



# MUSEUM TRANSACTIONS

## Negotiating Knowledges, Governing Cultures

» TONY BENNETT

I expect that most readers of *Humanities Australia* will be familiar with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) *Map of Indigenous Australia* (fig. 1). Some, particularly the Academy's anthropologists, will be acquainted with it professionally. But most, I suspect, will have come across it in one or another of the more general contexts in which it has been circulated. These include museums. It forms a part of the visitor's orientation to the First Australians: Gallery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders at the National Museum of Australia, and, since it was first made available in 1996, has performed a similar function in relation to exhibitions of the cultures of Indigenous Australians at many Australian museums.

The role the map plays in these contexts is a complex one shaped by the ways in which it negotiates the relations between the different knowledges that it brings together. These include, most obviously, the Indigenous knowledges of the relations between language, culture and country that the map foregrounds. However, in giving these knowledges a particular cartographic form, the map also testifies to the influence of the anthropological concept of culture areas. Associated originally with the Boasian school of American anthropology, this concept and the accompanying practice of mapping Indigenous cultures to territory has — since its introduction to Australia via Norman

Tindale — played a significant role in re-mediating the relations between anthropological and Indigenous knowledge practices.

In the AIATSIS map, finally, these relations are set within a nationalist cartography. While territorially distinct from one another, the different 'language, social or nation groups' the map presents are located within what is unmistakably a map of Australia. The map, in this respect, is an instance of what James Scott has called 'seeing like a state'.<sup>1</sup> It is from this perspective — the gaze from above of a nationalist cartography — that the map orchestrates the relations between the ways of 'seeing like an Indigenous Australian' and 'seeing like an anthropologist' that it brings together.

This is not surprising. AIATSIS is a state institution. So are the National Museum of Australia and the other museums in which the AIATSIS map, or ones like it, cue in the visitor to the curatorial logics underlying exhibitions of Indigenous materials which anchor culture to country.<sup>2</sup> My interest in such maps, then, is with the role they play in shaping the transactions between state and citizens that are enacted across the relations between museums, their visitors and other constituencies. As such, they provide a productive point of entry into the broader questions I want to pursue: the means by which the civic and other transactions that museums effect are shaped by the distinctive

(above)  
Detail, fig. 3,  
p. 25, An  
unidentified  
Māori speaker is  
recorded at the  
Dominion Museum,  
Wellington.

orderings of the relations between the knowledges that they bring together.

The arrangement of *Encounters*, the exhibition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander materials on loan from the British Museum that was held at the National Museum of Australia in late 2015 and early 2016, is a good example of what I have in mind here.<sup>3</sup> The exhibition was the product of a complex set of relations: between two national institutions; between Indigenous and anthropology curators (with some combining both statuses); and between all of these and the Indigenous source communities represented on the exhibition's Indigenous Reference Group. The main organising principle of *Encounters* presented the exhibits as 'stolen objects' which temporarily recovered their true meanings — ones they had lost on the varied routes through which they had reached the British Museum — in being symbolically returned to the source communities from which they had originally

been taken.<sup>4</sup> This was effected, in the lay-out of the exhibition, by locating the objects in the context of these source communities which were, in their turn, presented as territorially-defined cultures mapped on to different parts of Australia. All, that is, except for a miscellany of the British Museum's objects which, since no source community could be found for them, were assigned to a territorially unmarked aisle like lost souls in search of the meanings that eluded them.

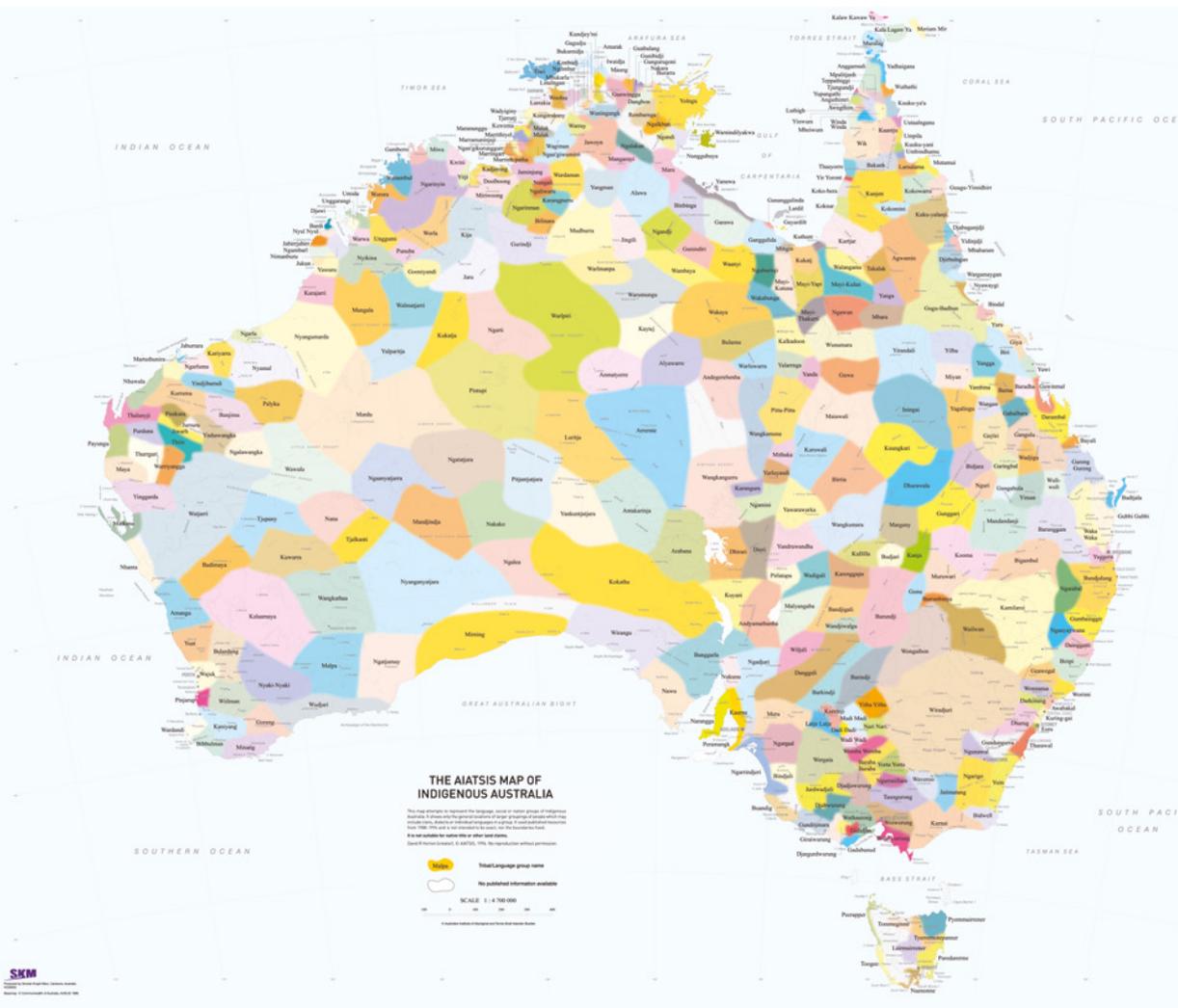
The result was a nuanced set of transactions through which a state agency engaged with its visitors, insofar as these were also citizens, in a range of different registers. Non-indigenous visitors were addressed as individualised citizens but in ways that invited and enabled a reconceptualisation of their relations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in according these both shared and differentiated Indigenous identities and cultures. And

(left)

Fig. 1. AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia

This map attempts to represent the language, social or nation groups of Aboriginal Australia. It shows only the general locations of larger groupings of people which may include clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. It used published resources from 1988–1994 and is not intended to be exact, nor the boundaries fixed. It is not suitable for native title or other land claims.

IMAGE: DAVID R. HORTON (CREATOR), © AIATSIS, 1996. NO REPRODUCTION WITHOUT PERMISSION. TO PURCHASE A PRINT VERSION VISIT: <WWW.AIATSIS.ASHOP.COM.AU>



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were engaged with in three registers: as members of differentiated source communities identified in the exhibition, as the collectivity of Indigenous Australians, and as Australian citizens. This all added up to the functioning of the museum as a state-ordered 'transactional zone' whose role in the governance of the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and their cultures differed sharply from that performed by the evolutionary principles of display which — with some exceptions — remained the most influential frameworks for presenting Indigenous materials in anthropology exhibits until the 1960s.

I'll come back to this point shortly. But I need first to take a couple of detours in order to provide both a theoretical and historical setting for the above remarks, as well as an

de l'Homme, and the American Museum of Natural History, for example); and the social consequences of those forms of ordering when translated into programs for governing both colonised and metropolitan populations, and the relations between them.

I look first at how the relations between the processes of collecting, ordering and governing informed the interactions between museums and Indigenous populations in Australia, New Zealand and the USA. I do so with a view, first, to identifying the sharply contrasting transactional realities these produced, and second, by tracing some of the interactions between them, to throwing some light on the historical processes through which the current set of relations between mapping cultures represented by the AIATSIS map and Australian museum practices have come into being.

THE ROLE THE MAP PLAYS IN THESE CONTEXTS IS A COMPLEX ONE SHAPED BY THE WAYS IN WHICH IT NEGOTIATES THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT KNOWLEDGES THAT IT BRINGS TOGETHER.

acknowledgement of the collective research on which they draw. The concept of museums as 'transactional zones' is, in truth, something of a shotgun marriage between, on the one hand, Michel Foucault's conception of the role played by what he calls transactional realities in processes of social governance,<sup>5</sup> and James Clifford's conception of museums as 'contact zones' that have played shifting roles in colonial histories in mediating the relations between Western and Indigenous knowledges.<sup>6</sup> It's the first of these concepts that I want to foreground here by presenting some aspects of the role it played in the Australian Research Council Discovery project *Museum, Field, Metropolis, Colony: Practices of Social Governance*.<sup>7</sup>

This project focused on the relationships between the processes of collecting associated with early-to-mid twentieth-century practices of anthropological fieldwork in Australia, Papua, New Zealand, France, the USA, and Britain; the processes of ordering to which the materials gathered from fieldwork sites were subjected on their return to the centres of calculation from which the fieldwork expeditions originated (the National Museum of Victoria, the Musée

Our interests in Australia focused on the relations between the fieldwork practices of Baldwin Spencer and Francis Gillen, Spencer's museum practices as director of the National Museum of Victoria, and his role in shaping the conceptual underpinnings for the new forms of racial administration that characterised the governance of Aborigines in early post-Federation Australia. Spencer is, of course, a complex and ambiguous figure whose equivocations are those of a Mancunian liberal, schooled in the traditions of John Stuart Mill, struggling to reconcile those traditions with the realities of the colonial frontier which provided the conditions that supported his practice and into which, in turn, his work fed.<sup>8</sup> Here, however, apart from noting the dependency of Spencer's and Gillen's fieldwork on the (relative) shift from the killings of the frontier wars to the more regularised forms of biopolitical governance that characterised the post-Federation establishment of a state-regulated 'Aboriginal domain',<sup>9</sup> I shall leave these complexities to one side to highlight two aspects of his work that bear on my current concerns.

The first concerns the consequences of his focus on the tribe as a major unit of analysis. This displaced the significance that had earlier been accorded to the analysis of supra-tribal nations, conceived not as sovereign political entities but rather in accordance with a biblical conception of nations as groups of common descent, united by language and custom.<sup>10</sup> Whereas Alfred William Howitt and his contemporaries had sought, well into the 1880s, to map the relations between different Aboriginal nations in this sense, the attention that Spencer accorded to the tribe as his primary (though not exclusive) unit of analysis formed part of a new hierarchical distinction between societies accorded the status of nations and those that were tribally organised. This distinction was, in turn, mapped onto a racially organised demarcation of the boundaries between the civilised and the uncivilised. In place of the wider self-identifications that Aborigines had often testified to in earlier studies, it substituted the tribe as a unit of colonial ordering that served to nullify cultural identities operating at a meta-tribal level, denying them any political or administrative significance. It also substituted a racial conception of Aboriginality as the common factor which cohered the customs and practices of different tribes into a single whole, thereby producing the race as such as the new 'transactional reality' through which government was to act on Aborigines.

Spencer's museum displays played a significant role in the public circulation of the conception of an unbridgeable racial divide — or, more accurately, a divide that could be bridged only by changing the racial constitution of Aborigines. They did so by bringing together Indigenous materials collected from different tribes and arranging them as parts of self-enclosed evolutionary sequences which, while testifying to a capacity for development in the past, were depicted as having come to a close in the present. If this required a program of technological uplift, it also called for a program of bio-cultural 'up-lift' or 'whitening' through which subsequent generations of Aborigines would acquire the capacities that would permit their absorption into the national population.

This racialised conception of time proved to be the key transactional reality through which

the governmental mediation of the relations between white and Aboriginal Australia was effected post-Federation. It is in this regard significant that Spencer's influential guide to the principles informing his exhibition of the National Museum of Victoria's Aboriginal collections was first published in 1901,<sup>11</sup> marking a key moment in the development of the links between ethnography and the new nation state through which policies designed to speed up the movement of Aborigines either through or out of development time became increasingly influential. This was most manifest in the development of new sets of spatial arrangements which, deracinating Aborigines by severing their links to country, also differentiated them in terms of their racial constitution. Assigning what were described as 'wild', 'full-blood' natives to reserves, thereby disconnecting them from the developmental time of civilisation and the time of the nation state, also separated them from the 'half-castes' whose genetic inheritance offered a foothold in developmental time which could be cultivated via continued selective breeding and education in specially designed training institutions.<sup>12</sup>

How, then, did the shift from this set of relations between the processes of collecting, ordering and governing and those associated with the AIATSIS map occur? We now know well enough that these processes have always been affected by Indigenous agency which, exercised in varying degrees at different points in the relations between fieldwork encounters and the arrangement of museum displays, has sought to influence what has been acquired through such relations of (unequal) exchange and what interpretations might be placed on it.<sup>13</sup> However, mapping techniques derived from the cultural area concept played a significant role in reconfiguring the ground across which the relations between Indigenous populations and anthropologists took place. And not just in Australia. Indeed, it was in New Zealand that such relations were initially most strongly and distinctively developed.

The key figure here from the American side was Clark Wissler. Appointed as the Curator of Anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in 1907, shortly after Franz Boas's resignation from the museum,



Wissler played a significant role in elaborating the anthropological concept of cultures as formally organised ways of life — the so-called ‘culture concept’ — beyond Boas’s initial, but somewhat parsimonious, formulations on the subject,<sup>14</sup> and in developing the mapping techniques that gave cartographic expression to the related concept of cultural areas (fig. 2). Wissler was also instrumental, through his relations with the Rockefeller Foundation, in developing connections between American anthropology and anthropological museums projects in Oceania. His influence on the work of Henry Devenish Skinner in New Zealand and his collaborations with Tindale in Australia were particularly important in this regard.

As is always the case, however, when concepts and methods travel they change as they are adapted to the contexts in which they are transplanted. In the New Zealand context, the concept of the culture area was translated into programs for recovering ‘the Maori as he was’,<sup>15</sup> a concept which was, however, interpreted differently and put to different uses by Pakeha and Māori anthropologists. Although having a longer history, the concept of ‘the Maori as he was’ was brought into contact with the cultural area tradition through the work of Skinner who had contacts not just with Wissler but with many members of the Boasian school of American anthropology: Alfred Kroeber, Edward Sapir, and Margaret Mead for example. It had been a defining feature of the Boasian tradition to extend the remit of fieldwork beyond the collection of artefacts to gather myths, songs, and stories both for their own sakes and as clues to the meanings that artefacts had in the context of regionally specific ways of life. As a curator at the Otago Museum, however, Skinner relied mainly on the techniques of material culture studies to define the boundaries of culture areas which he interpreted as geographical regions whose inhabitants showed a strong family resemblance to one another in terms of their way of life.<sup>16</sup> Strongly committed to a practical function for anthropology, the regionally articulated evidence of ‘the Maori as he was’ that was provided by the mute remnants of material culture was to provide the conceptual grid — the transactional reality — through which the Pakeha governance of Māori lives was to take place.



The political career of the concept of ‘the Maori as he was’ was different on the North Island where two different traditions were brought into contact with one another in the adjoining Maori Ethnology Gallery and the Maori Hall that were opened in Wellington’s Dominion Museum in 1936. The first of these sang mainly to the tune of Elsdon Best’s work. A Pakeha anthropologist, Best had led fieldwork expeditions from the Dominion Museum to sites — along the Whanganui River, for example — selected in view of their limited exposure to European culture and therefore viewed as likely to provide the most authentic evidence of a pre-contact Māori culture. Differing from Skinner in working closely with Māori informants, Best’s fieldwork and the influential study to which it gave rise,<sup>17</sup> constructed the Māori past as an idealised realm sealed off from the present. If the Maori Ethnology gallery echoed this conception, the Maori Hall — and a series of events which accompanied its opening — articulated a different interpretation of ‘the Maori as he was’, one which reflected the input of the Māori anthropologist Peter Buck and of Sir Apirana Ngata, a Māori member of Parliament, head of the Department of Native Affairs, and a member of the Board of Maori Ethnological Research. The interpretation of the Hall and the performances that accompanied its opening prepared the way for subsequent presentations of ‘the Maori as he was’ that were annexed to programs for the revival and creative development of Māori traditions. Recordings of Māori songs, for example, retrieved and preserved traditional Māori art forms to serve as a platform for social and cultural development programs in the present (fig. 3). In thus articulating a vision of ‘the Māori as he is’ — as a distinctive and dynamic strand of the national story — such presentations of Māori culture connected that



(above)

Fig. 3. An unidentified Māori speaker is recorded at the Dominion Museum, Wellington on a wax cylinder by (from left): Johannes Andersen, Te Raumoia Balneavis, and Elsdon Best.

IMAGE: JAMES MACDONALD, O.011963, WITH PERMISSION FROM THE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND TE PAPA TONGAREWA, WELLINGTON.

vision to claims for autonomous economic, social and cultural development that helped to shape post-war programs for Māori self determination.

There were not any equivalently developed forms of Indigenous engagement with Australian museums in the inter-war period. The extent to which Aboriginal activists subscribed to an understanding of Aboriginal culture as a distinctively patterned way of life is less clear. While the Australian Aborigines League was committed to preserving aspects of traditional art and ceremony, this did not, in Russell McGregor's estimation, amount to a commitment to maintaining and fostering a distinctive holistic integrity for Aboriginal culture understood as 'a vital and viable way of life'.<sup>18</sup> However, Heather Goodall interprets this differently, suggesting that Aboriginal activists hesitated to press public claims to the strength and vitality of traditional culture lest this might seem to endorse the role that anthropological expertise played in validating the special administrative controls whose power they were contesting.<sup>19</sup>

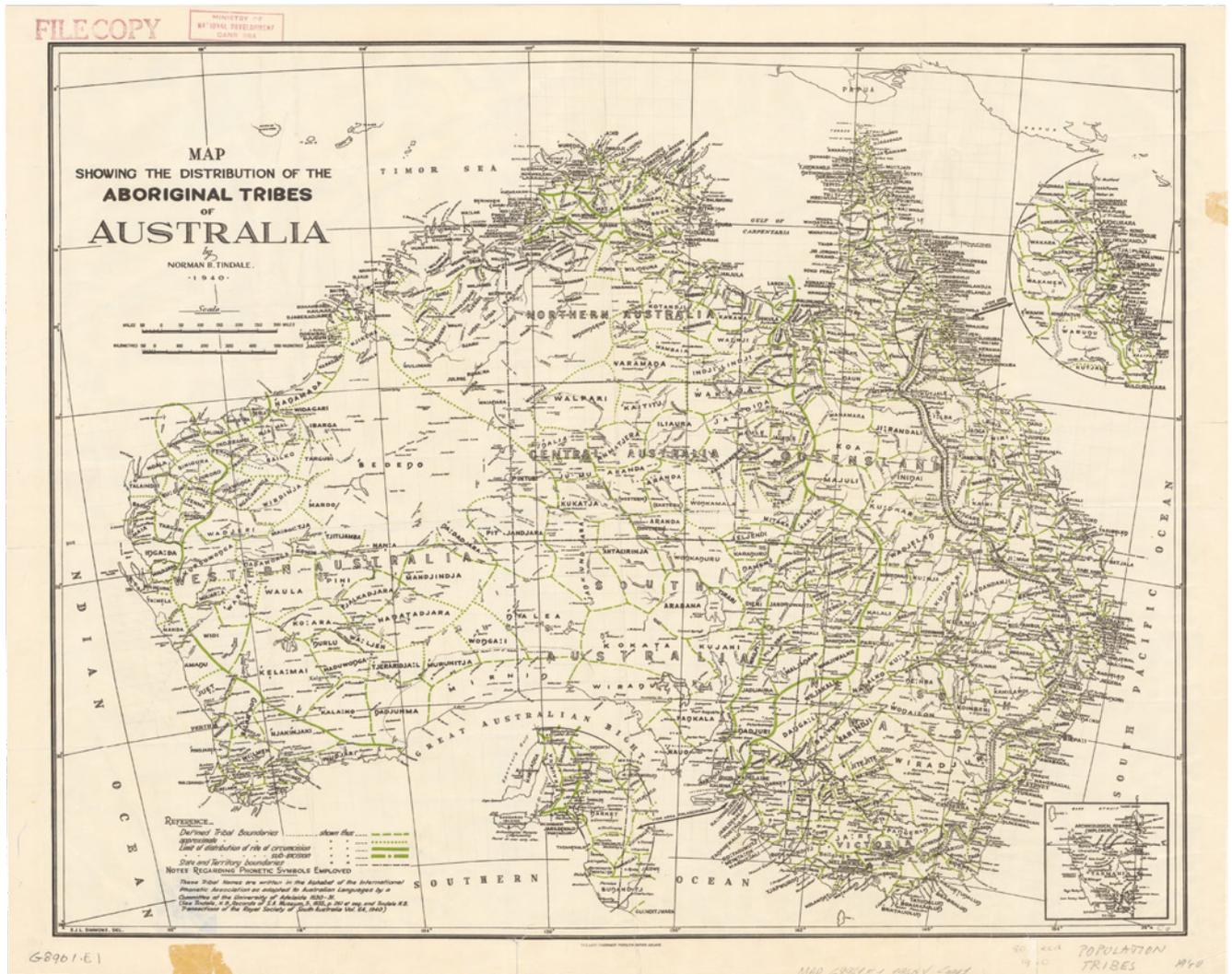
However, the inter-war years did witness the beginnings of a move away from the racial paradigm that had followed in the wake of Spencer's work and toward the territorial differentiation of Aboriginal cultures. Norman Tindale from the South Australia Museum was a key figure here. Personally acquainted with Wissler through their collaboration in projects funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, Tindale, through his mapping projects, was influential in translating the culture area concept into the Australian context. Starting this work in the early 1930s, Tindale published the first version of his *Map Showing the Distribution of the Aboriginal Tribes of Australia* in 1940 (fig. 4).<sup>20</sup> This went through a number of iterations en route to the publication of its final version in 1974. Just as much as in New Zealand, however, the culture area concept and the broader Boasian culture concept underlying it were given a distinctive inflection upon their arrival in Australia.<sup>21</sup> While Tindale's first map connected differentiated Aboriginal groups to different regions, the language he used was still that of tribes. And his conception of the cultures that might be ascribed to such groups drew more on Edward Burnett Tylor's conception of culture as

an aggregated set of traits rather than, as in the Boasian conception, amounting to a formally patterned whole expressive of a distinctive way of life.<sup>22</sup> He was also as much concerned to map physiological characteristics alongside laws, languages, and customs in accordance with the racial underpinnings of the biomedical models of Indigenous governance that characterised the inter-war years.<sup>23</sup>

For all that, Tindale's map proved to be a game changer, particularly when interpreted in the light of post-war tendencies in anthropology represented, for example, by Catherine and Ronald Berndt, who registered a fuller appreciation of the significance of the formal aspects of the culture concept.<sup>24</sup> In also accruing the more political inflections associated with Indigenous concepts of country, its significance as a step along the road to the *AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia* is clear.

As such, the work performed by the map has been governmental in the Foucaultian sense that its ordering principle of a national framing of the country/culture couplet — the site of a provisional historical mutuality between Indigenous knowledges and anthropology — functions as the transactional reality through which key aspects of the relations between the state and Indigenous Australia are mediated. This is not without its contradictions, some of which surfaced during the *Encounters* exhibition,<sup>25</sup> which at root have to do with the anthropology/Indigenous knowledge interface which remains inescapably tangled with ongoing colonial relations in the very process of seeking to break with them.

I want now, however, to look at some other aspects of the governmental histories of the culture concept. For these were not restricted to the roles it played in producing new interfaces between settler and Indigenous populations in New Zealand and Australia. The concept also had a significant, albeit surprising political career in the United States. Surprising in that, while the concept was developed in anthropological fieldwork studies conducted among Native Americans — originally Boas's studies among the Kwakiutl but later extended to include the Plains Indians studied by Wissler as well as Alfred Kroeber's work among the Arapaho — it found its main fields of practical



application in providing a set of coordinates for mediating the relations between white nativist Americans and America's growing immigrant populations in the mid-twentieth century. The Boasian school's conception of the relations between the formal properties of the culture concept, cultural areas, and processes of cultural diffusion was particularly important in this respect. The understanding of a culture as comprising not just a list of traits but as being governed by a formal grammar — its 'pattern', in Ruth Benedict's influential formulation<sup>26</sup> — informed the role accorded it of regulating the relations of exchange between the cultures of peoples in movement and the cultures of the areas they moved to. In being cut to the cloth of assimilationist policies these qualities of the concept lent force to the demand that immigrants must be prepared to jettison those aspects of their culture that could not be reconciled with the pattern of the culture into

which they had migrated. Margaret Mead's conception of the 'third generation' through which, after initially clinging to their European ancestry, immigrants eventually jettison it piece-by-piece so as to become, by the third generation, thoroughly adapted to 'an "American way of life"' is an economical summary of this logic.<sup>27</sup> This is especially so in the respects in which it left Native Americans and African Americans — whose management continued to be conceived in biopolitical rather than cultural terms — to one side of such assimilationist logics.<sup>28</sup>

The Boasian conception of culture was not, of course, the only concept of culture to be developed in the relations between the fieldwork practices of anthropology and museums during the inter-war years. Paul Rivet, Director of the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro from 1928 to 1937, when he became Director of the newly established Musée de l'Homme, was also noted for his role in the development of a conception

(above)

Fig. 4. 'Map Showing the Distribution of the Aboriginal Tribes of Australia', Norman Tindale, 1940.

IMAGE: WITH PERMISSION FROM THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA, OBJ-230054338 <HTTP://NLA.GOV.AU/NLA>

of culture which, while sharing with Boas's culture concept the limitation of never entirely pulling free from the assumptions of biological race categories, nonetheless moved significantly in the direction of the more relativist, non-hierarchical characteristics that were claimed for it by Claude Levi-Strauss and others in laying the conceptual foundations for UNESCO's post war policies of cultural diversity. Rivet's conception, however, differed from Boas's in its more environmentalist characteristics.<sup>29</sup> For Boas and his followers culture was not an expression of an essential set of connections between a people, a place, and a way of life but rather a creative and pliable articulation of the relations between diverse traits which, in being brought together from different origins, acquired a formal unity and cohesion from the creative capacities of the people occupying the particular territory where those traits congregated at a particular historical moment.<sup>30</sup>

While less flexible in this regard, Rivet's conception of territorial cultures marked by high levels of formal integrity and coordination, played a key role in the organisation and circulation of regionalised systems for the governance of cultures and identities in Greater France in the inter-war period and, indeed, through into the Vichy period. The circulation of ideas and practices between the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and two other institutions — the Musée de L'Homme (Hanoi) and the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires — contributed significantly to these developments.<sup>31</sup> The conception of regional homelands (*petites patries*) that the ethnographic projects and collections of the Musée de l'Homme (Hanoi) promoted as a means of managing differentiated regional identities in French Indo-China owed a good deal to the status of *petits pays* accorded to France's provincial regions. In its turn, the conception of *petites patries* fed back into the programs of collecting, ordering, and governing France's regional cultures that distinguished the practices of the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires under the directorship of Georges Henri Rivière. These practices contributed to the development of the conceptual foundations for the regional cultural ecologies associated with the later development of France's eco museums

as *in situ* forms for the governance of regional cultures and identities.<sup>32</sup>

Albeit via different routes, these inter-war developments in American and French anthropology also connected with the British project of Mass Observation (M-O) and, in doing so, mingled with another set of connections between anthropological fieldwork and museums: those derived from M-O's chief founding figure, Tom Harrisson. Schooled in the fieldwork tradition pioneered by Alfred Cort Haddon's Torres Strait Island Expedition of 1888–1889, and following the model of Haddon's subsequent role in initiating the Ethnographic Survey of the United Kingdom, Harrisson's conception of M-O translated Haddon's conception of an 'anthropology at home' into 'an anthropology of ourselves.' This was, however, envisaged on a larger and more contemporary scale in that the selves at issue, while including salvage conceptions of Britain's rural folk that had informed the Ethnographic Survey, went beyond these to include the contemporary ways of life characteristic of modern industrial and urban Britain.

While it was not a museum, M-O was conceived as an enterprise of collecting, ordering and governing fashioned on a museum model. Harrisson's co-founder, Charles Madge, called it a 'collaborative museum.'<sup>33</sup> Collecting the views and practices of ordinary Britons through a mix of fieldwork and survey methods and ordering these via the work of analyses conducted on them in the centres of collection where they were brought together, M-O mobilised the results through a variety of mechanisms with a view to intervening in and altering what they viewed as the remote and out-dated forms of gentrified rule that characterised the relations between rulers and ruled in inter-war Britain.<sup>34</sup> In the process, particularly during the wartime years when it was integrated into the Ministry of Information and when, in the persons of Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, there was considerable trans-Atlantic traffic regarding the role that anthropology might play in the management of wartime populations,<sup>35</sup> M-O fashioned, in its conceptions of morale and atmosphere, a distinctive set of transactional realities through which governing authorities of various kinds sought to connect with, mould and

transform the behaviours of both soldiers and citizens at war.<sup>36</sup>

So much, then, by way of summarising the implications of the approaches developed in the *Museums, Field, Colony, Metropolis* project for our understanding of how, as sites organising complex transactions between different knowledges, cultures and publics, museums have contributed to the formation and transformation of the mediating systems of thought through which processes of governance are enacted across the relations between varied populations. The research also had a more personal pay-off for me in view of the light it has thrown on the concept of culture as a way of life which, like many working in the field of cultural studies, I first became acquainted with in the 1960s via the work of Raymond Williams long before I developed an interest in the histories of museums and anthropology. Like most of my contemporaries, however, I paid little attention to the genealogy of this concept. And Williams didn't help much. While acknowledging his debt to Ruth Benedict's concept of the pattern of a culture for his own concept of structures of feeling,<sup>37</sup> and while it was clear that his acquaintance with the Boasian tradition was dependent partly on T.S. Eliot whose *Notes Toward the Definition of Culture* drew heavily on the Boasian culture concept, and particularly its territorial aspects,<sup>38</sup> Williams tended to run Tylor's and Boas's definitions of culture together. And, of course, his work was best known for the stress it placed on working-class ways of life and for his insistence that the complexity of the structures of feeling that these manifested merited attention on a par with that normally reserved for canonised works of high culture.

It came, then, as something of a surprise when, after having immersed myself in the texts of the Boasians, I re-read one of the formative texts of cultural studies, Williams' essay 'Culture is Ordinary'. For, while Williams' conception of the ordinariness of culture was most usually associated with his valorisation of working-class culture, the scene that Williams first evokes is defined territorially. 'To grow up in that country,' he says, 'was to see the shape of a culture, and its modes of change.'<sup>39</sup> The country in question was the Border Country between Wales and England, and it is this culture as a whole that Williams

describes before coming to its class partitioning. In the end, though, it is the combination of class and region, of working-classness and Welshness, that Williams brings together in his mapping of culture to country. This is, then, one more moment in the history of the culture concept, one which, similar in some ways to the conception of 'the Maori as he was', inflected its governmental logic in new directions by attaching it to the aspirations of subordinate social movements. One episode, then, in a varied political career which owes a good deal to the extraordinary plasticity of the concept and the scope this has afforded for it be differently deployed in different contexts.<sup>40</sup> ¶



TONY BENNETT FAHA is Research Professor in Social and Cultural Theory in Western Sydney University's Institute for Culture and Society, and a Fellow of the UK Academy of the Social Sciences. His recent books include *Making Culture, Changing Society* (2013), and *Museums, Power, Knowledge* (2018). He is also co-author of *Culture, Class, Distinction* (2009) and *Collecting, Organising, Governing: Anthropology, Museums and Liberal Government* (2017). He was Director of the Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy, and Co-Director of the UK's ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change. He currently convenes two Australian Research Council-funded projects: Australian Cultural Fields: National and Transnational Dynamics, and Assembling and Governing Habits.

1. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998).
2. This theme was also a strong aspect of the original organisation of the Bunjilaka gallery at Melbourne Museum. See Museum of Victoria, *Bunjilaka: The Aboriginal Centre at Melbourne Museum* (Melbourne: Museum of Victoria, 2000).
3. I draw here on a fuller discussion of this exhibition. See Tony Bennett, *Museums, Power, Knowledge* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 275–88.
4. The exhibition catalogue offers a comprehensive summary of the principles informing the arrangement of the exhibition. See National Museum of Australia, *Encounters: Revealing Stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander*

- Objects from the British Museum* (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2015).
5. Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*, ed. by Michel Sennelart and trans. by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), p. 297.
  6. James Clifford, 'Museums as Contact Zones', in *Clifford Routes: Travel and Translation in the late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 188–219.
  7. Award Number DP110103776. The grant was awarded to Tony Bennett (convenor) and Fiona Cameron at the Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University, as Chief Investigators, and to Nélia Dias (University of Lisbon), Rodney Harrison (University College London), Ira Jacknis (University of California, Berkeley), and Conal McCarthy (Victoria University of Wellington) as International Partner Investigators. Ben Dibley was the Research Fellow appointed to the project. I have, with their agreement, drawn freely on both the collective contributions of these co-researchers as well as on their contributions to the issues focused on Australia (Dibley and Harrison), New Zealand (Cameron and McCarthy), the US (Jacknis), France (Dias), and Mass Observation (Harrison). I am in addition especially grateful to Conal McCarthy for his assistance in relation to the Figures included in this article. The findings of this project are presented in Tony Bennett, Fiona Cameron, Nélia Dias, Ben Dibley, Rodney Harrison, Ira Jacknis, and Conal McCarthy, *Collecting, Ordering Governing: Anthropology, Museums, and Liberal Government* (Durham, N.C. and London: Duke University Press, 2017).
  8. Differing assessments of Spencer in these regards are most sharply posed by the contrast between Patrick Wolfe's and Howard Morphy's approaches. See Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999) and Howard Morphy 'Empiricism to Metaphysics: In Defence of the Concept of the Dreamtime', in *Prehistory to Politics: John Mulvaney, the Humanities and the Public Intellectual*, ed. by Tim Bonyhady and Tom Griffiths (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1999), pp. 163–189. I have addressed the relations between these in Tony Bennett, *Making Culture, Changing Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 185–86.
  9. On the concept of the 'Aboriginal domain' see Tim Rowse, *Remote Possibilities: The Aboriginal Domain and the Administrative Imagination* (Casuarina: North Australian Research Unit, Australian National University, 1992). For the application of this concept to the role played by Barrow Greek Station in Spencer and Gillen's fieldwork, see Bennett et al, *Collecting, Ordering, Governing*, pp. 31–35.
  10. I draw here on Kevin Blackburn, 'Mapping Aboriginal Nations: The "Nation" Concept of Late-Nineteenth Century Anthropologists in Australia', *Aboriginal History*, 26 (2002), 131–58, and on my earlier discussion of these questions in Tony Bennett, 'Making and Mobilising Worlds: Assembling and Governing the Other' in *Material Powers: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn*, ed. by Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 190–208.
  11. Baldwin Spencer, *Guide to the Australian Ethnographical Collection in the National Museum of Victoria* (Melbourne: D.W. Paterson, 1922).
  12. The references are to the terms used by Spencer in his proposals for the spatial zoning of the Aborigines of the Northern Territory. See Baldwin Spencer, 'Preliminary Report on the Aborigines of the Northern Territory', *Bulletin of the Northern Territory*, 7 (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1913).
  13. On the role of Indigenous agency in the processes through which museum collections have been acquired, see *Reassembling the Collection: Ethnographic Museums and Indigenous Agency*, ed. by Rodney Harrison, Sarah Byrne and Anne Clarke (Sante Fe: SAR Press, 2013). See also, with specific reference to Australia, Philip Jones, *Ochre and Rust: Artefacts and Encounters on Australian Frontiers* (Kent Town, S.A.: Wakefield Press, 2007).
  14. See Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1923).
  15. Here and elsewhere, the macron that is used in contemporary renderings of "Maori" is omitted as historically anachronistic.
  16. Henry D. Skinner, 'Culture Areas in New Zealand', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 30.118 (1921), 71–78.
  17. Elsdon Best, *The Maori As He Was: A Brief Account of Maori Life As it Was in pre-European Days*, New Zealand Board of Science and Art: Manual No. 4 (Wellington: Government Printer, 1924).
  18. Russell McGregor, *Indifferent Inclusion: Aboriginal People and the Australian Nation* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2011), p. 250.
  19. Heather Goodall, *Invasion to Embassy: Land in Aboriginal Politics in New South Wales, 1770–1972*. (Sydney: University of Sydney Press, 2008), pp. 280–81.
  20. This first version was produced in the context of Tindale's involvement in the Harvard-Adelaide Universities Expedition of 1938–39. For an analysis of the broader relations between American and Australian anthropology in this period, see Geoffrey Gray, *A Cautious Silence: The Politics of Australian Anthropology* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007), pp. 49–61.

21. See on this Paul Monaghan, *Laying Down the Country: Norman B. Tindale and the Linguistic Construction of the North-West of South Australia*. Ph.D thesis, Discipline of Linguistics, School of Humanities, University of Adelaide, 2003.
22. For perhaps the sharpest differentiation of the two concepts, see Adam Kuper, *Culture: The Anthropologists' Account* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000). George W. Stocking Jr's more detailed accounts of the two concepts are still canonical. These are collected in George W. Stocking Jr, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
23. This aspect of Tindale's work has constituted a significant subject for the critical practice of Indigenous artist Vernon Ah Kee.
24. See, for example, Ronald M. Berndt, 'Transformations of Objects, Persons and Country: Some Comments', *Occasional Papers in Anthropology* (1979), Anthropology Museum, University of Queensland, pp. 143–52.
25. For an Indigenous critique of the orchestration of the relations between Indigenous voices and institutional scripts that *Encounters* effected, see Julie Gough, Jonathan Jones, Kelli Cole, Shari Lett, Glenn Iseger-Pilkington, Billie Lythberg, Jennifer Walkate, Jeanine Nault, Jake Homiak, Joshua A. Bell, and Natasha Barret, 'Reflections from a Panel of Indigenous Speakers at the New Encounters Conference, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 16–18 March 2016', *Museum Worlds*, 4 (2016), 196–214.
26. Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York: Mariner Books, 2005 [1934]).
27. See Margaret Mead, *And Keep Your Powder Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1942), p. 29.
28. See Mark Anderson, 'Ruth Benedict, Boasian Anthropology and the Problem of the Colour Line.' *History and Anthropology*, 25. 3 (2014), 395–414.
29. The relations between Rivet and Boas are discussed at various points in Christine Laurière, *Paul Rivet le savant et le politique* (Paris: Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, 2008).
30. See Ira Bashkow, 'A Neo-Boasian Conception of Cultural Boundaries', *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 106. 3 (2004), 443–58.
31. The Musée de l'Homme and the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires were both nurtured within the Musée d'Éthnographie du Trocadéro from the late 1920s prior to their establishment as independent institutions in 1937. The Musée de l'Homme (Hanoi) was established in 1938.
32. See Dominique Poulot, 'Identity as Self-Discovery: The Eco-Museum in France', in *Museum Culture: Histories, Discourses, Spectacle*, ed. by Daniel J. Sherman and Irit Rogoff (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 66–84.
33. Charles Madge 'Mass Observation', *New Verse*, 17, p. 16.
34. For an assessment of M-O's contribution to changing class relationships in inter-war Britain, see Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 2010).
35. See Peter Mandler, *Return From the Natives: How Margaret Mead Won the Second World War and Lost the Cold War* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).
36. See Ben Dibley and Michelle Kelly, 'Morale and Mass-Observation: Governing the Affective Atmosphere on the Home-Front', *Museum and Society*, 13.1 (2015), pp. 22–41.
37. Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965) p. 63.
38. Eliot wrote that he understood culture as anthropologists did to refer to 'the way of life of a particular people living together in one place'. See T.S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962).
39. Raymond Williams, 'Culture is Ordinary', in *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism* (London: Verso, 1989 [1958]), p. 4.
40. Tony Bennett, 'The Political Career of the Culture Concept', in *The Routledge Handbook of Global Cultural Policy*, ed. by Victoria Durrer, Toby Miller and Dave O'Brien (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 607–20.