



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

Archaeology Seminar Series 2017

The Trouble with Representation

Australian Indigenous World(view)s and the
'White Magic' of Modernity

Dr. Carsten Wergin

Ruprecht-Karls-University Heidelberg, wergin@uni-heidelberg.de



This talk presents original ethnographic material drawing on long-term fieldwork at the Indian Ocean coast of Northwest Australia. It highlights a particular aspect in a conflict situation over the construction of a \$ 45 Billion AUD liquefied natural gas facility (LNG) on top of an Indigenous heritage site, Walmadany / James Price Point. The presentation discusses the troubles encountered by an anthropologist born and raised in Germany in his attempts to translate Indigenous knowledge and heritage into Western scientific terminology. Based on this I address the following questions: How can Western law und science be better equipped to recognize Indigenous knowledges as ontologically different but equal epistemic partners? How can collaborative works in archaeology and anthropology help to account for Indigenous world(view)s beyond the modernist rationale?

Bio: Dr. Carsten Wergin leads the Research Group "The Transcultural Heritage of Northwest Australia: Dynamics and Resistances" at Heidelberg University. His academic background is in sociocultural anthropology, media and transcultural studies with a wider thematic interest in Digital and Environmental Humanities research, and a regional focus on the Indian Ocean World, drawing on long-term fieldwork phases in the Mascarene Archipelago and Northwest Australia

Thursday 6th April,

4-5pm Social Sciences Lecture Room 1 (G28)

Convenors & Enquires: sven.ouzman@uwa.edu.au & india.dilkes-hall@research.uwa.edu.au