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Architecture_MPS, University of Cyprus; Cyprus Institute

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

1. Paper / Proposal Title: Wybalenna: a colonial housing response to the Tasmanian Black War

2. Format: Written paper

Written paper / verbal presentation / screening / short film / other – please specify

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5. University or Company Affiliation: School of Architecture & Design, University of Tasmania

6. Abstract (300 words):

European colonisation of Tasmania (Australia), in the 1800s resulted in conflict between the Tasmanian Aboriginal, or *palawa* peoples, and the colonisers. In response, the

colonial government instigated a campaign of moving the palawa people away from their homelands, to a settlement located off shore on Flinders Island called Wybalenna. The Wybalenna settlement, which translates to *Black Men's Houses*, was occupied from February 1833 to October 1847.

Wybalenna provides a historical example of the provision of housing provided against a complex backdrop of social and political agendas. Noted historians questioned the degree of negotiation that took place to achieve the physical removal of the palawa peoples from their traditional lands and buildings.

At the Wybalenna settlement, various stages of housing was provided. The palawa peoples were judged on virtues such as cleanliness, morality and civilised behavior, which became qualities entangled with, and revealed by, inhabitation of space. The housing played two roles. From the colonialists' perspective it was hoped that the buildings would bestow on, or permeate the palawa peoples with associated European qualities. For the palawa peoples, the buildings became sites where they were expected to conform to western European spatial organisation, quite different from palawa buildings, such as open-sided domes.

The palawa peoples displayed various methods of resistance to the European buildings. For instance, interiors of the houses were painted, buildings were physically damaged, traditional practices were adhered to within the confines of the terrace buildings, and exterior artefacts were brought into the interiors, thereby rupturing the interior/exterior division created by the housing. Thus, despite its tragic elements such as the high mortality rate at the settlement, Wybalenna can also be framed as a story of resilience by the palawa peoples, who continued to demonstrate choice and cultural practices while in their forced surroundings.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors):

Dr Jacqueline Power is a lecturer at the School of Architecture and Design at the University of Tasmania. She has research interests in the disciplines of interior architecture and product design.

Her interior architecture research focuses on Australian Indigenous buildings and environments. This formed the focus of her PhD thesis which investigated south-east Australian Indigenous space. Her thesis, "*South-East Australian Indigenous Space and its Cosmological Origins*", examined notions of interior, interiority and cosmology in relation to classical Australian Indigenous buildings.

Jacqueline is also involved in cross-institutional collaborative research in the field of product design. This research explores how designers can create products that are more meaningful for users and ways users can be involved in the completion of products.

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