And it is here in this spatio-political disruption 'in-between' where a person is conceived/born, where their usual place of habitation is, and where and how a body finds both its deep sense of alienation and attachment.[Φ] It is only in the last two-three hundred years or so that a person, for the most part, didn't venture more than a few miles from the locality where they were born. But, as John Berger says, 'Emigration, forced or chosen, across national frontiers, or from village to metropolis, is the quintessential experience of our time'.[Ω] And possibly one of the most significant of the many spatial grids that overlay us all is the one connecting conception/birth to a current or final place of habitation and/or death. And, in death (to invoke the spirit of electromancy, something to be explained in the future), the tombstone memorialising my life might read: Terrence Maybury, born — Wagga Wagga in the Riverina, died — Bean Creek, Northern Rivers. Traversing the time and space between these two events, these two presences and the fear of their total absence, illustrates that 'Home is no longer a dwelling but the untold story of a life being lived' and that the 'centre' of that 'untold story' is 'the entire earth'.[∇] That the home of Homo sapiens is now the entire globe and not merely the region or the locality of a person's conception/birth or habitation/death is possibly one of the most significant transformations visited on the psyche by capitalism over that same period of change mentioned earlier: the last two-three hundred years. Globalisation casts a cosmopolitan ethic over the entire earth. And while locals might object, cosmopolitans and locals now constitute a symbiotic dyad.

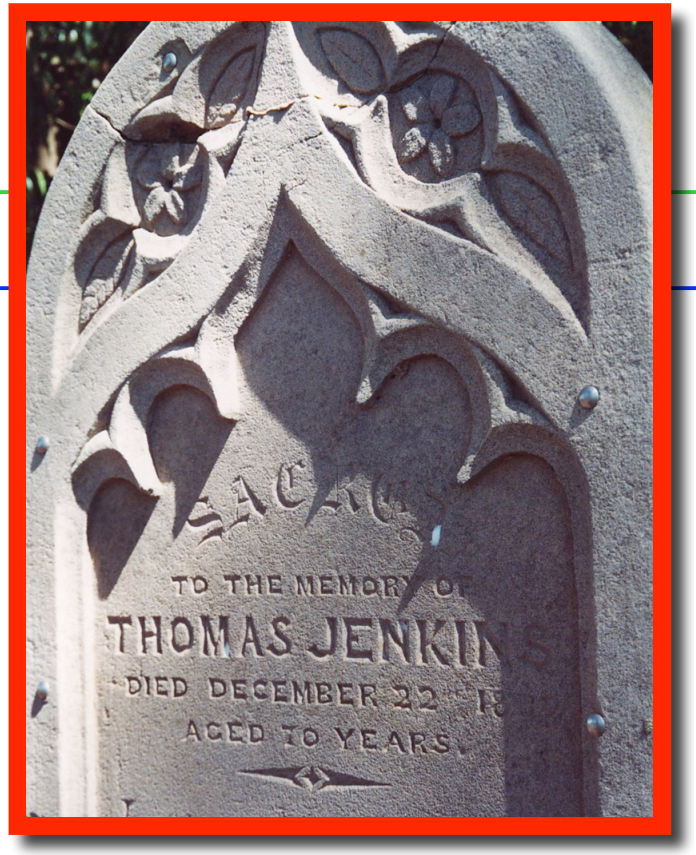
[THE END]

Φ Cf: 'How do we conceive of the inter- in international, intercultural and interpersonal communication, if not as the irreducible and irreconcilable difference broached by the space of the in-between?' See Hamid Mowlana (2003), 'Communication, Philosophy and Religion', in *The Journal of International Communication*, vol. 9, #1, p.23.

Ω John Berger, 'A House is Not a Home', in *New Society*, 23 June 1983, p.462.

∇ John Berger, 'A House is Not a Home', pp.463&464.

- χ -



‘I suffered long with pain repressed
Which wore my strength away
It made me long for endless rest
Which never can decay.’

[Gravestone Inscription of Thomas Jenkins,
Buckingbong Cemetery, via Narrandera]

... we should recall that any reading of the past—
however much it is controlled by the analysis of
documents— is driven by a reading of current events.
Michel de Certeau [81]

On the 17th September 2004 I alighted from my car after making my way out from Narrandera on the road to Buckingbong Station; I was about two thirds of the way to my destination. I was enacting a ritual repeated many times before: returning to the actual place in which my forebears had actually lived. I'd come prepared with both a map and a compass. The map allowed me an accurate idea of where I was and in what direction the object of my detour would take me. I climbed a fence and proceeded in the direction I knew virtually would take me to my destination. I'd calculated that I had about a kilometre to walk. It was a beautiful spring afternoon, an almost perfect combination of sunlight, air, temperature and purpose. About half way to my destination a very loud whoosh interrupted the 'calm', frightening my heart into a rapid beat, the adrenalin surging. More than instantly, I looked about me and up into the sky expecting to see a magpie shooting off at an angle to my head. Nothing. The whoosh was gone and there was no sight of any object that could've produced that distinctive sound (I'd been swooped by magpies before, it's an attempt by the bird to keep possible predators away from their nesting young). This is another haunted prologue brought alive by this visit to Murdering Island on the 17th September 2004.

It might well be a badge of ironic dishonour to locate a number of historical sources that offer a possible confirmation of a massacre perpetrated by your ancestors on indigenous people. It casts a unique light over what you think is your 'national identity', it unsettles the

81 Michel de Certeau, 'Making History: Problems of Method and Problems of Meaning', in *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (Columbia University Press: New York, 1988), p.23. [Maybury added a note to this reference, saying that 'At a chora-logical level, any 'reading of the past' is also un.consciously influenced by one's perspective on the future.' Ed.].

core of any professed patriotism, a point given serious amplification by Katrina Schlunke's realisation (after unearthing a massacre in her own family history in the New England region) that, 'The ordering and the recording, the white patterning are all here in *my* head. But my white patterns record how land was taken, my white patterns show how my own overblown love of the land I grew up on is now doubtful and ugly and undecided.'[82] Along with its propensity to alienate, even cancel the patriotic instinct, a massacre also raises the serious question of historical verification itself, of historical veracity in all its forms, regardless of whether they are oral, literate or electronic. The power of Ossie Ingram's oral testimony on the massacre comes about partly from this ambiguity of its 'historical' veracity:

> "About half a mile from the Buckingbong homestead there was a big waterhole where the Aborigines used to camp. Where they all got poisoned was actually at Green Swamp where there was a second group of families camped. The station owner poured drums of poison into the water and a lot of Aboriginal people died, some say six hundred of them. Then the first group who were camped up at the big waterhole, about twelve miles away, heard what happened and cleared out further out to Duckbend. Even in my childhood the river still flowed around Duckbend and it formed a sort of an island. They got onto this island and that's where they stopped. A boundary rider was going past and spotted smoke rising from the kangaroo grass there. He snuck up there and then saw the Aboriginals camped, and returned to the homestead and told his station overseer boss. So the boss got his men together and they rode to the Bend."

> "They shot the remainder of the tribe, or horde I suppose it was, except for the one man. This man got a reed into his mouth and used it to breathe while he swam down the river with it. He bypassed all the places that he knew and ended up at Benerembah Station. That's where he collapsed on the river bank when he was found by the station owner's daughter. She cared for him until he recovered, fell in love with him; and ended up marrying this Aboriginal man."[83]

---

82 Katrina M. Schlunke, *Bluff Rock: The Autobiography of a Massacre* (Curtin University Press: North Fremantle, 2005), p.228. [Italics in the original].

83 Ossie Imgram, recorded in an oral interview at Grong Grong, via Narrandera, March, 1995 and transcribed in the interviewer's book: Peter Rimas Kabaila, *Wiradjuri Places: The Murrumbidgee River Basin, Vol. 1* (Black Mountain Projects: Canberra, 1998), p.90.

[Massacre Island, via Narranderra, 2004]

Also, Peter Freeman, quoting from the memoirs of James Baylis, a surveyor along the Murrumbidgee River during the 1860s/70s, says that 'The Jenkins and their neighbours determined that the natives "had to be taught a lesson. All hands on the adjoining stations and across the river turned out and drove them to an island in the river where numbers of them were shot. The island is known as the Murdering Island to this day and is about three miles down the river from Buckingbong"'.[84]

84 Peter Freeman, *The Homestead: A Riverina Anthology* (Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 1982), p.196. Freeman's architectural take on Riverina homestead life during the colonial era includes a section on Buckingbong station (pp.196-200), depicted in its rundown state in the 1970s before the current owners rebuilt the homestead.

Page + 217 = ➥

The suggestion that there is a massacre in the family romance is one of those jolts that take you out of yourself, out of your capsule-like knowledge of the world, demanding an explanation of its motives and action, and its re-transmission as historical data both 'chaotic' and 'truthful'. According to Kabaila, Ossie Ingram 'grew up on the Sandhills settlement near Narrandera, not far from the Poisoned Waterholes and Massacre Island. Ossie is retelling an account given to him in the late 1930s when one of the old people pointed out a place at Duckbend (downriver from Massacre Island) where the events were said to have occurred.'[85] Further to its oral nature, Kabaila says that 'a substantial body of legend has grown up around the two places'; and, also, there seems to be no clear date for the massacre, but most likely it occurred around the time of The Wiradjuri War, 'probably early in 1841 [as] posses of settlers on both sides of the river trapped 60 or 70 Wiradjuri men, women and children on Murdering Island in the Murrumbidgee', as related through Bill Gammage's local history of the Narrandera Shire.[86] Finally, Kabaila extrapolates, 'Whatever the events at Poisoned Waterholes Creek and Massacre Island actually were, and no contemporary record of these events has yet been uncovered as historical "proof", the oral tradition for these places undoubtedly springs out of the memory of killing by white settlers in the Wiradjuri region, during this darkest period of Aboriginal history in NSW' (p.90). In the oral remembering of the Wiradjuri, then, a number of massacres are continually re-remembered by recourse to one or two massacres. Kabaila sums it up this way: 'Massacre Island is the most significant because it provides the clearest link between oral tradition and place. Massacre Island is a relatively undisturbed place which evokes an atmosphere of unease, and is a symbol of the alienation of Wiradjuri lands' (p.92). The practising memory of the Wiradjuri then is its own form of historical authentication via the continual verbalisation of this story.

This massacre was most likely just one among many occurring during this frontier war, a war fought over the ownership and control of Widajuri country, a fight the indigenous people ceded to the Europeans. In this particular case though the massacre is not merely an historical fact to be argued over by experts; its incorporation into the "I"-Maybury Family Romance marks it as a 'fact' with intense psychic and familial resonance. It's possible now to have a micro-insight of the psychological ambience circulating through family members in the HBO series *The Sopranos*, while also being a reminder that the violence inherent in coveting space is not merely a product of conveyancing regulations, parliament's legislative imperative, or, more broadly, the rule of law. Massacres are a regular practice in conflicts over land

85 Peter Rimas Kabaila, *Wiradjuri Places*, p.90.

86 Bill Gammage, *Narrandera Shire,* (Bill Gammage/Narrandera Shire Council: Narrandera, 1986), p.35; see also p.238.

tenure, while also indicating that your very life is threatened by this kind of conflict. The Massacre Island episode serves as a personal emblem of a much wider series of massacres.[87]

No matter what the ramifications for me personally, or for my family, or even for what might constitute their collective relationship with long-dead forbears, the oral testimonials of the Murdering Island story suggest a rich variety of parallels in the tripartite set referred to earlier as the oral, the literate, and the electronic.[88] At the simple work-a-day level, this oral story has come to me, firstly, via an inkling in Gammage's *Narrandera Shire*, then via a tape transcribed into Kabaila's *Wiradjuri Places*, and later (in 2004) speaking to Ossie Ingram in person at his home in Narrandera, and finally re-transcribed again into the laptop where I now manipulate it. From Ong we get a sense of how oral communication works in a more purely oral context. Even more fascinating than this though is how a particular message gets interpreted and transformed across these three domains. What happens to a message when it gets shifted around the oral, the literate and the electronic?

Quite by accident rather than design I discovered a number of historical sources indicating there was a massacre of maybe 60 and possibly up to 140 Aborigines, including women and children, at Massacre Island (sometimes also known as Murdering Island), a now haunted place in the broad terms offered by Peter Read in *Haunted Earth*,[89] and one situated approximately eight kilometres south-east of Narrandera on the winding Murrumbidgee River, one of three significant rivers of the Riverina region. A further four kilometres upstream was/is Buckingbong Station, one of the big squatting runs of the region during the squattocratic ascendency of the middle period of the 19th century. Buckingbong was ruled mainly by Frank Jenkins (1820-1902), although he was assisted (amongst others) by his two brothers: the more wild John Jenkins (1816-1899, and who also held property under his own name), and their eldest half-brother Thomas Jenkins (1812-1882). In the surviving pictures there is a significant difference in the physiques of Frank and Thomas. Thomas Jenkins and his

87 For a broader historical context to the Massacre Island incident (and wherein it is not mentioned) see Bruce Elder, *Blood on the Wattle: Massacres and Maltreatment of Aborigines since 1788* (National Book Distributors: Sydney, 1998). For this Wiradjuri contextualisation see especially: 'The Massacre of the Wiradjuri — 1824', pp.42-53. At the time Wiradjuri lands extended north-east to Bathurst, just over the mountains from Sydney, where this earlier 1824 massacre took place.

88 Kabaila also cites an interview he carried out with Neville Lyons (another Sandhills ex-resident) in which he talks of poisoned flour being given out to Aborigines at Poisoned Waterholes Creek. See *Wiradjuri Places*, pp.90-91.

89 Peter Read, *Haunted Earth* (University of New South Wales Press: Sydney, 2003). *Haunted Earth* details, in an oral interview method (among other techniques), a number of Australian places (a cemetery, a Chinese restaurant, a monastery, for example) where the ghosts of the past still lurk in the awareness of the people who now inhabit them.

wife Theresa Jane Jenkins (nee Dunstan, 1820-1895) are my mother's father's mother's parents. My mother Mary Patricia Maybury (nee Berryman, born in 1924) was the second child of Herbert Harry Berryman (1884-1958, himself one of thirteen children as well as a twin), and Kathleen Elizabeth Berryman (nee O'Brien, 1891-1978). Herb, as my grandfather was known, was the sixth child of a union between Rebecca Jane Jenkins (1855-1922) and James Bliss Berryman (1844-1922), who married at Wagga Wagga in 1876. Rebecca was the sixth child of Thomas and Jane Jenkins, which circulates the narrative back to the earlier signatories of the Buckingbong run.

In what might become known as the Buckingbong Massacre there is a significant lesson to be had from this confluence of *place* and *family* and *self*. This comes about because the massacre took place on country the Jenkins' brothers quite literally squatted on from the early 1830s. In the early 1840s, when the massacre is thought to have occurred, Buckingbong Station covered a large swathe of prime riverfront country, along with extensive backblocks, sometimes spreading up to 95,000 acres in later years. The Jenkins brothers were powerful figures in the Narrandera area and, to a lesser extent, across the Riverina region. John took up a big run near Gundagai in the eastern part of the region, but the banks called in his bad debts and Frank had to bail him out. It appears Thomas Jenkins had more of a support role rather than leadership role in this diasporic dynasty from over the sea one that was extensively connected to Airds Irish migration.[90]

V

> He [Frank Jenkins] told me how they [the blacks] were very troublesome spearing cattle, and at last all the settlers on both sides of the river determined to give them a lesson; so one day they all went out armed and drove the blacks before them, who took refuge on an island thickly overgrown with reeds in the middle of the river, about seven miles up from the town of Narrandera, and here they were shot down in numbers. The island is known as the Murdering Island to this day.[91]

90 The Jenkins' brothers role in the evolution of Narrandera and the surrounding locality is extensively documented in Bill Gammage, *Narrandera Shire* (Bill Gammage/Narrandera Shire Council: Narrandera, 1986).

91 James J. Baylis, 'The Murrumbidgee and Wagga Wagga', in *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 13, 1928, p.256.

By the end of 1890s depression, and assisted by colonial New South Wales government legislation, often referred to as the Robertson Land Acts of the 1860s pushing for smaller sized farm holdings,[92] the Jenkins brothers were either dead or bankrupt. One circulating local story is that Frank Jenkins had to have his funeral costs paid for by Sir Samuel McCaughey (1835-1919), an 'old friend' of the brothers and a powerful sometime fellow squatter and parliamentarian of the era. Frank and John Jenkins are buried at the Narrandera Cemetery, their graves listed on the tourist pamphlet: *Narrandera Cemetery Heritage Walk*, where it written they 'bought the Buckingbong run for the price of two cows and two calves.'[93] Thomas Jenkins is buried at the Buckingbong cemetery, not far from the current Buckingbong homestead, which has recently been renovated by the current owners from its dilapidated state of the early 1980s. In 2002 the cemetery had a $2000 makeover initiated by another Jenkins descendant, former Narrandera mayor Warwick Heckendorf, also my informant about the McCaughey story.

For all this (and possibly because of it) the massacre seems not to have been entered into any legal discourse, or at least in the material I researched in the New South Wales Archives Office and elsewhere. The knowledge of the massacre, though, lingers in the cultural memory of the Narrungdera clan of the Wiradjuri people, custodians of Buckingbong country before European colonisation.[94] Ozzie Ingram, a member of the Narrungdera clan, confirmed to me in person that he had been orally informed of the story of the massacre by his uncle when he was a boy.[95] The lack of a relay between the oral tradition of the Narrungdera clan and any legal record of it in the European sense of this case means that a comprehensive *naming* of the Buckingbong massacre remains allusive. It's possible the massacre was the last "battle" of the short Wiradjuri war of the early 1840s, one whose opening skirmishes were dominated by the Narrungdera people.[96] After

92 The people who took up these smaller blocks of land (which included a number of government conditions, like certain lengths of fencing installed within specified time-frames and the extensive clearing of vegetation, were known as 'selectors'. The theme of bucolic idiocy that permeates the cultural rendering of rural and regional life in Australia can be traced at least to Steele Rudd's series of novels (and subsequent films), *On Our Selection*, most of which depict the lives of half-witted characters living in this 'selector' milieu and based loosely on Rudd's life in the Darling Downs region of Queensland.

93 Narrandera Shire Council, *Narrandera Cemetery Heritage Walk,* issued at the local Tourist Information Centre. The pamphlet acknowledges one of its sources as Bill Gammage's *Narrandera Shire*.

94 For an anthropologically/archeologically orientated account of the cultural memory of the events at Massacre Island and Duckbend (another local massacre site), and their significance as heritage places, see Peter Rimas Kabaila, *Wiradjuri Places* (Black Mountain Projects: Canberra, 1998), p.92, which is itself contained within a larger overview of the Narrandera area, pp.89-112.

95 On 18/9/2004 I spoke to Ozzie Ingram at his home at Narrandera. He also contributed, as oral source material, much the same version of events to Peter Rimas Kabaila's *Wiradjuri Places*, and Peter Reid's, *A Hundred Years War: Wiradjuri People and the State* (Australian National University Press: Sydney, 1988), see especially 'Interlude: Narrandera 1929-1945', pp.76-83.

96 For an account of the Wiradjuri war in the Narrandera area, see Bill Gammage, *Narrandera Shire,* pp.32-37.

this episode Wiradjuri people descended into dispossession, poverty, alcoholism, family breakdown, welfare dependency, and eventually 'the stolen generations'.[97]

[Buckingbong Homestead, 2004]

While I certainly don't have first-hand access to the Wiradjuri's cultural memory of the Buckingbong Massacre,[98] I do have access to the Maybury/Berryman/Jenkins ancestral mix that creates a thread of gene-a-logic connecting me to this virtual event from the past. That I found out about the massacre from historical sources dealing with the Riverina, and not from one of the family members, is itself instructive. Forgotten, repressed, ignored, maybe even accompanied by a blissful naïvety, the massacre has not rated a mention in the family archive: either as sound, image or text. Although the highly popular Australian novelist of the 1920s/30s – F. J. Thwaites, a great

97 The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's 1997 enquiry into the 'Stolen Generations': *Bringing Them Home: National Enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children From their Families*, generated extensive and sometimes heated debate across Australia, many disputing the claims of genocide made by the enquiry. The fact remains that Aboriginal children were taken from their families by Government authorities in large numbers, a practice that continued up until the 1960s.

98 For a brief account of the Wiradjuri version of the events on Massacre Island see Iris Clayton & Alex Barlow, *Wiradjuri of the Rivers and Plains* (Heinmann Library: Melbourne, 1997), p.55.

grandson of Frank Jenkins (and who wrote *The Broken Melody* as a memorial to a childhood sometimes spent on Buckingbong) — was sometimes mentioned in passing.[99]

There is a parallel reminder here in Robyn Ferrell's account of her home town of Pinjarra, a small community in the Peel Inlet/River region, just south of Perth, Western Australia, where she attended primary school during the early 1970s; in particular, the shame the Pinjarra massacre visited on the town's psychogeography. She writes that, 'The Pinjarra massacre stands as a literal event of colonialism, one which forced denial on all of its subjects, European and Indigenous, from the governor down, and bound them together in their shame.'[100] The Riverina massacre, one that is more circumspect in relation to discourse, to private white family knowledge, to society, an absent understanding that helps produce a collective sublimation, all the while illustrating how 'Shame is brought on by other people. More abstractly, shame is instituted by community to effect an indifference to others. 'Don't stare, it's rude.'' This bond of silence in the face of tragedy, bloody-mindedness, murder, transgressions of all kinds, is common enough, and not just in regional contexts. Its power comes about because, in a way, 'Shame describes and proscribes an effective community, before law, before strategy, scheme, plan, program and legislation — a spontaneous and unavoidable bond that comes about just in virtue of being in proximity' (p.31). I am an heir to this silence (the intensify of which sharpens our psychic proximity to the Buckingbong massacre), its varying degrees of shame, a process that will intensify as knowledge of it spreads further afield. In historical accounts the numbers murdered in the massacre might vary but it is the shame of the still present virtual existence of the killings on Massacre Island that haunt and shame the present generation and its moment, either as silence, or as repressed or active thought.[101] Without a ceremonial atonement of this massacre the shame will fester without a specified action to express it, to exorcise it.

99 F. J. Thwaites, *The Broken Melody* (Angus and Robertson: London, 1930).

100 Robyn Ferrell, 'Pinjarra 1970: *Shame and the Country Town*', in *Cultural Studies Review*, vol. 9, #1, 2003, p.33.

101 Interestingly, the document that names the *place* of Massacre Island is the local topographic map, Berembed Weir (8228-S, Scale 1:50,000), published by the Central Mapping Authority, Surveyor General's Department, Bathhurst, New South Wales, grid reference: DB657483/4. There is also a graphic illustration of the topography of the island in Peter Rimas Kabaila's *Wiradjuri Places*, p.92.

In *Haunted Earth*'s first encounter with the 'inspirited' nature of place, Peter Read visits ('After Midnight' on the 18 January 2002), the Gore Hill cemetery on the north shore of Sydney. At this timespace coordinate, with its dense concentration of ghosts, there is a eureka-like moment where Read's Anglican childhood, and his Western, largely secular epistemological frame frays at the edges: 'What limitations we western scholars place upon ourselves!'[102] A statement posed as an exclamation, expressed almost as a sense of exasperation, and not even as a question. The visit to my great-great-grandfather's grave (and his siblings at the Narrandera Cemetery), as well as to the site of the Buckingbong Massacre (and the current homestead), was preceded just a few days earlier by the death and burial of an aunt. All these rituals conform to one of *Haunted Earth*'s many insightful observations:

> Almost any place seems to be capable of transforming the human observer (or creator) to a heightened state, which can be imaginative or meditative or physical; every site is capable of receiving or possessing an inspiritment bestowed by the human agent.[103]

Indeed the thought produced by rituals of this kind (especially as it is experienced in specific places) is also stark reminder of that which remains outside of the strictures of the print imagination, yet always hinted at and alluded to, sometimes even explicitly. In speaking of Koori history in the Eden-Monaro region on the south coast of New South Wales, local activist Vivienne Mason is quoted, in an interview from 1992, as saying:

> A lot of people down here didn't know much about their tribal background and going through this research we have found that it was actually the white people who saved our history for us. We've learnt from them. If they hadn't recorded a lot of it, our history would've been lost, not our culture but our history.[104]

---

102 Peter Read, *Haunted Earth*, p.41.

103 Peter Read, *Haunted Earth*, p.35.

104 Vivienne Mason quoted in Mark McKenna, *Looking for Blackfellas' Point: An Australian History of Place* (University of New South Wales Press: Sydney, 2002), p.222.

Page + 224 = ➥

In this ambivalent zone between the white recording of ritualised events in place (like massacres, deaths and burials) and their public expression in some kind of popular discourse (familial, journalistic, novelistic, bureaucratic etc.) lies a choral quality of knowledge that Derrida identifies in the *Timaeus*:

> Deprived of a real referent, that which in fact resembles a proper name finds itself called an X which has as its property (as its *physis* and as its *dynamis*, Plato's text will say) that it has nothing as its own and that it remains unformed, formless (*amorphon*). This very singular impropriety, which precisely is nothing, is just what *khora* must, if you like, *keep*; it is just what *must be kept for it*, what *we* must keep for it.[105]

From a chora-logical point of view it is untenable to round up these rituals into a reciprocally understood frame. They have been, and will remain, edge(y) epistemologies. They may be named, even with a Proper Name (the Buckingbong Massacre), but as objects of knowledge they will refuse a collectively comprehendible exegesis. At best and worst, they remain the subject of intense debate, but a debate without a collectively agreed upon referent. Even within each one of us this referent remains unstable, a site of difference, and within the thought of the philosopher possibly even more so.

[THE END]

105 Jacques Derrida (1995) 'Khora', tran. by Ian McLeod; in Thomas Dutoit (ed.), *On the Name*, (Stanford University Press: Stanford, California; p.97. [Italics in the original].

[Baylis Street, Wagga Wagga, 2004]

['Regional Subjection and Becoming': An Annotation]

Invoking the work of Judith Butler and William Connolly, and incorporating numerical, governmental, economic and cultural data from the Latrobe Valley region of Victoria as case-study material, Katherine Gibson's essay uses focus group commentary as methods to analyse the relationship between being, space/place (LaTrobe Valley), subjection (the sometimes rationalising forces of power that act to constrain the way a citizen-subject acts in the world), and becoming, which Gibson characterises as 'how [citizen-subjects] create new identities for themselves despite the seemingly hegemonic power of dominant discourses and governmental practices.'[106] (Darren Tofts' comment: 'I am always *in medias res*' neatly sums up this psychic process of becoming.)[107] Once again, chora is not mentioned in this essay, but with its emphasis on these elements (being/space/becoming, the region, the citizen-subject, power and globalisation) it nonetheless assumes, ipso-facto, a peculiarly Australian discourse on the chora.

Katherine Gibson is one half of the writing team J. K. Gibson-Graham whose individual and collective writings are partly devoted to questioning the largely hegemonic status of the term 'Economy', its capitalisation part of the way in which the reality-effect surrounding any discourse on the topic has been conveniently 'naturalised', largely in the interests of centralising forces. Gibson-Graham's work gives voice to the silence embedded in this assumption, of the 'reality' of the economy, of how it is almost the Father of culture, society and nature. The privatisation of brown coal extraction and its attendant electricity generating industry in the Latrobe Valley by the Victorian State Government during the 1990s provides the necessary psychic and political disruption to examine these assumptions in a specific Australian region, one that has had a long affiliation with the Australian Labor Party.

106 Katherine Gibson, 'Regional Subjection and Becoming', in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 19, 2001, p.641.

107 Darren Tofts, 'Hyperlogic, the Avant-garde and Other Intransitive Acts', in *Parallax: Essays on Art, Culture and Technology* (Gordon & Breach: Sydney, 1999), p.25.

Page + 227 = ➥

Gibson also examines the early 20th century numerical calculations that justified inaugurating a mass production electricity generating industry when previously energy generation was mainly taken care of as a private affair. (I might also note here that recent developments in the renewable energy generation return this critical infrastructural provision to a private and/or localised responsibility). She notes that the cost of labour was neatly excised from these early 20th century calculations, a fact that was reiterated when the privatisation process of the 1990s largely automated electricity generation doing away with labour costs as much as possible. As the discussion in the focus groups Gibson quotes illustrate, this privatisation and automation process devastated the social and psychic economy of the Valley. The centralisation of electricity generation by the state of Victoria through its agency the State Energy Commission of Victoria (SECV), and concomitantly, the power of the unions in labour affairs in the Valley combined to form a unique monopoly, a reminder that any monopoly is a key factor in the forces of economic, cultural and political centralisation.

After the First World War Lieutenant-General Sir John Monash became the head of SECV, who then collectively proceeded to push for the socialisation and the enculturation of a mass electricity generation industry in the region. Up until the advent of World War 2 though there was no conception of the Latrobe Valley as a region. The publication of a regional survey and plan in 1947 changed this. Gibson analyses this plan, noting of its ignored findings that localising interests were instrumental to its failure, while also saying that 'The failure of technologies of governmentality effectively to 'create' a region that could be 'ruled' allowed a discourse of individualism to gain power' (p.662), a comment that could equally be applied to every region in this country. Localising interests, which could be characterised as crossing a range of criteria such as town versus country, male versus female, black versus white, employed versus unemployed, educated learning versus real-world learning, civic versus bureaucratic, old-timers versus newcomers, young versus old etc., especially when dominated by one large Economic Behemoth and encouraged and propelled by individualising instincts, is a text-book example of the balkanisation impulse so essential to thwarting the development, and the becoming into being of a sense of regionality. Even the union movement, who Gibson says are 'organised around slogans such as "united we stand, divided we fall" (p.663) fell into step with the individualising impulse. Helping to give rise to Gibson's thoughts, one focus group respondent spoke the following words:

> "I was talking to a union leader about two years ago and he suggested that one of the mistakes the unions made was to individualize the problem. That is, the focus was on the size of the packages and ensuring

access of their members to the best deal possible for those people individually. Looking back, his feeling was perhaps we should have looked at the wider community, perhaps we should have been looking at the social rather than the individual, and perhaps in the future the region needs to *socialize issues* or look at issues from a *social community* perspective rather than look at how it will effect individuals." (p.662, italics in the original).

Here then is a significant crux of the chora-logical dilemma in action. On the one hand there has now been a deeply embedded history and an extensive training in individuating protocols that have been (self-)instituted across a wide range of disciplines and practices (a process that has itself been fluently analysed in Foucauldian terms by Nikolas Rose).[108] The ingratiation into modern forms of being of an essentialist kind of *self-made-ness* is a manifestation of this individuating impulse (and as the Latrobe example suggests, still a powerful force). This self-made-ness is often couched in terms of its isolation from collective practices and understandings like society, culture, politics, nature, community etc. If there has been a failure in the Latrobe of developing a regional community from an economic/political/social point of view, or as William Connolly says of the 'democratic', political imagination, ' ... the recognition of a people ... bound together by a set of shared understandings, identities, debates, and traditions ...';[109] might it be instructive to think more acutely about a new beginning for the communal ethic, one where the sensation of and a feeling for *regionality* is paramount, which is a point of view Brian Massumi indirectly inaugurates a discussion on in *Parables of the Virtual*. This might be a process that takes on board (in both deconstructive and reconstructive ways) what it might mean to the arts of *becoming* in thinking and acting as a regionally mobile citizen-subject with global ambitions. With this now long history of individuation differentially embedded in all of us, and through which feeling and sensation are key ontologically framed political markers, any new regionalist project will need to take seriously this bodily located political economy more so than class, social or collective starting points. 'Regional Subjection and Becoming' provides some implaced ballast to the praxis of these critical conundrums.

[THE END]

108 See especially, Nikolas Rose, *Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power and Personhood* (Cambridge University Press: London & New York, 1998).

109 William E. Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis & London, 1995), p.136.

- χ -

[RIDDLE: How might one compose an electronically codified algorithm for the coordinates of in-front and behind, moisture and dryness, left and right, for heat and cold, nearness and farness, above and below ... or for the salt of the earth?]

- χ -

[Main Street: *West Wyalong*][110]

While imaginative literature is one of the most fallible of historical sources, it is also one of the richest.

David Walker and Richard Nile[111]

'There has perhaps been a mistake — but of no great importance — made in the denomination of this picture', opines Gordon, the Adelaide based narrator at the centre of a short story called 'The Drover's Wife' and who is himself the former husband of Hazel, the person he alleges is the real name of the woman depicted in *The Drover's Wife*, which is a painting by Russell Drysdale wrought under the influence of an even older short story called 'The Drover's Wife', which was earlier written by the hand of a Sydney author by the name of Henry Lawson while travelling through the Riverina and who thought he saw a drover and his wife somewhere on the road between West Wyalong and Narrandera, via the Wagga Wagga stock-route (the author of this short story might well have had this thought but he equally could have had a severe dose of the d.t.'s so his drinking might have influenced his thinking and as such is most likely delusional thought and not an accurate depiction of reality).

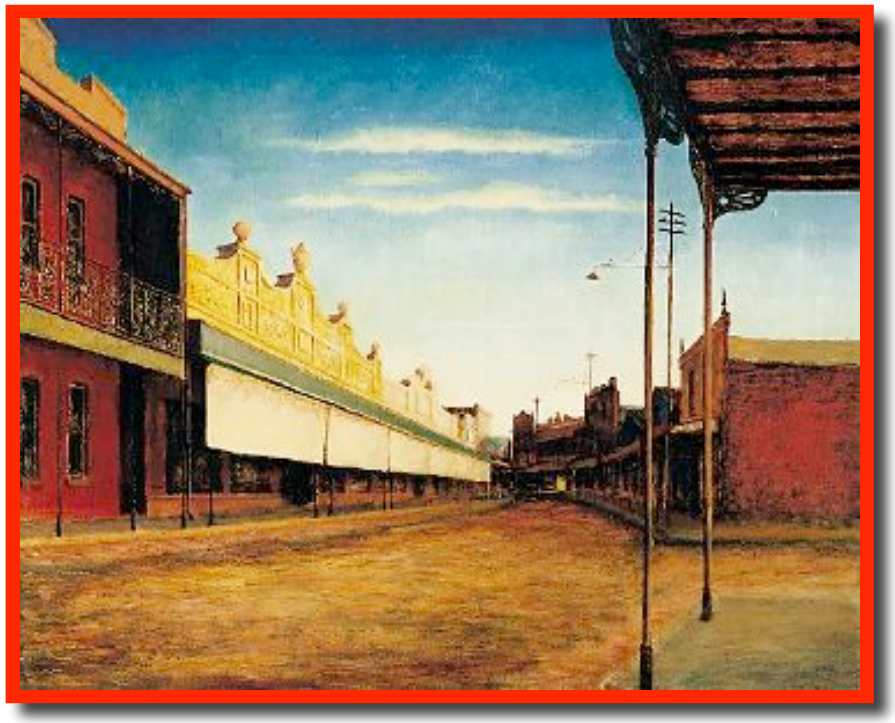
During the early part of 1949 the Australian artist Russel Drysdale paid a visit to the 'little town' of West Wyalong, a small community on the northern flank of the Riverina and the site of the inspiration for his painting *West Wyalong*. (It should go without saying that Drysdale probably missed drinking with Henry Lawson in one of West Wyalong's many pubs by over fifty years, as the latter came through this 'little town' looking for drovers and their wives to write about sometime during the social and political upheavals of the 1890s depression). While still too young to drink at the time I myself spent some time in this 'little town' during the 1960s (my parents owned

---

110 In a note attached to this fragment, Maybury remarks that 'Murray Bail's short story, 'The Drover's Wife', in *Contemporary Portraits* (University of Queensland Press: St. Lucia, 1975), pp.53-61, provided the impetus for this parody-style reflection.' [The opening line in 'Main Street: *West Wyalong*' is the same as the opening line of Bail's version of 'The Drover's Wife', Ed.].

111 David Walker & Richard Nile, 'Fact, Fiction and Fancy: Using Literary Sources', in Local History Co-ordination Project (eds.), *Locating Australia's Past: A Practical Guide to Writing Local History* (New South Wales University Press: Sydney, 1998), p.56.

Page + 231 = ➥



[“West Wyalong”, Russell Drysdale, 1949]

and operated a small corner shop during the time Drysdale visited). I used to perch myself at the open window of the Commercial Hotel, a pub in which my uncle was drinking, listening to stories and seeing images remarkably like the ones Lawson wrote about and Drysdale painted, and waiting for one of them to emerge to drive my grandmother and I back to the family farm. One critic went so far as to say that this depiction of the town’s Main Street is ‘one of Drysdale’s finest paintings’, and further that, ‘Three days were enough for the artist to absorb the atmosphere of this little town in central New South Wales.’[112] But the story portrayed in the painting *West Wyalong* always puzzled and irritated me, although it was the ‘three days trip’ idea that really made my blood boil.

---

112 Lou Klepac, *The Life and Work of Russell Drysdale* (Bay Books: Sydney, 1983), pp.46 & 111.

["West Wyalong", Terrence Maybury, 2004]

Drysdale made the trip with his friend John Nagle, a judge on the country circuit, and after arriving back at his home town of Sydney he painted the actual picture from a 'rapid notation' he made of the town's Main Street during this visit. There can be little doubt *West Wyalong* is a good example of Drysdale's distinctively rangy style: the veranda posts holding up the awnings attached to the buildings seem impossibly thin, as if they might tumble over at even the suggestion of a person leaning against them. In another of Drysdale's paintings 'The Cricketers', painted in 1945, the human figures depicted give another good example of this rangy visual quality. In *West Wyalong*, though, there are no human figures depicted in this built landscape, a Main Street that is often glowingly referred to by local authorities as the only *curved* main-street in Australia, and by doing so disobeying the usual grid structure of town planning. My disquiet about *West Wyalong* come from my memory of West Wyalong's actual main street as a child, looking in on the drinkers and storytellers in the bar, strolling hand-in-hand with my grandmother along its curved Main Street, going in and out of the shops, especially the Greek-owned

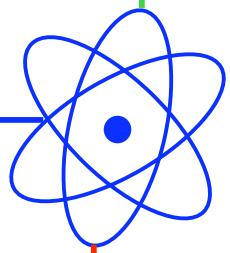
Page + 233 = ➥

Paragon Café with their addictive chocolate milkshakes. I remember the Main Street always bustling with people, cars, and movement of all variety; it was not a still-life even in my recollected memory of it.

This now mythical place (that is, this image and memory of the Main Street of West Wyalong) I'd skipped through, stood in, walked along, lingered over; this place, for me now long gone in actuality, but re-presented here by Drysdale's painting as a virtuality, and reverberating with all Main Streets (particularly with ones from American movies and television series and an idea that indicated Drysdale might have been an audience member for John Ford's western, *The Searchers*). Without human figures (who are the painting's ghosts in my memory/imagination) a viewer who has walked that actual street remains cornered, cut off from the broader mythological scale at which *West Wyalong* operates. The painting has stolen my memory of this place while leaving both intact, aggrandising it for purposes other than I might allow, recreating (literally and metaphorically) on a larger canvas an *idea* of this Main Street and one that is not merely a creative interpretation of this collectivising place. It has antagonised me by colonising my small town memory, unreservedly fixing it in a visual plane forever, or at least until the painting's provenance peters out at some distant point in the future. It is not now my memory of that place, or of anyone who may have regularly walked that actual Main Street, but a small entry in the national archive, a small remnant of national mythologising. It is not only the camera that steals this memory-spirit, under human guidance, the pen and pencil, the paintbrush, the voice box, theories of all kinds, also produce vanishing acts on reality, and context.

[THE END]

FEEDBACK, COMMENTS, EXTRAPOLATIONS, IMPORTS & EXPORTS:



As the printing press led to the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire and to the birth of Protestantism, the Internet will lead to the decline of traditional intermediaries (such as bankers and retailers) and global forums (such as large television networks and wholesale markets) all of which will be replaced by specific players with specific constituencies and direct access to citizens at the local level.

Jacques Attali [114]

The word 'bastard' has a richly ambiguous resonance in the Australian meaning-making lexicon. All at once, and differentially according the G. A. Wilkes's *A Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms* (20-22), the word's meaning can be 'Derogatory, but not necessarily suggesting illegitimacy', as in Henry Lawson's poem 'The Captain of the Push': 'Here's the bleedin' push, me covey — here's a bastard from the bush!' As well, it can be 'Compassionate, indicating a grudging acceptance', as in, for example, Joseph Furphy's *Such is Life*: "Seen better days, pore (fellow),' observed Cooper sympathetically, as the ripple of water into the pannikin indicated that the whaler was at the tap.' ('Fellow' is here politely substituted for 'bastard'). Then there is the word's 'Friendly and affectionate' usage, as in Lawson Glassop's wartime novel *We Were the Rats*, published in 1944: "G'day, ya old bastard,' said Jim, and I was amused again that the Tommies could never

113 [It appears this essay was submitted for publication but was rejected by its peer reviewers. The first reviewer writing that, 'I'm afraid I find all my Sokals have gone off. This is just letting rhetoric stand in the place of careful, patient, critical, concrete and specific thought.' And the second reviewer writing that: 'Obviously the objection will be raised that in recommending the essay be rejected I am misunderstanding the ways in which bastard reasoning deconstructs the generic hierarchy which privileges the 'practical' essay (with a thesis and a point) over the performative essay whose very playfulness subverts the practical essay's illusory claims to mastery. Furthermore it will be objected that in my unreflecting defense of 'instrumental' reason I am marginalizing those very discourses which disrupt that reasoning. So be it. Somebody has to make a call.' It appears here in a much-abbreviated form. Ed.]

114 Jacques Attali, 'The Crash of Western Civilization: The Limits of the Market and Democracy', in *Foreign Policy*, #107, 1997, p.60.

Page + 236 = ➥

get used to our main term of endearment.' Then there is its 'Impersonal' usage, like the following diary entry from the highly popular Australian writer Ion L. Idreiss: 'Of all the bastards of places this is the greatest bastard in the world.'[115] Included in this everyday lexicon are 'bastardry', 'Pommy Bastard', 'bastardisation' ('to seek to humiliate, as part of initiation into a regiment, college etc.' — *Macquarie Dictionary*), and 'happy as a bastard on Father's Day'. (This latter entry is also an echo of one of my mother's favourite sayings: "it's a wise man who knows his own father", a constant familial iteration that must caste some doubt on my own bastard origins, that is, I have both Catholic *and* Protestant antecedents). In short, any bastard can get mixed up with all sorts of things, not just pre-marital sex and illegitimate children.

The word 'bastard', then, both in the Australian vernacular, and more broadly, in the bastard reasoning that chora-logic foregrounds, provides us with an inkling of the situated and constructed nature of meaning-making and, more broadly, the kind of rationality it can lead to, or more accurately, direct us away from. The current era is, without a doubt, a timespace coordinate wherein reason/rationality has come under increasing scrutiny from a range of objectors, from both within the academy via the postmodern turn, and also from religious institutions and entities. Norman O. Brown provides a clue as to the source of this religious mistrust of reason:

> Reason is the Devil's "bride and whore." Not only is reason a positive enemy to scriptural faith, but it is also linked to the Aristotelian principle that good works make a man good. Reason is the source of all achievement in this world; but good works and achievements in this world are the domain of the Devil; therefore the teaching of reason can only be the Devil's teaching, and the voice of reason the voice of the Devil.[116]

In this context of a suspicion in rationality, the splitting of the atom and the dropping of the atomic bomb might also be invoked. Certainly, the long-term transition from Holy Roman Catholicism, through Protestantism and then on to Capitalism has been well documented. The material/spiritual dichotomy that sometimes animates these '-isms' through all these transformations though (a dilemma illustrated, on the one hand, by the human yearning for worldly influence, money and power; while on the other, there is a craving for a permanent booking with immortality in the afterlife) also splits any easy understanding of reason and rationality. Whatever else its call to a higher authority might mean, legitimate reason is also the logical dexterity by which self-interest is articulated. Secular rational knowledge

115 G. A. Wilkes, *A Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms* (Fontana/Collins: Sydney, 1980), pp.20-22.

116 Norman O. Brown, *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytic Meaning of History* (Wesleyan University Press: Connecticut, 1959), p.213.

has consistently tried to disregard this tension by repeatedly attempting to universal its logic, by either implicit or explicit means, saying that this particular convention of knowledge applies to everyone, in every instance, and in every location. The whole idea of the physicists' 'theory of everything' might fit into this particular category. It is an attempt to defy anthropology's claims to 'local knowledge' (an examination of which is made in Clifford Gertz's extended analysis),[117] and also a claim that can also be extended to localities and regions in a Western context, not just to anthropologised contexts. Consequently, might it be useful to ask how bastard reasoning is being thought of in the universal 'rationalism' of neo-liberal economics?

- χ -

Knowledge is a leaky phenomenon …

Michael Storper & Allen J. Scott[118]

One of the sins of scientific, objectivist modes of discourse is to take your sources out of context. This is exactly what I've done with the Storper and Scott quote invoked above. In the actual context of this quote, the authors go on to discuss knowledge in the framework of 'firms', 'underinvestment' and 'R&D', in short, a political-economic analysis. For me though the opening clause — 'Knowledge is a leaky phenomenon …' — is a far richer observation if left unqualified, free of extended clarification. Its rawness has a wild eloquence to it. Taking things out of context is, of course, a regular occurrence in a range of discourses, a pointer to 'the irrationality of rationality', or the 'rationality of irrationality', to use Zoe Sofia's articulation of the gendered 'logic' of computer culture.[119] Bastard reasoning then is not simply out there in the provinces or the regions, or an epistemological framework for imbeciles, criminals, women, the lower classes and animals. It is everywhere about us, and within each and every one of us. Right across the continent, right across the universe, there are badlands knowledges being articulated in bastard-logical terms, even if sometimes this logic remains private, or even just an un.conscious immanence. It is also tied in with this dynamic between top-down and organic conceptions of knowledge.

---

117 Clifford Geertz, "Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective', in *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (Basic Books: New York, 1983), pp.167-234.

118 Michael Storper & Allen J. Scott, 'The Wealth of Regions', in *Futures*, vol. 27, #5, 1995, p.510.

119 Zoë Sofia, *Whose Second Self?: Gender and (Ir)Rationality in Computer Culture* (Deakin University Press: Geelong, 1993), pp.23-37.

The new regionalist enterprise is an adjunct of the neo-liberal economic philosophy coming down to us from Adam Smith (whose own imperialist ghost can still be heard across the plains and billabongs of my own home-region — the Riverina — an idea coming out of David Jones & Paul Roberts's observations in 'Adam Smith's Riverina').[120] This is a ghost that has also haunted the houses of Milton Friedman, the Thatcher government, Reaganomics and various Australian governments. Wendy Larner & William Walters couch this neo-liberal emphasis with the following regional inflection: 'The *vocabulary* of regionalism is also that of market economics. It is the vocabulary of growth, dynamism, and prosperity, and only sometimes of regional sense of community and identity'. While in some respects Larner and Walters are referring to supra-national forms of regionalism/regionalisation, their point is also pertinent to sub-national forms as well. Regardless of this distinction, and keeping in mind Larner and Walters's further point that, '... regions are open and fluid, allowing multiple linkages with other geographical and governmental scales', new regionalism contains within its philosophical and political program a majority component of top-down *regionalisation*.[121] Looked on as field of knowledge, new regionalism is a doctrine that to varying degrees is a system of thinking and acting imposed on regions from afar.

This is not to say that the new regionalist paradigm operates in a wholesale top-down manner though. Many of its components have been *actively* taken up in a variety of regional contexts throughout Australia and across the world.[122] In the region where I live — the Northern Rivers of New South Wales — Kyogle Council and the NSW Department of State and Regional Development have produced a new regionalist blueprint in their *Kyogle "Sense of Place Project" Economic Development Plan*, a 170-page document that canvases industrial development options across a wide range of economic activities in the beef, timber, light manufacturing, tourism, education and the telecommunications industries and is the result of a community consultative process over a three-year period.[123] Clearly, this blurs the distinction between a top-down and an organic approach to the region and place-making; although this kind blurring of conceptual distinctions in actual practice is itself a component of bastard reasoning and more porous forms of bordering in political, economic and cultural systems.

---

120 David Jones & Paul Roberts, 'Adam Smith's Riverina', paper presented to the Institute of Australian Geographers 22nd Conference, Canberra, August 1987.

121 Wendy Larner & William Walters, 'The Political Rationality of "New Regionalism": Toward a Genealogy of the Region', in *Theory and Society*, vol. 31, #3, 2002, pp.414 & 410. [Italics in the original].

122 This point is taken up in Al Rainnie, & Julie Grant, 'The Knowledge Economy, New Regionalism and the Re-emergence of Regions', in Al Rainnie & Mardelene Grobbelaar (eds.), *New Regionalism in Australia* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2004), pp.3-24. It is also addressed in National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, *State of the Regions*, (National Economics: Melbourne, 2002 & 2003).

123 Kyogle Council, *Kyogle "Sense of Place Project" Economic Development Plan*, (Kyogle Council & NSW Department of State and Regional Development: Sydney, 2005), available at <http://www.kyoglecouncil.nsw.gov.au>. [Accessed 11/5/2005].

One of new regionalism's most potent conceptual components is what Philip Cooke & Kevin Morgan calls the 'learning region'.[124] A specific instance of the take-up of this idea is on the website of the Northern Rivers Regional Development Board which claims that the Northern Rivers is a 'learning region' (NRRDB is a business orientated hub dedicated to promoting the economy of the Northern Rivers). The Board also commissioned Cathy Henkel's 2000 report, *Imagining the Future: Strategies for the Development of 'Creative Industries' in the Northern Rivers of NSW*, which once again confirms a desire for the Northern Rivers to transform itself into a 'lifestyle and learning region' (p.8).[125]

Certainly a great many of the sub-categories that Cooke and Morgan use to explain the learning region in *The Associational Economy*, elements like 'trust', 'social capital', 'proximity', the distinction between 'tacit and codified knowledge', 'flexible organisation', 'innovation', 'reflexivity', are all useful tools of analysis. The authors go on to say that in the learning region, 'vocational learning and knowledge are ... classified in terms of *competence* (i.e. ability to conduct a specific task) rather than capability (i.e. understanding of the mechanisms underlying solution of the problem involved in the task). Competence is cheaper to provide than capability' (p.68), a point that provides a hint as to the style in which learning is couched in this new regionalist method. Even though Cooke and Morgan are arguing from a UK perspective, the production of knowledge in a 'learning region' methodology remains more an *instructional* activity rather than a heuristic one. A spatially sourced bastard form of reasoning has many affinities with the heuristic method where learners are forced to find out for themselves.

Tragically, the expanding influence of the new regionalist model as a part of global/local transformations will bring to bear an intensified emphasis on a certain kind of learning and understanding, one where knowledge acquisition is viewed merely as *instruction* and not along more organically inclined heuristic principles, an effort that will bring knowledge-making holus-bolus into the very heart of this 'productivist' process rather than question it. All this concomitantly extant knowledge circulating through bodies-in-places makes it implausible to emphasis one disciplinary or methodological domain when it comes to understanding how knowledge is produced and disseminated in particular places. Indeed, such theorising in a one-dimensional disciplinary way might itself be classified as 'irrational', and

---

124 Philip Cooke & Kevin Morgan, *The Associational Economy*, see especially 'The Region as a Nexus of the Learning Process', pp.60-82. See also Kevin Morgan, 'The Learning Region: Institutions, Innovation and Regional Renewal', in *Regional Studies*, vol.31, #5, 1997, pp.491-503.

125 Cathy Henkel, *Imagining the Future: Strategies for the Development of 'Creative Industries' in the Northern Rivers Region of NSW* (Commissioned by the Northern Rivers Regional Development Board, in association with the Northern Rivers Area Consultative Committee and the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations & Small Business: Ballina, 2000), available at <http://www.nrrdb.gov.au>. [Accessed 10/6/2005].

it is this accusation of 'irrationality' that critic John Lovering has pointed out in relation to the 'economic sense' that dominates new regionalist discourse and quite likely this key component of the learning region. [126]

In the current, almost unilateral emphasis on the market within neo-liberally focussed economies, polities and cultures there is a very dangerous irrationality masquerading as a reality effect. As John Lovering points out, new regionalism's 'blindness to the pervasiveness of 'irrationality' in the economic sense is ... profoundly misleading' especially 'when it comes to the labour market' ('Theory Led by Policy', p.388), a space where the economic instinct is at its most acute. Clearly, this intersecting conglomeration of pluralised forms of information that constitutes the production of regionated knowledge, as it continuously *and* interruptedly courses through, and sometimes terminates in the body; all the while forming a knowing matrix in/through which bastard reasoning thrives, and out of which any kind of rhythmic 'coherence' about the self and its world is re/formulated on a minute-by-minute and a day-to-day basis. Naturally enough, this is a difficult bind for the 'lawful' constituencies of what Derrida calls the 'legitimate logos' (represented here by the new regionalist method as a branch of neo-liberal economic rationality), and that is to recognise bastard reasoning as its very own neurotic symptom. As a method, chora-logic is *implaced* at the nurturing heart of a sometimes-illegitimate logos consistently resolute in compelling authoritarian forces to stay alive-to-the-world, to curb the will-to-abstraction and thus its will-to-power, the latter two a tandem act usually carried out from afar. Chora-logic is organically fixated, an animating *and* animist life-force, one that is also keenly alive to the dangers of an unbridled and obsessive extension of the death instinct at critical moments of both individual and collective madness (which in this case is represented by the global extension of the neo-liberal ethic and the economic 'rationality' that frames it). Finally, it may just turn out to be that the bastard reasoning of chora-logic and the economic rationality of neo-liberal thinking only differ in the extent of their implacement: bastard reasoning is the more local/regional form while neo-liberal economic irrationality is globally implaced. Any learning region program would be wise to look at the 'bastard knowledge' assumptions it brings to its own understanding of regions because 'A clear idea has no special interest for the bastard. Rather he fiddles around in order to cause a short-circuit, always on watch for those flashes of thought which are necessarily followed by thunder, on occasion effecting a direct hit or refreshing creativity.'[127]

[THE END]

126 John Lovering, 'Theory Led by Policy: The Inadequacies of the 'New Regionalism' (Illustrated from the Case of Wales)', in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 23, #2, 1999, p.388. See also John Lovering, 'The Coming Regional Crisis (And How To Avoid It)', in *Regional Studies*, vol. 35, #4, 2001, pp.349-354.

127 Adilkno, 'Critique of Bastard Knowledge', available at <http://www.thing.desk.nl/bilwet/TXT/BASTARD.ENG.txt>. [Accessed 31/3/03].

- χ -

What is the name of that obsession for singularity and unity, for an order that does not divide, for a world of symbiotic union, for a world that begins and ends with an indissoluble ego?

Sharon Traweek [128]

128 Sharon Traweek, 'Unity, Dyads, Triads, Quads, and Complexity: Cultural Choreographies of Science', in Andrew Ross (ed.), *Science Wars* (Duke University Press: Durham & London, 1996), p.148.

Page + 242 = ➥

[Domestic Harmony]

After moving to the Northern Rivers in the early 1990s I shared a house with a person who I'd never met before. The house was located on 40 acres and set at the end of a dead-end road in a idyllic rural context about twenty minutes drive from the ocean. The house itself was sited about 500 metres from the roadway down a driveway with overhanging bushes. The only people who visited us were people we knew. One night a mutual friend of the household and her newly born baby son were staying with us; they were both asleep in the spare room as I went to bed around 11.30-12.00 pm. As I was just about to doze off to sleep a car pulled up in the driveway outside my window. After a period wherein the expected knock on the front door didn't materialise, I drowsily pulled on some clothes and went outside through the front door. Instinctively (I was responsible for chopping the firewood for the household) I picked up the axe, located as usual just inside the front door. With a torch in one hand and an axe in the other I ventured out to the parked car. I looked into the VW micro-bus, there wasn't a body to be found. My nerves rose to a heightened level of excitement. I walked around to the side of the house, where there was a window into the room where our friend and her baby were sleeping. Shining the torch around the window I noticed there was a man peering into her room through an opening in its curtains.

A high-decibel howling yell comprised of, "What the fuck are you doing?" originated from somewhere below my diaphragm. My assailant spun around to look me directly in the eye. It was only later that I realised I was shining the torch directly into his face while I had the axe raised threateningly above my head. A split-second-of-an-eternity separated his riposte from more of my screaming, howling invective, an impressive display of fuming rage. In that split second of fury I knew, with an infallible sense of absolute certainty, that I would lay that axe into the middle of his head if he went for me.

As it happened, he cowered fearfully into submission at what, I only realised in retrospect, must have been a shit-scaringly traumatic experience for him, only becoming conscious afterwards he was strung out on speed or smack or something, his eyes bulging out of his head, criss-crossed with a network of intersecting red lines. He rang up the house a couple of hours later and threatened to kill me, but I never heard from him again. Here was an intense example of bastard reasoning in-situ, a represented account of a real event from which most likely I would have been committed for murder or manslaughter if my opponent had decided to attack rather than cower into submission, the fight or flight instinct. I could find no antecedents for this action within my previous experience, having generally considered myself a pacifist. But from then on I knew that not to be the case.

[THE END]

[‘Crow Tries the Media’]

He wanted to sing about her
He didn’t want comparisons with the earth or anything to do with it

Oversold like detergents
He did not even want words
Waving their long tails in public
With their prostitute’s exclamations

He wanted to sing very clear

Ted Hughes[129]

129 Ted Hughes, ‘Crow Tries the Media’, in *Crow: From the Life and Songs of the Crow* (Faber & Faber: London, 1974), p.46.

Page + 244 = ➥

[The [Local]±[Universal] Joint][130]

Imagine for a moment that I arrive at your place-of-work, or your digitally fortified media room, or even some a lecture theatre like the one we are in today, and proceed to excrete or urinate in the doorway or on a wall. Less wildly, imagine I am a crow screeching out 'FAAAAARK', 'FAAAAARK' as I fly over some specific piece of the Australian landscape, or even as it might be uttered as part of a satirical routine by a well-known television personality.[131] In an even more unbalanced act, what if I were to sidle up next to you and start sniffing around your ear or even your backside? Absurdly, consider for a brief moment that I am J. K. Rowley, or the like, a globally popular author. All-in-all, these 'real virtualities' might be viewed as transgressions of some particular order or another.[132] Differentially though, they are all deeds of territorialisation, a combinatory thought/act duality that girds the production of sovereign space, a meta-and-physical place where ownership and control is meant to lie exclusively with the power of its owner/s. Pissing and shitting, or screeching on the border may not now be an overt territorialising act of the human mammal but, more broadly in the 'animal' world of mammals, or at least according to *Tracks, Scats and Other Traces: A Field Guide to Australian Mammals*, it does have an overtly gendered character: 'Scats are sometimes used as territorial markers. Many animals, particularly males, will deposit their scats in prominent places as a sign of territory ownership.'[133] It remains to be seen though whether any altering in the gendered character of the human mammal vis-à-vis access to and the control of territory, money, or other bodies will shift this particular territorialising protocol in any significant way.

Curiously, *Tracks, Scats and Other Traces* doesn't acknowledge the existence of the human as a species of mammal with propensities in territorial demarcation of the excremental kind; regardless, territorial demarcation, as thought and practice, is still deeply charged with psychic, political, and epistemological significance. Here too, in 'The Local±Universal Joint', I am marking out a territory of both my own *and* our collective autonomy. I am certainly not the first to indicate that acts of territorialisation, de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation are an acute aspect of becoming me, of becoming local, even of becoming regional, national, or global and the attendant

---

130 ['The Local+Universal Joint' is the written text of a speech Maybury delivered to the 'World and Self' conference in 2004. Ed.]

131 Alan McKee discusses this well-known episode as one of Australian television's illuminating moments when Graham Kennedy's 'transgressive' use of the crow-call got him banned from live performance in that medium by the censors. See, *Australian Television: A Genealogy of Great Moments* (Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 2001), pp.26-28.

132 I've taken this term from Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, 'Real Virtuality', in Rob Wilson & Wimal Dissanayake (eds.), *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*, (Duke University Press: Durham & London, 1996), pp.107-118.

133 Barbara Triggs, *Tracks, Scats and Other Traces: A Field Guide to Australian Mammals* (Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 1996), p.85.

attempts at resistance and/or acquiescence to subjection that these spatial affiliations inspire.[134] Borders and acts of border-making are attempts to quieten this becoming, to "Let It Be", and/or to let it backslide into *being-ness*, into the more 'relaxed and comfortable' capacities of known habits.[135]

At one level all the above episodes can be considered 'transgressive' in the sense Alan McKee uses the term when categorising Graham Kennedy's crow calls. Equally, if I were actually to piss in the corner (rather than just imagining it or talking about it) many of you would be deeply offended that I had violated the *civilised* order; some may even call in the police or security guards. While civility is often used to regulate the boundaries of space and knowledge, a differing interpretation, already alluded to, is the way acts of transgression sometimes serve to camouflage the actual means of re-, de-, and territorialising acts in meta- *and* physical, real *and* virtual domains. More commonly (in an everyday-life-kind-of-way), acts of becoming local are bipedal, like de Certeau's meditation (after a taking in a panoptic view of the city from the World Trade Centre), on walking New York into existence;[136] similarly, we also walk localities into existence. This ancient system of transportation (also taken up in the idea of the *flâneur*) in many ways defines the limits of what might be called local. In an age populated by fast machines, walking continues to measure the local by leaving considerable time to soak in and reflect on what one's existence is about in belonging to a particular place. The slow pace of walking the local into existence is the matrix out of which the concrete, the objective and the empirical, even the digressionary, the dreamy and the reflective, emerge as significant components in the production of that locality and of knowledge itself.

From ancient times onwards it is also possible that through this concentration on local space, mapped in a bipedal movement, that the *measured* imperative of literate discourse emerges. Over time, the introduction of the horse, the car and the aeroplane, and of course the clock and computer,[137] has significantly altered this measured quality of knowledge-making in particular places. The speed at which walking and thinking proceed then might indicate a certain equality, a certain relational parity between power, thinking and local action. Since at least the Enlightenment, through the Modern and up to this Postmodern period, locality has developed a reputation as the arse-end of progressiveness, the very antithesis of erudition. In short, more comprehensive, widely applicable, even universal forms of knowledge (sometimes made rigidly coherent by ideological purity in religious, political, scientific, artistic and sometimes technical frames) have come

134 Katherine Gibson, 'Regional Subjection and Becoming', in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 19 2001, pp.639-667.

135 Cf.: 'Habit is an acquired automatic self-regulation.' See Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Duke University Press: Durham & London, 2002), p.11.

136 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp.91-110.

137 Harmeet Sawhney, 'The Slide Towards Decentralization: Clock and Computer', in *Media, Culture & Society*, vol.26, #3 2004, pp.359-374.

to overshadow, and sometimes to downplay and eradicate local forms of knowledge. The re-emergence of local/regional patterns of thought and action has prompted a fresh look at the politics and culture of 'balkanisation', a term that means 'to divide (a region or territory) into small often hostile units' and currently a primary rhetorical means to ridicule and undermine the local and the regional.[138]

By now the turn to the spatial is a well recognised. Part of this interest in the spatial is the limitation set up by a reinvigorated sense of the global. The stratosphere (as both an environmental given and as a colloquialism for reaching great heights) is the atmospheric skein that cloaks this limitation with a temporary means to understand this re-minted plateau called globalisation. The feverish change and uncertainly brought about by globalisation would not operate effectively without some kind of limitation, some kind of sense of a border. Now that a many of the geographic contours of the globe has been mapped the turn to local and regional space seems to me to be an inevitable part of both our globe's physiographic limit in concert with this political, cultural, social and psychological uncertainty. As Doreen Massey has suggested 'the seeking after a sense of place, has come to be seen by some as necessarily reactionary', and further she says, 'While 'time' is equated with movement and progress, 'space'/'place' is equated with stasis and reaction.'[139] Rightly, Massey questions the 'serious inadequacies in this argument' while driving home the worrying nature of this debate to the urge to draw borders around spatial categories. Indeed, domestic space and the local are so closely linked as to assume a sometimes-unquestioned basic truth of human existence, that is, up until recently they are bordered, knowledge and space wise, in a largely unquestioned way. The reinvention of interest in the body and self-making in domestic and local/regional spaces also break open these reactionary assumptions.

The one thing that can be said about 'spatial demarcation', apart from an inkling that this juxtaposition might be an oxymoronic one, is that a variety of spaces can exist simultaneously inside one another. Nano-spaces exist within psychic and biological spaces, within domestic spaces, within local spaces, within regional spaces, within national spaces, within global spaces, and if there is a universal form 'out there' it could be cosmological space. So in becoming local again we are also becoming nano-logical, even cosmo-logical in our spatial affiliations, and in the process a sense of *becoming infinite* intrudes on the 'boundary' as a functional demarcation of place, an uncertainty

138 Quoted as a footnote in Petar Ramadanovic, 'Language and Crime in Yugoslavia: *Milarod Pavic's* Dictionary of the Khazars', in David Jordan (ed.), *Regionalism Reconsidered: New Approaches to the Field* (Garland Publishing: New York & London, 1994), p.185.

139 Doreen Massey, 'A Global Sense of Place', in *Space, Place and Gender* (Polity Press: Cambridge, 1994), pp.147 & 151.

that also arises with the use of a 'disciplinary frame' as a functional demarcation in the production of knowledge.[140] Indeed, if there is an equable life-form 'out there' beyond the stratosphere they might look down upon the earth and its human inhabitants as populating a minute and highly parochialised locality in a remote corner of the universe, many of whom are prone to shitting in their own nest or fighting and/or killing each other over the spoils. We don't even have to look to the *alien* though (a popular *otherling* figure redolent of globalisation's imaginary fears) as a way of seeing the world objectively: Denis Cosgrove gives us a detailed analysis of NASA's images of the earth (taken from the moon landings of the late 60s/early 70s) reiterating that this was the first time the earth was photographed from outside itself and from then on seen as occupying *a place in space*.[141] Following the widespread dissemination of *The Whole Earth* and *Earthrise* photos from NASA we can now see the earth as a tiny locality in a hypothetically blacked-out infinity of localities.

Looked at in this vein (that is, the globe as a locality) rather than in the way that Ros Irwin speaks of when referring to comments made to her from some of her fellow Lismore locals: "[...W]hat I've come to understand is that you are *never* a local unless you are born here. [...] I mean even after twenty-odd years people say [to me], well, you're not a local."[142] This kind of exclusionary and reactionary localism stands in contrast with John Berger's thinking of the globe as a kind of psychically arbitrated and domesticated locality: 'The only hope for recreating a centre now is to make it the entire earth.'[143] Globalisation, especially in its virtualising extensions of real places, encourages this broadened view of the world as a local/regional space while simultaneously serving as a cross-fertilising protocol for every spatial scale.

All over the globe then there is a re-evaluation of what it means to be local, or what J. K. Gibson-Graham call 'An Ethics of the Local'.[144] A centrepiece of this local re-awakening is what might be termed *a thinking and feeling otherwise* about given certainties, or universal dictates. J. K. Gibson-Graham, taking a cue from Judith Butler, Michel Foucault and William Connolly's work, see that these larger processes of epistemological, cultural, political and economic realities (the political economy of capitalism is one such monolithic 'reality',

---

140 This sense of *becoming infinite* has been influenced by Foucault's remark that '... the real scandal of Galileo's work lay not so much in his discovery, or rediscovery, that the earth revolved around the sun, but in his constitution of an infinite, and infinitely open space.' See Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. Jay Miskowiec, in *Diacritics*, vol. 16, #1, 1986, p.23.

141 Denis Cosgrove, 'Contested Global Visions: *One-World*, *Whole-Earth*, and the Apollo Space Photographs', in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. 84, #2, 1994, pp.270-278.

142 Ros Irwin, sometime mayor of Lismore, as well as a city councillor and community activist from the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, quoted by Rob Garbutt, 'Local Order', in *M/C: A Journal of Media and Culture*, vol. 7, #6, <http://www.journal.media.org.au/0501/08-garbutt.php> (2005). [Accessed 22/2/2005, italics in the original].

143 John Berger, 'A Home is Not a House', in *New Society*, 23 June (1983), p.464.

144 J. K. Gibson-Graham, 'An Ethics of the Local', p.8.

American cultural imperialism might be another, even Christianity and Islam are useful examples here) are reconceptualised by a miro-politics of change and becoming rather than living a life through the fortified security of the already known and the collectively sanctioned. This is a micro-politics aimed at overcoming the primal fear of uncertainty and otherness (always remembering, as Gibson-Graham note in 'An Ethics of the Local', that 'Locality is the place where engagement with the stranger is enacted' p.8). This is also a local/regional place where change is dealt with on a bodily level rather than leaving it to macro-political forms of representative democracy or global corporations, or even non-government organisations (NGOs) because '... it is not easy to overcome the feeling that the state works for its own objectives rather for the rational functioning of a society served by responsible and self-effacing statesmen.'[145]

In a wide variety of measurements, by giving over our political and epistemological power to the institutions of representative democracy (parliaments, the judiciary, the executive, the bureaucracy, universities, the churches, even the media) we have also sometimes abrogated our collective and individual obligation to change things on this everyday basis. Representative forms of democratic governance, as a set of symbolic and actual arrangements, contains an embedded knowledge that large scale change is somehow taken care of by these higher authorities. And if this kind of knowledge is left largely unspoken, the significant change that does occur does so mainly in the interests of those already mentioned institutional arrangements and not in the interests of the concrete circumstances where that same institutionally self-interested change actually takes place.

Part of this shift from collective, universalising operations to more local/regional ones (the dispute in the Sunshine Coast hinterland town of Maleny in Queensland over the siting of a Woolworths supermarket is another example of this shift) is also a change in the epistemological and political register.[146] Epistemology is generally conceived of as *how* we know what we know. In whatever form knowledge takes though the body is always its conduit. Nationalised forms of literacy are an epistemological form that have largely collectivised our knowledge of the world into objectively realised formats like the novel, the essay or the dissertation. The already referenced geo-political uncertainty (especially as it relates to the nation state) is mirrored in what Gunter Kress says of literacy: that it is 'fast becoming' one of our 'fundamental anxieties'.[147] I would beg to differ, even if only slightly: it *is* one our core anxieties. The conflicts arising out this anxiety are now being rehearsed right across the nation.

---

145 Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, trans. by Sacha Rabinovitch (Allen Lane: London, 1971), p.70.

146 On this conflict see the full-page ad in *The Weekend Australian*, July 23-24, 2005, p.26. Also, see the community's website at <http://www.malenyvoice.com.au>. [Accessed 25/7/2005].

147 Gunther Kress, *Before Writing: Rethinking the Paths to Literacy*, (Routledge: London & New York, 1997), p.1.

This anxiety over literacy has come about, in part, due to the rise (since the advent of Morse code) of electronic communication, or what Gregory Ulmer says of this current era that it is one where literacy is morphing into 'electracy'.[148] Electrate epistemologies bring with them a significant re-shaping of the *how* in the way knowledge is organised. Connected to these concurrent reshapings is the way in which electronically coded knowledge interacts with visceral forms of (body) knowledge and their dual propensity to sideline the more overtly ratiocinated quality of objective language central to literate order and control.[149] Electrate forms of knowledge cannot be limited to a linguistic frame because they reference sounds (with access to voice, music and FX), images (with their line, colour and movement), and also gesture, amongst others. A move to the local and/or the regional, then, for me at least, is directly connected to this move to an electrate sensibility, one that is a whole-of-body-approach-to-knowledge, not merely a utilisation of the reasoned, measured objectivity promoted by literacy.[150]

The shift from literate forms to electrate ones also entails a change in the way/s knowledge is arranged, categorised, cohered and, most importantly, transformed. In literate formations, knowledge is sometimes located in specific material genres like the novel, the poem, the treatise, the thesis, the newspaper, or magazine; or it is sometimes arranged in figures of speech or word categories like verbs, adjectives, nouns etc. In electracy, given its broader range of epistemological fragments, a differing means of cohering the disorder in the minutiae presented by these fragments is conceivable. One of these means of coherence is the 'information value chain', a conceptual tool taken from political economy.[151] The four components of the information value chain are *data*, *information*, *knowledge* and *wisdom*. The basic level is *data*, which Davis and Stack define as 'raw perceptions captured by some data-collection device'. In electrate terms, data might be conceived of singularities like words, images or sounds, or the sub-components that make any of these singularities codifiable in an electronic form. These sub-components could include letters, numbers, pixels, and the bits and bytes of computer code. As mentioned, these *data* singularities require a technical frame in order to be stored, retrieved and/or interpreted, that is, the necessary re-shaping of data to take it to the next level of the chain.

---

148 Gregory Ulmer, *Internet Invention: Literacy into Electracy*, (Longman: Boston, 2003).

149 The visceral and affective propensities of electronic knowledge are forcefully articulated in Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*, (Duke University Press: Durham & London, 2002).

150 I've written about some of these issues in 'The Literacy Control Complex', in *M/C: Journal of Media and Culture*, vol. 7, #2, 2004, available at the Journal's website: <http://www.media-culture.org.au/0403/05-literacy.html>. [Accessed 23/3/2005].

151 In what follows I've been influenced by two sources. Firstly, Alopi Sione Latukefu, 'Unravelling the DNA of Knowledge: Building Future Regional Memory in the Pacific Through Deconstructing the Past', in *Paideusis: Journal for Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Studies*, vol. 2, available at the Journal's website: <http//:www.geocities.com/paideusis/e1n2a/html>, (1999), p.26. [Accessed 16/6/2005]. And secondly, Jim Davis & Michael Stack, 'Knowledge in Production', in *Race and Class*, vol. 34, #3, 1992, p.2.

It is this more atomised level of electronic information that is exponentially expanding in the global era, hence the emphasis on the database as a significant electronic form.[152] Crucially, as Davis and Stack argue, it is the application of 'human labour' to data that is necessary for it to be transformed into *information* (simple examples of this next link in the chain might include catalogues, time-tables, itineraries, manuals, readouts at ATM machines etc). If data is the more atomised level of an electronic epistemology, then *information* constitutes the level at which a rudimentary coherence is applied. *Knowledge* is the level at which analysis, critical and/or imaginative engagement, and where the working-body applies an interpretative framework through the shaping and reshaping of the data and information at its disposal. It is also the level at which a particular *position* might sometimes be taken in relation to that collected *data* and *information*.

The wisdom domain (a level left out of Davis and Stack's discussion but referenced in Latukefu's essay) is the most amorphous category. It is amorphous, in part, because as human labour transforms data up through the chain into wisdom, increasing levels of subjectivity intrude on the process of interpretation/categorisation at this level. A wise artefact for me (Simon Pockley's online documentary *Flight of the Ducks* is one such wise-work) might be incomprehensible or offensive to the next person. What can be said about the wisdom level of an electronic epistemology is that the quality and amount of research, the wide-ranging thinking and reworking, possibly along with the peer assessment that has gone into what is sometimes a universal theme of the work, is extensive.

A work of wisdom then might be thought of in terms of the way its content makes invisible it formal arrangement, or where its message rings down through the ages or across spaces and places. Progression through the chain, understood through the human labour applied to it, is simultaneously quantitative and qualitative, measurable in the hours taken up in the process as well as in the excellence or otherwise of its contribution to the question or dilemma the work addresses. Data, as a term that has a freer definitional status in relation to linguistic criteria, and thus able to reference print, image and sound, is the means out of which any electronic artefact is synaesthetically transformed into the wise-work through the application of human labour. While a sense of alchemical mysticism might pervade some popular and elite understanding of any movement through an electronically codified information value chain (that is, of turning data-shit

152 Discussion on the database is extensive. Three differing variations on this theme that I'm familiar with are, firstly, Rod Pilling, 'The Changing Role of the Local Journalist: From Faithful Chronicler of the Parish Pump to Multiskilled Compiler of an Electronic Database', in Bob Franklin & David Murphy (eds.), *Making the Local News: Local Journalism in Context* (Routledge: London & New York, 1998), pp.183-195. Secondly, Mark Poster, 'Databases as Discourse, or Electronic Interpellations', in Paul Heelas, Scott Lash & Paul Morris (eds.), *Detraditionalization: Critical Reflections on Authority and Identity* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1996), pp.277-293. And thirdly, Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England, 2001), 'The Database', pp.218-243.

Page + 251 = ➥

into wisdom's-gold), it remains an important means, in either politico-economic, cultural or psychic terms, of the way an electronic epistemology might be reconceived in and through a globally pluralised sense of locality and regionality.

Now for a rounding up: the universal joint ('a joint allowing free movement in all directions within certain limits', *Macquarie Dictionary*) is an apt image for rethinking the way/s in which a 'relational' sense of locality and regionality might be framed.[153] A universal joint presupposes a relatively mobile but 'stable' point through which a range of other trajectories of knowledge might travel. A subject's particular point in space is not simply limited by its intersection at the crossroads of the four cardinal points of the compass, as Walter Benjamin's comment on locality would seem to suggest:

> One only knows a spot once one has experienced it in as many dimensions as possible. You have to have approached a place from all four cardinal points if you want to take it in, and what's more, you also have to have left it from all these points. Otherwise it will quite unexpectedly cross your path three or four times before you are prepared to discover it.[154]

One must also have some experience of a locality's underbelly (its dark underground), and even to understand it through a panoptical overhead frame, as well as *all* the entries and exits from *all* points of the compass. A spatio-temporalised relativity in understanding the soul of a place, and the souls in that place, requires a sometimes overly ambitious and monumental erudition; one derived from both directly implicit and tacit experience of it *and* the accumulation of codified knowledge specific to that locale. Any rigidly universal knowledge applied indiscriminately to a place from *elsewhere* serves primarily to subjugate both its people and its nature to the socio-political forces of that distant space.

An universal joint of knowledge, activated by a subject in a specific location, is framed less by the broader or a distant community's urge for an overarching explanation (literacy is exemplary in this process with its adherence to socially sanctioned forms of public education and a proper lexical order) but rather is framed by how 'the body's bilaterality' (a fuller corporeal definition of the bipedal movement through a specific place) is synaesthetically arranged around *all* the tacit and codifiable knowledge perceived in and of that

---

153 John Allen, Doreen Massey, Allan Cochrane, et. al., argue for a 'relational approach to space and place' in *Rethinking the Region* (Routledge: London & New York, 1998), p.5.

154 Walter Benjamin, writing in his Moscow diaries, quoted in Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England (1989), p.25.

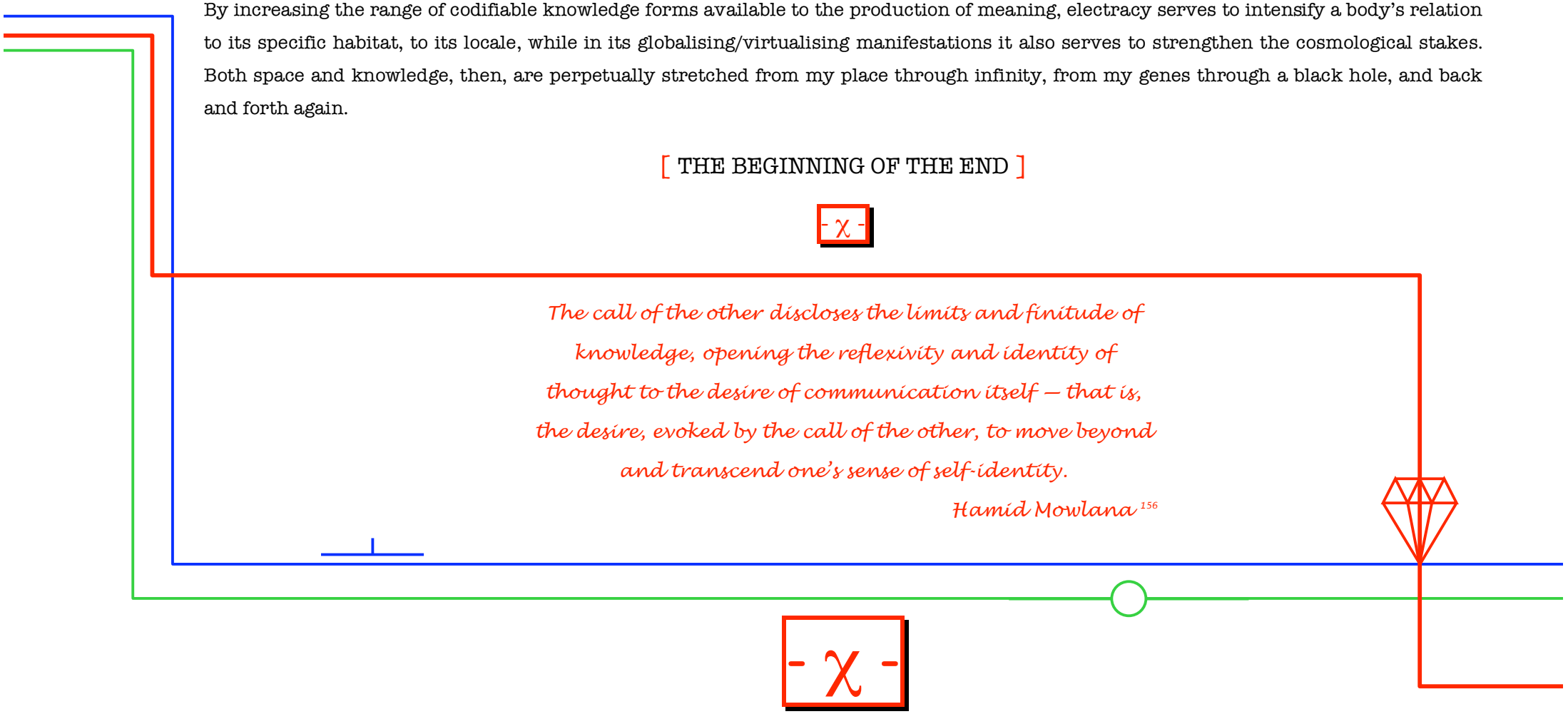
place.[155] All the knowledge referred to here includes not only textual/language based forms of knowledge, but also its sounds and images, its totemic knowledge, its smells, indeed a whole cornucopia of knowledge forms many of which, but not all, are codifiable by electronic means. By increasing the range of codifiable knowledge forms available to the production of meaning, electracy serves to intensify a body's relation to its specific habitat, to its locale, while in its globalising/virtualising manifestations it also serves to strengthen the cosmological stakes. Both space and knowledge, then, are perpetually stretched from my place through infinity, from my genes through a black hole, and back and forth again.

[THE BEGINNING OF THE END]

- χ -

The call of the other discloses the limits and finitude of knowledge, opening the reflexivity and identity of thought to the desire of communication itself – that is, the desire, evoked by the call of the other, to move beyond and transcend one's sense of self-identity.

Hamid Mowlana[156]



- χ -

155 On the body's bilaterality see Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1997), pp.208-210 & 236-237.

156 Hamid Mowlana, 'Communication, Philosophy and Religion', in *The Journal of International Communication*, vol. 9, #1, 2003, p.15.

Home is not where one is pushed into the light,

but where one gathers it into oneself to become light.

Ihab Hassan[157]

157 Ihab Hassan, 'How Australian Is It?', in Peter Craven (ed.), *The Best Australian Essays 2000* (Black Inc.: Melbourne, 2000), p.417.

Page + 254 = ➥

[Late News]

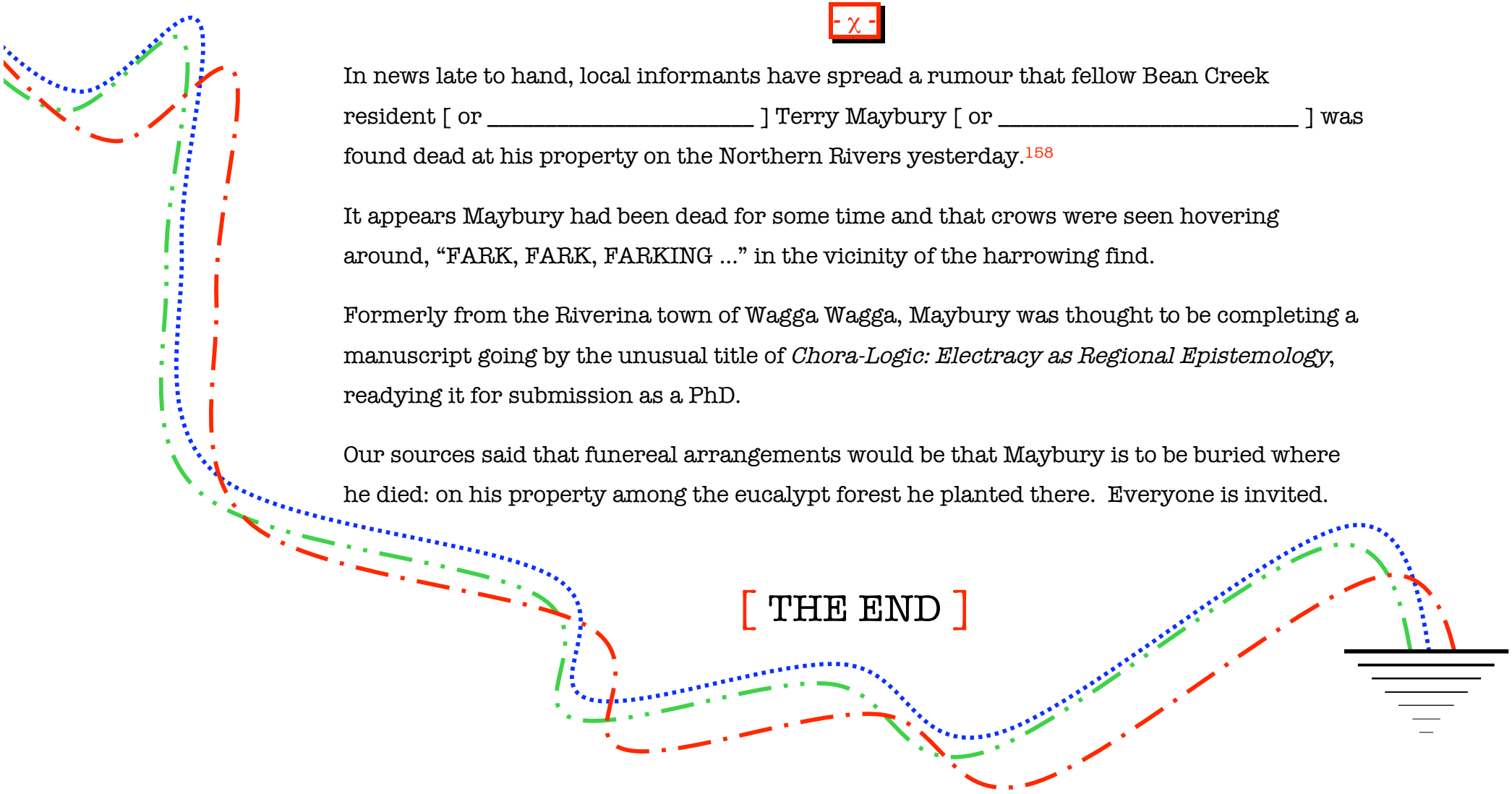
- χ -

In news late to hand, local informants have spread a rumour that fellow Bean Creek resident [or _____] Terry Maybury [or _____] was found dead at his property on the Northern Rivers yesterday.[158]

It appears Maybury had been dead for some time and that crows were seen hovering around, “FARK, FARK, FARKING ...” in the vicinity of the harrowing find.

Formerly from the Riverina town of Wagga Wagga, Maybury was thought to be completing a manuscript going by the unusual title of *Chora-Logic: Electracy as Regional Epistemology*, readying it for submission as a PhD.

Our sources said that funereal arrangements would be that Maybury is to be buried where he died: on his property among the eucalypt forest he planted there. Everyone is invited.



[THE END]

158 [In discussions before his death Maybury insisted that spaces be left open for people to insert their own particulars into the grand narratives and big theories, or to throw the latter out altogether. Ed.]

[Click to Return to ...]

[THE BEGINNING? - χ -]

and/or

[THE MIDDLE? - χ -]

and/maybe

[THE END? - χ -]

[DOUBLE CLICK - χ - TO EXIT]

[Fχ: *FLOATING OVER THE BURIAL SCENE, FROM HIGH ATOP A DEAD TREE,*
IS THE DISTINCTIVE WHISTLING SOUNDS OF A FAMILY OF WEDGE-TAILED EAGLES]