

REVIEW

Aboriginal Domestic Tourism Leadership Towards Reconciliation in Australia

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ABSTRACT

The world-making possibilities of domestic tourism provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia with the potential to take leadership over the challenging interpersonal encounters necessary to the process of reconciliation. This proposition is drawn from a philosophical hermeneutic view of domestic tourism hosts and guests as always already bound by complex histories they cannot change. The paper demonstrates that tourism can enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to operate enterprises based on customary cultural law of neutral meeting places attuned to the difficult interpersonal challenges of Reconciliation. Neutral meeting places do not impose reconciliation onto domestic tourists, the intent is to instead exercise everyday humanity and compassion while enabling visitors to fulfil their travel desires. The findings suggest that visitors can become oriented to Aboriginal ways of being and stimulated to learn. As interactions progress, visitors can reach readiness to take up opportunities for genuine dialogue with Aboriginal hosts. Outcomes raised in this paper highlight that tourism can enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, as colonised people, to implement their cultural authority to take leadership over perplexing historical legacies woven through the fabric of a Western-dominated society conditioned by colonialism.

1. Introduction

Domestic tourism in Australia presents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with opportunities to deal with social, political and other

burdens of turmoil inherited from the colonial past. As illuminated by Hollinshead's^[1,2,3,4] work on the production and performance of travel; tourism and worldmaking can go hand in hand making it a powerful vehicle for script-

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ing the past, the present, people, places and cultures. This school of thought draws attention to mediating agencies and the like that massage projections of people and place, via "...creative and often 'false' or 'faux' imaginative processes and projective promotional activities..."^[4] that can uphold enduring legacies that plague societies in turmoil^[5,6]. Social, political or historical contexts already naturalised within a given society become further re-presented and/or enacted via tourism^[7]. For Hollinshead^[3,8,9] there is cause for optimism, however, because tourism can also enable people subjugated by colonisation or other regimes to exercise professionalised agency over tourism worldmakings and take action on social, political, cultural or other burdens that linger from the past.

Philosophical hermeneutics sheds light on domestic tourism tasks for colonised people by providing crucial insight into being at stake for domestic tourists (as discussed by Jacobsen)^[10] that manifests ontologically as inauthenticity (whether social, political, cultural etc.) enlivened through tourism^[11]. Enactments of people and place as part of domestic tourism unfold in the manner(s) conceived by hosts and guests bound by the same histories, landscapes and borders^[12]. Contrary to views about tourism as a site of existentialist authenticity^[13], the often inconspicuous yet expansive presence of inauthenticity regulates domestic tourist being through tourism^[10,12] which in turn shapes many challenges faced by marginalised populations that seek to use tourism as a means to work through legacies from colonialism or other regimes of oppression.

The usefulness of philosophical hermeneutics as a transcendental practical philosophy^[14,15] draws attention to the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to procure domestic tourism spaces that bridge, instead of sustain colonial legacies like indifference, marginalisation, racism and the like. Tourism can be a vehicle for peace^[16], with enough potency to create positive encounters between societies locked in (seemingly) perpetual cycles of volatility^[17]. Researchers such as Waitt, Figueroa and McGee^[18] recognise that evocative landscapes can lead domestic tourists to reflect introspectively, however the literature invariably assigns the task of reconciliation through tourism to Aboriginal cultural tourism enterprises^[19,20,21]. While Aboriginal cultural tourism enterprises are often adept at providing transformative learning experiences, Gadamer^[22] reminds us that the essence of genuine dialogue (suffering) implicit to reconciliation can preside over whether any tourism encounters take place at all.

The potential for domestic tourism to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with profound opportunities to deal with injustices inherited from the past is noted in the literature^[10,19]. However, there is little insight

into how the nature of being at stake for domestic tourists can form the basis of proffered tourism contexts with potential to facilitate complex socio-political challenges like reconciliation. The starting point for this inquiry was that domestic tourism enjoins the long stories of place, which for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people includes enduring colonial legacies and the challenges of reconciliation. Case study evidence from Goombaragin Eco-retreat, a small Aboriginal-owned tourism enterprise, was compiled to demonstrate ways of harnessing the worldmaking nuances of tourism to facilitate the difficult inter(and intra)personal undertakings that reconciliation necessitates on everyday Australians. The findings are detailed below following a review of literature and an introduction to the complex Australian socio-political history of concern. Reconciliation is a long and very difficult process, however the perspective forwarded below is that tourism can enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to exercise customary cultural authority to facilitate relevant interpersonal happenings for everyday Australians to move forward. As Hollinshead^[3] suggests, tourism can empower the marginalised, oppressed or subjugated, as much as it can be used to engineer ways of knowing and being that reconfigure societies at large.

2. Reconciliation: A Colonial Legacy Conditioning Domestic Tourism in Australia

The struggle for reconciliation in Australia is a long and complex story^[23,24]. However, before highlighting notable present-day initiatives, it is pertinent to introduce an encounter (termed here as the 'Waymbuurr encounter') that took place around 18 years *before* British settlement of the continent in 1788. The journals of Captain James Cook and botanist Sir Joseph Banks record that after making their first landfall on the continent on April 29, 1770, they made their way north charting the east coast, noting numerous encounters with native people. After more than 2 months they ran aground on a reef and several days later (July 6) eventually beached their vessel on the southern side of a river-mouth. Aboriginal people in this region speak the Guugu Yimithirr language and know this place as Gungardie, on Waymbuurr-warra clan land. This place is now called Cooktown (see Figure 1), located on the Endeavour River in far north Queensland, Australia. On July 19, 1770, after increasing contact with Guugu Yimithirr people, the journals of Cook and Banks recorded the following incident:

Ten Indians [sic] visited us today...They soon let us know their errand which was by some means or other to get one of our Turtle of which we had 8 or 9 laying upon the decks. They first by signs askd [sic]

for One [sic] and on being refusd shewd [sic] great marks of Resentment... (Joseph Banks 1770^[25])
 ...they grew a little Troublesome...soon after this they all went ashore, Mr. Banks, myself, and 5 or 6 of our people being their [sic] at same time...with the greatest obstinacy they again set fire to the grass... until I was obliged to fire a Musquet [sic] load with small Shott [sic] at one of the Ring leaders, which sent them off...one must have been a little hurt, because we saw a few drops of blood...we follow'd [sic] them for near 1/2 a Mile... (James Cook 1770^[26])
 ...then meeting with some rocks from whence we might observe their motions we sat down and they did so too about 100 yards from us. The little old man now came forward to us carrying in his hand a lance without a point. He halted several times and as he stood employd [sic] himself in collecting the moisture from under his arm pit with his finger which he every time drew through his mouth. We beckond [sic] to him to come: he then spoke to the others who all laid their lances against a tree and leaving them came forwards likewise and soon came quite to us... (Joseph Banks 1770^[25])

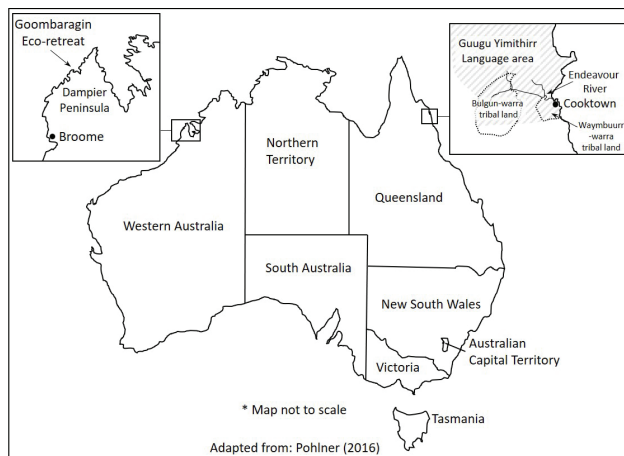


Figure 1. Locations of Goombaragin Eco Retreat and Cooktown

According to Alberta Hornsby, a Guugu Yimithirr-speaking Elder and descendent of the Bulgun-warra (a clan neighbouring Waymbuurr), the Little Old Man was a Waymbuurr-warra Elder who performed actions of high cultural significance^[27]. Under Guugu Yimithirr law, Waymbuurr is a neutral meeting ground: a place where no blood is to be spilt. To Guugu Yimithirr people on July 19, 1770, the white strangers captured too many turtles, however the actions taken by the Waymbuurr-warra Elder, according to Hornsby, with "...the intention of bringing about peace was so significant..."^[27] because it marks the first recorded act of reconciliation in Australia: it was

also an event that took place according to the authority of Aboriginal culture. People in present-day Cooktown, under guidance from Hornsby and Guugu Yimithirr people, argue that this encounter is an important moment in the history of Australia.

Overshadowed by other events during Cook's 1770 voyage and British settlement of the continent in 1788, the Waymbuurr encounter seemingly became lost to the passage of time. The forthcoming expansion of colonisation impacted Aboriginal people tremendously throughout the land. While some Aboriginal peoples suffered less incursion than others, expanding settlement enacted what some historians dub as frontiers of conflict^[28]. Even though Aboriginal inhabitants made localised resistance in many areas, the gradual wave of dispossession from their homelands also came with widespread suffering, disease and death^[28]. Settler society developed widely-held depictions of Aboriginal people as treacherous, troublesome and of lower humanity, hygiene and intelligence^[29]. Government sanctioned segregation, 'protection', institutionalisation and assimilation of Aboriginal people ensued as the nation grew, accompanied by a colonial culture of indifference and prevailing attitude for the race to wither away^[30,31]. Through layers of history a slew of colonial legacies evolved and still course through the fabric of Australian society today.

Australia's peak national reconciliation organisation, Reconciliation Australia, recognises that after Cook proclaimed British possession of the east coast on August 22, 1770, the first notable step towards reconciliation occurred more than 160 years later in 1932^[32]. Reconciliation may not have been on the initial agenda in the 1930s, per se, yet the process was woven through forthcoming decades of movements seeking equality, citizenship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, freedom from racial discrimination and land rights^[30]. One notable moment came from Vincent Lingiari, an Elder of the Gurindji people who in 1966 led a protest about poor working conditions they endured at Wave Hill Station, a cattle property in the Northern Territory. The Gurindji campaigned for several years, eventually receiving title over their land in what became a landmark moment for Aboriginal land rights. In closing his maiden speech to the Australian Federal Senate in September 2016, newly elected Senator Patrick Dodson (a Banaga Aboriginal Elder from Broome, Western Australia – see Figure 1) spoke about the Gurindji 'hand-back' ceremony held in 1975 that was attended by then Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam. As Senator Dodson quoted in his speech, Lingiari replied to Whitlam in Gurindji language at the ceremony by saying "Let us live happily as mates, let us not make it hard for each other"^[33]. Senator Dodson paid tribute to Lingiari by remarking that:

It was a testament to his strength, his resilience and his generosity of spirit. After a century of theft, of violence, of dehumanising exploitation, of structural and institutionalised racism, of a stolen generation policy, genocidal in its intent and its impact, this leader was ready to move forward to build a better place^[33].

Lingiari's high-minded vision embodies qualities that contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have continually sought to emulate as part of their efforts to work towards a better future.

Focus on reconciliation gathered momentum under the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1991-2000), which served as a predecessor for Reconciliation Australia (2001-present). Reconciliation in present-day Australia is broadly viewed as "...the process through which non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians enter into a dialogue with one another with the intention of agreeing on ways in which to mitigate the disadvantage that Indigenous peoples experience"^[23]. Reconciliation Australia^[32] spearheads a formal reconciliation agenda to take action for change in: race relations; institutional integrity; equality and equity; unity; and, historical acceptance. As from the 1930s onwards, this agenda remains intertwined with resolving legacies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and wellbeing. The agenda calls for action from governments (such as change in the Australian constitution, legislation, policies and improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage in health, education, employment, imprisonment etc.), corporate Australia (including workplace Reconciliation Action Plans - RAPs), the general community (e.g. marches, Reconciliation Week, events, etc.) and at an interpersonal level (including trust, support for reconciliation and eliminating racial discrimination)^[32]. A 2016 report released by Reconciliation Australia highlighted progress in some areas (particularly RAPs) and widespread desire for Australians to achieve reconciliation, however many of the targeted actions remain well below satisfactory levels.

Reconciliation Australia^[32] call for widespread change in Australian society and the need for genuine interpersonal dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which includes overcoming stereotypes and prejudice^[34,35]. Reconciliation Australia^[32] contend that organised events, education and workplaces that implement RAPs improve everyday interaction, trust and understanding. However, the conscripted or voluntary nature of such engagements can have limited reach. In concluding their findings on historical acceptance, Reconciliation Australia^[32] reported that "...many Australians acknowledge the 'wrongs' of the past but do not have a detailed understanding of these 'wrongs' or their ongo-

ing ramifications..." and this "...failure of Australians to engage deeply with our past is a genuine roadblock to reconciliation". Indeed, this draws attention to the extent that present-day Australia continues to be constituted by unshakable spectres of the colonial past.

3. The Reconciliation Proposition Posed by Aboriginal (Cultural) Tourism

As evidenced by the Reconciliation Australia^[32] report, the reconciliation process involves matters constitutive of everyday life and nationhood in Australia. Indicative of Heidegger's^[11] concept of 'they', reconciliation for Australia is a complex phenomenon greatly dependent on the agency of individuals to move forward. As psychologists point out, moving towards reconciliation necessitates that individuals:

...must take account of the harm done to the [sic] Aboriginal people and societies done by White colonisation...The history of massacres, disease, dispossession, and family break-up is too well documented to ignore, and the Mabo decision clearly repudiates terra nullius. Statistics on unemployment, incarceration, morbidity, education, and life expectancy all testify to the massive disadvantage of the [sic] Aboriginal people. And yet it seems that no responsibility can be allocated for this – to refer to "guilt" immediately arouses angry responses from an Australian audience^[36].

The need for individuals to shoulder responsibility for Australia's 'they' reflects a dilemma raised in Heidegger's^[11] position that Dasein is absorbed into the nothingness of everyday communal existence 'traceable to no-one'. Reconciliation in Australia necessitates that everyday Australians, regardless of having personally committed any transgressions, acknowledge their stewardship over 230 years (and counting) of legacies inherited as part of being Australian. It is indeed a complex proposition of tremendous gravity and theorists^[35,37] argue that many individuals experience difficulty broaching such a task, let alone setting aside anonymities directed toward members of the other party.

Australia has not paid enough attention to the role's tourism can play to create opportunities for interaction rarely present in the everyday routines of most Australians^[38,39]. The proposition for everyday Australians to actively engage in reconciliation is intrinsic to Aboriginal cultural tourism carried out as guided tours, cultural centres, workshops or cultural awareness camps^[19]. Aboriginal cultural tourism enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to articulate their perspectives through visitor learning experiences to potentially stimulate genuine dialogue that compels visitors towards transformative

personal change^[19,21]. Aboriginal cultural tourism enterprises are located all over Australia (in urban and non-urban areas) and typically operated by Aboriginal people belonging to each area (often identified as Traditional Owners of their region). The development and emancipatory intentions of Aboriginal cultural tourism reflect what Venn^[40] highlighted as the growing movement of colonised populations forging post-colonial ways of being.

Aboriginal cultural tourism offers additional hope to those seeking to work through legacies from Australia's colonial past. However, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to make progress on reconciliation through domestic tourism requires overcoming several prodigious challenges. The first challenge relates to Aboriginal cultural tourism being a niche experience with greater appeal to international visitors^[19,21,41]. Less than 3 percent of the domestic market participates in some form of Aboriginal cultural tourism^[42] and domestic market interest has consistently remained low^[43,41] with the reconciliation literature often reporting on conscripted encounters by corporate or education groups^[19,20,21]. Domestic Aboriginal cultural tourism statistics, recently criticised as over-inflated^[41], highlight a trend of sharp decreases in annual participation (of around 19-23%) from 2006-2010^[44] and participation highly skewed towards passive activities (e.g. 'seeing a cultural site' or 'seeing any art, craft or cultural display')^[42]. Government agencies^[42] highlighted five domestic Aboriginal tourism visitor segments, but only one (termed as 'Active NT Focused') demonstrated potential (albeit, behind preferences for passive activities) to attend Aboriginal guided tours.

Secondly, the philosophical hermeneutic position on domestic tourist inauthenticity draws attention to the (recognised/under-recognised) omnipotence of enduring Australian social, political and historical contexts^[10,11], even if claims reported in the Australian tourism literature about domestic tourists 'lacking awareness of Aboriginal cultural tourism opportunities' are genuine^[43,45]. Arguably, Aboriginal cultural tourism is implicitly predicated on effecting change in Australian long stories of people and place^[19], however as Jacobsen^[10] pointed out, the challenge is that the forcefulness of historically conditioned inauthenticity readily sets authoritative grounds for domestic tourist 'knowings' to always already out-sanction projections of being and spatiality made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This relates to a third fundamental challenge, that the reconciliation proposition forwarded by Aboriginal cultural tourism articulates that domestic tourists must undergo genuine dialogue and therefore: they must undergo a degree of suffering^[10,19,22]. Philosophical hermeneu-

tics illuminates the gravity of such a proposition (noted above), but in addition, Aboriginal cultural tourism must also bridge an ongoing dilemma of meeting Australian domestic tourist "...expectations of relaxation, recharging, breaking the routine and indulging themselves..."^[42]. With the suffering implicit to reconciliation placed in the foreground of Aboriginal cultural tourism, there is a danger of inadvertently inciting domestic tourist avoidance instead of stimulating encounters leading to genuine dialogue. Avoiding Aboriginal cultural tourism may not only enhance the authoritarian influence of inauthenticity^[10], there is also danger to further invigorate neo-colonial silence and indifference^[31,46]. As Moreton-Robinson^[47] argues, silence aids in rendering invisible the white exercise of power over the representation of Aboriginality and legitimisation of knowledge. Given the freedoms of being in the world^[22], Aboriginal cultural tourism ends up fraught with over-dependence on making a 'call to arms' appeal to the moral agency of domestic tourists^[18,19,48] to take up the proposition of reconciliation.

4. Stimulating Tourism Encounters Instead of Avoidance

Inter-personal reconciliation is often contextualised in the social psychology and psychology literature as encounters facilitated by a third party or facilitated workshops^[37,49]. With such expertise rarely at hand in tourism, the potential for domestic tourism to facilitate reconciliation rests on the adeptness of hosts to procure contexts conducive to genuine dialogue. According to inter-group theorists, suitable settings include contexts that (among other things) facilitate positive encounters^[50], diminish the influence of negative expectations^[51], erode existing asymmetries of power^[35] and encourage openness to the voice of Others^[35]. In summarising Amir (1969), Etter^[39] outlined that unfavourable conditions will evoke (among other things) unpleasantness, frustration or involuntary participation and ultimately sustain tense relations. Favourable conditions, according to Gadamer^[22], appeal to and maintain a fundamental sense of human solidarity between participants^[14], highlighting that the proposition of reconciliation be composed with everyday humanity and compassion.

It is in relation to this point (i.e. producing tourism conditions that facilitate genuine dialogue towards reconciliation) that the relevance of the Waymburr encounter in 1770 (introduced above) comes to the fore. The law of Waymburr as neutral ground is rooted in Guugu Yimithirr culture from long, long before the British arrived. Being on Waymburr-warra land necessitated neutrality from conflicting parties and governed the possibility for the reconciliation effected by the Waymburr-warra Elder

in 1770. Neutral ground was also pivotal for Gadamer, who believed that if "...there is no common ground linking two parties together, no conversation can succeed...the ultimate goal is to regain one's natural capacity to communicate with others..."^[15]. The Waymbuurr law brought about interaction to de-escalate conflict, which according to reconciliation theorists would heighten the potential for dialogue to occur^[37,49]. The Waymbuurr encounter in 1770 also demonstrated that understanding and trust can grow which, as Fisher^[37] and Kelman^[49] maintain, are vital to make meaningful progress towards reconciliation.

Neutral ground spatially contextualises reconciliation as an interpersonal process^[49]. Indeed, de-politicising encounters potentially alleviates the proposition of inevitable suffering necessary for individuals to achieve genuine dialogue, with sensitivity to the varying capability of individuals to engage^[14,22]. Sources in the literature maintain that tourism dedicated to reconciliation be contextualised to visitors as 'reconciliation experiences'^[20,52], however tourism encounters contextualised on neutrality may not necessarily aim to achieve genuine dialogue or reconciliation at all. Neutrality does not ignore injustices conditioned by colonialism and the like, but rather, as the Waymbuurr encounter in 1770 showed, it provides a spatial context to make dialogue possible^[37]. A similar principle is observable in demilitarised zones such as the region between North and South Korea^[17]. Neutrality broadens the possibilities for engagement and subsequently increases scope to build positive encounters^[35], incrementally reduce inter-group prejudice^[51], increase mutual recognition and respect^[35], and stimulate the kind of 'internal dialogues' that prepare people to volunteer in genuine dialogue for reconciliation^[53]. Neutrality wrests control away from regimes of authority, silence and indifference to improve the potential for encounter instead of stimulating avoidance.

5. Research Design

Case study analysis was undertaken to highlight ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people harness the worldmaking possibilities of tourism to deal with the difficult interpersonal undertakings that reconciliation necessitates on everyday Australians. The case study was carried out with Goombaragin Eco-retreat, a small Aboriginal family-owned enterprise located in the remote north-west coastal region of Australia. A case study design, which "...investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context..."^[54], was selected because it involves in-depth inquiry to generate contextual information crucial to investigating complex situations^[55]. A single case design was implemented given that the historically conditioned nature of domestic tourists and the localised nature of tourism generate dis-

crete complexities of being, ontology and understanding. In this regard, the case is not considered typical of tourism enterprises operated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people^[55], but rather that it provides a setting for in-depth analysis to understand ways that marginalised people manage the historically conditioned interpersonal complexities of domestic tourism.

Indigenist research principles were applied, particularly in terms of participant involvement throughout the research process^[56]. This involved establishing data collection methods, clarifying the cultural boundaries of the inquiry (e.g. what can and cannot be recorded), identifying research participants (e.g. Goombaragin visitors were not considered for data collection) as well as setting the project timeline (particularly in relation to data collection) and ethics approval requirements. The Indigenist research principle of privileging the voice and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, illustrated in the case study section below, involved prioritising the statements, worldviews and perspectives of the Goombaragin owners in the interpreted outcomes of the study^[56]. Indigenist inquiry is suited to complex socio-political contexts^[56,57], which corresponds with the philosophical hermeneutic position of conceptualising domestic tourism as entwined with the long histories of place. Furthermore, Indigenist principles were applied given the study involved Indigenous people, land and knowledge, as well as the need to generate outcomes based on culturally grounded practice.

The present study adhered to additional Indigenist research principles such as Rigney's^[58] assertion that Indigenist research ideally be implemented by Indigenous researchers. Indeed, the present study is aligned with the Aboriginal-driven endeavour to situate Aboriginal ways of knowing and knowledges alongside Western social science^[47]. Relationship-building permeated the entire research process (e.g. face to face meetings, telephone conversations and e-mail correspondence) to establish an appropriate channel of feedback, work towards applied outcomes^[57] and respect cultural sensitivities while implementing and subsequently presenting outcomes. The research design was submitted and approved by the relevant ethics committee.

Data was collected on location in late March based on agreement with study participants. Cultural, spatial and landscape contexts were recorded among the chain of evidence generated by the several methods used to develop the case study^[54]. Semi-structured interviews conducted with the Goombaragin Eco-retreat operators were guided by general topics to stimulate fluid conversation privileging the voice and perspectives of participants. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed verbatim accompa-

nied by extensive field notes. Participant observation was also used to record aspects of service and amenities^[54]. Finally, the study compiled information from secondary sources such as the Goombaragin Eco-retreat Facebook page, Tripadvisor, Goombaragin guest comments book and promotional materials.

6. Case Study Results: Goombaragin Eco-retreat

Goombaragin Eco-retreat is a small family-owned business situated in a remote area on the Dampier Peninsula approximately 180 kilometres north of Broome in Western Australia (see Figure 1). The retreat is owned by a direct Aboriginal descendent of the Goombaragin land, Kathleen (who is a Bard, Gija, Nygkina, Nimanburr and Baniol woman) in partnership with her non-Aboriginal husband (John). The eco-retreat is on land known in local Bardi Aboriginal language as Goombaragin, which Kathleen explained in the following way:

...Goombaragin's meaning is like 'meeting place' and it's a name that was given to [my uncle] by one of the Elders, so we called it Goombaragin. Goombaragin sits in an area in Pender Bay, and in the old way, in the old Bardi way, this whole area is known as the Embulgin area. We decided on taking that name, a meeting place....

Pender Bay has a rugged and pristine coastline dispersed with small Aboriginal settlements (see Figure 1). The area is rich in cultural heritage and contains important cultural sites. Much of the Dampier Peninsula region is designated under the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act (1992) and restrictions are placed on visitor access in the entire area, including guests staying at Goombaragin.

Goombaragin was originally conceived as an Aboriginal cultural tourism enterprise, but after several years of struggle the business focus shifted to eco-retreat style tourism. Today, Goombaragin is marketed as a retreat that offers visitors a remote location and opportunities to enjoy 'an eco-experience getaway with a difference'. The retreat contains walking tracks, scenic lookouts and a long sandy beach for visitors to swim, snorkel, go fishing or relax at their leisure. The retreat has a capacity of only 20 guests a night, and receives guests from the nearby town of Broome, all parts of Australia and around the world. The main visitor types are couples, families or small groups. As an 'eco-retreat', Goombaragin tends to receive guests that believe in ecologically sensitive activity.

The eco-retreat offers self-contained accommodation (including two eco-tents, an eco-chalet and nature tent) and two unpowered camp sites. The campsites appeal to travellers with their own camping equipment, while

self-contained accommodation guests seek a bit more comfort. Self-contained accommodations are serviced, while campers have access to an ablution block, fresh water and a communal kitchen area. Accommodations are dispersed throughout the retreat to provide guest privacy and seclusion, all situated near cliff-top vantages with ocean views.

Visitation at Goombaragin coincides with the northern Australian 'dry season' usually from May to November. The Dampier Peninsula has limited services and infrastructure so Goombaragin needs to be self-sufficient using solar power and composting toilets. Supplies are restocked by regular trips to Broome, but home-grown produce and seafood are an important source of food. Goombaragin has telephone (but limited mobile phone reception) and wireless internet connection. Road access is on unsealed surfaces, most of which involves rough conditions accessible only by four-wheel-drive vehicle but frequently impassable in wet weather. Bush fires and tropical cyclones occur in this region and like all coastal waterways in northern Australia, people need to remain vigilant for salt-water crocodiles.

7. Guest Experience Provided by Goombaragin

Goombaragin respond directly to initial enquiries and multiple e-mail or phone conversations with prospective guests are common. In addition to collecting booking details, Goombaragin inform prospective guests about safe driving and visitor experiences in the Dampier Peninsula region. Goombaragin is part of a network of tourism enterprises operated by Aboriginal people (all linked through extended family, language and culture) dispersed around the area. The Goombaragin embeddedness in the local culture, community and tourism network is woven through the entire experience provided to visitors. Traditional Owners are responsible for the safety of visitors on their land, which for Goombaragin means implementing various safety policies, including to ensure that incoming guests notify them about their time of departure from Broome or their place of origin.

Shortly after guests arrive at the retreat they are given an orientation by one or both of their hosts. This involves a short tour of the retreat and the facilities, as well as a nearby cliff-top to take in the view over Pender Bay. Here they are provided information about the surroundings, including Aboriginal place names, natural features and areas ideal for fishing, snorkelling or swimming. Important nearby cultural areas are briefly identified, but guests are not taken to these sites and also asked to not enter these sites during their stay. Guests are shown various walking

tracks to use when exploring the area and asked to refrain from walking beyond landmarks that indicate the boundaries of the property. Guests can enjoy the surroundings at their leisure and can choose to join the host family and other guests for informal gatherings around a communal campfire each evening.

Kathleen and John respond to all hospitality needs of guests during their stay. Making sure that guests are safe, well informed and aware of important cultural protocols are all part of the cultural ways that Kathleen and John practice through Goombaragin. Kathleen and John try to ensure that guests feel 'at home':

...a lot of people feel like part of the family when they come up here. They don't feel like they're just holidaying at some resort, they feel like they're actually part of the family, part of the community here with us... [John]

Another cultural aspect provided for guests is fishing, which is a way of life for the majority of coastal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Kathleen and John regularly provide bait, join guests on fishing excursions, cook the fresh catch and share a communal meal with their guests. Kathleen often shares recipes with interested guests as well.

8. Open-ended Dialogue Around the Campfire

While Goombaragin occasionally receives guests who keep to themselves, the rapport built during pre-booking conversations typically results in cordiality that continues after guests arrive. Goombaragin do not provide day time presentations or tours, but instead Kathleen and John informally interact with guests depending on their needs. While guests are free to experience the surroundings on their own, they are encouraged to ask questions at any time. Conversations usually depend on the level of interaction sought by guests, often evolving as time passes during their stay. Goombaragin is in a remote location and the way of life there (e.g. being self-sufficient, education options for children in remote locations, living with extreme weather conditions, etc.) is often a talking point for guests.

Kathleen and John share knowledge about the land and culture in an informal way, often identifying things (such as tidal movements, the weather, landmarks, bush foods, etc.) using local Aboriginal words that spark curiosity for interested guests:

...sometimes we don't realise we're talking about gugal or bani or whatever it might be, or bush tucker or something and they go 'oh what's that?' [Kathleen]

During the day Kathleen and John might only have limited interaction with their guests, so the evening communal camp fire provides a chance to share some food

(such as fresh fish), refreshments and conversation with guests willing to attend:

...what we like to focus on as hosts is sharing with our guests that come here, sitting with them, talk with them, have a yarn around the campfire, come and eat with us if they want to and have that experience... [Kathleen]

It is an opportunity for guests to reflect on their day as well as get to know their hosts and other visitors. The campfire takes in some of the shelter provided by a grove of old trees, a location long used by Kathleen's people as a place of meeting:

Even like we're sitting down underneath this big tree right now, old people used to sit here under the same tree and there's evidence of the old people that used to sit here under this tree... [Kathleen]

Campfire gatherings are informal, with most evenings a mix of group discussion and people talking 'one-on-one' or in smaller groups. Newcomers generally become increasingly involved over several evenings:

Some people come around, when they first come into a group conversation and sit down, they'll be fairly quiet, you'll see their first few comments will show they'll have a bit of an attitude, leaning one way or the other. But within ten minutes of sitting down listening to all the different points of view around the table, they seem to open up and change their attitude towards the end of that conversation. So the next night around the fire, their attitude will be a bit different.... [John]

Conversations can cover any range of topics and include guests reflecting on their experiences at Goombaragin, their past travel experiences, fishing, pets, driving in remote areas, sports and any other topics that arise. Goombaragin is located in the kind of region often perceived as associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. According to Kathleen and John, many guests engage in conversation with them about these issues.

Kathleen and John rarely have guests say that they have conversed with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people before visiting Goombaragin. Many guests arrive holding various misconceptions. For example, it is common for first-time Goombaragin guests to be surprised that the eco-retreat is operated by a small family and not an entire Aboriginal 'community'. It is common for guests to be surprised that Kathleen and John are a mixed-marriage of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners. Some guests are surprised that Goombaragin do not hold a cultural performance of dance and song:

...some people go up here expecting people to be painted up running around singing and dancing and

things. They just come up here, meet us, stay a few days here and it's not that much different to anywhere else, the people are people... [John]

Campfire conversations often lead to Kathleen and John helping guests broaden their perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Guests hear about the history and legacies of colonisation in the Dampier Peninsula and Broome regions, as well as for Australia in general:

...in those conversations there's things like, you [Aboriginal people] weren't allowed inside the Broome area, that post outside of Broome, you weren't allowed inside the Broome area if you were speaking the local language, you had to speak English to go in there. People couldn't speak in their own languages...I think they're [guests] a little bit shocked as well hearing that's how it actually was...That kind of changes their attitudes a bit, it makes them think a bit more about it... [John]

...we talk about the land issues, the native title issues, the issues with save the children, the breakfast club stuff that some of the communities do, we talk about indigenous housing issues and things, we talk about the drug and alcohol stuff... [Kathleen]

Many topics involve subject matter that might be unsettling for guests, but the campfire is often a setting where Kathleen and John become more 'up front' about sensitive issues:

...you can't change what has happened, we all know that...but you don't have to forget it...You've got to be honest and real about it even if it shames this country, which it does.... [Kathleen]

As Kathleen further explained, being honest about history and situations faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people requires an appropriate and timely approach:

...you've got to have that yarn to be respectful enough about what happened ...I'm always a person for being compassionate, loving and being compassionate, and I think those kinds of things carry through...That yarning gotta happen to move forward together in new ways, new pathways... [Kathleen]

After each evening guests resume spending time at their leisure and often return to the campfire the following night. Kathleen and John believe the campfire setting is an open, inclusive and respectful setting where guests often become interested and willing to actively take part in these conversations:

...we've never really had any big heated debates and things around the campfire, because that's where most the yarning happens, we sit down at the end of the day, because everyone's invited to the campfire who wants to come and sit down. I think we all have

our turn in really sharing each of our thoughts and then others joining in, having their opinion, but in a nice way... [Kathleen]

It is through the campfire discussions that relationships and familiarity evolve into dialogue that potentially leads to guests acquire more understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For Kathleen and John, these interactions often seem to be inevitable:

I think we have that reconciliation by having those conversations. But we may not advertise it as such... it happens really naturally.... [Kathleen]

A lot of people go away with a different impression than what they were expecting when they came up... [John]

For many guests, once the time comes to leave Goombaragin it does not mean the end of their interactions with Kathleen and John. Many stay in contact via e-mail or social media. As John added, "A lot of them leave as friends and [we] stay in contact with them". Some previous guests even send them updates about their subsequent travels or when they used a recipe they learnt from Kathleen.

9. Discussion: the Remarkable Potential of Domestic Tourism

Goombaragin Eco-retreat provides an opportunity for guests to immerse themselves in a remote and pristine location, yet it is also a setting that plays host to complex encounters conditioned by legacies of colonialism. The cultural notion of neutral ground governing Goombaragin is similar to the law of Waymbuurr, nearly 2,300 kilometres away on the eastern side of the continent. This is in no way indicative of cultural homogeneity, but as the Waymbuurr encounter showed in 1770, Goombaragin is a neutral place that de-escalates the politicisation of encounters even though this appears to relegate Aboriginal people to a position of servitude. Being tourism hosts at Goombaragin does not dissolve cultural authority because the enterprise is defined by cultural law from long before Cook's voyage through the Pacific in 1770. Goombaragin Eco-retreat is a genuine representation of enduring local Aboriginal ways.

The extent that the enterprise embodies old ways of culture begins with the name 'Goombaragin' designated by the local Bardi (Aboriginal) language meaning of the location. This serves as the first point of contact for prospective guests, with neutrality furthered by the enterprise being an eco-retreat (not an Aboriginal cultural tourism enterprise as discussed above). Goombaragin have a cultural duty of care that translates to a service ethic of personalised hospitality. These elements contribute to positive tourism experiences^[50] that correspond with domestic

tourist preferences for relaxation and getting away from it all^[42] and potentially allay unease visitors may feel about an Aboriginal-operated enterprise^[51]. Goombaragin acknowledge that Aboriginal places are landscapes appealing to the needs, desires and interests of other people, which is a gesture that arguably plays a role in establishing a sense of common ground between hosts and guests. Interestingly, Goombaragin guests are provided freedom to self-regulate their immersion in the landscape, but they must also respect cultural protocols explained by their hosts. Guests are continually presented opportunities to become more familiar with their hosts, the landscape and culture as their visits unfold. The suggestion here is that Goombaragin indoctrinates guests into the Aboriginal way of being in that landscape. This reflects a point highlighted by Galliford^[19] and Lloyd et al.^[21] that upon spending time with Aboriginal people on their land, many guests become increasingly 'oriented' to Aboriginal ways. For Goombaragin this is achieved without proposing that guests engage in dialogue towards reconciliation. In doing so, their application of Aboriginal cultural authority in the broader social realm of contemporary Australia serves as a measure to circumvent avoidance, silence and indifference.

Conditions observable at Goombaragin (including: tourism enterprise governed by cultural authority; neutral ground; host duty of care and guest hospitality; enabling guests to self-regulate their immersion in the surroundings; and, orienting guests to Aboriginal ways of being) appear to help build familiarity, trust, openness and solidarity that serve as foundations for engaging in dialogue about sensitive issues around evening campfires. Consistent with the historically constituted nature of domestic tourism^[10,59,60], features such as the remote location and Aboriginal-owned status of the enterprise evoke guest (mis)understandings conditioned by 'they'^[11]. As Jacobsen^[10], as well as Singh and Krakover^[60] argued, such conditioning enforces perceived expectation on domestic tourists to know. Here is when the door further opens for inauthenticity (drawn largely from what Heidegger^[11] viewed as the idle talk of 'they) to define truths and reading competencies used to exercise an all-knowing magisterial gaze over destination people and places^[61]. On the one hand, this highlights Gadamer's^[22] notion of recognising the limits (horizon) of understanding. On the other, it highlights the hermeneutical dimension of experience "... as a single great conversation that is taking place and in which every present time participates..."^[15]. As a neutral meeting place, Goombaragin oversees open-ended dialogue that draws misunderstandings and sensitive issues to the foreground of conversation.

When guests voluntarily disclose their (mis)truths, per-

ceptions or prejudices about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to their Goombaragin hosts, they literally and symbolically bridge a vital step in genuine dialogue^[22]. Goombaragin guests put their preunderstandings at risk and open to the understanding of their hosts^[22]. This, as Bernstein^[62] argued, demonstrates humility to concede one's limitations. Goombaragin appears to achieve, albeit one visitor at a time, the kind of historical acceptance that Reconciliation Australia^[32] reported as one of the ongoing stumbling blocks in the national reconciliation scorecard. Campfire dialogue at Goombaragin acts as a context for domestic tourists to cast an introspective gaze towards their own views and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people^[47]. Indeed, this is the kind of internal and interpersonal dialogue that reconciliation demands upon everyday non-Aboriginal Australians^[53]. Suffering is implicit to these encounters, but at Goombaragin Eco-retreat it unfolds within compassion, solidarity, respect, openness and hospitality according to the cultural authority that shapes the entire experience on offer to all of their guests.

10. Conclusion: Cultural Authority Reinvigorated through Tourism

The interpersonal nature of reconciliation in Australia inscribes domestic tourism opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to contend with present-day challenges lingering as legacies of a colonial past. Host and domestic tourist ways of being actualised through tourism are deeply rooted in the long histories of people and place, be it timeless cultural authority or the recent, indelible residues of colonialism. Reconciliation is a monumental task that will continue in Australia indefinitely and tourism encounters are only a fleeting moment in these long histories of people and place. However, the professionalised agency exercised by Goombaragin Eco-retreat highlights the potential for tourism to recast these stories towards new trajectories into the future. In light of philosophical hermeneutics, a crucial consideration for colonised people using tourism as a means to deal with legacies from the past is whether any encounters with domestic tourists take place at all.

The challenge for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is to encourage interpersonal encounters by bridging conditioned behaviours like avoidance, silence and indifference exercised by everyday Australians. Goombaragin Eco-retreat demonstrates tourism attuned to complex interpersonal sensitivities to ultimately counteract, instead of sustain legacies holding back reconciliation in contemporary Australia. Reconciliation is a process that must afford people time to grapple with the monumental

gravity of the colonial past in the present. Goombaragin implement hospitality, compassion, respect and understanding to build a sense of solidarity with guests and facilitate them to fulfil their desires in the surroundings. Even if no genuine dialogue takes place at all, the interpersonal engagements provided by Goombaragin serve to build trust and improve the scope for domestic tourists to participate in genuine dialogue towards reconciliation in the future.

Goombaragin shows how tourism can enable colonised people to implement and legitimise cultural authority within the broader social realm of Western society. This is indeed rare in contemporary Australia given that Aboriginal laws and cultures no longer occupy the preponderant position of governance held all over the continent during the Waymbuurr encounter in 1770. Yet in a contemporary society that privileges Western knowledges, Goombaragin demonstrates that cultural authority can facilitate interpersonal processes crucial to deal with the legacies of a colonial past. Goombaragin does not directly propose reconciliation dialogue onto domestic tourists because, as philosophical hermeneutics maintains, the eventuality of these conversations is implicit to their social, cultural, historical and other bonds as Australians. With time and immersion in the remote surroundings, many guests appear to reflect and voluntarily put their (mis)understandings at risk. Goombaragin provides conditions that facilitate guests to undertake genuine dialogue and bridge the suffering implicit to moving forward with reconciliation.

Domestic tourism is based on hosts and guests being bound together in ways too easily beyond their control, conditioned by a past, as Gadamer^[22] argues, they cannot change. Indeed, for Goombaragin guests to voluntarily open themselves to the subjugated Other highlights the remarkable potential of tourism to disrupt the long-standing everyday Australian avoidance, silence and indifference towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Goombaragin highlights that tourism can be a valuable pathway for colonised people to attain rightful platforms of representation and leadership despite legacies of marginalisation, hostility and oppression. Hollinshead's Bhabhaian^[63] contention is that this vantage be a vehicle for hybrid projections of being, new sensibilities and articulations ordinarily drowned out by racial paternalism, greed and ethnocentrism.

While the transcendental nature of philosophical hermeneutics helps to illuminate the practical task of reconciliation taken up by Goombaragin Eco-retreat, it is important to note that Aboriginal cultural authority is not subsumed by philosophical hermeneutics, but rather philosophical hermeneutics helps illuminate the vitality of

Aboriginal ways that have endured for many thousands of years. Goombaragin symbolises the power of colonised people to embody Gadamer's faith in the extraordinary resolve of humanity to stand up and assert that a tumultuous history will no longer "...master the present in some arrogant and superior way and bring it under critical control"^[15]. Domestic tourism for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be understood as another chapter in an undertaking that can be traced back to the cultural authority of the Waymbuurr-warra Elder in 1770. Goombaragin Eco-retreat deserve recognition as a contemporary, grass roots leader willing to guide fellow Australians through the difficult task of reconciliation. Their endeavour enjoins the ongoing efforts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout Australia who not only honour the injustice, hardship, suffering and loss endured by their ancestors throughout colonisation, but also to emulate their fortitude, cultural integrity and resolve as they forged their way through tremendous adversity.

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