**Wit(h)nessing Zincland:**
*From the affective encounter to unfolding a shadow country in the Anthropocene-in-the-making*

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Melodious and unmistakable. Brolgas are overhead, crossing country. They bugle on the fly. In a Sydney gallery, Elder, eminent artist and activator Nancy Yukuwal McDinny scans the postcard I hand her. An aerial photograph of a zinc refinery on the east coast of Queensland connected to the catastrophic McArthur River Mine in her Country (Garrwa, Yanyuwa) near Borroloola in the Northern Territory, Australia. She pauses, steadies her hand, looks more closely, then speaks.

This paper presents the project “Greetings from Zincland: Unfolding a Shadow Country” associated with *Postcards from the Anthropocene: Unsettling the Geopolitics of Representation*, an international exhibition and conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2017, and since published as a book in 2022 (Cincik and Torres-Campos). *Greetings from Zincland*, a postcard I sent across the equator as a digital image, a recorded voice reading, and a critical text, is a dispatch from belonged-by country and its shadow places (Boscacci; Plumwood). It recalibrates vintage 1950s’ imagery of local tourist views composed in the North Queensland port city of Townsville—on Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba and Bindal lands—with one contemporary sighting of a twenty-first century becoming. It introduces and maps a scattered particular-planetary shadow country found in the glare of bleaching tropical light. With it, I unfold a wit(h)nessing story from one shadow place of unexpected connection and confrontation in the antipodean Anthropocene-in-the-making (Yusoff 2). If a picture postcard is a material form of encounter-exchange, an affect charged one is also an im/material dispatch. And, Auckland, you are one of my shadow places.

**A Note**

This creative critical investigation, which continues to unfold, was presented at *Ngā Tūtaki – Encounter/s: Agency, Embodiment, Exchange, Ecologies* for the opening panel, “Affective Encounters, Shadow Traces, and Resonant Naturecultures in the Anthropocene: Particular-planetary aesthetics in the feminist ecosocial turn.” The full essay, in press elsewhere at the time of writing, will not be replicated in this *Swamphen* issue (Boscacci). In the follow-on essay, “Relationscapes of Extinction, and More Life: Zincland to Zealandia”—part two of ‘before and after’ mode of this issue’s reflective call—I pick up the affective encounter and trace to chronicle
Fig. 1 *Mapping a Shadow Country* (2011–2020). A visual trace of ship connections between Gurambilbarra Townsville and 120 shadow ports in twenty-five countries dispersed across the planet. Digital print, 100 x 65 cm. Image © Louise Boscacci
a passage of a-bodied, more-than-human wit(h)nessing that begins in, and moves from, Tāmaki Makaurau.

I begin the next leg in Auckland because it is one of the 120 oceanic ports of connection and exchange with Gurambilbarra Townsville that disclose and compose a previously hidden shadow country of particular planetary connection, disconnection, and implication. This shadow country is visually worlded in the trace map and toponymy of shadow place names in Figures 1 to 3.
Louise Boscacci [Essay prelude] Wit(h)nessing Zincland: From the affective encounter to unfolding a shadow country in the Anthropocene-in-the-making
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WORKS CITED