anangu Pitjantjatjara Council, website). Following this the Pitjantjatjara Council was instrumental in assisting Anangu to regain title to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park which covers an area of 132,566 hectares (132.5 square kilometres) of arid ecosystems and is located in the Northern Territory adjacent to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands of South Australia. In 1985 the Park was handed back to the traditional owners and is held by the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Aboriginal Land Trust. It was leased back to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife and is now jointly managed under the direction of a Board of Management that includes a majority of Anangu traditional owners (Department of Environment and Heritage (a) website). The Pitjantjatjara Council also assisted Anangu across the border in Western Australia in their campaign for full land rights but they were successful only in gaining leasehold to the Ngaanyatjarra lands adjacent to the South Australian and Northern Territory borders.

This study is located in the natural and cultural landscapes of the Indigenous lands that straddle these three state borders. These are the traditional lands of Anangu: Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Western Desert people. The traditional relationship of Anangu to their lands is subject to different legislation under three British Australian state laws. However, Anangu do not recognise these imposed state lines as legitimate and continue to claim rights to the land and water sources of their traditional clan estates and
larger hunting ranges that cross these borders. *Ngura walytja* is the Anangu term for their clan estate, the country to which they are related through familiar kinship; this is the country to which they belong and for which they accept management responsibility. These estates are interconnected by the songlines of the *Tjukurpa* Law, the law laid down in the beginning of time when land and water, animals and plants, humans and their tribes and languages were being formed and given life. *Tjukurpa* is recorded in the stories and song sagas that tell of the creative acts and journeys of Anangu Ancestors who were able to shift their shapes between animal, plant and human form, thus establishing the law of interconnectivity of all living and non-living in the lands and waters of Central Australia. Anangu are living in those lands today, singing and dancing these stories and songs of *Tjukurpa*. They say the performance of these songlines keeps their Law alive.

Within these lands the tourism business of Desert Tracks provides a case study of Indigenous and Western co-management. It evolved from a joint venture in 1988 to become a fully Indigenous-owned enterprise in 1994 that retained non-Indigenous management and has, since 2000, successfully sub-contracted out its business management while retaining ownership and directorial control. The company office is at Uluru while the directors live across the border in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands of South Australia (see Chapter 8).

The landscape to be explored in this thesis is the cross-cultural ‘performance space of translation’ within the Desert Tracks tours. This is a meeting ground where Indigenous and Western knowledge and practice of caring for cultural and natural landscapes co-exist and must be integrated to achieve accreditation and sustainability under two laws. The borders crossed are both physical and metaphysical, between the different spiritual, ecological, economic, cultural and ontological ways of knowing country. The gaps of differences to be bridged are cross-cultural between Western and Indigenous knowledge, and inter-cultural between the different fields of Western specialist knowledge that are applied to the management of a modern eco-cultural tourism business.
The desire for practical and symbolic reconciliation in Australia is an enduring problematic of post-colonial Australia. Dr William Jonas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner from 1999-2003, in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s (HREOC) Social Justice Report 2003, commented that the government’s emphasis on practical issues of reconciliation to the exclusion of symbolic issues is unbalanced and not producing the expected positive outcomes for Indigenous peoples’ health and wellbeing. The report revealed that ‘the claim of the government that “the wellbeing of Indigenous people is improving under this Government” cannot be verified across many core areas of practical reconciliation’ (HREOC 2003:17). The report indicates that despite the investment of significant government resources there has not been a reduction in the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in key areas of socio-economic disadvantage.

Jonas argues that government policy has ‘developed a tunnel vision that renders it incapable of seeing anything that falls outside the boundaries that it has unilaterally, and artificially, established for relations with indigenous peoples’ (HREOC 2002:87). He says this needs to change. My research findings support the argument that practical and symbolic reconciliation must proceed together if the health and wellbeing of Australia’s Indigenous people is to improve. Convergence of difference requires thinking outside borders. Many borders are conceptual, contained by languages, which need to be translated in oral, written, artistic and filmic performance to effectively communicate across cultural borders. This thesis is one such act of translation in the performance space of the cultural natural landscapes on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands.
Chapter 1

OVERVIEW

Thesis Proposition
My research aim is to explore in depth the perceptions and values of Indigenous and Western cultural and natural resource management capable of sustaining the practice of an ecologically and culturally appropriate tourism business on Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands of Central Australia. This inquiry examines ways in which mainstream Western thinking on natural resource management (NRM) is able to join with Indigenous concepts of caring for country in a shared holistic conception and practice of cultural natural resource management (CNRM), bridging both Indigenous and Western.

The landscapes of Australia today have been created and sustained through the cultural interaction of humans with the natural environment over many thousands of years. Recognition of this is not new, but an integrated approach towards cultural and natural landscape management in mainstream theory and practice has proved difficult because of the historical divide between nature and culture in Western ontology, theory and practice (see Brody 2001; Mathews 1991). As many writers have so ably described, there is a wide gap between the Western ontology that divides nature and culture, and the holistic ontology of the Indigenous intellectual tradition that perceives and values nature and culture as one system (see Abram 1996; Rose 1988, 1999b; Brody 2001).

The mainstream narrative of Australian history has long disremembered, or actively discounted, Indigenous history and knowledge (well documented from Stanner 1969 to Langton 1998). Stanner summarises the consistent theme of the early histories of Hancock and others, as ‘hunting and pastoral economy cannot co-exist within the same bounds’ or more pejoratively, ‘the twentieth century and the Stone Age cannot live together’ (Stanner 1969: 22). It was assumed that through assimilation Aboriginal knowledge and cultural practices would be
discarded and Western knowledge and practice adopted as superior. As Professor Marcia Langton comments in her book on Aboriginal land management, *Burning Questions* (1998):

I suggest that Aboriginal people and their land management traditions have also been rendered invisible in Australian landscapes, not only by legal but also by 'science fictions' that arise from the assumption of superiority of Western knowledge over Indigenous knowledge systems, the result of which is, often, a failure to recognise the critical relevance of these latter to sustainable environmental management.

(Langton 1998:9)

**The Link of Cultural and Biological Diversity**

Stanner and Langton argue strongly that we need a less shallow and less ethnocentric environmental history of this land to ensure sustainable futures. Our scientific and cultural knowledge of this continent and its islands needs to be rooted in the 'deep time' of its existence. Mary White (2000:xvii), a skilled scientific storyteller, gives us a sense of the 'deep time' of this as she speaks of a continent eroded through millennia to a flat, wrinkled, dried out, old land. Yet it was able to support a thriving diversity of animals and plants managed successfully by the Indigenous people for thousands of years. Unfortunately, during the 'shallow time' of the last 200 or so years since European colonisation, much of the continent has been seriously degraded by over-exploitation of our surface and underground water supplies, destruction of native flora and fauna by introduced plants and animals, and large scale pastoralism and agriculture, all of which have drastically reduced the biodiversity of this land (see White 2000; Flannery 1994).

The impact of colonisation on cultural diversity in Australia has also been devastating. It is estimated that there was an Indigenous population of about 300,000 Aboriginal peoples in Australia at the time of first settlement by the British in 1788 (Blake 1981:4). Linguists estimate that there were probably 600
dialects spoken by some 600 tribal groups of 500 people each. Allowing for classificatory mistakes, they suggest that these represented 200 to 250 Aboriginal languages spoken in Australia 200 years ago. A recent study indicates that 160 languages are extinct and 70 are dying with only twenty likely to survive at least in the short term (Walsh & Yallop, 1993:2). Language is the repository of cultural ontology, of the knowledge, perceptions, values, humour and relationship to land that cannot be expressed the same way in a foreign language. This is an issue of great continuing concern to Aboriginal people, was reported in a recent article on dying languages in the Sydney Morning Herald in which Roy McIvor, a seventy year old elder of Hopevale, expressed the complex relationship of language to cultural knowledge thus:

Language teaches us kinship, keeps us together. When we lose these kinship terms, our whole caring and sharing system breaks down. We call it *mugay* – a system of kinship relations, for discipline, respect and support. When people know their place, there’s respect. (cited in Van Tiggelen 2005:28)

Loss of language is connected to loss of spiritual connection to country for the individual and the community, a loss of ‘all sense of direction and purpose’ (Topfer, in Posey 1999: xi). Loss of languages, nationally and internationally, is directly related to the loss of ecological knowledge of culturally specific ways of caring for places and bioregions of this world.

International globalisation of one system of trade, is threatening to create a Western cultural hegemony, reducing local regional uniqueness and diversity. There is increasing concern that this will increase the loss of the languages, practices and knowledge inherent in cultural diversity that are as essential for sustainable life on this planet as is biodiversity. Klaus Topfer, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program in 1999, said:
Respect for biological diversity implies respect for human diversity. Indeed, both elements are fundamental to stability and durable peace on earth. The key to creating forms of development that are sustainable and in harmony with the needs and aspirations of each culture implies breaking out of patterns that render invisible the lives and perspectives of those cultures. It is the concern of many people that biodiversity must be appreciated in terms of human diversity, because different cultures and peoples from different walks of life perceive and apprehend biodiversity in different ways as a consequence of their distinct heritages and experiences.

(ibid)

My research is theoretically situated within this international context of the recognition of the importance of cultural diversity to maintaining biodiversity and sustainable futures for all the peoples of this planet.

Desert Tracks Case Study

This thesis examines the possibility of cultural, diverse knowledge converging to protect biodiversity and provide sustainable livelihoods for Aboriginal people living on remote Indigenous lands. The specific case study is of the development of Desert Tracks, an Indigenous tourism business on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands of South Australia, over the years 1988 to 2005. This business developed as an Indigenous response to the impact of the colonization of their traditional lands that destroyed their traditional economic livelihood and threatens to further decimate their culture. The elders recognised the need to adapt to the new economic to support their traditional knowledge and culture. The global tourism interest in Indigenous culture and remote, beautiful, natural environments was seen by Anangu as an opportunity to provide an income to enable them to live and work in their traditional homelands (James 1996a: 19, see Appendix 6).

To protect the fragile ecology and traditional cultural knowledge and lifestyle of these desert lands from the impact of tourism, a convergence of Western and
Indigenous philosophy and best practice of natural and natural resource management was seen as essential by the co-management team (ibid: 19-22). The Anangu traditional owners of the homelands worked with their non-Indigenous managers and advisors to develop a culturally convergent management theory and practice in the eco-cultural tourism business of Desert Tracks. Thus a case study of Desert Tracks provides an example of the practical and symbolic issues faced by Indigenous and Western people working together in an attempt to converge their knowledge and practice of caring for country and community. The process of this development and the possibilities and pitfalls of translation of ideas and knowledge within this cross-cultural performance space is discussed in detail throughout this thesis.

In 1988 Nganyinyji and the other senior traditional owners of Angatja in the Mann Ranges of South Australia decided to set up a cross-cultural learning centre at their homeland. The Desert Tracks tour vehicle was used to bring fee-paying students to this Bush College. The seven-day intensive courses offered by Anangu were an attempt to put the vision of reconciliation and cultural convergence into practice. Nganyinyji’s Bush College became an open-air university at which the two different traditions of knowledge, Indigenous and Western, could be shared and the divergence or convergence of ways of knowing discussed. The co-management of the business necessitated close examination of the capacity for the two laws to become one in order to sustain a Western business on Indigenous lands operating within international Western law and traditional Indigenous Law.

This thesis is a formal examination of her vision statement in the context of the cross-cultural tours of Desert Tracks. The question is, to what extent real convergence of the two cultures had been achieved in the co-management plan and practice, and where convergence was achieved, how it was achieved. The early years were an experiment in the possibility of developing a joint-venture tourism business on Anangu Pitjantjatjara (AP) Lands as none had been
attempted previously. In 1994 a formal co-management business plan was written in consultation with the Anangu owners (see Chapter 8). This plan incorporated Anangu and Western knowledge of cultural and natural resource management in all aspects of the planning of infrastructure, environmental protection, economics, itineraries, guide training, ethics, protocols and permits. Cultural protocols and practice had to be incorporated into the design of a profitable Indigenous tourist operation.

The Desert Tracks business plan included aims and objectives that incorporated the practical and symbolic concerns of reconciliation. The practical reconciliation objective was to co-develop a sustainable industry for Indigenous people on their traditional lands. The symbolic reconciliation objective was to facilitate greater understanding between Indigenous and Western people in Australia. There were difficult practical problems in Indigenous people’s daily lives in remote homelands: the need for clean drinking water, shelter, food, meaningful employment, training, health and wellbeing. The business had to ensure that these were supported and improved by their involvement in the tourism enterprise.

Nganyinytja and the elders were clear that income from the business was a secondary aim to the teaching and maintaining respect for Anangu cultural knowledge. This was achieved through the incorporation of Anangu Tjukurpa Law into the business plan; recognising their spiritual beliefs, customary economy, traditional ecological knowledge and social practices. Sustaining culture was essential to sustaining the spirit and wellbeing of Anangu living in and caring for the country of their ancestors. As Nganyinytja said:

They want to keep the culture, ours and theirs, keep the two ways strong. Much trouble has come from people forgetting the land, the spirit. Many people are sick and have lost their spirit.

(Nganyinytja 1993:23)
The two ways had to be kept strong by the business. The process of co-management was a continual working out of the complex issues that arise where and when these two very different cultures clash or converge in Australia.

Towards a Convergent Culture

The term 'convergent' is used throughout the thesis in its biological sense; referring to 'unrelated organisms having the tendency to become similar while adapting to the same environment' (Australian Oxford Dictionary 1999). Thus, a 'convergent culture' is one formed from different cultures that become similar as they adapt to the same environment. My contention is that the land of Australia forms a crucible in which the mix of previously unrelated peoples who now live on her soil and water are being transformed into members of a new convergent culture. All Indigenous peoples and settlers perceive kinship with country differently. Their diverse perceptions and values of relationships that connect human beings with the natural world need to be understood so that the assumptions underlying different knowledge traditions become clear. Once difference is understood and respected it becomes possible to converge sustainable resource management theories and practice while sustaining biological and cultural diversity.

The convergence needs to occur at many levels. The deep-time stories of the land emerge by listening to the Dreaming Law of her first people and layering these with Western Creation stories of geology, soil typology, vegetation and water. The Indigenous Law of the Dreaming teaches that humans were and are active co-creators of the land: their ancestors were both human and animal, spirit and matter. Human performance of the Dreaming stories, songs and dances ensures the sustainability of animals and plants, land and water today. These ontological beliefs, both scientific and sacred, form the bedrock on which the maps of peoples' knowledge of the land are drawn. Use of the resources of land and water of this continent is governed by cultural theories and practices.
that express these different ontological relationships between human beings and their natural environments (Brody 2001; Posey 1999; Rose 1994b).

This inquiry seeks to determine whether Indigenous knowledge of the complex interrelationships of kinship between nature and culture can be translated across the borders of languages, cultures and disciplines into Western knowledge. The issues of translation of different knowledges are not only cross-cultural between Indigenous and Western knowledge, but also inter-cultural between the disciplines of Western knowledge. The aim is to move beyond these borders into arenas of convergent trans-cultural knowledge where new knowledge can be created from the two.

**Field of Study and Data**

The field of study is the cultural centrality of place-based knowledge and how this generates the theory and practices of cultural and natural resource management in any peoples for any landscape. The theme is the interface between the knowledge bases of two vastly different cultures, Indigenous and Western, over the same terrain, in the performance space of Desert Tracks cross-cultural tourism. The topic is the nature of interaction at that interface: how Western and Indigenous people translate their cultural knowledge for each other within this performance space.

The study is based on seventeen years of records of Indigenous and Western cross-cultural exchange in the context of Desert Tracks on the AP Lands. The data examined includes: visitors’ comments, articles, letters and poems; the professional voices of journalists, photographers and filmmakers; Anangu teachings, comments, meeting decisions and responses to interviews were recorded and translated by myself and reviewed by other interpreters, Linda Rive, Lizzie Ellis, Stanley Douglas and Lee Brady. Most of the long quotes of personal communication are from unpublished field notes, emails and letters, and visitor book comments. However, where these records have been
incorporated into published articles on the web, in newspapers, magazines, books, films and radio programs they are referenced appropriately.

**Bi-cultural Research Methodology**

The bi-cultural research model used in this thesis is derived from the Ngaanyatjarra, Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara Women's Council Action Research Model. This has been expanded to incorporate the protocols and accountability requirements set for Western researchers in Indigenous communities established by Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwa Smith (see Smith 1999). These research approaches are explored in detail in Chapter 4.

Being cognisant of the differences between Western and Indigenous approaches to knowledge and research, I have acknowledged these differences in all aspects of the field and literature research. Differences must be respected if the convergent practices and principles of Indigenous and Western theory and practice of caring for country and community are to be discerned in this dynamically changing cross-cultural space. My research complies with the ethical standards of Indigenous research models, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Council and the Australian National University.

**Acts of Translation**

The role of a bi-cultural performance space as a means of translation between two cultures is the theme of this thesis. The thesis structure reflects the two cultural languages in which the research was carried out: oral and written, Indigenous and Western. The body of the thesis is presented in three acts reflecting the change of the languages and expository styles. The present introduction is followed by three sections, each an Act in the cross-cultural performance space. In Act I, a Western approach to collecting and analyzing data is followed. Act II follows traditional and Indigenous methods of storytelling as visitors travel with Odysseus and Wati Ngintaka along the Ngintaka Songline Trail. Act III reviews and discusses the findings of Act I and II, identifying the success and difficulties encountered in the two-way translation of Western and Indigenous knowledge of caring for cultural natural
resources of land and water. The similarities and differences between the two knowledges are reviewed in the translation schema frames identified by Anangu and Western participants as significant in their own terms (see Figure 41). This provides an overview of the complex patterns of cultural divergence and convergence essential to discerning the possibilities for each frame contributing to sustaining patterns in the whole.

Act I is a Western humanities approach to the historical and social data in my field of research. The first chapter provides a history of the place, the people and the politics of the AP Lands. The second chapter outlines the national and international context of Indigenous tourism, followed by a chapter on the market demand for Indigenous tourism. The final chapter of this section examines the management of Desert Tracks in accordance with the ethics and best practice of eco-cultural tourism combined with Anangu cultural protocols and traditional ecological knowledge.

Act II gives preference to a traditional mode of knowledge transmission, the story poem or song saga, which is an ancient and respected form of discourse in both Indigenous and Western cultures. The thesis journey into the performance space of cross-cultural tourism is taken with two archetypal heroes, Odysseus and Wati Ngintaka. Their behaviour as travellers is a guide to the moral and practical rights and responsibilities of travellers, hosts and guests. The Odyssey is an archetypal story of Western culture, considered by philosopher Bertrand to be ‘the earliest and greatest literary monument of the Greek world’ a pillar on which the wisdom of the West was built (Russell 1959: 12). The Anangu epic song saga of Wati Ngintaka is of equivalent status in the Anangu intellectual tradition of Central Australia.

The Ngintaka Tjukurpa is one of the stories that Anangu choose to teach tourists on Desert Tracks tours. In 1994 at a Desert Tracks Inma Festival they made an oral recording of the saga in song and story that was produced on compact disc (CD), with a written bi-lingual translation, and made available for
sale to the public. This version of the story is the one I use in this thesis as it is the most accurate recording and translation of the song saga sanctioned for public use by the AP Council (see Appendix 1).

In Act II a tour group, consisting of real travellers drawn from various Desert Tracks tours over the years between 1988 and 2005, is taken on the thesis journey. They are introduced to Indigenous conceptions of country, their lands and waters, through the five perceptual value frames of spiritual, ecological, economic, cultural and ontological connection to and caring for country (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2:** Indigenous Kinship with Country: Five-toed Footprint (D James, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIGENOUS KINSHIP WITH COUNTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five toed footprint of sustainability</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- **Spiritual**  
  *Kurunpa:* spirit of health & wellbeing
- **Ecological**  
  *Ngura Walytja:* caring for homelands
- **Economic**  
  *Ngapartji-ngapartji:* reciprocal sharing
- **Cultural**  
  *Inma Way:* interconnectivity of songlines
- **Ontological**  
  *Tjukurpa:* holistic law of nature & culture

This section of my thesis also includes a digital video disc (DVD) compiled from archival footage of Desert Tracks tours made over the years 1990 to 1996, and film taken during my field research in 2003. The footage provides a history of Desert Tracks and documents the interactions between tourists and the researcher within the translation performance space of the Anangu cross-cultural tours of Desert Tracks. I was involved in the production of the archival films represented in the DVD documentary as an interviewer, translator and assistant to the directors and editors. The film about Desert Tracks, produced by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA), includes my research interviews for the Tourism Impacts Report pilot project of the
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy (NATSITS) in 1996 (see Appendix 6). The resulting film, *Ngura Walytja: Kinship with Country*, is a documentary that explores the roles, on Desert Tracks tours, of the researcher and translator, the Anangu teachers and their knowledge, and the visitors’ changes of perception and valuing of the knowledge of Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. The DVD follows the five perceptual value frames of the translation schema in the thesis chapters of Act II. The DVD was specifically designed to be a visual thesis for Anangu to appraise; it can be understood independently of the written by a non-academic audience or seen as a totality after reading the thesis (see Appendix 2).

The aural and visual media presentation of this thesis respects both the Indigenous tradition of knowledge transfer in aural form and the Western written tradition. Aural, visual and written forms of the thesis are necessary to adequately communicate in the Western and Indigenous forums of knowledge discourse.

**Act III** of the thesis reviews the possible convergence of the two cultural knowledges. This section includes a discussion of the translation schema through which convergence of different cultural knowledges may be facilitated in the performance spaces of cultural natural resource management. The five frames through which this cross-cultural convergence is viewed are windows on the process of translation of key Anangu and Western concepts as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 41. Together they form a pattern of perceptions and values, knowledges and practices that are intricately linked in the sustaining of our shared cultural natural landscapes and resources. These are expressed in words in Figure 3.
NGANYINYTJA:
Reconciliation means bringing two cultures together:
'Maru munu piranpa tjunguringanyi,
Black and white coming together.'

The two laws need to become one to keep the land. We, the Pitjantjatjara people, have always kept our land and looked after it and made it grow. At first white people did not understand us, they shot the black fella and the black fella speared the white fella. I do not speak badly of those people who do not understand. I want to teach all people, black and white, about the land and our way of living with it.

Ignorance is the reason for a lot of racism. If people will listen to our way, they will understand why we live in the country of our grandparents and why we must have strong land rights.

If people lose their land, their law is broken and their spirit dies.

Angangu Tjurupa (Aboriginal law) needs to be kept strong. On Pitjantjatjara land our council keeps the land rights law strongly. If people wish to come and learn our way, they can come on a trip to my homeland, Angatja. My family runs a bush college teaching our law and lifestyle. Many people come ignorant of our way, wanting to learn. Office workers, teachers, doctors, nurses, Aboriginal people from the cities come to learn, those whose land and culture have been taken away from them. It makes me very sad to hear of what they have lost.

Now lots of people, black and white, are wanting to learn about the old law, from our grandmothers and grandfathers. People are happy to learn from me and my family. We are happy to share our way and pleased that they are taking back this new knowledge to their homes and teaching others. We need to keep the cultures strong, need the two laws to work together. All people whose hearts are open to understanding each other's culture should come together. We can work to increase the understanding and open-hearted acceptance of each other.

Kulinja tjuta pakani kuwari - many people who listen with understanding are rising up now. They want to keep the culture, ours and theirs, keep the two ways strong. Much trouble has come from people forgetting the land, the spirit. Many people are sick and have lost their spirit. The white government has cut their culture; we grieve for them. But we can all learn and make our spirit strong.

My teaching is about opening your spirit, working together to build understanding. Opening our way, opening our hearts to share the spirit of the land with all who want to learn. The Mabo decision is good. The land is the centre of culture and spirit for Aboriginal people.

Those people whose land was taken from them, where the big cities like Sydney and Adelaide were built, those people need to be helped. They need land for their culture and spirit to be strong again. White people need to understand Aboriginal law and that Tjurupa is in the land. People need to not just talk mining, money, cars and cattle. They need to open their hearts, let the wind that blows across my country talk to them. Understand that angangu maru- are alive and living on our land, looking after it as our grandmothers and grandfathers did, following the law. People need to realise that we all share the same spirit that comes from God and from the earth.

All people whose hearts are open to understanding each other's culture should come together

Translated by Diana James (Sydney Morning Herald, Good Weekend, 21 August 1993:23).
Chapter 2

KEY CONCEPTS

In this chapter the key concepts of the thesis are discussed in the context of the case study of the Anangu tourism business, Desert Tracks, on the AP Lands.

The Performance Space

Paul Carter developed the concept of ‘performance space’ in his analysis of early exchanges between settlers and Indigenous people in Australia:

Their value lies, not only in bringing people without a language in common together, but in opening up a space between and around them, a dynamic space that...kept all views open; that...preserved intervals of difference.

(Carter 1992a:179)

I am expanding this concept into a ‘performance space of translation’ in which different cultures perform their concepts and knowledge in an attempt to explain themselves to the other. An important premise of this performance space is that those who enter it do so of their own will. The actors in this space are there with the intent to transform the cross-cultural interface of colonisation from one of forced assimilation to reconciliation and integration through negotiation.

Stanner noted that Australian Aboriginal peoples have always proactively sought to negotiate and accommodate the strangers who came and took over their country. He remarked that despite the atrocities of colonization:
...on the evidence the aborigines have always been looking for two things: a decent union of their lives with ours but on terms that let them preserve their own identity, not inclusion willy-nilly in our scheme of things and a fake identity, but development within a new way of life that has the imprint of their own ideas.

(Stanner 1969: 27-28)

This desire to embrace the new way of life on their own terms inspired the Anangu of Angatja to start Desert Tracks. Ilyatjari stated this clearly:

I’m teaching my grandchildren the imma and how to survive in this land. The culture may be lost if they don’t have a reason to learn it. The business brings in money for people to live in their own country and keep their culture strong. This is our business Desert Tracks. We started it for our grandsons and granddaughters to carry it on and grow this business. I am now working and planning for this future.

(Ilyatjari quoted in James 1996:20)

The performance space of Desert Tracks cross-cultural tours is a place of dynamic translation of old ways into the new context of a colonised Australia. Ilyatjari is clearly teaching his children and grandchildren how to maintain their true identity while adapting to changing economic and social circumstances.

The visitors who enter this performance space also intend to change their old perceptions and values of Indigenous people and their relationship to land. Like the first settlers who danced with Aboriginal people on the beaches of Sydney, people change by dancing together performances of translation, attempting to communicate through various languages (see Clendinnen 2003). However, these performances are not only friendly, many have been and continue to be acts of plunder caused by greed or ignorance, that lead to dispossession of the Indigenous by the settler. This thesis explores the positive and negative exchanges that occur in the performance space of tourism where
hosts and guests, natives and strangers meet. Both Odysseus and Wati Ngintaka were involved in kindly reciprocal exchange and acts of plunder.

Nganyinytja believed that the tours could help dispel ignorance and assist reconciliation between cultures:

> Ignorance is the reason for a lot of racism. If people will listen to our way, they will understand why we live in the country of our grandparents and why we must have strong land rights. If people lose their land, their law is broken and their spirit dies.
> (Nganyinytja 1993:23)

Thus tours were designed by Anangu to be an open performance space of translation between Indigenous and Western worldviews. They assume the intent of people who enter this space is positive and Anangu do not expect to be plundered. Unfortunately this is not always the case as explored in Chapter 13. However, the majority of exchanges have been overwhelmingly positive and have allowed the possibility of people changing their perception of the other and themselves in the cross-cultural performance space. The potential for changes both cultures’ perceptions and values of our shared cultural and natural landscapes is facilitated by the third space of translation.

**Islands and Beaches of the Desert**

Another symbolic representation of the cross-cultural performance space is the concept of ‘Islands and Beaches’ developed by historian, Greg Dening (1980). Here the ‘beach’ is the translation space between one culture (the island) and the whole surrounding cultural milieu. It is a complex space entered by invaders, missionaries, educators, and colonisers or drifting beachcombers. Physically the ‘island’ of Central Australia is separated from the rest of Australia and the world by a sea of sand; waters of mirage rather than waters of salt seas, both equally unpalatable.

The metaphor of the inland desert as a ‘sea of sand’ was familiar to early explorers who called their camels ‘ships of the desert’. It was on these
‘monsters’ that Aboriginal people saw their first white men. Mick Wikilyiri remembers: ‘Hey, there’s a big dog standing over there. What’s this thing with the long neck? Mamu! Evil spirit! There’s a huge evil spirit here in our camp. We were scared but the man called us over and offered food’ (Wikilyiri, pers. comm., 1998).

Modern tourists experience the Anangu Lands as an island cut off from the surrounding sea of mainstream white Australian culture. When they travel there they face their fears of the ‘dead heart’, the expanse and emptiness of the desert, the fear of the unknown world of the Indigenous other. They choose to transform their own monster fears (see Tacey 1995). They meet with Anangu on the ‘beaches’ of the ecotourism performance space. These beaches are protected by tangible and intangible ‘windbreaks’ created by their Anangu hosts and professional guides to protect the visitors from the wild dust storms of post-colonial cultural breakdown that engulf Anangu communities. These ‘beaches’ provide havens for both hosts and guests while they engage in the complex and difficult tasks of cross-cultural learning.

**The Sentient Land**

The physical ground of the performance space is the land of Australia, the driest vegetated continent in the world, to which both Aboriginal people and strangers must adapt in order to survive. The land is an active agent of cultural convergence within this space, creating physical and spiritual parameters within which life is sustainable. Merleau-Ponty points out that humans can touch because they are touchable beings. He says we touch the world because it touches us, we see with eyes that are themselves visible to non-human eyes. His notion of the ‘flesh of the world’ and its ‘reciprocity of perception’ aligns his understanding with that of many Indigenous peoples. He suggests that ‘our sentient bodies are entirely continuous with the vast body of the land’, that ‘the presence of the world is precisely the presence of its flesh to my flesh’ (Merleau-Ponty, in Abram 1996:69).
This philosophy is conceptually convergent with Anangu belief that the land and all living things are embodiments of their ancestors; their flesh is the flesh of animal, plant, trees and rocks. The land lives and breathes the Tjukurpa of Dreaming ancestors. This notion of land as an active participant in the performance space of cultural translation may seem strange to the Western scientific mind, but experiential evidence that the land of Australia has transformed the original Western culture that settlers brought here is unequivocal. Australian culture has been moulded by the drought and plenty of this land. This land changes people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who are actively transforming and reinterpreting themselves within this sentient land.

Ngura Walytja

WEH Stanner rightly said no English words are adequate to describe the relationship of Aboriginal people to their land, ‘A different tradition leaves us tongueless and earless towards this other world of meaning and significance’ (Stanner 1969:44). However, some attempt at translation must be made if we are to understand their relationship to the land of the continent we share.

Ngura walytja is the key Pitjantjatjara term denoting kinship between people and the lands and waters that comprise their country. Ngura refers to a camp, home or place where people live. Strangers are identified as kin relations firstly by asking which ngura they come from, which tract of land or place they call home, and through this their relationship to Tjukurpa can be ascertained, then the more specific aspects of kinship that place them in generational moieties and familial relationship to their hosts. Ngura can refer to a specific site or a tract of land or the whole country of a people. Walytja refers to members of family, relations, kinsmen and those cared for as family. Anangu have an all-inclusive classificatory system of kinship including all known Aboriginal people into family relationships. Strangers, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, can be included into this walytja system if they behave appropriately (Goddard 1992:180). Ngura walytja refers to the place or country that one belongs to and takes care of, one is ‘owned by’ and ‘owner’ of this place. Ngura walytja is also
the land of one’s spirit (see Downing 1988). Thus, the Anangu concept of ngura walytja encompasses spiritual, ecological, economic, cultural and ontological relationships and responsibilities to one’s country.

**Cultural Landscapes**

The Australian Federal Government Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) conforms to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee cultural heritage definition in its recognition of significant ‘cultural landscapes’ in Australia:

Cultural Landscapes represent the ‘combined works of nature and of man’. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.

(DEH(b), website)

In 1987 heritage values of the lands within the boundaries of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park were internationally recognised by listing it as World Heritage natural and cultural landscape. The DEH describes its integrated natural and cultural landscapes as follows:

The huge rock formations of Uluru and Kata Tjuta are remarkable geological and landform features set in a contrasting, relatively flat, sand-plain environment. They are a part of an important cultural landscape and have special significance to Anangu. The features of both Uluru and Kata Tjuta are physical evidence of the actions, artefacts and bodies of the ancestral heroes (the tjukuritja) who travelled the earth in creation times. The travels of these ancestral heroes are celebrated in Anangu religion and culture today.

(DEH(a), website)

These Anangu cultural landscapes do not end at the borders of the Park. The tracts of land referred to as ‘cultural landscapes’ in this thesis may not have
been recognised nationally or internationally as sites of ‘outstanding universal significance’ but they are of outstanding living cultural significance to Anangu. In accordance with the World Heritage Committee and the Australian Department of Environment and Heritage, this thesis uses the term ‘cultural landscapes’ to refer to sites that are either ‘an outstanding example of traditional human land use’ or are ‘directly associated with living traditions and beliefs’ (ibid).

**Cultural Natural Re-source Management**

Working with Anangu, their concept of *ngura walytja* relationship to natural and cultural landscapes needs to be translated into the framework of Western natural resource management (NRM) requiring translation of the terms and concepts involved. The terms ‘resource’ and ‘management’ need to be understood in an expanded sense that incorporates Anangu conceptualisation of these aspects of their relationship to the environment. The English language term ‘resource’ is used in NRM to refer to a stock or supply that can be drawn on from our natural environment to achieve an end or fulfil a function in industry, either agricultural or heavy industrial, in society. This is a reduction of the term from its original meaning in Latin: ‘source’ came from the word ‘surgere’ meaning ‘to rise’. This meaning is particularly apt when considering water as a renewable resource. A water ‘source’ is a spring, a living body of rising water that needs to be allowed to continue to rise and not become clogged by dirt or clay trampled in by livestock on pastoral properties. The prefix ‘re’ attached to any verb means ‘once more’ or ‘afresh’, to ‘return again to a previous state’ (*Australian Oxford Dictionary* 1999). The importance of sustaining fresh water sources cannot be overstated, so I choose to expand the term resource to *re-source*, which incorporates the concept of continual renewal of sources.

The concept of ‘management’, referring to human use of natural re-sources, is likewise expanded to incorporate the Indigenous concept of caring for country. The Anangu term *kanyini* means to *care for* and take responsibility for people and country. If the concept of Western ‘management’ is expanded to
incorporate the Indigenous concept of ‘caring’, then the same responsibility and care that is taken for people will be extended to their environments. Anangu speak of caring for country as *ngura walytjangka manta kanyini*, which means, ‘looking after the country to which you belong together with the community of your relations’. This is a cultural perception and valuing of the natural landscape in which the land sustains community and the community sustains the land. That is why CNRM refers to cultural natural re-source management throughout this thesis.

**On Translation**

The performance space of translation is one in which people choose to share their culture by performing it in language, written or spoken, song, dance or mime, and translation occurs through intermediaries with some knowledge of both cultures who translate each to the other. Even in the first encounters between new settlers and Aboriginal people on the beaches of Botany Bay and Sydney Harbour a few individuals emerged from each side who, by skill or desire, became the in-between people, the trans-relators between cultures (see Clendinnen 2003).

Translators acknowledge that complete and accurate cross-cultural understanding rarely occurs, as the conceptual differences between cultures and the incommensurability of languages prevent exact equivalence (see Fagles in Fagles and Knox 1996; Le Guin 1989). Acts of translation are performances of interpretation, ongoing processes of mutual understanding that are never fixed, rather always becoming something new.

Translation is an art that can be applied to specialist knowledge to enhance conceptual understanding for non-specialists. However, to corroborate findings within a specialisation such as science, experiments must be conducted in the language of that science. Similarly, translation enables wider understanding of Anangu knowledge by non-Indigenous people but it does not allow us to explicitly corroborate or disprove this knowledge in terms of its own
epistemology. Conceptual frameworks depend upon the language in which they are built; translations are only windows into these other worlds.

Idea-seeds can blow through these windows of translation. Ursula le Guin quotes the English poet Shelley’s notion of ‘idea-seeds’:

Hence the vanity of translation: it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower – and this is the burden of the curse of Babel.

(Le Guin 1989:110)

Shelly proposes that a radical transplanting of ideas from one language to another is required in acts of translation if the idea is to grow strongly in new soil. Thus translations are transformations, ‘a new plant, as Shelley says, sprung from the idea-seed of the old one’ (ibid: 111). This concept of translation as acts of transplanting ‘idea-seeds’ from one culture to another is further explored in Act II of this thesis.

On Repetition

On Desert Tracks tours it takes three days of repetition of the story and songs, the steps of the dances, walking the Songline Trail in country and hearing again the story and song in situ, before visitors begin to understand in their sensate bodies and minds the Anangu perception and value of cultural natural landscapes. On a tour in 1989 one visitor, Anne-Marie Cousteau, remarked:

You begin to understand, very deeply within yourself, what the Aborigines mean by the ‘Dreamtime’ – the time when those fantastic beings walked the Earth. As you listen to the stories, you begin to realise the Dreamtime is still today. We saw the Aborigines rub the rocks out in the bush so that the Dreamtime would stay with them.

(Cousteau 1990:16)
Anangu achieve this transformation of their visitors’ perceptions and values by repeatedly telling them to listen and look with new ears and eyes, by repeating and repeating the stories, song and dance of Tjukurpa, the Law of their lands. Learning by travelling beside a teacher guide is a process of constantly listening and watching over a long period of time (see Chapter 4). Repetition is a common teaching methodology in aural cultures where vast amounts of knowledge must be remembered without reliance on written texts.

Storytelling repetition is no longer a familiar method of acquiring knowledge to Western academically trained minds. As a member of a 1997 tour commented:

Over the period of the week-long visit, some of the stories were repeated three or four times under different circumstances. Initially this was tiresome once one ‘knew’ the story. Later other factors seemed to come into play for some, independently of the skills of the story-teller. What exactly was one hearing? What part of oneself was registering what kind of communication? Were aspects of the story being heard subconsciously and with what effect and at what level? To what extent did the telling have a hypnotic effect?

(Judge 1997).

Repetition of specific sayings of the Anangu teachers or repeated references to key concepts throughout this thesis is a deliberate adoption of this storytelling or song saga, performance memory device. The intent is to take the reader back into the presence of that person or concept reminding them of characteristics revealed in previous contexts that need to be expanded in the new context. This repetition is necessary with complex and unfamiliar concepts like ‘Tjukurpa’ which cannot be simply translated into a single word in English nor understood in one interpretation, of which there are many (see following section Tjukurpa).

Inma

In Anangu culture, inma, ‘the songs of the Tjukurpa or the Dreaming’, correlate to the physical topography of the land and the sites where water, food and
shelter can be found (Tjilari, pers. comm., 1976). Knowledge of these songs is essential to survival both physically and spiritually. During the formal training of young men and women the songs are embedded in their thinking by constant repetition:

This process of indelible implantation of the features of the totemic songline, with its implications for every facet of living, is of great significance to each individual. It enables music to be used as a powerful force throughout life.

(Ellis 1985:123)

The importance of repetition is vital in the music and verses of the long song sagas of many cultures. In Anangu tradition the melody is fixed while the text, rhythm and duration of the song may change (ibid.). However, the melody is constantly identifiable because it is ‘the essence of the ancestor’ (ibid.). This melody is the character’s signature tune, and performs a function similar to that of repeated epithets in Homer’s verse and leitmotifs in Wagner’s operas. Homer used a recurring epithet for each hero or character; there was a choice of epithets to fit the changing metre, the ‘intricate set of metrical alternatives for the recurring names of heroes, gods and objects’ (Fagles and Knox 1996:15). These recurring epithets served the same function as leitmotifs in Wagner’s opera, Der Ring Des Nibelungen. Wagner’s musical leitmotifs, Homer’s epithets and Anangu inma recurring melodies and verses signal the entrance of specific heroes or heroines into the performance; they are mnemonic memory devices common to long song or verse sagas of different cultures.

_Tjukurpa_ and the Dreaming

Anangu say _Tjukurpa_ was in the beginning, and that all things came to be alive through _Tjukurpa_, and all things continue to be sustained by it. In this sense ‘Tjukurpa’ is an active verb: not a ‘Dreamtime’ but rather a present continuous ‘Dreaming’. Anangu use ‘Tjukurpa’ to translate the English language concept of ‘the Word of God’ into Pitjantjatjara Christianity. Rabbi Cooper agrees that the word ‘God’ has no gender, nor is it a noun, but has the dynamic qualities of a
verb (see Cooper 1977). He argues that these dynamic qualities are evident in
the Biblical text, ‘In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and
the Word was God...In it was life. All that came to be was alive with its life’
(John 1:1-4). Anangu conception of ‘Tjukurpa’ is as an equivalent life giving and
sustaining Word and Law.

Early linguists and anthropologists have, however, consistently translated
Tjukurpa and other Aboriginal words for similar concepts, as nouns. The
concept ‘Dream-time’ arose out of Spencer and Gillen’s use of the Aranda word
Alcheringa in 1899 to denote the mythic times of the ancestors of the totemic
groups. In 1926 Spencer revised the meaning; Altjira also meant ‘dream’ and
Aborigines used the English word ‘Dreaming’ to refer to their past times and
ancestral heroes. Elkin found that from 1927 onwards ‘in southern, central,
north-western and northern regions of Australia, whatever the term, it was the
“Dreaming”’. As he also found, performance of the rituals of the Tjukurpa is to
‘be in the Dreaming’ (Elkin 1964:210).

In the short span of the last two hundred years the translation of Aboriginal
languages and understanding of cultural context has changed the way the
Dreaming is understood by non-Indigenous people. Anthropologists,
depending on their analytic frameworks, have interpreted the concept
differently in five main categories: as imaginary myth, as history, as charter or
law, as dream and as ontology.

Radcliffe-Brown favoured fantasy; in 1945 he called the Dreaming a ‘World
perceived it as imaginary myth with no believed historic link to the present via
the totemic ancestors of Elkin’s ‘eternal dream-time of spiritual reality’ (ibid).
Elkin persisted in understanding Dreaming as history and law. He later
expanded his interpretation of Dreaming in a functional way, ‘mythology is a
very important institution...as historical interpretation and a charter for present
day social and ritual life’ (Elkin 1964:244).
Roheim, in 1954, used Freudian dream analysis to interpret the Dreaming myths as actual dreams. His view was that Australian religion 'as a social institution is a defence organised against the separation anxiety' (cited in Hiatt 1975:15). Hiatt extended this theory to argue that myths are 'proto-analytic insights into the stuff dreams are made of. Rites and rituals psychologically transpose individual fear of change...to conscious and collective levels of social integration and adaptation' (ibid:16).

Eliade perceived the depth of the Dreaming and refused to reduce it to fantasy, psychological defences against fear or a functional social institution. Since 1949 he studied all religion as ontology. The expression of ideas 'on the nature of reality through myth, rite and symbol' embodies 'abstract metaphysical concepts' (ibid:10). Stanner, in all his writing agreed with Eliade's approach to the Dreaming: 'we are clearly dealing with a world-and-life view expressing a metaphysic of life which can and should be elicited' (ibid:14).

Currently the Australian Oxford Dictionary (1999) defines Dreamtime: 'in Aboriginal belief: a collection of events beyond living memory, which shaped the physical, spiritual, and moral world, an Aboriginal consciousness of the enduring nature of the era'. This definition of the Dreamtime avoids the 'real or myth' debate by acknowledging it as Aboriginal belief; it recognises the historical and moral charter aspects, and provides an ontological premise that 'the physical, spiritual and moral' worlds are all shaped by the Dreaming. The metaphysical aspects of the Dreaming need to be understood as central to Aboriginal ontology, the first principle of things, including concepts of being, knowing, substance, essence, cause, identity, time and space. Our understanding of the concept of Tjukurpa is expanded in the spiritual, ecological, economic, cultural and ontological acts of translation in Act II.

**Songlines: Inma Way**

The Australian term 'song line' is used to describe an Aboriginal cultural concept of 'the map drawn by the journeyings of an ancestral being or beings; a
dreaming track’ (*Australian Oxford Dictionary* 1999). The word ‘songlines’ entered common usage in 1987 when Bruce Chatwin published a book on his travels in Central Australia titled *Songlines*. He wrote inside the dust jacket:

I have a vision of the Songlines stretching across the continents and ages; that wherever men have trodden they have left a trail of song; and that these trails must reach back, in time and space, to an isolated pocket in the African savannah, where the First Man shouted the opening stanza to the World Song, "I am!" (Chatwin, 1987: front cover).

Europeans find ‘songlines’ similar to the concept of the ley-lines said to link sacred sites throughout the British Isles and Europe. Many peoples around the world have recorded the epics of their real or imagined journeys and the exploits of their ancestral heroes and heroines in song sagas that have survived in oral form for many thousands of years. India has the epics of the *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavad Gita*, Sweden and Norway have Viking sagas like *Fridthjof’s Saga*; the Icelandic Sagas, including *The Saga of Burnt Njal*, were probably song sagas before being written down between ca. 1100 AD and 1300 AD, as were the song poems of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* written down by Greek scholar Homer in 800 BC (Fagles & Knox 1996: 3-11). This universal oral tradition of recording ancestral history in song sagas is today retained in written poems, songs and operas like Wagner’s Ring Cycle, *Der Ring Des Nibelungen*. Thus, as Chatwin intended, the term ‘songlines’ encompasses the concept of trails of song across many different cultural landscapes. In this tradition *Wati Ngintaka* is comparable to *The Odyssey* as both are ancient songlines of their cultures.

‘Songline’ is a useful term in the performance space of translation as it conveys a transcultural metaphorical concept of the ancestral song sagas that relate all peoples to their homelands. Songlines are cultural interconnective webs of memory carrying knowledge of the role specific places have in peoples’ cultural natural landscapes. The songlines like modern wireless communication lines carry spiritual, ecological, economic, cultural and ontological knowledge linking people and places in natural and cultural landscapes around the globe.
Pan-continental Songlines

There are two Aboriginal songlines mentioned in this thesis that stretch beyond the Anangu lands of Central Australia, the same story connecting different peoples and languages across Australia. The first mentioned is the Seven Sisters Dreaming, known to Anangu as Kungkarangkalpa Tjukurpa, and the second is the Rainbow Serpent Dreaming, known as the Wayampi Tjukurpa in Anangu lands. That these two Dreamings exist and are connected across Australia is asserted by Anangu custodians of these Dreamings and is supported in the anthropological literature reviewed.

The map painted by Josephine Mick (see Figure 1a), a senior traditional owner of the Kungkarangkalpa Tjukurpa shows the path of the Seven Sisters Dreaming traversing Australia from the east coast of northern New South Wales across the state through Central Australia over to Roebourne on the west coast. From there the Sisters returned past Uluru and then turned south near Mt Connor into Armunta’s clan estate lands around cave Hill, they built a shelter at Walinynga that became the cave of paintings now visited by tourists. Then the songline moves south past Fregon into the Flinders Ranges and down to the Great Australian Bight before heading north to finish around Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. Inawinytji Williamson speaks of this songline in relation to her painting, Seven Sisters. This is recorded on the Ngura Walytja DVD accompanying this thesis.

Radcliffe-Brown, in 1930, recorded the evidence for the existence of the Rainbow Serpent Dreaming all over Australia. He stated:

My studies of Australian beliefs has lead me to the conclusion that this particular myth is one of the most important of the mythology and that fuller knowledge of it is necessary in any attempt we may make to understand the Australian conception of nature.

(Radcliffe-Brown 1930:342)
He found that all over Australia the rainbow-serpent was associated with water, in lagoons, waterholes and waterfalls. Anangu refer to many water sources as being associated with Wąampi. Springs and waterholes are referred to as wąampitjara meaning 'containing the rainbow serpent'. The phrase, kapi wala wąampitjara niil-miilpalatjara palatja, means 'that spring is the sacred water of Wąampi'. This Dreaming provides a metaphorical conception of an important law regarding the management of water as a sacred source of life.

**Seeking the Trans-cultural in the Cross-cultural**

The term ‘cross-cultural’ is intentional, clearly stating that there are two distinct cultural relationships to land, Indigenous and Western, recognized in Australian law today. The Anangu law of Tjukurpa, which prescribes a custodial ownership of land embodied in the language and practice of relating to ngura walytja, is a distinctly different law of land ownership than that of the mainstream Western laws of Australia which confer ownership of land through purchase and leasehold entitling the owner to profit from the use and sale of the property and its natural resources.

‘Cross-cultural’ needs to be distinguished from ‘inter-cultural’, which refers to exchanges between different specialist groups within one culture. The exchange between Anangu and non-Indigenous Australians is not inter-cultural; it is cross-cultural. Within the cross-cultural performance space of Desert Tracks tours participants celebrate cultural diversity and respect difference while seeking trans-cultural convergence, where the two ways of knowing can become one. They seek trans-cultural knowledge that offers the dynamic activation of human consciousness across borders of culture, state, and religion and race, referred to by De Chardin as ‘the spirit of the earth’ (De Chardin 1963:18).

My distinction between cross-cultural and trans-cultural knowledge draws on Bob Hodge’s discussion of the differences between Western academic disciplines of knowledge. He defines ‘disciplines’ in Foucault’s terms, as ‘a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through the
action of an identity taking the form of a permanent reactivation of the rules’ (Foucault, cited in Hodge 1995:35). Western knowledge disciplines are bounded and heavily guarded fortresses of knowledge. The stability of the disciplines depends upon a strong accreditation system that gives the holder the right to speak as an expert, an authority with power to accept or reject what is considered right or correct knowledge and what is outside the pale, outside the fence.

Hodge represents the ideal image of disciplinary organization of knowledge as ‘a set of ellipses of light, with an intense focus at the centre, with darkness (in which monsters live and breed) all around outside the borders’ (Hodge 1995:36). The space on the border between two disciplines is called ‘interdisciplinary’. This space functions ‘as a way of confirming the existing structure of knowledge, because it fills, and hence, reinforces the space between the disciplines’ (ibid:37). Each discipline raids the other to bring back ‘monsters’ to be tamed into conformity within the disciplinary frameworks (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: The Transdisciplinary Ellipse (Hodge 1995:37)

Hodge suggests that true trans-disciplinary formations of new knowledge only occur when the knowledge maps fold in upon themselves. As during tectonic earth movements, sand is metamorphosed into new bedrock; the thought grains of sand on
the beaches in between cultures are transformed, smashed together by unexpected earth movements. Trans-disciplinary formations are not just interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary linkages ‘but are new potentially explosive density near some arbitrary margin that destabilizes the basic core-plus-periphery structure of the prior disciplines’ (ibid:37). These trans-disciplinary and trans-cultural formations of new knowledge are disturbing because of the mix of ‘immediate experience’, ‘imaginary themes’ and ‘immemorial beliefs’ that are ‘the Other, the shadow of disciplinary (privileged, expert) thought’ (ibid).

Hodge’s diagrammatic representation of the ‘trans-disciplinary ellipse’ draws on the biological metaphor of cellular transformation to explain his concept of the transformation of disciplines by intrusions of the ‘Other’. This conceptual metaphor is similar to Shelly’s insistence that effective translation of ideas between different cultures and languages requires transplantation of idea-seeds into the other cultural milieu to grow as new trans-cultural ideas. I have adapted Hodge’s diagrammatic representation of his conceptual metaphors for trans-disciplinary formation into a diagrammatical representation of the growth of cross-cultural idea-seeds into trans-cultural knowledge (see Figure 5).

In my two dimensional diagrammatic representation of the multi-dimensional performance space of translation I have used the biological metaphor of two living cells undergoing change. The two cells are the Indigenous consciousness cell with a black nucleus of knowledge surrounded by a white sea of ‘monsters’, while the Western consciousness cell has a white nucleus of knowledge surrounded by a sea of ‘black’ monsters. These monsters are the unknowns that haunt the borders of both cultures’ existing knowledge paradigms. All peoples fear these monsters. In Anangu culture monsters are called marnu and are represented as white: traditional marnu dancers are covered in white clay or ash and white is the colour of mourning and death. In Western culture monsters have traditionally been represented as black: devils are black and black is the colour of mourning and death. The culturally specific meanings of these colours are used in my diagram to symbolically represent the different cultures, their monsters and the meeting and transformation of both cultures.
Both cultures recognize that joining precedes conception of the new one being from two different beings. Thus the black and white patterned middle section represents the new embryonic transcultural knowledge emerging from the cross-cultural performance space.

In the host and guest translation performance space it is salutary to recognise that what is strange to one is familiar to another: that the colour of fear and death is white for black people and black for white people. Literally, the shadows that haunt our psyche are different colours. Under the harsh light of the Central Australian sun there is no place to hide our monsters, which are clearly visible to the other. We must learn to dance with each other and our monsters, which if unacknowledged, will destroy attempts to translate seed-ideas across the cultural gap and give birth to new transcultural knowledge.

**Figure 5:** The Cross-Cultural Performance Space (D. James 2005).
Tjungurinanyi: the Two Laws Becoming One

'The two laws need to become one, to care for the land'. Nganyinytja made this statement when speaking out on the need for reconciliation in Australia in 1993. Her statement raises interesting and complex questions about pluralism and unity: how are such different laws of the Indigenous and Western peoples of Australia to become one? In her statement on reconciliation Nganyinytja called for, 'black and white people to come together, maru munu pigrapa tjunguringanyi' (Nganyinytja 1993:23). She does not mean assimilation but rather reconciliation by coming together with respect for difference.

Nganyinytja is proposing a synthesis of the two cultures in which each transforms the other with neither losing their cultural identity. The philosopher who most clearly expresses this concept in the Western tradition is Teilhard de Chardin who speaks of the need to maintain cultural diversity within universal unity:

Cling to your own race, indeed, and your own nation: for a sound synthesis calls for strong and sharply defined elements. But if you wish fully to realise yourselves, beware above all of everything that isolates, that refuses to accept and divides...let your thought and action be 'universal', which is to say 'total'.

(De Chardin 1963:95)

These two philosophers, Nganyinytja and De Chardin, are calling for a profound change in mainstream human consciousness, a shift from divisive thinking promoting superficial cultural pluralism that ignores the reality: that a dynamic synthesis of human knowledge is needed to prevent the environmental degradation of the earth we all share.

De Chardin argues that Western knowledge needs to move beyond simple Darwinism, the survival of the fittest, where 'living branches develop primarily by stifling and eliminating one another'. Evolution is 'not to be conceived on the
lines of a stem that is swollen with the sap of all the stems it killed as it grew';
rather 'every blade and every fascicle, every individual and every nation, will
find completion through union with all others. No longer a succession of
eliminations, but a confluence of energies - "synergy"' (De Chardin 1963:18). He
argues that nations, boundaries and exclusion between neighbouring peoples
are non-sustainable. Rather, he suggests, human 'thought' provides a crucial
adaptive difference:

Through spirit's irresistible affinity for its own kind it has created a
sort of convergent milieu within which the branches, as they are
formed, have come closer together in order to be fully living. The
energy among humans must be transformed from the competitive to
a cooperative force, from repulsion into attraction of the other.
(ibid)

De Chardin proposes that the activation of the whole of human consciousness
will be more than a sum of its parts: it becomes a synthesis. This convergent
synthesis of consciousness will create:

A state of unanimity; such a state, however, that in each grain off
thought, now taken to the extreme limit of its individual
consciousness, will simply be the incommunicable, partial,
elementary expression of a total consciousness which is common to
the whole earth; a spirit of the earth.
(ibid:40)

In the translation performance space between cultures the individual grains of
thought dance around each other until they are ground into sustainable bread
of life. However, this convergent dance is performed on transitory beaches that
are cyclically submerged by the rising tides of mainstream human thought
concerned with defining and clarifying the differences between races, cultures,
countries, ethnic groups and individuals. As Greg Dening says, 'We are bound
together by the encounters of Native and Strangers in our past'; historically we
have been involved in creating separation: 'my stories come of the crossings it
takes to make islands and of the crossings it takes to tell the stories of their
making' (Dening 2004:13). His interest lies in the crossing of beaches, beaches
that are made of grains of sand, and, as he suggests, also made of grains of
thought that make up the stories of difference.

The meeting place of cross-cultural tourism is a place where people perform
translation. It is a performance space in which ideas cross the boundaries of race
and culture, attempting to translate their different experiences and conceptions
of the land. The sands they cross today in Central Australia are not the same as
those that the first white explorers and settlers crossed when meeting the
Indigenous people of this land. The sands have shifted in the winds of time and
tide of the politics of colonialism. However, these desert sands still mark a
boundary of an island of Indigenous land within a Westernised continent.
Indigenous lands are another country within this colonised country. This
'white' Australia is itself an island in the Asian southern seas of the Pacific
Ocean, like a beached whale far from its northern ancestral clime.

The stories of the crossings of these beaches, then and now, on the coastal sands
and of the desert sands of Central Australia, are travellers' tales of meetings
between hosts and guests, natives and the strangers. Dening's words ring true
in this performance space:

There is now no native past without the Stranger, no Stranger
without the native. No one can hope to be mediator or interlocutor in
that opposition of Native and Stranger, because no one is gazing at it
untouched by the power that is in it. Nor can anyone speak just for
the one, just for the other. There is no escape from the politics of our
knowledge, but that politics is not in the past. That politics is in the
present.

(ibid:11)

This profound statement leads us into the next two chapters which discuss the
theoretical and methodological divide that this thesis attempts to bridge, the
ontology and epistemology of the two cultures that share a political past and present of opposition of Native and Stranger in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. The translation that is being attempted within that performance space is by those who have been deeply touched by the power within the opposition, wounded by it in fact, and seek to move because of that knowledge in their wounds towards a convergence of cultures that respects diversity in unity.
Chapter 3

Ontological Divide

Introduction
My inquiry is located both physically and metaphysically in the space where the Indigenous world interfaces, overlaps and converges with the non-Indigenous world. An appreciation of the different cultural beliefs about the nature of being held by both groups of people is necessary in this space. The researcher has agreed to respect the ethics and intellectual heritage of both cultures in the theoretical and practical research approach and in the delivery of findings.

In the development of an appropriate approach to bi-cultural research I have relied heavily on the work of the Indigenous scholars, Linda Tuhiwa Smith, Marcia Langton and Patrick Dobson. Their methodologies and practices respect the ontological integrity of Indigenous knowledge. On the Anangu Pitjan tjatajara lands two different ontologies and epistemologies of knowledge coexist.

Patrick Dodson is an Indigenous academic well qualified to speak on the difficulties of cross-cultural understanding in Australia. He was formerly the Chairperson of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, a Director of both the Central Australian Land Council and the Kimberley Land Council, and Commissioner on the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. He said:

I am not one to dwell on difference. I look for what unites us, not what divides us. And yet there are differences between the non-Aboriginal, the Kardiya, and the Aboriginal, the indigenous, views of the worlds. One of those is that we tend to see the world in circles while our non-Aboriginal brothers and sisters tend to see the world in straight lines.

(Dodson 1998:1)
Dodson’s summation of the differences between the ontology or worldview of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is a premise on which I base my methodology. Unfortunately, the term ‘worldview’ has too often been a term of colonial denigration, dismissing the beliefs of Indigenous peoples as unreal myth and magic, in contrast to real ‘ontology’, the science and logic of Western philosophy. To avoid this pejorative meaning, I prefer to use the term ‘ontology’ when speaking of the different philosophies of the metaphysical nature of being held by Indigenous and Western peoples. I am supported in this by the work of Eliade and Stanner who, as mentioned earlier, regarded all religion as ontology, a sophisticated metaphysics of life.

An understanding of these different ontological premises on which the two cultures, Anangu and Western, premise their theories of knowledge is vital to understanding the different epistemologies, the methods of validation of each knowledge system. These differences must be respected and understood if the interaction between the two in the cross-cultural performance space of Desert Tracks tours is to be understood.

**Ontology of the Two Laws**

The meaning of the English word ‘ontology’ comes from the Greek stem ont meaning ‘being’ and -ology from the Greek ‘logos’ referring to ‘word or reason’ (*Australian Oxford Dictionary* 1999). Ontology can be most closely translated into the Anangu language of Pitjantjatjara as Tjukurpa, the word of the Law that created all things and is the reason for the nature of being. The metaphysical aspects of the Tjukurpa that are central to Aboriginal ontology, the nature of being, are all referred to in the present continuous tense of being, knowing, actively causing creation and existing in time and space. Tjukurpa is an unfolding mystery of Creation, the meaning of which has to be earned and lived, danced, sung and tracked in country.

If Tjukurpa is Anangu ontology, what is the ontological foundation of Western cultural knowledge? Since the Western tradition separated culture from nature,
spirit from matter, religion from science, it is not possible to encapsulate Western ontology in one holistic philosophy on the nature of being.

The multi-cultural Australian society today largely claims to be secular and ascribes to a Western scientific theory of creation. However, within this society large numbers of groups believe in a religious explanation of creation. The main religious tradition that Aboriginal people have experienced since colonisation is Christianity in its many forms. Different churches established missions in remote Indigenous lands before governments intervened in Aboriginal welfare.

Poem 1: ‘Tjukurpa’ by Diana James 2002

**TJUKURPA**

In the beginning was the Word,
In the beginning was Tjukurpa;
The Word was with God, and the Word was God,
Tjukurpa iriti ngarinytja, and Tjukurpa was Sacred;
All that came to be alive, was alive with the Word,
All that came to be alive, was alive with Tjukurpa.
As it was in the beginning,
will now and ever shall be,
Tjukurpa was, is and will be, alive!

**Western Ontological Split: Religion and State**

The first mission on AP Lands was at Ernabella, when in 1937 the Presbyterian Church bought a sheep station and established a medical and ration centre in the Musgrave Ranges. This mission was unusual in that it encouraged Aboriginal people to retain their language, culture and ceremonial life. There were no forced conversions, adoption of white clothes, goods or forcing children to live in boarding schools and forget their language as happened across the border at Warburton.
Many Anangu were eager to understand the whitefella Tjukurpa, to understand their spiritual power, and out of respect for their visitors, to learn the songline of the white Creation Ancestor, Jesus Christ. Most of the elders I have worked with over the years have maintained the two belief systems as complementary rather than contradictory; in fact many who are the strongest traditional law men and women, have also been baptised and become lay church elders.

Peter Nyaningu is one such elder who, during my research on the Ngintaka Trail, described for me the way Anangu are trying to work with and understand whitefella law. They realise that Western society does not have a holistic law like Anangu Tjukurpa, so they are trying to walk hand in hand with both of our laws, that of the Church and that of the State. He drew a very clear diagram, which shows the middle path of understanding that Anangu are trying to follow (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6:** Ara: Working Together Structure (Diagram from drawing by Peter Nyaningu, at Ngarutjara 25th April 2005)

Anangu ontology of the Tjukurpa must interface daily with Western ontology in the form of various specialised knowledges: those of Western governance,
economy, science, health, education and spirituality. The epistemologies, methods of validation of knowledge, and the ethics of operation of each of these specialised knowledge traditions, differ from each other and are very different from the Anangu epistemology of validating new knowledge within the ontology of the Tjukurpa.

**Oral and Written Knowledge Cultures**

The differences between the oral and written language traditions of both cultures are a key. Anangu speak an embedded language felt through the soles of feet that dance the ancient dust of the landscape in Australia, peopled for the last 30,000 to 35,000 years (Flood 1983:30; Walsh 2005:22). Academe speaks through the disembodied language of written texts, a symbolic representation of people in varied landscapes that is thought to have originated as pictographs only five to six thousand years ago in Mesopotamia, gradually becoming the symbolic alphabet that is used in this text, less than 3,000 years ago. Alphabetic systems use symbols to represent sounds, which, unlike pictographs, make them 'the most versatile writing system available,' (*Australian Oxford Dictionary* 1999).

This alphabetical representation of the sounds of the Australian landscape has only been attempted for just over 200 years. Before it was written it was told and sung; this ancient land resounded to the language of its being. The Indigenous oral history of Australia was continuously retold in story and song and performed in dance and was passed down through countless generations before ever black lines on a white page began to render this history speechless. Nganyinytja, at an Adelaide ANZAAS conference in 1980, addressed the learned gathering of anthropologists and social scientists in this other language of history. She drew a map of Australia and pointed out her country in the northwest of South Australia. Then she covered the map with circles indicating Aboriginal sacred places all over Australia and said:
A well-known poet of the Australian landscape, Mary Gilmore, wrote of Indigenous languages as being intrinsically interconnected with this land:

**Australia**

I

There was great beauty in the names her people called her,
Shaping to patterns of sound the form of their words;
They wove to measure of speech the cry of the bird,
And the voices that rose from the reeds of the cowal.

Poem 2: (Gilmore, in Cusack et al. 1965:188)

While this appreciation of the sounds of Aboriginal languages may seem romantic, it does recognise an interrelationship with specific places and animals of Australia that the foreign sounds of the English language do not have. Language embodies country and the naming of places connects them with the ancestors of the people living on the same ground today. Loss of these names and the oral language history of landscape strip it of its kinship relationship to living peoples and renders mute their caring for country. This is why relating a specific language to a specific landscape is essential in bi-cultural research theory and method.

Tim Bonyhady and Tom Griffiths, in their study, *Words for Country*, point out that, “Landscape” and “language” are often seen as opposites. While “landscape” often evokes the natural world, “language” suggests the human’ (Bonyhady & Griffiths 2002:1). They acknowledge that the term ‘landscape’ suggests a place and a view. For there to be a view there must be people as a
view is a peculiarly human concept of space. Thus the word 'landscape' is more
descriptive of a peopled place than the terms 'natural environment' or
'wilderness', which often exempt the role of human hands in their formation.
Australia is a continent whose environments have been co-created by human
and natural forces over millennia; Indigenous hunting and gathering
techniques have patterned the surface with landscapes of great diversity.

'Landscape' then, is a term that can usefully be used in bi-cultural research as it
incorporates the viewer as an active component of the viewed, recognising the
Indigenous knowledge that the human eye, hand and footprint are visible in all
landscapes. It also places the researcher in their own view as they are also part
of the landscape they study.

Within the multi-culture of Academe there are many inter-cultural dialects of
English used by various disciplines or schools of thought and inquiry. This
chapter, therefore, is about the 'language' choices made during this research:
the academic theory and method and the Indigenous oral traditions and
practices that informed and influenced the research. This thesis will be
presented in both a written and an oral/visual DVD format to attempt to
faithfully re-present the bi-cultural languages of caring for the eco-cultural
landscapes of country. These two mediums of presentation also enable the
research findings to be examined by both Anangu and academics in their own
language.

Aural and Written Knowledge Cultures
Ilyatjari stated that the most important knowledge to be communicated cross-
culturally is 'Inma Way'; thus the teaching of the songs and dances of the
Tjukurpa of Angatja was core business for Desert Tracks (discussed in more
detail in Chapter 12). Catherine Ellis, an ethnomusicologist who worked for
years listening to, transcribing and learning Pitjantjatjara music, agreed with
Ilyatjari. She found that the Western analytic understanding of Anangu inma
was essential to understanding and appreciating the complexity of Anangu
thinking because 'music is the central repository of Aboriginal knowledge'
(Ellis 1985:83). Ellis’s detailed analysis of the structure of rhythm, tone, text and melody of Anangu music and song draws Western attention to a complex structure of knowledge and thinking that is so foreign we do not have the ears to hear or the mind frameworks to understand. We are inarticulate novices in this aural world, floundering to understand the complex interrelationship of song, country, community and law. Ellis’s description of the beauty and complexity of Anangu music reflects the complexity of Anangu knowledge:

Aboriginal music has an iridescent quality. The colour depends on which aspect holds one’s attention at any time. The structures, even if completely unaltered, can appear first in one form, then in another. The multiple sets of possible variants around one pattern increase this potential. If outsiders fail to appreciate this, they fail also to understand how a tribal performer perceives, and can be enthralled by, something so mundane, simple and primitive to these foreign listeners.

(Ellis 1985:82)

While Anangu teachers favour full immersion, listening, observation, repetition and practice, Ellis suggests that analytical study can also help an outsider to understand because Westerners respond intellectually to the written form of the complex patterns of music. They can ‘see’ if it is written.

Most tourists have difficulty in appreciating the music, song and language of Anangu because such an appreciation relies on aural skills that Western education does not develop to the extent of Anangu education. There is a common Western assumption that the complex structures of grammar, syntax, music and lyric poetry cannot be constructed orally but evolved with the written form of language. Scholars of Homer’s epic poetry argue over whether he could write, because writing is an act of creation used by modern poets, whereas oral composition is somehow inferior or primitive. Wolf, an eighteenth century German scholar, argued that if Homer was illiterate ‘he could not possibly have composed poems as long as the Iliad and Odyssey’ (Fagles &
Knox 1996:7). Shorter oral ballads must have been compiled much later into the current written epic form.

The living tradition of Anangu oral epic poetry, created and recreated by senior song men and women, is evidence that confounds this theory. Anangu songlines travel across the country through variations of cultural group and language, maintaining a distinctive melody or leitmotif that identifies the Creation Ancestors. Ellis refers to this as a ‘totemic melody’ (Ellis 1985:90). This is true of the Ngintaka Ancestor of the Songline that traverses Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara country, changing language but not melodic form.

When the Western tradition crossed over the border from oral to written tradition, at about the time of Homer, it gradually left behind the rigorous memory training of scholars, poets and bards. Memorising of poetry, texts and mathematical tables was still common in Western education fifty years ago, but it had become a rote process of simple repetition rather than a musical aural system allowing memorization of vast song sagas. The West has since become reliant on written texts to store and verify the vast amount of information generated by this society. Hence the loss of aural skills training that makes it difficult for adult visitors to Anangu lands to learn by watching, listening and doing without asking questions and wanting written referencing of knowledge.

It is interesting that Western culture idolises scientific knowledge based on experiential method, yet people find it difficult to rely on their direct experience. Scholars who are convinced that an oral culture could not construct an epic poem of the complexity of Homer’s Odyssey seek to deconstruct the whole into its parts, the original short ballads stitched together in the written record. This is classic Western intellectual tradition where analysis relies on reduction of a whole to its parts. The description and dissection, in written text, of these parts is believed to be a more thorough understanding than the observation of the whole.
All actors in the performance space of cross-cultural tourism experience cultural deafness and blindness. On tour, a Western trained doctor once asked me how an oral language could possibly have a fixed grammar, as it is not written down. He could not conceive of oral knowledge being internally consistent over time without reference to written texts. Conversely, Anangu have asked me how they can have faith in Western laws that can be changed by acts of a parliament that itself changes every three years. Anangu often experience interaction with our written Western law as a journey through a baffling maze because of dead ends and changing rules. For example, Native Title rights in one state of Australia are not the same as those across the border and the Land Rights they gained under South Australian law in 1981 are now being changed under new federal and state laws.

Anangu wonder how we trace our laws back to the Biblical ‘Ten Commandments’ when our civil laws do not conform to the spiritual values inherent in these laws. We separate civil from religious law so that we can mouth the commandment to ‘love our brother as ourselves’ while legally making sure he cannot get a share of our private property. Western ontology is not holistic. It splits to accommodate different civil and religious laws, between public good and private gain, between protecting the democratic equal rights of all citizens while ensuring unequal power and wealth to a small elite. Access to the wealth generated from exploitation of this country’s natural resources is kept ‘secret and sacred’ by the ‘secret English’ of corporate law and by government grants that Indigenous people rely on, as they cannot access bank and investment through mortgaging Native Title lands. Like Odysseus, our society spins clever yarns while cleverly dispossessioning Indigenous people of their law, their culture and the resources of their land.

**Inclusive and Exclusive Ontology and Epistemology**

Catherine Ellis’s research into the structures of Anangu music found that, like all music, it has distinctive patterns within fixed boundaries. Within Western music these patterns are symmetrical, while in traditional Western Desert
Aboriginal music the patterns are asymmetrical (see Figure 7). She argued that the structures within music ‘embed patterns of thought which operate outside music’ (Ellis 1985:85). Her analysis highlighted the ‘difference between the rigid divisive thinking shown in the structures of Western music and the flexible additive thinking shown in the structures of Pitjantjatjara music’ (Ellis 1985:85).

**Figure 7:** Comparison of Western and Anangu Musical Structure (Ellis 1985:85).

Ellis cites, as an example of these profound ontological differences, an instance of cross-cultural exchange that contrasts the Western and Anangu concepts of inclusion and exclusion of both kinship and time. The conversation is reported and her interpretation is in brackets:

*Anangu asked a Western administrator, ‘Are you our brother?’ (i.e. Can we incorporate you into our fixed system of tribal relationships since we have the capacity to expand these under special conditions to include some outsiders as a special honour?) The administrator laughed and said, ‘Of course I’m not your brother. And anyway I*
must go now as it is lunchtime'. (i.e. No, my personal interest in you
excludes your concepts of interpersonal relationships and of time: I
am here concerning your education).

(Ellis 1985:86)

The Anangu capacity to include non-Indigenous people in their kinship system
greatly facilitates cross-cultural learning by positioning the visitor in
relationship to all Anangu on the Lands, relating them to country and creating a
‘family’ who will look after them, making sure that they learn correct protocol
and behaviour. Anangu expect the administrator to acknowledge his
relationship to them and look after them by teaching them the protocols and
obligations of the Western government system. The Westerner, however, reacts
by establishing his exclusion from them and their reality; they are not his
brothers and his time and culture are more important.

Anangu ontology is ‘inclusive’ of all things living and non-living; all are created
and sustained by Tjukurpa, which governs social and religious law. Tjukurpa
recognizes the kinship relationship between all people, country, animals, plants
and things. Western ontology, by comparison, is exclusive: this is not that;
nature is not culture; all men are not brothers; civil law is not spiritual law;
matter is not spirit. Such profound ontological differences between Anangu and
Western thinking lead to different epistemologies of knowledge. Western
verification of knowledge as true requires exclusive linear categorization of all
things. By identification of difference, the whole becomes divided into smaller
and smaller boxes. Western mapping of cultural and natural landscape reveals
patterns of difference, patterns of separation by fences between this and that. In
comparison, Anangu epistemology relies on finding the interconnection of all
things within Tjukurpa, inclusive cyclical thinking. Anangu mapping of cultural
and natural landscapes reveals patterns of linking, tracks across the land.

The Ontological Divide to be Bridged
That there is an ontological divide, a gap in understanding, between these two
cultures in Australian society is as true today as it was in the first colonial
encounters. It is evident in the areas of politics, wealth, health, education and the hegemonic privileging of one knowledge system over the other, that the first peoples of Australia are disempowered, impoverished, of ill-health and poorly educated compared to the majority of the settler population. There is no mainstream arena of Australian life in which Indigenous peoples are heard unless they translate their ideas and concerns into Western bureaucratic language to be heard at the conference table and to access funding for their concerns and needs. The interested audiences who will listen to other languages are special interest groups within the mainstream, like those involved in Indigenous NRM. Even in these arenas Indigenous knowledge concepts are fitted into the structures, logic and conceptual frameworks of Western thought and practice. It is within this colonial framework of power and privileging of English language concepts and intellectual tradition that various attempts are being made to recognise, respect and incorporate diverse knowledge and practice into mainstream culture.

The space in between the two knowledges and languages is the conceptual and real space in which I have located my thesis. In this study it is the space occupied by the eco-cultural tourism business of Desert Tracks on the AP Lands of northwest South Australia. On these lands, despite years of exploration, mining, pastoralism, missionaries and government settlements, Anangu holistic ontology of land has not been lost. This interaction of many different groups of Western cultural colonisers with Anangu has created a complex cultural mixture of concepts and actions in relationship to the use of natural and cultural landscapes and resources of this performance space.

Since colonisation, a proliferation of ‘development projects’ have been designed to assist Anangu in their adaptation to a rapidly changing ecological and socio-cultural landscape. Stanner commented in 1969 on the failure of any one ‘sovereign remedy’, like better education or health services, modern sanitation, improved housing or various employment schemes to ensure Indigenous health and wellbeing (see Stanner 1969:57). The situation has not improved; in fact on
the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands it has deteriorated, with members of the last
two generations lost to petrol sniffing and now marijuana abuse is causing
psychosis (Dr Kerry Gell, pers. comm., 15 November 2005).

An understanding of the processes of development projects’ successes or
failures requires analysis of the language and cultural concepts that determine
the actions taken. While Western knowledge is privileged, in most exchanges
people are attempting to negotiate some understanding and facilitation of joint
aims to benefit Anangu health and wellbeing. However, many projects fail to be
adopted by Anangu. This study suggests that inadequate translation time and
expertise contribute to the continuing problematic within the situation.

This study of cross-cultural management of Desert Tracks is not suggesting
that two-way translation is always possible; just that the space of translation
needs to be recognised and prioritised in discussing and planning joint project
development. It does provide an in-depth case study analysis of the cross-
cultural communication, business planning and practical management of the
environmental and cultural heritage of the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara
peoples on their own lands. The language of Western land management,
natural resource management, cultural heritage protection, politics, economics,
education, health, journalism, advertising, the arts and tourism needed to be
translated both ways between English and Pitjantjatjara. This approach to two-
way translation is a useful tool in the cross-cultural performance space.

**Metaphors, Thoughts and Actions**

To explore this space it is necessary to understand the fundamental connection
between metaphor, thought and action. The work of Lakoff and Johnston (1980)
in examining the important role of metaphor in everyday life forms an essential
theoretical basis of my thesis. Through extensive linguistic research they have
found that metaphor is not just a poetic device or rhetorical flourish of language
but rather is basic to our thinking and action. They claim, 'Our ordinary
conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally
metaphorical in nature’ (Lakoff & Johnston 1980:3). Their primary basis for this assertion is through linguistic analysis of everyday language and its relationship to the way we structure the evidence of our senses. In this study I will concentrate on how awareness of the metaphors of language enables us to better understand the conceptual metaphors that determine the land and water use of different cultural groups. To negotiate understanding between divergent groups the translator must employ a flexible ‘metaphorical imagination’. This is ‘a crucial skill in creating rapport and in communicating the nature of unshared experience’ (Lakoff & Johnston 1980:231).

_Ngangatja apu wiya, ngayuku tjamu:_
This is not a rock, it is my grandfather.
This is a place where the Dreaming comes up, right up from inside the ground.
(George Tinimai, in Vachon & Toyne 1984:5)

How are non-Indigenous people to understand the conceptual metaphors of this statement? The Western concept of rock is of a thing, of a substance other than myself, definitely not related to me in terms of kinship. To gain some idea of how a concept can be metaphorical and influence action, let us examine the concept of ‘rock’ in two different cultural metaphors reflected in everyday expressions of the two languages.

In English:
‘THIS ROCK IS A HARD SUBSTANCE’:
That argument is solid as a rock.
I will build my church upon the rock of faith.
Caught between a rock and a hard place.
The business is on the rocks.
He is a rock.

As Lakoff and Johnston say, it is important to see that we do not just talk about ‘rock’ in terms of a hard substance. Rocks give our intangible ideas substance;
they stand or fall, are solid or weak. Belief and faith are strong or weak
depending upon whether they are founded on rock or flounder on rocks. We
act in terms of rocks, we are caught between them, or we fail and are smashed
onto them. People’s integrity can be rock solid or collapse under pressure.

In Pitjantjatjara:

‘THIS ROCK IS MY GRANDFATHER’:

_apu ngangatja ngayuku tjamu:_

‘This rock is my grandfather.’

That’s a really important, sacred thing that you are climbing...[the rock].
You shouldn’t climb. It’s not the proper thing.

(Kunmanara, Uluru Traditional Owner)

_apu ngaratja Ngintakaku ngalya:_

‘That cliff face is the Lizard Man’s forehead.’

_apu palatja (Wati Nyiru) kunkarangalkpa nyanganyi:_

‘That stone [the Ancestor Man Nyiru] is watching the sisters.’

Anangu are not just talking about rocks as being ‘like’ people or representing
them; they ‘are’ the person. They act towards these rocks as relatives. They
respect, sing to, care for and interact with particular rocks as sentient beings in
the landscape that can affect their lives. The rocks can watch, listen and get
angry and shake people off their backs, as is said of the Devil Dingo in Uluru
shaking off tourists (Nellie Paterson, pers. comm., 1978).

Lakoff and Johnston do not claim that metaphorical concepts explain entirely
how we structure what we do but they help us, at least in part, to understand
how we perceive what we are doing. ‘The essence of metaphor is
understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another’ (Lakoff
& Johnston1980:5). The analysis of ‘the rock’ cultural couplet of conceptual
metaphors is an example of the direct relationship of language and thoughts to
actions. These conceptions of rock as either an inanimate thing or as a living
being will result in quite different actions towards rocks in the environment.
They will be perceived and valued either as a material resource, a building
block for human industry, or as a sentient being that is part of the kin relationship web that connects humans to everything in their environment. These and other conceptual metaphors will be explored throughout my thesis as a way of understanding the worldview of people whose relationship to land use is radically different from the hegemonic Western industrial society view.

**Landcare Languages**

The relevance of ‘natural resource management’ theory and practice to this thesis is in the areas in which it informs best practice eco-cultural tourism in the desert rangelands of the AP Lands. However, the concepts and language of natural resource management need to be examined as constructs of Western conceptual metaphors embedded in our perception of nature as separate from culture and of ‘resources’ as things to be ‘managed’. The choice of language we use to describe human interaction with the land and water of our environment is an expression of our cultural conceptual metaphors. The divergent meanings that people ascribe to the terms used in the field of natural resource management (NRM) within the Western English speaking world are profuse. The phrases, ‘natural resource management’, ‘land management’, ‘landcare’ and ‘caring for country’ need to be unpacked to reveal the cultural conceptual metaphors they carry.

*Landcare Languages* is a study, edited by Valerie Brown, of the language used by the many different groups of people involved in landcare projects in Australia (Brown 1996). In linguistic terminology these ‘languages’ might be more accurately described as dialects, forms of speech particular to specific groups within society, but in terms of everyday usage the term ‘landcare languages’ is more readily understood. The groups identified in the study were farmers aged over fifty and under thirty: Aboriginal landholders, administrators, politicians, economists, environmental scientists, media and educators. All of these groups, except the Aboriginal landholders, are members of a broad cultural group I will refer to in this thesis as ‘Western’. This group, ‘Westerners’, may include cultural subgroups of immigrants whose first language is not English but in
general their cultural background has more in common with European than Indigenous heritage. These subgroups may have significantly different concepts of landcare but these are not included in the scope of this thesis as they are not an influence on the Pitjantjatjara Lands. My concern is with the challenge of translation between the languages at the interface of conflict and convergence of the dominant Western landcare languages identified in the landcare study, and the voices of Anangu expressing their concepts of land management and caring for country in Central Australia.

Throughout this thesis the landcare conversations between people who do not share the same language, culture, perceptions and values are discussed. Understanding in this arena must be negotiated. To negotiate meaning you have to first become aware of difference and then respect that divergent worldviews are coherent explanations of reality. To negotiate meaning with someone, you must accept that his or her language and concepts form a coherent system and that being able to interpret one part of the structure into your own language does not provide an understanding of the whole. I argue that you need to enter into the ontology of the ‘other’ to understand the delicate and complex linkages between their cultural concepts and practices. Metaphors are essential for negotiating meaning between different languages and cultures, both cross-culturally and inter-culturally.

**Translation in the Performance Space**

The ‘performance space of translation’ is a metaphor used throughout this thesis to encourage perception of cross-cultural Indigenous tourism as an active cross-cultural performance (see discussion of concept in Chapter 2).

The space allows for transforming developmental plots, which the audience and performers are involved in to varying degrees of awareness, during the play. The audience is not static; sometimes it will consist of the researcher, other theorists of social change, historians and scientific analysts, and at other times, from other perspectives, these people may enter the performance and the
Indigenous people and their co-workers retire from the central stage to watch the watchers.

The performance space examined in this thesis is that of the Desert Tracks tours, a space where translation across cultural intervals of difference is intentionally being engaged in by the hosts and guests on Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. This performance space is similar to Anangu inma ground, where dance and song of Tjukurpa is performed. When different clan groups gather for ceremonies the first performance is by the hosts; the Tjukurpa of their lands is sung first, then visitors perform their country. As each clan performs a dance and song stanza of the Tjukurpa that relates to their particular country, they are performing self as part of group identity to the others. The inma can be seen as a communication of deep meaning between those of the same culture, language, concepts and knowledge. Cross-culturally these performances appear colourful and intriguing, but lacking deep meaning until translation is performed.

**Convergence in the Performance Space**

Convergence of cultures across the ontological divide between Indigenous and Western beliefs, perceptions and values will take time, listening, discussion and reviewing as we travel along together.

Dickie Minyintirri, an elder Pitjantjatjara man, asks:

> What are your deep stories?
> Tell us of your Tjukurpa, your Dreaming Law.

The desire to communicate at this deep ontological level cross-culturally has been reiterated to me by many senior Anangu in different contexts and places. In July 1999, I was camped beside a fire at Cave Hill with Dickie Minyintirri and his wife, Armunta, the senior traditional owner of Walinynga (Cave Hill). Early in the morning, in the pre-dawn light, Dickie called out to me in the custom of the traditional ara, the morning news:
Hey, untaal [daughter]! We’ve been waiting to talk with you about things of deep importance. This is very important. I want a university here, at Cave Hill, just like they have in Adelaide. So when people come to learn about inma and our Law they come with respect. It is important teaching.

White people always come here and ask us about the deep stories of our land, our Tjukurpa, and we share with them. But most white people only discuss with us their little stories, stories about money, housing, hospitals. Why? They never come and tell us their deep stories, their Tjukurpa? We need a place where we can share the deep stories of our cultures, where each listens to the other with respect.

(Minyintirri, quoted in James 1999:14)

This chapter has presented a word picture of the ontological divide between the Indigenous concept of a holistic Tjukurpa and the Western traditional conception of human domination of nature. The Indigenous Australian intellectual tradition of the close relatedness of humans, animals, plants, land and waters of the earth has much to offer Western understanding of the nature of being. If believed, this ontology engenders an ethic of human responsibility to care for nature as a relative: caring for country as an expression of human kinship to country.

If these ‘idea-seeds’ can cross the ontological divide a new convergent culture may grow from the translation performance space. The possibilities for dynamic convergence between the cultures will be examined in detail in ACT II within the context of the performance space of the cultural natural landscapes of Desert Tracks tours.
Chapter 4

BI-CULTURAL METHODOLOGY

The research journey is presented in storytelling mode, because Anangu tell their history in stories and tourism is a story about journeys. This thesis is a journey of translation between two distinct cultural ‘perceptions and values’, ‘learning and understanding’ and ‘living and managing’ of the ecological and cultural landscapes of tourism. This research approach respects the Anangu theoretical approach to tourism as a method of bridging the cultural perceptual gap. Anangu say they invite non-Indigenous people into their lands to ‘open their ears, eyes and hearts’ to new perceptions of land and understanding of the cultural and spirituality values of country. This, they believe, will bring together ‘Western’ and ‘Indigenous’ ways of living in and managing country. It is their theory that this research investigates.

In undertaking cross-cultural research, the ontology of the culture being studied and the conceptual framework of the social scientist are brought into direct confrontation: there is a need to integrate the methods utilized with the culture in which the research is taking place (Price-Williams, cited in Berno 1996:377).

Epistemological Divide of the Two Knowledges
Western disciplines of knowledge have evolved epistemologies that validate the type of knowledge they seek. The Western traditional debate concerning the foundations of knowledge consists of interacting theories of rationalism, empiricism and scepticism. Anangu Tjukurpa is both rational and empirical if examined from the premise that Tjukurpa is a valid explanation of the creation of the world. For example, if one believes the ngintaka lizard is one’s ancestor then recognition of connection to this animal and all creation becomes a rationale for sustaining the cultural and natural environment that sustains this animal and oneself. This is not very different from the scientific theory that humans are descended from apes and that we need biological and cultural
diversity to survive. It is an acceptance of the premise upon which one’s ontology is based. It is the important base from which a framework of rational or empirical methodologies can be constructed.

Scepticism, the third major Western theory of knowledge, holds that any validation of knowledge cannot be justified with certainty. John Patterson, in his philosophic examination of Maori values, says ‘in trying to express and improve our understanding of the concepts and values the traditions embody, we can of course make use of all the proven intellectual tools at our disposal, including those of sceptical philosophy’ (Patterson 1992:12). Can a Western sceptical philosophical tradition, developed in the disembodied mind, be used to understand and critique the concepts and values of an embodied Indigenous tradition? I think sceptical philosophy is useful in that it supports the relativity of all knowledge systems. However, it is a reductionist approach rather than a cumulative and additive approach to knowledge, which recognises the different perspectives as complementary aspects of the whole.

The Researcher in the Cross-Cultural Performance Space
My methodology is defined in terms of the Anangu frameworks of relationship, respect and responsibility: relationship to the people and place, respect for difference and sameness in culture and practice, and responsibility to ethically fulfill reciprocal obligations to share the findings of the research.

The right to comment on another’s culture must be earned, not assumed. The researcher must learn the language: learn to sit, to listen, to look and to know the natural and cultural landscapes of the other in terms of their values and perceptions. This is not an act of imperialism or appropriation of another’s cultural worldview. It is an act of respect, which requires great intellectual humility, and the recognition of being a stranger in another’s country. If the researcher refuses to learn their hosts’ cultural parameters of knowledge, to accept their hosts’ ontological explanations for being as the basis of their actions, and does not learn to see their country through their hosts’ eyes then
the researcher is unable to engage with them in meaningful dialogue. A discussion of values and perceptions of caring for country must first take as valid the ontology of the other, understand the differences between the worldviews being expressed and then seek cross-cultural conceptual metaphors that can allow transcultural idea-seeds to grow. Cross-cultural discourse seeking trans-cultural understanding of ways in which the two laws can work together must be two-way, not just adapting Indigenous culture to Western reality but also adapting Western culture to Indigenous reality.

The Anangu custom is for the stranger to sit on the smoky side of the fire. This forces one to look away, not directly into the eyes of one’s hosts. This is one of the first rules of etiquette of face-to-face dialogue with Anangu. Exercising peripheral vision is essential for both to be aware of the other’s actions, reactions, body language and honesty of exchange within the space.

Usually, in the Humanities, the researcher is expected to join in with the activities of others while maintaining a critical observer status. This is defended as the social equivalence of a scientific objective perception of reality. It is postulated on the premise that observers external to the situation can gain ‘better’ more quantifiable and comparable measures of society. The second major assumption is that those within the social activity cannot really understand it because they are gazing from the inside out. The outside-in gaze is favored in the Western academic tradition as being more real than inside-out experienced reality. This view is also a practical reality for most researchers who are non-indigenous to the society they study and therefore cannot claim an insider view. However, being an outsider does not ensure an objective view.

The position of the researcher in cultural landscapes can never be neutral. The act of observation alters what is observed in both the natural and social sciences. Given this constraint, it seems necessary to state the background and involvement of the researcher. In my case, my academic training is in anthropology and bilingual education. I have been employed by several
Aboriginal communities in the Central Desert for the last thirty years in various capacities including anthropological clearances for mineral exploration and mapping, community business management, bilingual education, homeland support, land rights, adult education, tourism and as an ‘interpreter’ between the languages of Pitjantjatjara and English. During this time I have had many patient and wise teachers of Pitjantjatjara language and culture. My position has been that of an active participant in many situations with Nganyinytja: in establishing the regional Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women’s Council (NPYWC); as joint partner in establishing the Desert Tracks tours; as translator of Nganyinytja’s autobiography and co-founder of the Spirit of the Land Foundation. There seems no way to avoid my observer bias other than to accept that it is present and, as much as possible, to acknowledge the observer’s active participation in the ‘performances’.

Research Ethics and Protocols
The Indigenous people of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands have established the ethical guidelines for this research. The researcher is obligated to behave within the ethics of reciprocity that govern the sharing of knowledge, resources and obligation to family and land, and to accept restrictions to knowledge shared due to gender and age. All written or recorded material must be checked with the informant, and if the information is the cultural property of a wider group it must be checked with elders or the Regional Council. The individual or community, prior to publication, should review any material, including film or photographs to be published. Any secret, sacred or restricted information must be removed at their request.

1. Public and Secret Sacred Knowledge
   The Socratic tradition central to European philosophical tradition celebrates open public debate. This, at first, would seem to be antithetical to an Indigenous tradition with sacred Law that is only open to initiates. There is a real reluctance by elders to share any more knowledge than is seen to be directly appropriate to the situation. The recipient must be of the appropriate age and gender to be told certain knowledge and must be