“The ‘other’ threatens thereby the authority and unity of the existing discourses, as it denotes its limits and evokes a sense of the unrepresented/unrepresentable” (de Certeau 1984). 

Political demands made in terms of the preservation of “culture” become a threat to a seemingly well established system or rights to land and property. In such cases as Hindmarsh Island, we are confronted with differing versions of what Ngarrindjeri culture comprises, each one having its own consequences for political decisions. But who is to decide on the correct view? In the established legal system experts take on this role. Their task is to translate “aboriginal culture” into the prevalent language of law. It is here that anthropology comes into the picture.

Within the discourse on the bridge contested and contradictory perceptions of reality construction appeared, which shaped the effects of the conflict and affected the way Hindmarsh Island is reported on. One way to come to terms with the conflicting views on the events is to perceive the bridge as a symbol which is loaded with many different interpretations of reality. Every representation of others involves the preference of one voice over another, be it for reasons of availability, convenience or intentionality. In either case it denotes that we are always confronted with only parts of the overall picture. Hence, the representation cannot be objective.