# Introduction

## Advertising Images of Uluru: A Critical Approach.

"Virtually any statement about advertising becomes outdated as soon as it is made" (Cook, 1992: 217).

Advertising is a frenetic business governed by constant market changes. The French theorist Roland Barthes once referred to advertising images as *restless* texts (Barthes, 1988). By this comment, Barthes meant that advertisements are *restless* both internally in the arrangement of images, words and sounds, and generally in their effect on readers and other media discourses. Advertisements are constantly transmuting and re–combining into parodies and pastiches of other texts around them, to produce a form of what Andrew Wernick calls "promotional culture" (Wernick, 1991). *Promotion* includes advertising, packaging, design and marketing, and crosses into general media culture. Advertisers are in the business of structuring meanings in order to produce commodity–sign values that will sell something. To produce sign values, advertisers trawl the cultural sphere for meanings (images) that will add value to the client's product or service. Advertising also feeds off itself, recycling and dressing up old strategies, slogans and ideas, in a quest for new angles on worn out images. Part of the pleasure in reading (and constructing) advertisements over the last decade has been to pick the source (name the signs) of the images and slogans in the latest version of an old favourite. This pleasure in decoding the text has become a form of communication itself. Different social groups such as *baby–boomers* who grew up with television programmes like the *Honeymooners* and *The Flintstones* from the fifties and sixties now enjoy comparing and reliving the same characters given a facelift for the nineties. The number one rating comedy show *Roseanne* is a recycled version of the *Honeymooners* . Returning to old hits for a new narrative twist is not only a postmodern phenomenon. This thesis argues that in the case of Uluru/Ayers Rock, advertising has helped to construct a series of viewpoints on the rock that build up a topology of signs and messages that now frame how we read either Uluru or Ayers Rock.

Having spent a decade researching and collecting everything I could find on Ayers Rock/Uluru, it soon became apparent when all the advertisements, postcards and notes were spread out, that most of the images, myths and ideas concerning Ayers Rock/Uluru over the last century, were connected both intertextually and reflexively. Images, names, phrases, framing strategies and stories linked to the rock could be found repeated or slightly altered across media and over time. The same views and attitudes recurred even if the author had been replaced. That is, while the scenes and makeup may have changed over the years the ideological plot remained the same in the majority of cases. Having said this, each new advertisement or tourist brochure could not be assumed to produce the same meaning as the one before. The technological ground had moved, the market forces realigned and the reader's position changed. A detailed empirical study was needed before any analysis could be carried out of how advertising had effected the image of Uluru.

Hundreds of advertisements and promotional texts featuring the rock have been produced during the last hundred and twenty years.The theoretical premise of this thesis is that the historical, political, economic and cultural shifts and turns that have shaped the public image of Ayers Rock/Uluru within Australian

society can be traced, in large part, through a careful analysis of advertisements. By mapping the changes in meaning within specific promotional discourses, it is possible to gain some insight into how the mythologies of Uluru and of Ayers Rock are pressed into commercial service.

The critical and theoretical location of this thesis lies within the area of Australian advertising studies. As such, this thesis seeks to advance the critical analysis of Ayers Rock/Uluru and to make a contribution to the emerging field of Australian advertising studies. In so doing, this thesis engages with a range of critical and theoretical approaches to the study of advertising. This integrated model also takes into account policy directions and regulatory implications.

Australian advertising studies is a relatively young field of critical inquiry within the broader category of Australian cultural and literary studies. Few humanities faculties around the country have developed courses specifically in the field of advertising studies. Instead, the critical analysis of advertising is pursued within other major areas such as cultural studies, media studies, sociology and a range of other social science courses. At the University of Technology, Sydney, for example, the School of Humanities has established a major program of courses in advertising. The critical, theoretical and practical aspects of these courses are integrated rather than split into studies and production branches. The pedagogical philosophy behind this integrated theory and practice approach has been built on the belief that students are best able to analyse and engage in innovative production work if they are exposed to critical, theoretical and creative issues at each step of their degree program.

This thesis is in some ways an expression of this philosophical and methodological approach to the critical analysis of advertising images. The critical analysis of advertising, this thesis argues, is most effective when both the practical, theoretical and social considerations involved in a campaign are addressed. Therefore, this thesis takes as its object of study a comprehensive and detailed survey of creative campaigns concerning Ayers Rock/Uluru. These campaigns are not examined in isolation or randomly selected to illustrate a narrow functionalist premise. Rather, the historical, industrial and political context in which these campaigns circulated has been considered. Guy Cook, in *The Discourse of Advertising* (1992) considers advertisements a valuable field of study since: “current ads reflect radical changes in our technologies and media, our social and economic relations, our sense of personal and group identity” (Cook, 1992: xv). By their nature, advertisements are not tangible or stable entities; they are a volatile synthesis of many components and only make sense through the process of signification. As such, advertisements only have meaning (exist) when they are actively engaged with or read.

### (i) The Growth of Advertising Studies in Australia.

There is no one correct way to read Uluru just as there is no one correct methodology for reading advertising images. Yet, advertising images (visual and textual messages) do seek to attract, then direct, the meanings readers take away with them. The people who advertise, visit or live at Uluru all have some stake (be it political, economic, cultural) in the production of images (mental, oral, or visual) that speak and make real that country. The tourist and the advertising art director also develop and sustain their own ways

of seeing and imagining the various signs of the country they travel through. These very different readings made by all those people who come in contact with Uluru have been informed by an equally different number of discourses. The survey images developed by the geologist working within a scientific discourse differ from the holiday snaps collected by the package tourist. The songs and paintings of Anangu *sing up* or *track up* a very different country to the current affairs footage shot by a Sixty Minutes television crew. Yet each set of images may eventually find its way into a glossy television advertisement which in turn produces a new textual image and reading of Uluru.

The complex weaving's of the advertising *text* are also what confront any cultural analyst trying to make sense of the hundreds of Uluru/Ayers Rock images in circulation at any given time. The cultural analyst must deconstruct the *texture* of images while also recognising that any deconstruction is necessarily a reconstruction; another reading, another set of images with political and social implications. In order to make any worthwhile contribution to the study of advertising or the study of cultural sites like Uluru/Ayers Rock, some understanding of the critical and theoretical advertising landscape is helpful.

The two major patterns of advertising critical analysis over the last twenty years can be divided into the categories of *diachronic* and *synchronic* analysis (to borrow two terms from French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure). Diachronic analysis focuses on the changes of language over time. Diachronic criticism has tended to look at the history of advertising as a crucial agent of First World cultural imperialism, particularly in Third World countries. This model was established by Dorfman and Mattelart's *How to Read Donald Duck* (1975) and Jeremy Tunstall's *The Media are American* (1977). Mattelart's recent book *Advertising International: The Privatisation of Public Space* (1991) is a continuation of this post-Marxist critical approach.

Synchronic analysis, on the other hand, is more abstract since it is empirically impossible to freeze the language of advertising in its tracks. Hence the comment from Guy Cook that any statement about advertising is outdated as soon as it is made. The empirical picture of advertising is constantly changing. Yet this is exactly the value of the synchronic model since it allows general theory to develop to a point where the empirical data can be made sense of. The practical usefulness of synchronic analysis means that it has become the dominant method of analysing advertising from a semiotic perspective. Under this synchronic model emphasis is placed on isolating different elements or signs and examining their internal relationships or codes of meaning. The synchronic model can be further separated into two related branches of critique.

The first synchronic branch of criticism has been labelled by Stuart Cunningham as "pop psychology and moralistic anti-consumerism" (Cunningham, 1992: 77). This moralistic approach is exemplified by Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957) that treated advertising as mass manipulation through examination of its use of depth psychology to penetrate the consumer's conscious defences. In so doing, symbolism was seen as to be employed in a dishonest and manipulative fashion to sell anything from Coca Cola to Soap Powder. Wilson Bryan Key's *Subliminal Seduction* (1973) is an extreme example of a critical view which sees advertising as manipulating a society without its knowledge through the use of hidden (subliminal) signifiers. This view of advertising has been largely debunked since most Western countries passed laws in the 1960s and 70s whereby no hidden messages are allowed to be inserted into television advertisements.

The other semiotic post–Marxist line of inquiry was made popular by Roland Barthes' book *Mythologies* (1973, first published as a series of articles in the 1950s) which focused via a series of case studies on the cultural reproduction of dominant ideological values embedded through advertising in bourgeois culture. The later publication of Judith Williamson's *Decoding Advertisements* (1978) expanded the range of examples studied within this structuralist model that brought together certain key aspects of a range of critical theoreticians including Levi-Strauss (anthropologist), Lacan (psychoanalyst), Saussure (semiologist) and Althusser (post-Marxist critic). However, Williamson succumbs to a common structuralist limitation (of the synchronic model), that of failing to analyse the wider historical, social and economic context in which the advertisement are found or the markets in which they circulate. Williamson's readings are incisive yet offer few leads into the wider cultural and social issues that the advertisements themselves are seeking to work off and be read against. Williamson's method of analysis tends to reproduce the abstract synchronic character of the advertisements she criticises.

In many ways both Barthes and Williamson built on the work of Walter Benjamin and others (Horkheimer, Bloch, Adorno, Lukacs) who were participants in The Frankfurt School during the 1930s. This post-Marxist, post-Freudian tradition was carried on by Herbert Marcuse in his *One Dimensional Man* (1968). The English Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies established in 1964 and directed by Richard Hoggart and aided by Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams and others (see Turner, 1990) was the other great influence on Australian media studies.

In Australia this critical approach was embodied in the publication *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies* founded by Graeme Turner, John Hartley, John Fiske and others from Perth (1983). One of the editorial advisers of this publication was Bill Bonney who co-founded and headed the humanities program at the NSW Institute of Technology, now the University of Technology, Sydney. From the mid 1970s Bonney and others (including Helen Wilson, Noel Sanders and Caroline Graham) encouraged a more diverse approach to the study and production of the media using post–Marxist, post–Freudian and semiotic theoretical models.

At the turn of last century, Saussure had predicted that synchronic analysis would eventually lead to a new combination called *panchronic* analysis. In 1983, Bill Bonney and Helen Wilson published *Australia's Commercial Media* in which they sought to synthesise the diachronic and synchronic approaches under the umbrella of what might be called *cultural Marxism*. Keith Windschuttle's *The Media* (1987) also adopted this critical model of analysing advertising. Both these texts draw in part on the work of Gillian Dyer's *Advertising as Communication* (1982) which also combines, as Williamson does, an amalgam of mainly English neo–Marxist and post-Freudian theories to analyse the field of print advertising.

In discussing the critical approaches of these authors, Australian analyst John Sinclair noted in 1990 that "while we can trace over these works a move to more sophisticated and problematic use of concepts and greater empirical depth and rigour, a gap still remains between the available terms of analysis and the challenging realities of the international manufacturing/marketing/media complex" (in Cunningham, 1992: 78). More recently, Stuart Cunningham in his *Framing Culture* (1992) sees the work of Bonney, Wilson and Windschuttle as a transitional stage between cultural Marxism and his preferred *policy-oriented cultural history* model. The work of Jules Goddard (1985) falls into this transitional category. Goddard uses a non-instrumentalist view to argue that advertisements should be seen as aesthetic commodities in their own

right. This view recognises the extra marketing value of advertisements that pick up on the work by various artists such as Hans Haacke, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holtzer in the 1980s. These artists in turn work with advertising and popular media images to convey their political and aesthetic messages. The relationship between art and advertising became increasingly blurred and at times economically and aesthetically symbiotic. The shift from cultural Marxism of the 1970s to the regulatory policy-oriented 1990s also includes Kathy Myers' *Understains - The Sense and Seduction of Advertising* (1986). Myers challenges left-cultural attitudes to advertising as a universal oppressor and the market as a passive sponge of illusions and false consciousness ideas. Instead Myers advances what she calls a "sophisticated theory of consumption" in which advertisements are treated as *vehicles* that carry shifting values depending on circumstances and who uses them. The political left must "capitalise on the skills and sophistication of advertising and marketing without falling foul of the economic and emotional arguments which currently identify it as tantamount to devil worship" (Myers, 1986: 13).

In Australia, John Sinclair's *Images Incorporated* (1987) also carried out a critique of prevailing neo–Marxist theoretical paradigms that he saw as narrow in scope. The two trends Sinclair criticised in neo–Marxist criticism concerned the analysis of domination and the control of meaning through ownership and professional structure and, secondly, a paradigm of false consciousness instilled by and through the advertising message. Sinclair argued that advertising is a complex phenomenon with both positive and negative functions in society. For Sinclair audiences cannot be treated as passive uncritical sponges since discourses are not equal in their social distribution, nor are audiences uniform in character and therefore not everybody reads advertisements the same way. This conception of audiences as active readers and producers of meaning was promoted by the English Marxist, Raymond Williams (1963), who saw advertisements as polysemic structures open to different interpretations by readers who decode the messages in the light of their socio–economic, racial, sexual and age background, and the knowledge of codes and discourses that they bring to the reading process. In other words, any analysis of advertising must take into account the cultural context (the market) in which the advertisement circulates and gains currency. This more holistic approach to advertising criticism is advanced by Sinclair when he argues that "the study of advertising calls as much for ethnographic studies of audiences and their decodings as it does for semiological/structuralist readings of particular advertisements, all against a background of the continuing social system from which advertising is generated" (Sinclair, 1987: 66).

Three recent English publications from Routledge neatly characterise the three main tacks advertising analysis have taken in the last five years. Martin Davidson's *The Consumerist Manifesto: Advertising in Postmodern Times* (1992), is an adman's analysis of the industry in the light of postmodern debates. This study is an encouraging example of an updated critical approach to English advertising from inside the industry. Davidson argues that advertising has become culturally credible and demands to be taken seriously as an important "world in its own right, with its own languages, customs and history, and one that sets the tone and pace for large parts of our lives" (Davidson, 1992: 3). Therefore any analysis must, in Davidson's opinion, address the business (non visual) side of advertising rather than focussing solely on the consumption end.

Guy Cook's *The Discourse of Advertising* (1992) takes a linguistic approach to the study of advertising discourses, particularly how language and paralanguage are used in copywriting and image/text constructions The third comprehensive analysis is Robert Goldman's *Reading Ads Socially.* Goldman

takes a cultural studies approach to a wide range of contemporary advertisements in the light of what he calls commodity feminism and postmodernism. Goldman gives a good overview of the different Marxist and post–Marxist approaches to the critical analysis of advertising. These three publications suggest that the critical study of advertising has become a recognised field within Humanities Faculties and within the advertising industry. The rush of publications over the last few years, particularly in England and America, is a testament to advertising's new–found cultural credibility. Australia has made some recent progress within education and publishing to address local issues. There needs to be much more done by publishers and universities to raise the status of advertising studies within Australia, particularly since Australians are amongst the largest consumers of advertising in the world.

The most detailed empirically driven critical analysis of advertising to date has been done by the Canadian group of Leiss, Kline and Jhally. Together and separately they have contributed a wide range of articles and the book *Social Communication in Advertising* (1986). Sut Jhally is also independently responsible for the book *Codes of Advertising* (1987). Both of these publications seek to integrate the traditional form of content analysis with a critical semiotic approach into a hybrid model that seeks to take into account the historical forces that have shaped the economic conditions of the market place. Leiss, Kline and Jhally list the limitations of the semiotic or representational critical method as being too subjective, non-quantitative and reductive to a generalised social critique. They seek to rectify this problem by using content analysis to underwrite their interpretive approach.

Content analysis involves quantifying textual elements then seeing a relationship between the frequency with which a certain element appears in a advertisement. The content analysis method assumes that what the text means is also what the producer means by the text. Meaning is treated as being hidden in the text and can be revealed simply by identifying and counting significant textual details. At best, content analysis is of some initial benefit when looking at a large number of advertisements, in so far as it identifies how often something recurs across the sample. At worst, this method makes inaccurate assumptions that ask more questions about the analyst than about the object of study.

In Australia, the use of content analysis within academic studies is still high compared to other critical semiotic and post–structuralist methodologies. The funding of large research studies tends to favour empirically based methods where the evidence can be easily quantified (filling in boxes) and displayed in graphs for regulatory action committees. A more far reaching cultural studies approach would be sensitive to historical specificities, complexities and contradictions across cultural, social and economic fields. The research time needed and breadth of issues involved would mean that the results of such studies may not so easily fit the political agendas of the government, corporate or academic bodies funding them. Even so, the challenge for advertising studies theoretical models is to arrive at a method of analysis that includes a historical dimension absent from most cultural analysis of Australian advertising. Such a model must include the viewer as an active participant in the process of what an ad means. The active participation of consumers in research groups within the marketing process within advertising agencies shows, however contrived the process may be, that the ad industry recognises the active power consumers have in the process of constructing meaning.

The majority of advertisements analysed in this thesis on Ayers Rock/Uluru, fall into the genre of what Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1986) call the *lifestyle format*, a term gleaned from marketing terminology.

Modern advertising has been categorised by Leiss, Kline and Jhally into four stages of identification. The first stage is called *idolatry* (1890–1925) focusing on product information; the second is *iconology* (1925–1945), based on product symbolism promoting image rather than information; and the third stage, *narcissism* (1945–1965), seeks to match personality types to products. The transformational fourth stage, from 1965–1985, is culturally characterised as *totemism* (an anthropological concept identifying an object or animal with a clan). The totemic phase involves the synthesis of the previous three phases:

> Consumption is meant to be a spectacle, a public enterprise: product-related images fulfil their totemic potential in becoming emblems for social collectives, principally by means of their associations with lifestyles (Leiss et al, 1986: 295).

Also from Canada, the recently published *Promotional Culture: Advertising, Ideology and Symbolic Expression* (1991) by Andrew Wernick, goes a step further than Leiss et al's hybrid model of analysis. Wernick draws on Jean Baudrillard to re–formulate aspects of the traditional critique of commodified culture developed by the Frankfurt School. Secondly, Wernick suggests that the "pan-promotionalism of contemporary communications (private as well as public, political, academic, artistic) could itself account for many of the features - intertextuality, de-referentiality, absorption of the real into its image - held to characterise the postmodern" (Wernick, 1991: vii). In the course of analysing a range of promotional industries caught in 'the vortex of publicity' Wernick concludes that "each promotional message refers us to a commodity which is itself the site of another promotion...whose only point is to circulate the circulation of something else" (Wernick: 121).

Wernick argues that the way forward is not to inhibit promotional circulation, which can get us caught up in "rearguard struggles in which pre-market unfreedoms, associated with repressive-hierarchical definitions of the sacred, are reactively defended or restored" (Wernick: 196). Rather, Wernick suggests that a more radical objective would involve "not just rolling back the area of cultural life colonised by competitive exchange, but doing so at the same time as the sacralised categories marking out the boundaries of permissible, competitive circulation were themselves humanistically defined" (Wernick: 196).

In the case of Ayers Rock/Uluru, Wernick's model could only be possible with a commitment on the part of all concerned to release cultural production from its currently overwhelming commercial imperative. This means greater subsidies to reduce reliance both on advertising revenue and on corporate sponsorships. At the same time this model implies a sustained effort to "revalorize the public realm itself as a space for disinterested expression and communication" (Wernick: 197). This sounds utopian in these dire economic and neo-conservative times, yet the alternative is ever more repressive regulatory policy laws pitted against unfettered exploitation and cultural mining of an ecologically and culturally fragile and finite resource.

Given the prominence of lifestyle or image–centred advertising in Australia during the last decade, this thesis has focuses on how the spectacle of The Rock has been imaged and sacralised within advertising and across the culture industry generally as an icon of post–colonialism. In so doing, this thesis argues that it has become impossible to adequately account for the formation of an advertising campaign without analysing some aspects of the economic, historical, cultural and social context from which it has sprung and in which it circulates and gains currency. Having determined the strategies of framing and currency value of Uluru as an advertising sign for both the traditional Anangu owners and commercial interests, issues

of policy and regulation must be dealt with. This thesis argues for a more encompassing cultural studies approach on the part of advertisers and consumers to the use of Uluru and other Aboriginal sacred sites that have become highly profitable resources within the national tourist economy.

### (ii) An Issue of Regulation

Advertising stands (as Uluru/Ayers Rock does) at the point of intersection for many important social issues facing Australian consumer society. Industrial, communications, and social policies have been adjusted in order to accommodate the changing conditions generated by advertising's rise to prominence in advanced post-industrial consumer capitalism.

Calls for regulatory actions restricting cigarette and alcoholic advertising, sex-role stereotyping, racism in advertising, political and advocacy advertising, advertising to children, pornographic images, and subliminal advertising are only a few expressions of current concerns surrounding the social role of advertising.

The majority of debates surrounding advertising are a rehashing of established, stale-mate postures. On the one side advertisements are called banal, manipulative and denounced as demeaning to the intelligence of their readers; on the other they are down played as inconsequential to consumer choice - they merely reflect what consumers already want. Both sides alternatively agree and disagree with the proposition that advertising is the mainstay of capitalism, the free market and democracy. These old arguments anchored to economic debates concerning the nature of free markets and the relationship of advertising to human wants and needs only restrict the possibility of responding to issues in their own terms.

In the course of the last fifty years advertising has permeated all facets of social life, blending with the consumer culture to the point where one is hardly distinguishable from the other. The German social historian Wolfgang Schivelbusch has recently stated that

> from now on advertisements define what a thing is. Ads create a world of illusions, within which things are assigned their new place, their new meaning, and the new rituals that surround them. The advertisement for a given product encompasses not only its "promotion," but also "recruitment" and "solicitation"; and in the broad sense the whole culture industry, movies in particular, are part of this advertising and publicity (Schivelbusch, 1992: 186).

This problem of identifying where advertising stops and news or drama begins can be linked in part to the separation of product from advertising image. As advertising has evolved during the twentieth century, it has become increasingly detached from the product it has represented. Tobacco advertisements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example, focused on the object: the images were anchored to the pleasures of smoking cigars and pipe tobacco. Within cigarette advertising the item itself has become largely irrelevant. It was the lifestyle in which the cigarette was found that sold the brand name. The advertising world has

become embedded in the product image. In Marxist terminology this process of the derealisation of things is generally known as a disappearance of use value into exchange value. The pleasure of smoking directly related to the re-enactments of advertising images. Advertising, whether as adjective or noun, now "pervades our entire culture industry" (Schivelbusch, 1992: 187).

Advertising therefore should be viewed as part of a broader system whose implications extend to the whole realm of mediated communication and popular culture. The fact that advertising does not neatly fit into assessment categories explains why there is so little consensus on how to regulate it. The difference between a tourist image and an advertising image is difficult to fix. The advertising industry itself says rather contradictorily that it is both self regulated and yet over regulated by a host of government bodies and consumer lobby groups. Both positions are in fact correct. Self regulation seeks, by and large, to forestall public outcries before they occur and by and large the industry is quick to act when a significant public protest is mounted beyond the "good for business" level of controversy. Being seen to respond to serious misrepresentation is good for the image of the industry and serves to undermine the more general objections to advertising turning people into *consumer junkies*.

The cultural meanings attached to advertisements and media images are constantly shifting due to rapidly changing social and economic conditions. Any study of advertising is therefore confronted with a range of issues including ideas, attitudes, motivations, dreams, desires and values: all of which are given cultural form through its *signifying practice*; that process by which words and images are given meaning. Advertising and media agencies seek to diffuse a constant stream of meanings into the belief patterns of society as rapidly as possible. Therefore, this study of Ayers Rock as a culturally defined site is in many ways a study of an economic system made up of often competing interests, in all their political, and cultural forms. These competing interests (private, public, corporate and governmental) highlight the need to investigate both the dialectical and synchronic relationship between historical, cultural and economic forces within Australian Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies and how one impacts upon the other.

The task at hand is to ascertain to what extent democratic participation in decision making between Anangu and advertising interests is threatened by concentrated ownership and control of media and corporate powers. Once this level of participation and control has been established then decisions about what must be done to counteract any imbalances can be adequately addressed. Only after it has been demonstrated how profoundly advertising has helped shape and maintain the structure of social relations in contemporary society, highlighted by the example of Uluru/Ayers Rock in this study, can the issue of regulation can be effectively dealt with.

**(iii) Two Names For One Rock.**

The place names *Uluru* and *Ayers Rock* are used throughout this thesis, even occasionally in the same sentence. Generally speaking *Uluru* refers to the sacred site belonging to the local Aborigines (Anangu) while *Ayers Rock* refers to the non-Aboriginal monolith. However *Uluru* and *Ayers Rock* do not denote exactly the same physical object. *Uluru* denotes the sacred waterhole (home of Wanambi, the giant rainbow snake) on top of the rock, and now, also the rock as a whole including the surrounding country for some distance (Layton, Mountford, Harney). The European *Ayers Rock* on the other hand refers literally to

the physical whole object; hence the common name *the Rock* (sporting different capitalisation depending on how the discourse is framed).

The politics of naming is further complicated by the Anangu use of the name *Ayers Rock* when funereal law forbids the use of the name *Uluru*. In the last decade or so, the name *Uluru* has in turn been adopted by an increasing number of non–Aboriginal voices within government, education, media and advertising to signify the Anangu connection to the rock. Since the handback of landrights in 1985, the term *Uluru* has taken on added political meaning and those who use it signal their respect for Anangu law. The use of either *Uluru* or *Ayers Rock* also must recognise that in semiotic terms different signs are being produced with different connotations that help make up often radically opposing myths concerning the world's largest rock.

The political importance placed on naming by all parties concerned with Uluru/Ayers Rock, was sharply illustrated by recent moves to change the "monolith moniker" as Chips MacKinolty reported:

> the Uluru (Ayers Rock–Mt Olga) National Park's board of management , which has majority Aboriginal representation, has decided in this year of Indigenous people to rename the rock Uluru and the park the Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park (MacKinolty, 1993: 3).

According to Yami Lester, the chairman of the board, renaming the rock and park "sent a clear message about Aboriginal ownership of the parkland and a sense of place in the largely cultural landscape of Uluru" (MacKinolty, 1993: 3). Continuing use of the name *Ayers Rock* in the park title is, for Lester and other Mutitjulu community members, "inappropriate and ignores the wishes of Anangu." While the Federal Government approved the change, the Northern Territory Place Names Committee strongly disapproved of the change. The park name is a Federal Government responsibility while the feature name is under the control of the Northern Territory Government. In 1992 the Northern Territory Government dropped the name Yulara from the resort in favour of Ayers Rock Resort. This name–change was done against Anangu wishes. Chapter six discusses the question of copyright images and the politics of the handback. Some policy questions are also raised concerning the management of images inside and outside the park.

Lastly, it should be noted that while not aiming to speak for or analyse the Anangu cultural significance of Uluru, this thesis does include some Anangu comments on the colonial and post–colonial constructions of Ayers Rock/ and Uluru images and the impact that these various commercial and non-commercial practices have had on Anangu culture.