LAYER FIVE: Rough Grid: Electrate Regionality

[Every story is a travel story— a spatial practice.]

[Michel de Certeau][1]

[After entering the correct password: _____]
[Click - χ - to go to the Introduction, namely *Rough Grid, A Game Plan*]

and/or

[After entering any password: _____]
[Click - χ - to be tossed randomly into the milieu of *Rough Grid*]

and/but

[After entering both a username and password: _____]
[Click - χ - to enter *Rough Grid* from its exit-point]

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[1]   Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1984), p.115.

Rough Grid: Electrate Regionality
A Game Plan

-χ- -χ- -χ- -χ-

Eloquence is often won at the expense of "wildness,"
and coherence in exile might be the result of an
arrogant refusal to learn a new language.

Ross Gibson [2]

Ross Gibson's 'Letters From Far-Off Lands' juxtaposes an analysis of Thomas Watling's *Letters from an Exile at Botany Bay to His Aunt in Dumfries* (written by a transported English convict, and subsequently an indentured labourer, in the first years of the British colonisation of Australia at Sydney Cove from 1788 onwards), with examples from the oeuvre of French filmmaker Chris Marker. This unlikely juxtaposition might seem mutually exclusive from a strictly critico-analytical point of view but Gibson paints a general view that writing from a position of exile upsets previously accepted notions of subjectivity/objectivity, authorial intention and reception, even creativity and intellect. This exilic connection is amplified by Watling's textual exemplar in that it sometimes 'appears as a mongrel treatise' (p.20), while Marker's work has a 'predilection for the exotic, paradoxical, and the doubtful' (p.51). This is knowledge-making twisted askew by as yet unknown (or maybe unknowable?) contexts and forces. Gibson's two exemplars then are fine representatives of the kind of 'bastard reasoning' that constitutes a pre-eminent feature of chora-logic ('Watling's story could be the first chapter in a long autobiography of a bastard nation', p.42). 'Rough Grid: Electrate Regionality' might also be considered as adding a cell to this genome of the 'bastard nation', a nation that, at the moment, might be considered *realistically* as a top-down federated entity but one that might also be thought of imaginatively as *regionated* from below.

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[2]   Ross Gibson, 'Letters From Far-Off Lands', in *South of the West: Postcolonialism and the Narrative Construction of Australia* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1992), p.59.

While Gibson recognises differences of 'coherence' between his examples, perhaps the finest instance of chora-logic arises at the beginning of one of Marker's best-known works, *Sunless*. While the unmarked narrator intones that s/he has now found a way to connect 'a shot of children walking along a road in Iceland' with some footage of 'NASA military hardware', 'a brief interlude of black leader' is invoked as the obvious 'recombinant' remedy.[3] The unknown timespace conundrum of black leader (one devoid of an obvious representational connection except for its *blackness* which might suggest an oblique reference to an *underground* of sorts) connects these disparate elements 'in a film about happiness and memory' ('Letters From Far-Off Lands', p.53). These seemingly arbitrarily edited signages are propelled more by a hypnotic appeal and are almost talismanic in their intensity, an attraction that arises out of their heterogeneously juxtaposed aesthetic more so than any singularised and sequential logic and coherence. The same could not be said for 'Letters From Far-Off Lands' though which is itself an ideal model of the later qualities, of an 'eloquence' that overcomes 'wildness'.

In a more homogenous and coherently marked system of meaning, the unity of its thematic lucidity might be one way to delineate its ecumenical intentions. It is the thematic rigour of a work that provides the conceptual architectonics to, and through which, every element of the piece travels in the self-same confidence that its discursive validation is holistically complete, while simultaneously satisfying an audience's supposed thirst for easy understandability. While the exposition in 'The Chora Meta-Physique' might make the method of 'Rough Grid' explicit (as opposed, for instance, to the sometimes implicit mode of thematic and methodological enunciation in fictional worlds) nearly all discourses have to deal with this question of the heterogenous nature of their form and/or content and/or methods. If, hypothetically speaking, Foucault's whole oeuvre is characterised thematically by the following statement: "the art of self-making is always and already inscribed with the policing mechanisms of the state via a subject's own willing take-up of educational, juridical, medical, sexual, economic, socialising and other protocols", then the greater the degree of microscopically presented evidence there is in this oeuvre that supports this statement the greater its thematic cohesion in the mind of its author and audience. Consider for a moment though the necessity, the urgency even, of championing the structure of a sign system that moves in a different direction; that is, while eschewing the apparent necessity for logical and argumentative completeness, this is a discourse that bases its 'incompleteness' on this microscopic variability and heterogeneity rather than its thematic or logical completeness as instanced by the wholeheartedly systematic integration of all of this selfsame microscopic variability.

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[3]   Stephen Graham links relational, co-evolution and recombinant perspectives in, 'The End of Geography or the Explosion of Place? Conceptualizing Space, Place and Information Technology', in Mark I. Wilson & Kenneth E. Corey (eds.), *Information Tectonics: Space, Place and Technology in an Electronic Age* (John Wiley & Sons: Chichester, West Sussex, 2000), pp.9-28.

There is, in this other kind of authorising impulse, the imperfect intention to lose this obsession with discourse as a seamless lens on reality, thematic completeness, or coherence of theoretical explanation (along with a propensity for articulating answers to 'big questions'), while altruistically seeking out a kind of implaced freedom in 'small inconsequential matters' (and their infinite pattern-making interrelations). At the same time this impulse should forsake the sometimes-overwhelming battle cry that constitutes the call-to-arms for a collectively understood explanation, or what Stuart Moulthrop calls the 'the idea of text as unified, self-contained utterance.'[4] By now, the audience for *Chora-Logic*, having arrived at this departure point — 'Rough Grid: Electrate Regionality' — will have a new beginning in mind, the kind of beginning that has the 'coherence' of the chora-logical method (as it has been framed in 'The Chora Meta-Physique') upper most in their minds, smoothly thinking that this method will be neatly applied to the subsequent content. Again, what of this other kind of already mentioned genesis, a genesis that goes in a variety of other directions than the production of coherence and unitary explanation, a genesis that is a 'miscellaneous' collection of 'wild opinion' and 'irrational sensation', and one that doesn't have universally true knowledge as its object, or as its finalising quest?[5] From now on, 'Rough Grid' moves *Chora-Logic* towards this idiosyncratic ideal of a heteroclite collection of minutiae, or a personal album of meditative trivia and has less to do with the coherence of an argument. And rather than being mournful about this epistemological reversal, dispersal and uncertainty (like Leonard Shengold's comment that, 'The world that is dominated by anal psychology is full of opposites, reversals, and contradictions'),[6] 'Rough Grid' is advanced as a meandering celebration of this will to cherish and enliven embodied and implaced, but disparate and diverse forms of personal, local/regional and abstract knowledge. Rather than continuing to consolidate the centralising impulse in epistemology, then, 'Rough Grid' advances the explicit idea that its experiential, heterarchical, bottom-up impulses are an equally, if not a more valid program for any future-possible regionally-articulated polis.

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[4] Stuart Moulthrop, 'You Say You Want a Revolution: Hypertext and the Laws of Media', in Eyal Amiran & John Unsworth (eds.), *Essays in Postmodern Culture* (Oxford University Press: New York & Oxford, 1993), p.93.

[5] Marcel Mauss uses this category of the 'miscellaneous' to instigate his thoughts on 'Body Techniques', in *Sociology and Psychology: Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (Routledge & Kegan Paul: London, 1979), p.98.

[6] Leonard Shengold, *Halo in the Sky: Observations on Anality and Defense* (Guilford Press: New York, 1988), p.11. Shengold also makes some pertinent observations about the importance of a healthy anality to the creative impulse in a psychoanalytically focussed discussion of novelist Gustave Flaubert's life and work at pp.46-49.

This reversal of epistemological know-how from holistic, unitary coherence and a seamless application of a consistent method, to the foregrounding of a set of multitudinous interrelations among small, irregular matters is the kind of logic chora instinctively 'knows' best. Accusatory dismissals of unintelligibility and inconsequentiality abound from 'coherent', 'hierarchical' systems, be they epistemological, social, political, cultural or economic in character, largely because the power of naming and arguing, and of defining relevance and coherence itself, resides with the victors and owners/controllers of these domains. Many of the vanquished in both real and abstract warfare are also robbed of their epistemological power along with their bodies, homes and identities. All the while, though, the microcosmic and the everyday (and their volatile interrelations) continue under the panoptic gaze of electronic surveillance while also remaining partly 'unseen' by the power-blocs of knowledgeable authority. However, these everyday instantiations of knowledge are not completely obliterated but are sometimes left to look after themselves until such time when another crisis or transition is called into play. Or just maybe, this beginning-again, this re-emergence occurs when a reinvigorated structure of knowledge is called forth because the gap between the real and what a power-bloc comes to know of it through established formulae no longer produces coherent results from within the overwhelming dominance of a utilitarian and a hierarchical system. Everyday minutiae percolate with this energy of the unsaid and the microcosmically sensed and felt, a process that is sometimes a resource and sometimes a curse for re-current hegemonies and for the future transformation of epistemological form and political structure.

Through one viewfinder 'Rough Grid' could be located in that tradition of flick-through picture books that were popular in the pre-history of the cinema and can sometimes still be found in children's toyshops today. From another tangent 'Rough Grid' could also be viewed as the script of an artist's book. A point that can be taken from these traditions is that both flick-through and artist's books had to be *designed* as much as written.[7] When using an overtly heterogenous array of source materials, materials that don't seem to cohere conceptually into one tidy paradigm or method, a producer has to think more carefully about the *layout* of that diverse material. Spatial layout is critical to design and the latter is not just an add-on to the conceptualisation of an idea as is often thought in literate practices. The design process here in 'Rough Grid' then might best be seen as the infrastructural matrix in and through which a diversity of ideas percolate and cross-pollinate but don't necessarily cohere in a traditional unitary sense. In short, 'Rough Grid' is a difficult intersection of personal and collective, abstract and implaced memorising, a practice of thought-in-action as much as an act of representation.

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[7]   In focusing on design I am, in part, responding to C. A. Hooker's remark that 'the whole world is shifting from reacting to what has happened, to designing what will happen.' Quoted in Ian Howard, 'From the Inside Out: The Farm as Place', in Andrew Light & Jonathan Smith (eds.), *Philosophy and Geography III: Philosophies of Place* (Rowman & Littlefield: Lanham, Maryland, 1998), p.148.

The diverse, sometimes irreconcilable content infra-structured in and through 'Rough Grid' by this design process consists of the following assortment of elements: pictures, graphics, sound bites, essays (shorter and longer), aphorisms, quotes, overheard snippets of conversations, scripts, among other detritus. A crucial infra-structural design component of 'Rough Grid' will be the connective coils of 'signal wire' arbitrarily bonding each of these miscellaneous components in the design of an electronic circuit. Using the simple conceit of a schematic diagram as a representation for an electronic circuit (with its suggestive symbols for resistance, capacitance, rectification, conduction, motors, insulation, volts, amps, current, logic gates, power supplies, batteries, antenna, switches, AC/DC, plugs, terminals, solenoids, diodes, coils, resonators, crystals, transistors, I-Cs, inverters, rectifiers, and groundings etc.) 'Rough Grid', in effect, gives voice to the overarching (and in this case contradictory) historical point that, 'The electrical industry is exceptional in that its birth and development were the direct consequence of scientific research.'[8] The embedded contradiction here is located specifically in the idea that a scientifically originated notation system can be utilised as an aesthetic and a creative means to infrastructure a theoretical/philosophical/artistic experiment. This is an appropriately contradictory way to chora-logically 'cohere' the content of 'Rough Grid'. To add emphasis to this electronically focussed means of infra-structuration, 'Rough Grid' might occasionally include examples from other systems of notation that writing sometimes ignores, for example, architectural, mathematical, dance, movement and gesticulating forms of notation, as well as forms of notation that represent the sub-atomic world. In other words a variety of notation systems might be deployed as graphical interfaces interspersed in and on the signal lines that connect up the miscellany of bits and bytes that constitute 'Rough Grid', although I would reiterate that it is the lines and symbols of the electronic circuit (in the primary colours of red — electronic?, green — oral/aural?, and blue — text?) that will predominate in this context. The insertion of these coloured lines of e-circuitry into the actual text could be random and/or deliberate. It is equally up to the audience to make 'sense' of them in and from their own context/s.

Given the sometimes fundamentalist gestalt of our era there are those who will be uneasy about such a disruption to logical procedure and so to indicate there is also room even in this epistemological underworld for those who actively seek out order and control from the highest levels there is, along with this 'Game Plan', the following compromise. On the next page (separated out from the rest of the discourse so that those players who would like to ignore this following concession are able to do so) there is an 'instruction manual', a kind of rules-of-the-game compendium for 'Rough Grid', compiled for those who are unable or unwilling to embark into uncharted territory without a map.

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[8]   T. K. Derry & Trevor I. Williams, *A Short History of Technology* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1960), p.608.

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So take leave now wily players, you are about to enter the 'magic circle' of 'Rough Grid', a region where the 'rules' of life, association, game-play and interpretation are themselves unique to this specific locale of un/knowing.[9] And in this leaving, take also the blessings of its author who, fearful of accusations of irrelevance, simplicity or solecism, will now absent himself from his own discourse, giving it over to a disembodied editor, a doppelganger who sits like a monkey on the back of Terrence Maybury insisting always on the need for order, for coherence and logical sequence.[10] Later, we might meet up again in some other context to reflect on the success and/or failure of this excursion to come.

[*Fχ/MUSIC:* *Throughout the entire journey of 'Rough Grid', try to imagine Allen Lamb's sound recordings of wind meandering through telegraph wires and fences.*][11]

[THE END OF THE BEGINNING]

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9   The idea of a 'magic circle' arises in gaming and identifies the exclusive, self-contained character of the rules of play within any given game. See Katie Salen & Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England, 2004), pp.92-99. Also, it might be useful to think of the concept of the magic circle as an electronic equivalent to Wittgenstein's notion of language games as he discusses it in *Philosophical Investigations* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1967). The difficulty and joy of implaced forms of knowledge though is that they sometimes idiosyncratically mix and match the rules of play from various sources.

10   This ploy arises out of Ulmer's comment that, 'Maria Carey was once cited in a newspaper article, in response to a flurry of rumours about her love life, as saying that *her image was having more fun then she was*. An important authoring skill in electracy concerns learning to "write" in the virtual sphere with this disembodied projection of one's "self." See, *Internet Invention*, p.312. [Italics in the original].

11   Details of Allan Lamb's experiments in sound design are available at the Australian Sound Design Website at <www.sounddesign.unimelb.edu.au/web/biogs/P000277b.htm>. [Accessed 8/11/2006].

[Click -χ- to proceed to the 'The Rules of the Game']

and/or

[Click -χ- to be randomly inserted into the middle of 'Rough Grid']

and/but

[Click -χ- to exit the game]

and/maybe

[Click -χ- you will stay precisely where you are]

Rough Grid: Electrate Regionality

-χ-   -χ-
-χ-   -χ-

The Rules of the Game

1. Throw a dice to begin and use that number to advance the required number of pages to start imbibing 'Rough Grid'. If you end up in the middle of a micro-story you can either start there or rewind to its micro-beginning.

2. Holding the bulk of the pages of 'Rough Grid' between the index finger and thumb of your left hand and steadying it with your right hand estimate the middle of the manuscript and start work from there.

3. Consider the graphical and notational component of 'Rough Grid' as being equal to, even superior to the written and/or imaged component.

4. Consider the red line of cables are meant to indicate a visual epistemology, the yellow lines an oral/aural trajectory, and the blue lines a textual epistemology. At times these coloured cables get confused and arbitrary.

5. Put a time limit on imbibing 'Rough Grid'.

6. Begin at the end of 'Rough Grid' and wander forward to the beginning.

7. Work through 'Rough Grid' in a random pattern of your own devising.

8. Feel free to make comments within the text itself. There are feedback boxes provided but don't let that limit you.

9. [_____]
    Make up your own 'Rules of the Game'.

10. Return to Sender.

[MENU]

[Terrence Shaun Maybury, Born 25/6/1957, Wagga Wagga, Riverina]

Domestic photographs are the

antiques of the postmodern world.

Don Slater [12]

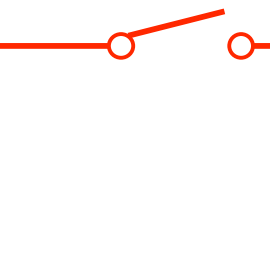[12] Don Slater, 'Domestic Photography and Digital Culture,' in Martin Lister (ed.), *The Photographic Image in Digital Culture* (Routledge: London & New York, 1995), p.145. [Italics in the original].
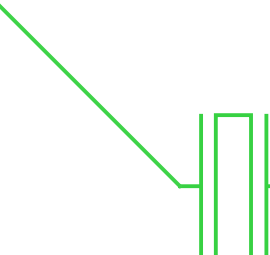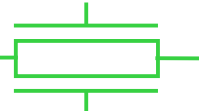
Hello Victoria,

I don't know whether you're familiar with it down Gippsland way but up here in the Rainbow Region there is a popular poster called the *Astrology and Moon Planting Guide* that comes out every year.[13] In the middle of the circle depicting the zodiac there is a fascinating story along the lines of the world being in the middle of bottoming out in a 70-year cycle, with this particular decade we are now in (the noughties!) being the nadir of the madness. The poster claims that the 60s were the high point of this cycle and that the Depression of the 1930s was the nadir of the last cycle. Keeping in mind astrology makes periodic comebacks in times of social and political chaos (I vaguely remember reading this somewhere) the comments seemed to be both profound and self-serving. Nonetheless, the poster has made a distinct impression on me to the extent that (for the first time) I've got it pinned to my note-board in my caravan-office. The moon and its daily rhythms have always instinctively attracted me but this is the first time I felt a more conscious connection.

The *2004 Astrological Calendar and Moon Planting Guide* is probably attached to the walls of a great many homes right across Australia. It is in the Northern Rivers region though where I've seen the calendar most frequently displayed. As its author says: 'All calendars, modern or ancient, have as their basis the movements of the solar system.' Time then, as signified by calendars, is an attempt at measuring the various interlocking movements of the solar system. That the calendar displays time as a circular phenomenon rather than a linear one might actually arise out of the pagan origins of astrology and makes it pertinent to my own obsession with electracy. In the Rainbow Region, astrology and the many associated healing arts like reiki and palm-reading are highly popular, as any reading of the classified section of Byron Bay's unique community newspaper — the *Byron Shire Echo* — will confirm. It's also a running joke in the Rainbow Region that the first question you ask upon meeting someone new is to ask them what their star sign is. For the first time in 2004 I pinned up it up in my work-space, you know my old studio-caravan that overlooks a dam to the north. I did so largely because of the following bit I copied from the poster:

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[13] Thomas Zimmer, *2004 Astrological Calendar and Moon Planting Guide*, published by Thomas Zimmer, Mt. Cougal Rd., Tallebudgera Valley, Queensland. This poster-size calendar is a circular rendition, in graphic form, of every day of the year. On the outside of the circle, rendering the month/day/date configuration, is an illustration of the various movements of the moon. The circle is also demarcated by the twelve categories of the zodiac, the basis of the star sign system. Of my own star sign — Cancer — it says: '... born with a strongly sentimental nature, the 'CRAB' finds greatness through nurturing in others A HEATLHY SENSE OF BELONGING'. Further citations are taken directly from this poster.

The challenge of describing this year's astrological 'mood' — that is to say the kind of 'learning environment' the year will present us with — is not a comfortable one. There do exist patterns and cycles in human affairs, and in a tentative way these can be read symbolically from the movements of the solar system. And at present, one can hardly attempt to comment on these patterns without addressing the subject of <u>fear</u>.

This concentration of fear might be attributed to the religious conflicts currently afflicting the globe but according to the calendar's text there is a deeper astrological wisdom involved: 'We are not looking at a short term, passing, preoccupation. We are looking at a large, weighty cycle, a 'pendulum' which swings between love/trust, and fear/contraction — affecting the world in a slow 72-year rhythm.' This is a rhythm that is 'defined by the 'precession' motion of the earth's axis: 72 years equals one degree of precession, half positive and half negative.' The calendar then charts this current cycle back to the 1929 stock market crash, and inversely, back through the heady days of the 1960s and up till now where, 'The trough of the negative half of the cycle is this coming decade'. This astro-logic puts our fate clearly under the spell of cosmic forces, a delineation that marks any human means of control as a largely futile gesture. Understandably, these monumental cosmic forces are delineated by, and referenced to, actual historical events, and in conjunction with the human subject at the centre of astro-logic, these various healing arts (especially astrology) have contributed their fair share to the transformation of our understanding of a person's relation to scale. In a weird way, a concentration on the smaller scales (each human's uniqueness in the astrosphere; and equally, in a more straightforward scientific sense, the microscopic, the sub-atomic) brings with it a concentration on the infinite. The more *limitless* our understanding of the cosmic scale becomes, the more the even macro *and* the micro levels appear outside of our control. Astro-logic, like geno-logic, makes for an imagined situation where the preordination of bodies, and the events and actions in which they are nested, is inscribed in cosmic legislation and seems largely unalterable.
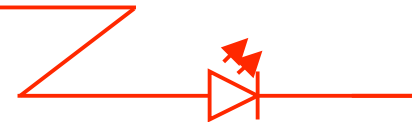
By the way what's your star sign?

TiSM

[THE END]

[Reginald Royce Maybury and Mary Patricia Berryman, Eloped and Married, 1946]

[Body Place]

Is it possible to forego the knowledge of *my* body when discussing *the* body as a central element of implaced knowledge?[15] Clearly the case argued so far would indicate no. The urgency of a spatial epistemology energises all the flows of my body, *and* their contribution to the knowledge it produces, whether on paper, on screen, or on tape. Blood, for one, is obvious: with the heart as its pump (and a great symbolic engine-room of love and hate, both so intimately tied to the production of knowledge), makes its movement-impulse known to all the flesh. Urine, only known when passed out, might remind you of the necessity for drinking it if you were to fall into a situation where water was absent and a grinding thirst animated the body. Snot and mucus are well known to those with allergies. And if Elizabeth Grosz was able to examine 'come' in a microscope when she was young (like a lot of young boys with the means to do so have), she might have said something different about this sticky fluid:

Seminal fluid is understood primarily as what it makes, what is achieves, a causal agent and thus a thing, a solid: its fluidity, its potential seepage, the element in it that is uncontrollable, its spread, its formlessness, is perpetually displaced in discourse onto its properties, its capacities to fertilize, to father, to produce an object. Man sees that his "function" is to create, and own, at a (temporal and spatial) distance, and thus to extend bodily interests beyond the male body's skin through its proprietorial role, its "extended corporeality" in the mother whom he has impregnated and the child thereby produced, making them *his* products, possessions, responsibilities.[16]

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[14] Plato, *Timaeus and Critias* [91], pp.122-123.

[15] Elspeth Probyn traces this distinction between 'my body' and 'the body' back to Adrienne Rich's work in 'Travels in the Postmodern: Making Sense of the Local,' in Linda J. Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (Routledge: New York, 1990), pp.176-177.

[16] Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* (Allen & Unwin: Sydney, 1994), p.199. [Italics in the original].

Certainly semen is sometimes a 'thing' utilised by masculine desire to possess and own the other, although the 'Map of Tasmania' (that splendid Australian euphemism for female genitalia) has its own means of dealing with ownership and control. Semen's 'formlessness' though is equally attractive: it means I can spray it about and *not* be responsible; equally, its 'products' are not mine to possess. They are merely the consequences of my lust (for sex?, for love?, for power?), something the socio-political order might allow me to hide, ignore, or pay off as a mistress or a whore. (Which might also raise two related questions: "Does the payee own the body of the prostitute?" and "Does the institution own the employee with a salary?") YES and NO. In this scenario a male can own anything but his own body, a point that might invariably come back to Grosz' position. But whether my own desire wants to possess the end-products of my body or not (products that might be classified as il/legal acts, neuroses, children, or cultural artefacts, or merely sticky fingers), in actuality, once they are out in the world they make their own way regardless of my proprietorial intentions. Grosz is right to imply though that the body's internal flows, and its external secretions, have a direct bearing on the quest for mastery over the cosmos, but in the latter it is also recognised that this mastery is equally illusory and speculative as it is coherent and objective. In this discourse — *Chora-Logic* — my own body is the central node of its production, but that is not the same as saying that I own that production once it goes on its way. It is the node that cross-fertilises other relevant nodes and serves to foreshadow other possible future nodes where these issues might be taken up. Even if I wanted to I have little interest in owning and controlling it once it makes its way out into the world. My interest remains in getting it out into the world by assisting its in becoming and its passage. My body is *in* the method of *Chora-Logic* to the extent that its many internal flows (both in mind and matter), and the secretions that arise out of it, are fundamental to its production. And it is this personal move from fixity to flow in the psyche that helps instigate this idea of the reflexive self.

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Arising initially in the sociological work of Scott Lash and John Urry, the concept of 'reflexivity' is now of crucial importance in understanding the make-up of the citizen-subject in local/regional spaces as well as in its global manifestations.[17] Before launching an expedition in search of reflexivity though it might be a useful point of departure to reflect on nationalised forms of fixed subjectivity that came to dominate thinking on this subject in the high-literate era. An emblematic reference point here is Russel Ward's *The Australian Legend* which argued that bush workers (in the form of convicts, shearers, gold-diggers, drovers, even swaggies), came to be the fixed models of subject formation on which a nascent 19th century white Australian nationalism was built.[18] This mythos of the bush worker made its way into Labor Party thinking and policy and was subsequently partially displaced and added to by the diggers of Gallipoli. While the more fixed forms of subjectivity that Ward mentions is contradicted by his emphasis on the 'stringy bark and green-hide' (p.182) pragmatism of the bushman (a quality that suggests the existence of a reflexive prehistory in Australian forms of literate subjectivity) it was these fixed forms that came to dominate discourse on what constitutes a 'real' Australian. In this burgeoning official national context it was imperative that the vernacular Rule #1: "No Poofters", was not only adhered to but closely followed by Rule #2: "No Sheilas", and equally by Rule #3: "No Dagos, Wogs, Niggers, or Slanty Eyes", making the national focus of subject formation clearly marshalled around simplified one-dimensional means of definition and exclusion.

While it is difficult to say whether the fixed nature of these subject forms arose out of their manipulation by ruling class interests or enthusiasm for them by an embryonic working class it remains the point that in national mythology they carried significant weight as models of subject identification. Ward also provides another instance of the important role increasing levels of literacy, via the spread of public education and the arrival of educated 'new chums' from the Mother Country during the period *The Australian Legend* speaks of, to this intensifying national chauvinism. The apotheosis of this educated bush sensibility was the sublime novel, *Such is Life*, Joseph Furphy's (aka Tom Collins) philosophical musings on life's vicissitudes

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[17]   Scott Lash & John Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space* (Sage: London, 1994), in particular see 'Reflexive Subjects', pp.31-59.
[18]   Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 1966).

and a model literary example of digressionary form coming at the expense of narrative continuity and seamlessness.[19] It hardly needs mentioning that the erudition this sensibility evoked was, for example, counter-pointed with the 'opposing tradition of 'Dad and Mum, Dave and Mabel'' from Steele Rudd's *On Our Selection*, a series of comic novels in which these aforementioned central characters eventually became 'semi-moronic, burlesque puppets' in the 'popular imagination' (*The Australian Legend*, p.5). In psychic, cultural, and political productions of all persuasions then this kind of boundary setting between idiocy and erudition continues to this day, as even a casual reading of *Big Brother* should verify. Lastly, an important part of Ward's method is worth mentioning in light of its possible relevance to developing forms of electracy: along with the usual historical forms of verification, much of the evidence he uses to substantiate his claims in this text are quotes from popular songs and ballads that were widely disseminated in Australia during the 19th century and on into the 20th century.[20] Once again popular culture plays an essential role in subject formation and identification because it is clear that in our late 20th and early 21st century contexts the highly mutable forms of pop music are a significant influence in the construction of the 'reflexive subject'.

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What can this term *reflexive* mean then? One primary definition, to quote the *Macquarie Dictionary*, is that, '(of a verb) having an identical object and subject, as *shave* in *he shaved himself*'. This is a good starting point in that learning here is not merely about mastering an already existing body of knowledge, an object to be framed for/or by the citizen/subject. Taken literally, if the object and the subject of knowledge are identical in reflexive forms of subjectivity it would produce an onanism of the most profound kind. In some ways the long-term production of objectivity and subjectivity had to occur to a substantial degree before a reflexive subject could come into being and so intensify that reflexivity to such an extent that it

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[19] Tom Collins, *Such Is Life* (Angus & Robertson Classics Edition: Sydney, 1975). *Such is Life* is set in the Riverina where its central character — Tom Collins — is a kind of itinerant but unemployed bureaucrat.

[20] A Joycian example here is the still widely sung 'convict-bushranger ballad', 'Bold Jack Donahue', whose first verse goes like this:
>   In Dublin town I was brought up, in that city of great fame —
>   My decent friends and parents, they will tell you the same.
>   It was for the sake of five hundred pounds I was sent across the main,
>   For seven long years in *New South Wales* to wear a convict's chain.
For the full text of the lyrics of this ballad see Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, pp.166-167. This textual citation though omits the accompanying music, a significant aide-mémoire to the popularisation mentioned and which is a significant omission of written texts.

becomes a significant element in the psyche and subsequently produces changes in intensity that are in league with, pre-date, or sometimes follow on from various cultural and political movements.

Reflexivity, then, is that element of the psyche that, rather than seeing either objects of knowledge or subject delineation and identification as fixed entities, postulates that all knowledge categories are a means via which constant reflection can, might and should take place. All knowledge categories are the raw data for mutable forms of subject-making confirming the idea that, 'Reflexivity is a crucial dimension of 'intelligence' that is itself clearly a fundamental ingredient of learning capability.'[21]   And while Cooke and Morgan see this 'intelligence' in institutional and organisational terms, the reflexive quality of the psyche (which may have been repressed or ignored in more nationalised contexts), is the cognitive modality which is the principle means of arbitrating, monitoring, comparing, contrasting, synthesising, even rejecting the way multiple domains of data, information, knowledge, and wisdom are incorporated into and out of the body. This reflexiveness is especially pertinent in dynamic Post-Fordist, post-modern, globalised/regionalised/localised contexts within which electracy currently flourishes. In psychic terms, a reflexive sensibility not only 'focuses on the relationship of different elements in the *same* system with each other', but all the elements that might be constituted by, within, and across a wide range of different systems operating simultaneously but which are not necessarily in sync with one another.[22] While the psyche doesn't so much care if the material presented for its reflexive arbitration is real/actual or representational/virtual, its limits are its own epistemological saturation; a collapse in data processing that is sometimes corporeally manifested as a 'nervous' breakdown. Reflexiveness then presupposes a multiple array of objects, a manifold number of both subjects and subject-positions, and a variety of mixed methods to process/ignore it all. All this sets the stage for an optimal level of innovation, or at least it creates favourable epistemological and psychological conditions for innovation and experimentation to take *place*. A reflexive subject is an implaced subject, implaced psychically, domestically, locally, regionally, nationally, globally, or cosmically by this variable multiplicity.

<div align="center">[THE END]</div>

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[21]   Philip Cooke & Kevin Morgan, *The Associational Economy*, Firms, Regions and Innovation (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1988), p.73.
[22]   Philip Cooke & Kevin Morgan, *The Associational Economy*, p.74. [Italics added].

[Here through a hole in the change rooms at the Wagga Beach,
Young Maybury spied his first naked woman.]

[(Captain Cook):(Re-Births):(Byron Bay)]

[An Abridged Version of an Essay Maybury Published in the journal *Transformations*]

We all live in a Perpetual Present. Behind us we have our own envisaged Past; with us is our own confusing and imperative Present, subject to compulsive expedient; ahead of us we have only our surmised Future of unsure prophecy and expectation. With these we make our way, doing what we must and constantly bending to demanding necessity, while trying to hold fast to our best intentions.

Ray Parkin [23]

During the course of 1770 Captain James Cook, botanist/entrepreneur Joseph Banks, and the crew of Her Majesty's Bark *Endeavour* proceeded from their circumnavigation of New Zealand's coastline to discover, explore and map the east coast of New Holland, as Australia was then known. Starting from Port Hicks near the current New South Wales/Victorian border, this famous voyage of discovery stopped at Botany Bay, eventually passing and naming Cape Byron and Mt Warning in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, and finishing its exploratory work at the top-end of Cape York in northern Australia. As Paul Carter notes, Cook has an ambivalent role in Australian history, variously exalted, ignored and vilified as a foundation figure.[24] More poignantly, at least according to Mark McKenna in *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* (a regional history of the Eden-Monaro area where Cook first sighted the Great South Land at Port Hicks), the bicentenary of the *Endeavour*'s landing at Botany Bay on the 29th April 1970 inaugurates a 'moral crisis' for the

[23]   Ray Parkin, *H. M. Bark* Endeavour: *Her Place in Australian History: with an Account of her Construction, Crew and Equipment and a Narrative of her Voyage on the East Coast of New Holland in the Year 1770: with Plans, Charts and Illustrations by the Author* (Melbourne University Press: Melbourne, 1999), p.ix. [Italics in the original].

[24]   Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History* (Faber & Faber: London, 1987), p.1.

nation and is marked by Indigenous Australians as a 'day of mourning.'[25] For Carter though Cook is a traveller with a 'propensity for coasting' (*The Road to Botany Bay*, p.2), and in our national imagination he (and possibly us) have continued to do just that right up until this day. If forgetting the historical trauma and the moral conundrum inaugurated by the *Endeavour*'s journey is not an option, how might it be possible to re-conceive our personal and collective understanding of it?

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Given the *Endeavour*'s journey is a national myth, one of the grand narratives of white Australia, and one often interpreted through the literate technology of Cook's journal (an outlook that explicates the voyage from a singular perspective), an alternative kind of imagining might be to look at the journey through a conglomeration of differing but intersecting perspectives so as this 'moral crisis' might be better confronted in its complexity rather than in the journey's singular certainty as an inaugurating national myth. This kind of multiple re-telling of the *Endeavour* myth is important because, as then Prime Minister Paul Keating implied in his Redfern Park speech of 1992, white Australia needs to deal with the injustices metered out to Indigenous Australians, injustices that came about partly as a result of this voyage of discovery.[26] If each subsequent generation has a responsibility to reinterpret the recurring myths of a tribe, the *Endeavour*'s journey must rank as one of our Top Ten legends in need of an epistemological overhaul.

In this particular re-birthing of the *Endeavour*'s journey I would like to look at it from a local and a regional perspective rather than a national one, in part inspired by the way *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* questions the period of time in between the *Endeavour*'s initial sighting of Point Hicks in 1770 and the first arrival of white settlers in the Eden-Monaro area in the 1830s, a 'period during which Aboriginal societies fought for their land' (p.92). Indeed, before European takeover the Great South Land could equally be conceived of as a plurality of regional societies more than it was a national one. In concert with this local/regional perspective (Byron Bay and the Northern Rivers of New South Wales respectively) there is also a focus on how the body operates in space, in particular how the crew of the *Endeavour* might have corporeally engaged with the world in a nautical context, one where their gaze was for the most part terrestrially directed. This is an attempt to shift the spotlight from the actual continent the *Endeavour*'s voyage is said to have

25   Mark McKenna, *Looking for Blackfellas' Point: An Australian History of Place* (University of New South Wales Press: Sydney, 2002), pp.157-158.
26   Paul Keating, 'The Redfern Park Speech', in Mark Ryan (ed.), *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Big Picture: Sydney, 1995), pp.227-231.

discovered to the space of the ship itself, and to use this as a means of contrasting the *oceanic* and the *terrestrial*, or the *fixed* and the *fluid*, a dyadic quadrant that dialectically entrains this voyage as it makes its way up the east coast in 1770. Equally, the fixed and the fluid is also a dyad critical to our understanding of the structures of knowledge. Thirdly, there is a sense in which this journey might also be re-conceived through an electronic epistemology, or in Gregory Ulmer's terms an 'electrate' approach rather than a literate one. Ironically, this latter emphasis is an approach that was also suggested to me via a reading of Ray Parkin's 'book' H. M. Bark *Endeavour*.

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Ray Parkin's H. M. Bark *Endeavour* excerpts journal material from among the *Endeavour*'s personnel, features of the ship's construction details, some of its plans and charts, along with aspects of its sailing capacities in both written and graphic form, a combination the author then syncopates with his own commentary. While H. M. Bark *Endeavour* projects itself almost as a multimedia exercise in a literate form, it still doesn't *move* in space, or even allow itself to get *Lost in Space*. Parkin has been a sailor so he knows his spatial co-ordinates too well to get lost, either textually or spatially. On Tuesday May 15 1770 though, while Cook and company are coasting along the ocean adjacent to the sub-tropical region now known as the Northern Rivers, he names the first of two still significant places there:

A tolerable high point of land bore NWbW distant 3 miles—this point I named *Cape Byron* (Latitude 28° 27´ 30" s, Long^de 206° 30´ West). It may be known by a remarkable sharp peaked Mountain lying inland NWbW from it. From this point the land trends N 13° W. Inland it is pretty high and hilly but near the shore it is low; to the southward of the point the land is low and tolerable level. (Cook, quoted in H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, p.220).

The next day, after sailing a little further north and looking back at that same 'remarkable sharp peaked Mountain' from a south-west bearing (just offshore from where the border-town of Tweed Heads now stands) Cook notes in his journal:

We now saw the breakers again within us which we past at the distance of about 1 League, they lay in the Lat^de of 28° 8´ & stretch off East two Leagues from a point under which is a small island, their situation may always be found by the peaked mountain before mentioned which bears swbw from them and on this account I have named *Mount Warning*. It lies 7 or 8 Leagues inland in the latitude of 28° 22´ s, the land is high and hilly about it but it is conspicuous enough to be distinguished from everything else. (Cook, quoted in H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, pp.222-223).
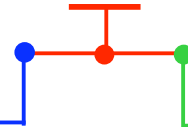
Cook's touring alter-ego — Joseph Banks — notes briefly of the same landscape feature: 'At sun set a remarkable peaked hill was in sight 5 or 6 leagues off in the countrey, which about it was well wooded and looked beautiful as well as fertile' (Banks, quoted in H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, p.223). With the liquid fathoms of ocean underneath them ('One fathom equals 1.82 metres, or six feet', Parkin, *H. M. Bark* Endeavour, p.*viii*), and the peak of the now-named Mt Warning lifting their gaze, the participants in this voyage used the act of naming to inaugurate an embryonic knowledge of the spatial co-ordinates of the Northern Rivers and Byron Bay, co-ordinates that placed both the locality and the region on the Mercator's projection, the imaginary grid that still girds the globe's maps. Significantly, at least as Parkin argues it, the '*Endeavour* was armed only defensively. The voyage was a voyage after knowledge, not conquest' (H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, p.*x*). 'Knowledge', 'conquest' and 'naming' are rarely absent from each other's company, all are inextricably linked, so to suggest otherwise is an implausible naivety. If previously the Great South Land was a satirical figment of Jonathan Swift's imaginary world in *Gulliver's Travels*, with Cook's naming of Cape Byron and Mt Warning, along with the mapping of their spatial co-ordinates, there is a material instantiation of the global ethic that has come to pervade much of Byron Bay and the Northern Rivers today.

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The figure of Mt Warning is the most monumental landscape feature of the Northern Rivers and a reminder of the Old World of Europe in its sublime capacity as a form of spatially acquired knowledge. Mt Warning is an extinct volcano whose prehistoric eruptions provided the basis for the fertility of the soils in the Northern Rivers region.[27] Also (and regardless of whether Parkin thinks the *Endeavour*'s journey had little to do with 'conquest'), his comment that, 'Mount Warning, whose peak is remarkably like that of the

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[27] This centrality of Mt Warning to the region's physiography is described in Bruce W. Graham, *Tweed Volcanic Region: 360 Million Years Ago to the Present* (Self Published: Tweed Heads, New South Wales, 2001), see especially 'Mt. Warning Central Complex', pp.41-64.

Matterhorn from this [south-west] bearing' (H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, p.221) evokes the static and monumental nature of European political power at an early pinnacle of its colonising ascendancy, as well as suggesting that a mountain top is the most beautiful of all landscapes. Sometimes considered one of the seven wonders of the natural world, the Matterhorn is a mountain peak rising 4,478 metres (14,692 feet) out of the Pennine Alps on the border between Switzerland and Italy and is a sight/site of sublime beauty. According to Simon Schama, a commonplace of European colonialism at the time of Cook's journey was '... that the possession of a mountaintop was a title to lordship. To a truly absolute prince, nothing, certainly not a pile of rock, should be "inaccessible," beyond the reach of his sovereignty.'[28] In this frame, the naming and ascension of a mountain are akin to institutionalising the principle of sacred autonomy, and the keeping in perpetuity of a fixed domain of political and epistemological power over the surrounding countryside. The mountain and its conquest, then, is a landscape figure that connects human knowledge to the unchanging word of God, or at least to the latter's Christian version, and a spatial means of creating the illusion of political and epistemological permanence.

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While it was some time before Europeans actually conquered Mt Warning, of *possessing* the views and the countryside afforded by its naming, mapping and ascent, the comparison between the two peaks remains instructive because acknowledging the height of a landscape feature in the exploration and discovery phase implied the nascent, even if somewhat hesitant imperial/colonial ambitions England had for New Holland at this time. This imperial predilection then foregoes an in-situ understanding of Mt Warning as 'a magnificent physical statement of 24 million years of land building and re-shaping, occasional bursts of violence, and life giving opportunities',[29] or of the local Indigenous people's spiritual or geo-political understanding of it, and gives its European name an expanded lexical inflexion than the one Cook intended: a *warning* of the 'timeless' European power to come. This additive level of meaning also insinuates the idea that the mountain is a landscape figure that presages the panopticon, as well as the surveillance society of global capitalism, both of which are now animated by electronic communication. From the top of a mountain, any centralising character can knock out a tune like "*I Can See Everything Clearly Now*". The *naming* of Mt Warning, then, fixates a European politics of

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[28]   Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (Fontana: London, 1996), p.423. Schama also gives an account of the relationship between mountains and Christianity at pp.411-417.
[29]   Bruce W. Graham, *Tweed Volcanic Region*, n.p.

space over its Australian variation and in so doing *thinks* that mountains and land don't change, or that human will or knowledge can't reshape our understanding of them, or ourselves. This is a control complex exercised on a titanic socio-political scale as much as it is an ordering, a naming of nature as well as providing an oblique clue as to the unchanging 'reality' of the *Endeavour*'s journey as an Antipodean foundation myth.

While the fixed nature of European socio-political power is sometimes concreted into place by its re/production in the more mechanical technologies of literate *textuality*, it is the *contextuality* of the *Endeavour*'s journey that also deserves highlighting here.[30] As Carter interprets the Cook/Banks relationship (the former intuitive, metaphorical; the latter a master of a more fixed Linnaean inspired objective formalism),[31] it was nonetheless one conducted mostly in an oceanic context, a context where an understanding of the 'body's bilaterality' (that is, the body's above/below, in-front/behind, and its left/right axes), is crucial.[32] These intersecting trajectories are utterly spatio-temporalising entities that corporeally configure our life-world experience as a four dimensional phenomenon, especially in the confined but fluid space of a sea-going vessel; they also help confer a centring privilege on bodily movement while remaining a serious impediment to epistemological stasis or a fixed gestalt. Even in more fixed terrestrial landscapes the body remains in perennial movement, so when located on the ocean there is a double movement of both the body *and* its context. As well, this double movement of the body's bilaterality, in conjunction with the oceanic, gives some *compositional* authority to the actual bodies held in their dual sway. The intersecting motion of these axes draws the body more intensely into its specific place on the globe (its *located* position) while simultaneously marking out the trajectory of its earthly movement (its passage from here to there, from birth to death).

These spatially mobile crosshairs animating the body-in-place (that is, the specific contextualised movement of the above/below, the in-front/behind, and the left/right axes of the body) are profoundly embedded in all of us, while also being imminent to all human groupings. It might then be fruitful to conjure up in our current thinking the bilateralising and contextualising capacities of any one, or a number of bodies on the *Endeavour*, as the ship made its way up the east coast of New Holland in 1770. This placement of actual bodies on the *Endeavour* (a understanding we can learn a great deal about from Parkin's 'book' H. M. Bark *Endeavour*), then, refers us to the

[30]   On this question of 'texts' and 'contexts', see Arjun Appadurai, 'The Production of Locality', in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (University of Minneapolis Press: Minneapolis & London, 1996), p.187.

[31]   Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History* (Faber & Faber: London, 1987), p.29.

[32]   It is Edward S. Casey who refers to these axes as 'the bilaterality' in *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1997), pp.207-210 & 236-237.

contextuality of a given code, production, event, or understanding, as much as its textuality, a change in emphasis vital to re-examining the nature of change, re-invention, and re-discovery. We need to do this in order to enhance the prospect of the latter trio's instantiation in economy, culture and politics, something that is already happening vis-à-vis the *Endeavour*'s journey.

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As the veils of repression surrounding our historical understanding of the *Endeavour*'s journey and its aftermath are increasingly contested, a process akin to Norman Brown's comment that, 'The dynamic of history is the slow return of the repressed.'[33] In Walter Benjamin's terms this is a 'moment of danger' where the actual mode of production in which our knowledge of the journey is couched is also contested.[34] An epistemological reformation (that is, questioning *how* and in *what* form our knowledge of a particular object or event is constituted), then, is a co-production partner with any historical, political or moral re-evaluation. So, in the slow-motion movement from Cook's era to our own, this 'oceanic feeling' of the *Endeavour*'s journey has moved onto land at Byron Bay, a Northern Rivers town that has undergone significant change with the ongoing pressures and pleasures of globalisation.

Byron Bay is now a significant staging point in a multiplicity of global trails, while also being a locality that is sometimes still jokingly referred to as a northern suburb of Sydney as well as a town 'increasingly colonised by 'bourgeois bohemians'', usually cashed-up former city-dwellers in search of the rural idyll.[35] With a heady mix of resurgent Bundjalung traditions and re-negotiations engaging both local indigenous people and more recent settlers; a by-gone history as a whaling station; a social tapestry comprised of a constant around-the-clock movement of hippies, back-packers, tourists and ferals; throw in some new-age mysticism (personal growth workshops centred on charkas, re-birthing and the sacred feminine are common in the Bay); a vocal creative community; as well as a justifiable reputation for expensive real estate; all these elements, and more, make Byron Bay a unique locality in the Australian spatial imagination. In this heated local space, the gifted citizen-subject is the one who stays mobile to the elements of self-making, actuality and discourse. This is also a citizen-subject made psychically, culturally and politico-economically mobile by interaction with the globalised flows of a pluralised network of electronic epistemologies and is less a part of the unitary certainty that exemplifies some of the debates

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33   Norman O. Brown, *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytic Meaning of History* (Wesleyan University Press: Connecticut, 1959), p.230.
34   Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (Fontana: London, 1973), p.247.
35   Ian Burnley & Peter Murphy, *Sea Change: Movement from Metropolitan to Arcadian Australia* (University of New South Wales Press: Sydney, 2004), p.224.

over nationalism or national character. This shift from a unitary-nationalist mode of knowledge production to a global-pluralist one is what most typifies Byron Bay as a community and many of the people who live there.

Conjunctively then, Parkin's H. M. Bark *Endeavour* and the journey it depicts, the current state of the Byron Bay locality, and more broadly, the nature and culture of the Northern Rivers region, should satisfy Ross Gibson's quest for an 'oceanic' understanding of white settlement rather than a terrestrial one.[36] At the same time it might be wise to keep in mind that the repressed knowledge the oceanic can sometimes summon up to testimony is also a representational space where a 'hatred of trees',[37] war, dispossession, rape and murder sometimes emerge out of silence and despair (one regional example of these latter categories is Peter Read's *A Hundred Years War*, which outlines the white settlers' war of dispossession against the Wiradjuri tribes of the Riverina).[38] The state has often repressed this deeper knowledge of colonisation, but Parkin evokes these 'uncanny spirits' of the oceanic, when quoted in Angela Bennie's interview with him as saying of his thirty-years-in-the-making obsession with the *Endeavour*'s journey: 'I believe a book is more than its author. The author is just the man who writes down what the book is telling him.'[39] This is the kind of gnomic instruction that a literate sense of authority might abhor but it is a declaration you could hear at any one of the multitude of personal growth workshops conducted in Byron Bay. At the very least an intensified sense of the 'oceanic feeling' (both positive and negative) has permeated the psychology and politics of everyday life in the 21st century. Byron Bay and the Northern Rivers are, respectively, living local and regional examples of this shift in emphasis from the fixed to the fluid, especially as it relates to both reinterpreting the past *and* the systems of knowledge used in that reinterpretation.

Cook, with his finely honed skills and knowledge in navigation, exploration and discovery; and Banks, the systematic scientist; simultaneously entwined with a composite picture of the spatial actuality of the *Endeavour* and its crew sailing up and alongside the regions of the east coast, all come together to form a possible spirit-like anagram for the modus operandi of electracy, the primary means of structuring knowledge in a globalising era dominated by electronic communication. With its ability to synthesise a wide variety of electronically codifiable modalities of knowledge (image, text, voice, music, FX, gesture, colour, computer program code etc.) it might

36   Ross Gibson, 'Ocean Settlement', in *Meanjin*, vol. 53, #4, 1994, pp.665-678.
37   Geoffrey Bolton, 'They Hated Trees', in *Spoils and Spoilers: A History of Australians Shaping their Environment* (Allen & Unwin: Sydney, 1992), pp.37-48.
38   Peter Read, *A Hundred Years War: Wiradjuri People and the State* (Australian National University Press: Sydney, 1989).
39   Angela Bennie, 'Honour for 'Blow-In' with a Tale to Tell,' in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Tuesday, May 18, 1999, p.11.

now be instructive to view the *Endeavour*'s journey through this kind of electrate ken. It is in this synaesthetic sense I can recall one of electracy's key poetic attributes: it is a spatially and temporally mobile epistemological structure (sometimes even a parallel, contagious and causal array of simultaneously present, sometimes seemingly absent meaning-making modalities). This is also on top of it being a kind of a techno-cognitive space where one's own potential for the navigation, discovery and exploration of electronic data (and its subsequent transformation through a continuum of information, knowledge and wisdom), combine with the arts of scientific definition, deduction and categorisation, and all of which remain components of the chora-logical method underpinning electracy, a topic dealt with in detail in another part of this manuscript.

The ongoing repression of these more mobile electronic arts of self- and world-making is a continuation of the agoraphobic instinct as Carter (in *Repressed Spaces*) might argue it. The 'stay put', 'stay silent' ethos of the more stitched-up elements of white settler culture (for the most part elements embedded in a literate sensibility) no longer remain adequate in the face of an emerging electrate sensibility, one predicated more on a *movement impulse* rather than the 'movement inhibition', the latter a significant characteristic of the agoraphobic charge according to Carter.[40] What is happening here, then, is a tentative reappraisal of the *Endeavour*'s journey from an electrate point of view and a multifariously configured chora-centric methodology, a shift that comes at the expense of a more singularly understood national/literate point of view.

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Finally, I too might cast off from the *Endeavour*'s engagement with Byron Bay and the Northern Rivers. But before doing so (and returning to the act of naming as a spatial practice that Carter references in practically all his work) it's worth noting the current wash-up of how Cape Byron got its name. One significant local myth recurrent in Byron Bay is that it was named after the Romantic poet Lord Byron (father to computer pioneer Ada Lovelace) and who, as a generalisation, abandoned reason in his search for a passionate engagement with the senses via the poetic sensibility. If the citizen-subjects of Byron Bay see themselves as Postmodern Romantics, this is a self-definition that could be realised by having a sensual night out away from the kids by going to the *Lord*

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40   Paul Carter, *Repressed Spaces: The Poetics of Agoraphobia* (Reaktion Books: London, 2002), p.9.

Byron Motel in the centre of town; they could even roam around the town's Keats Street, Shelley Drive, and Lawson Street reciting Shakespearean sonnets to a hip-hop beat. After all, this is a town that has refused entry to 'Club Med, McDonald's, giant property developer Becton, even Bob Dylan', an outcome that symbolises Romanticism's occasionally stubborn practicality.[41] But if Ord's self-assessment, a character in M. Barnard Eldershaw's novel *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* is accurate: 'I am a romantic which is the synonym for an untrustworthy person, one who is emotionally avaricious ...',[42] then the romantic impulse as we experience it today might also provide an even deeper psychic justification for the economic, political, and spatial rapaciousness of the colonial/imperial/capitalist kind. But regardless of whether one is a scientist, a romantic poet, captain of the *Endeavour*, or an 'ordinary' citizen-subject of the 21st century, there is an ethical price to pay for the rapaciousness of over 200 years of European settlement in Australia, a price that one day will have to be more accurately formulated in ecological, economic, possibly even thanatological terms.

Here, in the poetry of mythmaking at least, it seems appropriate that an aesthete has usurped the British naval officer — 'Commodore the Hon. John Byron' — who according to Parkin was the person after whom Cook named Cape Byron (H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, p.221). However, it is not simply the act of naming places in pre-/colonial, or even differential local/regional contexts that should be of concern here. Rather, the concern could equally be concentrated on the whole 'lexical cartography of twentieth-century Australia', one that indiscriminately implants a distantly conceived discourse over the pre-existing space, culture and politics of a Down-Under continent.[43] If J. M. Arthur's thesis in *The Default Country* sails close to the truth's bright light (that the lexical order English literacy entrenches in Australia from colonial times onwards, but particularly in the twentieth-century, is inadequate to a more thorough-going understanding of the continent) then this realisation still has an adverse ongoing influence over our current epistemological ordering of Antipodean time and space.

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[41]   Andrew Fraser, 'Wrong Note, Billygoat', in *The Weekend Australian*, September 10-11, 2005, p.24. Byron Bay is currently embroiled in an ongoing debate about excessive development with many locals demanding that controls be put on further population and tourist increases in the town.

[42]   M. Barnard Eldershaw, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* (Virago Press: London, 1983), p.15. *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* is also partly set in the Riverina.

[43]   J. M. Arthur, *The Default Country: A Lexical Cartography of Twentieth-Century Australia* (University of New South Wales Press: Sydney, 2003).

If the language we currently use is inadequate to a fuller understanding of Australian time and space, and we would like to *rewrite* the historical record of the *Endeavour*'s journey, just what might be the options? Firstly, throw out the urge for a traditional re-write and engage with one of the more mutable forms of electracy: the code of a computer game. Parkin's work is an extraordinary example of an author being *in* the work, not simply *of* it, or even just its copyright holder. As a sometime sailor, artist and writer, Parkin's great achievement in H. M. Bark *Endeavour* is to present this voyage of discovery in its spatio-temporally configured oceanic actuality, or as close as any literate representation will allow. Herein, the voyage's virtuality and reality reverberate eagerly through, about, and in each other in an almost organically focussed representational praxis. Its superb drawings of the *Endeavour* and elements of its nautical technology testify to this assertion. H. M. Bark *Endeavour*, then, provides a singularly important but aesthetically composite foundation on which a computer game might be built. A McLuhanesque idea no doubt, but the past (and its re/presentation) is not a 'foreign country' or some incomprehensible other to be ignored, repressed, and vilified, or even exalted as unchanging.

If it were possible to bury the literate version of H. M. Bark *Endeavour* at sea, it might eventually be plausible to resurrect it as a computer game where a player is elevated to the role of an avatar of the ship's famous captain, possibly Joseph Banks, even one of the crew or an on-shore Aborigine of the period, or some admixture of these and other elements, and is positioned in such a way so as to engage a different semantic order in relation to the landscape, politics and culture of Byron Bay and the Northern Rivers, possibly even the entire east coast of Gondwanaland/New Holland/Australia. While it is certainly not feasible to repress the *Endeavour*'s journeying altogether, it is possible to re-imagine, re-code and re-order our knowledge and understanding of it by, for example, making a computer game out of it. Pertinently, Andrew Murphie captures well the intensely dynamic complexity of self- and knowledge-making in gaming contexts, writing that '... games show us that habit never stands still.' And that,

The modulation of habit is central to gameplay, motivated by the simple but in some ways difficult problem of what to do next, how to adapt given habit to the relational histories, vertigos and battles that might be coming up next. The

contemporary ecological context for this — and perhaps *the* contemporary social problem involved — is the problem of what to do next in the midst of networked complexity.[44]

As an electronically codified computer game incorporating the continually interacting engagement of image, sound and text (and their many sub-categories), the *Endeavour*'s journey could exist in a ceaseless state of re-discovery and re-invention where one possible coding strategy among many might be the option of portraying Captain Cook as a refugee from his own emotional, familial and localising circumstances. This is a point of view that will resonate with anyone who has arrived by boat or plane on this continent, or even in the Northern Rivers region, since at least 1770.

[THE END]

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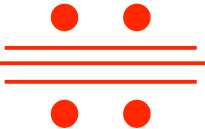
[44]   Andrew Murphie, 'Vertiginous Mediations: Sketches for a Dynamic Pluralism in the Study of Computer Games', in *Media International Australia*, #110, February, 2004, p.79. [Italics in the original].

FEEDBACK, COMMENTS, EXTRAPOLATIONS, IMPORTS & EXPORTS:

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➡ 🐾 [The Donkey/Dog Rooter] 🐾 ↻

BEGINNING ACTION: EXT.   PADDOCK   EARLY MORNING

At intervals, hints of mist hug the ground over the Bean Creek locality on the Northern Rivers region. A rough-hewn older man — JOHN MANNING — walks across an open paddock; in the background, a clump of trees emerge out of this mist. Half a dozen mongrel dogs accompany him. Dressed in the ragged dirty clothes of a *Deliverance* character he strides purposefully towards a video camera attached to a tripod some distance away and situated on the other side of an intervening barbwire fence.[45]

In the aural overlay, a cacophony of barking dogs disturbs the morning peace although none of the dogs accompanying Manning are barking. Eventually Manning arrives to address the camera at which point he comes to a standstill. Looking into the camera's viewfinder is an operator, framing up a shot of Manning as he approaches. For a brief moment there is a Mexican standoff.

JOHN MANNING

You're fuckin' sick you are. Do you know that?

The video camera continues operating, and without answering, its operator continues to look into the viewfinder. Manning moves closer to the fence-line separating them, his demeanor growing more animated, more passionate with anger.

JOHN MANNING

(continuing)

What's up with you? You're sick! Hey? Supposed to be bloody school-teacher, hey! I wonder what all the pupils'll think when they find out, hey? When I tell 'em one or two things about you, hey, and what a lyin' bastard you are!

Manning perches an elbow on one of the timber posts holding up multiple strands of the barbwire fence.

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[45]   [The title of this piece, according to Maybury's notes, arose out of the way the young people of the district started to label the central character in the conflict. Ed.].

JOHN MANNING

(spitting the words out)

I'll fuckin' have you mate, don't you worry about that!

Simultaneously, Manning starts vigorously pointing his finger at the camera, and through the camera, at its operator.
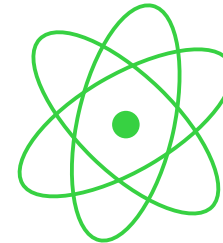
JOHN MANNING

(continuing)

You're fuckin' sick … What about the environment? You chopped down three bloody gum trees rather

than spend a dollar on your fencing, ya' fuckin' arsehole!

Manning leans over the fence looking even more intensely at the camera and its operator.

JOHN MANNING

(shaking a fist/finger at his interlocutor)

You're sick Maybury, sick …

With this accusation finally out in the open, Manning heads off up the gentle incline, at a slight angle to the fence-line. That barking crescendo of dogs gradually swells to a cacophonous level. Manning continues walking off into the distance, towards the source of this sound: a dog-pound on top of the ridge above the incline.[46]

[THE END]

[Fχ: *AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF BARKING DOGS, A "FAAARRRK, FAAARRRK" OF CROWS IS HEARD*]

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[46]   In researching the legal context of this conflict, a study of noise pollution conducted in 1986 puts barking dogs second to traffic noise in levels of psychological agitation, as well as being a significant source of neighbourly disputes. See the *State of the Environment* report from 1997 at the website of the Environmental Protection Authority of New South Wales: <http://www.epa.nsw.au>. [Accessed 20/2/2005].

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When a man considers his youth, his language seems to refer more often to a place than its absence, and to a place unobscured by any notion of Time as a veil or barrier. The place is inhabited by people privileged to search for its particularity (that quality which obsesses plainsmen as the idea of God or of infinity has obsessed other peoples) as readily as the man of the present might try to divine the special identity of his own place. Much is made, of course, of the failure of each — the man and the young man — to comprehend his unique situation. The two are often compared with dwellers in neighbouring regions who try to map all the plains they find necessary or all they would be content to know, and who agree that each may include parts of the other's borders in his own map, but who find at last that their two charts cannot be brought together neatly — that each has argued for the existence of an ill-defined zone between the last places that he could wish for and the first of those he has no claim to.

Gerald Murnane [47]

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[47]   Gerald Murnane, *The Plains* (Penguin: Melbourne, 1984), pp.85-86.

[What is a Region? : What is an Author?]

'What is a Region?'[48] is a question that is more than merely a grammatical or an imitative echo of Foucault's essay: 'What Is An Author?'[49] On the one hand, defining a region is supposed to be about delimiting and demarcating a specific space along collectively recognisable lines, a process whose objective aim is eliminating all ambiguity about what is included-/+excluded from that space. As already mentioned, there is an ambiguity around a region's border-making capacities. This gives it greater longevity than that of the category 'author', who emergence, according to Foucault is, at a broad glance, coterminous with the rise of the 'individual' in Western discourse. More micro-analytically though,

> Writing unfolds like a game (*jeu*) that invariably goes beyond its own rules and transgresses its limits. In writing, the point is not to manifest or exalt the act of writing, nor is it to pin a subject within language; it is, rather, a question of creating a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears (p.102).

Likewise, the region is a space where the subject disappears into the everyday, where it is sometimes thought ordinariness transforms life into lifelessness, where sameness day in/day out makes for a boredom in little need of the labour of meaning-making, where a citizen-subject is politically *contained* by this disappearance. The "disappearance" of the regionating subject, from the state's usually metro-centric perspective, is a means of quietening its extremist calls: of racism, of the sometimes regional pursuit of environmentally unsound practices, of its laments over poor infrastructure, of its occasionally biblical rendering of fire, flood, drought and pestilence. Like the writing subject, the regional subject can sometimes revel in this ambiguous situation of disappearance in the eyes of the state and its existence in a circumstance of ordinariness. To the extent that it is *away* from the political intentions and the prying eyes of the state (and its operatives in police, military, bureaucratic, educational and religious organisations), the regional subject is "free" to the extent that this spatially ambiguous situation provides a fulcrum in which transgressive behaviour ferments. Like the sometimes hermetically sealed domestic space, the region is a space where experimentation with social, political, and psychic norms remains a crucial part of subject formation. Certainly, many of these experiments may have been conducted before but the very "invisibility" of everyday life in the regions (especially in the eyes of the state) sanctions a transgressiveness that can be both reactionary *and* progressive. The

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48   Malcolm Campbell, 'What is a Region?', in Local History Co-ordination Project (eds.), *Locating Australia's Past: A Practical Guide to Writing Local History* (New South Wales University Press: Sydney, 1988), pp.41-49. Also, see Ian Gray, 'What is Regionalism?', in Wayne Hudson & A. J. Brown (eds.), *Restructuring Australia: Regionalism, Republicanism and Reform of the Nation-State* (The Federation Press: Sydney, 2004), pp.16-25. In 'relational regionalism', this question is a recurring one with numerous multiple-choice answers, each with a possible ring of truth in its halo.

49   Michel Foucault, 'What Is an Author?', in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (Penguin Books: London, 1991), pp.101-120.

regionating subject has a small measure of authorial freedom in the means of its own becoming. Furthermore, it might well be that the norms of nature, rather than any socio-political ethic, that are the principle means via which subject formation is held to account in the regions: lacking in the more traditionally enculturated spaces of the cities, a regional subject is more attuned to the culture of nature, and hence of the 'uncivilised'.

There is another sense in which a network connection can be made between these two questions of 'What is an Author?' and 'What is a Region?' Certainly, there is an ambiguous zone of being and becoming in the *presence* and *absence* of the regional subject in a particular place, especially as the onto- and epistemic politics of this zone relates to nation-centric forms of discourse. This freedom, which is not entirely free, exists in conjunction with another prohibition, one Foucault describes as follows:

> The author allows a limitation of the cancerous and dangerous proliferation of significations within a world where one is thrifty not only with one's resources and riches, but also with one's discourses and significations. The author is the principle of thrift in the proliferation of meaning. (p.118).

If it is taken as given that Foucault is writing here of the literate author, it is almost certainly a categorisation in which the power to articulate is authorised: *who* gets to write is significantly more important here than *what* gets written, although the two are not entirely disconnected. The many stories circulating about impoverished, unrecognised authors are ideological nourishment to the mechanisms of power (in particular, the legalities of copyright, defamation, libel and slander, and of nationally fixated influences in media, law and the universities), that help keep uber-signification in check. Or, as Foucault puts it: 'The author is ... the ideological figure by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning' (p.119). This 'fear' of 'the proliferation of meaning' has only intensified with the more full-blown advent of the electrate author where one of the slogans goes something like 'Anyone can now be an author', or equally a 'co-author.'[50]

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[50] An analysis of this theme is taken up in Richard Grusin's 'What is an Electronic Author? Theory and the Technological Fallacy', in Robert Markley (ed.), *Virtual Realities and Their Discontents* (John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore & London, 1996), pp.39-53.

Similarly, the region is a category used extensively as a means of regulating the proliferation in the number of polities. The term 'balkanise' is a blanket category of discourse invoked by national and global authorities (and others) as a warning of the possible descent into a hell of too many territorialising impulses based on ethnic, racial, gender, or even spatial lines. Human groupings based along regional lines are also the object of another particularly virulent form of ideological control: accusations of inbreeding. Accusations of inbreeding (I've heard Tasmania mentioned in this context), or of bestiality (vernacular discourse has the 'backwater' of New Zealand as a place where sexual congress with sheep is common), are a means of demarcating those regions where the inward turn is paramount (for instance, where the local is the focus of a region rather than the national or the global). Through this cyclops, the region remains a parochial political form and the proliferation of its number axiomatically means that the inward turn is universalised in any possible regional/national confederation or potential regional/global configuration. The ongoing inculcation of the fear of regionalisation (especially of too many regions and their inward, parochial nature) is a corollary of the fear of too many unauthorised authors producing a surfeit of signification. An increase in the number of centres of power means an intensification of the *political*, of political intrigue, with one possible result here being that there is a concentration on the short-term view in policy proposals. Clearly, a regional polity brings this intrigue closer to a subject's front door while the national and the global level displaces it further afield.

[THE END]

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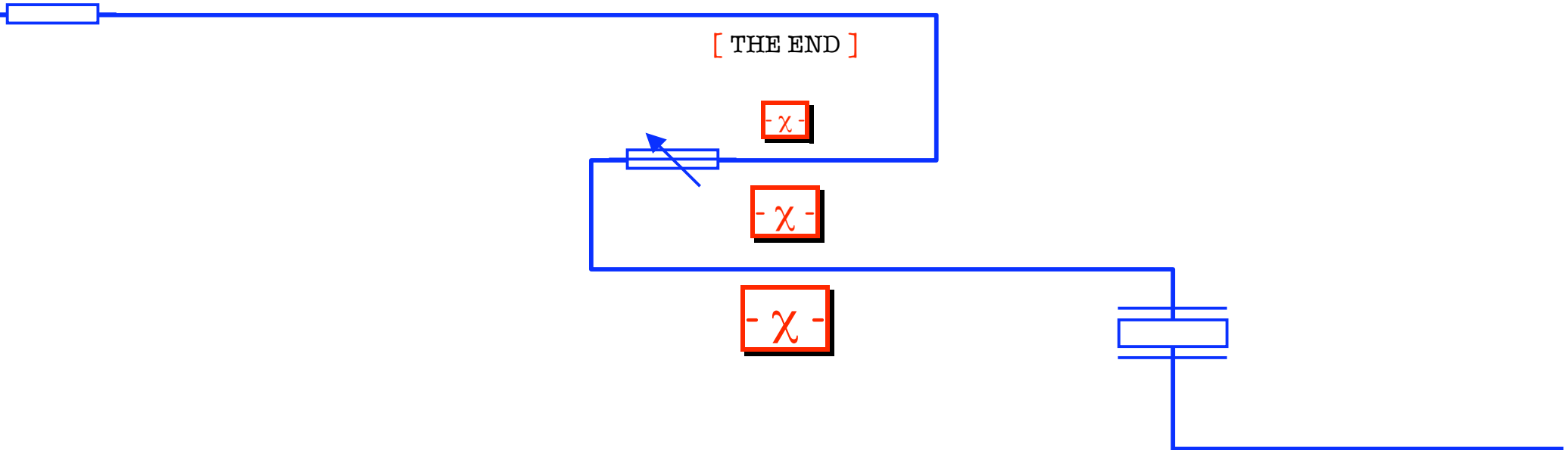
[Feeding the Chooks]

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[Fχ: *OFF IN THE DISTANCE, THE SCREECHING OF A FLOCK OF SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOOS RINGS OUT*]

[Becoming-Crow]

Birds were produced by a process of transformation, growing feathers instead of hair, from harmless empty-headed men, who were interested in the heavens but were silly enough to think that visible evidence is all the foundation astronomy needs.

Plato [51]

There is a reality to becoming-animal, even though one does not in reality become animal.

Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari [52]

In close proximity of both my home and body (which means that all you have to do is pivot on the spot and you can see, hear and sometimes touch the objects in proximity), there is a wild menagerie, one that doesn't include pets. Red bellied black snakes, common mynas, rabbits, black cockatoos, rats, geckos, a wide assortment of insects, pee-wees, goannas, galahs, at least three variety of frogs, sulphur-crested cockatoos, the imported red claw marron and silver perch, kangaroos, horses, water foul, a pair of wedge-tail eagles, water dragons, the occasional fellow Homo sapien ... and crows (sometimes known as the 'Australian Raven', or by its scientific taxonomical category, '*Corvus Coronoides*').[53] Although crows sometimes gather in packs (and 'packs, form, develop, and are transformed by contagion', *A Thousand Plateaus*, p.242) nesting in a tree near my place there is a matched pair (and like galahs, crows mate for life). Like Heather Blakey's homepage (where she claims crows as her totem, their blackness indicating that all life emerges from darkness, from the maternal womb, out into the light), these matched pair of crows (and now their two offspring) has become my totem, but maybe at the behest of different impulses. Constantly circling my shack, enforcing their territorial rights, trying in vain to

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51   Plato, *Timaeus and Critias* [92], p.123.
52   Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, '1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal ...', in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (University of Minneapolis Press: Minneapolis & London, 1987), p.273. [In a note attached to this quote Maybury added the following: 'The reality is we are already animal, becoming animal is real.' Ed.].
53   Ken Simpson (editor) & Nicholas Day (illustrator), *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* (Penguin Books: Melbourne, 1999), p.252.

scare off goannas and kookaburras, eating all the scraps I can throw at them, crows are my totemic emblems, a material rendering of my becoming-animal, and into whose digestive tract I might one day merge if I die unexpectedly out in the middle of the paddock. A becoming-crow might also be a becoming crow-shit, the well-known fear of being eaten by animals: 'The idea of being eaten by animals at times arouses a very primeval terror. Being left as a corpse for crows and ravens can mean, in other words, being abandoned and cast out from human society.'[54]

Is this becoming-animal, in my own specific case a becoming-crow, an unbecoming of the human, a reversion or an advance to the primitive and the uncivilised, or into non-matter, or into the unsubstantial itself? To answer in the affirmative would be a crude, even if accurate, restatement of the loathing settler societies had for indigenous peoples, and their forms of governance and knowledge. Rather, in this case it could also be totemic knowledge, a kind of ancient sub-branch of epistemology, which on the surface has no analogue in the sometimes-narrow scientific rationality that helps to underpin the exploitation of the country that those settler societies came to dominate. It was not only imperative to subdue the human protagonists of a subjugated or colonised region but also to ignore, shoot or chop down, any plant or animal material it contained or deemed unnecessary to that subjugation. Occasionally, in the various pasts of regions around the country dead crows and eagles would be tied to fence lines to deter their like from coming back into proximity. My neighbour still does it occasionally.

The crow is rarely considered good eating despite the fact that South Australians are sometimes known colloquially as 'crow-eaters.'[55] A number of European domesticated animals though (like the cow, the horse, sheep, and to a lesser extent the goat, for instance), have been installed as commercial totems in settler societies, a totemism that has consolidated with the advance of time, a point underscored by Alfred W. Crosby's comment that,

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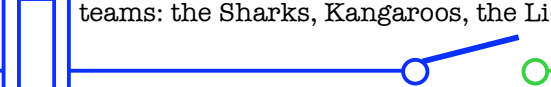[54]   Boria Sax, *Crow* (Reaktion Books: London, 2003), p.65.

[55]   G. A. Wilkes, *A Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms* (Fontana/Collins: Sydney, 1980), pp.101-102. Wilkes also includes a number of other crow colloquialisms that enliven the Australian vernacular: 'crow', a woman who is old or ugly; 'draw the crow', to come off worst in any allocation; 'when the crow shits', payday; 'stone the crows', an 'expression of surprise, regret or disgust'; and 'where the crows fly backwards to keep the dust out of their eyes', an attribute of a deeply isolated locality.

> To a certain extent, the success of Europeans as colonists was automatic as soon as they put their tough, fast, fertile, and intelligent animals ashore. The latter were sources of capital that sought out their own sustenance, improvised their own protection against the weather, fought their own battles against predators and, if their masters were smart enough to allow calves, colts, and lambs to accumulate, could and often did show the world the amazing possibilities of compound interest.[56]

In the transformation of wild nature into its domesticated variety (a transformation that might now be considered complete), the totemic impulse continues. Associationally speaking, J. K. Gibson-Graham's point that 'Locality is the place where engagement with the stranger is enacted',[57] indicates that locality, as an intimate sub-scale of the region, is also the point at which the animal, and our own animality, is encountered most acutely, most intensely. The metropolitan, or the suburban region, has been, to varying extents, mostly cleared of this diversity of wild animal life. Indeed, largely because the totemic junctions of knowledge have been so consciously obliterated in settler societies, it's possible that this matrix of knowledge has a greater unconscious presence, affecting all of those whose rational propensities have deigned to ignore or repress it. It nonetheless finds its expression in the naming of (usually) metro-centrically located sporting teams: the Sharks, Kangaroos, the Lions, the Wallabies, the Eagles, the Rams, the Magpies and the Adelaide Crows.[58]

And so, at 11.32 pm on the 25th of June 1957 (or more likely the next morning) there may well have been a large gathering of crows at the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital, an avian gathering together in a pack to cry out "Faaarrrk … Faaarrrk … Faaarrrk" at the birth of another infant Homo sapien, an animal they've come to an uneasy détente with. That the phrase "Wagga Wagga" is a Waridjuri word for 'place of many crows' seems to be repeatedly reiterated in the naming myths of my home-town.[59] Irvin goes on to say that, 'The name exhibits a clear use, by the aborigines, of onomatopoeia, "Wa-gah Wa-gah" being a pretty fair imitation of the crow's cry' (p.10). "Wa-gah Wa-gah" and "Faaarrrk … Faaarrrk … Faaarrrk" are undoubtedly differing means of representing the crow's cry through language, a point to which I will return.

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56 Alfred W. Crosby, 'Ecological Imperialism: The Overseas Migration of Western Europeans as a Biological Phenomenon', in Donald Worster (ed.), *The Ends of the Earth: Perspectives on Modern Environmental History* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1998), p.109. Also, Crosby uses the evocative term 'Lands of the Demographic Takeover' to comparatively analyse the settler societies of America, Australia and New Zealand from this biological perspective.

57 J. K. Gibson-Graham, 'An Ethics of the Local', available at the Community Economies website: <http://www.communityeconomies.org/info.html#papers>, p.8, 2001. [Accessed 8/9/03].

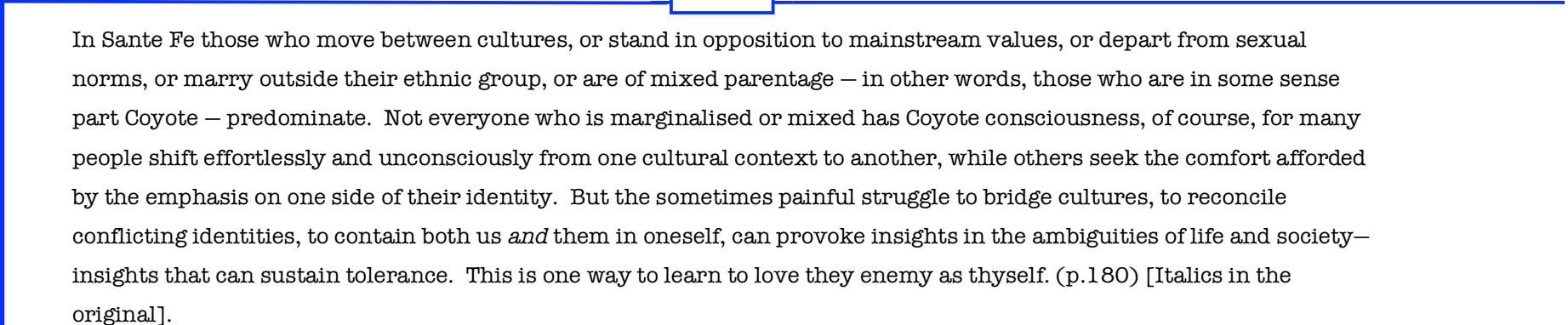58 [Added as a sidebar, Maybury scrawled the following note: 'The Adelaide Crows are a well known Australian Rules football team who at one stage had a former Wagga Wagga resident and publicly outed adulterer Wayne Carey playing for them.' Ed.].

59 Eric Irvin, Place of Many Crows: A History of the Foundation of Wagga Wagga, NSW (Daily Advertiser: Wagga Wagga, 1953), p.10.

This naming of Wagga Wagga is also traced back to one of the first squatters in the locality, a William Best who was issued with a squatting license for the "Wogo Wogo" run, as squatter's large holdings of land were once called during the colonial era. Another local historian Keith Swan, after confirming the above official version of the town's naming, quickly suggests an even more enticing unofficial translation: 'a drunken or reeling man.' And if 'in the Waridjuri language ... repetition of a word indicated plurality', might I here suggest a chora-logical reinvention, and that is that a pack of drunken and reeling corvids emerged in tandem with the birth of that infant boy on that winter's night in 1957 alternately screeching "Faaarrrk" and "Wa-gah."[60]

In other regional contexts the crow is considered a trickster figure. Chris Wilson's *The Myth of Sante Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition*, for instance, draws on a range of 'Native American writers' who 'tap into their oral traditions', and who 'frequently revitaliz[e] trickster figures — Raven, Crow, Raccoon, Magpie, and above all, Coyote.'[61] For Wilson, the trickster figure in this southern American tradition encourages a 'Coyote consciousness' (which could also be a synonym for Chela Sandoval's 'differential consciousness', even for chora-logic):

> In Sante Fe those who move between cultures, or stand in opposition to mainstream values, or depart from sexual norms, or marry outside their ethnic group, or are of mixed parentage — in other words, those who are in some sense part Coyote — predominate. Not everyone who is marginalised or mixed has Coyote consciousness, of course, for many people shift effortlessly and unconsciously from one cultural context to another, while others seek the comfort afforded by the emphasis on one side of their identity. But the sometimes painful struggle to bridge cultures, to reconcile conflicting identities, to contain both us *and* them in oneself, can provoke insights in the ambiguities of life and society—insights that can sustain tolerance. This is one way to learn to love they enemy as thyself. (p.180) [Italics in the original].

The crow then is a trickster figure given to transmogrification, i.e. magical change, or equally, mythical change, maybe even encouraging transitions among social and epistemological categories. This could be change between human and animal, culture and nature, or

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60   Keith Swan, *A History of Wagga Wagga* (City of Wagga Wagga: Wagga Wagga, 1970), p.xxiii.
61   Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Sante Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque, 1997), p.171. More broadly see, 'Interlude: Coyote Consciousness', pp.168-180. Donna J. Haraway also invokes the 'coyote or the trickster' figure in, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (Routledge: New York, 1991), p.199.

between any number of incompatible ideas or entities. These mythical acts of transmogrification are more easily achieved, aided and abetted by the crow's acute intelligence, the latter a point made palpable by Boria Sax:

> All ornithologists agree ... that corvids are at or near the pinnacle of the avian world in brains, perhaps rivalled only by parrots. Corvids have the largest brains in relation to their body size of any birds, and corvid brains are tightly packed with neurons. The brain of an American crow is about 2.3 per cent of its body mass. For human beings, the brain is about 1.5 per cent of the body mass, while the figure for a domestic chicken is 0.1 per cent.[62]

Unlike Homo sapiens, and possibly as a result of this acute intelligence, you will rarely see a crow transmuted into road-kill. Mythically speaking, a Wagga Wagga birthplace (maybe the crow really is the correct totem for a pluralist) may have pluralised my own body and spawned a heterogeneous array of Terrence Mayburys, all of whom have taken on the mantle of trickster figures and whose continuing raison d'être is the repeated wrong-footing of accepted wisdom. By any measure this is a dumb way to get on in the world, considering the crow, when looked at from a 'body mass' ratio (that is, a mathematical point of view), is substantially more intelligent than I am. Might this compaction of neurons humble the human while also indicating a higher potential wisdom in the crow? What is it that the crow can teach me?

The crow, like the human, might even like ideas, theories and speculations, and like the cosmos itself, always has origin myths associated with it. Borio Sax writes that, 'scientists ... tell us that crows are members of the family Corvidae, which also contains magpies, jays, cloughs, nutcrackers and other birds.' Already then crows are allied as much with intra-taxonomic difference as they are with singularity, a contrast with the notion that singularity is the usual starting point. However, spatial beginnings are also important to origin myths: 'The family Corvidae probably originated in Australia, at a time when that continent was relatively isolated from Eurasia. After the continents drifted closer together, about 20 to 30 million years ago, these birds crossed into Asia' (*Crow*, p.9). From here on in, 'rapid evolutionary differentiation' spreads the family Corvidae out across most of the planet. Here then is a concomitant tangent to that influential anthro-centrifugal force known to Homo sapiens as the 'out of Africa' theory, itself given sustenance as an origin myth by Darwin's theory of evolution.

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[62]   Boria Sax, *Crow*, p.19.

The juxtaposition of these two theories of origin ('out of Gondwanaland for the family Corvidae', and the 'out of Africa' for Homo sapiens and their predecessors) although at significantly different timescales, predisposes me to thinking about the very nature of animal/human memory itself. Darwinian inspired theories of evolution have once again called into our thinking an anthro-centripetal idea, that is, the becoming animal of the human, the widely feared breaking apart of the civilised. In particular, what is brought to the fore here is intelligence itself, that process of self-conscious production and reproduction that allows such juxtapositions in the first place. Intelligence is, after all, also a rethinking on the arts of thinking, which, of course, what makes self-reflexiveness possible.

Gisela Kaplan and Lesley J. Rogers, in *Birds: Their Habits and Skills*, call forth these shibboleths of animal/human and instinct/intelligence, in respect of the avian world saying:

> Intelligence may also be described as the ability to recall the past and to have foresight of the consequences of actions but these are, generally, not considered qualities that birds might possess. Instead, birds are often thought to respond to events in ways that are instinctive, or predetermined according to inflexible programs. This is far from correct. Birds have excellent abilities to form memories and they can recall very detailed memories after long periods of time.[63]

Crows are known to cache their food. Depending on the perishability of the food stored will determine the length of time of that caching, and hence also a distinction between short-term memory, where instinctiveness might be thought to dominate, and the long-term view critical to 'spatial memory'; that is, the crow must know where in their territory which bit of food has been stored. I have myself been a first-hand witness to the crows here in Bean Creek, watching them cache scraps I've thrown them, although a more detailed experiment would be needed to ascertain with complete certainty their long-term mnemonic capacities. In this latter respect though we can rely on Kaplan and Rogers' analysis, one that suggests crows have the capacity for contextual intelligence by invoking both short- and long-term memory. Indeed, a critical point made by these bird lovers is that, 'The part of the brain used for spatial memory grows larger when it is put to use by the bird' (p.174). Kaplan and Rogers' also re-present research to argue that crows are not only tool users but are also tool-makers, both of which are classical markers of measurable intelligence in human mortals (pp.177-179). By implication then the crow's

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[63]   Gisela Kaplan & Lesley J. Rogers, *Birds: Their Habits and Skills* (Allan & Unwin: Sydney, 2001), p.173.

brain is a muscle both genetically and contextually contingent according to the precise circumstances of the selected individual and group. The crows' intelligence then also makes them ripe not only for teaching and learning but also for myth-making and legend, not only by Homo sapiens but maybe even by the crows themselves.[64]

Boria Sax's *Crow* also gives a detailed analysis of the crow as a mythical figure. *Crow* does however make a crucial distinction between 'formalized mythologies', and 'legends' or 'folklore', stating that:

> ... legends, which may have survived for millennia in oral traditions, can often be older than myths. Formalized mythologies are generally products of warrior and priestly classes. Folklore generally expresses a more egalitarian, and perhaps more archaic, vision of the world, in which not only kings and peasants but also animals and plants interact with comparative intimacy. This is the genre in which crows, which are used to living off their wits, fit in especially well.[65]

It is perhaps the crow's multiplex of characteristics (life-long monogamy, caching food, their grounded intelligence, tool-making capacities, carrion eating), along with their perceived powers of divination or prophecy ('In a vast range of cultures from the Chinese to the Plains Indians, crows are bearers of prophecy', *Crow*, p.29) that an image of them incorporated into the City of Wagga Wagga's coat of arms is an ambiguous one. Here in the town's coat of arms ('The proverbial longevity has made them important in heraldry', *Crow*, p.47) there is perhaps an effort to combine this mythic status with the legendary one. Two crows, one on each side of the heraldic shield, 'wear distinguishing collars in the form of a W and stand on a base of grass divided by water, representing the building of the city on either side of the river', its motto, depicted at the foot of the crows, being 'FORWARD IN FAITH.'[66] The allusion to the language of the indigenous Waridjuri in the naming of the town stands in contradistinction to the heraldry of the coat of arms whose origin can be traced back to the Crusades and their subsequent use by noble and upper class families to publicly authenticate themselves and their blood lineage. The coat of arms then is a small token of that layering over of the past, a sedimentation on a sedimentation, and an socio-political analogue of the

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[64]   A recent newspaper article recounts the research of 'Griffith University senior lecturer in ecology, Darryl Jones', who suggests that crows 'have learnt to flip over cane toads and disembowel them without coming near their poison glands'; and further, that 'they have taught each other how to open pizza boxes'. See Philip Hammond, 'Cluey Crows Get Away with Blue Murder', in *The Courier Mail*, Friday, June 25, 2004, p.1.

[65]   Boria Sax, *Crow*, p.17.

[66]   Keith Swan, *A History of Wagga Wagga*. The coat of arms, and its interpretation, is depicted in the frontispiece of the book.

geographically defined 'prior stream' sedimentation of the Murrumbidgee River, a process where from ancient times ('various Pleistocene and possibly some Holocene') recurrent leavings flowing down from the Australian Alps onto the Riverina Plains created the soil component of its current landscape.[67] Traces are differentially marked out by these various recurrences and at times obliterations, reminding us they cannot be completely eradicated.

The crow is a silky, shiny black 'colour', a feature that gives it an added layer of nervous energy, especially in a hot/dry climate like Australia. That 'crows and ravens are found throughout Australia, in all habitat types, with the exception of the more arid areas of Western Australia', also indicates their significant presence in the Australian landscape, in its various regions. While its feathered exterior is significant there is its 'territorial call', one that 'is a slow, rather high "ah-ah-ah-aaaah" with the last note drawn out.'[68] In the Australian context it is this territorial call, as much as the crow's blackness that has resonated throughout the symbolic economy. It is Graham Kennedy's transformation of this territorial call of the crow into what sounded like the word 'faaarrrk' ('fuck' for those unfamiliar with Kennedy's idiomatic phrasing on *In Melbourne Tonight*, the television variety program on which this performance took place) that significantly altered both Kennedy's career as well as deepening the crow's resonate mythology in Australian culture. It seems inconceivable that the crow's distinctive territorial call could have garnered even more widespread coverage without some form of recording technology, which in this case was television.[69] Kennedy's crow call has now become a constant iteration in the history of that medium.

Every morning the local crow-family perch in the redgum tree outside my window and do exactly that: they let other crows know (and possibly me) that this is their ground and transgressing its borders means some form of conflict will ensue. This territorial cry, the "Faaarrrk" of the crow, is the crow's equivalent of border patrol and protection, an animal element we've incorporated into our culture and politics. Alan McKee is right then to suggest that Graham Kennedy's use of the crow-call in his variety show on '3 March 1975' is a

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67   This 'prior stream' sedimentation is analysed in Trevor Langford-Smith, 'The Dead River Systems of the Murrumbidgee', in *The Geographical Review*, vol. 50, #3, 1960, pp.370-371.

68   See the Australian Museum Fact-Sheet on crows and ravens at <http://www.amonline.net.au/factsheets/crows_ravens.htm>. [Accessed 5/4/2004].

69   Ian Rowley's method of collecting specimens for a taxonomic survey of crows has a slightly different relationship to electronic recording: 'Corvids are notoriously difficult to shoot and progress in collecting was slow, initially, until it was found that by replaying a recording of the mobbing calls, birds of all five species could be regularly induced to fly within shotgun range.' See, 'The Genus *Corvus* in Australia', in *CSIRO Wildlife Research*, #15, 1970, p.33. Here science must kill its object in order to study it.

significant example of popular memory in operation.[70] That the then Australian Broadcasting Control Board went on to ban Kennedy from broadcasting live only added fuel to this 'transgression.' However in McKee's account of this particular episode, and others Kennedy is credited with, his 'subversiveness' and transgressive behaviour is what's highlighted. This all leads up back to Kennedy himself, or to the *archive of television memory*, as distinct from the media more generally and even less so to the crow, or the crow call itself. McKee rightly says that, 'The crow call survives as a benchmark, against which public profanity can be judged', but referencing this episode in terms framed by Kennedy's career, or of public standards of decency then and/or now, or even within the confines of the disciplinary rhetoric of 'great moments of Australian television', all these approaches absent-mindedly ignore the *animality* of both profanity and the crow, as well as the mortals who revelled in or were repulsed by the Kennedy crow-call. This shift is a textbook example of 'The Poetic Fallacy of Animality' about which Georges Bataille says:

> animal life, halfway distant from *our* consciousness, presents us with a disconcerting enigma. In picturing the universe without man, a universe in which only the animal's gaze would be opened to things, the animal being neither a thing nor a man, we can only call up a vision in which we see *nothing*, since the object of this vision is a movement that glides from things that have no meaning by themselves to the world full of meaning implied by man giving each thing his own.[71]

In the analysis of Kennedy's crow call, McKee can only take us further into more meaning, an algorithmic expansion of theoretical and memorial representation, and it matters not whether this production of knowledge is socially, culturally, politically, or economically inscribed. For to face the 'nothingness' of the animal or of the profane world, would mean a possible annihilation of not only human dominance of that world but also of any system of meaning through which that dominance is upheld. It is the system of representation itself (oracy, literacy or electracy), along with consciousness, that in combination serves as possibly the most significant barometer registering and measuring our removal from animality. In Bataille's words, 'Nothing, as matter of fact, is more closed to us than this animal life from which we are descended' (p.20). Any increasingly complex system of representation, but especially one with an ingrained and compounding sense of inward remoteness, has as its raison d'être, at the very minimum, both wilfully ignoring, and ultimately, the complete removal of this animal from and within the human.

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70   Alan McKee, *Australian Television: A Genealogy of Great Moments* (Oxford University Press: Melbourne). *Australian Television* provides a useful framing of these 'moments' as popular memory in the Introduction: 'Collectively Remembering a Public Archive', pp.8-10. The broader Kennedy analysis is, significantly, Chapter 1: '*In Melbourne Tonight/The Graham Kennedy (Channel Nine) Show*: Advertising Transgression, *1951-70, 1970-75*', pp.17-31.

71   George Bataille, *Theory of Religion*, trans. Robert Hurley (Zone Books: New York, 1992), p.21. [Italics in the original].

Invoking Bataille also suggests the crow is not only an avian reality or its imitated cry a 'great moment in television', the bird also has a place in the history of philosophy. Within clicking distance on the WWW there is evidence that "The White Crow is a Scientific Joke", a story which goes like this:

A Master asks her student: *"How might we prove the theory that all crows are black?"*
The student replies: *"We must go out in the field and look at crows. If they are all black we have proved the theory."*

Master: *"Surely one black crow is not enough?"*
The student agrees: *"We must have replication to ensure the validity of our data. We must observe many crows."*

Master: *"How many black crows will prove that all crows are black?"*

Student: *"Aaaahhh ... the trap is made clear. Seeing 10 black crows is not enough, neither is seeing 100 or 1000. In fact, we can never PROVE that all crows are black unless we could see every single crow."*

Master: *"True, however, we can DISPROVE the theory that all crows are black by observing even a single white crow!"*

It is perhaps through this 'paradox of the crows' narrative that the indie/grunge band Counting Crows actually got their name. The key plank in scientific veracity is what Henry Lowood refers to as the 'quantifying spirit.'[72] Numbers have always figured in the scientific method as a principal means via which its findings can be verified. The larger the number of verifiable observations in a scientific sample or experiment, the greater the 'truth' of its recommendations and conclusions. A hundred crows is better than ten crows, but a thousand crows are much better. But what of an infinity of crows? Without the ability to collate every single crow in the cosmos there is still a lingering doubt that the white crow might exist but is not yet in your sample or purview. The abstract existence of this white crow is the ghost inside the 'quantifying spirit'. It is through the 'paradox of the crows' where a philosophy of negation comes about. Popularly, there is an implicit understanding that Nietzsche is the archangel of this 'nihilism', but Peter Bloxsam writes that 'Carl Hempel's gift to the world in 1937 was his "paradox of the crows", also known as the paradox of negation.' This paradox wrestles (even after dispensing with its many other conceptual gymnastics) with a vague idea that indicates that non-knowledge is a form of blackness, a nothingness

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72   Henry Lowood, *The Quantifying Spirit of the 18th Century* (University of California Press: Los Angeles, 1990).

with a non-existent core. The crow in this parable then grapples with the nearly-always-imagined *possibility* of a *one* white crow existing somewhere in the cosmos. More importantly, one day it will fly into our sample and upset all our certainties. And it is this certainty that is most clearly a casualty in the move to a digitally orientated, virtually realised polity. In the dynamic environment that electracy helps elevate, the white crow shows up with great rapidity in the guise of new disciplines, methods, ways of seeing, even as migrants on our doorstop. In the process, a philosophy of negation, a philosophy that questions the quantitative and empirical value of everything, not simply the veracity of the black crow, might be reconceived as an important abstract means via which change is understood in dynamic systems where at every level the *source* of the actual knowledge under investigation and its relationship to the actual point of its production is ever more ambiguous *and* concrete. The paradoxical white crow then makes a small contribution to questioning the very methods of both scientific and humanistic enquiry.

There is a postscript to this 'paradox of the crows' worth touching on. Instead of looking elsewhere (around the corner, over the horizon, in another country or cosmos) for the one illusive white crow to prove the falsity of the proposition that all crows are black, might it be easier to look at the 'Colour of the Bases of the Body Feathers' of the actual crows you are able to empirically touch and count in-situ: 'Not only are the bases of crow feathers snowy white compared to the ravens' dirty grey, but the intergradation of colour is gradual in the latter while strikingly abrupt in crows …'[73] Regardless of whether the crow is black or white on the outside, this simple test of looking *under* the bird's black feathers will prove you do have an actual crow residing at the very place of your investigation, one that is empirically both black and white.

[THE END]

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[73]   Ian Rowley, 'The Genus *Corvus* in Australia', pp.36-37. Rowley also presents photographic evidence of the white 'colour' at the base of the black feathers.
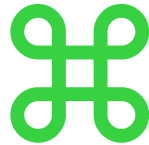
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Vietnamese Chicken Salad (Serves 6)
(Based on a recipe by Lê van Nhânh & Meera Freeman)

Ingredients
3 Chicken Breasts
1/2 cup rice vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
3 tablespoons raw sugar
1 red onion finely sliced
250gm Chinese cabbage finely sliced
1 large carrot, peeled and grated into very fine shreds
2 tablespoons Lemon Myrtle Infused Macadamia Oil

Garnish
1 tablespoon chopped Vietnamese hot mint (if not available use 1/2 tablespoon mint and 1/2 tablespoon rocket chopped to thin strips)
2 tablespoons raw macadamia pieces
1 tablespoon natural macadamia oil
1 tablespoon crisp fried shallots (buy in Asian Grocery stores)
Prawn Crackers

Dipping Sauce
1/2 teaspoon raw sugar
3 tablespoons fish sauce
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1 fresh red chilli (seeded and sliced finely)
(Combine fish sauce, lime juice, raw sugar and sliced chilli in a small serving bowl. Stir until sugar is dissolved).

Simmer chicken breasts in a saucepan of salted water until chicken is just cooked through. Drain the chicken and set aside to cool. Combine vinegar, salt, pepper and raw sugar and marinate the sliced red onion in this mixture for 30 minutes. Combine cabbage and carrot together in a large bowl. Pull the cooled chicken into fine shreds with your fingers and combine with the cabbage and carrot. Add the onion, its marinade and the Lemon Myrtle Macadamia Oil and toss well. Transfer to a serving platter. Fry macadamia pieces on gentle heat in macadamia oil stirring gently until just brown. Remove from heat and drain on paper towel. Garnish with the hot mint, macadamias and crisp fried shallots. Serve accompanied with the Dipping sauce and prawn crackers. [74]

The world over regions and food are connected; sometimes the link might be tenuous, even mythic in character, but nonetheless it remains a strong link. The Riverina has long been considered the food bowl of Australia. In pre-multicultural Australia, food was often characterised as a bland dish of meat and three vegetables, preferably served up in an overcooked state three times a day. Much popular and academic discourse has credited the arrival of various waves of immigration, and the culinary practices that accompanied these arrivals, with the consolidation of ethnic diversity in the previously homogenous, doggedly Anglo-Saxon context of pre-World War Two Australia. Lacking a peasant base from which white Australians could develop a cuisine of its own though, since the colonial era a great deal of food production has largely been export driven. So when the squatting era morphed into the family farms of the selectors, and subsequently when global agribusiness concerns entered the realms of food production in Australia something was lost, and according to Michael Symons it left us with 'hard tomatoes, pale eggs and stale apples cosmetically coated with wax.'[75] Local produce, though, has been making a belated return in the form of burgeoning farmers' markets with an organic profile cropping up around the country, once again reminding us of the centrality of food to regional space, and of a supply of food that is not trucked in from elsewhere but is grown and processed in the vicinity of the body that eats it. [76]

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[74]   This is a recipe downloaded from the Brookfarm website: <www.brookfarm.com.au>. [Accessed 4/4/2005]. Martin and Pam Brook run Brookfarm, a small organic farming enterprise on the outskirts of Bangalow on the Northern Rivers.

[75]   Michael Symons, *One Continuous Picnic: A History of Eating in Australia* (Penguin Books: Melbourne, 1984), see especially 'Hard Tomatoes for Hard Times', pp.242-252. [Maybury seems especially indebted to *One Continuous Picnic* for many of the generalisations in this opening paragraph. Ed.].

[76]   Geoffrey Lawrence & Ian Gray give a good overview of the complex mix of change that currently distinguishes food production in Australia of late in, 'The Myths of Modern Agriculture: Australian Rural Production in the 21st Century', in Bill Pritchard & Phil McManus (eds.), *Land of Discontent: The Dynamics of Change in Rural and Regional Australia* (University of New South Wales Press: Sydney, 2000), pp.33-51.

Nonetheless, a Vietnamese Chicken Salad is a direct result of a distinct cultural and political transformation in Australia. After the fall of Saigon, and the American defeat at the hands of the Viet Cong, a large contingent of Vietnamese refugees settled in Australia, bringing with them a cuisine that has itself been influenced by French culinary expertise during the time of Francophile colonization of their country, a feature I witnessed first-hand on a visit to Saigon in the early 1990s.[77] Another tangent here is that Brookfarm is also a macadamia plantation, a nut tree that originates from Hawaii. In turn, Brookfarm is now exporting their lemon myrtle infused macadamia oil to various markets around the globe, a specific example of what Lawrence and Gray refer to 'the emergence of agricultural diversity' (p.35). Brookfarm then is an up-market culinary example of the dynamic interplay between regionalisation and globalisation. The regions have largely been characterised as primary production zones, as bread-baskets for the cities, a point that has assisted in their characterisation as backward spaces, or as Lawrence and Gray again say a "country hick' notion of simple people involved in a simple lifestyle' (p.34). But in Brookfarm's case, it also manufactures foodstuffs from its raw material as well as 'generously' providing recipes and health information on its website, all practices which suggest a synthesis of primary, secondary, tertiary, even quaternary production practices.[78] More broadly, while the Northern Rivers is not known locally or globally for one specific foodstuff, it does promote itself as 'clean and green', 'ecologically sustainable', 'organic', all in concert with 'ethical business practices.'[79] It is these transformed agricultural practices (practices which were always the first means of capital accumulation in colonial and national polities) that now constitute a major ingredient of the 'new regionalism', a movement that has is attempting to synthesis cultural/pedagogic questions (for instance, identity-making) with traditional politico-economic questions (for instance, markets, modes of production, primary and secondary production).

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[77]   David Bell and Gill Vallentine reiterate the continuing influence of 'the gastronomic regions of France' as spatialising practices; for example, 'Lorraine, a dairy farming region in north-eastern France which has given us the quiche'. See their, *Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat* (Routledge: London & New York,1997), p.158. I'm also indebted to this work for its model of including recipes in its discussion as well as the section, 'Region', pp.145-161.

[78]   Barry Jones defines 'The *quaternary* (information) *sector* [as one that] provides 'soft' or intangible, services and its common element is the processing of symbols and/or symbolic objects.' Jones includes a wide variety of electronic communications, telecommunications and computing industries in his description and analysis. See *Sleepers, Wake! Technology and the Future of Work* (Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 1982), p.48.

[79]   The most comprehensive in-situ outline of this kind of regional identity-making, one couched mainly in commercial terms, is the Northern Rivers Regional Strategy. See their website: <www.nrrs.org.au>. [Accessed 5/4/2005].

While the red cedar–getters of the earlier colonial period on the Northern Rivers also exported their prized timber to foreign markets, the question that remains is this: how different is this 'new regionalism' (or the language it uses) to the exploitation of the natural resources of a region in times gone by? The food being produced by this new regionalist approach might differ in the kind of refinement that is brought to bear on its end products but there the differences might end. One significant difference though is the knowledge brought to both the production process itself and the almost instantaneous knowledge of the market largely brought about by the information and communication technology (ICT) revolution. The cedar-getters would've waited months to find out information about their global markets and to get paid for their bounty. In a politico-economic sense, a spatialised understanding of a regionalised globe only makes sense when virtual communication between them has a human response time. I speak, you answer; I answer, you speak; a point that reiterates the classical communication theory and its ongoing influence. So while globalisation has, in a sense, always existed, as many communications scholars have remarked, it is this instantaneous quality of electronic communication that makes the global/regional nexus a political force of some importance,[80] especially if that communication remains less mediated by national forces. While the cedar-getters might have exported mainly to England and America, the Brooks can look to any net-connected rising upper/middle class market the globe has to offer. China and India seem on hand to meet this criterion.

[THE END]

[80]   While not dealing directly with agricultural matters McKenzie Wark's, *Virtual Geographies: Living with Global Media Events* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1994), gives a reading of the speed of global media vectors (economic and cultural); however, a wide range of everyday human activities are not immune from these influences.

[God's Own Country]

In selecting the Riverina and the Northern Rivers as grounding points for *Chora-Logic* I was initially guided by an unreasoned intuition. Intuition oftentimes desperately searches to articulate a reason for its existence and it was only on reading the following comment from Kim Mahood that that elusive rationale became evident: 'Once the place of conception conferred the birthright, but now it is more and more the handing down of stories and knowledge of traditional homelands.'[∞] In this context, Mahood is making reference to the Aborigines she both grew up with and some of whom she met up with again after returning to the Tanami desert region in Central Australia where she grew up on Mongrel Downs Station, a journey that is the focus of *Craft for a Dry Lake*. One of the significant internal problems of the Aboriginal polity (created mostly by the encroachment of European colonisation) is that people attached to one bit of country have come into more frequent contact with people who traditionally have inhabited other regions.[∅] This is the cause of a great deal of internal conflict within Indigenous society. This is not limited to indigenous societies though; in all human cultures, the idea of 'traditional homelands' is a now a highly vexed issue. Conception and birth in a particular place no longer confers ownership or control of that country, in a materialist, a politico-economic, or even a discursive sense.

[∞] Kim Mahood, *Craft for a Dry Lake*, (Anchor Books: Sydney, 2000), p.243.

[∅] Cf: 'Indigenous people fighting for their survival may have a point when they insist that their identity is regionally grounded.' See Paul Carter, 'Virtually a Paradise: Grounding the Region', in *Periphery*, #19, 1994, p.7.